



The Gael Gazette

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Guelph Collegiate-Vocational Institute - Student Newspaper

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Better and Better

By Addison Sambels

One locally owned restaurant has been doing all they can to help during the pandemic, having donated over 3,500 meals to those who need them the most during Thanksgiving.

Kirtida Kitchen, owned by Hitesh Jagard and Kirtida Jagard, started the 30 Hot Meal Drive on October 1st to give the Guelph Food Bank some help. They worked hard every day. Up until October 12th, 30 hot meals were being donated to food banks. The Jagard's, along with occasional help from two volunteers, have reached their goal of 360 meals, made, prepared, and delivered for the 30 Meal Drive cause.

Along with participating in the 30 Hot Meal Drive, Kirtida Kitchen is also working with Sai Dham Food Bank, donating 60 meals every Sunday to the homeless. "Their volunteer comes here with other food packages and we give them the 60 hot meals for the homeless in Downtown Guelph," said Jagard, as he explains how this weekly initiative works.

This restaurant has been giving out more meals than ever since COVID-19 began, willing to help those in tough situations, along with donating meals to frontline workers at hospitals, grocery stores, banks and providing meals for international students. They have also donated 1,750 gift certificates to Guelph General Hospital Workers in regard to their hard work.

Kirtida Kitchen is still working to donate 60 hot meals every Sunday for the homeless in downtown Guelph. "The people are so glad that they have hot meals on Sunday morning." Jagard continues, "They get so happy."

GCVI Breakfast Club

By Khushi Vyas
and Khushali Vyas



Under the bright morning sun, hungry teenagers open up their brown breakfast bags filled with delicious and healthy snacks like apples, cheese, crackers, granola bars, yogurt, carrots, and more. Their loud and inevitable munches fill the atmosphere as they savor the precious moment.

Thanks to GCVI's community partners at the Guelph Children's Foundation, the breakfast club opportunity is once again available for all GCVI students. The new and improved Breakfast Club is now open for anyone including students, families, and seniors. The Breakfast Club, which started for the year on Wednesday, Sept. 30th, is located outside of the Church of Apostles just up Paisley Road. Students can visit the club before their morning or afternoon cohort's class to grab something to eat.

Taking into consideration the current global pandemic, the adult volunteers that help run the club work to minimize the potential of COVID-19 transmission by taking as many precautions as possible, like maintaining proper social distancing, sanitizing as often as possible, providing pre-packaged foods, and encouraging everyone to wear a mask at all times. This year, rather than having kids enter the building, a table is set up in the parking lot area to allow space to maintain physical distancing where people can grab and go with their breakfast bags. Mark Evans, one of the volunteers who supervise the table that holds the breakfast bags, hopes to see at least twenty students a day. Therefore, those in need of a healthy and delicious breakfast, or those who simply wish to check out this wonderful club should definitely drop by the Breakfast Club at 86 Glasgow St.

Link Crew at GCVI

By Gabriella Rubinoff

Link Crew is a leadership program at GCVI that allows for Grade 11 and 12 students to mentor grade nine students during their first year of high school. Though Link continues to run this year, it has been modified as a result of COVID-19, meaning it hasn't been able to run exactly like past years. This has been a significant change to the club, but they have found multiple solutions in order to welcome incoming grade nine students.

In the past, grade nine students would have arrived at GCVI and headed to the gym where the orientation took place, but this year was a little different. On August thirty-first, a virtual grade nine student orientation was held on google meet which allowed for many incoming students to meet each other. Furthermore, Link Crew is planning all sorts of activities for this year and next, although these activities will be entirely virtual for the time being. Some of these activities may include virtual movie nights as well as virtual yoga, baking, and painting classes.

So if you are a grade nine student at GCVI, make sure to stay up to date and check your Link group's Google Classroom regularly. You never know when your Link leaders might be posting about the next fun activity!

The GCVI Chamber Choir Operates Online This Year

By Ross McCusker-Vance

The GCVI chamber choir is an extra-curricular activity offered by the Music Department, which has created a vibrant musical community for fifty student vocalists this year. With Ms. Osborne on maternity leave, Mr. Austin and Ms. Collins have taken on the role of staff choir leaders. The group practices once a week and this year, due to COVID-19, these practices have shifted online. Sophie Wilhelm, a four-year veteran member of the choir, describes how the teachers are making online rehearsals work: "They have different ways they do rehearsals, which is mainly editing recordings for us to listen to (to learn our parts), hosting online meetings, and finding a way to edit each part together when the time comes. So far, rehearsals have been running smoothly and I'm so thankful for both teachers. If not for them deciding to do online rehearsals, the choir would have to pause. But not only have they kept rehearsals going, but they're also keeping the spirit alive and being really encouraging, which I'm very grateful for."

So far this year, the chamber choir is working on three pieces. Ms. Collins comments on why they are doing each one. The first is "Helpless", from the musical Hamilton. "We are singing Helpless because students are really into the musical Hamilton right now and it has easy harmonies which work well for the online setting." The second piece is "Dreams" by Pentatonix which Ms. Collins says is a 5-part harmony song and a more challenging piece. The third piece is "Prepare the Way", which is a Swedish Christmas song. "We decided to do a collaboration with a Swedish choir because we are online and it is much easier to do a collaboration with people around the world when we are online. The Swedish choir chose this piece because there are lyrics both in English

and Swedish and it is a good opportunity for both groups," stated Ms. Collins. The students are looking forward to this collaboration. As ninth grade choir member, Arden C, exclaims, "I'm really looking forward to all the super cool collaborations that we're doing and getting to learn Swedish!"

The GCVI Chamber Choir has clearly had a positive impact on its members' high school experience. Sophie explains that in previous years they were able to go on different trips for performances, and had amazing opportunities, such as singing at a concert with the band Foreigner, and also singing at the Sleeman Centre for a Remembrance Day ceremony. Despite the inability to perform in person, the choir continues to create long lasting and memorable high school experiences for its members. "It's really helped with getting to know people since it's so hard during COVID at school to meet people that aren't in your classes. It's been really nice because I'm starting to feel like I'm part of the community," explains Arden. Sophie also feels the unity of the chamber choir community: "What I like most about being in chamber choir is the people in it. Because of chamber choir, I've made new friends that I probably wouldn't have made otherwise. The choir is a community that bonds over our passion for music. On field trips, people would sing on the bus for hours on end. The level of enthusiasm is very high. Even though rehearsals are online now, the energy is still the same."

It is clear that the GCVI Chamber Choir has adapted to the new normal of COVID-19 to keep motivating its members. Mr. Austin and Ms. Collins plan to keep giving the students great opportunities. "Our goal is to have fun singing "together" and keep the community feeling even though we are not able to be together in person."

HOSA at GCVI

By Jessica Snowball

Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), is a club at GCVI that aims to educate students about health sciences. Students compete in individual or team events ranging from biomedical debate, dental terminology, and clinical nursing, but there are over forty events to pick from. HOSA's first meeting took place on October 7 over a google meet. It was an information session that introduced students to the executive team and the teacher supervisor. This first meeting also addressed the benefits of joining HOSA. One of the many benefits of participating in HOSA workshops and competitions is gaining hands-on experience performing medical procedures.

HOSA is also a great outlet for students to explore possible careers in health science. For example, if a student was interested in becoming a dentist but was not sure if they would be happy working as one, they could experiment with dentistry through participating in HOSA. Students who are part of HOSA will spend their time in the club preparing for two conferences happening later this year. The first will be in the fall and will consist of a written component. The second conference, taking place in the spring, will consist of workshops, and both a written and practical component. Both of these conferences will take place online this year due to COVID-19. HOSA members were required to pay an eighty-five dollar fee, and the deadline to register was October 30. This deadline ensured that students would receive their study material with enough time to learn it before the fall conference. Good luck, HOSA members!

Dyslexia Awareness Month

By Linh Ho

Throughout October, we celebrate those with dyslexia. GCVI showed support during Dyslexia Awareness Month by wearing red shirts on October 21. The red represents the red pen that teachers use to mark their students' work, and taking the power back from the colour that has plagued them.

Dyslexia is a learning disorder that affects the language-processing areas of the brain. It relates to problems with reading caused by difficulty with relating letters to sounds and identifying speech sounds.

This month we recognize, raise awareness, and share stories of dyslexia. Sara W, a GCVI Gael, has decided to share her story. School was sometimes a challenge; she struggled with the direction of numbers, spelling, and the pressure of editing others' work. When she was younger she felt that dyslexia held her back, and she feared others would find out and judge her. She stated, "I didn't want to be treated differently. It was kind of embarrassing." Several teachers were accommodating and helpful, however, some chose not to take it seriously and thought she used it as an excuse to slack.

Sara discovered how common dyslexia is and has since met others with it. It affects approximately 5-10% of the world's population. She said, "Practicing a lot has been helpful". She persevered by working extremely hard (and she had a touch of help from spell-check).

Terry Fox Run

By Haley Juryne

This year GCVI decided to host a virtual Terry Fox Run. The goal for the campaign was to raise \$1,500 and travel a collective distance of 3,000 kilometers to complete Terry's Marathon of Hope as a school. Instagram and Facebook, (@GCVITerryFox), were the main platforms for information on the run as well as daily announcements at GCVI. This virtual journey began on July 1st and recently ended on September 30th. Staff and students were able to participate either solo or in a team of up to six. Participants were encouraged to direct message the Instagram account, or email Vani weekly with any kilometers the participant had tracked while being active, along with a picture. For fundraising purposes the Instagram account had a link in its bio to set up team/individual fundraising pages. Along with information about the run the Instagram page also offered insightful glimpses into Terry's early life and journey. The original goal of 3,000 kilometers was achieved and was even more than doubled at 6,100 kilometers. According to Wayne Gretzky, "There are certain people who are put on Earth for a reason, and Terry was one of those people. He pushed us to think outside the box, to open our eyes and to get involved, even if we haven't been touched by cancer ourselves. He raised incredible awareness and put cancer research on the forefront of our minds, and still does to this day." Thanks GCVI for getting involved and continuing Terry Fox's legacy.

Library News

By Tony Powers

With more books, more representation and more hedgehogs, exciting things are happening for the P.G. Reid Library Learning Commons and Archives. Despite the restrictions, students are still able to check out books for both personal and academic purposes through a questionnaire located on the library's website. The only possible disadvantage to this new system is that students must have specific books in mind when filling out the questionnaire, and they may only take up to three books at a time. After that, students will receive an email when their books are ready to be picked up from the table outside the library. Standard due dates apply and books are to be returned in the bin outside the library's entrance. There is a diverse selection of new books for students to choose from, many of which touch on privilege and injustice in society. The new batch of "Ms. Reed's Recent Reads" includes many of these topical books such as; *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta, a novel in verse which talks about racism and homophobia, and *Patron Saints of Nothing* by Randy Ribay, a novel about identity, grief and corrupt governments. Both of these come highly recommended for anyone wanting to learn more about privilege or anyone that just wants a good read.

Books aside, everyone wants to know how the hedgehogs are doing right now. There is a new hedgehog in the library named Alfred. He is getting along well with the staff and has even been given his own mask by Ms. Lawrenson so that he can stay safe while at work. The original hedgehog, Homer, spent his summer vacation at a cottage with Ms. Wilken and is now spending most of his time in his garden since he is too small to be given a mask. The library's Instagram page [@gcvlearningcommons] posts weekly updates regarding these adorable critters for anybody that is interested.

Staff Spotlight

By Lauren Campbell

Mr. Craig Snell has been teaching for twenty-five years, ten of those being here at GCVI. He teaches mathematics to grades nine through twelve, including IB math. As a high school student, he enjoyed most subjects, but he always excelled at math, his favourite, and he then went on to study it at the University of Waterloo.

When he's not at school, Mr. Snell enjoys hiking, golfing, sports, and travelling, but that has unfortunately come to a halt for him since the pandemic began. During quarantine, Mr. Snell spent his time with his family, which consists of Mrs. Snell and his daughters Sara and Grace, who are nine and seven years old. He spent his time during the pandemic at the trailer with his family, and a lot of time cleaning and doing work around the house. He seemed happy to have gotten a few rounds of golf in, and the Snells also got a new deck during quarantine. Mr. Snell and his family watched a lot of movies and

shows during their time spent together at home, including many kids' shows like *Dora* and *Numberblocks*, and they watched the *Greatest Showman* three times. Something positive that has come out of pandemic for him is balance as well as the ability to find out what is truly important.



Mr Snell, this issue's Staff Spotlight

In terms of teaching during the pandemic, Mr. Snell finds that student engagement in the classroom has been really affected by the smaller class sizes and wearing masks. It's challenging for him as a teacher to tell how the students are doing in the class when they aren't actively participating in class lessons or activities.

As for teaching in general, Mr. Snell finds that working with students is the most rewarding aspect of being a teacher. He claims they keep him "youthful and hip as well as introduce [him] to all the current and new trends like 'Facebook' and 'NKOTB' (New Kids on the Block)". Despite the many rewarding parts of being a teacher, Mr. Snell finds that the challenging aspect of teaching is "striking a balance between the things that you have to do versus the things you want to do" - a balance between all the factors that pull you in different directions. Some of the best advice he was given as a student was to "do something that [you] enjoy, but most importantly, do something that will make a positive impact on your community". In order for students to make the most of their high school experience, Mr. Snell suggests "[finding] your passion(s)... sports, theatre, music, academia.... while keeping a good balance between the things that you have to do, versus the things you want to do". He states that finding that balance is a challenging thing to do, and it is something that Mr. Snell himself is still working on. The next time you see Mr. Snell in the hallway, make sure to say "thank you", as he is truly an asset to our family here at GCVI!

Over Our Heads

By Mirren Litchfield



Have you been lucky enough to walk through the Old Quebec Street Shoppes and notice the art installation of a canoe atop thousands of single-use plastic beverage bottles? The sculpture, 'Over Our Heads', by Toronto-based artist Rebecca Jane Houston was on display in Old Quebec Street Shoppes throughout September, October and early November and is a commentary on the overwhelming plastic pollution in Ontario's waterways.

The statistics are startling: in Canada, only 9% of plastic waste is recycled. Studies have found up to ten times more microplastics in bottled water than in our tap water. It takes three times the amount of water and a quarter bottle of petroleum oil to manufacture one bottle of water. These figures are hard to put into context. Rebecca Jane Houston says in regards to her sculpture: "It makes the problem more visible and tangible than just talking about numbers and statistics. I think that art's impact can bypass the intellectual response and go straight to the gut and the emotions."

The current news about plastic is even more troubling: There are huge islands of plastic waste in our oceans. Our recycling system began to unravel with China's announcement that they would no longer be accepting our recycling waste. And it has been suggested that plastic recycling was just a lie to sell more plastic to waste-conscious consumers.

A recent announcement by the Canadian Federal Government to ban some single-use plastics (shopping bags, straws and takeout containers, and more) in 2021 is a big step in the right direction but unfortunately does not include beverage bottles. This is a heated issue in the Guelph area where a group of volunteers at Wellington Water Watchers have taken on corporate giant Nestle, who is bottling local water for its own profit at a massive potential risk to the environment and access to clean water for future

generations. The Water Watchers' motto: "Water for life, not for profit", strikes a chord in its many supporters.

Karen Rathwell, a volunteer from Wellington Water Watchers, spoke of the ban and the fact that it did not include drink bottles: "I was so disappointed to see that plastic single-use beverage bottles, in particular bottled water, was not on this list. This is amazing, because when you look at any picture of plastic pollution on beaches, in dry rivers, in waterways, along roads, what do you see? You don't see forks, spoons and straws, although I'm sure they are there, you see single-use beverage bottles by the 'zillions! There are so many reasons to ban these bottles and bottled water in particular. In Canada, for the most part, the quality of municipal tap water is often better than the water in plastic bottles and it's better regulated. This has been proven repeatedly. When you consider the microplastics, chemical leaching, huge cradle to grave environmental footprint, recycling programs that are ineffective and most importantly, privatization of something that is a human right - it just doesn't make sense [to not include single-use beverage bottles in the ban]. We will always need plastic, but we need to use it thoughtfully, not wastefully."

Our dependence on single-use plastics is clearly impacting our local environment. It is estimated that 10,000 tonnes of plastic waste enter the Great Lakes each year. Artist Rebecca Jane Houston's sculpture attempts to bring this very issue to our attention and to highlight the potential to bring about change through legislation. She says, "I also hope that the canoe makes us think of the local impact on the Great Lakes and not always think about the more distant ocean. There is just as much microplastic in Lake Ontario but the oceans are more romantic so we focus more on them. I like to remind people that this work is not about individual action or blaming the consumer. We need governments to represent our wishes and make policy that regulates industry and to create bans on single-use plastics. It's starting now in Canada and locally in Guelph with new regulations. That's the way to make change locally and globally! Policy, policy, policy!"

We can continue to pressure our elected officials to call for changes in policy: include beverage bottles in the ban on single-use plastics, increase producer responsibility for waste processing, and set recycled-content targets for plastic products and packaging. We can also use refillable bottles to enjoy municipal tap water, and be mindful of our overall consumption, including single-use plastics and packaging.

More Than Just Fortune Cookies

By Felicia Sang

Picture this.

It's January 23rd 2020 and you're stressing, like every other high schooler at this time of the year. Exams are around the corner, but unlike others, you're also dreading something else. Last night, your father had shared an article to the family WeChat group. You don't remember the exact title, but you knew for sure that the words "Wuhan", "Coronavirus", and "Lockdown" were somewhere in that headline.

You're worried for countless reasons;

For your grandparents, who live in Shanghai and cannot stay in their apartment building for more than two days without having to go buy groceries

For your mother, who had just taken a flight to China for the New Years and you're unsure if she had enough face masks with her

And for your younger brother, because at fifteen years of age you knew how to handle nasty comments, but he doesn't, and you have no idea how he would react to his classmates calling him 'the virus' or 'bat eater'.

You realize that as much as the coronavirus terrifies you, the way people were going to react to the virus scared you more. These may not have been the first thoughts for the majority of people when news broke out about COVID-19. But it was the bright flashing warnings that wedged themselves into the minds of countless East Asians living in North America, including myself. In fact, there was not much surprise when reports of anti-asian and anti-China hate crimes started flooding my social media feed. It was never a shock to anyone in the East Asian community that our grandmas were being beaten for taking the bus, or that our siblings were being bullied and tarnished with dirty words, or how petitions began gaining attention worldwide in an effort to 'ban' people of Chinese ethnicity everywhere.

Why?

Because acts of racism towards East Asians were never a side effect of the COVID-19 outbreak. I was never scared of what people thought of me because of the virus, but because I'd seen what people were capable of doing even without a pandemic stirring. Hate crimes towards the Asian community have always existed. Slanted eyes and mocking of our accents, degrading of Asian food and cultures, forcing English upon us, the whitewashing and stereotyping of Asian characters in pop culture, the banning of Asian technologies and claiming every one of Asia's step towards success as a 'spying technique', and downplaying every contribution Asian countries had in the World Wars. COVID-19 never began the acts of hate; all it did was give people a reason to express their hate even more openly. If it wasn't going to be COVID-19, it would've been something else. Another opportunity for people to jump on and attempt to get rid of the Asian culture and influence around them.

So where does this all lead?

Why is it important to know all of what I presented to you above? It is important, because people have to stop giving in to these attacks. COVID-19 related or not.

It's time Asian households in North America stopped keeping quiet and allowing others to look down on them. It's time Asian-American students started embracing themselves instead of avoiding their roots because it would make them too 'foreign'. It's time Asians took matters of representation into their own hands, rather than leaving it in the authority of white people who couldn't care less on how they portrayed Asians in their movies and books.

As more and more generations of immigrants start losing their languages, their traditions, and their pride in their heritage, the more these hate attacks succeed. The more invisible our cultures become in a continent claiming to have been built on multiculturalism.

Instead of backing off and erasing our Asian identity to avoid racism and hate, we have to stand up against that very sentiment. Admittedly, sometimes it takes the sacrifice of one to end a conflict. However, our silence as a community has never meant surrender. For decades, East Asians in North America and Europe have been seen through prejudiced eyes, and never taken seriously. For years, we've chosen to ignore and take on that hatred without batting an eyelash, because so many people believed that the only way we stood a chance of combating this discrimination was if we were strong enough to.

Today, we are strong enough. Several Asian countries have become leading nations in the world, contributing to innovative technologies, influencing pop culture, and changing history at this very moment.

We've come a long way from being suppressed by colonialism and proxy wars. Yet people still believe that we're fishermen who read scrolls when in fact, we are so much more.

It makes sense that people would view Asia like that, because Asia has never been represented correctly in western media or movies. People believe what they see, they believe what they experience. It's only right that they believe East Asia is fortune cookies and war torn countries because that's all they've ever been taught.

My goal is to change that, to share what I know, and what I've experienced. Maybe, just maybe, when people see East Asia under a different perspective, they'd find more ease in eliminating that prejudice and appreciating our cultures.

So bring it on Westernization and white supremacy; it's time I introduced you to the beauty of East Asia and its cultures.

This is the first in a three-part series of articles written by Felicia Sang on the topic of Westernization and Asian culture.

Being an International Student During a Pandemic

By Maria Rausch

I still remember the butterflies in my stomach when the plane landed a year ago, and if I try hard enough, I can still hear the sound of them being crushed as soon as I heard the news.

Picture this: you spend your whole life dreaming, planning and waiting for the day that you will leave your hometown behind and embark on the greatest quest of your life so far. You meet people from all over the world who speak unknown languages, who look so different than you, but who share the same restless, adventurous spirit. You will go on to create unforgettable memories. You will discover yourself and the world while learning every step of the way. Until one day, by an unfortunate twist of fate, every wide-eyed explorer you met on your journey has to go back "home". But what does that four-letter word mean now?

After spending what feels like a lifetime in a country permeated by so many memories, and creating extraordinary friendships, home is a difficult concept to define.

I was one of the few lucky ones who got a chance to stay after the global pandemic was officially announced. Most international students all over the world had to return to their home countries and leave behind everything they once knew.

My flight back to Brazil, the country I am originally from, was cancelled. The next thing I knew, the borders were closed, and my plans to visit my parents for the summer were completely destroyed. At this point, I had not seen them for 6 months, and I didn't know when I would see them again.

After months of isolation and many FaceTime calls, fall came knocking on our doors and with it came the new school year. Everything feels so different now, but the first time I walked through the main doors it was as if nothing had changed. The memories of "normal" times still linger around the halls but I am sure that besides all the adversities, we will all have an incredible and very unusual story to tell in the future.

Although most international students left, there are still a few familiar faces walking around the halls and I am fortunate to have a couple of Brazilian friends still going to GCVI. Being an international student in this unprecedented time is like living in an alternate reality, but doesn't it feel like that for all of us? I couldn't choose a better place to be living my alternate reality in, though, and I believe I speak for all of us international students who still remain when I say that every day I am more and more grateful for the chance to still be here.

Will GCVI Have a Yearbook This Year?

By Jessica Dao

As of Fall 2020, a group of dedicated student volunteers and fellow GCVI teacher, Mr. Osterberg, have decided to take on the challenge in planning the upcoming school yearbook.

All of what we know has changed, and so we must be as flexible and adaptive as we can. That's right, scratch everything you know about GCVI's yearbooks-this one is going to be quite different. The format of the book and its production will be unlike any other years.

We are limited, such that there will not be photos of huge groups, live teams, and the usual events to document. However, this does not mean that there will be no photos to share-just as our activities/actions/experiences of this year will be unique, so too will be the format/structure/final product of our yearbook. As such, students ALL need to keep in mind that the purpose and goal of this yearbook is to create a memory of this year. To do this, the GCVI yearbook volunteers need as many students as possible to be involved in sharing, to make sure the best results and diverse experiences for the book. So, start snapping photos of friends in their cool masks, dissections in science class or even biking trips in gym-all social distanced of course.

While taking shots, ensure that everything is organized - what class was this photo? Who and what grade are the people in the shot? Who is the teacher? What is the day?

"...keep taking those photos of unique things, moments, changes, etc. Look for really cool masks that people are wearing (we are definitely going to have a yearbook page of GCVI's coolest masks). Remember, if it's a moment worth remembering, it's a moment worth capturing - so get that photo even if it's with your iPhones," Mr. Osterberg, yearbook coordinator for the 2020-2021 year.

Become a part of the new and unique yearbook planned for the 2020-2021 GCVI school year today. Send in any photos/artwork/written reflections/poetry, etc to sosterberg@ugcloud.ca with the subject line as "FOR YEARBOOK" (the capitalization is crucial).

Help capture these memorable moments that deserve to go in history.

Taking a Positive Approach Towards Covid-19

by Deepali Rajpal

Covid-19 has had a huge impact in all parts of the world, on children and adults alike. Each individual has a different say on how this current situation has impacted them. And though every age group will have a different perspective, we will be focusing on high school students, and their say about this situation. Then, we'll show ways to approach these current circumstances in a more positive manner.

Covid-19 has been hard on all of us, but what about High Schoolers?

In general, everyone has been impacted on different levels, and the ones we tend to talk about more are adults. But what about the kids who go to school everyday? Whose learning has been interrupted over, and over again? Now, finally when they did get the chance to go back to school, there's the constant nudge of sanitising their hands, wearing masks, and not being able to get close to their friends, who they haven't seen in so long. Many people have said that no one talks in their class, and barely people raise their hands to answer questions. It could be because of the masks, or it could be because of the social distancing taking place, either way, it's a downside.

Many people who were interviewed for this article said that they became less motivated in the quarantine. They got "lazy" and slept for longer periods of time. Their schedules were all messed up, and there wasn't much they did about it. Almost everyone said that they missed their friends, and some even felt very isolated at times. For the grade 9s, it has been difficult to begin high school during these times. Many students have said that it's very hard to make new friends this way; meeting new people and making friends is a huge part of grade 9.

How Can This Situation be a Positive Thing?

This Covid situation has been bad enough, but if you think negatively about it, it won't become any better. On the contrary, it will become more difficult to deal with. So how can we cope with this situation positively? The answer to that is simple: having a more positive mindset. For instance, some people said that they have gotten closer to their family, with all the time they got to spend with them during quarantine. Another student in grade 10 used this quarantine as an opportunity to try something new; they took up some new hobbies, like writing, photography, reading, and biking, because they had the time for them. Someone even said that they felt their mental health improved without all the workload from school. A grade 9 student explained that since the clubs are online, they feel more comfortable, and feel they can join more clubs than they would have in a regular school year. These are just a few examples of people who chose to focus on the positive aspects of the current situation.

But how might one transition to a more positive mindset? One way is gratitude. Studies have shown that thinking of something you are thankful for everyday improves your overall mental health. So get a paper or a notebook, and write down two things you are grateful for. It could be something that someone did for you, or it could be as simple as, "I'm grateful I had something to eat for breakfast this morning." Try doing this every night before bed, and see how it impacts you. If you don't want to do that, you can also talk to someone. By doing this, you'll realise that you aren't alone, and that there is someone else you can relate to and share your problems with. As a challenge, reread the first paragraph of this article, and find a positive side to each point noted.

The times we are in now is something we have never seen before. Though this situation isn't ideal, we still have to deal with it. So, we can choose to make the best of it by focusing our attention more on the positive side, or do the complete opposite. No one knows how long this pandemic will last, but we will get through it. As someone once said, "Take life day by day and be grateful for the little things. Don't get caught up in what you can't control. Focus on the positive."

Updates on Student Senate

By Ellie teNyenhuis

GCVI's Student Senate is a group of student leaders that arrange events for the school to improve the school's spirit. Last year, Senate ran GCVI Semi, Spirit Week, Hallweek and the 12 Holly Days, just to name a few.

This year because of COVID-19 the Senate members from last year have been re-appointed. Senate is hoping to run virtual events this year, similar to how they ran Spirit Week last year. Follow their Instagram @gcvisenate and pay attention to the announcements to be notified of any events Senate runs. Students interested in becoming more involved with the events that Senate organizes can join Town Hall, which will run through the Google Classroom this year. All students are encouraged to join Town Hall. More information coming soon through their Instagram page [@gcvisenate] and announcements.

Debate Club

By Asmaa Alsayed

For students looking to improve your speaking skills and meet new people, the Debate Club is here. It is run by staff supervisor Ms Westermann and student co-chairs Ashley C and Matya S and was founded six years ago. Debate Club is a great place to learn new skills such as the etiquette of debate and how to properly structure a debate.

Debate Club will run all year long, with a Google Meet every Tuesday from 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm. The main goal of Debate Club is to help you with your public speaking skills, and eventually allow you to go to tournaments. Sadly, there will be no tournaments this year thanks to COVID-19, but debates will occur in small groups and breakout rooms over Google Meet.

Debate currently has nearly sixty members, however new people are welcome to join at any time, just send an email to Ms Westermann to let her know. Anything one could have missed from previous meetings, such as what was covered before and the rules of debate, is on the Debate Classroom. Hope to see more students there!

Band in a Pandemic World

By Emma Nero

This year, many classes and clubs are looking a lot different due to COVID-19. According to a new grade nine student taking part in Mr. Austin's band, practices are quite different than they would be in an average school year. Band practice has been taking place every other week but is subject to change if regular school returns, or if the band moves into a competition season. For the past few weeks, the band with students of widespread and varying music experiences and instruments have been practicing the piece 'Rising Star', which is "almost always the first junior band piece played every year", said the student interviewed, who wishes to stay anonymous. The student interviewed also mentioned a second piece in the works as well titled 'Bringer of War'.

Music can mean different things for different people. Everybody involved with music has had different experiences, which has led them to their own musical interests and their own tastes in music and instruments. For this anonymous band member, their interest in music, and the flute specifically, first started when they were faltering in their elementary school music class. They took it upon themselves to join the school band, and put more focus into the art form, and made it their priority. They recalled that experience "ended up sparking a deeper interest in music" and they began to understand it and value it more.

"I think that being a part of a band community is a really special and unique experience." They believe that being a part of a band community like the one here at GCVI is a very uplifting, inclusive, and supportive experience, "I knew nothing [about music] when I started and joined the band at my elementary school... I was lifted up, encouraged, and related to... I can already see after only a few weeks at GCVI that the band here really embodies that community support too". Although this student's love for music has flourished and changed their perspective on life over the years, they don't wish to pursue music as a career. They do, however, encourage the idea of joining and participating in musical activities and clubs as it has positively changed their perspectives on music and life, introducing them to a very inclusive and supportive environment which brings them joy in their everyday life.

Super Soup-ers Saddened by Suspension of Super Soup-off

By Hayley Watson

Yes, you heard it here first, folks. The Soup-off that takes place at the Wellington County Museum and Archives each year has been cancelled due to COVID-19. Still want some super soup? You've come to the right place!

Today I'll be giving you not one, not two, but three soup recipes I personally have either made or tasted. We'll start with Potato-Leek Soup (with fennel instead of leek), then Broccoli-Cheese Soup, and one of my personal favorite dishes in general, Pantry Soup. Let's get started!

Potato-Leek (or Fennel) Soup

The first time we made this dish, it was because we got something in a farm-share box (a weekly box of fresh fruits and vegetables from a local farm) that we thought was a leek. It was not. It was a fennel. So now we make this soup, which is the same recipe, but substitute fennel in for leek. It's really good! I had some just last week.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons butter

1 fennel (or 3 leeks if you want to be boring and follow the original recipe) halved lengthwise, chopped

2 large potatoes (about 2 cups total), peeled, diced

4 1/2 cups (or more) vegetable stock

Optional: Top with chives

Instructions

Melt butter in a heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add fennel; stir to coat with butter. Cover saucepan; cook until fennel is tender, stirring often, about 10 minutes. Add potatoes. Cover and cook until potatoes begin to soften but do not brown, stirring often, about 10 minutes. Add 4 1/2 cups stock. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 30 minutes.

Puree soup in batches in a food processor or blender until smooth. Return to the saucepan. Thin with additional stock if soup is too thick (it's not). Season with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.) Bring soup to simmer. Ladle into bowls. Garnish with chives (or don't) and serve.

Pantry Soup - A recipe by yours truly

Step One: Look for a ready-to-eat soup in your pantry. Any kind of soup will do, my favourite is chicken noodle.

Step Two: Use a can opener, or ask someone around you to use a can opener, and open the can of soup. If you have a box soup, ignore this step.

Step Three: Pour the soup into a pot, and heat up on the stovetop.

Goes well with grilled cheese*.

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Super Soup-ers Saddened by Suspension of Super Soup-off [continued from page 10]

Broccoli Cheese Soup

I'll be honest, I don't love this soup, but it's popular with everyone else in my family. Sure, I'll eat it, but it's not my favourite like the other two recipes on here. Then again, I don't really like cheese with broccoli. I'm sure you'll like the soup though, especially after making it yourself!

Ingredients

1 tablespoon melted butter (either salted or unsalted, doesn't matter)

1/2 medium chopped onion

1/4 cup melted butter

1/4 cup flour

2 cups half-and-half cream

2 cups vegetable stock

1 "good-sized" head of fresh broccoli

1 cup carrot, finely grated

8 ounces grated sharp cheddar cheese (I use Ivanhoe cheese, the obvious best brand. My mum also works for Gay Lea Foods Co-Operative, so any recipes I make we use Gay Lea Food products, and Ivanhoe is one of their plants).

Salt and pepper to taste (more salt may be needed if you used unsalted butter)

Instructions

Sauté the onion in 1 tablespoon melted butter and set aside. In a large pot whisk together the melted butter and flour over medium heat for about 3-4 minutes. This is known as a roux.

Slowly whisk in the half and half and vegetable stock. Let it simmer for about 20 minutes.

Add the broccoli, carrots, and onions. Let them simmer on medium-low heat for about 25 minutes until the broccoli and carrots are tender.

Add salt, pepper, and sharp cheddar cheese. Let the cheese melt and then serve.

For a smoother soup puree it in a blender. The original author said that they love the chunks but I'm inclined to disagree. To each their own!

This recipe has been adapted from
TheRecipeCritic.com

Thank you for taking the time to read this! I hope you enjoy your soup-er soups!

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