

The Chariot

Edition 2

October 2021



How Covid-19 affected the class of '22.

by Emma Seley

The days got shorter, but they stretched and stretched. Students and teachers dragging their way to the finish line with perseverance and persistency. Coming back from a two-year quarantine, these students had no formal transition from being fresh sophomores to wise, old seniors.

Over the past few weeks of senior year, students frantically rush to the end to complete their final applications for college on

top of continuing their academics to their best potential.

Senior high school student Jaida Quinones says, “It took away a lot of fun activities including homecoming which makes me sad.” Another senior student, Maggie Perfect argues, “Covid-19 has rushed me in applying for colleges and has given no help and guidance along the way.”

Each student has had to skip a chapter of their lives and continue on as if nothing has happened. The generation is changing and evolving, and many students want more time to figure out the next direction of education. (Continued on page 2).

We’ve Got Spirit, Yes We Do!

by Sophie Lentz

On the week of September 13th, the students and faculty of Wyomissing High School demonstrated an abundance of school spirit. The week started out with a bang when students, who wore the school colors of white and blue (and a hat for seniors), walked into the school to find the hallways decorated, thanks to the work of student council members and some spirited volunteers. The activity of the day was inferno—an intense group of minute-to-win-it games. On Tuesday, everyone was seeing double! Twin day made for a great start to the day, followed by knockout, a competition among partners of each grade who arguably had the most original twin outfits. Wednesday was a day of academics, more so than a typical school day, where students came wearing their favorite academic or college wear. (Continued on page 3).

Read Sutton Dareneau’s monologue on page 5.

Get some fashion tips from Lexi Polyak on page 4.

Learn more about an every day activity: taking the stairs, from Ellie Folga on page 6.

Read Katie Schadler’s thought-provoking poem on page 3.

(Continued from page 1).

The school work and responsibilities have piled on to the backs of these seniors. Despite the loads of work, these high school students hustle day and night in order to make ends meet. Seniors continue to attend school in person, while wearing masks and washing their hands frequently. This setback will not tear apart the class of '22, as it will only make the new generation stronger and more reliable for future multi-tasking jobs.

The graduating class of '22 will not have a homecoming dance and possibly will have to dismiss prom and graduation plans. The

infamous Mini-Thon fundraiser will not be the same high-energy, up-kept event where students go to raise money for children with cancer, as Covid-19 oozes in its crevices. They will not get to hug their high school friends goodbye, and they will lose a core memory adults replay to their children story after story, talking about the drama of high school and their main experiences.

Although Covid-19 has brought darkness, it has also given students the opportunity to become more independent and responsible for deadlines, given that things have switched from in-person work to more asynchronous assignments. It

has provided a slot of time to slow down on life and take a second to focus on the present. It casted a pause on the troubling, rushed schooling most seniors were tired of living through and reset their limitations on education with motivation to pursue more learning.

Devon Lawley, a senior at Wyomissing high school expresses, "I am going to miss the teachers the most, as they understood me and guided me through high school. I will not be able to give them the formal goodbyes I imagined giving." This year has become a learning tool around figuring out the ins and outs of education in a pandemic.

The Bus Driver Shortage: What You Should Know

by Ayumi Best

Across the nation, the bus driver shortage has been a rising crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In a recent survey conducted by HopSkipDrive, a school transportation service company, roughly 81% of school districts report an insufficient number of bus drivers, and many schools need 30%-50% more drivers to adequately support their students. This evidence suggests the following question: Why are school districts facing a bus driver shortage? Although the topic sounds mundane, there are many factors that contribute to proper transportation in schools. Bus drivers are required to work an unconventional split schedule, which makes it difficult to maintain a regular routine or take on another job to supplement their income. Many are non-union staff members who do not receive benefits and are not compensated for breaks. Additionally, drivers must obtain a commercial license, creating an additional cost and making their job less desirable. The shortage has left some schools forced to take extreme measures such as paying families to take their own children to school and hiring alternative methods of transportation. Next time you see a bus driver, be sure to thank them for sticking with their essential job during a time when the industry is complicated!



(Continued from page 1). Later that day, the best and brightest from each grade participated in the Academic Challenge hoping to win points for their grade. Thursday came with a break from the games, but students still brought spirit to school; a throwback to the summer was represented by Hawaiian wear.

While the first four days of the week were undoubtedly fun, Friday took the cake. The hallways were a rainbow, with each grade decked out in their class color. The week came to an eventful close with a final hurrah: Spirit Games. First came a beautifully choreographed senior dance, filled with flips, splits, and unmatched foot work. For the main event, participants from each grade played games such as a three point shoot out, an obstacle course, relay races, but most importantly, tug of war. After a long run of intense games, the day came to an end, and the results were in: Unsurprisingly, the senior class took the win with a well-deserved victory!

The Same Poem

by Katie Schadler

The same faces, the same places,
 We race to lunch for a decent seat.
 Seventh grade and she wears a backpack too big
 With an ego too high and a scope too narrow.
 This isn't real life.
 Inside a bubble of academic excellence and athletic glory,
 We push to be more than the person beside us.

The clock ticks faster, my ears bleed at the blaring bell.
 One more anxious second,
 Another monotonous day,
 Another bustling breezeway,
 Another fake smile.
 I cannot morph any longer.

8 more months till graduation
 Beside my kindergarten class.
 They tell you
 Don't wish it away.
 But this sameness is tiresome.
 There is no one new,
 But a single stranger.
 Wait, I have seen you before.

I know everything about you, who you are
 And who you were.
 A blessing and a curse.
 United by proximity.
 Bound by love.

I don't remember when
 familiarity became similarity.
 When sameness became family.
 Chosen by convenience and popcorn
 reading.
 But I find myself choosing you.

Yet somehow, when the sun hits the glass,
 She finds comfort in the traditions,
 The history of loose ends,
 Stolen tears, and boulevard views.

It is time to go.
 To resemble more than my kindergarten
 self.
 But I am rooted in the familiar faces.
 And you, my darling, have become that
 familiar face.

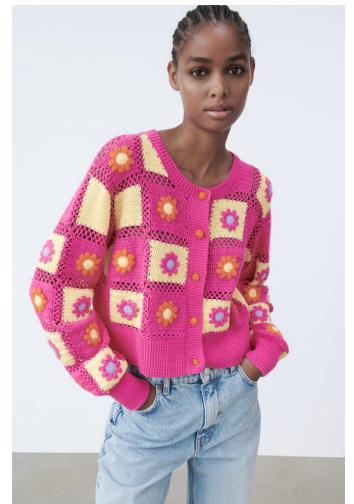
Keeping up with Clothes

by Lexi Polyak

Every season, it seems as though the world adopts a new clothing fad to “wear out.” Fall 2021, however, promises to maintain a number of classic, timeless pieces that we haven’t given up on just yet. This autumn, be prepared to rip out colorful sweaters, intricate prints, and even your old leather jacket—yes, I said leather jacket! These unlikely candidates for the October-November lookbook will serve you well this season, just as they have done many falls before.

Colorful Sweaters:

Typically, the autumnal season ushers in neutral earth tones, consisting of different shades of browns and greens. However, we are seeing a major increase in popularity of bold, vibrant knitted sweaters. Brands like Zara and Urban Outfitters have re-popularized thick, grandma-like sweaters with plenty of color. These knitted tops are a fashionable way to keep yourself warm in the coming months while staying on top of modern fashion.



Intricate Prints:

Stripes, swirls, and color block patterns go hand-in-hand with knitted sweaters. While solid color pieces have dominated the fashion industry for almost a decade, we are seeing a shift towards more expressive clothing: Rich colors like royal blue, scarlet, and magenta have emerged as statement fabrics that are sure to spice up any outfit. Adding a boldly-colored headband or belt is a subtle but sure way to bring some life to your outfit as well.

The Classic Leather Jacket:

Leather jackets have truly never gone out of style: a principal that rings true in Fall 2021. This autumn, pull out your mom or dad’s old leather jacket and pair it with some ripped denim jeans. The combination of classic and modern-day fashion will define your outfit as a combination of “retro but timeless.” Essentially, you cannot go wrong with a leather jacket, and there are hundreds of ways to style such an iconic piece.



The following is meant to be read as a monologue. Please imagine the writer, Sutton Dareneau, standing on a stage with the spotlight centered on him, his rings glittering in the limelight, reading, impassioned from a leaf of paper. Or alternatively, him screaming into his phone. Both are applicable. Furthermore, musical accompaniment is suggested. As it is meant to get more intense as you read onward, we recommend "Hall of the Mountain King." We also recommend "Pirates" by Jenny Owen Youngs. The latter not because it should be listened to as you read the monologue but simply because it's a pretty good song. With this, we begin:

Give Me My Villain Arcs

A written monologue by Sutton Dareneau

We'll begin with this, what is a villain arc? Well to start, we have to define a character arc, which Wikipedia defines as a transformation or inner journey of a character over the course of a story. A villain arc is a character arc but for, well, a villain. But why should I care, why should you care, why should writers give me my villain arc. Let's start with the subject matter at hand: the character going through development. Ah, villains, how do I love thee, let me count the ways. It's the scheming and the plans. It's the tragic backstory, it's the drama, it's the back and forth, the story, the rising climax. It's the monologue, it's the silent type, it's the crazies, the zealots, the psychos and the sociopaths. And then adding to that, so much more than that, we get development. We see the villain's pain and then see them work through it or ignore it. See the zealots go crazy or the socios fall in love or the silent types' frigid facades crack, then fracture, then shatter as they collapse into rage or devastation. A villain arc is not only giving attention to one of the most entertaining characters, but it's also seeing them grow and change. Give me my villain arcs.

And then we have the variability. There are so many different arcs a villain can go through. First and foremost, we have the spiraling. This is the silent type fracturing, the zealot going crazy. This is where they ignore their issues or the issues get worse, and they quickly begin spiraling out of control. Then comes the redemption arc. Something happens, and they realize the error of their ways, attempting to redeem themselves. This is the socio finding love. Now these are just a few. There are more examples to be found, but I will mention my favorite: the corruption arc. This is the hero who becomes the villain through some villain's intervention. This is the hero falling into a dark and twisting romance with the villain, but the villain ends up using the hero, and they become an evil duo. This is the hypnosis, the brainwashing. This is the manipulation and the one bad day leading to a bad week leading to a bad year and before they know it, they're right and proper and enjoying themselves, but then they're caught and end up in prison but oh ho ho, don't worry: They've escaped and want revenge. This is the abandonment and the trust issues and the coming full circle as corruption leads to redemption and the tragic death just as they come back into the light. This is the escaping from the darkness for just a moment before getting pulled back or better yet escaping to sacrifice themselves for a former loved one. Give me my villain arcs.

And so I say unto you, writers young and old, regardless of age, gender, or orientation. I say unto you, the professionals and the amateurs and those who are writing for the first time. I say unto you, the story-writers and the world-builders and the character-creators and the arc-makers and those who make oh-so specific scenes in perfect clarity. I say unto you, the notebook fillers and the napkin doodlers and the red inks and the blue inks and the black inks and the graphite and the typers. I say unto you, who write articles and newspapers and webtoons and short stories and full-fledged books and fanfics. I say unto you. Please. Give me my villain arcs.

You Should Care: Take the Stairs

by Ellie Folga

Whether you think about it or not, almost everyday, you take the stairs. Now the act of taking the stairs may feel like a monotonous activity that can even be frustrating, but I'd like to inform you about its benefits, that may make it seem less daunting and less of a chore.

1.) Less time. Taking the stairs may seem as if it requires a lot of time and energy, but in reality, it saves more time than taking an elevator or escalator. With stairs, you get to pick the pace you move, whereas with an elevator, you may be stuck waiting for it to reach your floor. Even once you get on, the usually slow and laborious pace of an elevator all factors in to the time it takes to reach your destination. Escalators create a happy medium. Most of the time, however, they are only available in certain public places, such as shopping malls, and realistically, most people don't walk up an escalator.

2.) Boosts energy levels. In a study published by the *Journal of Physiology & Behavior*, spending 10 minutes walking up and down stairs provides a greater burst of energy than 50 milligrams of caffeine. Even at a low to moderate pace, the effects remain, which means you don't need to go running up the stairs every time you approach them. Perhaps this is a reason why almost all school buildings require stairwells—besides, you know, structural purposes—in order for students to get a little pick-me-up in between classes. Oftentimes in the afternoon, energy levels begin to dip, and this is when students feel most groggy or disoriented. So, simply choosing to take the



stairs may help make you more alert and put you in a more energized frame of mind.

3.) Small bursts of exercise. Though this one may seem a bit obvious, it is still worth noting. With all the sitting workers do at their jobs and students do at school, taking the stairs is not a crazy ask. Walking up and down stairs actually utilizes different leg muscles than other forms of cardio, and climbing stairs at a brisk pace can pick up your heart rate. Over time, regularly taking the stairs can improve cardiac and leg strength, as well as improve joint flexibility. Active stairs climbers are also more fit and have higher aerobic capacities compared to people who opt otherwise, according to Duke University's Human Resources. Clearly, there are many benefits to enjoy while taking the stairs throughout the day. All in all, it's pretty remarkable that the body can use all of the structures and skills required to walk and climb stairs without much difficulty. I'd say next time while you're running down the stairs trying to make it out of the door or even leisurely walking to your upstairs class, keep these perspectives behind stair climbing in mind, and you will have one less thing to complain about.

Fun Section:

A	S	E	N	E	K	E	S	A	I	T	S	S	R
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ENERGY
FAMILIAR
SENIORS
GRADUATE
DRIVER
VILLAIN
SPIRIT
SWEATER
LEATHER
BUS
STAIRS
MUSCLES
JACKET
CHARACTERS

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