



“Everybody Cut Footloose!”

by Rose Vizza & Anna Stollsteimer, '20



This spring, Villa drama will be taking the stage with the Broadway show, “Footloose,” on April 5th, 6th, and 7th for a final production in the gym. “This show is very special because it’s our last show in the gym and so it’s kind of bittersweet. We’re looking forward to the auditorium but it’s kind of the end of an era,” says Mrs. Holdren, the director of the show. With the upbeat songs we all know and love, the girls can’t wait to cut loose with their incredible dance moves which they’ve been determined to learn for months from their amazing choreographer, Ms. Amanda Page. Director Mrs. Holdren said of her: “This show is just so much fun and I think a lot of that has to do with adding in our new choreographer, Ms. Page. She brings a lot of energy to this show which is very dance heavy.”

Based on the 1984 movie, this show consists of commonly known songs such as “Holding out for a Hero,” “Let’s Hear it for the Boy,” and of course

“Footloose” which the cast has worked very hard on with music director Mrs. Nelson. “It is different from the movie so they should expect that,” Mrs. Holdren states, “But they should come ready to hear some of their old favorites from the radio. The songs are familiar so it’s going to be so much fun and they can sing along!”

In the show, we meet a boy named Ren McCormack (Jacob Jimenez) who moves from Chicago with his mother, Ethel (Grace Kelly), to a small town known as Bomont. After only a few days, he begins to feel out of place and notices something odd about the town. It is later explained by three girls, Rusty (Madison Buchinski), Wendy Jo (Anna Stollsteimer), and Urleen (Rose Vizza), that the town’s Reverend (Shamus Ehresmann) created a law that banned all dancing due to an accident that happened years before. Ren then begins his fight to legalize dancing because he has a passion for dance, as he says in his song “I Can’t Stand Still.” Ariel (Arianna Barricelli) does not

understand Ren at the beginning of the show, but grows to become fond of him after she learns the story of his life in Chicago and why he moved to Bomont. However, she is held back from pursuing any friendship with him because of her controlling boyfriend, Chuck (David Scott). She is, though, ‘Holding Out for her Hero’ and slowly starts to think it might be Ren. Does Ren win the fight to legalize dancing in Bomont? Does Ariel break free from Chuck and fall for the new kid? With the show quickly approaching, the cast can’t wait for you to find out the answers. Mrs. Holdren says, “I’m really excited for people to see it. I think we are now at a point where an audience would help us since it’s such a high energy show. It really, now, just needs an audience to feed off of.” Come join the cast on April 5th, 6th, and 7th as they kick off their Sunday shoes in “Footloose”!

Science Fair and Beyond by Lia Caucci, '21

Earlier this month, Villa held its annual Science Fair. A plethora of experiments were showcased. From testing which acne medications work the best to determining whether certain materials blocked Wi-Fi signals, there was a good deal of variety this year. Each participant from the Villa Science Fair got to move on to the Bucks County Science Fair held at Dela-

ware Valley University. Some projects that moved on from the first round featured measuring the flammability of different materials and observing the growth of plants using different fertilizers.

During the second round, judges walked around and asked the competitors questions regarding their variables, materials, inspiration for their project, and how it connects to the real world.

Alex Venth, a sophomore who moved on to the second round, said "It was very interesting to interact with the judges and an overall great experience." All of our Villa students did amazing this second round. Our very own Tara Czekner won first place for her experiment involving botany. Eight of our other girls, including two teams, won second place awards and three other teams won honorable mention. Congratulations to all of our Science Fair winners!

Reinventing the Robotic Wheel by Sarah Shubert, '19

Coming from humble beginnings last year, Holy Ghost Prep and Villa Joseph Marie's joint robotics team started. Over the past year, the team experienced success and growth, gaining fifteen more students throughout the season including some Villa students.

The team features Annalais Schuck '22, Amelia Fisher '20, Lucy Pickersgill '20, Grace Kennedy '19, and Nicolette Tumaz '19, who helped lead the team to success at the State Championship last weekend earning them second place.

The joint team competed



with 8 different robots at the PA Eastern State Championship. Additional acknowledgements included the Sportsmanship award, Robot Skills, Build Award, the

Tournament Champions, and the Amaze award.

The group competed against 86 teams, and three of the teams in the top 20 included Holy Ghost and Villa's combined team. The team #242A ended in 4th place and made it to the quarter finals while five out of our eight teams qualified for the elimination round. Team #242A was one win away from earning a bid to the Robotics World Championship! The joint Holy Ghost Prep and VJM robotics team has made great progress throughout the past year and will continue to do great things.

A Gem of a Case by Madeline Marriott, '20

Villa's Mock Trial team was back in full swing this year for its third annual season. This year's case, featuring a question of wrongful death due to prescription of opioids, made for an interesting and action-packed trial. The defense team competed against Bensalem High School, last year's regional champions, and gave an outstanding performance, just barely falling short of victory. Grace Matwijec

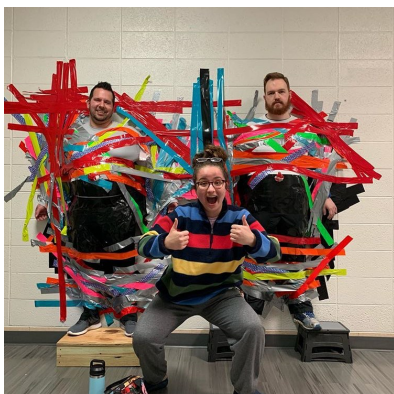
'21 received the Best Advocate Award, and Tara Czekner '20 received Best Witness Award for her portrayal of Sal Abbott. Tara Czekner said of the experience, "Joining mock trial has been the best decision I've made this school year. It introduced me to something I truly love to do and to people that I adore working with. It brought me out of my comfort zone, and I can't wait to return to the team next year." The prosecution competed against Holicong

Middle School the next night and brought home a huge win for the Jems. The award for Best Advocate went to Erin Devine '19, and the award for Best Witness went to Kiersten McKenna '20 for her portrayal of J.J. Teva. This year, we are sad to say goodbye to two of our two beloved seniors, Erin Devine '19 and Samantha O'Hara '19, who have both been with the team for three years. Congratulations on a great season, ladies!

Spirit Week Highlights



Preeti: the New Agent P?



Don't 'Egg' Mackenzie on, or you'll get taped to a wall, too.



Riley and Keely flying high with Eagle

Corey Clement



Anna all Flyered up!

A Night to Remember by Maddie Marriott, '20

This year's Winter Formal was a night full of great music, delicious food, and fun with friends. Over 500 students attended this year's dance, despite the weather-related postponement. Jems and dates alike danced the night away in their elegant attire as the DJ played crowd favorites all night. The gym and main hallway were both beautifully decorated to match this year's theme: *The Great Gatsby*. Some highlights of the

night's festivities were the photo booth and awesome door prizes. Katie McLaughlin '20 said of the evening, "I had a blast! The crowd was super energetic and everyone was dancing until their feet hurt!" Special thanks to Mrs. Quinn, Emily Noone '20, and Chloe Niemczak '20 for all their hard work, and to the parent, student, and faculty volunteers that set up, chaperoned, and made the night run smoothly!



Jems cutting loose on the dance floor.

One EGGciting Night by Grace Hughes, '21

February 15, 2019 — The annual Chicks with Sticks tournament is a truly thrilling night where friends become enemies. This eventful night is a chance for the Jems to show off their hockey skills acquired in Sophomore Gym Class. There were 9 teams competing this year.

The night started with tough losses for many teams, such as Erm's Nation which lost its first round game 3-0. This was not the end for these sophomore chicks; they pulled together as a team and made it to the final round.

The final game pitted Erm's

Nation against The Kickin Chickens, a senior team.

These teams had to play two games to determine the winner since the senior team had been undefeated throughout the whole night. In the first game, Erm's Nation won 2-0, and was very confident in their chances of being the 2019 Chicks with Sticks Champions. Erm's Nation team member Jess Joslyn says that, "I think we may have been a bit too confident; after we won the first game we all assumed we would win the next game but sadly that did not happen." The seniors came out strong and were determined not to lose to the

underclassmen. In this intense game, players gave it their all. Erm's Nation's "all" was not enough to beat out the relentless Chickens, though. The seniors came out on top with a score of 3-1.

Overall, the annual Chicks with Sticks tournament was a success. Although only one team could bring home the win, every player that night surely had a good time. Soon, all Villa Staff and Students will get the chance to experience the thrill and excitement of a live game; a select group of Faculty will play against a team made up of the MVP's from the student games. This game is destined to bring intensity and tons of laughter to the crowd and players. Glory awaits the victor. Who will win?

Mrs. McClain by Olivia Glunz, '20



Pass by the Nurse's Office, and you may catch a glimpse of a new, smiling face. Mrs. McClain just joined the VJM staff this year, but she is already confident that she loves her new job. Having attended an all-girls high school herself, Mrs. McClain feels right at home in this spirited, enthusiastic community. Her first day on the job still stands out to her: "I felt like I belonged." She describes the excitement of meeting other faculty members and the unforgettable welcome she received. Mrs. McClain is

looking forward to next school year, which promises a renovated office in the Main Hallway. She anticipates getting to know fellow staff members better as well as meeting even more students.

Ever since eighth grade, Mrs. McClain has aspired to become a nurse. Inspired by a family member who studied nursing, she pursued this career because she "always had a need to help people." Mrs. McClain enrolled at the Northeastern Hospital School of Nursing, where she participated in the Med-Surge Program. One of her favorite rotations was in the post-partum

ward; working with mothers and newborns was enjoyable and rewarding. Most recently, Mrs. McClain was employed in the Council Rock School District, where she subbed at various elementary and middle schools. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her four children, who range in age from 12 to 22. She especially loves attending their sporting events, including baseball games and wrestling matches. We're glad to have such a warm, kind-hearted addition to the VJM community.

Mrs. Schuster by Alex Venth, '21



This year, Villa is fortunate to welcome Mrs. Schuster to the staff. Mrs. Schuster is the new Executive Administrative Assistant at Villa. She is taking over for Mrs. Cunningham this year, who retired after this past school year, and who was a huge asset to Villa for her many years. Though Mrs. Schuster has big shoes to fill, in Mrs. Brown's words, "She

has taken the reins from Mrs. Cunningham and continues to steer VJM in the right direction." Mrs. Brown feels like they have worked together for years and loves sharing lots of laughs with her everyday. Mrs. Schuster is not only known to the faculty and staff for her wonderful sense of humor, but also for her work ethic and expertise. "She is so willing to assist in any way

that she can," Mrs. Brown says, "We piggyback off each other – if she needs to leave the office, I cover for her and if I need to leave, she takes over. Whenever I have to leave early or take a day off, I never worry about the office because I know it's in great hands." We are so lucky to have this important role filled by such a capable and caring person. We are excited to have

Ms. Sherri Jokic by Olivia Glunz, '20



Villa is happy to welcome Mrs. Jokic, our new part-time nurse. Although she only works here one day per week, Mrs. Jokic has really enjoyed getting to know the girls. "You're all awesome!" she says. Mrs. Jokic was determined to pursue nursing since elementary school. She "always knew" that this was the career meant for her. After high school, Mrs. Jokic attended Jefferson University. She supple-

mented her education with a school nursing certification from Immaculata University and a Master's in Nursing from Holy Family University.

Mrs. Jokic has been employed in a variety of capacities throughout her career: she has worked at Lower Bucks Hospital, a school for special needs students, a drug company, and in hospice nursing and home care nursing.

Currently, Mrs. Jokic also works at Council Rock North High School. She recently attended their band trip to Hawaii and is looking forward to their Senior trip to Florida.

Outside of work, Mrs. Jokic enjoys spending time with her family. She is married with two daughters, 27 and 23. Aside from nursing Mrs. Jokic has many other interests including: gardening, kickboxing and going on walks. Welcome!

The Classics: Total Snore or Give Me More?

by Sara Jacalone, '20

Here at Villa, our English classes focus heavily on classic literature; could a deviation from the comfort of classics benefit students? It's widely accepted that classical literature contains timeless insight on the human condition and can illustrate history in a way that textbooks can't achieve. While there are certainly many advantages to studying literary masterpieces, ignoring contemporary works can deplete students' English education. The answer is a well-balanced integration of both dated and modern literature.

Students respond best to novels that contain relatable characters and scenarios. The majority of the classics gained their fame for defying social norms or satirizing the quality of life of that day and age. To a modern reader, the struggle of arranged marriage doesn't really strike any emotions. Many readers are turned off by the archaic language used in older works of literature. What may be an interesting story with a significant les-



Sara weighs her literary options

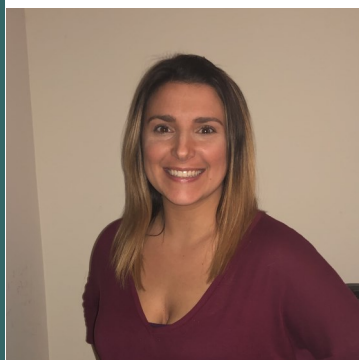
son gets lost in iambic pentameter and page-long sentences. Additionally, the jokes and allusions lose their relevance,

floating over the head of a teenage reader in 2019.

Of course, there is plenty to learn studying classic literature. Novels like *Pride and Prejudice*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *The Scarlet Letter* have stood the test of time for a reason; they offer valuable lessons that will forever be applicable to mankind. Contemporary literature harbors those same lessons and will, in time, hold the same status as the great classics. I think that reading more modern novels would benefit high school students because they are more likely to be able to understand and relate to them.

Some examples of important contemporary novels include Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, and *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Said works explore powerful, engaging topics. While the situations—such as Nazi Germany or a utopian society—may not be relatable to modern teens, the themes included are universal.

Mrs. Franzzo by Hunter Odias, '20



Erica Franzzo is Villa's new Communications and Public Relations Manager. She is a Villa alum and graduated in 2003. While at Villa she excelled in math and art. She continued her interest in art at Arcadia University where she received a B.F.A. with a concentration in graphic design.

After school she worked at Cooke Publishing, a small publishing company focused on school supplies such as textbooks. She worked

here for 12 years before coming to Villa.

Erica grew up in South Philly and then moved to Somerton when she attended Villa. Interestingly, she actually met her husband at Villa's Aloha dance in her Junior year. The couple have been together ever since. They currently have a two year old son, Anthony Junior, nicknamed AJ.

In the short amount of time in her position, she's done so much. On her second day here,

Mrs. Franzzo set up the interview between TV's Keith Jones and Keeley Connor. She was also able to contact Corey Clement's manager and bring Clement to Villa.

While here, she hopes to expand the website and highlight more clubs and activities. She also hopes to further the marketing at Villa and let more people know about what a great community we have and how awesome our school is.

Senior Poll Question: How do you feel about the Prom venue this year?



"I am excited that the location has been changed this year. I've stayed at the hotel at Penn's Landing before and it was beautiful!"

Grace Ridgway



"I liked the place the prom was at last year; it was elegant and really nice so I wouldn't mind still being at the Bellevue, personally."

Nautica Merritt



"I'm excited to see a new part of Philly. I am really excited overall!"

Geena DeAngelis



"I'm super excited to have a new experience at prom, and I'm happy it's on the water."

Camila Drobac



"I am very excited for the new prom location; I can't wait for the new experience."

Sarah Shubert

She Shoots, She Scores: B-Ball Team on the Rise! by Katie Bruni, '20

Villa's Varsity Basketball Team is looking better than ever this year. They may have suffered some tough losses, but the Jems had a better record than last year. This year, Villa showed the league that they were here to play. Despite a less than perfect record, the team had some key wins to highlight the season, including a buzzer beater against Nazareth and a win against Merion Mercy after losing to them in a previous game. Brooke Morrell ('20) looks forward



ward to next year, saying, "This season has been a lot of fun, and as it comes to a close I can't help but think of what next year will bring us." Jackie Skalski ('20) said, "Basketball, for me, is basically my passion, and it is what I do. There is no other school that I would want to represent or play for. I am blessed to play for this team, and I look forward to next year." The girls on the team really are like a family. Best wishes for next year!

Full of Cheer by Nautica Merritt, '19

The Villa Cheer Team is small but mighty when it comes to participating in competitions and cheering at basketball games. Nonetheless, the dedication and hard work of captains Alexa Roth '19 and Jess Peterson '20 made it able for the girls to have a successful cheerleading season. From the Christmas Pollyanna practice to Senior Night, the team shared a very close bond. The girls placed second in their final competition at Lansdale Catholic. Sadly, seniors



The cheer team in all its glory at a competition.

Nautica Merritt and Alexa Roth had to say their goodbyes, but they are hopeful for another amazing season next year as they head off to college. Coaches Kelsey and Krista Keen are so proud of all the hard work the girls have faced even during difficult situations. Overall the team is appreciative for all the great times they have had together and will miss the seniors next year as they start a new chapter in their lives.

Poll Question: What changes would you like to see in the uniform?



"I wouldn't like the shirts to be white because I always stain my shirt, and I don't want to look dirty so maybe if the new shirts were a darker color that would be nice!"

Ava Costanzo '21



"I would like the uniforms to be pink, ditch the plaid, and have tan skirts. I also want the girls to be able to wear cute shoes!"

Emme Grasela '20



"I would like to wear Sperrys and keep the band around our shirts still."

Grace Brennan '20



"The white shirts get dirty too easily, so a darker color would be better. The shoes need to be changed because they have no support and they look like they are for the unfashionable elderly."

Sarah Cahill '20



"I would like to change skirts to shorts and get rid of name tags. I'd also like some sort of sweat jacket we can wear during the day in a dark color like navy."

Mackenzie Robertson

Making A Splash by Tara Czekner, '20

Led by captains Caitlin Whalen and Jillian Reifsnnyder, the Villa Swim Team had an intense season, with a Villa record for number of wins. The team may have few members but remains mighty. This year featured a relay team that made it to States.

Not only are the girls of the swim team famous for their often hilarious pleas for more people to join the team, they are also known for their unity as a team. The team would often celebrate over a group dinner and even attend special events like the formal together, rushing home after a meet to get ready. The swim team is also singularly outstanding with half of the



team successfully qualifying in individual events for Districts during the League Champs, and they are also enjoying their qualifying times for relays.

A new development on the team this year is the ongoing partnership with Father Judge, whose stellar morale and positive energy is contagious. The two teams have become fast friends. Jill Reifsnnyder ('20) notes just how hard the swimmers have worked this year and how incredible their achievements are. "I'm so proud of these girls for all the hard work they've put in this season, because every dual meet, everyone was swimming four races, usually with only ten minutes of rest in between," she says. She also wants to extend an invitation to every Villa girl to join the swim team!

Staying on Track by Gabriella DaPrato,

Track is heading into the spring season! In order to hear more about the ups and downs of track, I sat down with senior Sabrina Rockelmann, to get insight into what she does in the winter months. For her, winter track is important preparation for the spring season; as she said, "My favorite part of winter track is staying in shape and training for spring track. Winter track prepares me with the strength I need for spring track." Training truly is im-

portant for every season, especially spring. Stay after school and you will see runners warming up or in the act of running.

Sabrina gave some insight about getting started and shared advice for all of those thinking about joining the track team: "Honestly, I would tell my freshman self to not be afraid to try something new. You don't know what could come out of something unless you try it."

Four years later, she and the other sen-

iors are still working hard for the meets. Looking forward, Sabrina says, "I know with the skills I have been given in winter track such as good form, technique, and stamina I will be ready for whatever comes my way."

There is no better teacher than experience, and this winter season helped catapult the track team ahead to (hopefully) even greater accomplishments.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The VJM Journal is a student publication. It is created by the VJM Journal staff along with the students of the Media & Journalism class. The opinions present in the paper do not reflect those of the student body, staff, faculty or administration of Villa Joseph Marie High School. Letters and comments should be sent to Mr. Pacenski

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VJM Journal

Recycling: We Can Do Better

by Alexandra Venth, '20

It is unfortunately an all-too-common scene at Villa: unrecyclable materials being thrown into the recycling bin by those trying to be environmentally conscious and recyclable materials being tossed carelessly into the trash bin. Villa's Environmental Club has been making strides to try to improve recycling at Villa by informing people of what should and should not be recycled. In addition, in classrooms, there are specific guidelines of what to recycle. Yet, many still end up utilizing these bins improperly.

There are a lot of things that we can do - along with those we are already doing - to be more environmentally-friendly. These easy changes will make a big difference in the long run. For example, you can use a thermos for water, rinse out your yogurt cups so they are recyclable, use a reusable coffee mug for your Dunkin' or Starbucks drink, and consider bringing your lunch in reusable containers instead of a plastic bag or aluminum foil.

Villa, as a school, could be more environmentally-friendly by eliminating styrofoam use. At Villa, styrofoam is used for everything from bowls for ice cream cake to cups for the occasional hot chocolate. There is a simple solution though: biodegradable containers, which, unlike styrofoam, will not still be intact, polluting the Earth, millions of years from now in an ever-growing landfill. Ending all styrofoam use at Villa would be a large step in the right direction toward an environmentally-friendly school. Granted, styrofoam is the cheaper option; however, sugarcane biodegradable bowls cost only cents more. This is a small price to pay for a clean future.

Villa already has some great environmentally friendly programs in place like the donating, reusing, and reselling of used locker works and school blazers. However, Villa and the Environmental Club cannot solve the environmental problem at Villa alone. Every member of the student body, faculty, and staff must help to make Villa a better place by introducing more environmentally-friendly habits into their daily lives.

Get Enlightened, Not Skinny by Emme Grasela, '20

Lent is the six week period leading up to Easter. Abstaining or fasting during Lent, the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, started as a Christian remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice during his 40 days of fasting in the desert leading up to his public ministry. Today, people are giving up things they love for Lent, but is this the best option?

Giving up something for Lent has become more of a dieting custom rather than a remembrance of and for Christ. People can receive advice on what to give up for Lent on social media, such as organizations with no affiliations to religion. For example, BuzzFeed offers a quiz on what to give up for Lent, and PopSugar has a list of unhealthy foods to give up for Lent. Many of the ideas miss the actual purpose of Lent and focus more on deprivation and guilt. This season is about sacrifice, not dieting.

Instead of taking away something you love, wouldn't it be more meaningful to add something? Adding something doesn't only affect you but can also affect others around you. For example, instead of giving up chocolate, give up thinking negatively and start looking for the good in bad situations. Even just saying good morning to people at school you normally don't talk to is a nice addition. Some other things you can add are a set time of reflection, prayer, meditation, yoga, exercise, etc. into your day.

The point is, giving up something you love is not always the best option. Adding something can help make you more positive and overall a better person to be around. This will bring you closer to God unlike just making a spring time resolution. Mr. Dennis, our Theology IV teacher, feels it is not just about taking away something you love, but adding something that will bring you closer to achieving inner peace and a better understanding of Jesus Christ.

