Football Team
Beats LHS
Eagles shut out Red Wolves

The football team had not won a competition against Loveland High School for nearly two decades. The Eagles had struggled against the Red Wolves for 16 years, but September 15, 2023, Thompson Valley finally beat them. Not only did the Eagles win the game, but they also kept the Red Wolves from scoring. The final score was 14 to 0.

Senior quarterback Riley Suarez threw for 88 yards with 8 completions on 13 attempts, also rushing for 92 yards on 17 carries. In other words, he had a good game.

Suarez’s effort, combined with an interception from senior Marco Lapierre, helped the Eagles get a shutout win over Loveland.

Aaron Appelt, a business teacher at Thompson Valley, said that the win over Loveland was great. “I think they’re very happy and I think it’s helping school spirit,” he said.

This was evident by the smiling faces of the spectators at the game.

Senior John Shier said that the win was, “very exciting” and, “The fact that we finally put together a great football team says something of the athletes at Thompson Valley.”

Michael Cramer and Ben Records - Staff Writers

Masquerade Ball Homecoming Week Filled with Events

Members of the homecoming court were recognized during halftime of the football game on Friday, October 6. They are Madi Gabriel, Isaiah Wiesner, Chloe Duzenack, Jack Maki, William Coronado, Audrey Lehnherr, Riley Suarez, Abby Wood, Marco Lapierre, and Paige Wagner. Coronado was crowned Homecoming King, and Duzenack was crowned Homecoming Queen.

The juniors and seniors competed in the annual Powderpuff football game on Wednesday, October 4. The seniors came out with the win 14-0. Fans supporting the juniors dressed in gold while supporters of the seniors were clad in pink.

The student pit theme for the game was “Gold Rush,” and the Eagles showed up in full force to support their team.

Homecoming Week Spirit Day themes included Barbie/Kenergy Day and Anything But a Waterbottle. Staff and students did not disappoint in dressing up.
Dangerous Heat Affects Student Performance

Malfunctioning air conditioning created issues at beginning of year

Isabella Barbre - Editor-In-Chief

As summer came to an end, students and staff were forced to return to sizzling classrooms without air conditioning. Fans were scattered around the school and even popsicles were handed out as temporary relief, but it just didn’t seem to do the trick.

Many students were quick to blame the school for not providing air conditioning, but not as many stopped to consider the costs the district would face in order to do so. According to the Loveland Reporter Herald, a calculation by the district estimated that it would cost $104.5 million to bring air conditioning to all schools. As the district’s total budget for the 23-24 school year is $202 million, this proves to be a challenge.

Since air conditioning couldn’t be provided, the district announced the idea of scheduling early release for days with extreme heat on Friday, August 18. However, that following Monday, the temperature reached a high of 99 degrees and there was no follow through with the releases, and it was never even brought up again.

Most students can agree that it is hard to find the motivation to be productive and get work done in the heat, but those affected the most seem to be the student athletes.

Junior Avery Gibbs plays varsity volleyball, and her practices take place in the school gym. Gibbs was asked how the heat has affected her ability to play sports. She responded, “I would say the focus of it goes away during games, like we had our first home game and I kinda forgot about it. But, practices, you just have really low energy and we take frequent breaks, so it’s kinda hard to get a lot of things done. But, yeah, it’s just not making it very fun to be there and it’s just kinda miserable. But it’s getting better recently.”

Gibbs was also asked about potential solutions for the heat situation in the gym. She answered, “We have about like two fans in there, but it’s just such a big space that it’s hard to regulate the air. It would be pretty great to have air conditioning, obviously, but I haven’t been to a school that did have air conditioning in their gym. I guess since we can’t fix the air conditioning, maybe people who I would charge of the athletics at the school could give us cold towels or more fans, just trying to solve the issue instead of just putting it all on us girls to try to figure it out I guess.”

Solutions seem to be a mystery to those who are in charge of athletics in the school, such as the athletic trainer Craig Krager was asked how he feels the heat is affecting athletes. He answered, “It’s definitely taken a toll on their bodies, especially since they have to sit in a hot class all day, and they’re sweating, and it’s causing them to have to drink more to try and stay hydrated well enough to get their practice in. Then they’re feeling the effects of it at practice, and probably not being able to perform at their best level.”

If just being in the building is so miserable because of the heat, it’s impossible to imagine how hard it is to be outside under the sun or on the hot tar, let alone while running. Krager said, “I don’t necessarily have any solutions, aside from doing something to help all the students be able to better deal with the heat itself. Whether it’s something along the lines of not being here, or doing something along the lines of providing adequate circulation, ventilation, things like that in the classrooms if air conditioning isn’t something that can be done.”

If air conditioning in schools cannot be funded, and early releases are going to be promised but not followed through, the district is going to have to come up with other solutions to reduce the effects of heat and fast, before it proves to be an even bigger danger next year than it was this year.

Narcan to be Available Over-the-Counter

Life saving drug is effective in temporarily reversing overdose

Mick Dallabetta - Staff Writer

In March of 2023, the state of Colorado passed a law to allow Narcan, a drug that you spray in a person’s nostril and it helps them get oxygen in their system during an overdose, to be distributed. At the beginning of September some pharmacies started to carry and sell Narcan over the counter. Narcan is a drug/lifesaver when someone is overdosing on opioids. When someone is overdosing on any type of opioid their respiratory system starts to shut down which gives less oxygen to the brain and other organs, Narcan is. However, Narcan is not a permanent fix, it lasts long enough to tell help to arrive in some cases it can last anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes.

School districts in Colorado are receiving Narcan for free because of the state health program. It can even found Thompson Valley. School Health Office Aide Cristina Frick stated, “So Narcan can be found in our AED’s in school, our hall monitor’s, SRO and jump bag (health office) and we’ve used it once in the last year. Narcan is readily available to the public so anyone can purchase it.”

There is a national program to administer Narcan if you are unsure a person is overdosing rather than having another health issue. Narcan has no effect on someone who is not overdosing so you can administer it to someone you think may be overdosing. You also can’t overdose on Narcan making it safe to sell in stores or even carry in schools.

Students understand the need for Narcan to be available in schools. Junior Bridget Giordano stated, “I think that Narcan should be in schools because drug overdoses are a big deal and something that not many people worry about. It should be available in either the front office or the nurses office.”

Larger cities like Denver are taking further action. Residents of Denver can request Narcan and Fentanyl testing strips for free. Regardless of where people live, nasal Narcan is covered by most insurance plans but not all.

Does it make sense for students to carry Narcan on them? Junior Student Bridget Giordano stated “I don’t think that teenagers need to carry it on them as long as it is available if it is needed. But if they want to carry it on, that is a personal decision that should be accepted.”

Walgreens pharmacies in Loveland and other places in Colorado sell Narcan for $44.99. And most local pharmacies carry Narcan to sell for a similar price.

Trump’s Indictments Have Historical Effects

Claire Macaluso - Staff Writer

On August 24, 2023, former president Donald Trump, surrendered himself to the Fulton County Jail in Atlanta, Georgia. He was charged with a total of 41 counts in the Georgia indictment relating to interfering with the 2020 presidential election. This includes violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), forgery in the first degree, conspiracy to commit election fraud, and many more allegations. This isn’t the first indictment that has been filed against Trump. In Florida and New York, he was indicted for keeping classified documents and falsifying documents, as well as being accused of election interference in Washington D.C. There are many different charges in each of these indictments. In turn, this leads to numerous questions surrounding how the significance of these indictments, of a former president, affects future elections and Trump himself.

When asked if accountability in our electoral college would be improved for the strength of our government, social studies teacher, Jay Klage stated, “I think there already has been changes made to the Electoral College Act and hopefully our institutions and our democracy will grow stronger as a result of any questions or concerns of fairness, these indictments may hold a historical significance on how we might improve future elections and the process that follows it. Strengthening not only our electoral college, but our democracy seems to be of the utmost importance, especially with world problems growing.

If Trump does continue his campaign, his favorability seems to have not drastically changed since the indictment and still holds him in favor of being the Republican nominee. As shown in a graph from FiveThirtyEight, Trump is ahead in the national polls at 50.3% followed by Joe Biden at 40.5%. The national polls at 50.3% followed far behind by Joe DeSantis at 14.8%. Tymon Sloan, a sophomore at Thompson Valley who supports Trump “100%” in his candidacy states that his initial thoughts of Trump during Trump’s presidency were that he believed that he was a better president than what we’ve had in recent years and “had much more capability in running our country.” Tymon’s thoughts of our former president haven’t changed since hearing about the allegations made against Trump in the recent Georgian Indictment and even relayed, “Why worry about that when there are already so many problems that we haven’t dealt with?” A great amount of world problems have been presented to the U.S. and the hometown of Thompson Valley such as a violent crime detailing a carjacking and a deadly shooting. However, this crime is the least of the U.S. worries when looking at the bigger picture of the root of our country’s issues.

In contrast, a different student at Thompson Valley who doesn’t support Trump has stated that the “GOP’s platform overall is simply about spreading hate and wanting America to be run to their liking.” This student also claimed that if Trump were to continue his campaign, “it would only create more problems for our society.” In an ABC/IPSSS Poll since the Georgian indictment, about 50% of Americans believe Trump should suspend his campaign. Yet, who is to say this will stop Trump? Even if Trump were to be convicted of a crime he could still legally run for president with a sturdy foundation of supporters and the details of a good campaign.
Athletic trainer is also PE teacher

Athlete Craig Krager. Krager is a beloved staff member and a great help to all students, especially athletes. He is always willing to be a helping hand and has the humor of a rock, which we just love (although he isn’t all that funny). As of this year, he has picked up the role of PE/Health teacher as well as still being our athletic trainer.

That change has made the PE department, and just our school in general, better. PE/Health teacher, Kaila Stassi has had a great time having him as a coworker this year.

She said, “Honestly, I just think he’s brought a wealth of knowledge to our department that maybe we don’t all have. And having that PE background has been incredible just because we’ve had a lot of turnover in our department.”

An athletic trainer is a certified healthcare professional who practices in the field of sports medicine. For example, at Thompson, Krager does injury evaluations and rehab. He also spends time at practices and games so that if players get hurt he can help them and make sure they are okay.

Krager has been adjusting to differences in working with all students, rather than just athletes.

Athletic Trainer Craig Krager has taken on additional responsibilities as a PE teacher this year.

He said, “It is hard to have the kids who are required to be in the class and don’t really want to be in there. They don’t see the benefit of being in either health or PE class for their overall wellbeing.” But overall Krager is loving his new role at our school. He said, “I enjoy being able to help students to learn about and understand the positives of being physically active and understanding the different aspects of health that are taught.”

Overall, everyone has been loving having Krager here in the building.

Junior Avery Gibbs, who is also a varsity volleyball player, said, “He’s a fun guy so it’s nice to see him around. It hasn’t really changed that much, he’s just fun to be around and he’s a good person so it’s nice to have him here this year.”

Stassi agrees, “In our health classes he knows it and he does an incredible job teaching it. And it’s just been really fun for me to collaborate and be a team with him.”

We are all glad to have Krager in the building this year, and for hopefully many more.

Musical Ms. McGinn

Jade Silvas - Staff Writer

Have you ever been to any choir concerts?

If you have, then you've definitely seen the wonderful Linda McGinn. She comes in to play the piano at every choir concert. Choir classes see her a few times before every concert to practice with her. Other than those few times McGinn learns all the music on her own time.

McGinn was asked how long she has been playing piano, “Since I was seven years old, many decades.”

“Absolutely” answered McGinn when asked if she enjoys playing piano for choir classes.

When McGinn was asked what she enjoys most about playing for us, she answered, “I was a high school choir director for 30 years so I love that I get to continue interacting with students. You all are so kind and talented; I love watching you progress and being a part of the music you make. And I especially love watching Mr. Kettlewell do all the hard lifting while I get to just sit there and play the piano.”

Choir teacher Bryan Kettlewell has been working with McGinn since 2016. She takes a lot of the heat off of Kettlewell when it comes to learning the piano parts of the songs, he can focus on teaching us all of the notes and text.

When Kellewell was asked what one thing McGinn does that really amazes him, he answered, “Her ear is so good that she can hear all the parts of the ensemble and can start playing them before they know that they’ve messed up.”

McGinn also has an effect when it comes to the students. Senior Carter Lessman has been involved in choir all four years of high school.

When asked about one thing McGinn does that helps her individually, Lessman said, “Ms. McGinn had a real knack for finding exactly where we are as a choir and individually need more assistance. And she provides it with her piano playing, which helps us perform better and become more confident in our music.”

Lessman said, “Not only does she know when we need it, she also knows when to let us try things without her help. Having her there especially helps me be more confident in my singing.”

“I definitely find concerts easier when Ms. McGinn is there to play for us. She is an incredibly skilled pianist, and her presence helps us feel more secure and confident. It’s a super cool experience, because she’s there being a wizard with her piano skills, and we’re up there trying not to die.” Lessman said.

“It ends up being a really cool product which she contributes infinitely to. In rehearsal, we’re just running things, but with her there at concerts, we get to see all of the pieces come together and really feel the music come alive.” answered Lessmen when asked if concerts are easier with McGinn.

All choir classes really enjoy when they get to see Ms. McGinn. Not only does she help with making choirs sound a little more put together but she brings up everyone’s mood.

New Dean of Students is a Familiar Face

Cambria Burgess - Staff Writer

The new school year brought a lot of new changes to the building. Among those changes was a new role for former ESS teacher, Lorr Quinn. Quinn has been an active member of the Thompson Valley staff and student body for 17 years, and as of the start of the school year, he is now the Dean of Students, replacing DJ Juergensen who retired at the end of last year.

“The reason I chose to take this position is I like meeting all of the kids. I enjoy doing the sports, and I figured this is a good way for people to know me that I never got to meet when I was working in Special Ed.” As the Dean of Students, Quinn is responsible for discipline and safety. His new position has also come with new challenges. Quinn says, “The biggest challenge has been all of the work that this thing requires with minimal training.”

Students have also been making the adjustment to having a new Dean in the building.

Alyssa Marchantario, sophomore, states, “I think Mr. Quinn is a good fit for the job because he seems to do his job well and there has been some improvement in the environment and the way people have been treating each other.”

Juergensen had a long career at the school, and his absence has also been felt.

Junior Hailey Hobson said, “It’s weird, I miss DJ, but Mr. Quinn is a cool guy.”

Similarly, teachers have had to adjust, too. English teacher, Loris Osier said, “I think [Quinn] had really big shoes to fill because DJ had done such a good job for so long.” Osier added, “Quinn has done a really good job of making sure that all of the things that were in place that kept our school running and being safe were kept in place, and I think he is going to have great ideas on how to improve security and keep our school moving in a positive direction.”

Quinn is also finding hope in his new job. He states, “What gives me hope is that the culture is changing. There are not as many issues looking at games and the pep assembly and how many kids were there, and right now I think kids are starting to come out of that COVID phase of being locked away that now they are starting to join in on things and all the sports are full, so that’s awesome.”
New Year Brings New Grade-Level Representatives

Claire M. Macaluso - Staff Writer

At the beginning of the year, the student body chose each grade’s student representative. Laurel (Meadow) Jimenez represents the freshman class, while Lila Aschenbrenner represents her sophomore class.

For the juniors, Avery Gibbs and Mireya Estrada are co-presidents, and the seniors have president Emma Smack and StuCo co-presidents Hailey Jackson and Paige Wagner. Each and every one of them has their own unique role to represent the whole of the student body. They go to meetings and decide what’s best for the students and the school, promoting school spirit, integrity, and unity.

Meadow Jimenez is new to high school and states that she enjoys being part of student council. She has experienced the stress of putting together homecoming knowing that they “have so much to do in a certain time.” They have less than two weeks to put up decorations and gather the students to enjoy their first dance of the year. Being a part of Student Council myself, I have seen the freshmen and sophomores be very engaged in their part to ensure the best for school events and the students themselves.

Lilah Aschenbrenner, a sophomore, also shares Jimenez’s thoughts on being a class representative, stating that she does “enjoy being a president.” Helping out with decorations for the homecoming dance, Aschenbrenner exhibits her hard work. She has been working on Bourbon Street, which goes with the Mardi Gras Masquerade theme, with Elle Shier, another sophomore, and myself, a junior.

Firsthand, the decorations look good and very creative, for this hallway you can see lanterns, ferns, arches, chains, and a theme of green and purple.

The junior class is being led by two people from their class: Avery Gibbs and Mireya Estrada.

It’s pretty both claimed that they love being a representative, stating that, “it has been really fun...going to meetings every Tuesday.” Gibbs and Estrada are good friends and get along very well, this aids in their pleasure of being in StuCo.

“One has been pretty chill. This is my dog right here,” stated Avery Gibbs. With the two of them leading their junior class, Gibbs and Estrada enthusiastically put their eagle spirit into every event they attend and help set up for. Our senior class representatives are both being looked up to by the body of the Student Council. Paige Wagner stated that she and Hailey Jackson, “oversee everything and make sure everything is flowing smoothly and efficiently. We are a resource for people that need questions answered. I think that everything is going good during class.”

Jackson and Wagner have had a hand in many of the events that have taken place so far this semester, writing the script for and emceeing both of the pep assemblies.

“I think our decorations look really good this year and a lot of people put in a ton of effort and I really like how everything has turned out so far,” claimed Paige, as well as Hailey Jackson shared, “We’ve seen some negative things from year past, so we are trying to make it better and hopefully more fun.”

Musical Talent on Display

Students and staff enjoy writing music and being a part of bands

Lade Silva - Staff Writer

In our school, there are many students who take an interest in music. There are a lot of opportunities thanks to the many music classes students can take. But a lot of students pursue their interests out of school.

An example of students who take interest in music is the band Philia, with members consisting of senior Lucas Bennett, junior James Carista, and junior Jackson Levin. Bennett is the one who writes all the music and is lead singer/guitarist, Carista plays the drums, Levin plays the drums and helps with writing music.

When asked about their process of writing, Bennett said, “I usually just mess around on the guitar and I come up with something cool that I think the band would like. Then I spend the majority of the time writing the lyrics because to me that’s the most important part.”

Carista says “For me the writing process is waiting for Lucas and Jackson to write the guitar and bass, they play and I just play whatever comes to my head and work on it later.”

Levin answered, “My songwriting process is honestly just messing around with the melodies until I find something that feels right, after that I just build off of what Lucas is doing to add more depth.”

Philia was asked if the music they write is personal or just for fun. Carista stated, “To me, none of the songs are personal because I don’t write lyrics I’m just having fun playing the drums.”

Bennett said, “The music I write is most of the time very personal to me and my life. I have some songs that are just scenarios and not about me, but that’s just a couple of songs.”

Levin answered, “The music we write for Philia I can’t say is personal for me because I don’t assist with lyrics that’s usually Lucas’s thing.”

When the members of Philia were asked what they have done with their music, they talked about a couple different things. They played a show at the East and Ale House Bar in downtown Loveland at an open mic. They made a little over $100 in profit.

They are also currently working on an EP that they hope to release later this year.

Philia was asked what they plan to do in the future. Bennett stated, “I plan to stay with this band long term and release many great albums and just have fun with my great friends and become better people one day at a time.”

Carista answered, “I definitely plan on being in this band until we feel like being done with it and joining other bands.”

Levin said, “In the future I hope to stay in this band and take it to the point where we could consistently release music.”

Another example of a student who takes an interest in music is senior Madisyn Humphrey. Although she doesn’t create music to perform, she does it for her own enjoyment.

When asked what makes her interested in writing music and playing piano Humphrey said, “I’ve always just been into music, there is no specific reason, it’s just fun for me.”

When Humphrey was asked what going through her head when she writes music, she answered, “It depends on what kind of song I’m writing. Sometimes it’s emotional or sometimes it could be something I’m passionate about.”

When Humphrey was asked if she creates music for fun, she answered, “I do, it’s something I really enjoy. I won’t make a career out of it but I will continue to do it for me.”

Musical artists also travel into our staff, social studies teacher Jack Costanza is in his own band. When asked how long he has been doing music, personally and on his own, Costanza said, “I started making music when I was 15 and originally we stole YouTube beats and wrote rap music and put it on SoundCloud. And then by the time I was a sophomore in college I started playing guitar and built a band. The band has changed a bunch of times, people joined and left. Basically, sense I was 15 so like 11 years now.”

When Costanza was asked what music makes him enjoy it so much, he answered, “I feel like I tend to be someone who is an overthinker about the world and my life. And something about music is it’s a thing where three hours can go by and I won’t realize three hours went by so it’s a nice escape and it’s a really cool way to communicate with other people.”

When asked if he plans to go further with music Costanza answered, “I plan to go where the wind takes me. For a while I was really passionate about trying to build a career and then I started not liking music. So now I take the opportunities in front of me and I work hard on the craft to make better stuff, so I want to get a lot better. But where that takes me is not too important.”

These are just a few examples of musically included students and teachers. A lot of students pursue their passion outside of the classroom, and have found creative ways of displaying their talents.
Who is your biggest inspiration? And why?
“I would say my mom, which I know is like a stupid answer. She’s a 4th grade teacher and she’s just so kind and amazing and welcoming and understanding. So, she’s my biggest inspiration. She’s done amazing things, and I’m just so proud of her.”

What’s your favorite memory from high school?
“Probably winning the Oregon State choir competition. Our high school choir won for the entire state; we were the best choir in the state.”

What’s been your biggest challenge so far this year?
“Learning how to do scheduling and concurrent enrollment stuff.”

What do you do to take care of your own mental health?
“I like to have a me day so that may be watching Friends on repeat, or how I OHW R%X U ORW K H U7X H2I aI like that. Just kinda vegging on the couch and relaxing, chilling.”

If you were a Colorado city which one would you be and why?
“This is not going to be a popular opinion but I would be Greeley. Because I really like the plains, I like farms and agriculture, being out in the wide open spaces.

Who is your biggest inspiration? And why?
“I would say my Orchestra teacher from 6th grade to senior year. His name is Bob Kreutz; he taught here and at Walt Clark. He kind of brought me to my love of music, but he also just taught me how to be a good person - and he was genuinely caring and I think I needed that in high school.”

What’s your favorite memory from high school?
“I was kind of like a music and arts nerd in high school, so I would say any of the cast parties that we had for musicals or plays were really fun.”

What’s been your biggest challenge so far this year?
“What hasn’t been a challenge is the real question. I would say scheduling for sure; they don’t teach you that in counseling school.”

What do you do to take care of your own mental health?
“I cuddle my dog. I do lots of painting, and exercise is big for me too.”

If you were a Colorado city which one would you be and why?
“I am pretty bougie so I’m gonna say Cherry Creek maybe.”

The counseling team includes Mental Health Specialist Kayla Hasstedt (pictured far left). Hasstedt and Registrar Becky Cooley are the sole returning members of the counseling staff this year. Counseling Secretary Glenna Keil is also new to her role this year.
There Can Be Only One Jay Klagge

Social studies teacher and tennis coach is an energetic original

Christian Colling and Ian Firestone-Staff Writers

Students at TVHS have many different teachers as well as coaches, and for Jay Klagge, during the fall and spring, he is both a respected social studies teacher as well as the girls and boys tennis team coach.

Klagge’s love for tennis began when he was just 5 years old. Klagge started coaching in 2004 as the coach for Mountain View, until he was the coach at Thompson Valley just a year later in 2005.

Drake Balke, a sophomore tennis player says, “Klagge has very good energy as a coach,” and, “He’s very positive and isn’t very critical.”

Carter Luce, another sophomore who is a student, and athlete of Klagge states, “Klagge urges all of his players to play for fun and not worry about your competition.”

Klagge shows his historic spirit with his car, a 1992 Volvo 740. “I’ve had it since the end of May. I paid $1200 for it, and it has about 141,500 miles on it.”

Klagge has been teaching a total of 30 years and spent 22 of those years at Thompson Valley. The other eight of those years were spent teaching in Michigan.

Balke is also a student of Klagge’s and says, “He makes it very engaging, and isn’t boring us with busy work.” He adds, “He is a very positive teacher.”

If you have ever been in Klagge’s classroom, you might not be sure if there are actual walls in his room behind all of the posters, charts and things filling up his room.

Luce said, “He is always energetic and provides a lot of support for his students.”

So, if you see Klagge in the hallways, strike up a conversation with him about almost anything and he won’t disappoint.

Tennis coaches Jay Klagge and Andy Buchanan share some thoughts on life while surrounded by cupcakes and tennis balls.

Foreign Exchange Students Bring Welcomed Diversity

Students from The Republic of Moldova, Germany, and Armenia offer their perspectives

Avery Gibbs-Staff Writer

It’s time to learn, learn about the world past the reaches of Loveland, Colorado. Time to open our arms and accept new and different opinions of our home. Time to learn about other people’s homes and listen.

Here at Thompson Valley, we are lucky to have plenty of foreign exchange students.

So, this is a great opportunity for us to welcome them, listen, and grow our knowledge of the world. Recently my friend introduced me to Dana Vlad who is from The Republic of Moldova. Her first day as an Eagle was about a week ago.

One of the first things she talked to me about was her goal to share her country, family and lifestyle as well as her new experiences as an exchange student with the people she meets here.

The Republic of Moldova a sparsely populated country but a truly beautiful one. Talking to Dana it is obvious she has pride in where she comes from and a great love for her family. I asked her what a day in her life looks like in Moldova.

This is what she said she does after school, “I spend time with my family, we go for walks or a ride in the car, a lot of beautiful views.”

Surrounded by forest and mountains, Moldova has a similarly beautiful landscape to Colorado. Known for its wine industry Moldova is the 11th largest producer in Europe. Consequently, Dana’s village Colibișași sits between a big wine vineyard and the river Pruț.

I asked Dana what her biggest culture shock has been so far in the U.S. She said, “You eat your pasta with bread, it’s really weird, it’s just bread on bread.”

Although this is an unexpected answer, it’s definitely a fair point, abundance is very American. When asked if she’s had an experience that she considered a bad culture shock, she responded, “I don’t see the bad right now, I’m sort of in a honeymoon phase.”

Dana has also told me previously that she was shocked that people smile so much which is a great look for Loveland, Colorado. To this point, I also asked her if she felt the school and community here had been welcoming family is the best she could’ve asked for. I finished by asking her what she is most excited about for this year. She said, “I am excited about everything: homecoming, spirit week, my classes, and all the sports games.”

There is no doubt that leaving your family, friends and home behind to travel to a new foreign place with strange people who have strange eating habits is terrifying but hopefully Dana, her new “sister”, Anna who just recently arrived in Loveland from Armenia and all the other exchange students this year will feel welcomed. So, keep up the big smiles and continue to show them how Eagles act.

Features
Catching all the Freshman Feels

Freshmen reflect on the beginning of their high school experiences

Athan I. Anik - Staff Writer

Starting high school is a big new chapter in life. The high school years are the last few before adulthood, and they can be a lot of fun. High school opens up a lot of opportunities unavailable in middle or elementary school, both socially and academically, including better and more exciting classes, more freedom of choice, many extracurricular activities with more variety, and the chance to find the people you truly belong with.

However, starting high school can also be intimidating or scary. The school is much bigger and harder to navigate, the classes are more difficult, and the amount of choice you have with them can be overwhelming. Many members of the class of 2027 have already been to their first games and pep assemblies, taken their first high school tests, and perhaps experienced their first high school break-ups.

For freshman Katie Baird, starting high school has been exciting, “The classes are fun and the students are alright.” However, Baird also said that so far her middle school experience was better. She said, “I got used to my teachers faster and the students were nicer in middle school.”

Brayden Wall, a football player, said “[High school] is a lot more fun than I thought it would be and not as stressful.” Wall added that he expected a lot of homework and bullying, but hadn’t experienced either. Wall is already planning how else to get involved, and plans to wrestle or play basketball.

Delia Spadafora, freshman cross country runner, has enjoyed the greater independence afforded high school students. She’s had a great experience so far with her sport saying, “I really like my coach and I know everybody who does it and I just like the competitive aspect of it so far.”

While this may not be everyone’s experience, there’s still time. The freshmen featured here are all involved with sports and other communities at the school. If you’re struggling to adjust, there is still time to make a home and we want you here, and we want you to be successful.

Artificial Intelligence Begins to Have Impact on Education

Teachers begin to make adjustments to assignments and policies

Michael D’Alibetta - Staff Writer

The rise of AI has affected classes and the way teachers have to grade. Students in classes can use ChatGPT to write their essays and stories for them instead of writing the assignments themselves, which has concerned teachers and administrators.

But is there anything good about the use of AI in a classroom setting?

As a new school year gets underway, it’s worth pausing to ask teachers what, if anything, they’ve done to adjust for AI in their classrooms this year.

English teacher Trinity Robertson reflected on how her classroom has changed to prevent students’ use of AI, “I require much more of what I do in the classroom to be handwritten, which is difficult for many students who missed nearly two years of writing and lack both the stamina and skills to write longer assignments by hand,” Robertson stated.

The English department revised their plagiarism guidelines to include a section on the use of AI this year, and largely modeled their policy after the one offered by Colorado State University.

However, teachers also have their own policies because this is a serious issue.

Robertson stated, “I have not heavily modified my general class guidelines, as I have always had strict policies about cheating and plagiarism in my class, but I do make sure to let students know that inappropriately using AI does fall under those categories and will result in the same severe consequences.”

Paul Binkley, who is also an English teacher, talked about how he changed his policy saying, “I have changed my official policies in a few ways. In some cases, they are established on a level above my class. For example, the English Department at TVHS has an Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy that now includes policies against using AI without permission. I also teach concurrent enrollment College Compositions classes, and Front Range Community College has taken a firm stance against the use of AI.”

The advancement in technology has caused all teachers, new and veteran alike, to make adjustments to their lessons.

Binkley continued, “The growth of AI has made me rethink how I design some of my assignments to make them require more human elements, insights, and input than an AI could produce effectively.”

Both Robertson and Binkley reported seeing increases in plagiarism as AI has become more popular.

“I feel I have seen a small increase in my classes. I expect I will see more [AI plagiarism] in the future. I read the newspaper every morning, so I know that nationally there has been a dramatic increase at virtually all levels of education. I do not think this is a problem that’s going away: we can’t put the genie back in the bottle,” Binkley said. “Education and students will have to adapt. I think some of that will mean modifying and/or holding to our values and work ethic, but I think it may also prompt teachers to create writing assignments that are that much more authentic and complex, rather than having a prompt that can be easily answered by AI.”

One of the ways that education has responded to the calls of administrators and teachers has been to provide tools for detecting AI, something that students may not always realize.

“It baffles me how [students] continue to believe that they can get away with [using AI] though, especially since the tools for detecting AI have only become more precise,” said Robertson.

AI isn’t all negative, though. Teachers are thinking about how to incorporate it as a tool, rather than fighting against it or pretending it doesn’t exist. They also don’t deny having to turn to AI themselves sometimes. “As someone who has relied on AI when I’ve found myself stuck on something I’m working on as a teacher, I believe that being able to use AI to take us further in our education rather than relying on it as a crutch will be an incredibly valuable skill for our students heading out into the workforce,” Robertson said.

Binkley agreed that it can be used as a tool in creative ways, but for now, said “I am most interested in having an accurate picture of what my students know and can do. AI may have a role in that, but accurately knowing my students’ abilities and needs is important for being an effective teacher.”
Hello!! My name is Bella and this is my second year on the paper but first year as Senior Editor. I’m super excited to see how this year goes and lead the class towards creating the best papers possible. After highschool I hope to go to nursing school and become a nurse. In my free time you can catch me reading, my favorite book is A Man Called Ove by Fredrick Backman, spending time with my friends, writing, or probably working because I’m a workaholic. I have one cat named Magic who drives me crazy but I love her to death, and one dog named Z (yes, just the letter) who is about the size of my foot.

Hello Thompson Valley. My name is Athan Janik, and I am a sophomore. This is my first year writing for The Voice. This is also my first year being involved with the theater company here. I’ve lived in Colorado my whole life and have never been to another state or country, nor do I really have any desire to. My hobbies and interests include video games, comic books, and this flannel my brother gave me a few weeks ago.

I’m excited to join the newspaper staff here. This seems like a pretty fun class and might help me figure out what I wanna do with my life career-wise. The current plan is to go to a college for some amount of time so I can get a job and make money.

My favorite color is blue. My favorite TV show is The Boys and my favorite movie is the 2022 Batman movie, followed closely by The Dark Knight. I like to spend my free time staring blankly at a wall in my room wondering where it all went wrong until it’s time for bed.

Overall, I’m excited to start working on this newspaper!

My name is Christian, and I am a sophomore. This is my first year writing for The Voice. I look forward to writing in The Voice as I enjoy the interviews and brainstorming for ideas that we can put in the paper. And as a member of FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) it gives me the opportunity to try and push for it in the paper so we can keep FCA in our schools.

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Staff Writer Michael Cramer

Hello my name is Michael Cramer. I have never written for the newspaper before in my life. My friend persuaded me to join, and I did think it would be fun to do anyway. I enjoy video games and being with my friends and family. I have three turtles and a cat named Stewart.

My name is Makinley McCutchen. I am a junior and love writing. I am 15 years old and my favorite color is pink. I moved to Thompson Valley High School my sophomore year from Tennessee where I lived my entire life. One of my guilty pleasures is rewatching Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire. When I graduate high school I plan on working my way to becoming a lawyer. My favorite hobby is reading in my free time or sitting at the lake with my friends and hanging out.

My name is Brinlynn Soderstrom. I’m a Junior at TVHS and I like reading forensic cases and writing fantasy stories about mythology and magic. This is my first year at The Voice. When I’m not at school, I am usually in my room practicing guitar or piano and sometimes working on my stories. I am known to be very outgoing and loud. I grew up in Modesto, California and moved to Colorado at the beginning of my sophomore year. When I get out of highschool, I plan on going to Mesa University or CSU to major in Forensics and Chemistry. If I could be one animal in the world, I think I’d be a sugar glider because of my energetic personality and how I constantly bounce off the walls. I’m excited to see what this year has in store!

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My name is Ireland Neill and this is my second year writing for a newspaper. I’m a junior and my favorite kind of stories to write are opinion and editorial. I enjoy writing stories that are controversial, or that people can relate to or learn from. My interests include the beach, 60 degree weather, sharks and photography. I even got a shark tattoo in Maui. I wanted to take Newspaper again because I had fun getting to write about many different topics last year and wanted to continue.
My name is Avery Gibbs and I am a staff writer for the Thompson Valley Newspaper. This is my second year with the newspaper. I love writing about things I love. My favorite part about being a writer is talking to people about their passions. I like knowing that my articles have influenced someone’s views on a subject that needs a new look. Writing is super powerful and I want to grow my abilities so that I will one day have a true effect on the issues I choose to discuss. My idol is Dickey Chapelle, an American photojournalist who was the first female war correspondent to parachute with American Troops and the first to be killed covering combat. I am reading a biography about her and one story of hers that really stuck out to me was when she was aboard a hospital ship named the Samaritan that was sailing to Iwo Jima during World War II.

She witnessed the nurses donating their blood, and asked, “Don’t the folks back home give enough?” They responded that there is never enough blood and described the atrocities that follow when there isn’t enough. By that afternoon she had staged and photographed a blood donation with those aboard as well as donated her own. The photographs she took aboard the Samaritan, both of the wounded soldiers and the donation drive were used by the Red Cross for a decade in their publicity campaigns. The millions of pints of blood they raised went on to save tens of thousands of lives. Now I don’t know if my articles this year will save that many people, but my goal is to have an impact and I am looking forward to putting in the work to make that happen.

Hola amigos, I’m Claire Macaluso and I am a Junior this year. I’m very excited to get started in journalism and can’t wait to write, interview, and have the most fun I can. Ever since I was young it was a dream of mine to do something with writing, and journalism called to me the most. I come off as very introverted and reserved, but when I am passionate about a project I break out of my shell. Coffee helps with this habit of mine, coffee and writing. So I welcome this new year with more caffeine and more opportunities to write and improve myself.

My name is Cami and I just love Ms. Osier and my friends, and my family! My favorite activities are probably hanging out with friends and showing school spirit. I am very passionate about grounding because you have to connect with the earth, and I think that it is so important to be kind and loving. I absolutely love newspaper and the family-like environment we always end up creating. and I am so excited to see how this year goes!

Hi, my name is Ben Records, and I am on the staff of the Thompson Valley Newspaper. I have been interested in newspaper for a while, and being a journalist sounds like an interesting career that I want to explore. I also march for the Thompson Valley marching band as a percussionist.

Hi, my name is Michael Dallabetta, but I go by Mick. This will be my second year writing for newspaper. It was really fun getting out of class and getting interviews from around the school. In my free time I like to do ceramics. I have been doing ceramics for the past year and was in my first art show over the summer.

A little something about James Aust: I am a very relaxed person most of the time but whenever I am around people that are just fun and goofy I will match the vibe of them and we are going to have a blast. I am apart of the JROTC class for Thompson Valley /Mountain View Battalion, I am also apart of the theater group this year. I really do like the school as a whole and I just would like for people’s words to be heard. I will make sure I talk with you your voice will be heard as long as I am in this class. I will make everyone matter and be heard by the world.

Hello readers, my name is Ian Firestone. I am a sophomore and this is my first year as a staff writer for The Voice. I play tight end and inside linebacker for the Thompson Valley football team. I am also part of FCA, I’m a big fan of hanging out with friends and family, my favorite color is yellow and my favorite movie is Tommy Boy. I hope you enjoy this year’s paper.
Opinions

Students No Longer Allowed to Sit in Their Cars in the Parking Lot
After a run in with campus security for sitting in my car, I wanted to know more about school security and policy

Izabella Barbre - Editor-In-Chief

“If you were in a talent show what would your talent be?”

Junior Noah Esparza says “I wouldn’t be in a talent show.”

Senior Caislee Hull says, “Professional hair braiding.”

Freshman Delia Spadafora says “I would make people laugh.”

Recently, I was sitting in my car in the parking lot during my off hour and was told by the security guard that students were no longer allowed to sit in their parked cars anymore, and that I had to find somewhere else to go.

Learning about this rule, understandably, I was upset. I was alone, minding my business, doing nothing wrong, but forced to leave. I felt like I had nowhere to go because there were only twenty minutes of class left.

I was not alone in my feelings. Senior Myla Mattson had a lot to say about this rule too. “I think it’s silly,” she said. “Not everyone, especially on Mondays, has the time to leave school and go to their house or like go to another place, but they don’t want to stay at school during an off hour because it’s supposed to be a break time, so it’s silly.”

There were a handful of issues that led to this rule being enforced. In general, it seemed to be that students who were not supposed to be in the parking lot, were in the parking lot. There has also been a huge spike in the number of fights recently, and the parking lot seems to be a main source and setting of these events.

So, apparently, the solution to these issues is to just kick everyone out of the parking lot, regardless of if they’re supposed to be there or not.

But Mattson had other ideas. “Instead, there could be strict checking of who’s sitting in their cars. They said that it’s because there’s people out there that aren’t supposed to be out there, but there are students who are out there. So, just check IDs like they do when we come into the building,” Mattson said.

The security department for the district was hesitant to do an interview or answer any questions unless it was in person, so no response was received from them regarding security and safety in the parking lot.

Yes, there is a problem with students misbehaving in the parking lot and yes, a solution is necessary. But, is this solution the right one, and will it even last?

My car is my safe space, it’s quiet, comfortable, and private. Knowing that I no longer have the option to sit in it ruins a lot of my day. I believe that kicking everyone out of the parking lot is a very lazy solution, and that other options should have been determined first.

Cell Phone Policies Remain a Hot Topic
Everyone has something to say about cell phone management in the classroom

Makinley McCutchen - Staff Writer

The debate over how to handle the use of cell phones in the classroom is ongoing at Thompson Valley. There are many different views on what to do and what not to do with cell phones during class time, with students, teachers, and parents having different ideas about what is best. Many teachers have begun asking students to put their phones in bins or other containers that are not accessible during class.

Sophomore Elizabeth Cramer feels like this sort of policy is too strict. She said, “I understand [teachers’] reasoning, and it is working, but the whole class is being punished because of a few kids being on their phones when they are not supposed to, which isn’t very fair for the kids who do what they’re supposed to.”

With the convenience of phones, it’s not uncommon for students, or even parents, to suggest that students need their phones so they can be reached in the event of an emergency. In response to this argument, long-time English teacher, Christy Goldberg, who is also a parent said, “There’s always a way to contact [your kid], other than texting them. I have parents text their kids in class saying, ‘Hey your aunt just died. ’That’s not appropriate. We need to go to the counseling office and have that kid pulled out and comforted. I don’t need a student to deal with a traumatic event without the right support system.” She added, thinking about her own kids’ teachers taking their phones, “My opinion on that is that I am fine with my kid’s phones being taken in class. It’s life.”

Last year, Goldberg and Jennifer Solt, who frequently co-taught their English classes last year, started asking students to turn in their phones, and if they did so every day, which even included making up work during ELO for absences, then those students would be exempt from a portion of their English final. This year more teachers have followed suit, asking students to turn in their phones or assigning points for standards-based skills, like listening, and deducting when students are repeatedly on their phones.

In all of this, though, parents also have opinions about their kids’ phones. One parent of a student said, “There will always be good and bad outcomes of having phones out while in the classroom; there is definitely a time and place. I think students should be able to show that they can be responsible with them and get their work done but those who prove it could be a distraction make sure they stay up out of sight.” The parent also added that it’s important to them to be able to reach their child directly, rather than having to call others.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to cell phones; for many students it feels like they’re being punished unfairly, “It’s not a good feeling, the kids who are irresponsible with their phones should be held accountable for that but the kids who have been responsible shouldn’t be punished the same way the kids who are irresponsible with them are.” Cramer said.

But for teachers who have been trying to figure out how to address phones for years, patterns of misuse over the years have made them less responsive to this criticism. “If you’re on a team and someone decides to get bad grades and they can’t participate with the team then the whole team suffers.” Goldberg added, “For me, I have taught a long time and there’s been enough of them who can’t put their phones away. They just have to show me they were listening if they want not to have to put their phones away.”

Ultimately, cell phones and cell phone use aren’t going away. Teachers, parents, and students are all going to need to work together to come up with solutions that everyone can live with. As a Thompson Valley parent said, “Of course, if there are more kids being distracted on their phones than kids who aren’t, then I can see why the teacher would want to take them up but that all depends on how the students treat it.”

Policy Update
A new policy is forthcoming, with enforcement starting Oct. 23. It includes all personal electronic devices. Briefly, the policy states:

• Phones and other personal electronics (such as headphones) that are out during class will be confiscated by the teacher and held for the remainder of the day. Repeat offenses will have escalating consequences with referrals, calls home, and confiscated phones being released only to guardians.
New systems are still in need of adjustments for student ease and clarity. They were quickly proven wrong. On the first day of actual ELO’s, the line to change or drop people’s classes was out the door and around the corner. People sat in the line to fix their schedule for the whole period and some didn’t even get the chance to change it.

Danian Saucedo Mejia, a senior, said, “The counselors have been helpful but I don’t like how they made it so you have to have appointments and you can’t just walk into the office.” When asked about his opinions on ELO, he said, “I don’t know why they moved ELO. It just makes it pointless because if you have a class like TCC or Automotive, you have to leave the class to go to ELO and then come back.”

John Shier, another senior, said that, “I think walk-ins for the first week was a great first step for changing schedules, however, I feel that the two days we could see the counselors was not long enough.”

Clearly, the start of the school year has been rocky and unpredictable, but overall, it has been a good first quarter.

### Relationship Advice

**Romantic relationships can be so rewarding, but what makes for long-term success?**

- **Makinley McCutchen - Staff Writer**
  
  Relationships are complicated. High school relationships are even more complicated. Some teenagers know exactly what they’re looking for, and as long as they’re looking in the right places and at the right person, they might end up with a lasting relationship. Other teenagers have learned through their relationships that there are qualities that they definitely don’t like in their partners.

  Junior Kristian Simonsen said, “I definitely don’t like when a girl is overly obsessed with herself, it is okay for you to think highly of yourself but it’s not okay when that is your entire personality.” He explained that he doesn’t like when a girl belittles others and believes she is better than everyone else in a room.

  From a female’s perspective, sophomore Elizabeth Cramer said, “I don’t like when a guy has a ton of girl friends, as a girl I know what most girls’ intentions are when it comes to a cute boy who is in a relationship.” She explained that she has been the girl before who had girls try to ruin her relationship for no real reason but because she found the guy attractive.

  Thankfully, not everyone has those red flags. Simonson followed his statement about how he likes when girls are selfless and aware of others feelings. He says, “I love when a girl takes my feelings into consideration, where I feel comfortable to be able to open up and feel like there is no limit to explaining how I may feel about things.”

  Cramer also has found some of the most endearing qualities for her future partner. She said, “When you know he has good intentions and a good heart that also takes your feelings into consideration, that’s when you know that there’s something special about them.” She explained that if a guy is humble enough to own up to mistakes and knows when he was in the wrong, that’s when you need to keep them. She followed that by saying, “Of course it applies to girls as well, but many guys tend to let their ego get the best of them so it’s hard to find a guy who is like that.”

  Those answers come from people who are currently looking for a relationship or just know what characteristics they want in a partner. But what about someone who has been in a relationship for one plus years? Junior Wren Wolvington went into detail about how important communication is in a relationship. “Communication is key, being able to talk through issues and solve them together therefore it is not only one sided is a big thing.” Wolvington also explained how boundaries are extremely important as well. Allowing someone to express their boundaries and you respecting their boundaries as well as just being kind during frustrating times is a big factor as well. She expressed how staying away from toxic tendencies will always keep your relationship healthy and pure.

### ELO Schedule Woes

- **Ben Records - Staff Writer**
  
  The 2023-24 school year started off a little rocky at Thompson Valley. With a whole new counseling department and changes with how ELO works, things were shaken up at the home of the Eagles.

  To start off, students were caught off guard by a new schedule-changing system. For the first week, instead of emailing the counselor or just walking into the office like they would have last year, students could only see the counselor if they had a “see counselor or just walking into the office like they would have...”

  John Shier, another senior, said that, “I think walk-ins for the first week was a great first step for changing schedules, however, I feel that the two days we could see the counselors was not long enough.”

  Clearly, the start of the school year has been rocky and unpredictable, but overall, it has been a good first quarter.

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The Voice is a student-run public forum. We welcome submissions of letters to the editor and other feedback. Any correspondence can be dropped off in room A96.
Opinions

Student Describes Being in Maui During Fire

Junior Ireland Neill was visiting the island with family when the fires broke out.

Ireland Neill - Staff Writer

Maui, Hawaii was severely affected by fires starting the morning of August 8. The fires, as many believed, were not directly caused by tourists, but by strong winds being blown by hurricane Dora. The very strong winds resulted in knocked over power lines and according to ABC news, even Hawaiian Electric admits that's what caused the fires. “Hawaii’s electric utility acknowledged its power lines started a wildfire on Maui but faulted county firefighters”. The power lines were tangled in untrimmed brush, causing sparks to fly and the fire to begin. Even though power was claimed to have been shut down six hours earlier, there is much speculation to the truthfulness of that.

The morning of August 8, my dad, my sister, my dad’s girlfriend and I decided we were going to take the Road to Hana. We were staying about three minutes North of Lahaina in a condo and left around 7 am. The road to our destination was a long one and the whole drive heavy winds were knocking around our jeep. During our drive we came up to a road with power lines in the road and had to turn around, but found another way.

With the high winds averaging 45 mph the whole day and reaching highs of 82 mph, the fire spread very fast. According to [who this is] in NBC Los Angeles, “The fires flared up Tuesday when weather conditions and other key factors, including the island’s natural landscape and weeks of dry conditions, resulted in a nightmare scenario for the island and firefighters trying to protect lives and property.”

Overall, the Lahaina fire alone burned 2,170 acres of land. This includes Front Street and many homes, shops and restaurants around the area. Power in the area was out when the fires’ intensity began to increase, so there was not much warning as to what was going on. That’s why so many lives were lost and people had to jump in the ocean, out of their cars, or off the street. No one was alerted there was fire; it just appeared for most. But, on this day, August 30, the Lahaina fire is no longer a threat and people are starting their recovery.

We spent the whole day traveling the Road to Hana, safe from direct contact with fires, but we were actually unaware of any danger, just like the majority of the people on the island. Eventually we started heading back to Lahaina and as we got closer to the town, the roads were so congested. As the night progressed winds got worse and were knocking the unmoving car around. We could see bright flames from a huge fire (not the Lahaina one, a brushfire) not far to our left. The car moved probably 30 feet in multiple hours. Around 11 o’clock we changed direction by crossing the median as many began doing, drove south and parked along the beach to spend the night. There were no hotels or condos available. The whole night we got knocked around by wind, but at 6 a.m. we headed off to a condo a family friend was able to loan us for a day.

The day the fires started, the road into Lahaina was shut down pretty fast. It opened up a few days later with a curfew, but a few hours later was shut down because of influencers and tourists taking video of what was going on, including homes that hadn’t been cleared yet and may have had fire victims in them. A Maui resident interviewed by the New York Post explained “You have tourists taking pictures of the destruction in Lahaina while there’s still bodies there. They’re snorkeling off the waters while they’re pulling people out of the water.” From that point on, only residents with Lahaina ID could enter. This meant people who were worried about family and couldn’t contact them in any way and tourists who lost all their stuff could not return to get it. Eventually the road opened again with a curfew, and the next day would be closed to anyone unless they had a placard, which meant you were a resident cleared to enter.

Luckily my dad, my sister and I (not my dad’s girlfriend, she had flown home) were able to retrieve what we had lost for six days. It took about an hour and a half to get in, and on our way we stopped and picked up a dozen or more cases of water to give to those who needed it. The three of us have left August 30 and ended up staying until the 17 due to five flights being canceled.

The condo we originally stayed at became a safe house for residents who lost homes, which. happened with a lot of Airbnb owners. As tourists left the island and stopped flying in, where they would have stayed were given to displaced locals. There were shelters in different places near the area. So many people, including my family brought water, clothes, food and other essentials from the only Walmart an hour away to the shelters and donation centers. My dad got to talking with a local running a small donation center and he told us how much help they were getting and they almost had too much stuff and didn’t know what to do with it. The best thing for tourists to do was get their stuff and leave as soon as possible. The island and people need to heal, and we need to let it.

Students Share Thoughts on ELO Changes

Even more changes to ELO on the horizon for second quarter

Michael Cramer - Staff Writer

ELO has changed many times throughout the past few school years, but this year had the biggest change yet with ELO now being between the first two periods, and the new system of signing up for ELO’s.

These changes have caused students to have strong opinions about ELO. Senior Danian Saucedo said, “ELO is pointless and we could be using our time better.” However, Saucedo added, “I still would rather have ELO than longer class time, ELO can be good for a break from sitting in class.”

Teacher vary having opinions. Business teacher Aaron Appelt said, “I would rather have the ELO than more class time.” Since there are guidelines for the number of hours that students have to be in class, the high schools in the district that do not offer ELO have to hold longer classes. For instance, Loveland High School has block periods that are over 90 minutes long. Adding the time that is now ELO to non-supervised time in the school day, like lunch, for instance is not an option. Some students are not aware of these guidelines.

As far as the move to detach ELO from the lunch period this year, there are mixed feelings. “I think that ELO during second period is better, since kids are less likely to ditch for lunch, but in general, I don’t like it,” Appelt states.

The set up in the cafeteria for students to choose ELO’s also caused some discomfort. It is also hard for students to find an ELO they would like with all the people in the one confined space. “I would like there to be more physical space for sign ups, but it is nice to talk to the students about what ELO is about,” stated Appelt.

And now, nearly halfway through the first semester, it sounds like ELO may be going through more changes before the spring. While nothing is finalized, a new model is being discussed that would include SAT prep.
Let’s Talk About Consent

Sex has to be an active choice in order to be consensual

Avery Gibbs, Staff Writer

It starts with sex ed in the eighth or ninth grade that turns the idea of sex into something that should be avoided at all costs, a dejectful and almost shameful thing. The lesson is shown perfectly in Mean Girls “Don’t have sex; you’ll get pregnant and die.” For high school students the shame and stigma that surrounds sex is not simply annoying, but it’s dangerous and it needs to be broken. Consent is a wildly important concept that unfortunately not enough people fully understand. Legally in the state of Colorado consent is defined as, “Cooperation in act or attitude pursuant to an exercise of free will and with knowledge of the nature of the act.” But to put it in a less scary way, Noah Stanton, a prevention education coordinator and victim advocate from SAVA (Sexual Assault Victim Advocate Center) in Fort Collins defines consent as, “agreement or permission to do something between two people. It is an active choice; it can’t be not saying anything. It also has to be a free choice. There can’t be any threats and intimidation and it has to be between two people with equal power.” Although this definition can be confusing and seemingly too in-depth Stanton states, “It’s really not that hard to ask, it can just be like checking in.” This is why free conversation about consent shouldn’t be avoided. It adds confusion, and although scary, asking is always better.

Communication adds a much needed clarity and it starts with education. Here at Thompson Valley, Craig Krager, a health and PE teacher states, “I think the stigma can definitely be broken and it only happens by talking about it. We are further education, with open dialogue and not that fear of having those conversations, that’s the only way we can break that stigma.”

Fear influences high school students greatly. It begins with talking to adults about something as personal as sex and then it can become even scarier to speak up when something happens. Fear is the main reason why most sexual assault cases are never reported. Noah states, “In general, three quarters of all sexual assaults are never reported to the police.” The reason for this she explains is because “So often survivors will come forward and share their story and be blamed for what happened to them.”

At SAVA, they state their goal is “a culture change that results in the end of sexual violence.” Culture changes take place here in high schools where impressionable young ninth and tenth graders learn about how to have healthy relationships. Sex education has changed over the years. Krager explains, “I think it’s definitely improved. It touches on the how and why as opposed to just where do babies come from? That used to be the main focus, but now it Touches on things like healthy relationships and consent.” This change shows hope for the future that teens will feel less ashamed and teachers, as well as trusted adults, will be able to treat sex as an open minded conversation filled with kindness and respect instead of non-discussable.

Stanton discusses the success SAVA has had with their education programs in Northern Colorado. “In terms of our prevention programs at SAVA we track the disclosures we receive and we work with students who disclose during a presentation or during a lesson related to sexual violence and we know that has gone up since we’ve started the program which we consider a good thing. From the onset it’s like oh no there’s more disclosures, but in reality, we know that the earlier somebody tells when something happens and gets support, the less likely they are to have long lasting psychological impacts so we think that is a really great thing.”

Prevention of sexual assault also comes with education on how to receive help as a survivor and how to treat survivors.

Stanton explains, “Our motto at SAVA is listen, believe, support. So listening is listening without judgment. Believing would be saying, ‘I believe you.’ It sounds kinda hoaky, but it’s extremely important and something we like to practice. Then finally support, a big part of that is when people experience sexual assault and other types of crimes they often feel like their autonomy has been taken away from them and so making sure to not take away further choice from them and giving [their autonomy] back to them.” These three ways to help a survivor will hopefully reassure them that what happened is not their fault.

Sadly, the media views sexual assault and rape survivors more often as the person in the wrong rather than a victim. False allegations and reports are presented as common, rather than what they truly are, which is rare.

Stanton states, “I would say something really important is that the rate of false reports for sexual assault is so much lower than a lot of people think it is - just because of the way our media portrays sexual assault and rape and these types of issues - it makes it seem like a lot of people are maybe creating false reports for self-serving purposes or if they feel guilty about having sex, but in reality, it is only 2-8 percent statistically of all reports are found to be false. That is the same as for any other violent crime so that’s like the same number of people who are making false reports for armed robbery.”

This statistical comparison should be enough to change society’s view of survivors, but unfortunately, media coverage and deeply embedded non sympathetic tendencies will continue, unless people begin to open up and become educated on these sorts of topics.

SAVA is an organization where students can begin to change these societal issues and help survivors. Stanton says, “There are a bunch of different ways [to get involved] so for people over the age of 18 they can volunteer to work on our hotline. We have a hotline training they can do. For people who are under 18 but over the age of 15, you can work at our summer prevention program called Super World and that is for more elementary aged kids and we teach them about healthy relationships and body positivity and consent, so it is volunteering to help with our camp counselor program. We also have school year education programs, so this year we have a program called the Sart Peers program that is in a lot of High schools in Northern Colorado and we are working on getting it in Thompson Valley. Definitely sign up for our programs if you see them in your school.”

In general consent is one of the most important things when it comes to healthy relationships. To help survivors listening, believing and supporting is key. Education in school and organizations like SAVA can begin to change the wrongful ideologies of students and society.

Discussing how their program has succeeded Stanton states, “It is a really great thing that people are starting to understand what types of things have happened to them and that they can share and get help and not be blamed.”
Running on Wings - Eagles Cross Country Team Soars to Big Wins

The 2023 cross country season has been a remarkable success for the boys cross country team. The boys team, composed of 27 boys, 10 Varsity, and 17 JV runners, has shown their incredible talent at both individual, and team level this season.

Some of the most notable races this year have been the Berthoud xc Invitational, John Martin Invitational, and the Longs Peak Invitational.

Senior Isaac Kreutzer says, "We did really well in [the Longs Peak Invitational]. That shows a lot of improvement." And the stats don’t lie. Last year the boys had two runners finish in the top 20, and this year there were six boys who placed in the top 20. And as for the overall scoring, the boys jumped from placing fourth, to winning the whole invitational.

"Some of the main changes from last year to this year is most of the athletes have a year more of growth and development in their physical size and fitness. Many of these athletes have been training consistently over the course of the last year and are seeing the benefits of that,” says head coach Kris Christensen.

Christensen, has been head coach for the last two years, and has seen drastic growth in the team. Before coaching at TV, he coached cross country at Bill Reed Middle School for several years. Christensen commented, “I work really hard to provide everything I can as the head coach, and I think the boys recognize it, acknowledge it, and match that effort. I am a team-first coach that tries to emphasize team before individual, and I think the way the boys work together in practice and at meets reflects that philosophy.”

Working as a team has been a great strong suit this season, but cross country is partially an individual sport as well. Many of the boys on the team have shown some of their personal bests during this season.

The journey of the boys from freshman to sophomore, sophomore to junior, and so forth has shown just how far this growth can go.

"I’d also like to say we got last year’s [runners]; they were sophomores, they’re now juniors. I think that was a big step. They’re now upperclassmen. I think that impacted the team culture a lot,” says Isaac Kreutzer.

Now that the postseason is coming up the TV cross country boys are preparing for regionals, and then state. These races will be the ultimate test and will showcase all of the work that the boys have put in over the season. Kreutzer says, “I see how, like we are placing pretty high, I don’t know if we will place a podium in state, but I think we are gonna place up there in state.”

Many of the teams that will qualify for state will put much competition on our boys team for some of those top spots. But with the dedication and leadership shown this season, anything is in the cards.
Christian Athletes impact Thompson Valley

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes brings community and consistency to some athletes’ lives

Christian Colling - Staff Writer

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) is a community of students who meet and are able to share their beliefs at school. The group has changed students’ lives.

Connor Hallagan, the Staff Sponsor of FCA reflected on his own experience with the organization in high school, "FCA was a place to come be in community with people who often had similar ideas. It was a place to know that I wasn’t alone in my faith and provided an opportunity to grow as a speaker and a leader."

FCA has a high population of students on the cross country team, and Hallagan is sometimes an assistant coach, strengthening those bonds. Hallagan has also seen how FCA has impacted others saying, “As both a coach and an FCA rep, I can’t explain how amazing it is to hear about the good things that some of these kids are doing in the community. The ‘this kid is so amazing’ calls come in often, and getting those is a testament to the work that God has done in [our athletes] and shows what living for Christ looks like.”

Hallagan added, “FCA allows kids to explore who this Jesus guy really is, serve those around them, and grow with those around them and I couldn’t be more thankful to be a part of that.”

Kaleb Spadafora, a Junior at who competes in cross country and is a member of FCA said, “I grew up going to church, but FCA really helped me take the next step in my faith. I went here and there in middle school, but once I started high school, I was committed. The community is amazing and I have learned so much since then.”

Spadafora also talked about the additional ways FCA has helped him grow. “Now, I have become a student leader in FCA, which is something I never thought I would do, but I really enjoy helping people take that next step as I did when I began FCA. I am forever grateful for FCA and how it has helped shape me into who I am today.”

Spadafora has brought a lot of things to FCA himself. He brings a great attitude, a smile, and has come into our weekly huddle providing input and helping others. In three years in FCA, Spadafora has seen it impact the school, saying, “When I started, it was really just some of the cross country team, with a few other people here and there. Now, if you come by during our Thursday lunch meetings, it’s almost a full classroom of people from all different sports and clubs, and even some that don’t do sports, and just want to learn about and praise Jesus. It is really amazing to see the effect it has on people’s lives and they keep coming back because they realize how fun it actually is.”

Another leader of FCA is sophomore Curtis Smela, a cross country athlete reflected on his time in FCA, “FCA has impacted me as a student by making me more involved in school, and care about my community more,” Smela added, “FCA has impacted others by giving them a community to be a part of and feel included with.”

If you are interested in being a part of FCA, they hold meetings at lunch every Thursday in the Health Room. You do not need to be an athlete to join.

Kicker Eli Metzger and quarterback Riley Suarez get into position for a kick. Photo courtesy of Misty Huss Photography.

The Eagle pit and Varsity football team celebrate the historic shutout win against Loveland High. The Eagles brought out a larger than life Eagles next for Coach to celebrate the team from.

New Eagles in the Nest

A new season brings a new head coach and high expectations for the Eagle football team

Ian Firestone - Staff Writer

The Eagles football team returned to the field this season with a new head coach leading them. Jamie Steele, the interim head coach, was the running back coach for the team last year. Steele was quoted by CHSAA now in “Denver Broncos coach of the week, Thompson Valley’s Jamie Steele” as saying “I just love being around the game of football and being around players. If I can make a difference in their lives, and they understand and respect the game of football – I just get joy out of that.”

After making playoffs last year for the first time since 2016, all eyes are on the football team to see if they can replicate the run.

The Eagles took the field for the first time this year against Summit High School, and finished with a 36-15 victory. And on September 16th they did something that hadn’t been done in 18 years. The Eagles beat Loveland High School with a 14-0 win. Such a performance in the first couple games certainly seems to suggest that the coaches have already impacted the team in positive ways. Colton James, a junior who plays tight end and outside linebacker says, “The new coaching staff has taught me to think more about what I’m actually doing when I’m on the field and helps me make bigger plays."

The last home football game is October 19th at 7:00 PM, so pack the pit and show your Eagle pride.

Need some Eagle gear to show your pride? Visit the school store at lunch on the last day of every week!
CALLING ALL SENIORS!
Class of 2024 Recognition Ads (Baby Ads)
can be purchased now through October
21st for the yearbook.
Visit
www.theyearbookcompany.com
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