October 2022 Vol. 32, No. 1

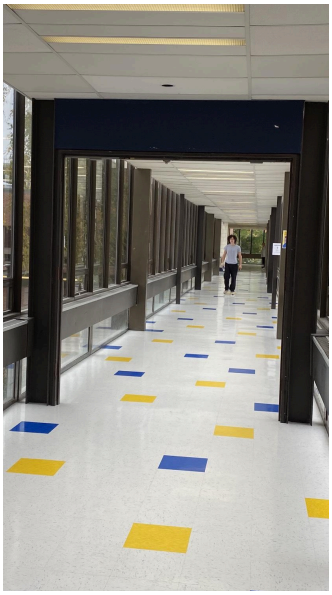
The Cougar Chronicle

The Student Newspaper of Haddam-Killingworth High School

Improvements Made to Building; More to Come

By Tobin Prue

Cracking tiles, hot rooms, and chipping paint would have been the words to describe HK last year, but many of those issues have been resolved, thanks to several projects completed over the summer.



The new tiles on the walkway to the cafeteria. (photo by T. Prue)

The HK cafeteria and catwalk received a makeover, as the old mismatched tiles were replaced with new glossy white tiles. To bring out that school spirit, there are blue and yellow tiles scattered around the white tiles in a patterned style.

Not only was the floor redone, but some of the stairwells were repainted a light gray, covering the decaying decals on the walls.

Even with the changes made, the need for additional changes remains, including the replacement of the old air-conditioning units.

“The original devices are original to the building and have begun to fail,“ noted minutes from the Sept. 13 Board of Education meeting. "Currently there are five units that are not working. The proposed direction for the High School is to find a more modern method to cool the building. Board member [Peter] Sonski advised that any proposed situation will not be feasible within this academic year due to sourcing delays."

"Superintendent [Jeffrey] Wihbey noted items such as looking at eight units, requests for other alternative options to be given, and that the work would not look to begin until the summer of 2023," continued the minutes.

School Policies Updated and Enforced

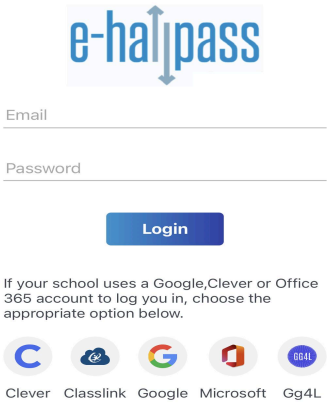
By Lindsay Blade

At the start of the 2022 school year, the students at HK have seen increased enforcement of cell phone policies as well as a new hall pass policy.

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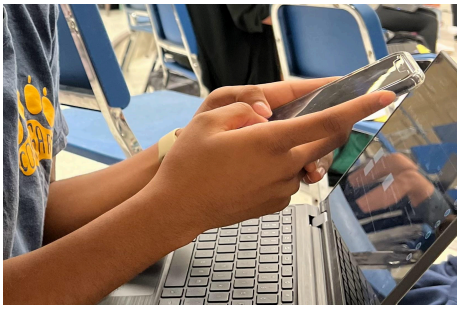
Many students at HK are slowly learning how to adjust to the new pass system. The new website that has been introduced is called the E-Hallpass, which requires students to sign out from classrooms electronically, with teacher approval.

"We need to know where 600 students are, and where our kids are if there was ever a fire drill or lockdown and a student was missing," explained Mr. Adam Apicella, assistant principal.



Teachers at HK increasingly noticed last year that students were taking advantage of using their cell phones during class and it was becoming a distraction to the students' education. The cell phone policy that had been in place remains, but teachers are enforcing it more consistently. Among the features included are this one: If teachers catch students on their phone, they can take the phone and give the student detention.

Jayani Bennett, sophomore at HK, seems to disagree with this policy. "The cell phone policy is pretty inadequate. If there's an emergency, how are students supposed to communicate if the phone policy is so strict? I understand that cell phones are a distraction but at the same time, it is mostly our way of communicating in this generation."



(photo illustration by Lindsay Blade)

HK Honor Societies Clean Up the Coast

By Sami Pach

Each year volunteers from the Spanish and French Honor Societies embark on a trip to the Old Saybrook town beach as a part of International Coastal Cleanup day. This year on Sept. 17, HK was joined by Old Saybrook High School's Ecology Club.

More than 30 years ago, Linda Marniss and Kathy O'Hara founded International Coastal Cleanup while working at a nonprofit named the Ocean Conservancy. After approaching many environmental activists, they had enough support to start a group.

Not only is it important to pick up all of the trash seen, but it has to be recorded on a special sheet as well. This paper has special sections for different types of trash that can be found. One group in particular found 124 cigarette butts. Other sections on this sheet include microplastics, metals, and glass.

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According to *National Today*, in 2018, “One million volunteers from all over the world remove at least 23 million pounds of trash from beaches and coastlines.”



HK cleans up the beach in Old Saybrook. (photo courtesy of Ms. Corey Borzain)

Joining a cleanup group can prevent the spread of micro plastics, glass, and other objects harmful to animals and humans. If the beach is inaccessible, two other ways to help are by calling out those who litter and by reducing the amount of plastics in use.

If everyone helps just a little, we can keep the shoreline clean and animals safe. Members of both the HK Spanish and French Honor Societies expressed their excitement about going on this trip next year with new people.

Fewer Hurricanes, But More Extreme Damage

By Saige Merwin

Hurricane Fiona recently brought power outages and wreaked serious damage to Puerto Rico last month before heading out to sea and returning to land in Nova Scotia, ravaging the landscape.

Soon after, Hurricane Ian packed an even more devastating punch, leaving more than 100 people dead, as it was the fifth-strongest hurricane to make landfall in the U.S., according to the *Washington Post*.

Even as these recent storms seem to fulfill a year in which meteorologists predicted one of the most active hurricane seasons ever, these were the only two hurricanes to hit the U.S after the fourth month of the Atlantic hurricane season.

Fiora was among the largest hurricanes recorded in Nova Scotia with multiple buildings washed into the ocean and a record amount of flooding. The last time Nova Scotia took the brunt of a hurricane with a similar intensity was Hurricane Juan in 2003, another storm with winds above 100 mph.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), “For the 2022 hurricane season, NOAA is forecasting a likely range of 14 to 21 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 6 to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 3 to 6 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher)."

NOAA said it provided these ranges "with a 70% confidence.”

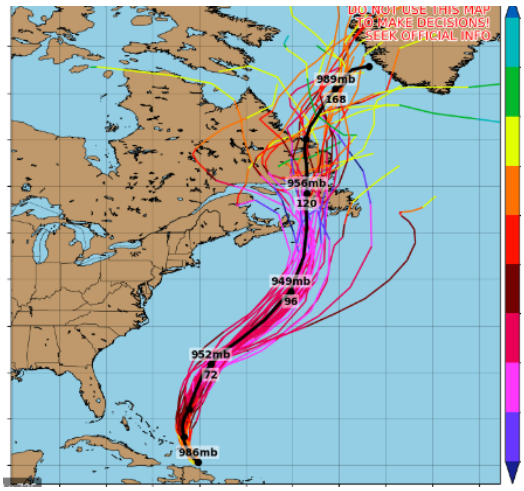
On May 24, NOAA released an alarming prediction for the Atlantic hurricane season. This forecast included 14 to 21 named storms, six to 10 becoming hurricanes and three to six becoming *major* hurricanes. This forecast aligned with the 2011 hurricane season, the fourth most active on record since 1851. Even with Fiona and Ian, the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season ranks among the least active hurricane seasons on record, according to

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Bay News 9 of St. Petersburg, Florida.

This season has had nine named storms, four of which became hurricanes, the first time since 2014 we haven't had a major hurricane before the midpoint of the season (Sept 10).

“Rainfall totals inland ranged from 2–3 in (51–76 mm) in parts of the Midlands of South Carolina to near 7 in (180 mm) near Charleston, South Carolina,” said Cory Smith of WLTX of Columbia, South Carolina. This is less rain than Connecticut saw on the Sept. 7 soaker, which dropped eight inches of rain on Higganum in the span of two days.



Queen Elizabeth’s Reign Over after 70 Years.

By Alec Sicurella

Queen Elizabeth, the United Kingdom’s longest reigning queen, died on Sept. 8 at the age of 96.

She was never meant to be queen. Her sister Mary was actually in line for the throne. After her father died, Elizabeth became queen at age 27 in the first live television broadcast. She traveled more widely than any king or queen who came before her.

Privately, she reveled in a love for horse racing and her Welsh corgis. She was also reputed to have a great sense of humor behind closed doors. For example, *Business Insider* reported how she "poked fun at world leaders and participated in a 'James Bond' skit for the 2012 Olympics."

She was the longest reigning monarch in UK history. She bred a new breed of dog called the Dorgi, a mix of Dachshund and Corgi.

Since Queen Elizabeth's passing, her son, Prince Charles III, is king. Now, the UK’s national anthem “God Save The Queen” will be changed to “God Save The King,” according to *The New York Times*.

The New Faces at HK

By Kelsie Piela and Madalynn Catalano

Many new faces can be seen in classrooms this year at HK. Among them are teachers in the English and Science Departments.



Ms. Jennifer Shatraw

Jennifer Shatraw is a new English teacher at HK. She went to school at the State University of New York and got her

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graduate degree at Texas A&M in English literature.

She has a passion for literature and says it was a logical fit for her to become a teacher so she could share her love for books.

Ms. Shatraw has two daughters who both go to the middle school. Before moving to Haddam in the summer of 2021, the Shatraw family lived in Texas for eight years and took a trip back there this summer.

This is her sixth year teaching English. “HK has been wonderful," said Ms. Shatraw. "The students are kind and hardworking.” She also praised the teachers for helping her adjust.

While she doesn’t have a favorite book – "there are too many to choose from" – she said that her favorite author is Margaret Atwood because of the humor, logic, and research she puts into her writing.

Ms. Shatraw said she has passions other than literature. She loves yoga and is a yoga instructor in her free time. She also loves pottery and spending time with her family and their great danes. She said that being a teacher is "so much work but it is so worth it."



Ms. Heather Ferrer

Heather Ferrer, a new face to the current students of HK, is actually a returning science teacher with 15 years of experience under her belt.

After graduating from the University of Rhode Island with majors in zoology and marine biology, she trained dolphins for the Navy in San Diego and worked with youth and family ministries. She then began teaching at HK, but took a break to do more work in the Youth and Family Ministries as well as raise her two children who are now in middle and intermediate school.

While Ms. Ferrer did take a teaching hiatus to focus on other aspects in her life, she has remained an active part of the community coaching a local recreational U-10 girls' lacrosse team, referring to the HK community as "home."

When asked about her homecoming as a member of the high school staff, Ms. Ferrer said, “Things are going well because the staff has been amazing!”

The passion Ms. Ferrer brings not only to her teaching but also to community service is recognized by students and families alike. One HK student referred to her as “a great figure in the community.”

OPINION

School Policies Get Mixed Reviews

By Mya Conlon

Entering the new school year means many new things including new policies or rules for the students. Some of the back-to-normal policies include the new e-hall pass and more strictly enforced phone rules. I believe that these both have

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important benefits but also can be inconvenient, and I know that many other students can agree.

Students are directed to use the e-hall pass when they need to go anywhere in the school, including the bathroom or meeting with a teacher. Essentially, students have to use this whenever they want to leave the classroom. This new technology will help with the bathroom capacity, limiting how many students can be in each bathroom to two, while also keeping the bathrooms safe.

In addition, the app enables administrators and teachers to find a student if needed.The app includes a time limit for how long students can be out of the classroom, which is set at five minutes but can be modified by your teacher.

Assistant Principal Adam Apicella said, “We need to know where 600 students are, and where our kids are if there was ever a fire drill or lockdown and a student was missing.”

I think that the e-hall pass in this case is a safety feature and could be very important if something like that were to happen.

While the e-hall pass has benefits, it also has some downsides, including being inconvenient. In the middle of class, you have to pull out your computer or phone, create a pass, and get your teacher to approve you. I found this to take up more time than simply asking my teacher to use the bathroom. Keep in mind this system is new to both the teachers and the students, so learning how to use it can also be time-consuming during class.

One existing policy that teachers have been enforcing more consistently is the phone policy, which was re-emphasized by the Board.

“Teachers needed a more universal code," said Mr. Apicella, explaining how some teachers reinforce the policy for phones in different ways. In the past, some prohibited all phones and some just let it slide when they saw a student with a phone.

Cell phones are known for being a major distraction in the classroom, so the rule from the Board is no phones during class unless given permission from your teacher, which isn't always followed because many students go on their phones in class anyway. While I always have my phone with me or on my desk during class, I know that placing my phone out of sight would greatly benefit my education.

In the end, these policies should bring better enforcement and more student engagement, while keeping students off their phones and in the hallways less.

SPORTS

Fall Sports Wrap-Up

By Luke Staskelunas

The first "regular," non-Covid sports season is underway in Connecticut and HK's fall sports teams are off to a solid start.

Boys' Soccer

This boys' soccer team is coached by Head Coach Mike Mead and by Assistant Coach Andrew Mead. The captains this season are senior Tyler Perry, senior Jack Straka, and junior Cole Merriam. The boys had a record of 6-3-1 at

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press time, with wins coming against Coginchaug, Portland, Hale Ray, Valley Regional, North Branford, and St. Paul.

The team was fourth in the Shoreline Conference and ninth in the state in Class S at press time. The boys continue to roll their way through the conference and are only a few wins away from clinching a spot in the playoffs.

Girls' Soccer

Girls' soccer is coached by head coach Mike Shea and assistant coach Anthony Shea. The captains for the team this year are seniors Leah Chester and Caroline Conte.

The team had an overall record of 5-4-1 and were 6th in Shoreline play at press time with their five wins coming against North Branford/Hale Ray, Old Lyme, Platt Tech, Wilbur Cross, and Westbrook.

Girls' Volleyball

The girls' volleyball team is coached by Robin Callender and the captains are seniors Payton Yazmer, Audra Yazmer, Kaleigh Bodak, and Paige Corcoran.

At press time, the team had an overall record of 7-3 with wins coming against Cromwell, Old Lyme, North Branford, Valley Regional, and East Hampton, Morgan, and Cromwell. They were fourth in the Shoreline and 11th in Class S.

Football

The Cougars football team is led by Head Coach Tyler WIlcox and senior captains Tate Callender, Alex Phipps, and Joe Whiteside.

At press time the team had a record of 2-2 with their wins coming against Old Saybrook/Westbrook, 30-0, in week one, and Windsor Locks, 28-12, in week four.

When asked about the team's outlook this year, Coach Wilcox said, “The expectations are to go out and compete every single week. We are a senior-led group that has a lot of experience all over the field. These guys are holding each other accountable and are looking forward to a very successful season.”

Wilcox added that the goal is “to go 1-0 every week.” He says that they focus on the job on a weekly basis.

Cross Country Teams Off to Strong Start

By Alex Lara

The girls' cross country team is off to a dominant start of their season with a series of impressive victories out of state.

The girls first headed to New York where they placed first at Somers Big Red Invitational. The varsity squad returned to New York the following week, where they won the Suffern Bear Mountain Invitational. The girls carried the momentum to Rhode Island, where varsity placed third overall at the Ocean State Invitational.

Freshman Grace Mitchel and Delaney Aronson, make valuable additions to the varsity squad, joining returning runners such as pack leader Isabel Beradino.

This powerhouse team will soon face off against fellow Shoreline Conference teams, hoping to contribute to their impressive dual meet record and win the Shoreline Championship for the sixth time in the last seven years.

The boys' cross country has had some difficulty in the first half of their

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season with a series of unfortunate injuries and illnesses conspiring to prevent the team from coming together to demonstrate its full potential as of yet. Nevertheless, the boys have persevered, with the JV boys in particular having great success.

After competing at the Somers Big Red Invitational, the varsity boys placed 4th at Bear Mountain. On that same day, the JV boys won a commanding victory at the CT River Valley Invite. The boys then competed at the Ocean State Invitational in Rhode Island, where the JV boys placed 3rd.

The boys are set to face more local competition in the coming weeks, and as more runners rejoin the lineup, the boys hope to maintain their 117-0 dual meet record, as well as win the Shoreline Championship for the 9th consecutive year.

Field Hockey Returns to Winning Ways

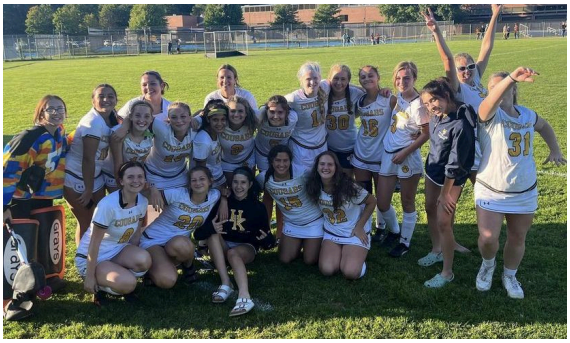
By Caroline Ignatuk

HK field hockey opened with a bang with a win against Valley Regional, 3-1. This was a huge improvement from last year's season, in which the team lost to Valley, 8-0 and 5-1.

After putting up a fight against North Branford, HK eventually came out with a 2-0 loss. Even this loss bettered last season's performance, when HK lost 3-0. After this defeat, the team went out strong in their next game against Morgan, winning 3-0. Téa Norman, HK's goalie, did an effective job of keeping Morgan from scoring.

The girls followed the Morgan win, with another success against Mercy, winning 1-0.

At press time, the team had a record of 4-5-1. Many of the players credit this improvement to the head coach, Dee Stephens. Coach Dee, new to the team last season, has helped the players tremendously this year and last. With her motivational spirit, she guides the players through each practice and game, educating them on stick skills and positions.



The 2022 HK Field Hockey Team

This season's captains, Audrey Wrinn, Brooklyn Bailey, Kelsie Piela, and Sophie Ramino, have also played a huge role in helping the team improve. Senior Piela said, "I think everyone has been working really hard and the team has a winning mindset."

Ramino, another senior captain, added, "We are bonded a lot more than last year. The whole team is practicing together, we have fun together, we cry together. We're more of a friend group than we've ever been."

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