
The **W**arrior ORD

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE UPPER SCHOOL



COVER STORY

If I Could Talk to My Kindergarten Self

by Anna Dunne, 12th; featuring David Smith, 12th, & Mae Li Blankenship, 12th

The Class of 2027 has started the year out as all WCA seniors do. An early first day of school to watch the sunrise. An evening spent prior decorating cars and parking spaces. An eventful hour spent running around with our Kindergarten buddies. Nights spent at football games and volleyball matches. One could easily say senior year has already been chalk-full of once-in-a-lifetime moments. And yet, any senior can attest to the fact that it still sometimes feels just like any other school year. Classes, tests, and projects still fill our days. As we embark on a year pieced together from familiar experiences and new ones, tedious days and exciting ones, we reflect on years past. I'm sure almost everyone out there wishes there were things we could say to our younger selves, advice we could impart, guidance we could give. A few of the 2027 seniors wrote down words they would say if given the opportunity to go back and talk to their kindergarten selves.

David Smith wrote, *"I have learned to live with no regrets, which is something I wish you would've known. One thing I want you to know is to never lose your love for reading! I know it may not be the coolest thing in middle school and early high school, but trust me when I say you need to stick with it. Over the years I have heard multiple in-person talks from famous leaders, and they all emphasize the importance of reading and how it develops leadership skills. I also wish now that you would've tried to play baseball once, I think you would've had potential. One thing you can look forward to is the future friendships you will forge. Somedays you may not like them, but ultimately you will be surrounded by like-minded, God-fearing young men. One thing you need to never lose is your childlike self-confidence. Trust me when I say it'll get you places. I really would pray that you come to Christ early, and that you have a nagging curiosity to learn more about the Gospel and the Lord in general. I pray that you never shy away from the hard questions."*

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PRAYER

Prayers for Chandler Templet

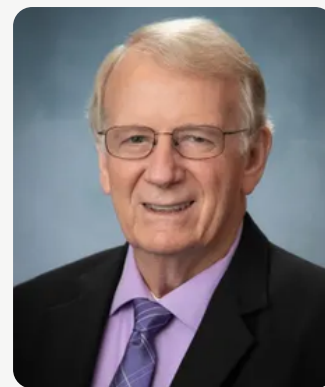
by Anna Clayton, 10th, & Peyton Wilkerson, 10th

Our friend and fellow student, Chandler Templet, is currently undergoing radiation and chemotherapy for Ewing Sarcoma. There are many ways we could pray for her during this hard situation that would be greatly appreciated. First, pray for the tumor to shrink and for her medical staff to have wisdom along this journey. Also, pray for complete healing and restoration of her body and that the chemo and radiation will complete all it is intended to. And pray for God to let His peace rest on them and bring comfort to them during this difficult time in her life. Pray that they know they are loved and thought about on the daily by many families at Whitesburg. In Matthew 19:26 Jesus said to them, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." This was the verse Chandler picked at the beginning of this year to dwell on during the school year. It would be a huge help for everyone to pray that that verse sticks with her and that she knows God will walk with her every step of the way!

INTERVIEW

Q & A with Mr. Reeder

by Anna Kolthoff, 7th



Mr. Reeder has been the headmaster at WCA since 2010. He is in charge of many things here at The Academy including choosing the theme for each year. Mr. Reeder is the author of two published books, his latest one is called *Down Comes the Tower*.

He is also a Vietnam War veteran. Mr. Reeder is a great headmaster, and he knows all the things going on around Whitesburg.

Why did you choose the theme "Rise up, Shine Bright"?

The theme for this year was inspired by three things. First, the scripture from Isaiah 60:1, "Arise, shine; for your light has come". Second, as I was thinking about a theme for this year, I kept thinking of the song our grammar students sing, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine". I did a scripture search of verses that speak to believers being a light in the world.



Third, when I read the verse in Isaiah, I thought about the sculpture that stands in the American Cemetery in Normandy, France. It commemorates the sacrifice of American lives for the liberation of France during the D-day invasion. The name of the sculpture is "American Youth, Rising from the Waters." The people of France deeded the land for the cemetery to the

United States, and commissioned the statue. My hope is that our students will be inspired to rise to the occasion that we are presented with today, just as American youth rose to the occasion of World War II.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I love people, and beyond my own family, I love the faculty, staff, and students at The Academy the most. I look forward to going to work every single day, and being with the best students, the best faculty, and the best staff of any school in America. Beyond that, I am excited about all that is happening on our campus. In the midst of construction of a new playground, a new athletic stadium, and the design phase of a new music building, we are having school every day; teaching and learning is happening.

How is your recovery from your surgery going?

My recovery is going well, but slowly. It's great to be back. I missed watching seventh graders learning how to open a locker, the excitement of the first day, hearing the laughter in the hallways, and seeing smiling faces. I am writing this on Thursday morning of our first football game, and it makes me very sad to think of missing it. I have never missed a home football game.

Did you like the video that the school sent you?

The video was amazing, I watched it multiple times.

How do you feel about your grandson graduating this year?

I have eleven grandsons, and one special granddaughter. Three have graduated high school and are now in college. It is very special to hand your own grandson a diploma. I am very blessed.

UPCOMING EVENT

Spirit Week

By Carter Cochran, 8th

Spirit week is an exciting time for our school! From Monday to Friday, the students get to wear unusual outfits. Each day has a separate theme for the students to plan together. The days are Decades Day, Tacky Tourist, Character Day, Duos/Trios, and Spirit Day. Students will plan weeks before the actual day during breaks and outside of school to ensure their outfits are ready.

Kicking off spirit week is Decades Day. For Decades Day, each grade is given a specific decade to dress like. Each grade looks like a portal into the past where you get to recognize how, as a culture, we have moved on and advanced. 12th: 2000s, 11th: 90s, 10th: 80s, 9th: 70s, 8th: 60s, 7th: 50s.

Tuesday showcases Tacky Tourist Day. Students dress like tourists who wear mismatched and impractical clothing. Common items are Leis and Hawaiian shirts. This silly day is exciting and fun for a lot of people!

Wednesday, you get to pick any character you want for Character Day! You can wear a costume and bring props to make your costume pop! You have a wide range of places to choose from, like movies, books, shows, and video games.

Teamwork makes the dreamwork on Thursday with Duos/Trios making their first appearance at Whitesburg! Students are given the opportunity to collaborate on their outfits. They get to match colors, make iconic teams come to life, and watch others do the same.

Last but not least, we get to end the week with Spirit Day. This is the day every other day is preparing us for. Wear your school colors and cheer on our football team as they play an exciting game against Lindsay Lane!

Spirit Week
SEPTEMBER 14-18

MONDAY	Decades Day
6 th & 12 th : 2000s 5 th & 11 th : 90s 3 rd , 4 th , & 10 th : 80s 2 nd & 9 th : 70s 1 st & 8 th : 60s TK, K, & 7 th : 50s	
TUESDAY*	Tacky Tourist
WEDNESDAY	Character Day
THURSDAY*	Duo/Trio Day
FRIDAY	Spirit Day Wear your best Warrior colors or Homecoming Shirt!

*Upper School ONLY!



SPORTS REPORT: FOOTBALL

First Game of the Season

by Bryce Chaffin, 8th

The Whitesburg Christian Academy Warriors played their first game of the season against the St. John Paul II Falcons. We had the special opportunity to play our first game at Wicks Family Field, and this game did not disappoint. The Whitesburg Warriors started the game strong with the first three drives producing touchdowns. The Warriors quickly stomped out any fire that JP2 had left. Throughout the first quarter, the JP2 Falcons had no answer to the Warrior's defense. Not long after the start of the second quarter, the Warriors piled on their fourth touchdown. The Warriors were about to score again when weather delayed the game. Not long after the rain delay, the Warriors scored their fifth touchdown, bringing the score 35-0. Throughout the rest of the game the Warriors shut down the JP2 Falcons.

The Nuwayhid brothers had two stand out performances. With Henry Nuwayhid racking up three passing touchdowns from quarterback Greer Lovell, and Reid Nuwayhid catching two interceptions. Also Price Crunkleton was perfect for the night, going five for five on extra points for the night.

Our Whitesburg Christian Academy cheerleaders and band showed out all game. They waited out the rain delays, and continued to perform well. They showed great enthusiasm and support throughout the game.



SPORTS REPORT

Starting the Year Strongby Abigail Good, 7th, & Leah Chaviers, 7th

Our Whitesburg athletic teams work very hard and deserve some spotlight. This year, they have an exciting season ahead of them.

Let's start with our Varsity Cheerleading team. This year, they are looking forward to building Christ-like relationships with each other on and off the mat. Laura Gilchrist says, "We have a new routine this year for competition and we are so excited to show others what we are working on!" Hallie Olinger says, "We have a new team and new competition routine this year! We can't wait to let the school and everyone else see the best new team perform!" They are so right. A new year has so many possibilities so it's not all about winning, it's about bonding and making friends in sports and out. Lastly, Latham Wells says, "We are doing a lot more team bonding this year, because the closer we are the better we perform." You yourself can see this new routine in action at the VBC on Oct 17, 2026

Now let's not forget our Cross Country warriors of the school. Our Cross Country is amazing and they are already off to a great start! Captain Izzy Allan says, "This season I'm looking forward to watching the team grow and hopefully win another state championship!" Ameilia Allan says, "I am looking forward to running at the meets and growing closer to the team!" These warriors are hardworking and strong. You can see these Warriors on September 26 at Whitesburg Twilight at PR'ville.

Our swim and dive team may not be in the spotlight, but with WCA everything is worth talking about. Our swim team has all absolutely amazing swimmers. They work together in Christian love to swim their hardest. Also, our dive team has extraordinary divers and an amazing coach so if you're interested, please join our swim and dive team.

Last but certainly not least, our awesome volleyball team. Our volleyball team is so ready for their season. They got up early in the morning just to go to practice. Sunday Ezell, the captain of the 8th grade team, said "I think our team is great at encouraging each other. If we are down by a lot, Caroline McCarthy especially, we encourage each other. We build each other up." They have ongoing spirit and never ending positivity, and the 8th and 7th grade teams never give up. Both teams are incredible at making everyone feel accepted into the teams as sisters in volleyball and in school. Maggie Cummings said, "We are great at never being negative toward others, we always cheer each other on even when the game/practice is very difficult." We should all be like them, encouraging each other when it's hard. Vanessa Vanderford said, "I'm looking forward to having fun with my friends while playing volleyball because it is two of my favorite things at one time." The volleyball team always has spirit to share, and Whitesburg coaches and teammates help each other with everything they can. So if you ever just want to be uplifted, go to one of their games.

Our Whitesburg Athletes are amazing, so go out and support our Warriors. Go Warriors!





STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

From Mentee to Mentorby Anna Newlin, 10th

This year has marked a change in our grade, going from a mentee to a mentor. Going through this change over just one summer is a surreal experience, but all very exciting and fun. It was so amazing being mentored and having the opportunity to learn, laugh, and love Jesus with the best mentors. Now, we are the mentors and have the chance to lead our very own mentees. We are excited to take what has been learned from the past few years and apply it to the groups that we are all now in! Having this personalized group to talk with, relate to, and pray with is such a blessing and a great opportunity to meet new people. Enjoying small group time with mentees to talk about Jesus and His blessings on us is not something to take for granted.

Through these groups, we are taught how to share our testimonies to others, learn about others' walk with Jesus, and pray over friends that we might not usually pray over. To have this opportunity to not be shy in our faith and given the chance to mentor younger students who should be encouraged by us to grow in faith is such a gift. Being mentees, we looked forward to laughing with and loving on those who we knew we could trust and look up to, and now being the mentors we want to have the same effect on our mentees. Always taking a chance to include Jesus in any leadership position is an important skill set to have. Especially mentor groups where the opening to talk about Jesus is a given.

"My mentor group is an amazing, fun, and supportive group where older girls guide younger girls through Bible study, meaningful conversations, and friendships that help us grow together." -Riley Durham, 7th. Being a mentee meant learning from people older than you and taking in their advice about school, life, and most importantly: their walk in Jesus. Growing up with mentor leaders encourages mentees to do the same when they reach 10th grade and have their very own mentees.

Becoming a mentor this year is a huge change for my grade, from being the ones who needed the help and advice to becoming who gives the advice and who leads the group. Having the opportunity to be a lead mentor is so incredible, because of the chance to actually lead the group in prayer and keep everyone on track. The mentor groups that we have now could be groups that we can always reach out to, talk to, and ask for advice from. A group chosen specifically for us is not something to ignore and should be taken seriously, because we never know how one thing could change someone's faith with your own testimony.

"I learned so much from my mentors; they helped me navigate through high school and told me things that benefited me greatly. Being a mentor has shifted my perspective and I want to do the same to my mentees that my mentors did to me" -Elle Abercrombie, 10th. Overall, this experience for my grade going from mentee to mentor has been so fun to experience, and we cannot wait to be leaders for Christ!



SCHOOL EVENT

Grandparents' Dayby Logan Cutter, 8th

Grandparents Day is a grammar school event that grandparents from grades TK through 6th look forward to every year. 2026 was the seventeenth Grandparents day, and the students of each grade learned and performed a song directed towards God and the love that our school has for our grandparents. They also create a gift that they give to their grandparents. For example, the fifth grade gift was a "What I love about you heart" which is a heart with a bunch of things they love about them. This means a lot to the grandparents. My grandma said, "I love being surrounded by so many loving grandparents. It's such a calm, cozy feeling, and being a grandma is one of the biggest joys of my life. Watching my grandsons every year grow taller, get smarter, and more adorable. I am so proud of my grandsons simply by who they are and who they are becoming. The music choices throughout all the grades singing makes me feel happy. I feel very welcomed and seeing the wonderful classrooms and meeting their teachers has been a pleasure. Grandparents day is the best day of the year." Thankfully for Upper School students, we didn't get left out. We had an e-learning day right before Labor Day, so it made for a four-day weekend.



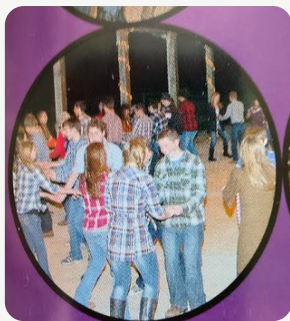
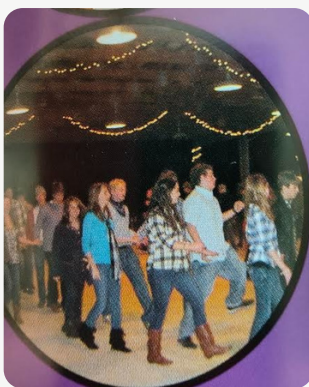
SCHOOL HISTORY

The History of HOCO

by Kate Mullis, 8th

We have all seen the photos of the homecoming dance, been to at least one of the games, and gotten out of class early for an awesome parade or pep rally, but have likely never thought about the history behind it. Almost two decades have passed since this tradition started, and we still work as hard as we did back then.

Whitesburg's first Homecoming dance was a "Hoedown" at Tate farms in 2010. The pavilion was full of pumpkins, and fairy lights set the mood. That year was also the beginning of the Homecoming court tradition, and the very first Homecoming queen was the daughter of the Tates! Since we had no football team then, Homecoming was centered around basketball, like today's "Hoopcoming". Back then our basketball "rival" was considered Lindsay Lane, the school we are playing football against this year for Homecoming.



One of the major HOCO traditions was the decorating of the doors. Each grade got a door to decorate as they pleased, and could choose a theme. As the years went by, the door wasn't enough for these decorations and it extended into the hallways. If you look close enough, you could probably still see what remains of the glue and tape that never entirely came off. One year, the seniors added the

elevator to their domain. Each time that you would walk into it, you'd hear the music blasting and see the decor that covered every single space. Another tradition was when each class would make banners to hang in the ROC, that said variations of the same message, "Go Warriors!" The decorating of doors tradition and the banners were soon discontinued, because you could no longer see the actual walls anymore.

In the middle of the pandemic, we first got a football team and shifted our HOCO focus from basketball to football. We had our very first Homecoming football game shortly after. It was very memorable when some alumni came back to watch our players! That same year, we started the Homecoming Parade and had the Whitesburg Band play in it. The students were able to focus their attention and artistic ability on the floats, instead of the walls.

"So, the year the band learned to march?" Mrs. Bolton said in an interview, "That was a great memory." Prior to 2022, The band performed at the pep rallies and parades but never did a half-time show. Later that year our first-ever Warrior marching band was formed, led by Drum Major Ethan Cole, and Mr. Willis, our band director. They have never failed to give us a great half-time show!

From the football field to the dance floor, I believe our students will rise up and shine bright for Christ, doing everything for Him. Though Homecoming has changed over the years, the school spirit stays the same.

SCHOOL EVENT

Energized for Energy

by Luke Tumminello, 12th

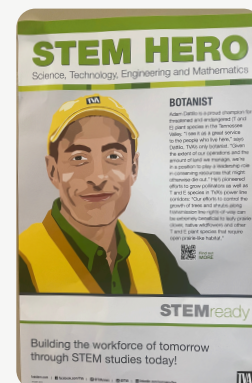
This year, Whitesburg Christian Academy has the privilege of being a part of the TVA's School Uplift Program. The Tennessee Valley Authority, the company responsible for providing electricity to portions of Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, and Tennessee, has gifted over one hundred schools, including WCA, a generous \$10,000 grant. Everything, from air conditioning and heating to lights and electricity, uses energy. As our school continues to grow, it also requires more and more energy, meaning energy conservation is becoming increasingly important. That's why the TVA has devoted resources to training students and faculty alike to be more energy-conscious.

There are many ways we can conserve energy, whether in school or at home. Turning off lights when no one is in the room can help use less electricity, and closing doors and windows puts less stress on the air conditioner by trapping cool air inside. In addition, simply spreading awareness of efficient energy use helps us be mindful of our resources.

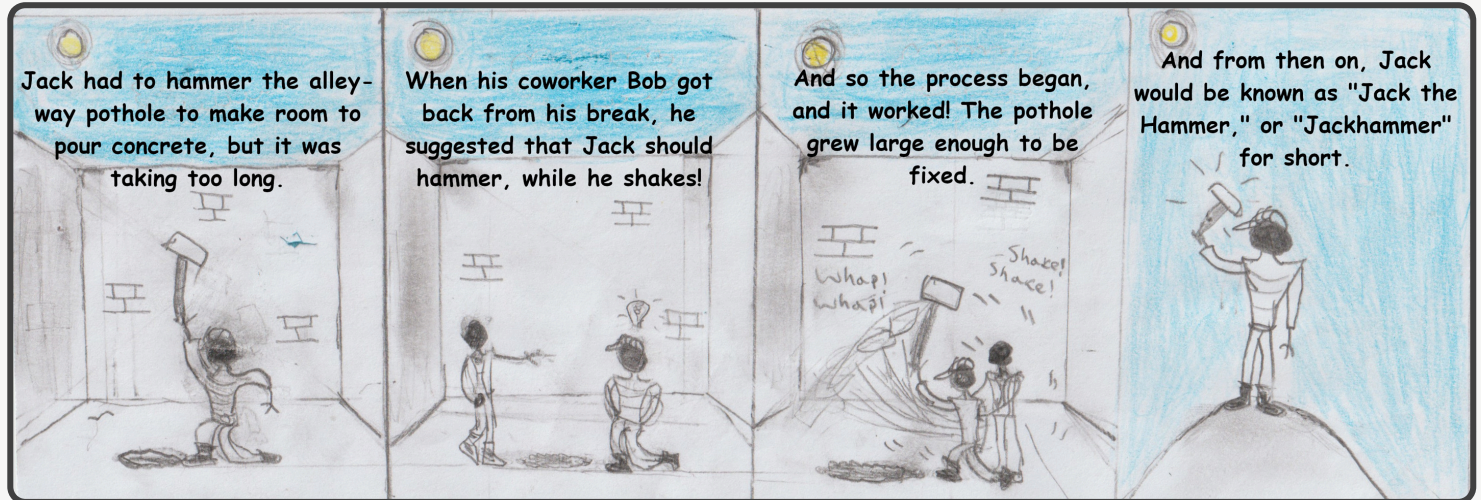
Using the grant, WCA is working with the TVA to select and make three facility improvements here on campus. To decide what improvements to make, the school is creating an Energy Team. This team will consist of both students and staff, and it will propose ideas and solutions for how to make the Academy more energy efficient.

We also have the chance to compete with other schools for more grant money by showing the school's passion for energy conservation. The stickers and posters in the hallway are the first step, and students can work together to find more ways to spread awareness and engagement throughout our community.

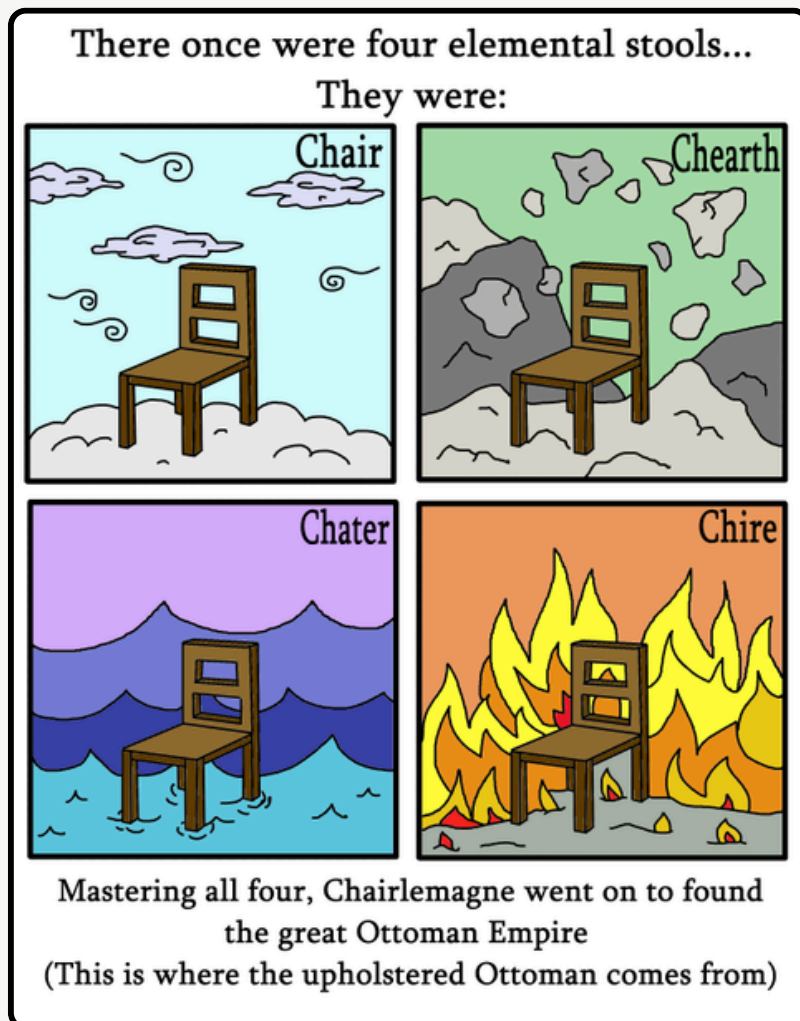
Students interested in joining the Energy Team or learning more can reach out to Dr. Buck or Ms. Williamson.



COMICS



by Benjamin Douglas, 9th



by Stirling Turnbull, 10th

Dad Jokes

submitted by Ella Carver, 10th, & Eva Metcalf, 10th

Why doesn't Jesus wear jewelry?
He breaks every chain!

Why did the football coach go to the bank?
To get his quarter back!

Why don't skeletons fight?
They don't have the guts!

What did one autumn leaf say to the other?
I'm falling for you!

Why didn't the skeleton go to the homecoming dance?
He had no-body to go with!

What's the laziest crop?
A couch potato!

If my nose was running money, I'd blow it on you, but it's snot!

Knock-knock!

Who's there?

Alaska.

Alaska who?

Alaska to the dance if you think you'll say yes!

Mae Li Blankenship said, "I know you can't see it now and it seems so far ahead of you, but the world is yours for the taking. And I'll let you in on a secret... you take on the world with boldness! You become strong, independent, and resilient. You learn the hard way that the world can be hard and you have to step to follow your passions and pursue what you believe in. One thing I want to tell you, for you to keep in the back of your mind at all times, is this: BE YOU!!! If nothing else, be you. Don't form friend groups that only some people can be a part of, don't try and get in the middle of the drama, because guess what? If it's really that important you're gonna hear about, and if you don't? You probably didn't need to know to begin with, and finally don't try and change yourself to become something you're not. The God who created mountains and the stars thought the world needed one of YOU too. So my last thing for you, kindergarten Mae Li, is that it's a long windy road to the day that sends you off on your next great adventure: the rest of your life. Some days you're gonna be counting down until then, but some days you'll want to stay here forever. Take hold of all the days because you know for sure that these are the days you were made for."

If you were standing face-to-face with your younger self, what would you say? Or even more so, what would your older self say to you now? In ten years, would you write a letter to yourself telling you to try more, to get out of your comfort zone? Would your letter encourage you to take things less seriously? Whatever stage you're in, think about the advice you would give your younger self and heed it so that your future letter does not repeat the old one. To the seniors, listen to the advice we've all heard a million times this year: take advantage of your last year. We've already experienced so many incredible traditions, and we have so many waiting for us: homecoming events, deciding on colleges, and eventually walking across the stage to receive our diplomas. Senior year has just begun; we have a great deal ahead of us. Ask yourself: what legacy do I want to leave after I'm gone? For me, I want this to be a year my kindergarten self would be proud of.

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September

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Samson has the Scoop! After reading the paper, please fill in the blanks. Bring your completed quiz to the lunchroom the **day after** the paper is released for a free ice cream sundae!

How many years has The Academy celebrated Grandparents Day?

What advice was your favorite from the seniors?

What theme did Mr. Reeder choose for this school year?

What are the first names of the twins who had an epic performance at the Warriors' first home football game?

When and where was Whitesburg's first homecoming?

How can you help conserve energy?

What day is Tuesday during Spirit Week?