

EDITORIAL

Homecoming traditions worth effort to modify

Homecoming is going to take on a new covid-proof look next week as the Chargers prepare to take on the Uniontown Eagles.

Students and staff enacted numerous changes in an attempt to make homecoming fun, but there were some disappointing decisions made. Student Council

The editorial is the opinion of the Charger staff.

Send letters to the editor to whscharger@gmail.com.

representatives met with principal Jan Hutley and discussed options for continuing with the traditional homecoming activities safely, although a few are still being prohibited.

First off, Friday will look a little different. Instead of spending the day working on floats and enjoying the school-wide barbecue, Friday will be a normal school day.

Rather than the annual parade downtown, we will only be holding a pep rally in the gym. Student Council will also hold its annual talent show following the pep rally. In order to make the pep rally safe for students and the community, it will be held in the new gym and live-streamed so younger grades can still watch without being bussed to Alma. Finally, in order to follow the county health department's guidelines we will not be holding a homecoming dance as it would be difficult to do safely.

Things that will remain the same during homecoming include window painting, spirit week and the crowning. Similar to the cruise night the booster club planned over the summer for the class of 2020, candidates will ride in a cruise down main street Tuesday night.

During stressful times like these, having Friday off to participate in activities would be a good way for students to destress and have fun. Hutley voiced her concerns to the student council about losing an academic day as well as the difficulty supervising students. There are ways that this day could have been modified for student safety, but those options were turned down.

There could have been more effort to work around the health restrictions with Covid and still allow students to participate in some of our favorite homecoming activities, like the parade. In the coming school year we hope that rather than losing all of our favorite activities we are able to modify them and participate as safely as possible.

"Wabaunsee's Got the Beat"

School Spirit Days

Tuesday: "Lazy Song," pajama day

Wednesday: "Party in the USA," wear American gear

Thursday: "Old Town Road," wear country gear

Friday: "Our House," class color day (seniors - white, juniors - blue, sophomores - red, freshmen - black)

SRO aims to make valuable connections with students

Kendyl Bolinder
@BolinderKendyl

School resource officer Taylor Schuldt said her main role is to form positive relationships with the students.

"I think what a school resource officer does is kind of misconstrued a little bit. Before anything else, when I'm here, cop is the last thing on my list. I'm a mentor first. I'm a counselor. I'm here for that kind of stuff way before I'm here for anything criminal," Schuldt said.

USD 329 officer Taylor Schuldt moved to Kansas from Georgia in 2017 with her husband, who is currently serving as a tanker in Fort Riley. Schuldt says she stays busy taking care of her two year old son. She has always wanted to go into law enforcement, as both her mother and father are long time police officers. She started in law enforcement as a dispatcher, then advanced to a jailer, and eventually a road deputy. Schuldt is currently working towards a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and homeland security, and dreams of someday being a special agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration.

After receiving a grant in July, the Wabaunsee county sheriff's department and school districts have been hard at work to better local

youth's education with the addition of school resource officers (SRO) at both Wabaunsee and Mission Valley schools.

In February, the Sheriff's Department submitted an application for a "Cops Grant," which is offered to agencies who are either looking to replace officers who were laid off due to lack of funding, or looking to expand operations in ways that would normally be difficult without additional funds. In July, the grant was offered to Wabaunsee county for two positions, which are now filled by officers in both districts.

According to Wabaunsee County Sheriff Rob Hoskins, the public has been requesting an officer in schools for a long time, but, with the county finances, it was not in the foreseeable future.

"With the school safety issues and the school shootings happening around the country, the safety of the youths while they're in school has become something that parents are really concerned about, so it was a public need, and it was a need we thought we needed to address, one way or another," Hoskins said.

Superintendent Brad Starnes said the addition of an SRO, along with other resources in the schools, will help to provide a safe haven for students and staff.

"If we don't first address so-



School Resource Officer Taylor Schuldt talks to Alma Elementary students during lunch time. Schuldt plans to spend time at each district building throughout each week. Photo by Emma Alderman.

cial-emotional health and people don't feel safe at school, we cannot expect student learning to take place," Starnes said.

Along with helping out with odd jobs around the school as needed, Schuldt's main role is to form positive relationships with the students. Schuldt's duties include being an educational source to youth about topics such as seat-belt safety or stranger danger, getting to know the youth, and being present during any safety issues. Having an SRO will hopefully

help reduce inappropriate student behaviors, develop a positive relationship between youth and law enforcement, and promote positive attitudes regarding the role of police in society.

I don't want younger kids to see me as something bad or something they're supposed to be scared of, especially with everything going on in the world right now," Schuldt said. "I want to make a positive impact on all the kids K-12 about what law enforcement does."

FALL SPORTS PREVIEWS

Football, cross country look to seniors for leadership

FOOTBALL LOOKS TO IMPROVE FROM LAST YEAR WITH A NEW DEFENSIVE SCHEME

Football looks to improve from a 1-8 record with a large group of underclassmen and hope for no COVID-19 outbreak on the team.

The Chargers take the field against Mission Valley at 7 p.m Friday at home.

The Charger interviewed head football coach Jess Rutledge.

How are you feeling about the season so far?

"Good! I feel good about every season, but every coach can say that because we look great right now in practice, but I'm anxious to see what we look like against an opponent."

Who are some of the team's key players this season?

"There's so many, but I'll give you a couple. Dawson Schultz is a returning starter on both sides of the ball going into year three on the football team, a senior, he really is Mr. Do-it-all. Last year he led us in return yardage, he was second on the team in tackles, second on the team in receptions, and is an unbelievable hard worker. He's basically what I model a good football player after. Cade Oliver is coming back to start his third year as quarterback which is really big in the sport of football. We just need him to take a bigger step forward with leadership being more vocal which he has shown us so far and just fine tuning his game. His completion percentage, his yards went up from his freshman year. Touchdown went down by one and intercep-

BRIEFS

Volleyball opened the season with a 6-0 run at the Amy Schutter Memorial tournament, only dropping 1 set on the day. The team travelled to Chapman Tuesday and heads to Lyndon Sept. 12.

Charger tennis opened the season with a 2nd-place finish at Wamego, including a 3-1 start for Kendyl Bolinder and Raegan Feyh in doubles. The team continues Thursday at Clay Center and Saturday morning at Seaman.

tions went up by two, so just a little more consistency from him there, but his running game has, no pun intended, taken off. Adam Miller will be a four-year starter on both sides of the ball for us. He's shown a lot of personal growth as far as being a leader, which I think is important for him. He's a physically imposing force."

Do underclassmen/new players bring promising talent?

"Absolutely! We have 27 players on our football team and 18 of them are freshmen and sophomores. They are showing a ton of promise. Most people look at that situation and go 'oh my god that's a lot of new kids.' I try to find the positive in it and I see a lot of fresh faces with opportunities and a lot of guys who are hungry to get playing time. We have more depth in a lot of positions than in the past. And guys are pushing each other. We've got spots that aren't sewn up because there's eight or nine seniors. There is a lot of promise

CROSS COUNTRY ENTERS THE SEASON WITH STRONG SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Cross country enters the season with strong senior leadership and hopes that safety protocols won't affect meets.

The team opens the season 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Silver Lake.

The Charger interviewed head coach Roger Alderman at the beginning of the season.

How are you feeling about the season so far overall?

"We are a little lower in numbers than I would like. We started to pick up a few more in the past few days. Two days of practice, it's hard to see what shape we're in yet. I knew we got some work to do but we're going so I'm happy."

Have you noticed any strengths or weaknesses on the team yet?

"It looks like we probably haven't had as much conditioning this summer as we normally have. They seem to be working really well together though, getting along with each other and that's always a big thing."

Who do you think some of the key runners are going to be on the team?

We always lean on our seniors to kind of lead and show the way. We've got Kimi Buchanan on the girls side and Eli Mumpower, Isaac Lira, Austin Henderson, Peter Stuhlsatz on the guys side. We've also got quite a few returning runners. I don't like to pick out any individuals a whole lot early on but our

seniors are always kind of the key."

Do you have any new talent that you are excited to have on to the team?

"We did bring up a few runners from our junior high program that have already run there for a couple of years and now are moving into high school. So we're kind of excited about adding those in. We had a new student that came out yesterday so we'll see how he adds to our mix."

What kind of things have you been focusing on in practices?

"So the early season is usually spent working on our endurance with just the longer runs. We'll start to work in some of the speed work later in the week, but to start off it's always the longer runs."

What are some of your big events or meets this year?

"Usually one of our big meets is the Wamego meet which is the second meet of the year, but that's pretty much up in the air right now. It usually draws hundreds of runners from all over the state, so they're looking at ways to limit how many people attend. So that's one meet that we might have to reduce. We always target league, regional, and state so in the end those will be the three meets we're looking forward to the most."

When is the first meet and can people come watch?

"Silver Lake is our first meet on Saturday, September 5. As of now they are not limiting spectators, so people are welcome to come watch it."

For full versions of each interview, check out the Senioritis Podcast on whscharger.com.