



Hope on a Rainy Day

by: Olivia Rueger '23

"Grateful". If the Overall Chairs could describe the Hope-A-Thon event and everything leading to it, "grateful" would be the word they use. Through rain and shine, the Jems danced for 7 hours in support of Hope-A-Thon on April 16th. For those 7 hours, 320 Villa Students came together to bring unexpected hope to families fighting the unimaginable. The amount of dedication shown by the faculty, staff, and students was outstanding and is clearly displayed in the numbers. Together, Villa raised \$95,208.08 in support of "Drew's Hope" and "Bringing Hope Home". This event would not have been possible without the months of planning and hard work

done by the Overall Chairs and Captains. Each of these girls worked hard in honor of their sister, Maria Middleton '21. The girls danced for both a cause greater than themselves and for school unity. From hearing from the guest speakers to partying in the gym, all the students enjoyed this event. The Jems truly put themselves out there for the benefit of others. Not only did Hope-A-Thon benefit others, this fun, safe, and festive event also allowed the girls to have a sense of normalcy and relax after a difficult year. Whether in rain or in shine, it is clear that nothing can stop the Villa community from helping others in any way possible.

A Way for Juniors to Step into Their Spiritual Lives

by: Maddie Smith '22

Junior Retreat was an excellent way for the junior class to understand Social Justice and what it entails. We had two guests, Darcy and Margarita from Saint Vincent De Paul Young Adult Center, host the retreat. The junior class was split up into multiple small groups and did an array of activities. Some activities included origami, small group discussions, reflections, and even video presentations from fellow classmates. These activities helped cultivate bonds with classmates while also learning about the positive impact we can have using Social Justice.

Junior Immersion consisted of a small group of 10 girls with guests Darcy and

Margarita once again leading the retreat. First, we got to know each other by sharing a story that defined our community. We then learned about different stories of people in Kensington by watching videos and reading articles. Personally, I felt that this made the service more fruitful, as we could directly see who we were helping. We then made care packages, which included Gatorades, granola bars, toothpaste, socks, and face masks, for a shelter in Kensington. We made cookies for the shelter as well. Overall, this experience was very fulfilling for those who participated, and it furthered our passion for service.



Another Successful Year of Service for CSC

by: Juliana Tulio '22

This year, Villa's Community Service Club (CSC) developed new ways to continue doing service due to COVID-19 restrictions. Although unable to take traditional trips to Blessed Sarnelli House in Kensington, PA, CSC continued donating food to Sarnelli by having baked ziti sign-ups and holding after-school sessions for students to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. In addition to individual service opportunities, CSC continued its monthly meetings, which consisted of performing service for specific organizations. Each session focused on a different service-related topic and allowed students the opportunity to support the community in various ways. In the words

of CSC Secretary Brianne Smith '22, "Despite these times, you can always find a way to serve."

Earlier in the year, CSC members painted pumpkins for Halloween that were then used to decorate a local nursing home. During the Christmas season, CSC had a food drive for Sarnelli and received many donations for the gift card giving tree. For Valentine's Day, club members made valentines for Holland Village (formally named as Twining Village Nursing Home). At the March meeting, club members learned about ASL (American Sign Language) and made a video signing the song "You Are My Sunshine," which was then sent to a local



preschool. CSC has many more service opportunities planned for the rest of the year, and according to club moderator Mrs. McCarthy, "We [CSC] have hopes of collaborating with the Environmental Club to start a Villa garden!"

Bonded Together with a Mission

by: Lizzy Mimm '21

A last chance for the senior class to gather together as one, Vespers, an annual Villa tradition, happened on March 18. The senior class reflected on their past four years at Villa and the growth and experiences that they have faced through the retreat. As part of the retreat, the seniors were asked to provide a word to explain each year of their high school experience thus far. According to Taylor Mueller, '21, "the experience connected everyone."

The seniors also heard from faculty

members throughout the night as they spoke to them from a mature and reflective sense. This retreat provided the seniors with insight and a chance to get to know one another personally and spend quality time with those they love at Villa. Mrs. McCarthy hoped that the "seniors grew emotionally and spiritually, with a faith that lasts them after Villa." Vespers was full of sincerity and reflection and reminded the class of 2021 that they will forever be bonded together by the Villa mission.



Honor Societies Induct New Members

by: Anna Wendel '21

Villa Joseph Marie High School will host a combined induction ceremony for their chapters of eight honor societies on March 15, 2021, in the Performing Arts Center. After rescheduling this event from February, preparations were made to celebrate the 92 students inducted this year. Ms. Szylejko, the moderator of VJM's National Honor Society, stated, "At first, it seemed like a major complication, but now certain students who could not come before can, and it gave us more to plan." New precautions took effect for the ceremony this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as creating seating charts, limiting

the number of guests, and introducing a live streaming option for additional family members who wanted to witness their students' accomplishments from home. The eight honor societies recognize excellence in Science, Spanish, Italian, French, English, Music, Mathematics, and General Academics coupled with Community Service and Leadership. Though current members will not attend the event, the President of each society will speak at the induction ceremony. Ms. Szylejko said, "This year, we have had to adapt and make changes so that we could have this event safely. We have been able to do



that, and I am happy we can celebrate our student's accomplishments."

A New Tradition for the Seniors

by: Anna Wendel '22

Despite the modifications that have been made to accommodate the demands of in-person learning during the current pandemic, seniors at Villa Joseph Marie High School had a new and celebratory tradition to look forward to. In a typical year, students from across the school would participate in both a Father-Daughter Dance and Mother-Daughter Tea to celebrate the special bond between parents and children. This year, VJM's Office of Institutional Advancement, along with the Parents' Guild, planned an event that combined these two special occasions. On May 8, 2021, VJM hosted its first-ever Guardian Gala for its graduating Senior class. Contributors to this event were

incredibly busy at this time obtaining gift baskets, contracting vendors, and preparing tributes for the event. VJM Principal Mrs. Carr remarked, "We made the decision[s] based off of COVID-19 guidelines, parent feedback from surveys and discussions, family comfort levels, and the potential for more vaccine roll-outs before the spring." Of course, even with these modifications, the essential elements could still be preserved, such as food, the fundraising element of the Mother-Daughter Tea, and dancing from the Father-Daughter Dance. Mrs. Carr stated, "the main tradition [is] spending time with your parent/loved one while enjoying a night out, dressed up."



For the Girls - Annual Spring Auction

by: Lizzy Mimm '21

The Spring Auction, an annual tradition, was held March 16-20. Between gift procurement, the spirit committee, gift cataloging, distribution, and bidding, this event required a lot of planning for it to run so smoothly.

The committee begins preparation by asking local businesses to support the Auction. The spirit committee then works their hardest to create several Villa-marked items. Any VJM item, like bags or beach towels, is made by them. Gift cataloging is when the committee receives and tracks all items coming in. Gift production is where the spectacular presentations everyone sees are created.

All items are grouped and staged to be photographed. Since this year's Auction was virtual, pictures with descriptions of each basket were taken. Gift distributors are then responsible for getting baskets to the winners.

Social Media posts helped intrigue viewers. Mrs. Franzzo and Mrs. Gorman promoted the Auction on social media by providing 'sneak peeks' of what anyone could win. According to Ms. McDonald, at the time, "there are some truly fabulous items up for bid in this year's event!" As Mrs. Johnson then stated, "This year's Auction offers things for alumnae, parents, and students, from the Villa bike



to a Weber grill." We hope you got your hands on a few of these incredible items when you participated this year. Save the date for next year's Auction on Saturday, March 19, 2022!

Second Semester Highlights



All-Catholic Band



NHD Winners



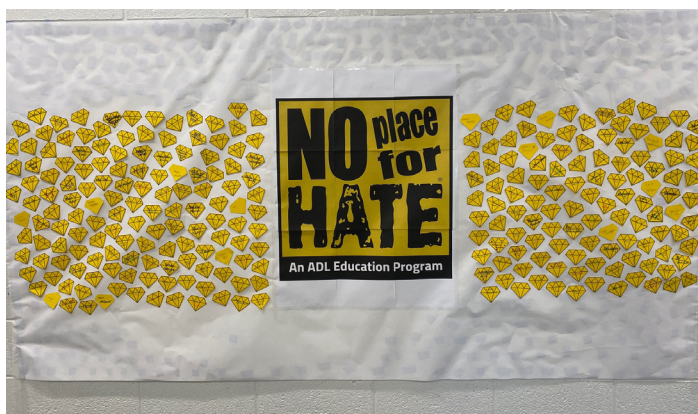
Welcome, Mr. Burke



CRS Collection



May Crowning



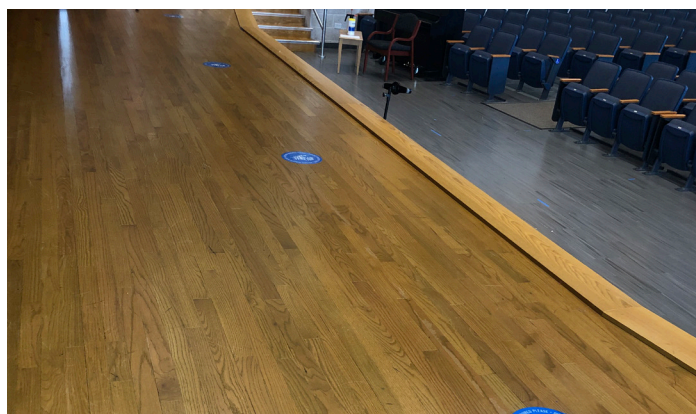
No Place for Hate Returns

by: Taylor Mueller '22

Villa has regained an important program this year known as *No Place for Hate*. *No Place for Hate* supports inclusion, promotes stopping bullying, and additional awareness for inclusivity in school communities and the surrounding communities. The program is a part of many schools across the nation and was recently restarted here at Villa this past semester.

The program's kick-off was paired with the Senior Real World Day and Student Life Day, where all of the students who participated signed a promise and learned more about what the program entailed.

Villa has many clubs and organizations for the girls to choose from, and girls can always start new clubs. Senior Grace Kelly discussed what creating a new club entails, "I imagine starting a club anywhere is a lot of work! It took lots of focus, energy, and time, but is all worth it!" After being asked what lasting impact she hoped the club would have on Villa, Grace stated, "My hope for the future is that every student can come to school and have equal opportunity to learn and to grow."



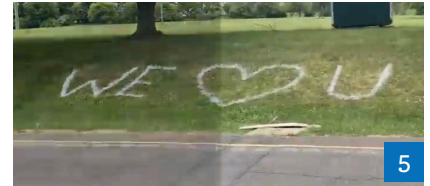
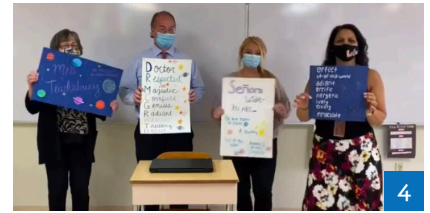
Perfectly Imperfect

by: Anna Wendel '21

On Saturday, February 27, 2021, Villa Joseph Marie High School hosted their second annual Women's Symposium, exemplifying what speaker Katelyn Romeo called "a certain indomitable spirit that Villa girls possess." Mrs. McDonald, Director of Institutional Advancement, and the Future Business Leaders Club, led by President Mary Frances McNulty, organized this entirely virtual event. Eight outstanding female leaders from the community were chosen as speakers: Mary Fran Bontempo, Jen Crompton, Kaitlin Files '06, Kimberly O'Grady, Christine Papp '00, Katelyn Romeo '10, Christen Routh, and Rebekah Siau. Mary Frances remarked, "The fact that Villa hosted this leadership forum reflects our school[s]...commitment to developing tomorrow's leaders."

The first keynote speaker, Kimberly O'Grady, sister of Maria Middleton '21, set a precedent for "speaking candidly on sometimes painful topics to a group that was, for the most part, not familiar to them," as Mrs. McDonald wrote. This aspect of the symposium remained constant, despite many changes that resulted from the current pandemic. O'Grady exemplified the idea articulated by Mrs. McDonald that "...our speakers effectively conveyed that change is inevitable, that 'stumbling' or 'making mistakes' is not equivalent to failure, and that not 'knowing' is okay." Speakers encouraged attendees to embrace the "perfectly imperfect." As Mary Frances McNulty said in her opening address, the day was "an opportunity to discover the leader that God calls us to be."

More Highlights from the Second Semester



1. Congratulations to those who won awards at the Delaware Valley Regional Science Fair:

- Brianne Smith '22 and Kelley Malone '22 earned an honorable mention award in the team category for their project on Plant Growth hydroponically vs traditional soil.
- Abbigail Turco '24 earned a 1st place medal in the chemistry category for her project on Types of Vinegar vs. The Molar Concentration of Acetic Acid.

2. A big round of applause for Bucks Happening's 2021 Teacher of the Year, Mr. Bender.

3. Best of luck to our student athletes who will continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level. Congratulations to:

- Kylie Aquaro: Ice Hockey, Rochester Institute of Technology

- Ella Arace: Soccer, Messiah University
- Faith Bartos: Lacrosse, Bridgewater College
- Julia Beck: Soccer, Misericordia University
- Allyson Gallagher: Rowing, Duquesne University
- Sabina Hartman: Swimming, The University of Kentucky
- Megan Iannacone: Swimming, Susquehanna University
- Kennedy Kilchrist: Soccer, Bloomsburg University
- Katie Sullivan: Soccer, Johns Hopkins University
- Grace Taylor: Soccer, Longwood University

4. Major thanks to NHS for making the teachers feel special during Teacher Appreciation Week!

5. Be the Light - We Love Our Seniors!

Stepping In & Stepping Up

by: Carina Yancer '22

Ms. Gallagher is assisting Ms. McBrinn, who teaches AP Literature, Accelerated English II, Accelerated English I, and Honors English II, while she is virtually instructing. Ms. Gallagher attended Saint Joseph's University, majoring in English and Secondary Education while minoring in Theatre Studies. She will graduate from Saint Joseph's University with her Masters of Education and a Reading Specialist certification in 2021. Ms. Gallagher has always loved English and serving others. Becoming an English teacher was the perfect mix between being able to help others and instill knowledge. Ms. Gallagher is an alumna from the class of 2016. She says, "When I walked back into its doors last September, I felt that same sense of home... home is certainly not lacking in knowledge, diligence, enthusiasm, hilarity, and most importantly, love." Ms. Gallagher's love for Villa is evident through her kind words. She is excited to be back in her safe space, and Mrs. Wisniewski, Villa's acting English Department chair, would agree. Mrs. Wisniewski taught Ms. Gallagher when she attended Villa, stating, "Her curiosity and love for English is clear in her dedicated work ethic." Mrs. Wisniewski is thrilled to have Ms. Gallagher back through the Villa doors with a different role. The English Department is also particularly grateful to have Ms. Gallagher join the Villa faculty this year.



A New Business Manager

by: Taylor Mueller '21

This school year, we have welcomed another staff member to the Villa Joseph Marie High School Community. We want to welcome Mrs. Harkrader to the Villa family! Mrs. Harkrader is Villa's new business manager this school year. She attended Shippensburg as an accounting major. When asked what inspired her to focus in this subject area, she stated, "I was good at math, my grandfather was an accountant, I took business classes in high school, and I was good with numbers." Some of Mrs. Harkrader's favorite things about Villa so far are that she loves seeing the girls in the hallway every day, loves the staff, and that Villa is very friendly. When asked how she spends her free time, she stated, "Taking care of my three children, going to their sports events, and driving them around, walking and running and being outside." Mrs. Harkrader would also like the Villa community to know that she is a proud owner of a golden retriever puppy and loves to travel. She ended the discussion we had by stating, "Don't be afraid to come to visit!" Again, we welcome Mrs. Harkrader to the Villa Community! Her office is located in the guidance wing at the top of the staircase.



Pump up the Spring Spirit!

by: Alexandra Venth '21

Spring Spirit Day is one of Villa's most beloved traditions. It is a time when the whole student body comes together for activities, fun, food, and, most importantly, dunking a teacher! Students were able to vote on which teacher they wanted to dunk during lunches, and Ms. Szylejko was voted this year's dunk tank "victim." Along with the dunk tank, the bracelet and tattoo station of previous Spirit Days also returned, joined by games like corn hole, spike ball, volleyball, and other yard games, which students played throughout the day. One new activity for this year was an inflatable jousting ring, where two students balanced on a pedestal and tried to knock their opponent off using inflatable poles. There were many salads and sandwiches available for lunch, all gen-

erously provided by the Parents' Guild! This year's senior-only activity was a sand art station, where members of the Class of 2021 made a sand souvenir to commemorate their final Spirit Day. Seniors also had a "senior preview" of Spirit Day by arriving early and getting the first chance to try out all of the Spirit Day activities before other students. Senior student council member Emily Vere-spy said, "We are excited to finally have Spring Spirit Day again after missing out on the tradition last year, and we hope everyone else is just as excited!" In a year where COVID-19 has made everyday student life challenging to maintain for most schools, Villa's teachers, administration, parents and student council have worked hard to ensure that many of Villa's most



valued traditions remained intact.

Prom? Prom!

by: Lizzy Mimm '21

Villa's juniors and seniors got their dancing shoes on April 23 and 24 for their annual prom. Although it took a "VILLAge," according to Mrs. Brown, the event was made possible because of the efficient senior officers and the student body posing their voices. This year's prom was held on campus, different from the standard location in Philadelphia. Creative thinking went into making this event possible, and everyone was sincerely grateful that the event was able to happen. Villa's campus was decorated and

set up for the occasion, from tables and snacks to lights and tents. Senior class moderator, Mrs. Weaver, said that "she put her all into this, and she prays that Villa girls may also find their passion and what they have been called to put their all into as well." It took careful work to ensure both safety and fun for the traditional night. The prom has been deemed an overall success and proved that Villa could improvise even in challenging situations. A special note of gratitude goes to Mrs. Weaver for all of her efforts.



Here VJM Theatre Goes Again!

by: Callie Henrysen '22

After the many obstacles raised by the current global pandemic, Villa Joseph Marie's Drama Club is finally back and better than ever! In Spring 2021, "Mamma Mia! The Musical" was performed from April 8-11. All four shows sold out, and the performing arts family was absolutely thrilled! The cast put so much energy into this show, practicing over spring break and all through the winter and spring seasons. With double casting, in case of any illnesses or mishaps, the cast worked even harder to fully know and become their characters and stay on top of their game. The feedback and support from the Villa community were absolutely astonishing. As said, COVID-19

did certainly raise many challenges amongst the cast. Singing in masks, staying distanced, and keeping things clean are not as easy as one may think. Dancing in masks is something that the cast can tell you all about. Makenna Buchinski explained, "Everyone is very enthusiastic and very into it. It makes it all worth it in the long run." All of the preparation that goes into the show allows for the amazing ending result. "Mamma Mia!" is such a wonderful show to put on, especially due to the upbeat music by Abba. There really is no better spring musical for the job. This reporter will remind you that "Mamma Mia" is magic. The music, the characters, the self-discovery — it's really



magic." The arts are back again! This Fall, Villa will be performing "The Addams Family". This is a very fun show, and you definitely do NOT want to miss it. The performing arts family hopes to see you there!

Getting Down to Business

by: Juliana Tulio '22

The Future Business Leaders Club (FBLC) has continued preparing the future leaders of the business industry, despite the obstacles COVID-19 may have caused. Starting as a club with only 20 members in 2019, the club has now grown into one of the larger clubs at Villa and has continued hosting various business-centered events throughout the school year.

In the Fall, the FBLC entered a scarecrow into the Peddler's Village's annual Scarecrow Festival. In the winter, the club sold Christmas ornaments to, in the words of club creator and FBLC president Mary Frances McNulty '22, "introduce students to the challenges of running a business." The sale was a huge success, and the club was able to raise funds to hold additional activities. In March, the FBLC hosted

its first VJM Shark Tank Game Night. The FBLC collaborated with Mr. Mayer's business studies class for this event, judged students' products and declared a winner based on the originality and feasibility of the students' inventions.

Aside from having individual club events and fundraisers, the FBLC has also collaborated with other Villa clubs and has been participating in multiple Zoom conferences throughout the year. The FBLC helped the Drama Board sell raffle tickets for the Fall show and collaborated with *No Place for Hate* to celebrate Women's History Month. The club also had meetings with Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick via Zoom and attended Villa's Women's Symposium, which was held virtually earlier this year. As



club member Ashley Rosica '22 states, "I enjoy being a part of this club because it provides Villa students the opportunity to immerse themselves into the world of business." To find out more information about the FBLC, make sure to check out its quarterly newspaper, "The Bottom Line"!

Programming Through the Pandemic

by: Delaney Geist '23

Villa's Coding and Engineering Club has created an algorithm guaranteed to foster skills needed in expanding STEM fields. These advancements into the physical applications of math and sciences are intrinsically valuable to our Villa community and society as these girls venture out into the world. Problem-solving is incredibly encouraged on the many challenges that the club delves into throughout the year. Senior leaders Katelyn Burke and Alex Venth have exceeded all expectations in running the club, as

they created projects for all the girls involved to work with. When asked what kind of activities were done, the girls stated, "Some of the projects and challenges we work on during the year are working with python and making catapults. Some members even create their own product." Needless to say, although no one could have expected how our school year would pan out, the Coding and Engineering Club was not deterred in the slightest from continuing with their plans, with only slight modifications and ingenuity



that is to be admired.

Informing and Discussing Relevant Events of the Day

by: Olivia Rueger '23

In a world where the media can be so tainted, it is crucial that young people have the opportunity to learn the unbiased truth. This is precisely what the Global Issues Club presents to its members and the Villa community in general. Global Issues Club gives students a safe environment to discuss opinions and beliefs and develop new ideas upon learning new knowledge. This group has discussed and presented everything from the 2020 Presidential Election to the Racial Disparities of COVID-19 to the issue of Fast Fashion. This club focuses upon what the girls are interested in and what they want to learn more about. In the future, the current Executive Board would

love to open the presentations up to club members, allowing them to present ideas and current events that they are interested in. This club has also had the opportunity to work with the No Place for Hate Club to discuss issues of racism and sexism in our current world. The Executive Board hopes to continue this with other clubs as well because current events are always relevant to a variety of subjects. The group hopes to grow in the coming years and encourages anyone interested to stop by and learn a thing or two. The Global Issues Club is proud of its accomplishments this year and cannot wait to see what next year holds!



Gardening with the Environmental Club

by: Juliana Tulio '22

The Environmental Club has been hosting its bi-weekly meetings year-round and has been planning exciting upcoming events for the remainder of the school year. During the Christmas season, the club created a "How to Have an Environmentally-Friendly Christmas" video uploaded onto Villa's Instagram story. In addition, despite multiple snow days and early dismissals earlier in the year, the club was still able to sell metal straws. The sale was very successful, as the club sold 150 straws and raised money to support their next project: creating a Villa garden. In recent news, the club just put stakes in for the arbo-

retum and will be adding a few more trees before the project is completed. Although the club is still finalizing its plans for a school garden in collaboration with the Community Service Club (CSC), Environmental Club President Alex Venth '21 hopes to accomplish this task by mid-May. While the exact locations of the garden are still underway, the club is hoping to have two planters and grow peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Club member Isabella Spera '22 stated her enthusiasm for starting a garden at Villa by saying, "It will add even more beauty to the Villa campus and is a great solution for some of the opportunities that



were lost due to the Coronavirus, like the Earth Day event." The rest of the school community is eagerly waiting to see the beautiful garden the club creates later in the year!

Calling All Writers

by: Sarah Taylor '23

Villa is a wonderful place for a student to express her creativity. "Quintessence," which is moderated by Ms. Chirico and Ms. McBrinn, is a magazine that showcases Villa's creativity. In the Fall, the club usually meets on Tuesdays after school. During the winter months, club members eagerly await submissions from the Villa community. In the spring, the members resume meeting on Tuesdays to create a layout. "If you enjoy reading, writing and

art, then 'Quintessence' is the club for you," Ms. Chirico, the club's moderator, encourages, adding, "If you are a writer or artist, you can submit to the magazine. If you are interested in joining 'Quintessence' or have any questions about the club, email Ms. Chirico at cchirico@vjmhs.org or Mrs. McBrinn at lmcbrinn@vjmhs.org. Also, feel free to go and talk to a member in person. We're always looking for submissions!"



Mock Trial Team

by: Taylor Mueller '21

Mock Trial is a club at Villa Joseph Marie that meets to prepare for court trial simulation competitions. The teams prepare case files and studies and oversee forming it as a typical and real court case and compete against other schools' teams in the local area. The team gathered throughout the year to prepare for these competitions. After being asked how competitions were being held virtually due to COVID-19, Senior Grace Matwijec states that "it was definitely a different experience, but we still worked hard, and for the first time ever, we advanced to the next round." After surpassing all of

the restrictions and challenges that were thrown upon the team by COVID-19, the team has had an overall typical year corresponding with the meetings and prepping for their trial and proceedings. Senior co-captains Katelyn Burke, Alexandra Venth and Grace Matwijec made it a goal to expand the team this year. They achieved this goal and doubled the number of members by talking to the freshman history classes. The team gained enough members to produce a JV and Varsity team; both teams are very proud of advancing to the next round for the first time. The team will continue to pre-



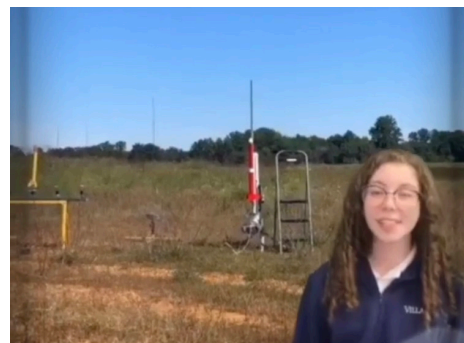
pare and practice under the leadership of teachers, Mr. Micalizzi and Ms. Young, and parent volunteer, Mr. Marriott, Esq.

Feats of Rockets and Flight

by: Juliana Marino '22

Interested in exploring the feats of rockets and flight? Villa's own Rocketry Club has been doing so since 2018. What once began as a hobby among some students and a helpful teacher has skyrocketed into a vast interest in aviation and engineering. Annalise Schuck, the team captain, insightfully quotes, "The Rocketry Club studies the physics of flight and explores the engineering design process by competing in the American Rocketry Challenge, the world's largest model rocketry contest. Over this year, we built and tested multiple prototypes to create a rocket that travels exactly 800 feet in the air and carries an egg safely to the

ground in 40-43 seconds. Teams from across the United States vie to produce the most effective design, and leading names in aerospace such as NASA, Boeing, and Raytheon sponsor the National Finals in June." The Rocketry Club currently has multiple members who all share a love of STEM and aerodynamics. Erin McFadden, who is on the team, stated that "the model rocketry club was a great opportunity for me to be exposed to the aerospace industry. Going to TARC was one of the most memorable experiences of my high school career due to the amazing mentors I was able to meet and the love of STEM I was able to develop."

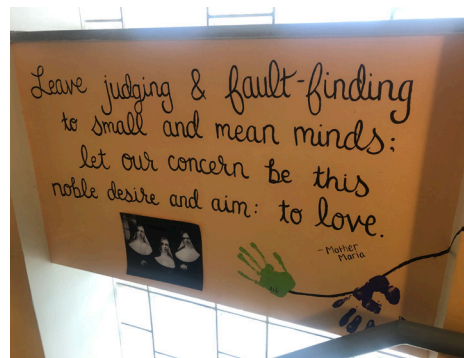


Spreading the Joy of Life

by: Emma Doughty '22

This year the Pro-life club looked drastically different because of COVID-19; however, we tried to make the best out of it. We held a few service opportunities, including making cards for recovering addicts and holding a prayer service, both of which had great results. The club's purpose is to encourage young girls at Villa to see beauty and celebrate all forms of life. To be Pro-life means not only to be anti-abortion but also against capital

punishment and euthanasia. Being Pro-life also protects vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, those in foster care, those struggling with addiction, and the poor. As a catholic school, it is essential to spread this message and serve our community. We are hopeful that next year we will have more sense of normalcy and plan to serve at local women shelters and attend the March for Life.



Join the Aqua Jems!

by: Sarah Taylor '23



Villa's swimming team, led by seniors Hunter LaBree and Isabelle Brady, powered through their sport season, even as the winter COVID-19 hiatus placed a chunk of their season on hold and made places to swim tricky to find. Fortunately, the Aqua Jems were able to practice and compete at the NAC. The Jems competed in three meets and made the Villa community very proud with their accomplishments. Four swimmers made it to Districts this year: co-captain Sabina Hartman '21, Megan Iannacone '21, Madeline Patrick '22, and Lillie Corino

'22. Lillie came in 3rd for the 200 Medley Relay, and Sabina qualified and attended States for the 100 Breast. As Ms. Heuckroth, the swimming coach, says, "Anyone out there who loves to swim is welcome to attend swim team try-outs next November. My main goal for my swimmers is to be strong and fearless. The team is dedicated and hard-working." Anyone interested in joining the "fun and inclusive Aqua Jems" can email Ms. Heuckroth at rheuckroth@vjmhs.org.

Lax Off to a Great Start!

by: Carina Yancer '22



The 2021 season looks slightly different than spring sports have had in the past. Considering there wasn't a season last year, the girls are thrilled to have a season no matter what it looks like. Coach Magnone, the Villa lacrosse coach, says, "Our team knows we are lucky to be playing, which is why we are going all in and always giving 110% each game." The girls savored everything since they now know nothing is guaranteed. Emily Leahy, a lacrosse captain, shares her thoughts about this season. She says, "With COVID-19 shutting us down last year, we were very excited to get back onto the field. The team looks solid this year with a great

lineup. The captains and I are very excited to be together and to see where the rest of the season takes us." The team and their fantastic coach can definitely agree with her. Coach Magnone has seen the Villa lacrosse team evolve throughout the years. She shares, "Even though we are still looking for our first win, we have incredible stats each game that have kept our confidence level up and our will to win." Lacrosse players show up on game days in full Villa gear, excited to play and give it their all.

Just Keep Rowing

by: Elli Einset '23



Crew is a unique and little-known sport, but Villa's Crew team is expanding! One of this year's captains, Allyson Gallagher '21, said, "It is such a unique sport that not many people know about, and when we have races, we meet people from all over the country." Crew is a three-season sport; student athletes row on Lake Luxembourg in the fall and spring and do workouts during the winter. The team competes in the spring against other local teams as well.

The team did have some differences in their season this year because of COVID-19. "The girls have to wear a

mask in the boat, and there are a lot of spectator restrictions," said Cecilia Kern '23. "Usually regattas are super big — lots of people and lots of food. We haven't had much of that this year."

When asked about a favorite memory from her three years on the Crew team, Gallagher said, "When the team went to Ohio my sophomore year for Nationals... We met crews from all over the country and Canada, and it was a great experience."

The talented Crew team represented the school at Nationals once again this year, and their accomplishments were nothing short of inspirational.

Jumping Through Hoops with a Swish

by: Elli Einset '23



The basketball team was able to keep its cool and thrive in its season, even with COVID-19 restrictions in place. "Although we have to wear masks at every practice and game, and COVID-19 interfered with our chances of playing in Districts, it was still an unforgettable season with many firsts: first time beating Mount and VMA and first time making it to league playoffs," said Julia Beck '21. The season ended with a record of 8-8, earning the team a spot in the playoffs. Unfortunately, the season was stopped short due to COVID-19 cases, though

there were many memories made on and off the court during the season.

"It is also the first time I have beaten Villa Maria since I have been at VJM. It was a great team moment, and we were able to celebrate on the court," said Beck.

When asked about a memory from this year that stood out to her, Mrs. Flynn-Hensel, Villa's Athletic Director, said, "The Council Rock South game... We played well against a team that was an even match and local rival. It was also the game where Julia Beck scored her 1000th point!"

Handling Every Hurdle

by: Delaney Geist '23



Whether their sneakers pounded on the ground or their muscles burned while practicing indoors, the track team has put in a lot of hard work this past Winter and current Spring. Despite the dark cloud COVID-19 cast upon all of us, the team persevered with safety and caution. From the constant mask-wearing to using their own jump-ropes for workouts and being creative with other exercises because of the absence of weight-lifting, the track team adapted with a determined spirit. Sophomore Olivia Burke explained, "Even though it has been a little different, I'm so grateful to have the opportunity with my friends during the pandemic, and

I think that the coaches and team have been working really hard to make sure we are able to enjoy the season as much as possible." This sentiment is mirrored by the meets, which were slightly different with fewer people and more masks but successful all the same. There were no shadows from the pandemic insight as the talented girls on the team broke barriers time and time again through their positivity, dedication, and work ethic.

Swinging for the Fences



The Villa Joseph Marie softball team made history this year with its tenacious skill and dedicated work ethic. As a result, the squad found itself in the State Playoffs for the first time in quite some time. With heavy hitters and smart players on offense and defense, this team is a force to be reckoned with. As the 2021 District One 4A Champions, the team already had a great deal to be proud of.

After defeating Archbishop Carroll 7-3 in the first round of the 4A PIAA softball tournament, the team lost to Bethlehem Catholic in the quarterfinal.

Team captains Rebecca Minnichbach '22, Brynn Davis '22, and Maria Gordon '22, led with talent and maturity. The best part about this young team is that it will keep most of its current talent into next year's season. Congratulations to the players and coaching staff that have worked together to achieve greatness this year. Best of luck to all the players in their pursuit of continued victories!

EDITORIAL NOTE

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

by: Elli Einset '23

Athletes Helping Athletes (AHA) is one of Villa's most populated clubs, whose primary goal is to encourage and learn through new experiences even through a pandemic. AHA is run by an Executive Board filled with students (Hailey Monaghan, Abbey Roth, Maya Joseph, Julia Noone, Ava Noble) and Transcend teacher, Mrs. Neeld. "This club encourages me to learn about the diversity in our world; it is not just decorating the gym to play a couple of games. Instead, I am shown how to step out of my own little world to become aware of others around me, which opens my eyes to their problems and needs," says Maya Joseph '21. AHA helps students become aware of the diversity in our world, and more importantly, in our community.

COVID-19 completely shifted our focus and changed the dynamics of our club. Most of our time and energy, pre-COVID-19, was spent planning and organizing for fun days to be with our buddies with special needs at events. Since in-person events were not allowed this year, we have had to do virtual Zoom get-togethers, which aren't quite the same," says Mrs. Neeld. Because of the pandemic, the AHA board and members were forced

to think of alternative ways to keep their message clear while keeping everyone safe! "Our Villa members hosted a Fall zoom night. We delivered bags full of goodies to our buddies so that we could celebrate the Fall season with crafts and then ended the night with a dance party! We also planned a Neurodiversity Awareness Month to inform our school about some differences in the brains of each person, because different does not mean bad!" says Maya. Through Zoom meetings, wearing ribbons and social distance parades, AHA was able to keep running with their message in the clear. "Athletes Helping Athletes has been one of the best parts of my high school experience. I encourage everyone to join!"



A New Tradition Brought to Life

by: Carina Yancer '22

This year Brooke May, Mary Ellen Connelly, Gianna Fiduccia, and Hailey Monaghan began a new tradition at Villa, Hope-A-THON. For the past two years, these girls have come up with ways to commemorate families who have struggled with cancer and Batten disease. Hope-A-THON, rescheduled many times, finally happened on April 16, 2021. Brooke May, one of the chairpersons, says, "We never even imagined we would raise that much money and have SO much fun!" Everyone was shocked to see over \$95,000 raised, but after all, the Jems know how to support those in need! She followed up by saying, "This money will be making such a big difference in the lives of families battling cancer and Batten Disease." For girls who are close with people who are battling cancer or Batten disease, Hope-A-THON meant so much and brought up many emotions. The chairpersons didn't

do it all themselves, and they had help from a large group of captains, teachers, and sponsors. Mrs. McCarthy also played a significant role in organizing the event. She says, "I began working with the overall chairs well over a year before the actual event, and they worked tirelessly planning out every last detail." The day was full of love and fun, and Villa students hope to continue this excellent tradition for many years!

