



# THE GOLDEN EAGLE

Covenant Christian Academy Newspaper

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## The Golden Eagle Remixed

By Amanda Bryson, Assistant Head of School

For the last two years, CCA has published two separate newspapers in addition to our weekly Covenant Connection. High school students in Mrs. Rude's Journalism classes have contributed articles to a quarterly newspaper distributed on paper at Community Meetings, while staff members have shared articles in a monthly newsletter emailed to staff, students and parents. After talking with readers, writers, and editors, a decision has been made to combine the two publications into one quarterly newsletter distributed in both paper and online formats. Look for copies of the new Golden Eagle at Community Meetings, via email, and on our school website. Happy reading!

## New student leaders take office

By Alex, Class of 2019

In early October, the Covenant Christian Academy secondary school elected its second Student Council. The eleventh-grade position of president was most hotly contested, with three candidates.



Secondary Student Council Members

Lauren, a new student at CCA this year, was elected president. Lauren said she decided to run because "I have always wanted to be a part of a student council and make a huge impact on my school." When asked about her goals for this year's presidency, she said she would like "to make sure that everyone will be informed as quickly as possible about current events or issues throughout the school year."

Tenth-grader Alex ran unopposed for vice president. The positions of secretary and treasurer went to ninth-graders Isabel and Matthew, respectively. Also elected were student representatives for fifth through 11th grades.

The new class representatives are Rachel, 11th grade; Rachel, 10th grade; Ariel, ninth grade; Charlotte, eighth grade; Madalyn, seventh grade; Elena, sixth grade and Kalena, fifth grade.

After a week of campaigning with posters, the nominees for the four main offices gave speeches to the entire secondary student body in chapel. The next week, each student voted for the offices and their class representative, who is responsible for taking class concerns and ideas to the student council. This year, a fifth-grader ran to represent the elementary school, and each high school grade was given a rep.

The high school students on the council will be attending a leadership conference later this fall to prepare them for the responsibilities of running a student council.

## History in every corner at Vint Hill Farms

By David, Class of 2020

Covenant Christian Academy's new building is currently the home of the Golden Eagles, but it is also home to a mysterious and secretive past that played a crucial role in our nation's history.



Most know that our building was originally part of the former U.S. Army base, Vint Hill Farm Station. However, many do not know the specific role that Vint Hill played during World War II and the Cold War.

To find out more about the history of our community and our building, I interviewed John Deperro, Chief Curator of the Cold War Museum, which is located in the adjacent lot behind the CCA building. He took the time to share some of the most intriguing stories about Vint Hill's past.

The weekend after the bombing of Pearl Harbor the owner of the manor house, now known as the Inn at Vint Hill, invited his friend, a member of the Army signal corps to his house to have lunch. The owner offhandedly mentioned that somehow he could clearly hear the radio chatter and dispatches of the taxis all the way in Berlin, Germany. Since

the U.S. was now at war with Germany, the friend took this information back to the Army and not two weeks later the Army had bought all the lands and buildings of Vint Hill.

Amazingly, Vint Hill sits on a rare geological formation that only occurs in four other places in the world. It is a long-range natural antenna. The Army quickly utilized this natural formation and began receiving signals from Berlin.

More specifically, one way Vint Hill played a major role in World War II was to monitor the Japanese foreign embassy in Berlin. The German ambassador would receive the daily German distribution list (this list was written overnight by German officers about the situation in Germany and their various other counterparts). Operators at Vint Hill would intercept these communications and decipher them. One day, a person deciphered the ambassador's report and discovered that Germany expected the U.S. and Britain to invade at the French town of Calais. This piece of information that was gathered at Vint Hill directly led to the success of the Normandy invasion of Germany.

When I asked Mr. Deperro if he could tell me some information about what the building we are currently in was used for, his face lit up. I knew he had a good story to tell. To begin the story, he first began with the well-known Bay of Pigs/Cuban missile crisis when the Russians had nuclear weapons within range of the United States.

The Army was tasked with preparing a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) where the U.S. government could operate in case of nuclear war. The SCIF room is located in our building! In addition, the Kennedy family would have been housed at the Inn at Vint Hill in the event of a White House evacuation.

Our building is more than just a school, it played a critical role in our nation's history. Because the work at Vint Hill was top secret, it is not remembered for its heroic activities, but as students, we can take pride in its history and be thankful that God has provided such an amazing location for our school.

## Chapel Challenge: Impact Vint Hill

By Amber Sabia, Head of School

In Chapel we have been focusing on three key things: being Intentional, living as a Trader and having an Impact.

What if we were intentional with our time, our words, and our actions? What if we intentionally devoted ourselves to kingdom business? What if we were purposeful and strategic just like Jesus? As we learned in chapel, we can be like the Good Samaritan, when we see someone in need we choose to help. Our challenge is to deliberately follow Jesus' instructions to, "Go and do likewise".

A trader is a new kind of missionary not defined by geography. Where you live doesn't make you a missionary, the mission you are on makes you a missionary. Being a trader is a movement that



requires us to live out our faith. As traders, we choose daily to sacrifice and be intentional with our time, money, skills, and passions. We bring the hope of Christ to people in need. A trader sees work as worship and a great opportunity to glorify God. Traders are kingdom focused and not self-focused. They trade in the pursuit of the American dream for a world that desperately needs Christ.

By being an intentional trader, we will have maximum impact. In chapel, we have discovered how we can impact others through service, kindness, prayer, and evangelism. Over the weeks in chapel, we have discussed impacting at home, at school, in our neighborhoods, and in Vint Hill.

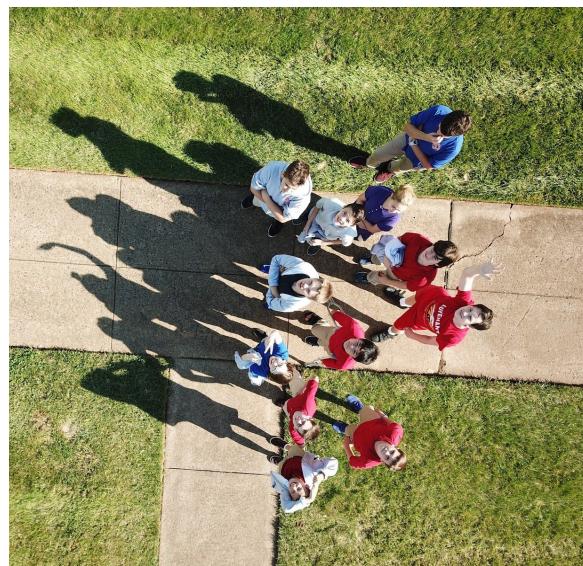
The Vint Hill Transitional Housing Program is an intensive, one year program assisting families in the transition from being homeless to acquiring the skills necessary to maintain stable and independent living. The community provides a structured, safe environment for the nurturing of families, the growth and well-being of children, and fostering community. The majority of residents are single mothers with children.

It is our desire for CCA families to help impact Vint Hill. We are still in the planning stages of what this will look like. In chapel, the students brainstormed in teams, and they all came up with such great ideas! Please join us now in prayer and soon as a trader who will intentionally impact Vint Hill.

*Hebrews 6:10: "He will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."*

## STEM steams ahead at CCA

By Alex, Class of 2019



CCA Drone Club as seen by one of their drone cameras

Covenant Christian Academy has expanded its offerings of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) courses and clubs this year.

In the 2016-2017 school year, Covenant Christian Academy was proud to introduce STEM to its curriculum. Using Project Lead the Way (PLTW), a not-for-profit organization that supplies schools with STEM curriculum, CCA introduced several electives, as well as clubs. The STEM classes offered were Computer Science (taught by Mr. John Tittle) for both middle school and high school, Electronics (also taught by Mr. Tittle), as well as a VEX Robotics club (led by Mr. Dennis Rude) and the Drone Club (led by Mr. Jon Marte, pictured at right in an aerial shot taken by the drone).

This year CCA added a few more STEM classes: App Creators, a middle school elective taught by Mrs. Lisa Marte; Computer Science Principles, a high school elective taught by Mrs. Marte, and Intro to Engineering, a seventh- and eighth-period high school class taught by Mr. Tittle. There was one club added as well, the 3-D Printing Club, taught by high school junior Lauren Marte. The school has also added a STEM lab, which holds several computer monitors as well as the 3D printer.

Lauren, the 3-D printing club leader, became involved in STEM when she attended Battlefield High School, where she was part of graphic design team, as well as the Robotics team. Because she had worked with a 3-D printer before, she was asked to run the club. Students in the club are learning how to create their own STL files, which are specifically for 3-D printing. They're learning "how to make their ideas come to life," said Lauren.

Matthew, a junior taking Computer Science Principles, explained that the class is covering a variety of languages (ways of writing code), some of which are suited to the Web, like HTML, while others are made for gaming, like Python.

Adam, a student in Intro to Engineering, when asked why he chose to take the class, said, "I knew college was coming up, and that engineering was a great option." He also mentioned that he enjoys the competitiveness of the class to have the best projects.

So far, the CCA STEM program seems to be a success and is only improving.

## Family Interview: Meet the Sandifers

By Hannah, Class of 2021

This year, we have a lot of new families and one of those families is the Sandifers. Their family is made up of Brian and Samara Sandifer and their five children, Rachel, Roman, Ryleigh, Reston, and Rebekah.

Mr. Sandifer is an assistant pastor at Heritage Presbyterian Church in Warrenton, the church that they attend. Mrs. Sandifer is a part-time contracted insurance claims filing administrator for licensed counselors, but her first and most important job is being a mom. Rachel is a sophomore, Roman is in eighth grade, and Ryleigh is in sixth grade, all at CCA. Their little brother and sister attend Brumfield Elementary School.

They heard about CCA through a sign off of Route 29 and all of the families who sang CCA's praises. Mrs. Sandifer described a normal satellite day for them as "Everyone gets ready for the day. Then we all come together and start our day in prayer and proceed to start our school work together downstairs. We stop for breaks and try to complete all of our work by 4 p.m." When asked if she had any advice for the other families, Mrs. Sandifer said, "Parenting is hard, but it can also be the most fulfilling and joyful job that God will ever give you. Keeping perspective on who is in control and, as a believer, how much God deeply loves you and your family is key! 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.' I have to pray that this turns from head knowledge to heart knowledge in every part of life, especially in parenting!"



# Sixth and seventh graders discover the point of life

By Amber Sabia, Head of School

While the 8th through 11th graders were taking the PSATs on October 11th, the sixth- and seventh-grade students had a great in-house retreat! We used the retreat materials that previous classes at CCA have walked through together, called “What’s the Point?”

Because this retreat is usually a full weekend long, we did have to condense the material and breeze through parts of it. We also skipped a few sections. Our hope is that parents will walk through the whole retreat devotional book with their students. That will extend and deepen the growth.

“What’s the Point?” encouraged each student to evaluate their relationship with Christ. We gave the students an option to receive salvation or to recommit their lives to Christ. We challenged each student to look at every situation--good or bad--as an opportunity to grow in the Lord. “What’s the point?”... to grow in the Lord!

Here is the acronym that was used to lead the students through an exploration in Scripture:



6th grade boys' small group with Pastor Gore and Mrs. Bryson

Purposefully  
Open  
Inside  
Nurturing  
Trust

Offering  
Fully

Living  
Intentionally  
For  
Eternity

# Staff Spotlight: Lindsay McGraw

By David, Class of 2020

Mrs. Lindsey McGraw, Spanish 2 and 3 teacher, is known for her kindness and energetic personality. She grew up in Fairfax and Fredericksburg, Va., and graduated from George Mason University in 2006. Mrs. McGraw received her master's degree from the University of Mary Washington in 2012.

Before becoming a teacher, Mrs. McGraw was a cheerleading and gymnastics coach, and served as a cheerleading camp instructor. Every day she brightens her Spanish classroom with her cheerleading energy. When asked why she became a teacher, she happily replied that she loves her students and enjoys how every day is different. One of her least favorites parts of teaching is grading students' work.

She cherishes her close, personal relationship with God. She believes that Jesus is like a friend she connects with through reading her Bible and praying. Her faith journey, however, has had some bumps in the road. She mentioned that while she was born into a Christian family, she stopped going to church regularly until the birth of her first son, when she began to attend Park Valley Church in Haymarket.

"Senora" McGraw is an exceptional teacher and enjoys watching her students grow in knowledge and in faith. Her happy presence brightens everyone's day. One thing she expects from her students is "dedication, dedication, and dedication!"



# New students fill the new halls at CCA

By Hannah, Class of 2021

Covenant Christian Academy students are seeing many new faces around campus due to the fact that 52 new families have enrolled for the 2017-2018 school year. Lately, Isabel, Jovan, Ema, and Emma, all new ninth-grade students, were interviewed and asked for their initial impressions of CCA.

The students come from a variety of different backgrounds and for many, this is their first experience with CCA's unique style of education. Many students, like Isabel and Emma, transferred from other private Christian schools, while some students, like Jovan and Ema, had been homeschooled for the last few years.

The students have found a lot to love at CCA. Some of the students have really enjoyed the freedom to use laptops in class. “I love being able to use technology with our school work,” Isabel said.



Jovan and Emma both said that they love how friendly all of the students are to each other. “I love that everyone is very accepting and friendly. Nobody feels like an outsider at CCA!” Jovan explained.

Head of School, Mrs. Amber Sabia, agreed, saying, “One of the most powerful ways I see the new students impacting CCA is through new friendships. I know the Lord will do great things through the friendships.” Obviously, Emma is enjoying CCA, because when asked, she said that there was nothing she would change about her new school!

The transition to CCA has had its hurdles, however. The satellite work seems to have been a challenge for the new students. Isabel commented, “I feel like it’s kind of hard to know what we are supposed to do for satellite work because there are so many different places to check. We have to check email, QuickSchools, and our assignment sheets, so it can get confusing sometimes.” Jovan agreed. “The only thing that I would change about CCA is the amount of satellite work that is assigned to us each week.”

Some students would like to see a wider offering of classes. “If I could change one thing, it would be to have more electives to choose from and participate in,” Emma commented.

It is clear that while the students have only been at CCA for a short time, they have greatly influenced our school. “We are so grateful that the Lord has brought all of the new students. I pray they all settle in quickly and know that they are part of a very loving family. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the new students. Such amazing hearts are represented in the student body! We can already see how the Lord is using the students to impact the world for Christ,” said Mrs. Sabia.

## October Madness

By Cindy Ward, Middle School Bible Teacher & Family Ministry Team Coordinator

It’s the middle of October and things may have really changed at your house. October is typically the month when the excitement of new school supplies, new teachers, a new building and meeting new friends and reconnecting with old ones all wears a bit thin – and the emotions start to flow. In any school setting, October seems to be the month when fun becomes work, and the natives try to revolt. Remember, cover your satellite days in prayer.

Here are some thoughts to possibly help reset the madness:

- Remember, you own the calendar and the clock. Parents can choose the bedtime tonight to make tomorrow start when it needs to. Research shows that most of our children, of every age, are **not getting enough sleep**. That's a horrible problem that sets a horrible trajectory ... but totally fixable. Consider a reasonable bedtime for even (or especially) your teenagers— with technology far out of reach.
- Help your students manage the clock. They may be surprised by how long breakfast takes on satellite days, or how many minutes they give to lunch, or pondering the meaning of life in the restroom. Teach them to **start the day with the end in mind**. Choose an end time to your day and walk through backfilling the day with your student. This is a life skill that will serve them well.
- Schedule another family meeting. Take some time, possibly in a neutral location to minimize emotional outbursts, and let everyone share how this year is going for them. Are they giving time to devotions and their walk with the Lord? Is everyone pitching in with chores? How are classes? How can you pray for each other? **You're still a team** –make sure you're connecting, re-assessing and working together.

It's going to be a great school year, full of growth and wonderful memories. You are doing great!

## What Should I Be Doing?

By Suey Nordberg, Guidance Counselor

If you know me, you know I love to talk about college. My kids are in college. I spend time on college campuses. I attend seminars. And wherever I go, I ask people about their college experiences so I can be a better and better college advisor. When talking about college parents inevitably ask "What should we be doing to get ready?" There's a lot lurking behind that question: worry about paying for college, questions about course selection (AP, Dual Enrollment and Honors), concern about which colleges are best, and whether someone is well-postured for acceptance. With many choices to navigate and a social culture that glorifies activity and achievement, it's not surprising that both parents and students feel anxious as they look to the future.

This year I've been visiting colleges and speaking with their Admissions Counselors. I've asked them your questions and more. I've asked them how they view a school like ours and what we can do to be sure our students have the same opportunity as others who apply. The answers are interesting. The University of Virginia (UVA), for example, does not accept dual enrollment credit. They accept AP. Why? Because they want students to focus on their time in high school, to enjoy those years, to try new things and explore their interests, and not to push ahead prematurely. That's an amazing answer from Virginia's premier institution. Yes, UVA values students who work hard and get good grades. They look for students who are taking the most rigorous courses their school offers, and also, amazingly, they are not comparing students to other schools – just their own schools.

For us, that means that CCA is not compared to Battlefield, Kettle Run, Trinity Christian, or Patriot. CCA students are evaluated in light of CCA – what we offer, what students choose to study and participate in, and how they develop out of those choices. This is really exciting news for our students because CCA is offering a wealth of opportunities. Rigorous academics, a robust selection of electives and activities, and increasing STEM offerings allow students to gain the credentials they need to be attractive candidates for college. University-model scheduling teaches students

responsibility, work ethic, time management and college-ready habits. Even more, CCA's focus on spiritual growth, character development, faith and service, allows students to grow into people who can thrive as they move into the challenging world of higher education and beyond – and impact their world for God's glory.

So CCA students, what should you be doing? It's good news! Enjoy the middle and high school years. Do your best in school. Take the most rigorous courses our school offers. Get involved in extracurriculars. Best of all – grow in faith and service. As we look at Jesus, we become like Him (2 Cor

3:18), and that is the most attractive quality of all. "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18

***Mrs. Nordberg will be presenting more information on college readiness through a seminar on Friday, November 10th , right after chapel (8:30 a.m.). Please plan to attend!***

## Opinion: Food Truck Fridays

By Ashley, Class of 2020

What more could you want from the empty Friday food calendar at Covenant Christian Academy (CCA)? Every secondary student ends up packing their lunches on Fridays, and sometimes it can be a struggle to remember to pack if you've bought lunches throughout the week and only attend main campus three days per week.

And I believe that the solution to mediocre, soggy-sandwich-laden packed lunches is Food Truck Fridays! Rotating food trucks are a fixture at Old Busthead Brewery (CCA's Vint Hill neighbor) every Friday and often serve delectable food at a low cost. For example, their most recent food truck, The Frenchmen, featured a burger called The Napoleon Conqueror. The sandwich, as described by The Frenchmen themselves, is a "savory deep fried chicken sandwich with Swiss Cheese, crispy bacon, ham, fried farm egg, and "frenchy" sauce served on brioche." This author found it to be delicious and satisfying!

The Frenchmen is just one of several varieties of food trucks that pass through Old Busthead Brewery every Friday that I'm sure would not mind serving hungry teenagers and staff for additional revenue. After interviewing the Frenchmen Food Truck employees, I found that they were "willing" and "would be happy to work something out" with CCA. The Frenchmen would also be happy to make the portions smaller for the younger kids in the secondary school. They specifically suggested sliders, which are smaller and easier to make in bulk. The sliders are also much less expensive than their giant sandwiches which generally range in price between \$7-\$12.

Before any of this can happen, however, the school and the food trucks would need to come to an agreement with the activity managers of different food trucks. While this may seem like a nuisance and process to some, the secondary school students like the idea. Sophomore Rachel said it would be "a great idea and a nice addition to our weekly menu options!"

Three cheers for Food Truck Fridays, a logical option to our empty Friday food calendar!