

# APPLAUSE

October 2020 Volume 22, Number 1



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Tumbleston Photography Studios

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## From the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome back! We're Clara and Logan, your new *Applause* editors. We hope that you're staying safe and adjusting well to the new school year, whether you're in-person or virtual.

When we signed on as junior editors last year, we never would have predicted what awaited us this year: using Zoom to communicate with our staff, taking pictures of students from six feet away, and planning articles over text.

Despite these changes, we're committed to providing the same quality journalism you've come to expect from *Applause*. We'll be featuring virtual and face to face students equally in features such as "Question of the Month" and writing articles that cover everything happening at SOA, even if it takes place at students' houses.

Last year, we published two online issues of *Applause* and distributed our June issue to all seniors at graduation and underclassmen at their yearbook pickup. This year, we're offering both print and online copies, which are accessible at [soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com), along with every other paper we've published since 1999!

One of our biggest goals this year is to increase our connection with our readers. Follow us on Instagram at @soapplause or send us an email at [@applause.editor@gmail.com](mailto:@applause.editor@gmail.com) to get in contact with us.

It's good to be back, SOA. Happy 25th birthday!

Your Editors-In-Chief,

*Clara Collins Logan Baker*



**Cover Art by Ellis Fox**

# Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of

School of the Arts

*Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers*

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## SOA Schedule

**Friday, October 16:** E-Learning Day

**Friday, October 23:** Half Day

**Saturday, October 31:** Halloween

**Tuesday, November 3:** Election Day- No school

**Tuesday, November 10:** End of Quarter 1

**Monday, November 23:** E-Learning Day

**Tuesday, November 24:** Teacher Work Day

**Wednesday, November 25 to Friday, November 27:** Thanksgiving Break

## Sign of the Month: Wear a Mask

Demonstrated by Alfonso White, 10th Grade



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Point your index finger and pinky on each side of your mask.**

## SOA Athletes Enjoy Successful Fall Seasons

by Giovanni Cusatis

*Applause will cover our athletes competing for their home schools during 2020-21.*

**Nic Tuemler** is a senior Piano major, who has been part of the James Island Charter High School swim team for six years. He started swimming when he was four, and has competed for three major teams. The first club he swam for was the Aiken Swim League, in Aiken, SC. When he moved to Charleston six years ago, he joined the Southern Marlins Racing Team and started swimming for the JICHS Trojans. Nic has two-hour practices every day excluding Sunday. Practices require him to be vigorous, as he swims about 4000 yards every practice. He normally competes in the 50 and 100-yard freestyle, which are the two shortest sprints in the sport. Nic qualified for the South Carolina State Championship Meet in four events: the 200 and 400-yard freestyle relay, the 200-yard medley relay, and the 100-yard freestyle. Nic's freestyle relay teams both set new school records in the qualifying meet, and Nic swam the 100-yard freestyle in 54.2 seconds.

**Lillian Sustaita** is a senior Strings major, who has run cross country for Stall since her sophomore year. She started running for Mount Pleasant Track Club in fourth grade because she saw her



**Nic Tuemler was part of two relay teams that set new school records for James Island this season.**

Provided

friend running and she thought it looked fun. Practices are tough, as they run between 4-7 miles every day. She also runs track, "which I'm better at," she says, joining cross country mainly to stay in shape for track, which takes place in the spring. In track she runs the 400 and 800 meter runs, the 400 hurdles, and the 4x4 relay. Her goal this cross country season is to run fast enough to earn a varsity letter. In her first meet this season, held at Wannamaker Park, Lillian ran a personal best, covering the 5K (3.1 miles) course in 24 minutes and 33 seconds.

**James Herring** is a freshman Visual Arts major, who runs cross country for North Charleston High School. He started running cross country recently, running with his dad and his running group, the Park Circle Pacers, last fall. He practices every week day, trying to continually improve his best times. His goal this season is to run a 5k in under 21 minutes. In his first meet this season he clocked in at 21 minutes flat.

Good luck Nic, Lillian, and James as you complete your fall seasons!



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**Lilli Sustaita and a friend take a break from a long practice to show off their Stall jerseys.**



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**James Herring speeds past the competition at a cross country meet.**

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## A Week in the Life of a Sixth Grader

by Leo Voelker, Sixth Grade Guest Writer

It took years of practice to feel ready for my School of the Arts audition. Then it came time, and I remember the 8th graders trying (and failing) to calm my anxiety. A huge weight was lifted off my chest when I got in. So, just being here is exciting for me.

Although there are some shortcomings to our COVID situation, like the distraction of seeing most of your classmates at their houses on the big screen or the challenge of making friends while remaining six feet away. I'm glad I'm here in person. I've made some new friends and have enjoyed getting to know my new teachers.

Middle school is a big change from elementary school. Everything is bigger. The kids are bigger; the homework is bigger; and my backpack is way bigger. I can barely stay upright! And I'm adjusting to not knowing everybody at the school. I used to know everybody, but it will just take some time.

SOA seems like a great school and I'm off to a good start.



Leo Voelker, Guest Writer

Photo by Ethan Butler

## Editorial

### RGB and RMM Inspire Us Amid the Challenges of 2020

To say it's been a rough year is an understatement. We don't have to throw statistics and headlines at you—we're sure many of you are all too aware of the state of the world right now. When we looked towards the new year in January, there was no way we could sense what was about to happen. We planned trips to new places, to visit family and friends, to tour colleges. We went out to eat and carpoled with friends and walked through grocery store aisles without a second thought. Last year's graduating class began honing their senior theses and sifting through college acceptance and rejection letters. When the orders to shut down schools came on March 13th, we didn't know how long it would be until we saw each other face to face. Even now, months later, many of us still haven't reconnected in person.

One unexpected side effect of the pandemic has been a sense of helplessness. Where many of us may have participated in protests over the summer or taken part in other community action events, now we were forced to take into account new risks. But despite these setbacks, many of you persisted in making your voices heard, through working with other passionate individuals or by creating art, sometimes both. Community action organizations like Charleston Area Justice Ministry held Zoom meetings and reached out to their members in new, inventive ways. School of the Arts students shared information with each other, sold art for donations to good causes, and sewed masks to give away. One thing was clear: you did what you could with what you had. If you're here at SOA, it's because you care about something so deeply it's moved you to action. You educate and guide the next generation, you write, you dance, you make music, you create art. This passion and skill provides us unique opportunities to do good.

Of course, we are not lacking in powerful role models. We've lost greats this year, most recently Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and, closer to home, visionary and School of the Arts founder, Rose Maree Myers (see page 10). Both of these women were trailblazers in their fields, unafraid of pushback and sights to behold when they came up against opposition.

For both women, the 1980s were not the most hospitable time to break convention, but both had clear ideas of how they could make this world a better place for their own generation and generations to come. They struggled, but more importantly, they persevered, and in doing so, forged legacies that we honor today. The work these pioneers started is not finished, and we owe it to them, and to ourselves, to continue their fight. It's time for us, as artists, students, and a generation, to unite and work to break down hardships thrown our way. It is both an honor and a necessity to keep pushing forward.



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#### The House **Lowery Rissmiller** *6th grade creative writing major*

Sits on the corner  
Of 32nd Blvd.  
The overgrown grass  
Is littered with weeds.  
A rusty bicycle leans against  
The dusty wooden porch.  
It might've once been a color similar to blue  
But the condition makes it nearly impossible  
To know for certain.  
Vines curl up the faded brick,  
Twisting this way and that,  
Almost as though  
They couldn't decide which direction to take.  
The driveway is cracked and gray  
And always empty.  
A neighborhood kid claimed  
He saw a car parked there once.  
Another says she observed  
A light coming from inside, late one night.  
It sits there, untouched.  
A puzzling mystery

To all, who dare to wonder.



Lowery Rissmiller, Author of  
"The House"

Photo by Ethan Butler

# SOA meets COVID

Applause spoke with members of the arts faculty to learn how they are adapting their teaching due to COVID-19.

## Strings

**Peter O'Malley:** In what ways has COVID-19 impacted the Strings program?

**Dr. Christopher Selby:** It's actually affecting teachers and students all over the country in a very serious and profound way. In the Strings program at SOA we are able to rely on the strong players at school to be the leaders, and the people at home can follow along with them. But if we were completely virtual, we'd have to go a completely different direction. It's been a real challenge on one hand, trying to find solutions for what's basically

at all. The delay is basically a dealbreaker of a challenge for us. And when we stop playing, we see the rest of the class still playing for a second or two. It's kind of crazy.

**PO:** How would you describe the experience teaching students this year so far, with the majority learning remotely?

**CS:** It's a little too early to ask this. The remote students are the ones immediately figuring out what's working and what's not. My fear is that the teachers are not hearing the problems the students are facing, so we just hear silence. Checking to see how everyone in the orchestra is playing just takes too long, and would bring our class to a standstill. Even taking roll takes



Photo by Ethan Butler

In-person Strings students practice from a safe distance of six feet apart.

an impossible situation. But I have to say, the first week turned out really good, and it could have been disastrous. We managed to get by with what I'd call a "passing grade."

**PO:** What unique challenges does a musical curriculum face that others don't?

**CS:** The biggest challenge that all musicians are facing is the delay. I believe it's about a third of a second delay each way, so you're hearing me a third of a second late, and I get what you say an additional third of a second late. It winds up being more than half a second, sometimes even longer, which is too long for people to play together virtually. With non-music related things, that half a second is not much of a problem

three times longer than it should. Regardless, we are figuring it out, and we'll get through it.

**PO:** Is there any possibility of performing as an ensemble later this school year?

**CS:** The feeling I have is one of hope, but it's also tempered by reality. At the end of last year in the spring, we had a lot of hope without reality. We had no experience with COVID, so we kept saying, "we're gonna do this, we're gonna do this," and pretty soon the hope started dying. In the current situation, I think we're solving problems we couldn't back in March.

I would like to believe that we would solve these problems and play concerts soon. We've all been watching really closely

what sports are doing. If there are athletic events in the gym, then maybe we should be able to have musical events in the theater as long as people are spaced. I'm hopeful, and right now I believe we'll be able to have concerts as soon as October or November.

## Deaf/Hard of Hearing

**Hannah Elledge:** In what ways has Covid-19 affected the staff and students in the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program?

**Ms. Tracy Duffy:** In the spring during the COVID-19 shut down, the teachers of the Deaf, Sign Language Interpreters, and Assistants spent hundreds of hours re-recording the General Education Teacher's lessons, embedding American Sign Language to provide access for our Deaf Students. We also determined during the home quarantine that our students felt isolated, at times, from others that they could communicate with. We set up live Zoom meetings several times a week to connect and provide access.

**HE:** What are some of the changes you've implemented to maintain the effectiveness of the program?

**TD:** Connecting through virtual meetings has become an important part of building our sense of community without students and staff. We have all gotten a crash course in using technology. Access to content in their native language, American Sign Language, is always a struggle, but even more so now when a majority of the class content is being delivered online in digital format. Closed captions do not always give our students equal access to information that the hearing students have. Our Deaf families acknowledge the importance of in-person instruction for our Deaf/Hard of Hearing students and the value of

having a sign language interpreter and teacher in front of them.

**HE:** What challenges do you and your students continue to face as a result of the pandemic?

**TD:** Access to the content and information presented in classes. Pre-packaged content, computer modules, and other digital resources used in some classes are not provided in American Sign Language. When meeting in virtual classrooms, it is often difficult for our Deaf students to have both a view of the teacher and have the sign language interpreter consistently in view. If a student is at home and is having difficulty, you can't just "call them on the phone" and walk them through the problem. You need to connect through video conferencing, which has its own challenges. Face masks are another challenge. All of our students require visual cues to understand language whether it's the use of mouth morphemes with American Sign Language or lip-reading to better understand speech. The use of clear face masks would dramatically increase the ability for our students, but that option is not currently available to them.

**HE:** Have you given your students any advice to help stay positive and motivated during this unique time (or vice versa)? And, if so, what is it?

**TD:** We have all been very mindful of their anxiety, that we are a community, and we are all going through this together. Our students are happy to be back on campus. Being together is a strong motivator and helps to promote a sense of community and family. Together, we are Deaf Power!

## Theatre

**Thea Putney:** In what ways has COVID-19 impacted the Theatre program?

**Mr. Derek Pickens:** This year our department is having to take a completely different approach to acting, but luckily there is a medium we don't frequently use

here at SOA but we will be using a lot this year: acting for the camera.

**TP: What unique challenges does a theatre curriculum face during these times that others don't?**

**DP:** Due to restrictions with social distancing and having to wear a mask, it's extremely hard to have actors perform and really connect with each other when they have to be six feet away from each other.

**TP: What changes has the pandemic forced you to implement?**

**DP:** It is definitely an adjustment and has thrown me for a loop, but in a good way. Many times, teachers will get in a sort of rut where they teach the same thing year after year, and this year is proving to be a great shakeup in my lesson plans. Having to take everything to a virtual level, I've had to reimagine lessons, create new ways of doing things, or completely replace lessons with something new.

**TP: How would you describe the experience of teaching students so far this year, with the majority learning remotely?**

**DP:** Being an actor I naturally thrive (on stage or in the classroom) on audience reaction and participation. Having to speak to the computer with most students muted and no reaction at all- I've had to personally adjust and remember that it's not that students aren't enjoying their classes- it's that there is a technological barrier between us that cuts out the personable part of the class. I do have a feeling, however, as the year progresses, that will work itself out.

**TP: Is there any possibility of performing later this year?**

**DP:** My hope is that by the spring we will be able to put on at least one outdoor production.

## Fashion

**Lizbeth Perez: In what ways has COVID-19 impacted the Fashion & Costume Design program?**

**Ms. Caroline Baker:** In March,

the Designers began by volunteering to make masks with Sew. Some.

Good, which supplied over 11,000 masks to under-supplied local medical professionals. We are very proud of how our students contributed to bridging the gap for those frontline workers! Many of our designers continue to provide masks to underserved populations in Charleston.

Over the summer, our best Design program volunteer lost both her mother and sister-in-law to COVID-19 in unrelated deaths, so she will not be able to volunteer with us for the foreseeable future. I also resigned this year, due to health and family constraints around the back-to-school policies. We have had students, as well as family members of students, contract the virus. Some have "recovered" and some did not. These illnesses and deaths change the people of the major which, of course, changes the major itself.

**LP: What specific, unique challenges does your curriculum face during these times that others don't?**

**CB:** The specific challenge in our curriculum is equity. If all of the students are virtual, we can all focus on costume & fashion design education. If some are virtual and some are physical, our schedule is subject to the safety precautions of being in person so we have less time for content. Being in person for our major requires an abundance of care to keep people healthy because much of what we do (cutting, sewing, drawing, draping, pattern-making) is done shoulder to shoulder in 1:1 lessons. Since that proximity cannot be safely done in person in our space, our choices are to focus on the academics or to try to work together at a distance with limited numbers. Since in person and online are to be taught simultaneously, the logical choice is to work virtually to provide the most possible equity, proximity and time efficiency.

**LP: How would you describe the experience teaching students so far this year, with the majority learning remotely?**

**CB:** Remote learning is off to a

great start for Design! We have already moved through several steps in the engineering design cycle (which we use to create our Fashion Show collections), created a lot of preliminary artwork and have covered quite a bit of material. The children are being exemplary students, handling Zoom with grace, managing time well and getting assignments done. Of course, we miss being together, but it has



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Grace Vail puts her skills to use making masks for frontline workers.

been a very productive first few weeks!

**LP: Is there any possibility of a fashion show later this school year?**

**CB:** Yes! There is always hope and there are many amazing volunteers dedicated to making the annual Fashion Show the best one yet!

## Piano

**Jasmine Benton: In what ways has Covid-19 impacted the piano program?**

**Ms. Debra Benson:**

Fortunately, we can still play our instruments in class. We have all of our keyboards spaced out in the room for social distancing. I feel like the curriculum is moving slower due to the situation, but we will get through as best as possible in these times. We are not getting the opportunity to play together as a class for scales and sight-reading. Also, we are not working on ensembles like we usually do at this time of the year. We are only concentrating

on solo repertoire.

**JB: What unique challenges does the piano curriculum face during these times that others don't?**

**DB:** It is challenging to work with students on Zoom on repertoire because of the delay and glitching. Many days I have problems hearing the students. Just today, I was giving the first scale test for this year. I had to concentrate on what I was seeing the hands doing versus what I was hearing because they were not the same.

**JB: What changes has the pandemic forced you to implement?**

**DB:** I have had to step out of my comfort zone and learn more technology in order to teach my curriculum. I am still working on new things. I have gone to using a course in composition off of Udemy for my juniors & seniors for their theory this year. I felt like this would be a good solution so that they would have tutorials to go back to as well as discussion in class. We are also adding some music theory platforms for the rest of our students to use online.

**JB: How would you describe the experience teaching students so far this year, with most students learning remotely?**

**DB:** I don't know that I have been this challenged in my teaching since I was a first-year teacher, and I have been teaching for 30 years. I definitely miss having my students in the class. I miss the interaction that you naturally have in-person vs. online. I feel like I can read my students far better in person. I want to be able to know when they are feeling frustrated or unsure of their knowledge so that I can explain things differently or give them some individual attention.

**JB: How will performances happen this year?**

**DB:** Performances will probably be pre-recorded and shared.

*Continued on page 8*

## SOA meets COVID, continued

### Dance

**Jasmine Benton: In what ways has Covid-19 impacted the dance program?**

**Ms. Kristin Tilloston:** Dance is such an in person art form. It deals with the physical body moving through space. We often rely on partnering and big group ensemble pieces that now we cannot do due to COVID distancing restrictions. So being virtual makes it very difficult to teach and for our students to learn. I know this is taking a toll on our students not being able to come to our studios.

**JB: What unique challenges does the dance curriculum face during these times that others don't?**

**KT:** To teach dance during the COVID pandemic has many challenges. I have to stand at least 6-7 feet away from my computer screen so dancers can see my entire body, as do my dancers need to stand 6-7 feet away so I can see theirs in order to give corrections/feedback to improve their technique. I have to watch tiny little squares on my computer as well as look at moving bodies in my classroom at the same time. I need to make sure I have my mask on AND speak loud enough over the music so my students F2F and Virtually can hear me. My classroom is not set up very well. My Promethean board, phone and computer hook up are on one side of the room and the stereo is on the other. To maintain social distancing, each dancer has a 10x10 foot dance square assigned to them in which they can dance. I can only fit fourteen students safely in my classroom. Since dancers sweat, roll around on the floor, and at times do not wear shoes, we clean our floors in between each class to keep everyone safe.

**JB: What changes has the pandemic forced you to implement?**

**KT:** Personally, I have rearranged my curriculum, at least for the first

semester, depending on how long the distancing restrictions last. For the first part of the semester, we are working on Dancer wellness (physical, psychological, emotional pressures, coping skills, how to eat properly, cross train). Then we will move into dance history, diversity in the current dance world, and analyzing dance performances.

When we get back to face to face, I hope to integrate more physical technique into classes.

**JB: Is there any possibility of performing later this school year?**

**KT:** A huge part of our program is our guest residency program. We bring in seven master teachers and choreographers in the country to teach our students both middle and high for a week at a time. So even if the guest residency teacher prefers Zoom classes, we will have them teach our students and set a piece (whatever that might look like). We have been thinking of creative ways in which we can Zoom or set choreography in a socially distanced way to record and present to the school and our dance families. We are continuing to move forward with Senior Thesis and Junior Composition.

### Band

**Will Brown: What's the biggest obstacle the Band Department has faced due to COVID-19?**

**Mr. Ken Turner:** Maintaining a clean environment has been a significant challenge. Performing on a wind instrument creates increased aerosols in the air in addition to condensation, which has to be expelled for the instrument to play properly. Also, the band at SOA is like a big family, so the students naturally want to hang out together, as many of them are best friends. Social distancing is something that I have to constantly remind them about, especially at the beginning and end of classes, when set-up and take-down occurs.

**WB: What's the teaching**

**experience been like having over half of the students over Zoom?**

**KT:** It has definitely been a challenge! Being a musician requires one to listen to oneself and to others while performing, and to react and adjust in real-time. Musicians often feed off of the musicianship of each other. My job as the director is to listen to what they are producing, evaluate, and help them make corrections, again in real-time. This is nearly impossible to accomplish over Zoom. There is such a large delay between what is happening in the classroom, and what the students at home are seeing and hearing. So, I have the students at home mute their microphones and perform with us while we perform in class. It works about as well as you could imagine. There are lots of technical issues with the computer music software we are using, combined with the lag in the material being received at home. But, we are making it happen!

**WB: Do you think there will be any concerts by the end of the school year? If so, what would that look like?**

**KT:** Yes! The SOA High School Bands hope to perform at least one concert outdoors, socially distanced, sometime in November, if it is safe to do so.

**WB: How well do you think students have adapted to the circumstances?**

**KT:** I am extremely proud of our band students! We have instituted many new protocols for set-up, take down, cleaning of their personal space, socially distanced rehearsals, bell covers, masks that allow them to perform on their instrument, and so on. They have risen to the challenge. Our band parents have donated tons of cleaning supplies, and the

students are utilizing them well. Our bands sound amazing so far, and I am excited to have many of them back in the classroom.

**WB: Are there any changes made throughout COVID that have changed for the better?**

**KT:** Without a doubt, the band facility is cleaner and more organized than it has ever been! The students have taken an active role in keeping the band area clean, organized, and free of anything that can't be utilized for instruction. As someone that is passionate about neatness, this makes me happy!

### Vocal

**Will Brown: What's the teaching experience been like having over half of the students over Zoom?**

**Mr. Robin Rogers:** Crazy! It's different. You have some students that are really paying attention and doing what they're asked to do, but there are a lot of kids at home that are not with you at all. We have to constantly reel them back in. There are also tons of



Middle school Vocal majors rehearse in the breezeway.

technical problems.

It puts more responsibility on the students to learn their own part by themselves.

**Ms. Heather Caffarel:**

We've totally had to change our instructional strategy to make sure all students are accommodated. There's a lot more multitasking that we, as the teachers, have to do in order to keep everyone engaged.

**WB: Do you think there will be any concerts by the end of**

### the school year? If so, what would that look like?

**HC:** We are planning to have an outdoor concert in December, but the number of students that sing together isn't going to be what it typically would because of distancing requirements.

### WB: What are changes behind the scenes that have affected teachers more than students?

**HC:** We anticipated starting everyone virtual, but we didn't. We had to really scramble to prepare to have students both online and in-person.

**RR:** No question - we would much rather have everyone in person!"

### WB: Can you recall another time in your teaching career that would be similar to this?

**RR:** Back in '89 when we had Hurricane Hugo, I was a teacher at Middleton High School. We were without power for four weeks, but due to the damage caused by Hugo, we ended up being out of school for about 8 weeks. That was a time where we didn't have the technology to carry classes on as normal.

**HC:** I could only imagine how this would be if we didn't have technology.

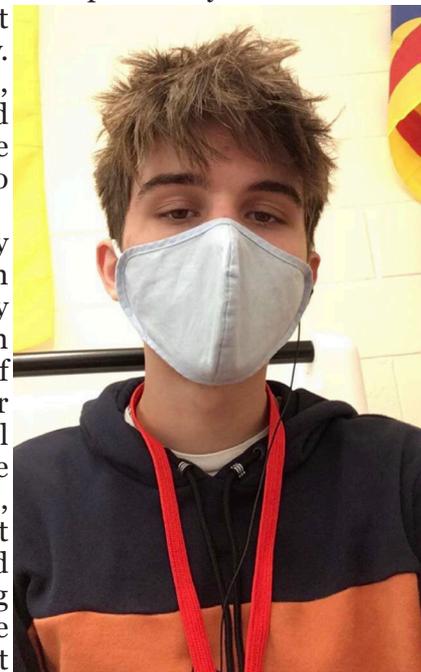
### WB: Are there any changes made throughout COVID that have changed for the better?

**HC:** I think that students' appreciation for choral singing and for music is going to be greater now since they've missed out on so much of it.

feeling at his laziest. Crosby delved into his love of music, all while trying to stay away from his parents to prevent them from also catching the virus. "I normally try to work on music every other day, but over quarantine, I could work consistently for long periods of time" he said. It sort of started feeling like a job, in the best way possible." Mr. Hill's own quarantine took a mental toll on his health as he slept for days on end with no strength to do anything but get better and play "Age of Mythology." He also used the time to set up Google Classroom for the school year. Mr. Hill was frustrated with his inability to be his active self and the helplessness that came with it, relying on his roommate's dog for company and chicken noodle soup made by one of his students (which, sadly, he couldn't taste, but he felt the love) to aid his recovery. While struggling with the virus, Mr. Hill would constantly remind himself of the Persian adage he learned from his father, "This too shall pass."

When asked what they would do if they were to catch the virus again, and how they would cope this time, Herrman recommended using lots of Ibuprofen and staying active (or at least trying to) in order to feel productive. Crosby claimed there would really be no way to prepare, and he would just try to ride it out like last time. He also said he would like a heads up about not being able to smell anything for a couple of months. Mr. Hill learned that if he were to get the virus again, Adam Crosby was glad to regain his sense of smell after months without it. time around, and recognized the only rational thing to do would be to wash his hands and wear a mask like he had before. Hill also recommended stocking up on soda water, as he would drink about eight bottles each day to keep hydrated.

In terms of their recovery, Herrman claimed he was feeling back to normal right after the symptoms wore off, as did Crosby. For the people who may be having a hard time with the virus themselves, Crosby says, "Stay strong and continue to do your best. A lot of it may not be under your control, but it's disrespectful to yourself to give up on the things that are. I feel like that applies to most things." Mr. Hill, though he slept on his chest for over a month to assuage the pain he felt the next morning, and still sometimes experiences shortness of breath, is back to his usual running times and exercises. He advises, "Keep yourself calm and collected and think about yourself. While being sick, many think of others to keep their minds occupied and deny the reality or maybe at times the severity of the situation. Take care of yourself first." Stay safe out there, SOA.



Provided

## Coronavirus: Who Caught it?

by Ella Fritz

Ah, yes, the coronavirus, a disease all of us try to stay away from by washing our hands, using face masks, and sneezing into the crooks of our elbows. Despite these efforts, some of the students and staff at SOA had the coronavirus knocking at their own doors during this pandemic. To get an inside look at how COVID-19 has impacted those previously infected, I interviewed **Adam Crosby**, a band major, and **Tyler Herrman**, a theatre major, two senior students at SOA who created a band together, and **Mr. Tristan Hill**, our high school Spanish teacher.

Herrman discovered he had coronavirus around late April, and it only took him three days to fully recover. Herrman's bandmate, Crosby, who believes he got the virus from Herrman one day after a jam session, said that he woke up with a splitting headache and pain a few days after testing positive. These symptoms lasted for about three or four days before slowly backing off. Crosby lost his sense of smell, but did not realize this had happened until he tried smelling his soda and did not pick up on the fizzy scent.

Mr. Hill also lost his taste and struggled with bouts of chest pain for a month. Around June 3, Mr. Hill noticed he was out of breath after completing a few exercises, but believed it may have stemmed from his own allergies. After he was diagnosed with the virus, Mr. Hill could only imagine where he might have gotten it from. "It was a struggle. All in all, the symptoms lasted about a month" he said. "I am a fairly active individual, and I will never forget one day mowing my neighbor's lawn and I had to stop several times to catch my breath. The next day, I finished the yard only to pass out on the couch for another four hours from exhaustion. As a runner, my lack of breath was very frustrating and I had to cycle to keep up my cardiovascular strength until about two weeks ago."

When it came to quarantining, Herrman spent his fourteen days of madness watching "Mr. Robot" and some anime,

[www.soa-applause.com](http://www.soa-applause.com)

# SOA Founder and First Principal Leaves Rich Legacy

by Logan Baker



Applause Archive

On Friday, September 25, Mrs. Rose Maree Myers, educator, visionary, and founder of School of the Arts, passed away at age 84. Myers, who worked in education for nearly fifty years, leaves behind a rich legacy, both in South Carolina and across the world.

Born in Lynchburg, South Carolina in 1935, Myers graduated from Winthrop University in 1958 after double majoring in English and Fine Arts. From there, she went on to act at the historic Barter Theater in Abingdon, Virginia, for four seasons. Even as SOA's principal, she never lost touch with her background in theater.

SOA math teacher Mrs. Ann Marie Fairchild remembers Myers' portrayal of Mrs. Darling in SOA's 2002 production of *Peter Pan* fondly, saying she'll never forget it: "Near the beginning of the play, Mrs. Darling sings a lullaby to her children. As I sat in the audience listening, I was transfixed. Her presence on stage was magnificent—totally elegant with a sweeping posture as she would glide over the stage. Her voice as she sang was tender and sweet. It was a rare opportunity to see our principal as an artist, commanding the stage in every way."

By all accounts, Mrs. Myers had a gift for captivating her audience, whether that consisted of her staff, students, or participants at a board meeting. Mr. Basil Kerr, SOA's band teacher, described her as "an amazing combination of visionary leader, innovator, and, especially, a political animal." Mr. Kerr went on to say that "No one could 'work the room' like Rose Maree Myers! Those of us who knew her back then, and attended board room meetings and other public groups involved in education, would watch in amazement as she would dominate the room simply by her presence. She was the same dynamic



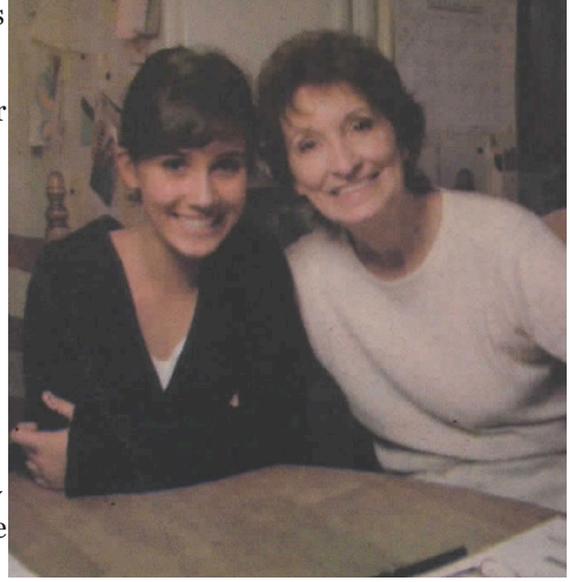
Applause Archive

RMM with Robert Porterfield, founder of the Barter Theater in Abingdon, VA, the company with whom she toured for four years in the late 1950s.

person whether talking to school board members, state politicians, millionaire philanthropists, or the faculty."

It was in 1960 that Myers first began teaching, having left Barter Theater and married Max Myers, her husband of more than fifty years, in 1959. She taught English and Art at

various elementary schools in South Carolina for two decades while pursuing further degrees in Elementary Education, and she became assistant principal then principal at Goodwin Elementary School before turning her focus on arts integration. Her own experiences with her students had led her to believe in the power of the arts in education. In a 2009 interview with *Applause* editor Chaney Long, Myers described how making colorful kaleidoscopes out of pie pans had helped her third graders grasp fractions, a breakthrough that started her on a journey of arts integration in the classroom. This path would eventually lead her to found Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary and our very own School of the Arts. When the district began formulating plans to turn Wallace Elementary School in West Ashley into an arts magnet school, Mrs. Myers quickly interviewed for the principal's position and got the job. It was under her leadership that ARCAE flourished, garnering attention from schools as far as Japan who wished to place more emphasis on the arts in their curriculums. Ashley River Creative Arts went on to win the Blue Ribbon Award, the Verner Award, and recognitions from the Kennedy Center and the National Endowment for the Arts under her leadership. Myers' new approach made waves in American education and international education alike, and, during her career, she traveled to forty-three states and China to consult and share her expertise. As a result, Myers' pioneering work is reflected in countless schools and students all over the world.



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Former *Applause* editor K. Chaney Long interviewed Mrs. Myers at her home for the 10th anniversary issue of *Applause* in 2009.

After ten years as principal at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary she began plans for a secondary arts school in Charleston County, School of the Arts, and was intimately involved in the building decisions for SOA's first campus, ensuring specific accommodations like sprung floors in the dance studios were carefully assembled. From the beginning, Mrs. Myers had "a singular focus on what she wanted SOA to be," Mr. Kerr says. It was this unwavering dedication that made our school what it is today, a place where creative students can nurture their abilities and hone artistic skills. Mrs. Myers served as SOA's principal for twelve years before retiring in 2007. As a former Ashley River Creative Arts student and a



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Ms. Myers is greeted at the Charleston International Airport after returning from China, where she was invited as a consultant in arts-integrated education.

As a former Ashley River Creative Arts student and a

senior looking back at my years at SOA, I can say without a single doubt that I would not be the person or artist I am now without Mrs. Myers' vision. I know I'm not alone in that. Countless students, including 2010 graduate **Jonathon Heyward**, who is now an internationally recognized conductor, acknowledge the role Myers played in their lives. Heyward, who recently conducted the London Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic, says, "...



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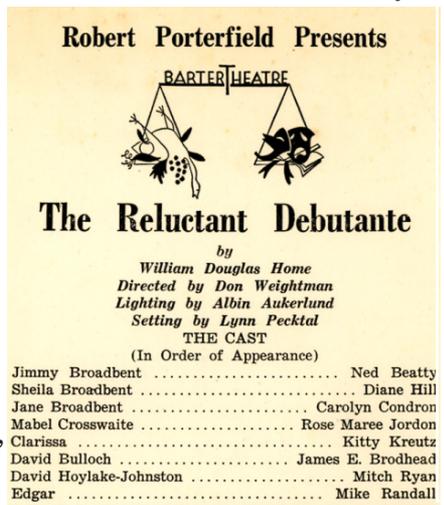
**Rose Maree Myers with Ashley River Elementary kindergardener Giovanni Cusatis in October 2010. Now a sophomore at SOA, Giovanni is one of many students who will have completed his K-12 education at both of the schools founded by Mrs. Myers.**

without Mrs. Myers' creative determination for the School of the Arts, I would not be where I am today. The fact that she noticed the importance of an arts-based curriculum in the Charleston County School District is a blessing not only for me, but also for the thousands of students who have attended SOA." In fact, it was at the Rose Maree Myers Theater dedication in April of 2010 that Heyward, a senior at the time, first conducted an orchestra.

Mrs. Fairchild, whose two sons attended Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary and School of the Arts, is

equally appreciative of Myers' impact. She recalls her as a "tenacious visionary," who "fought daily battles for her two schools and had to convince everyone that this school plan was necessary and bound for success." Mrs. Fairchild also says that her family has been "directly impacted by [Myers'] hard work in incalculable ways," calling Mrs. Myers' flexibility when Fairchild wanted to teach half-time in order to spend more time with her young children "the most wonderful gift ever." She is still grateful for the experience.

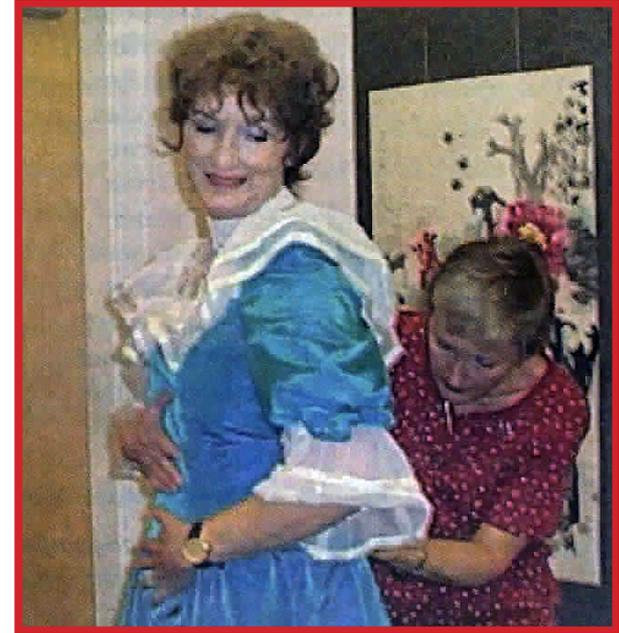
Students at SOA owe Mrs. Myers our deepest gratitude, as the lessons we have learned and will continue to learn can be directly attributed to this inspiring, magnetic visionary. The legacy she leaves behind, Mrs. Fairchild reminds us, "should not be taken for granted." In her 2009 *Applause* interview, Myers reflected on her achievements, stating, "I've had a great career. I've so enjoyed every part of it." This love and passion, along with her courage and conviction, will continue to shape future students for generations to come. She'll be dearly missed by those who knew, loved, and admired her, and we will continue to honor her life's work the best way we know how, by making art and changing the world for the better.



Applause Archive

**RMM, formerly Rose Maree Jordon, appeared in "The Reluctant Debutante" as part of a cast that included Ned Beatty, who went on to star in such classic movies as *Deliverance* with Burt Reynolds and Jon Voigt.**

**Looking Back on SOA's Past 25 Years**  
*In celebration of SOA's 25th anniversary, each month we will be revisiting moments from 1995 to 2020.*



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**From the November 2001 *Applause*: Mrs. Marie Nichols fits SOA principal, Rose Maree Myers, for her role as Mrs. Darling in *Peter Pan*.**



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# Meet your new Applause staff!



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**Peter O'Malley**  
Sophomore Strings Major  
**Wears:** a mask  
**Stays:** at home  
**Vote:** November Third



Provided

**Ella Fritz**  
Sophomore Creative Writing Major  
**Wrote:** a novel  
**Likes:** sushi and pickles, together. Forever.  
**Wants:** to go to sleep after she writes this.

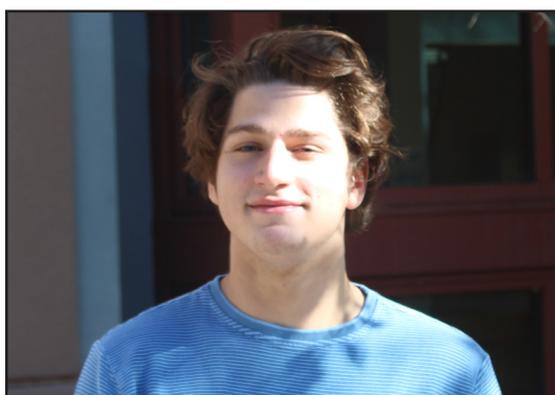


Photo by Ethan Butler

**Will Brown**  
Senior Vocal Major  
**Favorite color:** green  
**Coffee:** iced  
**Please:** Vote him out



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Katie Forrester**  
Senior Creative Writing Major  
**Favorite Cult Classic:** *Scott Pilgrim*  
**Currently listening to:** Beach Fossils  
**Role Model:** Aubrey Plaza



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Hannah Elledge**  
Senior Creative Writing Major  
**Follow:** my Insta - hannahelledge  
**Craving:** iced coffee with caramel and cream from Dunkin'  
**Working:** it



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Logan Baker**  
Senior Creative Writing Major  
**Catchphrase:** "That movie sounds awesome. I'll add it to the list."  
**Likes:** Toads, warm color palettes, poetry  
**Recently attempted:** hand-making pasta (for four hours)



Photo by Avea Diamond

**Ethan Butler**  
Senior Strings Major  
**Likes:** Dr. Pepper and Chocolate  
**Misses:** Mr. Orvin  
**Have:** A great day



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Clara Collins**  
Senior Creative Writing Major  
**Afraid of:** Eggs, Quentin Tarantino, turning assignments in on Canvas  
**Favorite mascot:** Celestial Seasonings Sleepytime Tea bear  
**Emotional support SNL cast:** Season 33



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Charlie Hastings**  
Senior Creative Writing Major  
Nuf: said



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Avea Diamond**  
Junior Strings Major  
Enjoys: reading books with words  
Gustav Mahler: is the best  
Cool: Beans



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**Jasmine Benton**  
Junior Theater Major  
Favorite color: neon green  
Likes: Percy Jackson books  
Favorite holiday: Halloween



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**Kenya Hines**  
Sophomore Theater Major  
Likes: Sanrio plushies, cows, berets, and sleep  
Favorite song: *If Without You* by Ateez  
Can't: Focus



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**Lizbeth Perez Brion**  
Junior Fashion Major  
Likes: being extra for no reason at all  
Dislikes: pickles  
Obsessed with: Frida Kahlo



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**Giovanni Cusatis**  
Sophomore Strings Major  
Favorite Team: Chicago Cubs  
Collects: Signed baseball cards  
Ask me about: My knowledge of baseball stats



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**Thea Putney**  
Sophomore Theatre Major  
Loves: Manatees and Christmas carols in September  
Dislikes: snakes, parallel parking  
Enjoys: fires in the fireplace in 80-degree weather



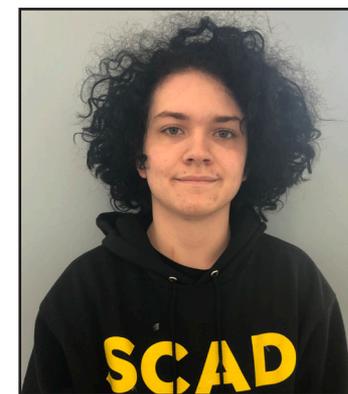
Provided

**Kenna Steele**  
Senior Visual Artist  
Star sign: capricorn <3  
Favorite arthropod: centipede  
Currently: interested in flowers with genetic abnormalities



Provided

**Ellis Fox**  
Senior Visual Artist  
Preoccupied with: cowboys on VHS  
Busy: trying to correct my posture  
Definitely has: a samurai sword



Provided

**Connor Smith**  
Senior Visual Artist  
Favorite movie genre: anything Robert Pattinson was in  
Named a cat: Barbra  
Secretly a: Vampire

## SOA Welcomes Back Recent Retirees Mr. Kerr and Dr. Schuster

Recent retiree **Mr. Basil Kerr** is once again teaching at SOA, so **Hannah Elledge** asked him about his time back.

**Hannah Elledge: How long did you teach at SOA and elsewhere before retiring?**

**Mr. Basil Kerr:** I taught band at Wando and Bishop England until 1995. I then went to USC for my Ph.D., where I also taught Music Appreciation and supervised student teachers. I was hired to be the first high school band director at SOA in 1998. I retired in 2018, then came back for an “encore” semester in the spring of 2019. All in all, I’ve been teaching for 44 years. My friends tell me I’m a failure at retirement!



Photo by Ethan Butler

Mr. Kerr is excited to be back at SOA teaching AP Music Theory.

**HE: What are your fondest memories of your “first” career at SOA?**

**BK:** When I first saw the old building, my first thought was “What a Dump!” But, when I walked the halls and saw the student - teacher interaction and the creative energy that flowed through the building, I was hooked. I fondly recall those early years in a band room that was a converted auto shop, and the family we built in the SOA Band Major, as well as the recognition of our AP Music Theory class by the College Board

in 2005. Mostly, I remember so many great talented students who have gone on to be successful in many careers, not just music.

**HE: What made you decide to return to SOA?**

**BK:** I truly enjoyed teaching Music Theory and felt I had more to give in that area. And, frankly, I miss the creative energy of the students, as well as the Fine Arts Faculty.

**HE: What will you be doing at the school this year?**

**BK:** I’m a part time teacher, and I only teach AP Music Theory on A days. It’s nice to be able to concentrate on this challenging subject.

**HE: What did you enjoy most about your brief retirement?**

**BK:** I considered retirement as a career shift and not a permanent vacation. I am the conductor of the Charleston Concert Band, a semi-professional adult music organization, and the chairman of the Education Committee for Charleston Jazz, as well as the interim director of the Charleston Jazz Academy. I also returned to performing on my French Horn as a member of the Summerville Orchestra.

**HE: Do you plan on continuing at SOA for a while or returning to retirement soon?**

**BK:** Three things will determine that: if I can still be an effective AP Music Theory teacher, if I’m still enjoying the challenge, and if Dr. Cook will have me back.



Recent retiree **Dr. Schuster** is also back teaching at SOA, so **Hannah Elledge** asked him about his return.

**Hannah Elledge: How long did you teach at SOA and elsewhere before retiring?**

**Dr. John Schuster:** I taught in Missouri for one year, Kentucky for thirty-seven years, and at SOA for two years. So, all in all, I’ve been teaching for forty years.

**HE: What did you enjoy most about your brief retirement?**

**JS:** Not having to get up or go to bed at a particular time.

**HE: What will you be doing at the school this year?**

**JS:** Teaching Algebra 2 and Discrete Math.

**HE: How have you had to evolve this year in order to be able to successfully teach**

so we need to give each other a little slack.

**HE: Have you noticed students struggling with a particular part of your math classes due to virtual learning?**

**JS:** The first day I was terrible - did not have the Zoom sessions ready, did not realize that the Zoom audience couldn’t really see the Promethean Board, didn’t record the session, etc. Thanks to students providing very helpful feedback in their journal entries, I think we have gotten a system that works for now and will buy time for me to learn additional things to do to make the learning process better for all.

**HE: What is your best piece of advice for your virtual students right now?**

**JS:** Make sure you know where the assignments are posted and do them as soon as possible. Procrastination will always cause problems.

**HE: What is the first memory you have as a teacher?**

**JS:** Do you know how old I am? I remember teaching my friends in high school how to do math in Pre Calc and Physics. Another old memory I have is of teaching Algebra to a blind student in college.

**HE: What is one moment as a teacher that made you think, “This is why I do what I do”?**

**JS:** When students say something like, “I never understood that before.”



Photo by Ethan Butler

Dr. Schuster brings attention to a poster giving his Algebra 2 and Discrete Math students advice for this school year.

**during the pandemic?**

**JS:** I was talking with Dr. Cusatis about returning to teaching math from the no-stress job of media clerk. I mentioned to him that teaching math after forty prior years was not a problem - learning to use Zoom while teaching students in class and virtually is something altogether different. Learning a new system, like Canvas, is another challenge that makes the start to the year more difficult. We just have to remember that we are all on a learning curve (maybe more like a roller coaster),



## Remote vs. In-Person Learning

*Peter O'Malley asked junior strings major Clara Anne Stavrinakis and sophomore strings major Nash Doar what each of them thought about the school year so far.*

**Peter O'Malley: What are some ways school is different from previous years?**

**Clara Anne Stavrinakis:** It's definitely weird having some students online and others in person, and it's exhausting just staring at a screen all day sometimes. In classes like Strings it's weird that no one can hear me play.

**PO: What are some advantages of virtual classes with the majority of students online?**

**CAS:** I enjoy getting to sleep-in a little later and it doesn't end up taking a while to get home like last year.

**PO: What are some disadvantages?**

**CAS:** In Strings it's hard to hear the orchestra and if my internet is bad, sometimes I can't hear anything at all.

**PO: What do you miss most that you likely won't be able to do this year?**

**CAS:** I'll miss Mock Trial and concerts.



Provided

Clara Anne Stavrinakis is glad to get a few extra moments of sleep now that she's attending classes virtually.

**Peter O'Malley: What are some ways school is different from previous years?**

**Nash Doar:** Well, obviously masks and staying 6 feet apart, but I think it's been good. I have been able to interact more with teachers, and with a smaller number of students learning in person there have been less distractions, which makes classes smoother.

**PO: What are some disadvantages?**

**ND:** I can't see my friends. I think I can speak for everyone when I say that I miss that friend group where we all sat together at lunch. It just doesn't feel the same with two people to a table, and the longer breaks take you out of that "student mode" you're in during class.

**PO: What do you miss most that you won't be able to do this year?**

**ND:** Field trips and performing. I truly don't think we will be able to do either of these, and it's sad to think about not giving the amazing performances SOA is known for.



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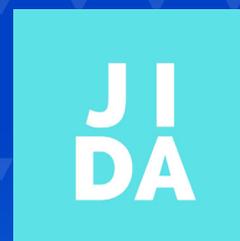
Nash Doar misses eating lunch surrounded by his friends.

## SOA Juniors Take On "The Shakespeare Challenge"

Twelve students in Dr. Cusatis's AP English Language class have agreed to tackle "The Shakespeare Challenge: An Act a Day." Sponsored by *Applause*, the competition requires students to read all thirty-seven of The Bard's plays in one school year. *Applause* purchased four comedies and four tragedies for each of this year's participants to get them started. Students must read print copies and take notes in the margins. You may follow their progress at [soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com). This year's challengers are Grier Abercrombie, Norah Bernstein, Charles Bouknight, Haley Freeman, John Wesley Kornahrens, Alma Lutas, Carolyn Macklin, Hayes Martini, Cassandra Phillips, Sophia Sinor, Philia Walker, and Gus Varallo.



Juniors Haley Freeman and Grier Abercrombie share a few magical lines from Shakespeare in the Pegasus Garden.



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Sophomore Visual Arts major **Devin Ware** skated and slept.



Senior Theatre major **Sylera Morrison** worked at the SC Aquarium as a high school intern.



Sophomore Creative Writer **Zack Kynard** did lawn care work and checked out different abandoned places- a hobby he's had for the past few years.



Sophomore Visual Arts major **Kayla Herrmann** practiced skateboard tricks and watched the sunset almost every night on her community dock.

# What did SOA do over the summer?



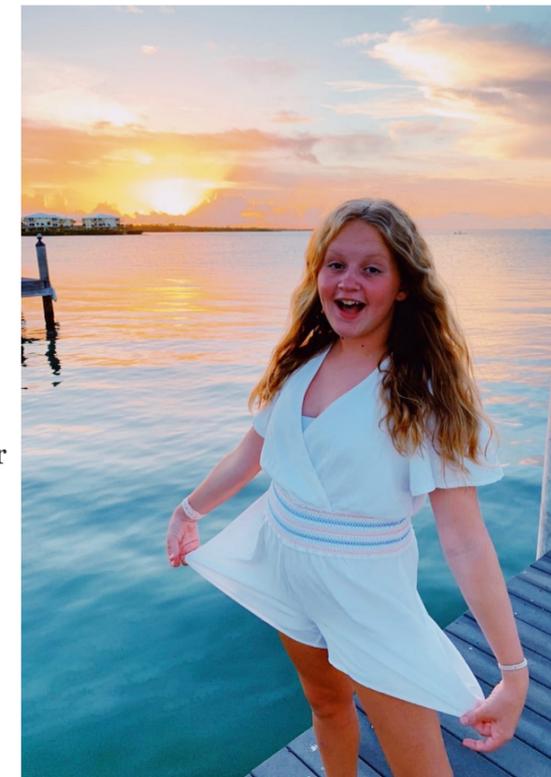
7th Grade Visual Arts major **Whitney Werking** swam with sea turtles.



8th Grade Dance major **Ella Schrecker** volunteered at a camp at her dance studio.



Sophomore Strings major **Peter O'Malley** spent the summer in Vermont and visited Burlington and Montpelier.



8th Grade Dance major **Ella Robbins** visited Key West and watched the sunset.

## Meet SOA's New Middle School Assistant Principal: Dr. Michael Griggs

With the new school year there also comes a new Middle School Assistant Principal, **Dr. Michael Griggs**, so we had **Hannah Elledge** ask him about his life before SOA.

**Hannah Elledge: Did you grow up in the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up and what attracted you to Charleston? Why SOA?**

**Dr. Michael Griggs:** I did not grow up in Charleston. I grew up in



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Dr. Griggs, a lifelong learner, draws inspiration from many sources, including jazz music.**

Chicago, Illinois, and moved to Louisiana when I was in High School. I began college in Louisiana, but joined the military and was stationed in Charleston, where I finished college. After working in administration as an assistant principal and principal in elementary schools, my supervisors felt I was a good fit for the School of the Arts. And here I am.

**HE: Where did you attend college, and what degrees did you earn?**

**MG:** I'm a perpetual student. I have attended many universities and colleges. A few are

Northeast Louisiana University, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Southern Arkansas University, Trident Technical College, Southern Christian University in Montgomery, Alabama, College of Charleston, University of Charleston, The Citadel, and the University of South Carolina. I have one Associates degree, two Bachelor's degrees, three Master's degrees, and one Ph. D.

**HE: How did you become involved in education as a career, and how long have you taught?**

**MG:** The activist in me moved me into the field of Education. After complaining about my children in school, I decided to become a part of the solution. This is my 20th year in public education.

**HE: What did you like or dislike about your early education?**

**MG:** My K-12 education was the highlight of my life. I never had a teacher that I didn't love until I got to college. Teachers have always been my inspiration. God made them. For real.

**HE: What were some of your earliest jobs? What did you learn from them?**

**MG:** I worked as a paper delivery boy in my pre- and early teen years in Chicago. I had to get up early to get papers to people's houses before they woke up in the morning. That taught me that you have to get up to get your work done. When I moved to Louisiana, I worked in fields weeding the cotton and corn crops. I was made to do that because I was

too young to resist my father's commands. That taught me that I didn't want to do that kind of work, but I learned that it doesn't take a lot of ground to put a seed in the dirt. With work, it will grow.

**HE: What interests do you have outside of your job at SOA?**

**MG:** I have several interests outside of my job at SOA. I still love to work outside when I can. I love classical Jazz (Black classical music) but was not old enough to see the Jazz greats. At times, I search YouTube videos and bask in watching Miles, Coltrane, and Freddie Hubbard, along with the singers of that era: Ella, Nancy, Etta, as well as up and coming artists, singers, and musicians. I also listen to authors who write interesting books and speak at colleges. Now that's three hours well spent.

**HE: What books or movies have had a significant impact on you?**

**MG:** Many books have had a part in developing me. *Escape from Freedom* by Erich Fromm, *I'm Ok, You're Ok* by Thomas Harris, *His Needs Her Needs* by Willard Harley, *The Destruction of Black Civilization* by Chancellor Williams, *Criminalizing a Race* by Charshee McIntyre, and *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys* by Jawanza Kunjufu. Many others, including the excellent writers of today, are producing truly eye-opening work like Khalil Muhammad's *The Condemnation of Blackness*. The book that has the most influence on me, which I have read more than any other, is the Bible. For movies, I love *The Wizard of Oz*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Madea Goes to Jail* (this one can be controversial). The movies entertained me, but I found what I thought was a deeper meaning in them. I receive energy from the readings and joy from the musicals.

**HE: Is there any story or moment that you'd be willing to share that stands out to you as one of those "this is why I do what I do" moments?**

**MG:** There are many stories that I can tell that are a "this is why I do what I do" type of story. To me, they are personal and spiritual. But I will say from a young age, I found that when I talk, my friends and colleagues will listen to me.

**HE: What do you most want your students to take away from you?**

**MG:** I would like students to take from me the confidence that they can do anything they want to do. Just look at me. If I can do it, they certainly can. But never step on, put down, or look down on people as you make your way to where you want to go. Holla!



Photo by Ethan Butler

**Ms. Derrickson social distancing kids with the aid of a six-foot stick on October 1.**

## Applause Welcomes SOA's New Teachers!

### Dr. Dustin Ousley

by Katie Forrester

**Dr. Dustin Ousley** will start his fourteenth year of teaching as he assists the vocal department with one of SOA's high school ensembles. Dr. Ousley was born in a small town called Fountain Inn near Greenville, SC. Even as an elementary school student, Dr. Ousley knew he would



Photo by Ethan Butler

become an educator. He credits his past teachers and mentors, who he still keeps in touch with, for inspiring a love for teaching.

Though he initially believed he was best suited as a mathematics teacher, Dr. Ousley discovered his passion for music education during his time as an undergraduate at Furman University. Dr. Ousley completed his Bachelor's degree in music in 2003 and obtained a Master's degree in Choral Conducting from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2005. After working as a music teacher at a North Carolina highschool for seven years, he left to pursue a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the University of South Carolina in 2015. While teaching at Coker University in Hartsville, SC, Dr. Ousley applied for a position at Charleston Southern University, which brought his career and family down to Charleston.

Dr. Ousley also works at CSU as the Director of Choral Activities and Coordinator of Choral Music Education. He says he has learned so much about himself, others, and relationships through teaching, stating, "Good teachers are always working to become better versions of themselves." He cites respect, working as a team, love, motivation, and dedication as values he hopes to show in all of his classrooms, and believes that putting in initial hard work is what makes downtime with students more rewarding for both parties.

Dr. Ousley loves playing sports such as tennis, racketball, and badminton, watching the Food Network, and spending time with his family of five, including their toy poodle. As a

part time music director and worship leader at Highland Park Baptist Church, Dr. Ousley's faith has shaped his identity and the blessings in his life. Though he has many inspirations in his love for music, *Into the Woods* stands out to him due to his experience performing the role of the baker in numerous productions.

Dr. Ousley encourages his students to ask themselves what they can learn from each day during this pandemic. He has faith that through maintaining the right perspective, both he and his students can emerge stronger from this pandemic, which has compromised traditional teaching and education.

### Mr. Patrick Martin

by Ethan Butler

**Mr. Patrick Martin** is SOA's newest English teacher. This year, his classes will include English 1 and 2. If there is one thing he wants students to take away from his classroom, it is intellectual curiosity.

Mr. Martin was born in South Carolina, but his family moved to Chase City, Virginia when he was very young. While he was in college, Mr. Martin's parents moved back to Edisto Island, and in 2005, Mr. Martin moved to Charleston with his family. As a kid, Mr. Martin worked for his father doing landscaping, which he initially wasn't crazy about. However, after getting his first real job at Hardee's, he realized that working for his father was "not so unreasonable."

He earned his BA in English from Hampden-Sydney College, and his MA from Middlebury College. Mr. Martin has been teaching for 22 years now. He started off teaching at a junior boarding school when he was twenty-one. Before coming to School of the Arts, Mr. Martin taught at Wando High School, where he was Teacher of the Year in 2018.

Growing up, Mr. Martin felt that his teachers had a "one size fits all mentality," and he did not feel that he fit in. Nevertheless,



Photo by Ethan Butler

when he was in ninth grade, his art teacher taught him how to paint, and also how to believe in himself. He later taught for five years at the high school he attended, continuing to work on his painting while teaching English.

Outside of school, he enjoys advocacy, speaking out about topics such as mental health and education. In fact, he even started his own advocacy group, The Safe Schools Project, which focuses on funding for mental health support in schools. Last year, Mr. Martin spoke at Mother Emanuel AME church, alongside congressional leaders in support of mental health funding for schools.

Mr. Martin enjoys watching musicals with his family, the music of *Wilco*, and the novels of Tom Robbins.

Even before coming to SOA, he was inspired by the teachers and students here. He says it is "an honor and a privilege to be a part of this community," And it's an honor to have Mr. Martin at the School of the Arts!

### Ms. Erin Small

by Charlie Hastings

Another new addition to the SOA staff comes from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department. **Ms. Erin Small** is originally from Charleston. She went to West Ashley High School, where she participated in theater, flag and line dancing, and cross country. She earned her BA in visual communications and fashion merchandising.

Before coming to SOA, she lived in San Diego and New York City, where she worked in book publishing, textile design, and marketing, but she's happy to be back in her hometown at her new job. Outside of school, she enjoys reading, going out to eat, biking, and kayaking.

Ms. Small started ASL a little more than a year ago. Even though she knew some signs beforehand, she desired to truly understand the language. With the help of SOA's Mr. Walters, who was her teacher,



Photo by Ethan Butler

she soon mastered the language and became certified to teach. She is most looking forward to working with all the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, especially, as she says, with “her main man [Ian Greig].”

Ms. Small loves working with students and loves ASL, English, history, art classes. SOA is the first school she’s worked in, and she’s excited to teach despite the global pandemic and has sustained her classroom according to CDC guidelines.

## Mr. William Harvey

by Jasmine Benton

SOA is excited to welcome **Mr. William Harvey** as the jazz piano teacher for SOA’s middle and high school. Mr. Harvey grew up in Beaufort, SC. He attended the College of Charleston and two CUNY schools in New York, where he received his bachelor’s and master’s degree in jazz performance. After continuously substitute teaching for some friends, he went back to school to get his teaching certificate. In New York, he has taught at the Piano School of NYC, the Harmony Program, and Mary McDowell Friends School. In Charleston, he has taught



Photo by Eghan Butler

at Allegro Charter.

Mr. Harvey didn’t start out as a jazz pianist or a teacher; in fact, his first job was as a dishwasher, a job that taught him lessons he would carry throughout his life: “One of my coworkers was an older fellow who had already worked two other jobs before arriving for my shift, and he was very tired all the time and worked very hard. It helped me to appreciate my opportunities and gave me a new respect for hard-working people of all professions.”

Mr. Harvey came to SOA after hearing about our school from a fellow teacher and was excited to apply after seeing a job opening. He would like for students to realize that skills learned through music can be

carried into other areas. He also says, “As a dad with young kids, I just want to remind students to be thankful for the sacrifices your parents have made in raising and providing for you, especially in the year of COVID-19.” We’re excited to have Mr. Harvey!

## Ms. Anita Hepburn

by Will Brown

We are thrilled to add **Ms. Anita Hepburn** to the incredible staff at SOA as our new Foundations of Animation and Yearbook



Photo by Eghan Butler

teacher.

Ms. Hepburn grew up in Budapest, Hungary, graduating from high school when the Berlin Wall came down. She worked as a secretary for the Hungarian parliament, even knowing the current Hungarian president at one point, but soon realized that she would rather go back to school. She met her husband when he was in Hungary. They both fell in love with the Charleston area, deciding to call it home after vacationing here.

Ms. Hepburn attended the College of Charleston, earning a degree in studio art.

Prior to SOA, Ms. Hepburn worked as a graphic designer at the *Charleston Post and Courier*. She earned her teaching certification while teaching at the Garrett Academy of Technology, where she worked for three years as a Digital Art and Design teacher. Ms. Hepburn gained a love for education after teaching adults at an evening art center: “While doing both jobs, I realized that I could combine the two careers.”

As much as Ms. Hepburn loves teaching, she also enjoys gardening, fashion, decorating, and traveling. She also likes to keep active, working out almost every day. Something she’d like her students to take away from her class is “to be creative thinkers and be unique in what you do - to stand out from the crowd.” She advises, “Don’t be afraid of the unknown; seize the opportunities.”

## Dr. Roberto Trigosso

by Ella Fritz

With teaching and administration experience under his belt, **Dr. Roberto Trigosso**, our newest Spanish teacher, has come into our school with a smiling face and genuine “hola!” at the start of his classes and Zoom calls.

Dr. Trigosso was born in New York City, and grew up on Long Island. In highschool, he had a passionate teacher that helped change his perspective on education, prompting him to become a teacher himself. As a teenager, he also worked in retail, learning the importance of listening to others and their needs, and this impacts his own teaching and personal life today. During college, Dr. Trigosso moved back to the Big Apple, earning a BA for Spanish and Literature from Stonybrook University and a Masters degree in Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and School Administration from Touro College and Hunter College. Our new Spanish teacher’s latest degree is a Doctorate in Education from Fordham University. Before Dr. Trigosso and his wife were married, they lived in New York City, but



Photo by Eghan Butler

they visited our beautiful hometown from time to time. The two enjoyed our city so much, they eventually decided to move to the Charleston area, even leaving behind the live shows, events, and musicals in New York City, offerings he always loved to take advantage of. Even though Dr. Trigosso cannot travel as much as he would like during the pandemic, he usually enjoys visiting family in Peru, traveling to Buenos Aires and Paris, and having the chance to snowboard during the winter (which, of course, would be terribly hard to do here!)

So far, Dr. Trigosso is loving the SOA staff and community, as he “already

feels at home.” He values his class time with students and always likes to help them “start their day, their classes, and each activity they engage in by thinking or talking about something positive.” He also believes that “when we begin with something positive, there is more opportunity for success in everything that follows.” Dr. Trigoso always keeps these values close, and looking back on his school years reminds him of the impact his own teachers had on him. He felt as though he could truly learn in a class when the teacher was able to connect and understand him. Dr. Trigoso is excited to be here for his first year at SOA, and he already enjoys the friendly environment and students that our school has to offer!

## Mr. Matt Verone

by Lizbeth Perez Brion

This year, SOA has the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Matt Verone as our new Spanish 1 teacher. Mr. Verone grew up in Syracuse, NY, and moved to



Charleston seven years ago. He attended SUNY Brockport in upstate New York and earned his Bachelor's in History and Spanish. Mr. Verone started working as a teaching assistant with the Special Education Department at the high school he attended as a teenager. He then decided to go back to school for teaching, and went on to get a Master's in Education at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, NY.

Some of his earlier jobs include working as a grocery store cashier, a busser/dishwasher at a restaurant, a food court worker at college, and a furniture mover. He says he learned how to deal with people from a customer service standpoint and that it also taught him a lot about responsibility. He has worked as a full time teacher for six years now, and was a teaching assistant for five years before that.

When asked if there was any moment in his career that made him appreciate what he does, he responded, “Last year, another teacher and I were talking about teachers we had when we were in school; one of my students overheard and asked, ‘You remember your teachers?’ and then he said, ‘Actually, I’m going to remember Mr. Verone.’”

Mr. Verone enjoyed his years as a student, and while he didn't love having to sit still for a long time when he was younger, he remembers really liking all of his teachers.

Some activities he enjoys outside of school are sports, reading, cooking, and walking and playing with his two dogs. He says he reads “mostly fiction, but a wide variety of genres” and said he recently enjoyed the book *Beartown*. He also likes “a lot of different music, but The Allman Brothers Band and Bruce Springsteen are probably my two favorite musical acts. I’ve seen them both in concert with friends and those are great memories.”

With the start of the new school year, he hopes to convey to his students that learning a second language can be fun and rewarding. He wants his students to find ways to enjoy their time in high school and middle school: “It’s important to work hard, but it is also important to find a balance.” He came here because he knew that there was a great community,

Photo by Ethan Butler



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## Where Are They Now: Sam Clarke

by Will Brown

**Will Brown** caught up with recent SOA alumnus **Sam Clarke** to discuss how she's dealing with her unusual first year of college.

**Will Brown: What college are you attending? What are you majoring in?**

**Sam Clarke:** I'm attending the University of South Carolina, majoring in Retail with a focus in Fashion Merchandising. Hopefully minoring in journalism next semester.

**WB: How has COVID-19 affected your college experience?**

**SC:** Honestly, I'm not entirely bothered by the fact that I'm not getting the "true college experience" my first year. I'm more comfortable in smaller groups, so I'm thriving now. The possibility of going home sooner than expected does weigh heavy on my mind, but the likelihood is low because USC has been taking very serious precautions.

**WB: How has the transition been from high school to college?**

**SC:** College is so much better than high school, especially coming from a small school such as SOA, to a giant campus like USC. There



Sam and a college friend hang out with USC's statue of Cocky, the school's mascot.

are 30,000 students here. I meet someone new almost every day on the crosswalk. My classes haven't been too difficult either, and I think I have my teachers at SOA to thank for that. There's also so much school spirit, which I've been longing for.

**WB: What's the most challenging thing about college so far?**

**SC:** The most challenging thing would have to be the walking. I live about a twenty five minute walk from my academic building and about a fifteen minute walk away from the main food court. This walk also makes it harder to use all fourteen meal swipes per week. Hiking the hills of downtown Columbia in a mask is not very fun.

**WB: What's the best thing about college so far?**

**SC:** The best thing thus far is definitely meeting new people. I've already made more personal connections with my roommates and the people living around me than I did with my classmates in four years of high school. Also all of the campus-sponsored events and groups like karaoke nights, laser tag, and goat yoga! I've already joined the *Daily Gamecock* team as a writer for the Arts and Culture section, and I even joined a bowling team!

**WB: What do you miss the most about SOA, and what are**



Sam enjoying Columbia's offerings at Soda City Market.

**your fondest memories?**

**SC:** I miss my teachers the most. I'm a teacher's pet, and I love it when I know my teachers like me. Most of my classes are pretty big, so it's harder to make connections with teachers like I did at SOA. The one professor I have developed the biggest connection with has been my English 102 professor (surprise, surprise). My fondest memories of SOA would have to be hearing and seeing creativity wherever I went. I'd hear the band rehearsing *Amazing Grace* and *Happy Birthday* every morning. There's nothing like the SOA Jazz band.

**WB: Do you have any advice for seniors?**

**SC:** Apply for so many scholarships. Don't let deadlines pass you by. Be easy on yourself, and don't stress out so much about being accepted to your top college. College is amazing no matter where you go, but any college is lucky to have SOA students. Try not to burn unnecessary bridges this year. Also, Ms. Hart is a great source of help for college essays.

**WB: It may be too early, but where do you see yourself after college?**

**SC:** It's hard to say for sure, but currently, I see myself pursuing a career in fashion merchandising, specifically in the sustainability and fashion forecasting world. I want to travel a lot, specifically to Spain. I'm already planning on a study abroad program for junior year.

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## Where Were They Then: Mr. Colin Waters

**Jasmine Benton** reached out to SOA theatre teacher **Mr. Colin Waters** to learn about his early life.

**Jasmine Benton:** Where did you grow up? Are there any differences between here and there?

**Mr. Colin Waters:** I grew up in Florence, Kentucky, a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. The greater Cincinnati area, like Charleston, is a pretty big arts area. There honestly haven't been too many adjustments for me between the two places- except for the weather. I do miss really cool fall days and even I miss snow sometimes.



Mr. Waters, in *Cheaper by the Dozen*, during his freshman year of high school

**JB:** Where'd you go to college? What did you major in?

**CW:** I went to school at Western Kentucky University and received a B.F.A. in Acting and a double minor in Musical Theatre and Performing Arts Administration.

**JB:** Were there any moments in your childhood that sparked your love for theater?

**CW:** I was pretty much sucked into theatre the moment I started. It became a part of my normal routine; however, I would say it wasn't until I was a sophomore that I knew it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I was accepted into the Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts, and during my time there it clicked that theatre is what I am supposed to be doing. That was definitely my most transformative experience.

**JB:** How did you get into theater?

**CW:** I got into theatre when I was just eight years old. I auditioned for a show I can't even remember the name of anymore, haha. From that moment on, I was constantly auditioning and performing.

**JB:** Do you have a favorite show you've been in? Why was it your favorite and what role did you play?

**CW:** I've had a few favorite shows I have been in, all for different reasons. I especially loved doing *Into the Woods*, where I played Jack; I also loved *Footloose*, where I played Willard. The show I think that tops it all for me, though, is *Of Mice and Men*. I played Lennie Small in this production. It was great to get my hands on a classic that- a little under 100 years later- still shared important messages. I normally am cast in comedic roles, so it was nice to get to do a drama-

which is my true favorite.

**JB:** What brought you all the way to Charleston?

**CW:** I came down to Charleston almost immediately after graduation because I was hired as a Resident Actor for Charleston Stage Company, where I performed in a majority of their shows at the Dock Street Theatre. After my first year with Charleston Stage, I was asked to stay as a second-year Resident Actor, which I gratefully accepted, and it was about halfway through my second year contract that I accepted the position at SOA.

**JB:** Is SOA the first school where you have taught? And if so, how are you enjoying teaching?

**CW:** Yes, this is my first official class. While I had been a teaching artist with Charleston Stage the past two years, this is my first time having my own classroom. It has been an absolute pleasure and honor to be teaching here at SOA. Especially in the midst of the pandemic, I feel so lucky to continue being involved in the theatre world, while most theatres are temporarily closed. It is so nice to still surround myself with theatre.



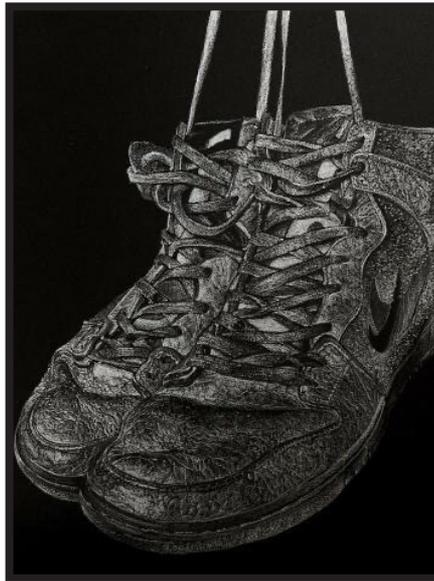
Mr. Waters in *Elf: The Musical*, 2019

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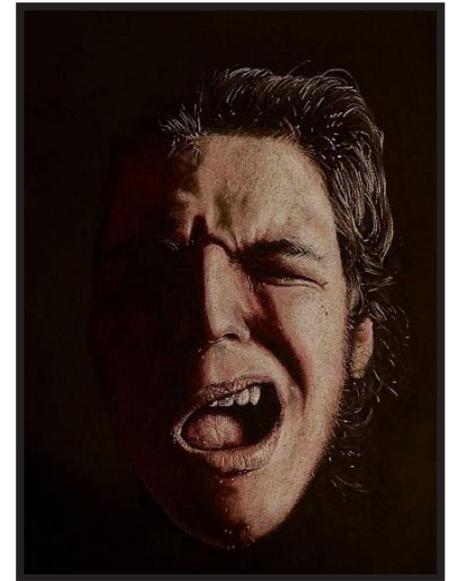




**The Hanging Elk**  
Kaija Brooke  
*Junior*



**Dunks**  
Leighton Webb  
*Senior*

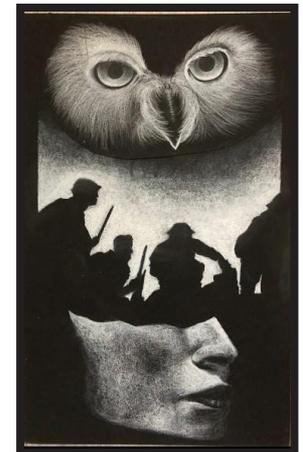


**Self Portrait**  
Leighton Webb  
*Senior*



**Black Birds Among Skinny**  
Ella Waldron-Norén  
*Senior*

**SOA Visual  
Arts Showcase**



**Wars Between Silhouettes**  
Ella Waldron-Norén  
*Senior*



**666**  
Kenna Steele  
*Senior*



**Margaux et Wilhelmina**  
Kenna Steele  
*Senior*



**An Observation of Tennessee**  
Kenna Steele  
*Senior*

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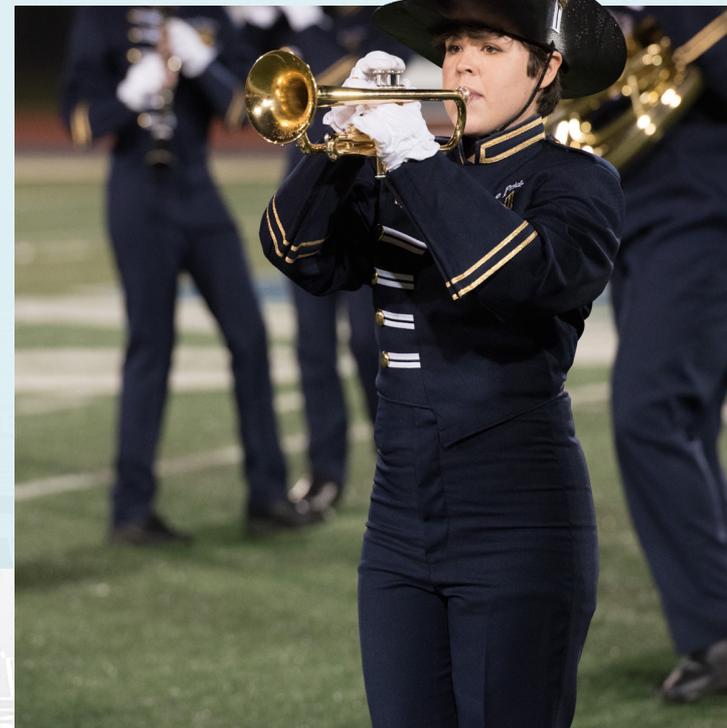
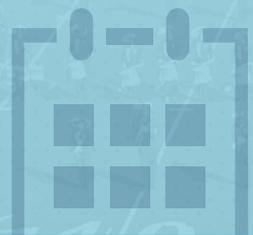
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## Horoscopes

by Clara Collins



**Libra (Sept 23- Oct 22)** Take it easy, Libra. Even beautiful social butterflies like you need a little break now and then. So take inspiration from the bears: kick back, relax, and go into hibernation for five to seven months. Or just take a break from Instagram for a few days.



**Scorpio (Oct 23- Nov 21)** Expect a reality check this month, Scorpio. I'm no psychic, but it might have to do with the fact that nobody else cares about the (hypothetical) TikTok you made that went viral. Stop saying that Will Forte's ex-girlfriend (hypothetically) commented! No one's listening!



**Sagittarius (Nov 22- Dec 21)** Keep yourself grounded this month. Buy a five dollar meditation app that you'll use once and then never delete because the daily notifications they send you make you feel guilty.



**Capricorn (Dec 22- Jan 19)** Boo! Happy Halloween, Capricorn. I'm pretty sure the house at the end of your street is haunted. Those creaks are probably just from the house adjusting, but the ghost you saw floating across your street last night? Etiquette suggests you should go over and introduce yourself to your new neighbor.



**Aquarius (Jan 20- Feb 18)** Your dog is mad at you. They'd never tell you, mostly because they can't talk, but you've totally been shortchanging them when you give them their dinner, and honestly, it's created a huge rift between you two. I'd probably give them an extra scoop of kibble tonight.



**Pisces (Feb 19- Mar 20)** You just read that your favorite oat milk brand is actually bad for the environment. Oops! Now you have to buy the worse version from Trader Joe's, which is a bummer, but good news! Twenty years from now, you'll invent the newest trendy non-dairy milk. I have no idea what kind, but I guess future you will know!



**Aries (Mar 21- Apr 19)** I can tell you're feeling charged up this month. Try to blow off some steam by getting into a Twitter fight with a C-list celebrity or posting a video of you ranting about the new Taco Bell menu on your private story.



**Taurus (Apr 20- May 20)** Keep your wits about you this month; if you're not careful, your friends will make you dress as your least favorite Spice Girl for the (socially distanced, of course!) Halloween group costume. Call dibs on Posh Spice before everyone even decides what the group costume will be.



**Gemini (May 21- June 20)** Gemini, you're feeling a little lost right now. I've got good news: a sign is coming. I'm not sure what kind (stop, railroad crossing, speed limit), but it'll surely help you on your journey!



**Leo (July 23- Aug 22)** You lost a penny in the last city you visited. It's currently making its way back to you, moving from wallet to wallet until it eventually ends up back in your hand. Then you'll put it back in your pocket, where it will immediately fall out of the same hole it did last time.



**Cancer (June 21- July 22)** I know you know what that person did, but just let it go. Taking the high road will always be better for you in the long run. Save the drama for *The Bachelorette*, back on October 13th, Tuesdays at 8 on ABC! (ABC executives, I'll be looking for my check in the mail!)



**Virgo (Aug 23- Sept 22)** Learn to forgive yourself. None of us is perfect, and nobody expects you to be. So let it all roll off your back, Virgo; I bet nobody even remembers that time you littered last month. (Except the cute little animals! Hey, I didn't say they had to forgive you.)



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## Sass Attack: Twelve Year Olds and Rolly Backpacks

by Hannah Elledge

*“Sass Attack” was started in 2007 by Applause writer **David Sass** and has been an Applause column for fourteen years, so, naturally, it had to be continued (as per tradition) by our own equally procrastinatory and dramatic high schooler, senior Creative Writer **Hannah Elledge**.*

Well, it’s official. We’re back. And by “we,” I mean them. And by “them,” I mean the middle schoolers. This decision to throw everyone back onto the campus comes with a variety of emotions. Some of you might be excited to finally get back to a semi-normal reality, while others may be double-masking it from now on to avoid the impending Covid-19 doom that surely awaits us in the upcoming weeks. But if you’re like me, the news of the middle schoolers’ return ignites a single fear above all others, one that rattles me to my very core. Rolly backpacks.

Now, it isn’t that I blame all middle schoolers for this trauma-inducing creation made to torture the ankles of all who dare get in its path. I blame Target. And any large corporation mass-producing these products. They have rotted these children’s minds into thinking that this will make them likable among their peers.

Wrong.

It is, in fact, quite the opposite. And, honestly, I don’t think all twelve year olds are unbearably annoying. Most of the time, I find their shortness and youthful charm quite entertaining, but this backpack is not as easy to like. It spreads, multiplies even, as students go home to their parents begging for the cool backpack on wheels that their friend has. I would compare the torture devices to a contagious disease, but with the times at hand, I will use another metaphor. I will liken it to a parasite--the middle schoolers--their hosts.

Anyone who has ever taken the bus at SOA knows the trauma that comes with this dangerous weapon, disguised as a thirty-two dollar teal bag with two zippered pockets and wheels that could cut bone.

Imagine this: you are walking down the breezeway humming to yourself as you always do come the end of fourth block. Your car beckons you from outside the black gates. “Hannah,” it calls, “you’re almost home.” You check your phone for Snapchats, even though you know the chance of one being there is slim, and that moment of ill-timed weakness is when it happens. They strike. All at once, they pour from the middle school doors. A flash of a blue ID is the last thing you see before your ankle, once pristine and unharmed, shatters under the wheel of the parasite. You scream as you fall, calling a curse out on the middle schooler who didn’t know the power they held. But, alas, they don’t look back. They never do, always running and worming between people, their roly backpacks trailing not so far behind, searching for their next victim.

So, for any middle schoolers reading this and looking for advice, get a real backpack, the type that has straps that go over your shoulders and makes you look like one of the Ninja Turtles. You should not get to escape the years of back pain and bad posture that everyone else has had to go through. Do not be so proud. And if it’s really *that* heavy, then use your (most-likely) decorated locker.

Anyway, I think I’ve done enough damage to the self-images of middle schoolers for today... and roly backpacks.



Photo by Hannah Elledge

VS



Photo by Ehan Butler

Senior Jonathan Yi was awarded a gold medal for winning first place in the Optimist International Club’s Oratorical Contest at the end of the past school year. If you are interested in participating in this year’s Optimist Club essay or oratorical contest this year, please contact Dr. Cusatis.

## Movie Review: *Tenet*

*SOA*, your favorite movie reviewer is back, and her opinions are as strong as ever! This time, **Clara Collins** is reviewing Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*.

*Tenet* was the first movie I've watched on an actual movie screen in months, safely tucked in a car at a drive-in. That alone made it worth watching: I highly recommend supporting a local theater like the Terrace Theater running something like this. It was a fine first film back. Nolan's direction is as slick and ambitious as ever, shooting dazzling action sequences on a grand scale, bouncing from huge airplane explosions to perfectly coordinated boat tricks to fight scenes involving thousands of people in massive opera halls.

The CGI in the film is incredible: cars go hurtling backwards in complex chases involving tens of huge trucks, two military teams battle on a huge expanse of desert, one going back and one forwards, and entire scenes are repeated with every motion in reverse.

It's commendable, too, that Nolan managed to create and plot out such a high-

concept film.

But despite all of this, *Tenet* falls flat. It's biggest problem is the same one many blockbusters fall victim to: nobody stopped to ask why it was getting made. The best movies are born from a story that must be told. They have hearts and souls. *Tenet* is heartless. The characters here don't really talk to each other; they talk at each other. The first act of the movie is almost exclusively exposition, none of it particularly interesting or understandable. Allies and enemies show up for ten minutes to deliver some new information, then disappear forever. The main character (John David Washington) doesn't even have a name, much less any sort of motivation. Washington was handpicked for the role by Nolan because of his fantastic work in *BlacKkKlansmen*, but he's given absolutely nothing to do here. The same is true for Neil (Robert Pattinson), who's mostly there to pad out action scenes or conveniently explain something when nobody else is around.

Kat (Elizabeth Debicki) is the only character with any hint of an arc, attempting to escape from her loveless marriage to master criminal and main villain Andrei Sator (played by a fully committed but sadly mediocre Kenneth Branagh) while protecting her young son. Her scenes are a breath of fresh air in a film mostly barren of characters who are not anything more than talking props, but they were few and far between, and she is often relegated to a simple damsel in distress.

All of this is what makes *Tenet*'s main flaw even worse. It makes no sense. Don't get me wrong: I'm no stranger to twisting, complex plots, and I'm usually a fan of them, but *Tenet* is confusing just for the sake of it. The science fiction is too convoluted to even attempt to explain here: there's time travel, technology from the future, objects and people going backwards, then forwards, and several overlapping timelines. All of it's thrown at the audience in quick succession, with no real

time spent developing how or why this universe works.

And, unlike other Nolan flicks or, say, equally confusing David Lynch movies, when the film is finished, there's no reward for piecing it all together, no great truth revealed.

*Tenet* would have benefited heavily if it had scaled way, way back. Spending less time globetrotting, blowing things up, and making every moment more tense than the latest James Bond movie's climax in favor of some worldbuilding and genuine, hard-earned character development could have made an instant classic.

Too bad Nolan can't go back in time and redo it.

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### The Busy Road

By **Olivia Stone** (6th grade creative writing major)

Behind my house,  
Beyond my yard,  
Lays Grey Marsh Road,  
Perhaps the busiest  
Street in town.

I can see it from the backyard,  
Where it greets me at  
Almost eye level.  
The road itself  
Is a sea of black,  
Where White and yellow lines mingle  
With stray leaves  
Who have come to dance,  
Fresh from the trees.

Neighborhoods dot the sides of the road  
With them, are monstrous pine trees  
Which drop their needles  
With every passerby.

You look up and see  
The blurred hues,  
Of the passing cars,  
Rushing by,

Engulfed in themselves,  
Not noticing the beauty of the road.



Olivia Stone, Author of  
"The Busy Road"

Photo by Ethan Butler

## Coastal Crust: A 5 Star Pizza Experience

by Will Brown

With an overwhelming number of pizza joints scattered throughout the Charleston area, it's tricky to find the perfect fit for your mood. Do you splurge on something a little more gourmet at EVO or Monza Pizza Bar? Do you convince yourself it would be healthier to buy boxed from the store and cook at home? Or do you opt for the convenience of Dominos, Pizza Hut, or heaven forbid, Papa Johns? Let me offer a solution to your next pizza night dilemma.

Coastal Crust is a true diamond in the rough. We ordered the Coastal Caesar and the Grandma pizza. While the Coastal Caesar was cold and served with freshly grated cheese -what more can a basic Caesar offer -it's honestly nothing to write home about. However, the Grandma? I could write home about it for pages, but I won't keep you for that long - here's what you

first stop to our table, but I can hardly get upset over my lack of patience. Especially given that for the rest of the night we were treated like royalty. By royalty, I mean that I never saw the bottom of my water glass (literally and metaphorically).

Let's talk COVID precautions. Face masks are required, and touch-free payment is an encouraging option though a scannable QR code on the check. Using their incredible outdoor seating is also highly encouraged. In fact, I think there's more outside seating than indoor. As the soccer goal, dartboard, and grass field may suggest, Crust is uber family and dog friendly. Indoors is equally as welcoming and warm with faux-leather benches, shiplap walls, and charming decor. It's clear that they've spent an equal amount of time on the mastery of pizza and creating the atmosphere.

Back to the edible goodness of Crust: I hope you get your conversations out of the way before this pizza gets to the table because there won't be much talking as you race to the last piece. After the pizza has somehow disappeared within a matter of minutes like the second sock after a wash, I wanted - I mean you'll want to - lick the plate clean to ensure that there's nothing left of Grandma. In all seriousness, here's the game plan for your next outing: Grab your mask (be sure to actually wear it), mosey on over to Coastal Crust (in Mount Pleasant or James Island), find a seat inside or out (both are great), order whatever your heart desires (if it's on the menu). Then take your time enjoying the atmosphere, food, staff, all the things. Finally, be sure to tip well. To make this long review short: It may be called Crust, but I can almost guarantee you won't have much on your plate by the end of the night.

**Mr. Harvey hopes you have a happy Halloween!**



Photo by Will Brown

The "Grandma" pizza, simple but delicious, blew Will away with its perfectly prepared ingredients.

need to know: The Grandma is six-slices of heaven. With relatively simple ingredients (olive oil, crushed tomato sauce, mozzarella, and basil) it's a hard dish to get wrong, but Coastal Crust has figured out how to go above and beyond the call of pizza-deliciousness. Whether it's the fresh ingredients, the cooking technique (woodfire, of course!) or a secret they'd never tell, it's something you have to taste to understand.

Now, the food isn't the sole reason I've given this restaurant my first 5-star rating. Not only are you getting an awesome slice of pizza, but you're also getting a slice of that hospitality the South is so well known for. It took a second for our waitress to make her



Photo by Will Brown

Coastal Crust's outdoor seating creates a cozy, laid back setting for a delicious meal.

## October Cultural Calendar

by Logan Baker

**Every Saturday:** West Ashley Essentials Farmers' Market (10:00am-1:00pm, 19 Farmfield Ave)

**Sat, Sept 26-Fri, Oct 31:** Boone Hall Fright Nights (limited tickets, see [boonehallfrightnights.com](http://boonehallfrightnights.com) for details)

**Various October dates:** MOJA Arts Festival (see [mojafestival.com](http://mojafestival.com) for details on virtual events)

**Sun, Oct 11-Sun, Oct 18:** Free Verse: Charleston Poetry Festival (see [freeversefestival.com](http://freeversefestival.com) for details on virtual events)

**Sat, Oct 17:** Sounds of the Lowcountry: Charleston Jazz concert (7:30pm-9:00pm, virtual or live at Firefly Distillery)

**Fri, Nov 13-Sat, Nov 14:** YALLFest's YALLWrite Online Festival (see [yallwrite.org](http://yallwrite.org) for details on virtual events)





## Halloween Trivia

by Charlie Hastings

Even though Halloween is still a ways away (not according to grocery stores, apparently) it's not too early to kick this strange year off with some trivia about the spooky holiday. Now, ladies and gentlemen, the six month wait is over, it's time for trivia.

### Questions:

1. What vegetables were originally used for jack-o'-lanterns?
2. When is the next Halloween with a full moon?
3. How many colors of M&Ms are there?
4. In what state is it illegal to dress up as a priest or nun?
5. The ghost of what president did Winston Churchill see in the White House?
6. What is the fear of Halloween called?
7. How much money did Americans spend on Halloween in 2019?
8. What was candy corn originally called?
9. What famous magician died on Halloween?
10. What is the most commercially successful horror movie?

### Ethan Butler 12th grade

1. Turnips
2. This year
3. Six
4. Louisiana
5. Lincoln
6. Hallophobia?
7. 700 million
8. Sugar kernels
9. Idk
10. *It*



Photo by Charlie Hastings

5/10

### Will Brown 12th grade

1. Eggplant
2. This year
3. Seven
4. Michigan
5. Lincoln
6. Spooky phobia
7. 5 billion
8. Pumpkin pieces
9. David Blaine
10. *Scream*



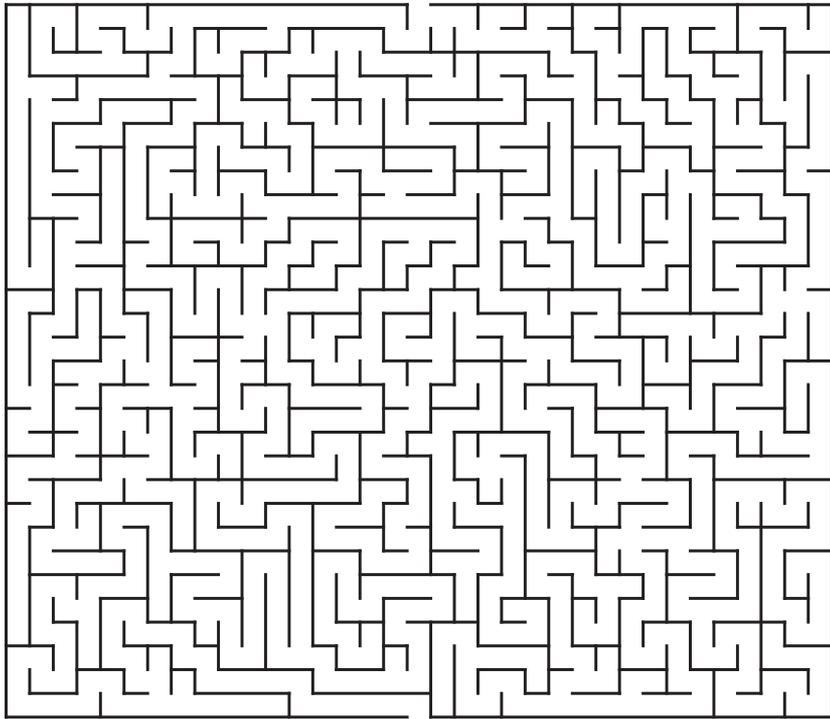
Photo by Charlie Hastings

2/10

## Answers

1. Turnips
2. 2020
3. Six
4. Alabama
5. Lincoln
6. Samhainophobia
7. 2.6 billion dollars
8. Chicken feed
9. Harry Houdini
10. *It*

# Help Mr. Waters find his theater masks!



				2		6		
2			8		1	9		
3		7	9	5				1
			1		4			
	1		3		8		9	
			5		2			
8				1	5	4		7
		3	6		9			5
		2		3				

## SOA Sudoku!



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“It’s not what anyone was expecting, and we’re all learning as we go.”

-Skye Waddell, 9th grade Band Major



“We have fewer opportunities to communicate with friends, but a two hour lunch break is great.”

-Ryan Dickerson, 10th grade Theatre Major



“This year I don’t have to smell 160 teenagers after a lunch outside.”

-Acadia Reynolds, 8th grade Creative Writing Major



“Not getting to chat with teachers and students before class. I’ve had to find other ways to stay in touch with people, such as Netflix Party.”

-Eli Bundy, 11th grade Band Major

# What’s something you find unique about this school year?

by Peter O’Malley, Ethan Butler, and Charlie Hastings



“A Zoom orchestra is unique!”

-Addie Black, 10th grade Strings Major



“Everyone is so extra nice and polite. I hope it lasts forever.”

-Mr. Clark, High School History Teacher



“Having to wear masks.”

-Ms. Badger, Cafeteria Staff



“Weird classes.”

-Margaret Carter, 12th grade Strings Major



“Free Lunch.”

-Kelsey Thorvalson, 12th grade band



“Not being able to share common art supplies.”

-Ms. Richardson, Visual Arts Teacher