
CHARGER EXPRESS



March 2021

Michael DeRichie

**Basketball is Back:
Chargers and Chargerettes Take
to the Court**

Back to Basketball

Recently, the Carbondale Area Chargers and Chargerettes made a change back to basketball. It has been about nine months since the last sporting events were cancelled because of the coronavirus. Many players missed out on football, baseball, softball, soccer, and other seasons because of it. This included seniors who missed out on potential scouting for future opportunities and for younger players who now miss out on some of their first seasons in varsity programs. The coronavirus has caused a lot of uncertainty and has slowed the development of the basketball teams, according to Girls Varsity coach Mr. Reckless. Senior Ray Ofner also says he missed out on his baseball and football seasons because of the coronavirus.

Mask Mandates and Precautions takes during basketball

Because of Covid-19, many precautions are implemented at practices and games. At the beginning of practices and games, temperatures are taken and a pre-health screening is also conducted. Masks must be worn at all times and players and coaches need to be socially distanced. Hand sanitizing stations are also placed around the gyms to stop spread of the virus or other potential illnesses. Senior Alyvia Schiavone says that the precautions have been difficult to adapt to, but is very excited for the opportunity in such uncertainty with the virus. Fellow senior Sarah Tolerico added that wearing masks can sometimes be difficult while running drills and conditioning.

Activities during Quarantine

During the long quarantine, players stayed active by doing various activities. Players got outdoors, went for runs, and went to local parks to play basketball. Sophomore Bryan Salitsky stayed active by going to the park and playing basketball at his house. Freshman Mason Baron used the outdoors and worked out when he had the chance.



New Carbondale Area School District Superintendent Mrs. Holly Sayre

Sam Grizzanti

A New Leader: Interview with Superintendent Holly Sayre

Mrs. Sayre began as Superintendent at the start of a difficult school year. Sam Grizzanti gets some answers about her background, her goals, and what she has enjoyed most about her new position so far. (See page 3 for the full interview)

Early Setback

The Junior High side of basketball was postponed due to a positive test within the program. Practices and games were shut down for ten days. As of this writing, all players are back on the court and all are healthy. They started their season on January 30th and hosted the Mid-Valley Spartans at home.

A Season of Hope

Although the coronavirus has been difficult to deal with, many are grateful for opportunity to play in this memorable season. Now that players are back to basketball, all we can hope for is a great and healthy season ahead. Go Chargers!



The Chargerettes in action on Senior Night against the Lakeland Lady Chiefs



Ray Ofner and the Chargers taking on the Dunmore Bucks



CAHS Senior Cheerleaders following the new guidelines and wearing their CA masks.

As of this writing, the Chargers and Chargerettes have completed their basketball seasons. While it was at times a challenge to keep up with the new rules and restrictions, all teams managed to compete and have memorable seasons. While none of the teams are bringing home a district championship, the staff of the Charger Express congratulates all of the players, cheerleaders, coaches, and administrators for getting through a challenging and unique season. We all look forward to a packed gym and the return of a full season and the annual Turonis Tournament in 2021-2022.



Sam Grizzanti

Mrs. Sayre Interview: from Page 1

New Leader

As you know, Carbondale Area has a new Superintendent, Mrs. Sayre. After growing up on a large farm, she entered the education field, having been a teacher and principal, among other assignments, before becoming Carbondale’s new superintendent in July of 2020. She is passionate about sports, particularly West Virginia University and the Pittsburgh Steelers, and was a coach for multiple teams in her old school. She has a husband named Larry and a Golden Retriever named Liberty

Challenges Facing the School

With the Covid-19 pandemic, Mrs. Sayre said she and the faculty of the district have been forced to adapt to the situation. The teachers have learned to teach online. She has also focused on ways that the staff and students can continue to learn and stay safe and healthy during this time, especially as she finishes plans to return to school in March. Ultimately, she has focused on how she and everyone else in the school have needed to adapt, and will continue to do so for the rest of this school year.

Return to School

For when we return to school in a hybrid, Mrs. Sayre has shown interest in getting to know the students. She believes that it is important for the staff and students to be familiar with each other. She plans to attend as many games and events as possible and wants to support the student body.

Memorable Moments

With all that is going on it seems harder to enjoy everything. This did not stop Mrs. Sayre because she is enjoying every moment she is able to find with the students. Her favorite moment so far was the Seniors’ holiday tree lighting. She was excited to have some students back on campus, and was happy to be a part of their moment.

Changes to the School

While applying for the job of superintendent, Mrs. Sayre had several ways of improving the school in mind. She wants students to have a more personalized education. She also wants to expand the opportunities that are offered to the students, such as additional electives. Lastly, she wants the school to be more focused on preparing students for college and/or careers. She looks forward to beginning to put in place these and other changes in the years ahead.



Mrs. Sayre’s favorite moment from her first months, the first ever outdoor Christmas tree lighting.



Jakub Marecki

Moving Up During a Pandemic: Life of a 7th Grader in 2020-2021

The coronavirus has changed lots of things for people of all ages. One of the major struggles of the past year is kids moving from one school to another in the middle of a pandemic that has kept everyone home on virtual learning. 7th grade student Jakub Marecki discusses some of these challenges from his own perspective, as well as the perspective of some of his classmates.

The new 7th Graders have yet to be able to officially step foot into their new school during the Coronavirus pandemic

Jakub Marecki

Moving Up During a Pandemic: The Life of a 7th Grader in 2020-2021

One of the most difficult parts of the new school year has been the transition of the 7th grade from the elementary school to the junior/senior high school while we are fully in virtual school. I asked two students some questions about the new virtual school system and how it negatively and positively affected them. First I interviewed Morgan Michalek. First, I asked him how it affected his schedule and he said that it negatively affected him because he sometimes has to stay up late to be able to finish his work. Next I asked him if he'd prefer the older schedule from the beginning of the year or the newer schedule. He said he prefers the newer, one which has shorter classes and a few hours in the afternoon to do work independently and reach out to teachers for help. The last question I asked was if he would prefer to be virtual or in the classroom, and he said he would rather be in the classroom.

Next I asked Albion Nasufi, for the first question he answered his schedule changed a lot since we went virtual. For the second question he answered that he liked the newer schedule over the older one. For the last question he answered that he would like to be in the classroom. For me personally, my schedule changed a lot like the others but I'd actually prefer the older schedule where classes were about 45 minutes long but like the others I'd like to be able to go back to the classroom eventually. One thing we all agree on is that it has been a challenge adjusting to the new schedule of the high school and getting to know our new teachers and their expectations. Even though it is later than we would have normally expected, many of us are looking forward to returning to the classroom and seeing what life is like in our new school.



The last time the 7th graders were physically in school, they were still attending Carbondale Area Elementary

In February, Mrs. Sayre and the School Board announced a return to hybrid in-person learning. On March 8, 2020, the first wave of students come back to the buildings, including pre-K through 2nd Grade as well as the Life Skills and Carbondale Area Achievement Program students. March 15, almost a year to the date after the pandemic closed schools, brings back grades 3-9, and then on March 22, grades 10-12 return. It has been a long and challenging year for everyone involved, and some students will continue to learn from home, but many of Carbondale Area's students are eagerly looking forward to returning to a more normal schedule in the weeks ahead. The next issue of the Charger Express will explore some of the ways that this transition back is affecting people, and what people are most enjoying and having the hardest time with during our return to in-person learning.

John Elko

New Teacher Feature Mr. Robert Barnett



Mr. Barnett, Carbondale Area's newest Social Studies Teacher

For this issue of the Charger Express, I interviewed Carbondale Area's newest faculty member, Mr. Barnett, to see how it is to not only adjust to a new school, but to do it in the middle of a pandemic and virtual learning.

First I asked him to briefly introduce himself to the students, "My name is Mr. Barnett! I grew up in Lake Ariel and graduated in 2007 from Western Wayne high school. After high school, I lived in Brooklyn, NY and worked in New York City at my father's office. This was a great learning experience! I moved to Long Island and began school at Nassau Community College. After two years at NCC, I transferred to Marywood University where I graduated in 2015. After graduation, I was a substitute teacher in various school districts in the area. I received my first teaching job in Philadelphia at Delaware Valley Charter High School. From there, I received a job at the People for People Charter School in Philadelphia. I taught at PFPCS for the last three and a half years."

Next I asked him what his biggest challenges are while teaching entirely online. He responded saying it has mainly been trying to find a way to connect to his students. He also likes moving around while teaching, so sitting behind a desk has been tough!

Next, we discussed his expectations for his students. He stated that he expects a lot from them but also understands that his subject (social studies) can be hard for some students to connect with, but his main goal it to instill the passion he has with this subject into his students.

Next I asked if he would look forward to returning to normal school. He stated that he is looking forward to meeting his students face to face, but he notices that his students' computer skills are growing rapidly and these skills will be very useful for future experiences.

We then moved on to what he feels have been some of the biggest challenges his students have faced in dealing with the shutdown and virtual learning. He thinks It may be difficult for them because of the lack of one-on-one time to ask teachers questions during class. He has been able to work with students in the afternoon on assignments, but it's hard to replace the impact of having a student raise their hand and a teacher to come and help in an actual classroom setting. He thinks it has also challenged students in managing their own time while at home.

Finally, we concluded by discussing his overall experience at Carbondale Area has been so far. He said, "my experience has been great so far!" and he said that everyone he has spoken to is very helpful and welcoming. He stated that from day one, he has had not only the staff offer him help and assistance, but the students have helped his as well. He was very nervous to meet so many students virtually halfway through the school year, but he feels right at home! Like all of us who are returning soon, he is looking forward to some amount of normalcy for the rest of this school year.

On behalf of the staff of the Charger Express and all Carbondale Area students, we extend a Charger welcome to Mr. Barnett and wish him luck the rest of the year and in the years ahead.

What's Next?

- All students in Grades 7-12 have been given the opportunity to receive their Chromebooks. In our next issue, we will explore the pros and cons of these new devices
- Hybrid is beginning. From March 8 through March 22, Carbondale Area students will begin returning to in-person learning. Our next issue will focus on this transition and what it has been like for students
- The spring sports season is kicking off. Baseball, softball, and track & field are in full swing and off to the races. Look for highlights in future issues.
- Mr. Barnett is only one of the new teachers in the Jr/Sr High School. Look for our profile on Mrs. Bailey, Computers Teacher, in our next issue.