



COVINGTON CONNECTION

The Newsletter Linking The Covington Schools,
Home & Community



Gene Gooding, Superintendent

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May 2021

COVINGTON EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Class of 2021 Valedictorians Named by Karen Brackman

Covington High School is pleased to honor three valedictorians for the Class of 2021: Sydney Hogue, Benjamin Romie, and Cael Vanderhorst. Each of these students has earned this distinction by graduating with an impressive perfect 4.0 grade point average.

Valedictorian Sydney Judith Hogue is the daughter of Karol and Steve Hogue. Sydney will be attending the University of Findlay with a major in Middle Childhood Education. She would love to return to Covington to teach in the future and will strive to “be a supportive teacher, who genuinely cares about each and every student, not only in their academics, but also in their social-emotional well-being.”

Sydney’s school activities include National Honor Society, Key Club, SADD Club, Drama Club, Spanish Club, Student Council, cross country, track, and choir. She also acted as a class officer and a HOBY representative for Covington, and Sydney was named the Americanism Test winner for her grade both junior (local and district level) and senior years.

Valedictorian Benjamin John Romie is the son of Wanda and Brian Romie. Benjamin will be attending The Ohio State University with a major in Linguistics/Foreign Language. He aspires to work either as a translator or interpreter, or as a foreign language teacher, thereby “us(ing) his skills to not only understand people from all over the world, but also teach them to do the same.”

During high school, Benjamin was a member of the state qualifying marching band and concert band--for which he served as vice-president, FFA, National Honor Society, SADD Club, Spanish Club and Hope Squad. Throughout high school, Benjamin has been selected by faculty for multiple awards honoring his integrity and overall citizenship.

Valedictorian Cael Tyler Vanderhorst is the son of Wendy and Eric Vanderhorst. Cael is still deciding on his choice of college but plans to major in Mechanical Engineering. Cael has several goals for his college experience including wrestling and earning a degree in engineering, as he looks forward to “creat(ing) products that will help make the world a better place.”

Cael’s high school activities include National Honor Society, football, wrestling--for which he was captain of the team and a multi-year state qualifier, Student Council, Spanish Club, and choir. In the past years, Cael has been honored as the outstanding math and science student in his class, as a gifted student athlete on various occasions, and as a young man with exemplary character.

Covington staff is proud to honor these three highly accomplished individuals throughout the graduation ceremonies and congratulate them on their outstanding contributions and achievements earned as students at Covington High School.

Covington Elementary by Josh Long CES Spring Book Fair

The Spring Book Fair will be held May 3rd thru May 7th for students only. The Book Fair will look a little different this year. It will be located in the hallway across from the library. We will have cases of books, posters and some other small items for purchase. Students in kindergarten thru sixth grade will visit the fair during their scheduled library day. Mrs. Reck will be sending home more information with students soon. Thank you for your support!

Search For Children with Disabilities

Covington Schools are participating in an effort to identify, locate, and evaluate all children from birth through 21 years of age who may have disabilities. Disability in this instance means such conditions as hearing impairments, visual impairments, speech or language impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotionally disturbed, multiple disabilities, cognitive disabilities, other health impairments, physical impairments, autism and traumatic brain injury. Before school districts can serve children, they must be found. Many unidentified children with disabilities are preschoolers. Parents may not be aware their child has a disability or that there are programs and services available. If you have or know of a child who may have a disability, contact Mrs. Cindy Johnson at 473-3628 for more information.

News from Covington Athletic Department by Ashley Johnson

The Covington Athletic Department and Covington Schools would like to welcome Austin Morgan, who will be taking over as the head football coach in the 2021 season. Austin is a graduate of Graham High School, and continued his education at Urbana University. While at Urbana, Austin earned his degree in AYA Social Studies Education. Austin will also teach JH/HS Social Studies at Covington starting next school year.

Austin brings high level football coaching experience with him as he has served as an assistant coach at Graham High School and Minster High School, including one state title while coaching at Minster in 2017.

Austin has stated that he is excited to meet the team and parents, and get to work for next season.

Covington is excited to have Austin Morgan as part of the Athletic Department and school system, and we look forward to next football season!

Everyone Wins by Bridgit Kerber

The PBIS program is still at work in our halls, despite the changes that were necessary for COVID compliance. PBIS, or Positive Behavioral Incentives and Supports, is a multi-tiered program of behavior instruction, which involves a universal rewards program for those students who meet or exceed behavioral expectations in the halls of Covington. That program is called PrideBuccs, in which students earn tickets for showing Bucc Pride, and can be redeemed for prizes from the prizewagon. This program has seen changes since its inception to either improve the format, or meet the needs of recent restrictions, but it is still going strong.

One way we've adjusted is by having students complete an "order" form when they have PrideBuccs to spend. This order is submitted to the CHS Student council, who volunteer their time during study halls to fill these orders for the entire K-12 student body. Another way is the PrideBuccs themselves. To limit contacts, students are given tickets, rather than using the original punch cards, since those require several contacts prior to being redeemed. One other change was to eliminate the quarterly luncheons, but institute weekly prizes instead.

Keeping up with the Prizewagon demand has been a challenge this year, which indicates that students are doing a great job of meeting the high behavior expectations set by the PBIS team. The prizewagon has new items available like, Buccs hats, water bottles, shirts, and string bags! These are going fast, so don't be surprised if your student shows up at home with some new Buccs gear. All prizewagon items are paid for through a state grant, and are meant to improve school pride and culture amongst students.

The ultimate goal of PBIS is to provide incentives and supports for the behavior of every student at Covington. The programs provide motivation and a sense of partnership among students across grade levels, and when everyone is involved, everyone wins!

Covington FFA by Jessica Helsing

Covington FFA members competed in the Ohio FFA/Agriscience Fair exhibition virtually at the beginning of April. All first and second-year FFA members at Covington completed a written report and project in their agriculture education class. Some students then submitted their applications to the state level for consideration.

Allison Gostomsky competed in Plant Systems Division 3, for individual 9th-10th grade students. This project researched variations in seed germination using different types of water. Allison Gostomsky placed 4th overall in the state!

Erika Gostomsky and Lainee McMaken competed in Animal Systems Division 4, for pairs of 9th-10th grade students. This project researched the water holding capacity of different types of bedding for livestock. Erika

and Lainee placed 3rd overall in the state!

Kara Stephan and Kila Stephan competed in Animal Systems Division 4, for pairs of 9th-10th grade students. This project researched variations in the diet of rabbits and its effect on their weight gain and development. The Stephan sisters were named State Champions and will now move to the national Agriscience Fair!

Ryan Rohr placed 1st in the state in the area of Agricultural Communications as an individual. The Agricultural Communications CDE prepares students for careers in journalism, radio and television broadcast, web design, marketing and more. The CHS team placed 3rd in the state with members; Tori Quinter, Gavin Swank, Allison Gostomsky, Derrick Meyer, Megan Rose and Michael Hagan.

The Ohio FFA Foundation is proud to sponsor this contest. The Ohio FFA Foundation is a cooperative effort among education, business and industry to support and inspire Ohio FFA members. For over 60 years, The Ohio FFA Foundation has been committed to providing opportunities for FFA members across the state. Supporting the Foundation is investing in tomorrow's agricultural leaders.

The State FFA Degree is the second-highest level that can be achieved as an FFA member. This step in the FFA Degree system encourages students to grow and achieve personally toward establishing themselves in an agricultural career. This achievement is based on a student's progress in a Supervised Agricultural Experience, community service, academic achievement, and overall FFA participation. This year Covington had two recipients for the degree. Senior Haylie Jackson and junior Connor Sindelir earned this honor and were recognized in the Ohio FFA virtual State Convention.

The American FFA Degree is the highest level that can be achieved as an FFA member. Attaining the American FFA Degree requires a solid commitment to agriculture and FFA. Morgan Kimmel has earned her American FFA Degree which will be awarded in the fall of 2021 at the National FFA Convention. In addition to her degree, Morgan was named the Ohio FFA Star American in Agribusiness! The American Star in Agribusiness is awarded to the FFA member with the top nonproduction agribusiness supervised agricultural experience in the state. The member must demonstrate outstanding achievement, active FFA participation, and an exemplary scholastic record. As the Ohio FFA Star Morgan's application will be forwarded to the national level.

The Ohio FFA Association bestows the Honorary State FFA Degrees for adults each year at the state convention. These awards are given to exceptional teachers, individuals, and companies who have demonstrated continued success and support of the FFA

and/or agricultural education. Covington-UVCC FFA nominated Mr. Bill Westfall for his outstanding dedication and assistance with the FFA chapter through the years. Mr. Westfall was recognized during the virtual State FFA Convention.

The Covington FFA chapter is a satellite of the Upper Valley Career Center. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.



Lainee McMaken and Erika Gostomsky



Kila Stephan and Kara Stephan



Ali Gostomsky

BPA Students Head to Nationals

By Kristi Homan

Kayla Mitchell, Garret Fraley, Gavin Fraley, Caleb Miller, and Kody Nelson of Covington High School will be participating in the Business Professionals of America (BPA) 2021 Virtual National Leadership Conference, April 26-May 9, 2021. These students will join nearly 6,000 conference delegates from across the nation to compete in national level business skills competitions. Students learn important business related skills, such as "learning to work with a small group. I knew them all personally, but really getting to know each member's strengths in our area, and then using those," was an important learning experience, said Kody Nelson.

Last year was the first year students had the chance to participate in the BPA club at Covington. As a junior, Kayla competed in the Prepared Speech event and earned a top place finish at regionals; the boys also finished first in their Administrative Support Team competition, as sophomores, advancing them all to the State Leadership Competition in Columbus, which was cancelled due to COVID 19. This year, all five students came back more passionate than ever for a chance to succeed after a chapter was left unfinished last year. "The students have worked hard to be successful and I am grateful their passion for success and hard work paid off," said chapter advisor Heidi Anderson, who teaches Business Education at CHS. When thinking about what is to come at Nationals, Nelson said his team's hardest challenge would be "learning the new material. We might not have the experience with the websites we have to use there, so we have to learn them."

Business Professionals of America is the premier Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) for high school, college, and middle school students preparing for careers in business, finance and management information systems and other related fields. Good luck in the coming days to all the participants!



Kayla Mitchell – 2nd place finish at State BPA for Prepared Speech.



All Covington High School students who participated in State BPA placed in the top ten.



Garret Fraley, Caleb Miller, Kody Nelson, and Gavin Fraley (not pictured) placed 5th in Administrative Support Team at the State BPA Competition advancing them to Nationals.

Covington High School and Junior High School

By Josh Meyer, 7-12 Principal

I want to personally thank our students, parents, staff and community for their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020/2021 school year. I am always impressed by how the Covington Community supports their children and partners with the school to provide the best education possible for all of our students. While the school year has been far from "normal" I know that our staff and students achieved at a high level this school year and we have been able to conduct many of our traditional spring activities following the safety guidelines and protocols outlined by the Health Department.

On April 7, 31 students were inducted into the National Honor Society. Congratulations to these students and their parents! It takes an immense amount of work and self-discipline to be inducted into the National Honor Society. The annual High School Honors Banquet was held on May 3. At this ceremony 55 students at Covington High School were recognized for a wide range of academic achievements. The support that our community provides is evidenced in the number of awards given and amount of money awarded to our students. On April 24 we held Prom at Romer's Catering in Piqua. While the night was certainly different, it was an outstanding opportunity for our upperclassmen to celebrate and spend valuable time together making lasting memories. Graduation will be held on May 30 at 2 PM at Hobart Arena. I look forward to celebrating our graduates on that day. Lastly, there are numerous other activities that our students are involved in that deserve mentioning. FFA competed at their state convention, BPA sent an individual and a team to their national competition, the music program continues to perform at a high level at their competitions and the Art Club held an Art Show this spring. It is evident to anyone that works with our students that they have continued to achieve at an elite level during the covid-19 pandemic.

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

Commencement Speaker Announced

by Karen Brackman

The Covington High School graduating class of 2021 is pleased to announce their celebration of commencement ceremonies on Sunday, May 30 beginning at 2:00 at Hobart Arena in Troy. The honored speaker for the 2021 commencement is 2007 graduate, Layne Fulks Toops.

As a student at Covington High School, Layne was inducted into the National Honor Society. Layne also acted as a class officer and Student Council member, participated in numerous clubs including Yearbook, Key Club, and Art Club, and was a member of the cheerleading, volleyball and softball teams.

Upon graduating from Covington, she attended The Ohio State University and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Hospitality Management and a minor in business.

Layne's professional career began with a position at The Ohio State University, organizing events on behalf of the institution, with notable clientele that included President George W. Bush, President Barack Obama, Coach Urban Meyer, among others. From there, she held positions with the Hilton Columbus Downtown and the Columbus Blue Jackets, establishing herself as an award-winning special events and marketing professional.

In 2017, Layne began working for her current company, ENGIE North America as a Business Operations Manager, and she is currently employed with the company as an acquisition advisor. ENGIE is a global energy company, based in Paris, France, that manages a variety of sustainable energy infrastructure services. As a member of the business development team, Layne represents ENGIE's portfolio of higher education partnerships, where she develops collaborative opportunities for the university communities. These partnerships enable US universities to achieve their specific sustainability goals, including energy conservation, infrastructure modernization and carbon neutrality. Currently, Layne supports a range of activities at The Ohio State University, The University of Iowa, The University of Maryland, Georgetown and Howard Universities, to name a few. From global and domestic internships, community initiatives, marketing and communications, her role engages each campus with ENGIE's wide, international reach.

Personally, Layne resides outside of Columbus with her husband, Brandon, and their three French Bulldogs. She is the daughter of long-time Covington residents, Sonny and Mindy Fulks.

We are very pleased to welcome back one of Covington's success stories to address the Class of 2021. Our honored guest's impressive credentials and accomplishments serve well as motivation for our newest graduates.

A Message from Superintendent Gene Gooding

A degree of normalcy

While we have certainly not been able to return to “business as usual” at CEVSD, the spring season has allowed us the opportunity to bring back many of the events and traditions that make school fun and interesting for our students. Many of the events that were canceled last spring are back on the schedule for this school year, and the students and staff members are very excited to participate in these great activities.

While following all recommended health and safety precautions, we have been able to have the Junior/Senior Prom, hold the National Honor Society induction ceremony, and play all of our spring sports. In the coming days, we will also hold the CHS Honors Banquet, host the Junior High Scholarship Club induction ceremony, hold an in-person Art Show, allow our fifth and sixth graders to attend a day-long PLUS field trip, and allow our Bands and Choirs to perform for their friends and family members. In addition, the CHS Class of 2021 will be able to hold an in-person graduation ceremony at Hobart Arena on May 30th!

I would like to thank the students, teachers, and staff members for continuing to follow the required

safety measures, and for being so cooperative during the 2020-2021 school year. Thanks to their continued efforts, we are one of the few schools in the State of Ohio who were able to stay open for in-person instruction and not miss a single day of school due to COVID-19.

I would also like to thank the Covington community members and local Covington businesses for their continued support of our students. During this pandemic, members of our community have donated their resources, time, and money to help us provide a great education for each of our students. More than any other year, it took a true community effort to educate our fantastic students!

Busy summer

It is hard to believe, but we are just a few short weeks away from summer break. As you know, the summer months are used by every school district to clean and improve the campus, to prepare for the upcoming school year, and to offer unique curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for their students.

This summer our maintenance and custodial staff will clean the buildings and maintain the grounds as usual. They do a fantastic job providing our students and staff members with a clean and safe environment. They also take great pride in our facilities and keep them

in excellent shape year round.

In addition to our routine, general maintenance, the HVAC unit at CHS will receive an upgrade this summer. The final four original boilers at CHS will be replaced by two high-efficiency units. This will allow the system in the high school to match the high-efficiency system in the new building, and will lower our cost to heat and cool the buildings.

Finally, more information will be coming out soon from Mr. Long regarding summer school options and Miss Johnson regarding athletic summer camps. Our students will have many opportunities this summer to continue learning and many opportunities to participate in the sports that they love.

Good Luck CHS Class of 2021!

I would like to wish good luck to the Covington High School Class of 2021! These last fourteen months have been very challenging for this group, but they have managed to persevere and succeed at a very high level in spite of all of the obstacles in their path. They are a fantastic group of young men and women, and they have made their mark on our school district. Congratulations CHS Class of 2021! We are extremely proud of you, and you will be missed after graduation!

Thank you!

THANKS FOR ASKING!

I have a question about the Covington Schools or a suggestion for improving the schools.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Mail your questions or suggestions to: Mr. Gene Gooding, Covington EVSD, 807 Chestnut St., Suite B, Covington, OH 45318.
