

features

10 A Summer to Remember!

Fill your calendar with family activities from our 2020 Summer Events Guide. Note: Due to Covid-19, be sure to check the websites for the most up-to-date information.

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If you're buying or selling in 2020, here's what you need to know.

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on the cover

Carlynton graduates and cousins Olivia Robb and Anya Carrasco received their diploma and awards from Principal Michael Loughren who traveled with the Cougar mascot in a police-escorted caravan through the Boroughs of Crafton, Rosslyn Farms and Carnegie. The three-day tour honored and commemorated the accomplishments of the Class of 2020 at the home of every graduate while family, friends and neighbors cheered in celebration. See story on page 36. Photo by Joe Appel Photography.

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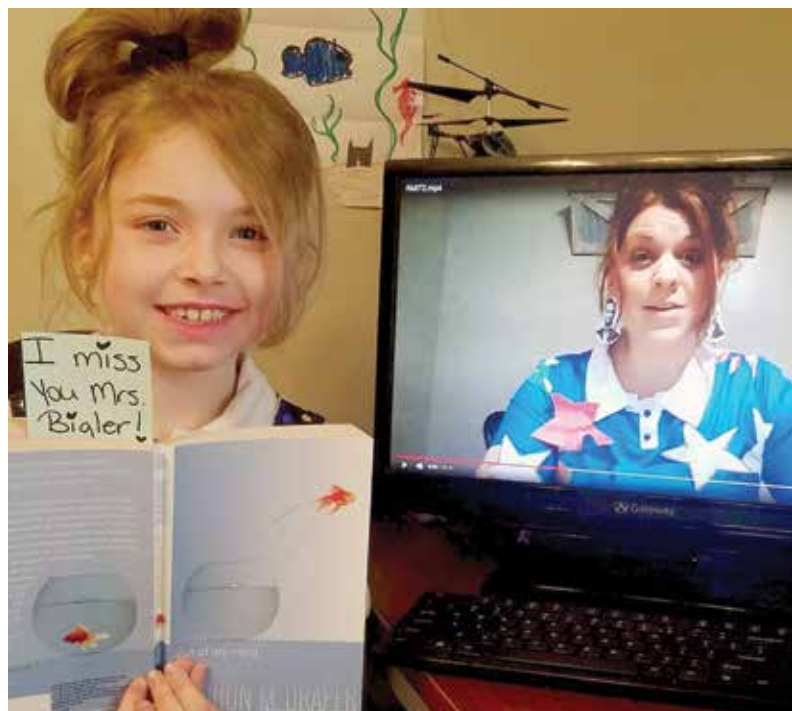
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CARLYNTON

School District News



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THE TOP 10



CONGRATULATIONS

CLASS OF 2020

CELEBRATIONS WERE NOT THWARTED BY A PANDEMIC

Members of the Class of 2020 will go down in history with an unprecedented end to the school year. When a school announcement in mid-March informed students of a temporary school closure, little did they know the shutdown, due to a COVID-19 Pandemic, would become synonymous with cancellations. The spring musical was cancelled. The band trip was cancelled. Prom was cancelled. The list of disappointments for seniors was endless. Pandemic became a novel word in everyone's vocabulary and the word "virtual" went viral. Classes went virtual, meetings were held virtually and the end-of-year senior awards and recognition program went virtual. Even commencement was held virtually.

Despite the ever-present cloud of the virus, the end-of-the-year forecast for seniors called for sun. Daily classes on Google Classroom or Google Hangouts became routine and virtual morning announcements brought cheerful messages and reminders into homes. Teachers created encouraging videos and made unexpected visits to the homes of every senior, placing a congratulatory yard sign near the front door. A number of educators lined the high school sidewalks for a clap-out when seniors drove by the building to drop off textbooks and Chromebooks and to collect personal items left behind in lockers. Senior shout-outs to honor the graduates were posted on the district website. And a memorable virtual senior awards ceremony recognized the achievements and accomplishments of the graduates and brought smiles and tears with a culminating collection of photos that reflected memories from kindergarten to the senior year.

Over a three-day period in early June, **Principal Michael Loughren** led a Cougar Commencement Caravan, designed to personally deliver diplomas to graduates in Carnegie, Crafton and Rosslyn Farms.

The Commencement Caravan was escorted through the communities by borough police officers. Assistant Principal **Rachel Gattuso**, the Cougar mascot (teacher/Athletic Director **Nathan Milsom** in disguise) and teacher **Jerry Pepe** joined the convoy with Mr. Loughren. As the caravan arrived to a home with blaring sirens and honking horns, Mrs. Gattuso used a bull horn to announce the name of the graduate while

Pomp and Circumstance resonated from the police cruiser. Seniors were encouraged to meet the caravan sporting their cap and gown, and they did not disappoint. Mr. Loughren was greeted with unreserved grins, handshakes and hugs as he presented, with panache, a diploma to each graduate.

Numerous parents took the opportunity to invite family and friends to their home in anticipation of the arrival of the Caravan. The presentation of the diploma became a celebratory gathering with cheers and applause in honor of the graduate. At nearly every home, neighbors came out on their porches or stood in their front yards to offer best wishes.

On June 5, the originally scheduled graduation day, a virtual commencement ceremony was streamed by TribLIVE High School Sports Network (HSSN).

The ceremony, though less than traditional, marked an important rite of passage for the Class of 2020 and featured virtual speeches by class president **Camryn Kwiatkowski** and VP **Dakota Mayfield**, valedictorian **Olivia Robb** and salutatorian **Haley Simcic**. Surprise guest speaker, alumnus and former Steelers head football coach **Bill Cowher**, recorded a personal message exclusively for the class from his home in New York City. Mr. Cowher encouraged the graduates to stay true to oneself and to take risks, cautioning, "In doing so, you will be disappointed. You will fall down. But you will not be measured by how many times you fall. You will be measured and defined by how many times you continue to get back up."

While the Class of 2020 did not experience a typical end to their senior year, they will long be remembered for persevering through a pandemic that would not hold them back from rising above the disappointments. They will be remembered for staying the course through adversity and overcoming.

Class vice president **Dakota Mayfield**, in his closing commencement speech, made the follow proclamation to classmates, "Now is the time for us to leave Carlynton, to go out into the world. For we are the future essential workers, doctors, nurses, engineers, military personnel and tradesmen. If we can persevere through a global pandemic, who or what can stop us now? It's time to let the world see the Class of 2020 as the next global pandemic... a global epidemic of success."

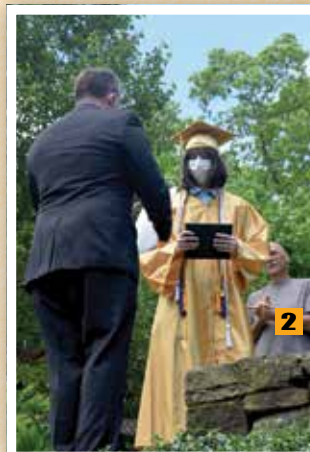


Seniors were surprised to find teachers at their door delivering yard signs to honor all the graduates of the Class of 2020. Pictured are Genevieve Beyer, Justin Brandenstein and Jaimee Cabili.

FUTURE PLANS

Members of the Class of 2020 will matriculate in post-secondary institutions across the state and beyond its borders, while others plan to attend the local community college as a spring-board for two years. Immediate employment is the choice for some graduates who will take a gap year and then enroll in college while others hope to learn and grow within the workforce. No matter the choice, the teachers, staff and administration of the District extend best wishes to all graduates as they spread their wings to explore their future at the following schools, colleges and universities:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ Allegheny College | ■ Hope College | ■ University of Mount Union |
| ■ AmeriCorps | ■ Indiana University of PA | ■ University of Pittsburgh |
| ■ Bella Capelli Academy | ■ Ivy Tech Community College | ■ University of the Sciences |
| ■ Boilermaker's Welding Training | ■ Kent State University | ■ U.S. Air Force |
| ■ Bloomsburg University | ■ LaRoche University | ■ U.S. Army National Guard |
| ■ Carlow University | ■ Mount St. Mary's | ■ U.S. Marine Corps |
| ■ Community College of Allegheny County | ■ Ohio State University | ■ Vet Tech Institute |
| ■ Culinary Institute of America | ■ Penn State University | ■ Washington and Jefferson College |
| ■ Dickinson College | ■ Pittsburgh Technical College | ■ Waynesburg University |
| ■ Duquesne University | ■ Purdue University | ■ Westminster University |
| ■ Edinboro University | ■ Robert Morris University | ■ West Penn School of Nursing |
| ■ Gannon University | ■ Rosedale Technical College | ■ Youngstown State University |
| ■ Geneva College | ■ Slippery Rock University | |
| | ■ Thomas Aquinas College | |



1. The very first stop on the tour of the Cougar Commencement Caravan was to the home of class president Camryn Kwiatkowski. After presenting the diploma, Principal Michael Loughren asked family to join him in congratulating the graduate. Green and gold masks were made for every senior by Family and Consumer Science teacher Suzanne Verbanick.

2. Salutatorian Haley Simic received her diploma while family and friends stood nearby to offer congratulations.

3. As the caravan stopped on a street in Carnegie, Principal Loughren shouted in celebration for the hard work and accomplishments of graduate Basem Majed.

4. Family and friends gathered to celebrate at the home of Abigail Lherbier as she received her diploma.

5. Principal Loughren offered a hearty handshake to graduate Chauncie Mickens who received his diploma before family and friends.

6. Festive balloons and nearby family celebrated the arrival of the commencement caravan to the home of Peyton Ensforth.





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7. The Cougar mascot joined the principal in giving a hand to Alex Bernard after he received his diploma.

8. An emotional Dallas Paolino is surrounded in a family hug after he received his diploma.

9. The family of Erin Fox stood nearby, taking photos to commemorate the presentation of her diploma when the commencement caravan stopped at her home.

10. The family of Maria Charron gathered to join Principal Loughren in congratulating the graduate.

11. Angel Lockhart is surprised and delighted to receive her diploma.

12. Elizabeth Duffy received her diploma and a congratulatory hug from Principal Michael Loughren.

13. Nick Cindrich gets a handshake from the cougar as classmates cheered in celebration from a distance.

14. Savannah Sevacko stood with the cougar mascot to offer a thumbs up after receiving her diploma.

MEET THE CLASS OF 2020

NAMES, AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- **Abdulwajud Oluwadamilare Adebisi**
- **Faith Anne Aliano** – Peer Mentor
- **Morgan Patrick Ault**
- **Kyle David Auth**
- **Izaiah Domenico Babish** – Male Scholar Athlete of the Year, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language
- **Alexander Michael Bernard** – National Honor Society, Peer to Peer Award, Peer Mentor
- **Genevieve Angela Beyer** – Peer to Peer Award, Peer Mentor
- **Samuel Christian Bigham** – National Honor Society, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Math and Reading
- **Andrew James Blain** – National Honor Society, Peer Mentor, SAT 700+ Club in Math, Exemplary Achievement in Math Award, Drama Award
- **Justin James Brandenstein** – Art Appreciation Award
- **Julianne Marie Brooks** – Parkway West Career and Technical Center Awards for Perfect Attendance, Student of the Month, Outstanding Senior in Culinary Arts, Community Service, National Vocational-Technical Honor Society
- **Hunter Charles Burdzel**
- **Jocelyn Marie Burns**
- **Ronald Dean Burns**
- **Jaimee Lauren Cabili** – National Honor Society, Crescendo Award, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Reading, Drama Award
- **Baillie Marie Canton**
- **DeQuay T. Canton**
- **Benjamin E. Carothers** – National Honor Society, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Math and Reading
- **Anya Rochelle Carrasco** – Student Government Representative, Distinguished Athlete Award, Peer to Peer Award, Carlynton Federation of Teachers \$500 Textbook Grant
- **Maria Teresa Charron** – National Honor Society, National Honor Society Pillar Society Award for 62 Hours Community Service, Peer Mentor
- **Nicholas Charles Cindrich II** – Student Government Representative, National Honor Society, Carnegie Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year, Robotics Mr. Roboto Award, Exemplary Achievement in Physics Award
- **Hannah Ruth Clark** – National Honor Society, Carlynton Federation of Teachers \$500 Textbook Grant, Exemplary Achievement in AP Biology Award, Drama Award
- **Sommer Jade Coggin**
- **Jenna Marie Craig** – Yearbook Award
- **Camille Kaylynn Cupid**
- **Alexis Michelle Deloe**
- **Alexa Rae DeRose**
- **Anthony John Devita**
- **Angelica Simone Diallo**
- **Elizabeth Marie Duffy** – Student Government Vice President, National Honor Society, Peer Mentor, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, "America Starts Here" Social Studies Exemplary Achievement Award, Drama Award
- **Peyton Jon Ensworth**

- **Chloe Alexis Evans** – Peer Mentor
- **Erin Madigan Fox** – Student Government Secretary, National Honor Society, Peer Mentor
- **Jane Marie Grabowski** – National Honor Society, Peer Mentor, Girl Scout Silver Award, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Reading, Cougar Times Journalist Award, "Shel Silverstein Silver-Tongue Award" for Exemplary Achievement in English-Language Arts, Drama Award
- **Ashlea Terreya Deonna Haigh**
- **Elana Caryn Heffner** – National Honor Society, National Honor Society Pillar Society Award for 43 Hours Community Service, National Honor Society \$500 Scholarship, Peer Mentor, Carlynton Federation of Teachers \$500 Textbook Grant, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History, SAT 700+ Club in Reading, Exemplary Achievement in AP Biology Award, Drama Award
- **Zavier Alexander Helbig** – Semper Fidelis Award for Musical Excellence, Drama Award
- **Edward Wade Huehn** – Military Award, U.S. Army National Guard
- **Nicholas Makenzie Hunter** – Robotics Mr. Roboto Award
- **Isaiah Noah Johnson**
- **Brandon Scott Jones Jr.**
- **Jack Ryan Jones** – Carlynton Federation of Teachers \$500 Textbook Grant
- **Rayana Lachelle Jordan** – South Hills Area School Districts Association (SHASDA) Award
- **Hayley Jean Kerns** – Semper Fidelis Award for Musical Excellence, Spirit of the Ensemble Award, Art Appreciation Award, Drama Award
- **Carnel George Kerr** – Male Athlete of the Year
- **Breannah Marie Keys** – Military Award, U.S. Marine Corps, Exemplary Achievement in French Award
- **Yuriy Korenovskiy** – National Honor Society, National Honor Society Pillar Society Award for 45 Hours Community Service
- **Camryn Elizabeth Kwiatkoski** – Senior Class President, Student Government Representative, National Honor Society, Congressional Leadership Award, Arion Music Award, "We Are the People" Social Studies Exemplary Achievement Award, Drama Award
- **Maxine Elizabeth Lauffer-Beck**
- **Jada Alexandra Lee** – Female Athlete of the Year
- **Abigail Faith Lherbier** – Student Government President, National Honor Society
- **Makayla Michele Linn**
- **Angel Lillian Lockhart**
- **Iryna Luchynyn**
- **James Benjamin Lukaszewicz** – Peer to Peer Award
- **Basem Hazem Majed** – \$5,000 Maggie Scholarship, South Hills Area School Districts Association (SHASDA) Award, Parkway West National Vocational-Technical Honor Society
- **Dakota Ryan Mayfield** – Senior Class Vice President, Student Government Representative, National Honor Society, National Honor Society Pillar Society Award for 58 Hours Community Service, National Honor Society Leadership Award and \$500 Scholarship, Peer Mentor, Gay-Straight Alliance Leadership Award, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History, SAT 700+ Club in Reading, Cougar Times Editor Award, "The Emily Dickinson Award" for Exemplary Achievement in English-Language Arts, Drama Award

- **Madison Michelle McMonagle** – National Honor Society, National Honor Society Pillar Society Award for 75 Hours Community Service, \$5,000 Maggie Scholarship, Peer to Peer Award, Peer Mentor, Yearbook Award, Exemplary Achievement in Spanish Award
- **Jaelyn Paige Melko** – Peer to Peer Award
- **Chauncie Richard Mickens**
- **Marco Raffaele Moorby** – Art Appreciation Award, Drama Award
- **Tasera J. Nalls** – Military Award, U.S. Air Force
- **Brady Lee Neil** – Parkway West Career and Technical Center Outstanding Senior in Auto Body Repair
- **Shelbie Marie Nixon**
- **Dallas Jaymes Paolino** – Peer to Peer Award, Peer Mentor
- **Juana Fidelina Pastor Gonzalez** – Achievement in English Learning Award
- **Ainsley Noel Pearce** – Peer to Peer Award
- **Jackie Lee Peterson**
- **Mark Edward Phillips** – Distinguished Athlete Award, Peer to Peer Award
- **Kassidy Elena Pierce**
- **Christian Thomas Ray** – Peer to Peer Award
- **Maggie Alisabeth Reigle** – Student Government Representative, Broadcast Media Achievement Award, Drama Award
- **Che Deonte Revis**
- **Olivia Marie Robb** – Valedictorian, National Honor Society, Female Scholar Athlete of the Year, Peer Mentor, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Math, Exemplary Achievement in Spanish Award, Exemplary Achievement AP Biology Award
- **Sarah Mackenzie Runk**
- **Abinadi Sanchez-Lopez**
- **Sierra Taylor Segeleon** – National Honor Society, Peer Mentor
- **Savannah Nicole Sevacko** – Student Government Treasurer, National Honor Society
- **Theodore Ronald Shedwick**
- **Haley Justine Simcic** – Salutatorian, National Honor Society, Girl Scout Silver Award, Excellence in Advanced Placement Testing Award in AP History and AP English Language, SAT 700+ Club in Math and Reading, Drama Award
- **Carlee Patricia Smith** – National Honor Society, \$5,000 Maggie Scholarship, Peer Mentor
- **Samuel David Snyder**
- **Mathias Gabriel Spragg**
- **Caila Jane Stacy** – Girl Scout Silver Award
- **Evan Lukas Staker** – Peer Mentor
- **Ryan James Waite** – Peer to Peer Award
- **Joshua John Weimer**
- **Gillian Marie Wertz**
- **Amiah Monet Whittington**
- **Haley Elizabeth Williams** – Senior Class Secretary
- **Jordan Marie Williams** – \$5,000 Maggie Scholarship, Peer to Peer Award
- **Christopher Wischmann**
- **Mario Ramone Mandel Wofford Jr.**
- **Maia Danaelyn Young** – Peer to Peer Award, Peer Mentor, Art Appreciation, Exemplary Achievement in Family and Consumer Science Award
- **Madison Renee Zirwas** – National Honor Society

ATHLETICACCOLADES

In accordance with Governor Tom Wolf's decision to close all Pennsylvania schools for in-person learning due to the coronavirus outbreak, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) made the decision to cancel all spring sports. Despite the setback, the successful accomplishments of the winter sports team thrilled the fans and boosted cougar pride throughout the school community.

In addition to play-off runs for the boys' and girls' basketball teams, the varsity boys' and girls' swim teams claimed its fourth consecutive WPIAL championship title and sent nine swimmers to the WPIALs: juniors **Sarah Barron, Natali Lutsiv, Sara MacMurdo** and **Lizzy Volz**; sophomores **Mary Duffy, Layne Harman** and **Sarah Pallus**; and freshman **Ava Gaitens** and **Libby Hatchings**. Thanks to a cooperative agreement between Carlynton and Bishop Canevin, the numbers for the swim team have grown. The coop is providing additional talent while developing camaraderie between two student bodies who were once rivals.

Six cougar wrestlers, seniors **Eddie Huehn** and **Jackie Peterson**, juniors **Oleg Melnyk** and **Collin Milko**, sophomore **Bryce Rodriguez** and freshman **Chase Brandebura** advanced to the Southwest Regional tournament held at IUP. At 106 pounds, Chase Brandebura clinched the WPIAL championship for the cougars and advanced to the PIAA state tournament a week later, pinning his first opponent in 50 seconds. Chase lost in the second round by decision, ending his freshman season with a wealth of wins and

experience. The wrestling team also enjoys a cooperative agreement with Bishop Canevin.

The varsity boys' and girls' bowling teams advanced to the WPIBL championship tournament for the second year in a row. The boys team also earned a spot in the state championship tournament. Strong leadership by seniors **Sam Bigham, Yuriy Kiorenovskyi** and **Josh Weimer** helped to propel the cougars to a successful season and established a solid foundation for years to come. Freshman **Shelby Palmer** and junior **Andrew Engleka** qualified for the state singles championships, and both went on to place among the Top 50 bowlers in Western Pennsylvania.

Rounding out the school year, several student athletes deserve a special mention for their achievements:

- Basketball letterman **Jada Lee** was named the Dapper Dan Athlete of the Year and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania Athlete of the Year. The senior guard was also one of two WPIAL female players in Class 3A to earn All-State honors and was named to the 2020 Post-Gazette Class 3A Fabulous 5.
- All-section honors were presented to senior basketball players **Angelica Diallo, Jada Lee** and **Chauncie Mickens**. Angelica, or "Jelly" as she is known by friends, and Chauncie will play for LaRoche University in the fall, and Jada is bound for Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland.
- Despite the lack of a track season, senior sprinter **Dequay Canton** was



Jada Lee



Chauncie Mickens



Angelica Diallo



Dequay Canton



The 2020 varsity boys' and girls' swim teams captured a fourth consecutive WPIAL title.

named the top returning Class AA sprinter by the PIAA based upon his performance at the 2019 state meet. Dequay was cited as the top returner in the 100 meters and among the top three returners in the 200 meters, and would have contended for the state titles in both events. He will head to Washington and Jefferson in the fall as a sprinter for the Presidents.

STUDENT ATHLETE PHYSICALS

For the 2020-2021 school year, the District will begin using the Healthy Roster platform for medical documentation for all student athletes. Healthy Roster will enable the district to gather the pre-participation physical documents; instead of filling out these forms by hand, all documents can be completed online. This process will save time and will limit the chance of lost paperwork. The program will also be used as a tool for communicating with parents when an athlete has an injury.

Healthy Roster is a free mobile app/website program designed to connect athletes, parents and coaches to the District's licensed athletic trainer and Allegheny Health Network Sports Medicine. Student-athletes will have their own private account, accessible only to parents and athletic trainers.

In order to set up an account, parents can download the Healthy Roster app from the App Store or Google Play and enter the code COUGARS to create a new account. Once the account is created, all documents required for the student athlete can be completed.

Any student in grades seven through 12 who plans to participate in a sport during the 2020-2021 sports season will need an account. Questions can be emailed to Athletic Trainer Kelsey Wallace at kelsey.wallace@carlynton.k12.pa.us. One account can be established for multiple children.

Healthy Roster is safe and secure and complies with all HIPAA regulations.

Free athletic physicals for fall sports will take place July 14, 5 p.m. in the high school gym.

Sixth Grade Academic Tributes

In addition to missing educational field trips and spring activities, the sixth graders at Carnegie and Crafton elementary schools missed the end-of-year recognition programs due to COVID-19 and the school closure. The program recognizes those who have excelled academically and celebrates the transition from elementary to middle school. Though not present for face-to-face accolades, the following students deserve a hand for their academic efforts and attendance records. High honor roll recognition is given to students who have consistently maintained a 3.8 to 4.0 grade point average. Individuals who maintained a grade average of 3.3 or higher during the school year are acknowledged as honor roll recipients.

CARNEGIE ELEMENTARY

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Sidra Almontaha Mahmoud Alhariri
Cydney McClendon Sara McCoy

HIGH HONOR ROLL

Amelia Babish Harita Venkatesh
Carlee Hughes Lucy Vetter
Bella Lucci Maggie Winston
Angelika Pyvovar

HONOR

Jacob Floyd Riley Sunderland
Joseph Mollica Gavin Wagoner
Aubrey Russell Evan Zielinski

6TH GRADE HIGH HONORS AWARD

Amelia Babish Maggie Winston
Lucy Vetter

6TH GRADE HONOR ROLL AWARD

Jacob Floyd Joseph Mollica

CRAFTON ELEMENTARY

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Gabriel Aldridge Rose Highfield
Benjamin Engel Trevor Patton
Kyle Erdner McKenzi Tomaszewski

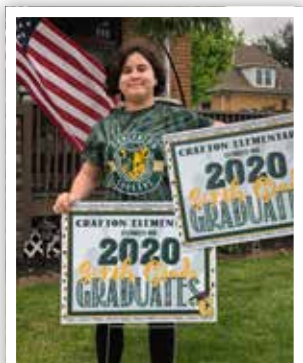
HIGH HONOR ROLL

Gabriel Aldridge Sarah Loney
August Bernhardt Kellyn Palmer
Kellan Chapman Owen Thompson
Caroline Choate Aida Varghese
Rose Highfield Isaiah Wall

HONOR

Ruby Bannon Fionn Hites
Connor Boyer Leah Hyre
Makai Campbell Audrey Matt
Vivian Ciechanowski Luke Palmer
Jeffrey DeSure Maddox Rullo
Gant Freidhoff Noah Stiffler
Solomon Henderson Riley Stoughton

An orientation day for incoming seventh graders is planned at the junior-senior high school in August and will provide ample time for students to explore the lay-out of the building, find their assigned lockers and practice opening the combination. In addition, a meet-and-greet with teachers and administration will be offered with the opportunity for students and parents to ask questions and review guidelines.



Carnegie sixth graders received surprise visits from teachers who delivered yard signs to recognize the final year as an elementary student. Pictured, Cheyenne Yeager, Chloe Cramer and Jacob Floyd. Teachers, staff and several members of the community funded the cost of printing the signs within minutes after an appeal was posted on social media.

Thanks to the efforts of the Crafton elementary sixth grade parent committee, money was raised and donated to print congratulatory signs for all the sixth graders who proudly placed them in the yard. Pictured L-R, Sarah Loney and Lena Levenson.

Connecting in a New Way

Elementary teachers find creative approaches to teach students virtually

The COVID-19 Pandemic forced a nearly 50-day school shut down. While the school district was quick to act to provide online instruction and Chromebooks to those who needed access to technology, the up-close connection at the elementary level between pupil and educator was absent. Teachers missed their students and students missed their teachers. Teachers made efforts to keep in touch by sharing videos, slideshows and reading stories to encourage and support pupils in their endeavor to learn outside the classroom. Overall, there was an earnest desire on the part of students and educators to maintain some semblance of normalcy amid the disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

The approach teachers would take to connect to students was creatively varied. Crafton Elementary third grade teacher **Jessica Bigler** would produce daily morning video messages for her students to provide directions and offer shout outs for positive things she saw in the virtual classroom the previous day. "I aimed to keep the assignments interactive,

interesting and meaningful to students, to keep them engaged," she said.

Mrs. Bigler and colleagues from both elementary schools believe the online learning platform made both the students and the teachers appreciate one another, adding "It brought us closer together, despite being apart."

Dan Hahn, a fourth grade teacher at Carnegie Elementary, said his students learned to use Google Classroom quickly. "Students utilized technology to create a lot of fantastic work. The experience they gained using Google Classroom will be very helpful as they use the platform in classes over the coming years," Mr. Hahn said.

On April 28th, Carnegie Elementary teachers gathered to decorate their cars with balloons, signs and streamers. Led by Carnegie Police Chief Jeff Kennedy and members of the Carnegie Volunteer Fire Department, they paraded through the community to visit students at a distance from their vehicles. Youngsters and parents gathered along the parade route with signs and waved eagerly as teachers passed by.

In the same way, Crafton Elementary teachers assembled May 14th to deck out their vehicles. Escorted through Rosslyn Farms and Crafton by Crafton Police Chief Mark Sumpter, the teachers traveled and waved from their cars as they passed delighted students and families lining the streets.

The Pandemic forced change in the lives of everyone, causing people to acclimate to a new way of living. Carnegie Elementary second grade teacher **Don Alexander** said he quickly realized that as an educator, he needed to be able to adapt to any situation, and went on to say, "The closure made me pay closer attention to the materials I used and how I could better meet the educational needs of my students. More importantly, it made me realize how much I care about my students, and how I miss the daily interactions with them."

The disruption of the Coronavirus outbreak may have interrupted the routine of the educational system, but the teachers, staff and students agree on one thing: the experience provided a deeper appreciation of school, community and one another.



1. During a virtual Teacher Appreciation Week sponsored by the Crafton Elementary PTA, third grader Olivia Colussy dressed as her teacher, Jessica Bigler. Mrs. Bigler read daily to students as part of a novel study and used the stories in books to take students on virtual field trips.
2. Carnegie sixth grader Carlee Hughes welcomed teachers as they drove by her home with a sign that read "Carlynton is stronger than COVID-19."
3. Crafton Elementary teacher Jordon Roussos used the sun roof in his car to peek out and wave to students.
4. The rain did not prevent families from lining the streets as teachers from Crafton Elementary drove by their homes.
5. Carnegie teacher Mary Campbell waved to a familiar face as she paraded with other teachers through the Carnegie neighborhood.
6. Students held a sign and cheered from the corner of Revere and Kings Highway in Rosslyn Farms as teachers drove by to say hello.

Cougar Connection

PROMOTING COMMUNITY, EXCELLENCE, AND CHARACTER

▲ Members of the Cougar marching band were selected to perform in a number of band festivals in the winter, giving them a chance to shine among peers from school districts in the Western Pennsylvania region. In early February, seniors **Faith Aliano, Elana Heffner, Hayley Kerns**, juniors **Eric Burcham, Rodrigo Corral, Sara MacMurdo, Sofia Notaro**, sophomore **Dominick Beglinger** and freshman **Pamela Smith** participated in Western Allegheny County Area Honors Band hosted by Chartiers Valley High School. Sofia Notaro went on to perform in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District band festival later that month.

Carlynton sent eight students to the Western Allegheny Middle School Honors Band festival, hosted by Cornell. Participants included eighth graders **Gabriel DiPietro, Chikamso Orji, Anna Hall** and **Sean Hart** and seventh graders **Amberlee Darr, Carter Litterini, Kaycee Litterini** and **Uzochi Orji**. Sean Hart, Uzochi Orji and Pamela Smith advanced to perform in the PMEA Junior High West District festival held in March in the Montour School District.

▲ NIGHT AT THE WAX MUSEUM

In February, Carnegie Elementary fourth graders took a step back in time by imitating famous people in history and transforming the school hallway into a living wax museum. Teacher **Julie Lewis** assigned students with the task of exploring the lives of prominent men and women in history. Students examined the biographies of musicians, inventors, television personalities, athletes and more before each decided to explore one famous individual.

From there, students were asked to create a display board with photos and highlights about the person's life, and then write and memorize a one or two-minute speech. But the assignment did not end there.

On the evening of February 19, parents walked into the school to a Night at the Wax Museum and discovered their



Alivia and Alexa Adamski worked as a team to portray the life and history of The Wright Brothers.



Aiden Scullion, aka Benjamin Franklin, stands as a wax figure and recites the speech he memorized about one of our nation's founding father to a parent.



Lucas Arnold, who has always been a fan of the game of golf, chose to research and portray Arnold Palmer for the Night of the Wax Museum.

children had transformed into costumed "wax" figures. Lining the main hallway was **Oprah Winfrey, Albert Einstein, Barack Obama, Tony Dorsett** and **Tom Petty**. Joining them were **Lebron James, Michael Jackson, Benjamin Franklin** and even **Honus Wagner**. In all, 52 characters

filled the long corridor. Parents could stop at each exhibit and listen as the "wax figure" shared a prepared speech about the character he or she was portraying.

Miss Lewis could not have been more proud of the accomplishments of her students. "The kids worked hard, stepped up to the plate and hit a home run," she said.

▲ The Amazing Alternatives Club of Crafton Elementary led a Valentine's Day collection of non-perishable goods for our U.S. troops serving overseas. In cooperation with the non-profit group, Military Connections, students collected food items such as granola bars, cereal, beef jerky, tuna packets, energy drinks and canned fruit. Personal care items such as deodorant and lip balm were also gathered as well as postage stamps. The community service project gave students the opportunity to help others by organizing and packing over twenty boxes filled with supplies for the men and women who serve. The club is facilitated by teacher Bridget Ward who works with the students in a number of volunteer and service endeavors.

▲ Freshmen members of the high school robotics club, **Alby Varghese** and **Lance Henderson**, clinched a top spot in a robotics competition held in February at the Estelle S. Campbell Boys and Girls Club in Lawrenceville. The duo received high marks in design based upon engineering notebooks they submitted prior to the competition. The notebooks documented the designs of their robots and detailed strategies for competition. Led by teachers and club sponsors



Amanda Sirianni and **Matt Stagl**, the boys traveled to Clarion University on March 5th to compete in the Western PA State Robotics Tournament. Prior to the school closure in March, members of the robotics club traveled to North Allegheny High School to compete in a middle and high school competition. Alby and Lance finished second overall at the middle school level and placed fifth in the Skills Driver Challenge.

Two high school teams also competed strong at the tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals round where they lost to a tough team from New Castle.

The robotics program has seen a steady increase in numbers, experience and skill with older students mentoring younger peers and setting the bar for success as they prepare for future challenges.

▲ Middle school students saw success at the regional science bowl competition held at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in March. Claiming the first place title was the team of eighth graders **Gabriel DiPietro, Sean Hart, Bailey Vetter** and sixth graders **Angelika Pyvovar** and **Lucy Vetter**. The second place award was also captured by the Carlynton

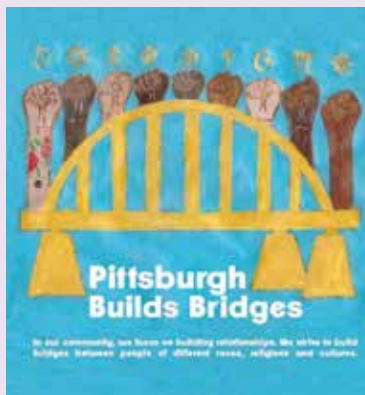
team of eighth graders **Wilson Choate, Mason Glover, Ella Snyder, Nicholas Weimer**, and sixth graders **Caroline Choate** and **Kellyn Palmer**. Students in grades four to eight participated in the competition by earning points as they honed their observation skills – discovering plants and animals in wildlife dioramas and getting their hands on real skulls and bones in the museums lab classrooms.

▲ RMU ACADEMIC ALL-STARs

Crafton Elementary students **John Slogick, Penelope Bittner** and **Fionn Hites**, pictured with Robert Morris University President Dr. Chris Howard, were honored at the RMU Hockey Academic All-Stars Awards Ceremony in March. As award recipients, the students were required to maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher while participating on select pee-wee hockey teams in association with the university.



▲ Carnegie Elementary second graders and teacher **Don Alexander** received a visit from local artist, Ebethal Badawi, in February. Ms. Badawi created a work entitled "Pittsburgh Builds Bridges, to promote unity, tolerance and understanding of cultural differences in the communities across the city. The artwork depicts hands with a range of skin tones and religious symbols behind a bright yellow bridge with a message that reads, "In our community we focus on building relations. We strive to build bridges between people of difference races, religions, and cultures."



▲ Congratulations to future leaders and rising seniors **Natali Lutsiv, Rodrigo Corral** and **Gina Ulizzi** who were elected to the positions of 2020-2021 senior class president, vice president and secretary, respectively. Elected as rising senior student government officers for the upcoming school year are President **Martial Delrosario**, Vice President **Evan Walker**, Secretary **Katie Fox** and Treasurer **Audrey Robb**.

Continued on next page >

continued



Maggie Morvay

▲ Rising senior **Maggie Morvay** received the Ralph Munn Award for her writing, *The Voice of Travel*. The poem, penned for a creative writing assignment in English class, was chosen for publication in the 2020 Ralph Munn Creative Writing Anthology and describes the vibrant colors in an airport while traveling to Costa Rico for a mission trip. Sponsored by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Ralph Munn Creative Writing Contest gives teenage writers, artists, musicians and coders the opportunity to share their work. Maggie, who serves on the high school's morning announcements broadcast team, plans to write for the school newspaper and yearbook in the upcoming school year.

▲ All dressed up and no place to go. Such was the scenario for juniors and seniors hoping to have a prom this past May. Seniors and good friends **Savannah Sevacko, Erin Fox, Elizabeth Duffy** and **Abigail Lherbier** decided to celebrate anyhow by donning their best and taking some



memorable photos. Don't let the frowns fool you – they had a great time in doing so.

▲ DISTRICT WELCOMES SARA HOFFMAN

The district extends a warm welcome to **Sara Hoffman**, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services. Mrs. Hoffman comes to Carlynton from the Clairton City School District where she held the position of Supervisor of Special Education. With over 20 years in education, Mrs. Hoffman says she was drawn to the small, community feel of the District.

Her father, an educator for 32 years, inspired her and her siblings to choose education as a career. Growing up, she always believed her calling was to work in special education where she has witnessed

successes, both great and small, among the children she has had the privilege to work alongside. Mrs. Hoffman went to Riverview High School and Clarion University for an undergrad and Master's degree in special education. She earned a supervisory certificate from Slippery Rock University.

Making her home in Cecil with husband Paul, two chocolate labs and a cat, Mrs. Hoffman is a step-mom to three children and two step-grandchildren.

▲ It is never easy to say goodbye, but even more so, when the school year does not end as usual. Four incredible teachers with a collective 97 years of experience retired at the end of the 2019-2020 school year:

Cynthia Bevan, Mary Ferro, Lisa Rowley and **Frank Zebrasky**. Likewise, secretaries **Deborah Chiocca** and **Catherine Kovach** retired from their posts, joined by paraprofessionals **Linda Driscoll, Nancy McMullen** and **Cindy White-Sutton**.

Custodian **Darlene Hatcher** and cafeteria worker **Maria Apicella** have also retired after many years of service in our schools. And regrettably, **Rachel Gattuso**, high school assistant principal, is saying farewell as her husband takes a new job in another city. The Carlynton School District extends its best wishes to these dedicated individuals who gave of their time and abilities to support the children of the District.



Sara Hoffman

2020-2021 School Year Calendar

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◆ New Teacher Induction

◆ In-Service Teacher Only

📅 Clerical Day Teacher Only

😊 School Opens

■ Holiday Schools Closed

✂ Elementary Open House

📅 Secondary Open House

☹ Last Day Underclassmen

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Testing dates are tentative
KEYSTONE EXAMS

Spring
May 17-28, 2021
Summer
July 26-30, 2021

PSSA TESTING

Grades 3-8
English / LA
April 19-23, 2021
Math / Science
April 26-30, 2021

School Closing Make-Up Days

(Days marked with a slash.)
February 15, 2021
April 1, 2021
April 5, 2021
June 7, 2021



Senior commencement will be held **Friday, June 4, 2021.**

