

# THE DEVIL'S HERALD

Avon Grove High School, West Grove, Pa.

Friday, January 24, 2020

Volume 21 Issue 5

## CLUBS

## AG smashes Garnet Valley in eSports

By  
Natalie Kelmelis  
Staff Writer

The big event that eSports had been growing towards came on January 10, 2020, the *Super Smash Brothers* tournament. Avon Grove's top ten players competed against Garnet Valley.

The players all pick a main, the character they regularly play with. "I main Peach, so that's who I practice matchups with to get better in fundamentals," said Stearn. The players practice together to prepare for the big day.

Though AG players often practice against each other, the competition does not create hard feelings. "We're definitely friends, and we talk and have fun," Stearn said.

On the day itself, spectators filter into the auditorium where the game is projected onto a big screen. Loud music is played over the speakers, and the players begin to practice.

Tensions rose as the Garnet Valley players enter, and the games began. Each team got 30 lives, three per player, and they face off.

Student commentators and live streamers recorded the event. The commentators gave a play-by-play of what happened in the game, as well as defining some "gamer vocab," for the non-gamers. Terms like SD (self destruct), stock (a life), and GG (good game) were defined for the audience.

The audience participated by suggesting more vocab and interacting with the commentators.

The players go by their gamertags, or their in-game names.

Stearn, now Wisteria, is the first



Avon Grove (right) defeats Garnet Valley (left) narrowly by two stock.

- Photo by Will DiBonaventura

player in the game, who manages to defeat her first opponent, and took one stock off of her second opponent before being defeated.

The game continued as energy remained high. Avon Grove maintained a slight lead, but the competition is pretty even. They continued back and forth between them as the players cycled through.

One of AG's players, Lurxx, defeated an opponent after only taking 77% damage, which is an

extremely low amount, but ended up losing to Garnet Valley's last player, V.

V had won Garnet Valley a few tournaments in the past, and was a force to be reckoned with.

V then easily destroyed two more of Red Devils, both in only a few minutes. Before losing to V though, one of the players, Kira, was able to bring V down one stock.

In the end, it came down to AG's last player versus GV's last player. C3 versus V.

C3 took one of V's stock, but then quickly lost one of his own. In the end, AG snagged the victory, and the crowd erupted into cheers.

The players ran to greet their friends, excitement was high as

hugs were exchanged.

The Garnet Valley team captain later approached the AG team to congratulate them, a genuine smile gracing his face. A friendly relationship was maintained between the two schools, despite the tense match.

Garnet Valley hopes to host Avon Grove one day.

After the tournament, Stearn decided she would "definitely" do another.

"Honestly, it was really fun, and the environment there wasn't really toxic, which was awesome, but it was one of the most nerve-racking things I've ever done," she said.

The club and its members strongly encourage new members to join if it interests them.

"Come on down and just vibe," said Tucci.

"Those tournaments were hype so you should definitely go to the next one," urged Stearn.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

## Intelligence plus character

*MLK pushed for more than just desegregation, so how have schools today furthered his goal of a more well-rounded education?*

By  
Abby Osborne  
Senior Editor

Every issue Martin Luther King, Jr. pushed and fought for was multifaceted. He spoke in nuance and treated every issue—whether it was voting rights, employment opportunities, etc.—with complexity, knowing that these subjects affected the everyday lives of African-Americans and should be treated with immense care.

His fight for education was no different.

Desegregation of schools was Dr. King's primary fight, but he was concerned with the type of education students would receive as well.

To Martin Luther King, Jr., education wasn't just supposed to be for building intelligence.

"It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is utility and the other is culture," said King in an article he wrote for Morehouse College, a historically black college (HBCU).

In this article he wrote, entitled "The Purpose of Education," he stressed that education wasn't supposed to be about just throwing information at students and expecting them to regurgitate it

back.

Education was not just about intelligence—"intelligence isn't enough"—but it's about "intelligence plus character." Dr. King thought "the most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals."

At Avon Grove High School, they're trying to encapsulate that very ideal.

"One of the things that we've really started to pay more attention to here is [that] social-emotional piece that is character and talking about what opportunities we're giving in class to share their voice and their opinions on different things," said Avon Grove High School principal Mr. Scott DeShong.

DeShong emphasized that character "has to be a part of everything we do." He mentioned that this is something the district tries to implement in students from the first time they enter the school district which can mean anything from actual lessons to extracurriculars like Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts.

Additionally, the school itself has brought in a consultant that's helping develop skills like "listening, responsibility, [and] communication."

SEE MLK PAGE 2

## STUDENT LIFE

## More time or more money?

By  
Lucin Milestone  
Staff Writer

Money. Everybody wants and needs it. But how do you get it when you are just in high school?

Well, it's really not a secret. You have to get a job.

For students, having a job or not is a very debatable topic. It seems that every concept of it has both ups and downs.

Most people agree that having a job is an experience that can help students and give them an advantage when pursuing a career when they are older.

"Part-time jobs are one of the surest ways to teach kids important job skills. Learning early how to balance school and work may help kids balance competing commitments later on," according to an article entitled, "Teens in the Workforce."

Along with this, it has been said that students develop a sense of responsibility, maturity, and professionalism, along with staying out of trouble.

But, there is no real evidence that proves these skills were developed from having a job specifically.

Instead, "a number of studies have found that high school students with jobs...are more likely to get into various forms of trouble than their nonworking peers," according to the article, "Teens in the Workforce."

The main debate for having a

job is how it will affect a student's education. In general, it will have either a negative or no affect, depending on the job's situation that the student is in.

Even though having a job could save money for college or give the students skills that they can successfully use in school, there seems to be more negative effects than positive ones.

One of these is students will have less time for homework and studying for any future tests or quizzes.

Other studies have found that

that she would not recommend students to get a job because it just takes up too much time.

To really compare how students act at school and their job, I went with a friend and sophomore, Lauren Miller, to experience what its like to have one of our good friends be our waitress.

"It was a weird experience to have my friend wait on me but it was still really fun to see her be so professional," said Miller after having lunch at the restaurant.

Wilson was able to put her job above the fact that we were friends and succeeded in being a great waitress.

Most students can agree that a huge advantage of having a job is earning money, like senior Jack Reilly, who talks about what it is like not having a job.

"I am interested in getting a job for the extra cash

and ability to save, but I haven't gotten any interviews after applying," Reilly said.

It was quite interesting to find that the student with a job had a more negative take on it than the person who does not. It shows that having a job has huge advantages, but is more useful for a student who can balance their time and handle the stress of going to school and work.

So, to all the students of Avon Grove and beyond, just like with almost everything else you may choose to do, do not get a job unless you know you can handle it.

**"Part-time jobs are one of the surest ways to teach kids important job skills. Learning early how to balance school and work may help kids balance competing commitments later on."**

the connection between work hours and the amount of time students spend doing homework is not evident.

Sophomore Karly Wilson, a waitress at Casa Italia, describes what having a job is like for her.

Wilson got her job to earn money and works 3 ½ to 5 ½ hours a day, one or two days a week.

"I get more stressed at school, backed up on homework, and can't hang out with people as much," said Wilson when asked how having a job affects her life.

Wilson described that she "hates how much time it takes up, but loves how nice everyone is."

Although she does say it has benefits, Wilson acknowledged

# OPINION

Opinion content in *The Devil's Herald* expresses the singular view of the writer. *The Devil's Herald* invites letters to the editor. Please email Mr. Gregory (rgregory@avongrove.org).

## Homework isn't benefitting students as much as you might think

By  
Lily Purifoy  
Staff Writer

School is a crucial aspect of children's lives. While school is an important part of a child's life, it's also important that the child takes a break from their education once in a while.

Multiple studies have found that most students are getting too much homework, leading to sleep deprivation, unhealthy levels of stress, as well as other related health problems. While it started out as giving students a little assignment to practice at home to help them in the classroom, homework, and the amount given, has gotten way out of hand.

According to studies done by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, the homework that students are given nowadays is unhealthy, just becoming a bur-

den and leading to an unnecessary amount of stress.

The stress of having to complete homework every night can affect the student's performance at school. Students need to learn in school, but they also need to be able to spend time exploring other things outside of school, like spending time with friends and family, travel, and try different activities to see what they're interested in.

"We don't learn much in class. We have to do all of the work at home," said sophomore Lauren Kim.

And Kim isn't the only one who thinks this.

"I have to do all of the work at home. It just makes us get less sleep and have more stress," said sophomore Alex Miller.

High school students today get way too much homework that just

consumes needed free time. Students wake up extremely early, go to school, and most have extracurricular activities that go until later in the evening.

The need to finish a bunch of assignments doesn't benefit them at all. This just leads to them not getting enough sleep at night, which in the long run negatively affects their education.

In 2013, research conducted at Stanford University found that students who spend too much time on homework experience more stress, physical health problems, a lack of balance in their lives, and an alienation from society.

If we want students to achieve their goals, learn more, and want to engage in learning, we need to either get rid of homework, or seriously decrease the amount that is given to our students.



- Photo by Lily Purifoy  
Greta Schroder stresses over English homework.

### MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

## Desegregation isn't enough

MLK FROM PAGE 1

Mrs. Gretchen Young, a history teacher and the chair of the history department at AGHS, agreed with his sentiment.

"I think we have a lot of groups and organizations and clubs that are trying to teach character. We have a lot of organizations like the National Honors Society, the Humanitarian Club, and the Cancer Society that their main goal is service. I think any time a student can put their time into service, it is teaching them character."

She also added that for her "teaching character is about modeling character for my students and making sure they understand the consequences of their behavior, or the consequences of their choices, at any given moment."

But teaching character isn't the only issue when it comes to race and education. Dr. King wanted students to have equal access to education, which relies on more than just desegregation.

According to an article written by Marilyn Anderson Rhames in the *Education Post*, she says "There are sporadic decreases in the achievement gap. But disparate discipline rates among Black students, combined with a lack of Black educators and a rampant belief gap, prove how incomplete the dream remains."

The dream, she means, is Dr. King's dream of students of color having an equal access to education.

Seth Gershenson, a public policy professor at American University, said that "representation absolutely matters and it matters for ... almost every educational outcome you can think of" in a recent *Washington Post* article. That same article says that "researchers have found significant positive results when Black and Hispanic students have teachers who match their race or ethnicity: better attendance, fewer suspensions, more positive attitudes, and higher test scores, graduation rates and college attendance. Teachers of color also have higher

expectations for students of color, which may fuel the other gains."

That gap of teachers of color is very much present at the Avon Grove School District.

According to a database the *Washington Post* created, the AGSD has a teacher of color gap of 28.2%. This means that "the percentage of students of color less the percentage of teachers of color. The larger the gap, the less diverse the teacher population is compared with the student population."

When you break it down, Black students represent 1.4% of the student population while 1.1% of the teacher population is made up of Black teachers.

Hispanic students represent 23.7% of the student population while 0.8% of teachers are Hispanic.

Asian students and students who identify as multiracial make up 2.2% and 3% of the student population respectively compared to 0.3% and 0% for teachers.

Some students like senior Kaelin Salley, one of the founders and co-presidents of the Black Student Union, wishes AGSD would fix this.

"I would also like to see them hire more teachers that are minorities."

DeShong acknowledged this.

"We've reached out to different colleges and universities throughout the state, so they're aware of the opportunities we have open to us. We have different partnerships with different universities in our region to bring students in for observation or student teach. We want to make sure we're attracting folks to Avon Grove who might not know about Avon Grove."

He also emphasized that they want to make sure that they "have teachers, counselors, school psychologists, [and] librarians that represent who the kids are that come to Avon Grove" as well "as always, no matter who the candidate, look to see if we can find candidates who are bilingual."

Salley also wished the school's curriculum would be more in-

clusive and diverse, something that has been a hot button issue for many schools who are trying to progress like Dr. King always stressed.

"Every time the lesson includes a Black person or [group of Black people] they are popular, [and we've] already heard of [them]."

Young agrees and attributes a fair amount of that to the idea that "history has been written by the educated elite and the wealthy elite, specifically old white men." To combat this, she tries to "[make] sure that every unit, every chapter includes not just the wealthy but the poor, not just the white but people of color, not just the male but the female stories."

She also thinks that one way to do it is to "look at what groups make up a society and make sure every group is represented proportionally. So if you're talking about the South during Reconstruction and 30% of the population is African-American then making sure at least 30% of the story follows the African-American story."

DeShong agreed and said the district "has a curriculum review process and part of that process really looks at looking at the resources that we're providing to kids and reflect the experiences that our kids have had. Does it meet the needs [of the populations] we have?"

These resources he mentioned can be anything from "textbooks and the different perspectives they provide on historical events and backgrounds of different authors and writers."

Education, at its core, is supposed to shape the new generation on the horizon of adulthood. If education keeps improving and progressing, especially with the aid of students who are becoming more and more inspired to champion that change, then society will keep improving and progressing.

Afterall, as Dr. King once said in that fateful article for Morehouse College, "education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society."

## News Briefs

### Police responds to parrot cries

According to the Associated Press, in Lake Worth Beach, Florida, police received a call from a concerned neighbor stating that they heard a scream, "Let me out!" The victim was inside a house with a man repairing a car in the driveway. He was questioned and showed the police that the noise was a forty-year old parrot named Rambo. The police burst out laughing and the man told the officers that Rambo was taught to scream when he wanted to be let out of his cage.

~By Anna Ashcraft

### Man allegedly robs Philadelphia pharmacy for sick child

According to CNN, a man allegedly robbed a pharmacy after flashing a note that said, "Give me all the money. I'm sorry, I have a sick child. You have 15 seconds." The clerk put an undetermined amount of money in a bag for the suspect. The suspect then put the bag in his pocket and left on foot. The man never showed the clerk a weapon, though he did reach into his pocket after showing the clerk his note. Police have not yet identified the suspect though his description is a black man between 30 and 40 years old. He is said to be a bit under 6 feet tall, and supposedly has facial hair.

~By Natalie Kelmelis

### Florida mom gives birth to two sets of twin boys in 2019

In West Palm Beach, Florida, doctors told a Florida woman that she has a better chance of winning the lottery than of giving birth to two sets of twins in the same year. According to the Associated Press, Alexandria Wolliston gave birth to Mark and Malakhi in March and Kaylen and Keleb in December. Two months after the first set of twins, she learned about the second set. They were born in West Palm Beach on December 27. Wolliston said Kaleb was dismissed from the hospital on Monday and she's hoping to bring Kaylen home soon.

~By Naomi Partridge

### Psychic woman claims child to be possessed, scams her mom of \$70K

According to the Associated Press, a 37-year-old woman by the name of Tracy Milanovich has been charged with obtaining property by trick, along with larceny and witness intimidation. Milanovich told the women her 10-year old daughter was possessed by a demon, and she would need large sums of money in order to rid the demon from her child's body. Milanovich was a tarot card and palm reader before she was reported and arrested on December 27.

~By Eliza Flanigan

### High school students spend their holiday break building a toilet paper pyramid

In 16 hours over the holiday break, a group of students built a toilet paper pyramid with 27,434 rolls of toilet paper. Their goal was to be noticed by the Guinness Book of World Records. They're also selling the toilet paper as a fundraiser for the 20-member robotics team. High school senior Maxton Herst got the idea three years ago after seeing a similar pyramid on Youtube. The students had to disassemble the pyramid after taking pictures of their masterpiece. The rolls were stacked January 6 into a 16-foot pyramid inside Midland Counties Bullock Creek High School by a school robotics team hoping to set a world record and raise money for the team in the process, according to MLive.com.

~By Lily Purifoy

# HERALD SPORTS

Friday, January 24, 2020

Page 3

## TRACK

# Track team working hard all year

By  
**Eliza Flanigan**  
Staff Writer

"We spend hours and hours working hard, but no one seems to notice," said Payton Smith.

A typical track practice consists of a warm-up, workout and, occasionally, the weight-room. Everything the coaches have the athletes do is meant to help them become better runners, jumpers, teammates and athletes.

Every group in track does a different work out aimed at helping them become better at their specific events. Distance may run one or two miles and repeats, while sprinters may perform short sprints, and hurdlers will practice that skill.

Alisha Southerland said that in order to get better, a runner must practice and practice and that they are only in competition with themselves to get better.

In order to improve, each athlete strives to have great flexibility, strength, and control.

At the end of a practice, the athletes perform a cool down and find water, lots and lots of water.

Winter track trains every day after school for two hours, but on weeks where a meet happens to

occur on a weekend, they meet 6 times in total.

Coach Broadbent said in order to prepare for meets he helps his athletes train to become "fast, explosive and as strong as possible" for the day of the meet.

"Most of our training reflects this and our training is designed around maximizing the potential of our nervous system, since that controls everything," said Broadbent.

"My preparation outside of practice includes trying to prepare for meets through lots of practice at school and through good eating and sleep schedules," said sophomore Payton Smith.

Carb loading and a lot of healthy sugars seem to be the common food when it comes to getting ready for meets in order to maintain sustainable energy.

"The night before a meet I like to eat pasta dishes to give me some carbohydrates," said Connor Bossong.

"I eat foods that will give me



-Photo by Eliza Flanigan  
Josh Herring, Seth Williams, Connor Bossong, Ian Ambrose, Nate Allen, Alex Hutchinson and Ethan Hudson run two miles around the Avon Grove track.

sustainable energy and not cause me to crash and become tired during the time of competition," said Mathew McLaughlin, a team

captain.

Coach Broadbent said a typical meet consists of "lots of time and lots of events, basically organized chaos! If you go to a dual or tri meet then you can expect the length of time to be about 2-3 hours, but on weekend meets, they can last around 7-8 hours."

This means that the athletes give up weekends to perform something they love, but Smith said it helps teammates bond because they all "suffer together."

She also said that the ride home includes "fun times and loud music."

According to Jackson Morris, the days after the meet are typically cool down days with easier workouts with lots of recovery and stretching.

The athletes train daily and according to Coach Broadbent, about 6-7% of the school's students are on the track team.

"We have a large and growing group of athletes that train pretty much year round with cross coun-

try, indoor track, and spring track, while others do off-season training during the same time frame as cross country," said Broadbent.

Not only does running track help the members improve their athletic ability, but it also improves leadership and communication skills.

"Being the captain has also helped my leadership skills and communication skills for the everyday work force life I'm going to be facing soon," said McLaughlin.

Smith also mentioned track helping her make new friends and learning to talk with, and work with a team.

"The AGHS student body should be very proud of the AGHS track and field team," said Coach Hill.

"We work hard all year, yet we receive much less recognition than other sports," said Smith, expressing her desire to have track recognized.

Avon Grove's track team spends hours and hours a week training, preparing and working hard and that is reflected in their success at the many meets they attend every year.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

# Lady Devils on the brink of making it



-Photo by Olivia Watson  
Jamie Perkins takes a foul shot during the Rustin game on January 10.

By  
**Olivia Watson**  
Staff Writer

Cheering loud and proud is the newest thing for the varsity girls basketball team. Throughout the years, the Lady Devils weren't a threat to anyone, but that has changed this season.

This is Head Coach Bart O'Connor's second year coaching the girls. The team is 5-10 (as of January 14), and they are ranked 28th out of 40 teams in District 1. The top 24 teams make the playoffs.

"The girls work hard. They're paying attention. They're listening. They're doing the right things. The only thing we're not doing is scoring, but we'll take care of that," said Coach O'Connor.

In addition to skill, Caroline

Malone attributes their success as a team to their chemistry, "The bond that we have, we're all so close, which is why we click and why we can play as a team, and I think that's the best part of the season."

For the Lady Devils the main goal this season is districts. "Our biggest goal [is districts.] We haven't been there in years. So we want to see if we can get there this time," said Malone.

Coach O'Connor also agreed, "The goal is districts. We have a shot to make districts. Avon Grove hasn't made districts in 8 years."

For the seniors this is a long time coming. Last year they were 6-15, and 32nd in districts.

The girls have also made a name for themselves and the program, "Other teams know who we are now," said Coach O'Connor.

## BOYS BASKETBALL

# Young, scrappy, hungry Despite loss to Henderson, team optimistic about upcoming future

By  
**Naomi Partridge**  
Staff Writer

Despite the loss against Henderson, the Red Devils are optimistic about the future of the team. The starting line up, made up of mostly sophomores, still has two years to improve.

Avon Grove suffered a 63-46 defeat against the Warriors on Thursday, January 9.

The Devils started out strong in the first quarter as sophomore Tyler Arnold hit a three-pointer in the final seconds to give the Red Devils a six-point lead. The first quarter ended with a score of 17-11.

Momentum changed in the second quarter as the Warriors doubled up the Red Devils with a 17-8 run to take a 28-25 halftime lead.

Henderson's momentum continued in the second half as they increased their three-point halftime lead to 16 as AG only scored three points in the third quarter.

By the final quarter, the Red Devils started to gain on Henderson, as they scored 18 points, but it wasn't enough to make a comeback and win the game. The Warriors won 63-46.

The Red Devils were led by Tyler Newman (11 points) and Ben Houghton (8 points). The top rebounders were Ben Houghton (6), Reese Ziegler (5), and Tyler Newman (5).

After the upsetting loss, Coach Mays was still positive about the game.

"Tonight's game did not go exactly the way we expected it to. As is common in all sports, there were a lot of momentum shifts during the game tonight. We started the game on a 12-4 run which is one of the best starts to a game that we had this season," commented Coach Mays.

The team's main goal is to make the top 24 teams in the district in order to compete in the playoffs. In order for them to do this, they have to work hard for the second half of the season to lock in their spot in the top 24.

As of January 15, they rank 33rd and have to move up 9 spots by the end of the season on February 6.



-Photo by Naomi Partridge  
Connor Lewin, #15, takes a shot for AG in the final quarter.

"I believe we should have won that game. As a young group we are going to learn from those mistakes that we had and come back stronger," said senior Ben Houghton.

Four out of the five starters are sophomores, including Tyler Newman, Aiden Violette, Reese Ziegler, and Tyler Arnold. Due to the young age of the varsity team, in the next two years they will have more opportunities to improve and grow.

Avon Grove will play Henderson again on February 4.

Coach Mays, as well as the rest of the team, expects a different outcome then. They are all looking forward to improving more throughout the second half of the season.

# AG Life

January 24, 2020

Page 4

## EDUCATION

# Agriculture education returns after 20 years

## Class visits Pennsylvania Farm Show

By  
**Sean DelVecchio**  
Staff Writer

When people think of the future, they think of a time filled with new technologies and engineering, but agriculture doesn't pop in their minds.

The 2019-2020 school year is the first year in the last 20 years that Avon Grove has offered an agriculture class. Agriculture unfortunately has a negative connotation among young people due to the misunderstanding of what agriculture really is.

Currently, there is only one class this semester but it seems evident that the class will continue to grow. There is already growing popularity in the technology education department for the class.

Twice a year, Avon Grove fills the center courtyard with goats. Students flock to pet and feed these new additions to the Avon Grove family, but many of them do not know why they are here.

This class has a mission to fix this.

"Students should be more aware of the importance of agriculture and how it affects people," agriculture teacher Mr. Chris Herrman stated.

People seem to have a very

warped view of what agriculture really is and how big of an impact it has on the community.

"I want to make it known that the traditional conception of agriculture is not the reality," said Mr. Herrman.

This statement holds a lot of ground, especially around the Avondale and West Grove communities. Agriculture has a rich history in this area with most of the land at one point being farm land.

Avon Grove didn't always lack an agriculture class. Twenty years ago, students and teachers not only had a farming program, but also had a strong appreciation for agriculture itself in the community.

No one knows for sure why Avon Grove booted this program, but one can guess that people just didn't feel that agriculture promised a fulfilling future.

This couldn't be more wrong.

Today, Mr. Herrman has changed how students view agriculture.

The agriculture class recently took a trip to the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where students flocked to get farm fresh milkshakes and spent hundreds on cowboy hats.

Students who would otherwise pass off agriculture as "just farming" excitedly awaited livestock



-Photo courtesy of Mr. Chris Herrman

Avon Grove students at the Farm Show learn the value of agriculture and livestock (Chris Decker, Kevin Moyer, Zach Reynolds, Joey D'Ambrosio, Ryan Rowlands, Anthony Santiago, Lucas Folkert, Andrew Miller, Shane Reith).

competition and gawked at massive sculptures of butter.

On a regular day, students rush to get out of school after learning

for seven hours. After about seven hours at the farm show, students couldn't be pulled away.

This just goes to show that peo-

ple care about agriculture and the future of food. The agriculture program has a lot of room to grow.

## CLUBS

# eSports is a 'friendly and open' community for AG students

By  
**Natalie Kelmelis**  
Staff Writer

At 2:30p.m., the library begins to fill with people. Some begin to chat, some unpack their Switches, and some talk and plan in preparation for the upcoming tournament. This is the Avon Grove eSports meeting, and they're going to make it a good one.

Avon Grove's eSports team was founded in the 2018-2019 school year. At the start there were between 15 and 20 members, and the only game played was *Rocket League*. This year, however, about 100 kids showed up to the interest meeting, and that has boiled down to about 60-80 regular members.

To fit all the members, the meetings take place in the library and Mr. Jones's room. In the library, kids play games on the Nintendo Switches, and in Jones's room, kids play on the PCs.

eSports have three competitive game teams: *Rocket League*, *League of Legends*, and *Super Smash Brothers*.

However, eSports isn't just for competition.

"We always have computers available so people have a chance to just game, to just relax, to just take a break from homework, or stress, or whatever, and just have fun," said junior Gabby Tucci.

One issue that people often debate when they consider the activity is whether or not to consider

it a sport.

"We are technically a club. We have competitive events like a sport would," stated communications officer and sophomore Eloise Fox.

They're comfortable being considered a club because of their weekly meetings and their informal attitude, but they aren't opposed to one day being a sport.

"I think it could grow into a sport over the next five years, maybe three," said senior and club president Connor Green.

With little local competition it's hard to actually build a competitive league. Since the club is so new, many other local schools still have yet to add it to their activities.

Many members feel that there are misconceptions surrounding the club. "People think geek culture is a negative thing," explained Tucci.

A misconception that concerns junior Claire Stearn is "that we're just lazy." She explained that a lot goes into being able to play the game well, like hand eye coordination and fine motor skills, which are skills very important to her as one of the school's top ten *Super Smash Brothers* players.

"You've got to gather all the skills you have, all the abilities you have, all the knowledge you have," explained Green.

Despite all the toxic stereotypes the gamers feel they suffer from, they have made a welcom-



-Photo courtesy of Eloise Fox

The Super Smash Brothers players before the of the tournament with Garnet Valley. Pictured from left to right: Nick Pino, Joey Kwietniak, Grant Bailey, Ethan Koszi, Larry Schwenk, Christian Hubbard, and Claire Stearn.

ing community. New members are brought in by their friends, who

then have the opportunity to make new friends through their shared

interest. Fox described it as a "friendly and open place."