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Avon Grove High School, West Grove, Pa.

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NEW HIGH SCHOOL

From a pile of bricks to a brand new school

New high school to open in less than a year



-Photo by Gaby Bellaver

The new Avon Grove High School is expected to welcome students on September 6, 2022.

By

Maddie Reisinger

Staff Writer

In 347 days the Avon Grove School District will be opening a new high school. This high school will include many new features that will benefit both students and staff for the years to come.

"The new high school will be nearly 300,000 square feet, while the current school is only 200,000 square feet," says high school principal Mr. DeShong.

The new main gymnasium will be able to seat nearly 2,000 people, while the auditorium will have a balcony and seat around 1,000 people, making the new school much more accommodating for the number of students and staff.

For all students, the new school will have an area called a makerspace. The makerspace is

a classroom and lab area that will have special technology and will allow students to work together on special projects and any new ideas they may want to test out.

Along with the makerspace,

their Chromebooks onto a larger screen to assist with projects and group work, instead of sitting in the hallways like they do now.

For all athletes and students taking physical education class-

center for all athletics.

For all AGTV students, the new studio will be a space that consists of a classroom, a recording studio, and even an outdoor area overlooking one of the courtyards

For all art students, the new school will consist of 6 classrooms specifically designed for teaching art classes. The current school only has 5 classrooms, and only three of them were designed for teaching art classes.

And finally, for all band and choir students, there will be two large music rooms along with three smaller rooms designed for solo and small group practice sessions.

Avon Grove High School looks forward to its opening on September 6, 2022.

"We are very excited, it's going to be great!" says Mr. DeShong.

"The new high school will be nearly 300,000 square feet, while the current school is only 200,000 square feet," says high school principal Mr. DeShong.

there will be ten areas throughout the school dedicated to students working and learning in small groups. Students will be able to be in their own room and project

es there will be one large gym, and an auxiliary gym that will be large enough to accommodate a full sized basketball court, and will include a weight room and fitness

for outdoor broadcasts. The new studio will also include an editing room and 3 smaller studio rooms for special recording and projects, says Mr. DeShong.

PANDEMIC

Helpful hands handle in-person learning

Federal funds provide for instructional specialists

By

Gaby Bellaver

Editor

Guess who's back? Everyone!

All students and staff are back in the building after a year and a quarter of being online in some fashion.

Slowly but surely students are going back to having homework every night. Tests and quizzes are starting to be handed out. In a few months, everyone's favorite midterms will be held in the math department.

But for some, the transition back into the classroom has not been an easy one.

Thanks to COVID, Avon Grove

School District received Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief funds from the federal government. The purpose of the funds are to give schools the resources they need to give students a proper education.

"Funds can be used to purchase personal protective equipment, help support the return to in-person learning, and support student learning," said Avon Grove High School principal Mr. DeShong.

Avon Grove has used a portion of this money by implementing instructional specialists. This is a program in which certain teachers are helping students readjust.

"At Avon Grove High School, the instructional specialists will

work with students and teachers during the 2021-2022 school year to support the academic growth of all students," said Mr. DeShong.

Five teachers were offered this opportunity. The staff includes Mrs. McCloskey, Mrs. Coffman, Ms. Krugreinhard, Mr. Mazzola, and Ms. Mills.

"We help students with organization, mostly. Finding the best ways to manage their time, work through their assignments, get caught up after absences, etc.," said Ms. Mills.

The 1,700 high school students are divided by grade. Ms. Krugreinhard is working with the seniors, Ms. Mills with the juniors, Mrs. Coffman works with the sopho-

mores while Mrs. McCloskey is handling the freshmen.

Mr. Mazzola is coordinating opportunities for students to help their peers. Programs such as the Freshmen Mentor Program and National Honors Society offer tutoring from fellow students.

Although their rooms are in the annex of the high school (above the auditorium), they usually meet with students in the library. They conduct their sessions during a student's study hall or lunch and learn period.

According to Ms. Mills, many students are recommended by their teachers. But with Mr. Mazzola's initiatives, anyone can sign up for peer tutoring.

The instructional specialists were added because of the COVID relief grants. Hopefully COVID will be over by next school year, but will these teachers stick around when the year is up?

"Some of this will continue into next school year, but we will be back in our classrooms. The resources we create, like tutoring, will hopefully continue!" exclaimed Ms. Mills.



HERALD SPORTS

Today

Girls Tennis
Ches-Mont Singles, 9:00am
Girls Volleyball vs.
Oxford, 5:00pm
Football @
Great Valley, 7:00pm

Sept. 25

Cross Country @
Carlisle Invitational
Tennis @
Ches-Mont Singles, 9:00am
Boys Soccer @
Garnet Valley, 10:00am

Sept. 27

Girls Tennis vs.
Oxford, 3:30pm
Girls Soccer vs.
Unionville, 7:00pm

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GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

New coach inspires players

By
Maddie Butler
Staff Writer

"To have a fun, positive, successful, winning season."

Those are the goals of Coach Brown going into her first season with the girls varsity volleyball team.

Coach Brown played volleyball throughout high school and afterwards she continued playing at Wilmington College. This prior experience with volleyball was a big part of why she decided to take the job as coach, in addition to her wanting to be a part of Avon Grove's program.

Despite her late start, as she was hired a week before tryouts, the girls had no problems welcoming her as a part of the team, said Coach Brown. From "singing music together on bus rides" to group hugs after every point made, this is a close-knit community of players with which Coach Brown has been able to bond within a short amount of time.

Reflecting the togetherness of the players, Alexandra Miller, a senior on the varsity volleyball team, said her favorite part is definitely the "team spirit."

During the team's second game on Fri-

day, September 10 against Phoenixville, the audience was at the edge of their seats as Avon Grove only needed one more point to win, but even through the sound of the crowd, Coach Brown could be heard saying, "Finish it, right here."

Avon Grove then went on to win this match 3 games to 0 putting the team closer to achieving the team's goal of going to districts.

Their goal for the team was not the only thing they agreed on, however, as both Alexandra Miller and Gaby Bellaver said that the addition of Coach Brown to their team has undoubtedly had a positive influence.

Gaby Bellaver, a junior at Avon Grove, backed up her statement by saying she has "definitely taught us a lot."

After the team's match on September 10, with loud upbeat music playing throughout the gym, and the volleyball team celebrating their victory, Coach Brown commented on how she is "grateful to be here."

As of September 22, the team is 3-3.

2021 Girls Volleyball Results

| | | |
|----------|---------------------|---|
| Sept. 7 | SPRING-FORD | L |
| Sept. 9 | D'TOWN WEST | L |
| Sept. 10 | PHOENIXVILLE | W |
| Sept. 14 | PENNCREST | L |
| Sept. 18 | STRATH HAVEN | W |
| Sept. 21 | COATESVILLE | W |

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).

PANDEMIC

Did we come back too soon?

By
Jackson Morris
Editor

Can you remember a time before COVID-19?

I know I struggle to do so. Many complain about mask mandates, social distancing, and all of the other things that have become regiment with the pandemic since that fateful day in March 2020.

Through these guidelines, however, I almost found a feeling of comfort.

The masks, the distancing, they worked.

They made me feel like I could return to seeing people, going to school, playing sports, all while staying safe. It gave me hope for a future where my peers and I could safely return to a normal way of life.

I thought that maybe some people started to feel the same way, but I was apparently mistaken. Avon Grove came back, full fledged.

No masks mandates, no proof of vaccination, no distancing. It was almost like the past 18 months vanished from our minds.

I was one of the few who walked the sardine cans of hallways with my mask on. It was easy to see the problems that could have come from a continued time without mask mandates.

This is why I breathed a sigh of relief when I heard that the school board was going back to masking up.

If we had continued on the path with no masks, I only saw one ending point: absolute shutdown, again.

Even though I do not agree with the initial decisions that were made on how we came back, I can't criticize them in good conscience. The school board was tasked with a very difficult situation.

School board meetings this summer were packed to the brim with angry parents and community members, all preaching from the same choir: no more mandates.

My heart goes out to the school board members who had to deal with insurmountable amounts of pressure from the community.

Being pressured into a choice is not the point of the school board. The school board makes decisions for the betterment of the school district.

There shouldn't be outside voices screaming so loud that it shifts the viewpoint and endangers the community.

The ultimatum I found was this: we are living in a time unprecedented. No matter what the administration or the school board chooses to do, there will be criticism. But overall, students health should come first, and an issue of public health should never be considered a matter of opinion.

There is some hope, however, that we all can feel. A day where we can actually go back to normal, safely.

AG juniors Ethan Wills and Jill Stauffer believe that day is possible, in due time.

"Hopefully, soon enough, the day will come when there are no more arguments about mandates," said Wills.

Stauffer was less optimistic, but still hopeful.

"Not soon. Sadly, not soon. Life right now isn't normal, but it eventually can be. What we can do right now is be safe, wear masks, wash our hands, and do our part."



-Photo by Jackson Morris

After a year of online and hybrid learning, all Avon Grove students returned to school to start the 2021-2022 year.

AG CLUBS

Diverse portfolios and participation in clubs save college applications

By
Riley Wiercinski
Staff Writer

Last year was a struggle for several clubs as publicity and getting information out to members came to a halt. Several colleges stated that clubs are extremely important for applicants to show their diverse portfolio, says the *Princeton Review*.

As seniors apply to schools, here are some new clubs that might catch the attention of students looking to show unique interests in their applications.

Performing Arts Club

PAC has been active in the AG community since 2015 and they strive to prove the importance and equality of all arts, theater, and music and gain connections in the artistic industry.

They hold a theater-themed talent show, a Halloween costume contest, and a variety of other activities. PAC also participates in a master class and takes an annual trip to watch a Broadway show.

"Our major goal is to create a family-like community and create art. I define art as something that was made to make someone else feel something," says PAC president Eliza Flanigan.

Rainbow Group

Rainbow Group has been active as an exclusive social outlet for 5 years, however, they are now focused on gaining publicity for the environment they have created.

They are hosting a thrift shop,

called "Rainbow Thrift," during homecoming and plan to donate most of their profits to the Trevor Project, a suicide prevention hotline that specializes in helping those of the LGBT+ community.

"We strive to create an inclusive environment and a safe outlet for all of our peers, LGBT+, allies, and those struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts," says sophomore representative Ruby Queen.

Humanitarian Club

The Humanitarian Club offers a variety of opportunities for community service, including food, blood, and flu shot drives. They also run a gift-wrapping event to raise money to fund their events.

During COVID last year, they sent holiday cards to people in nursing homes.

Their main goal is to give back to the Avon Grove community and provide comfort to everyone in troublesome situations.

"We try to make people the healthiest and happiest they can be," says communications officer Sophia Kaiser.

Avon Grove Medicine Club

As one of Avon Grove's newest clubs, the AG Med Club was established in January 2021. The club volunteers at Project Cure and at local kennels. They also host several guest speakers from various fields in medicine.

They also sent cards to St. Jude patients and want to shadow healthcare workers when hospitals return to normal.



Rainbow Group participants Dani McVean and Ruby Queen create a poster plan for their homecoming booths.

-Photo by Riley Wiercinski

"We want to help kids in our school get involved in medicine without being stressed out, since this is one of the most difficult and competitive fields to join," says founder and co-president Mikaela Cavanagh.

Black Student Union

BSU has been active for 4 years. They participate in a MLK Breakfast, PLE's Multicultural

Night, and other events that unify the community.

Their mission is to educate others about black heritage and create a family-like atmosphere for students.

"We hope to provide a safe space for black students to learn about their culture and history, while still having fun," says vice president Andrew Norman.

All in all, there is a club in Avon Grove for each student to express their unique interests. Joining clubs and extracurricular activities allow students to take part in their school and community. Participating in and gaining leadership roles in clubs allows students to stand out to admissions officers and continue to build upon their individuality.

AG CLUBS

Checkmate! Chess is back

By
Naomi Partridge
Senior Editor

Chess has always been popular, but when has it been this popular? With the help of the hit Netflix show, *The Queen's Gambit*, and the monotonous quarantine, chess is returning.

Chess was first popular in the mid-twentieth century with the development of modern chess tournaments, but by the late 1900s interest began to decline due to boring grandmasters and controversial leadership according to *The Atlantic*.

Inspired by the recent Netflix hit, *The Queen's Gambit*, and the boredom of quarantine, chess is mainstream once again. Right after *The Queen's Gambit* released, Chess.com activity surged; play was up 66% with 5.3 million active accounts according to Chess.com.

Late last school year at Avon Grove, Evan Diefenbeck, Ben Coppens and Kshitij Kochhar started playing chess out of boredom.

"After joking with the idea, we decided to establish an official club," says Diefenbeck.

Last year the co-founders, with the help of their advisor Mr. Renz, began creating Chess Club. During the last few months they

were able to have some meetings and began to build interest in the club.

"We had maybe ten to fifteen people in the group at the time, so we were able to fit everyone in Mr. Renz's class," said co-founder Kochhar.

This school year the co-founders decided to take the Chess Club in another direction.

"We started heavily advertising our club on the announcements and through our Instagram with the help of Leia Conlan," said Kochhar. "When we had our first meeting this year we had so many people that we were unable to use Mr. Renz's room."

Given her experience running the AG Enact Instagram, the founders asked Senior Leia Conlan to manage the page. Their Instagram (@ag.chessclub) became the most effective way for the club to grow interest.

"The account has grown to 90 followers pretty quickly and I think it's helping people become interested in the club," says Conlan. "[It] is really fun to run since I can take pictures of people playing chess or just chess related things and then share them with all the followers."

The founders are also wanting to take the club in a more serious and competitive direction by par-

ticipating in tournaments in the future.

"I definitely feel proud of the club," says Kochhar. "Initially I was planning on it being a small group of people who played chess amongst each other, but after seeing the growing culture of chess here at Avon Grove, it makes me excited to see where the club goes in the future."

Even if members aren't tournament ready, the founders are planning to teach new members, hosting lessons and coaching more intermediate players.

Chess has been played for centuries and is arguably the most famous game in history. Its growing popularity just shows how timeless of a game it is.

"Chess Club isn't here to set the world on fire," says Diefenbeck. "I just want to hang out with the boys and play chess."



-Photo courtesy of @ag.chessclub

"Chess.com is a really informational resource for people who show interest in getting into chess," says Kshitij Kochhar.