Parents Push Back Against ‘Privilege’ Sign

ALEX NEWELL  
Staff Reporter

On October 15th, the Cougars lost a close football game to Butler by a score of 28-21. However, the story of the night was not the game itself.

A sign held by the Butler High School cheerleaders caught the attention of Charlotte Catholic parents, who took to social media to voice their complaints. The sign read “Sniff sniff, you smell that? $ Privilege $.” The word “privilege” is in white letters. Some interpreted the sign to mean that Charlotte Catholic is predominantly white with wealthy families. Parents of Catholic students claimed the sign was offensive and denied its apparent implications.

Opinions about the sign vary across the Catholic community. Some students believe it was nothing more than one school trash-talking another in a sports game. “Tensions can get high in the crowds of the football games so stuff like this is just going to happen,” said senior Nathan Peine. He said that “students are going to be rowdy in the stands and some jokes may be taken as serious, but they are really nothing more than that.” Others claim that the sign has a deeper meaning and is disrespectful toward less-represented students. An anonymous senior at Catholic believed the sign was “telling” and that the generalization that all Catholic students are wealthy white people is a “harmful claim to students that struggle financially as well as those that are underrepresented at Catholic.”

Butler’s administration has since issued an apology towards Catholic students and parents CMS spokesperson Vicki Grooms wrote that they are aware of the sign and that staff members and certain students will face consequences, but they have not specified the punishment.

Principal Telford released a statement as well, which reads “We appreciate the outreach we’ve received from the Butler High School community and are confident our good relationship with them will continue. We understand how emotions surrounding sports events can sometimes result in actions that do not represent an organization’s values. It is our hope that everyone will learn from such moments because at the end of the day we are all one community.”

HOCO is a Go!

TESS VALKOVSCHI  
Staff Reporter

After much deliberation, Charlotte Catholic High School gave students a homecoming dance for the 2021-22 school year. The dance took place in the school gym on October 23 from 9-11 pm, following the homecoming football game on October 22. This was all underclassman’s first school dance as Covid-19 prohibited CCHS from having a homecoming dance last school year.

Since the beginning of the year, administration was hesitant to confirm a homecoming dance, as they kept an eye on Covid-19 and its variants. On September 27, the student body received an email to vote on themes for the homecoming dance. Through this poll, administration confirmed that the 2021-22 school year at Charlotte Catholic would indeed have a homecoming dance.

The themes that students could vote upon were Roaring 20’s, Glow Crazy/Neon, Masquerade, and No Place Like Homecoming/Wizard of Oz. On October 4, the winning theme was announced: Masquerade, winning the poll with 220 votes.

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GRACE GILRANE
Staff Reporter

Charlotte Catholic theatre’s most recent production Close the Shades has been advertised as a dark comedy. In a previous interview, writer and director of the play Mr. Riter noted that “as the play begins, one bad thing happens… after another” to the protagonist, Becky, who is played by senior Grace Lisi. Those who had the opportunity to see Close the Shades will tell you that is true.

The actors kept the audience laughing throughout the play with scripted jokes, awkward scenarios, and the comical personalities of each character. Senior Vivian Trinh remarked that “there was a great use of sarcasm and comedy throughout the personalities of the characters.”

In the first five minutes, Becky’s cat is killed, her boyfriend breaks up with her, and perhaps most tragically of all, there are no blueberry bagels—Becky’s favorite—available at the bakery. All of this happens on her birthday. As act one progresses, the audience meets the characters in Becky’s life. Her ditzy best friend Jan, played by senior Sage Hessert, was a fan favorite. Vivian said that she “loved Jan’s character because she’s a annoyingly optimistic.” Jan's second personality is the pure opposite of Becky’s gloom and cynicism. Grace and Sage play off of each other to create some of the show’s funniest moments.

Later in act one, Becky’s coworkers Mr. Ross, played by senior Dominik Daly, and Herman, played by sophomore Max Coven, are other sources of hilarity. Becky’s mother, played by sophomore Ava Blaha, is a busybody who disapproves of her daughter’s unraveled lifestyle. Senior Cameron Donnelly plays Becky’s father, who endlessly complains about the price of his daughter’s birthday dinner and tells Becky that her makeup makes her “look like a hooker.”

While there are several minor characters that contribute to the plot, the show is not complete without Brian, the burglar who attempts to rob Becky’s apartment early in the show. Played by senior Ketai Pimplaskar, Brian breaks into Becky’s apartment to rob her and encounters Becky and her now-ex-boyfriend, Greg, arguing. Greg and Marisa Montione said that one of her favorite scenes was when Becky, Greg, and Brian were all arguing in Becky’s apartment. Brian breaks up their argument and escorts Greg out of the apartment, where Greg proceeds to fall down the stairs to his death.

Becky and Brian grow closer and are eventually engaged by the end of act one. Grace’s performance as Becky carries the plot of the play, but Ketai’s performance as Brian delivered the biggest laughs. Marisa remarked that Brian was one of her favorite characters because of his dialogue and demeanor. Aside from his string of burglaries, Brian is at first a benevolent character. That is, until he makes the jump from petty thief to murderer.

As act two winds down, Brian begins to push down the stairs people that inconvenience him or Becky. Once the police discover this, Becky realizes that this is actually how her ex-boyfriend died. Not a fatal fall, but a deadly push.

These murders draw in the dark element of the “dark comedy” descriptor for this play, resulting in hysterical scenes. Brian’s victims include Greg, Jan, and his landlord Sal. Marisa remarked that Jan’s funeral was one of the funniest moments “because the cast sang a very out-of-tune version of Amazing Grace” to kick off the scene. Vivian said that the moment Becky confronts Brian about his actions was also quite comical because “she was going ballistic about the situation, but Brian was chill about it.”

Close the Shades was a triumphant return for Charlotte Catholic high school theatre after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. Additionally, Mr. Riter’s original work will be the last ever non-musical production to grace this stage before the opening of the MACS Fine Arts center. Next up for Charlotte Catholic theatre is their spring musical, and all are anxiously awaiting the announcement of what that production will be.

There’s No Debate: Speech and Debate is Doing Great

ANDREW O’BRIEN
Staff Reporter

Students at Charlotte Catholic High School pride themselves on their ability to win and speak the truth. As the 11th ranked high school speech and debate team in the state, it is clear they excel at both. This ranking is due to the efforts of talented and dedicated speakers and debaters motivated by coach Carmen Kohn.

The Speech and Debate team comprises dozens of hardworking members who participate in a variety of different events. These include Dramatic Performance, Extemporaneous Speaking, Improvisational Speaking, Informative Speaking, Lincoln Douglas debate, Novice Policy Debate, Original Oratory, Public Forum Debate, and Policy Debate. Students compete in events of their choosing during the competitions, which are held numerous times throughout the year.

The 2021-2022 speech and debate team began competing a few weeks ago and have already seen success. In the recent North Mecklenburg Viking Classic, seniors A.J. Richards and Max Hansbroger saw victory in the Varsity Public Forum debate prelims while Kara Bivens secured another top 10 finish in the Varsity Lincoln-Douglas debate. These feats, while notable, constitute only a part of the team’s impressive performance.

It is a common speaking in front of a few people and engaging in debate is not difficult; however, performing in these events can be intense. Senior Ainsley King described the weekly tournaments as “nerve wracking.” She offered a warning to prospective team members, saying the club is “not as easy as it seems” and that “it is definitely not for the faint of heart.” Members and coaches are equally committed to working hard. Junior Ellen Michaels, a club member, described sponsor, Carmen Kohn, as “dedicated, motivated, and passionate.” Mrs. Kohn is attentive to the questions and concerns of her students and repeatedly warned that “there will be no free days until after the last competition.” She helps all students who have trouble, including those who are not members of the speech and debate team.

Despite the time and effort members put into the club, they insist it is rewarding. Various reports of the club described it as “entertaining,” “engaging,” and “enjoyable.” Ainsley described the club’s team-bonding as “lots of fun” and said that “the speech and debate team as a whole is like its own little group.” Another team member said that “speech and debate is more than a club, it’s a lifestyle.” Students’ attitudes show how speech and debate is more than some chores students must endure: it’s a fun and lively way to become a member of the Charlotte Catholic family.

All in all, this year has been successful for the Charlotte Catholic speech and debate team. As the year continues, remember to check in on the team’s progress either through the Daily Announcements or through Tabroom.com, where the results for each tournament are posted. Best of luck to the team in their future competitions!
Quarter One, And Done

NATALIE DOMINGUEZ  
Staff Reporter

With the return of seven classes per day and extracurricular activities, the first quarter of the 2021 school year brought the first sense of normality to Charlotte Catholic since early 2020. Although the seven-period school day may seem overwhelming, students have adjusted to the workload and gained an idea of what the rest of the school year may look like. Despite the additional work that comes with all seven classes, sophomore Kelly Budzichowski said, “I am enjoying hanging out with my friends and the consistency of the schedule this year.”

A major aspect of the first quarter has been the return of homeroom, where students spend eight minutes socializing before A period. “I like homeroom because I think it’s a good place to go first thing in the morning rather than having to keep track of where you would have to go for your first class,” said Kelly, in contrast to last school year. Sophomore EJ Bowman also enjoys homeroom. EJ said it is “nice to talk with friends and study.”

In addition to the return of the regular schedule, freshmen and sophomores had their first retreat of the school year. Sophomores discussed the virtue of friendship, played dodgeball and attended mass and confession. “I liked the speaker and thought the topic was interesting, and it was nice to see all of the girls in our grade,” said EJ. As in years past, CCHS fall sports are up and running. Students have enjoyed attending games and supporting their classmates. Football remains a popular attraction for students on Friday nights. Themes and new competition fill the student section with excitement. “The football games are significantly more energetic than last year and there are definitely more people too, which makes it even more fun,” said Kelly.

The Cougars have played several home games, but a few games against local high schools have been played at a neutral site, American Legion Memorial Stadium on Central Piedmont’s campus. In a game against Providence High School on September 17th, the Carolina Panthers sponsored a competition between the two student sections, offering $5,000 for the most energetic student section. Unsurprisingly, the Cougars’ student section brought home the prize. The students loved the “Hawaiian Out” theme and brought immense energy to the game. EJ said, “Providence was my favorite game that I’ve attended this season.” Overall, the first quarter has been a success. Kelly said the “biggest highlight of the quarter is everyday at lunch when I get to talk to my friends and enjoy their presence.” Students look forward to more athletic events, dances, and the holiday season.

The Rolling Stones Rock the Queen City

LEONARDO YON  
Staff Reporter

On September 30th, 2021 the legendary rock and roll band “The Rolling Stones” performed at the Bank of America Stadium; their first time playing in the Queen City since 2005. Their first concert in Charlotte was played at the newly opened Spectrum Center.

This concert was a part of their “No Filter” tour, which was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The tour consists of 13 cities across the U.S, starting in St. Louis, Missouri and is scheduled to end in Austin, Texas. Charlotte was the second stop on their tour.

The Rolling Stones’ visit to Charlotte excited not only their fans, but business owners in the area. With fans coming from both Carolinas and other out of state visitors, the concert was a big boost for local businesses, especially those in the Uptown area. The night before the concert, lead singer Mick Jagger was spotted enjoying a beverage at the local bar “The Thirsty Beaver Saloon.”

While the tour brought great excitement to the Charlotte area, it is bittersweet as founding member and drummer Charlie Watts died a few months before the tour started. Originally he was not going to travel with the band on tour because he was recovering from a medical procedure. During the concert, Mick Jagger said, “This is our first show without him in 59 years, so we’d like to dedicate this show to Charlie.” Drummer Steve Jordan, a close collaborator with Watts, was chosen to replace him on the tour.

The concert was a multi-generational gathering of Rolling Stones fans. About 40,000 fans ranging from children to aged fans of the band since their beginning in the 1960’s. The band played a total of 19 songs across their over two hour performance. Rolling Stones hits like “Start Me Up,” “Honky Tonk Woman,” and “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” had fans singing and clapping along as the 78 year old Jagger performed his classic dance moves.

Lead guitarist and founding member Keith Richards also took to the microphone, performing two songs: “Before They Make Me Run” and “Shipping Away.” The band also performed their newly released song “Troubles a’ Coming.” Originally recorded in 1979, it will appear on the 40th anniversary reissue of their album “Tattoo You.”

After the first 17 songs, the band briefly left the stage and returned for an encore performing “ Gimme Shelter” and “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction.” During “Satisfaction” fireworks lit up the sky and ignited the crowd.

After the band left the stage, an image of Watts appeared on the video monitors, leaving fans awestruck. As fans departed the stadium, truly getting their satisfaction.
It’s October, which for all children and candy lovers means Halloween. Throughout the world, people enjoy this holiday by dressing up in costumes and going trick-or-treating. Some dedicated celebrators go all out on costumes, planning months in advance. People don costumes for this holiday for several different reasons. Younger kids get excited about how much candy they get when trick or treating. Teens and adults look forward to costume parties and a fun night out. Lots of people look at Halloween as a once-a-year chance to be someone different.

Psychologists have recently related Halloween costumes to personality traits. For example, those who choose scary costumes are looking to dominate social situations, and those who go as something silly have a great sense of humor. Psychologist Dr. Scott Bea of the Cleveland Clinic said Halloween is a more comfortable way for people to expose more of their personality to others. He also states that “for others, it may reflect their alter ego or who they would really like to be.” Dr. Bea also analyzes the flip side to dressing up. He said, “for others, it may reflect their alter ego or who they would really like to be.” He concluded that dressing up in costume lets people feel anonymous and safe enough to let their guard down.

In addition to the psychology of dressing in costume, dressing up for Halloween has a history. The tradition of dressing up as different characters originated with the ancient Celtic festival, Samhain. Samhain marked the end of harvest and beginning of winter. During this festival people would light bonfires and dress in costumes to keep ghosts away. Halloween eventually evolved into a day of trick-or-treating, costume parties, and carving pumpkins into jack-o-lanterns for front porches.

Choosing the right costume can be stressful. While some plan their costume months in advance, others wait till the last minute. The choices are endless... couple costumes, group costumes, or solo costumes. After interviewing Charlotte Catholic students we found that some students have personal connections to their costumes. When asked about his costume for Halloween, Sophomore Max Tebben said, “I am going to be Maverick from the movie Top Gun because when my dad was in high school, he was nicknamed Maverick since people thought he looked like him. My dad has a costume that he wears to Las Vegas every year with his friends, so I’m going to use the same costume and dress up as Maverick for this year’s Halloween.”

Unlike Max, Sophomore Anna Grace Evans said, “I have no idea what I’m going to be yet.” Like other students, she is leaving the decision for the last minute and planning to choose a costume that’s easy to make or find.

No matter what you’re dressing up as this year, remember to have a spooky Halloween and a BOO-tiful night!

Día de los Muertos: Not A Mexican Halloween

FERNANDA RAMIREZ
Staff Reporter

Coco and The Book of Life are just two movies that portray Día de los Muertos or the “Day of the Dead.” These movies flaunt the traditional sugar skulls and festive colors, but regularly lack the holiday’s origin. Día de los Muertos dates back to the 16th century in Mexico and is celebrated annually from November 1st to November 2nd.

Rooted in Aztec culture, Día de los Muertos began as an Aztec festival before the 16th century in commemoration of the Aztec goddess, Mictecacihuatl. This “tidy of death,” ruled the underworld, and guarded the bones of the non-living. Mictecacihuatl is now often invoked as “La Catrina,” who embodies the modern-day celebration of Día de los Muertos and symbolizes death.

The original version of La Catrina was illustrated by Mexican artist, José Guadalupe Posada in 1910. Posada illustrated La Catrina for his political lithographs but alternatively became known as the “Father of La Catrina.” Posada’s work is now exhibited in the Diego Rivera Mural Museum in Mexico City and the National Museum of Death in Aguascalientes.

In the 16th century, Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés and the Spaniards colonized Mexico and attempted to convert the Aztecs. The Spaniards disapproved of the Aztec’s beliefs and regarded them as savages. In an effort to convert the indigenous people of Mexico, the Spaniards persecuted and massacred them. Consequently, Mictecacihuatl’s celebration was synchronized with the Catholic feast days of All Saints and All Souls.

Día de los Muertos is primarily a Mexican holiday but has gained national recognition over time. The celebration honors the deceased in a joyful rather than a mournful way.

Festivities are organized throughout the country. These festivities include the traditions of las ofrendas (altar offerings), cempasuchil (marigold flowers), calaveras (skulls), and pan de muerto. Each family has its unique take on each delicacy. However, pan de muerto is a holiday staple. The round sweetbread, with a design of crossed blossoms and butter. Altars frequently include the pastry.

For the 17th year, the Latin American Coalition in Charlotte will host a Día de los Muertos celebration from 12PM to 5PM on Sunday, November 7th. The festivity will be held at Camp North End in partnership with the Levine Museum of the New South. Admission is free and attendees can expect live music, dance, community altars, and sugar skull workshops.
Autumn Falls in Charlotte

The Haunting History of Charlotte

MEG FRANTZ  
Staff Reporter

It is only after the fourth chime of the clock in the middle of town that the whistling began, every day without fail. The town likes to believe it’s the wind, or perhaps it’s a crying baby from the house on Cougar Lane, but only the owner of Apartment 222 knows the real reason behind the whistling that turns into screaming. To distract himself from the impending scream, he picks up a newspaper centered on his desk, mindlessly reading the words on the page:

“Students living in Albright Residence Hall on the Queens University side of Charlotte campus have more than their studies and social lives on their minds. Multiple students have reported seeing apparitions in the halls, doors flying open and closed, and hearing strange knocking on the walls. Unexplained occurrences are common at the supernatural, caused by students who walk while on campus. They seem to have unfair advantage on the campus, haunting current students along the way.

Regan O’Hall, class of 2018, knew people who experienced the chilling effects of these ghosts. She said, “A girl who lived in Albright Hall got stuck in her room when she was unable to open her door though it was unlocked. Despite several people attempting to help her, she couldn’t get out for a few hours.” Regan personally doesn’t believe in the phenomenon, but she said the “campus never goes silent. This time it’s right out of her room.”

Deep in the city of Charlotte is an Irish Pub, Rí Rá. This establishment is a comforting, welcoming environment where people can enjoy tap drinks with their friends and family. However, even the most comforting places can have the most chilling secrets. Mysteriously translucent men are rumored to wander around the pub, drinking and drugs, and speak in thick Irish accents to patrons. A young girl haunting the pub practices her A.B.C. ‘s outload and writes her progress on the specials chalkboard. Taps turn on by themselves, and whirring sounds arise from the basement. The pub remains busy, even when the patrons call it a night.

Founders Hall in Charlotte, which is home to the Leonard Bearstein Symphony Orchestra during Christmastime, is a popular venue for other events throughout the year. The most peculiar of these events is the haunting of a young girl named Louise around Halloween.

The hall used to be a medical school in the 17th century. Some students needed a body on which to practice surgical techniques, so they broke into a nearby cemetery and stole a body. The owner of Apartment 222 puts a newborn baby from the house on Cougar Lane, so the owner’s heart pitter-pats in his chest, a cold sweat crawling up his spine. The whistling-that-screams begins almost immediately after the clock ceases. This time it’s right outside of his apartment door.

The farm contains a pumpkin patch, food, places for photo opps, a hay mountain, hay rides, picnic areas, and farm animals. They are open Monday-Sunday from 9am to 6pm until October 31st, with $5 parking Saturday and Sunday.

For all those seeking a good scare this fall, Charlotte has a number of attractions for all ages. Every year Carowinds selects special nights to put on the biggest halloween event of the season. This year, SCarowinds will run from September 17th to October 31st. Inside the grounds, there are thrilling mazes, scare zones, and entertainment. Normally tickets cost around $70 at the gate or $40 online, but for those interested in fast lanes or season passes prices may vary.

Sccarigan Farms also converts their 275 acre farm into an adrenaline pumping haunted trail on select weekends in October. This 125 attraction is sure to leave teens and adults spooked. According to their website, “If someone has not peed their pants by the end of the night we know we haven’t done our job.” Tickets are $35 per person for walkins Thursdays and Sundays and $40 per person on Fridays and Saturdays. Unless you buy your tickets online, make sure to bring cash and check to the farm since they do not take credit or debit cards at the door.

Whether looking for a good scare, or a fun time outdoors enjoying the cool weather, Charlotte has many activities to offer. With one weekend left this October there is no time to waste, so make sure to soak up Fall this year!
Squid Game Gets the Green Light

WILL HICKS
Staff Reporter

In 2016, you would have had a hard time going ten minutes without hearing someone talk about a new show called “Stranger Things.” This Netflix original blew up, bolstering the streaming corporation’s monthly subscribers to an all-time high and breaking several viewership records. Netflix generally does not release viewing records, though it did announce that the Stranger Things Season 3 premiere had garnered an incredible 64 million viewers—the most of any premiere on Netflix. Few media observers expected any show to reach this level of popularity again.

Surprisingly, a few shows have overtaken Stranger Things’ place at the top. Only one, however, has managed to crush it. This show has amassed over 111 million viewers and is currently Netflix’s most watched show ever. It was the top show in the U.S. for an entire month. This is surprising because the show is a Korean production with the odd title of “Squid Game.”

With its Korean origin, dearth of American cultural references, and violent premise, Squid Game is a show few would expect to dominate the ratings charts.

The story follows a Korean man named Gi-hun, who, because of a gambling addiction, is on the brink of economic ruin. Later, he finds himself competing in a deadly game with 455 other people from which only one player can emerge alive but having won a massive sum of money. Some might expect audiences to avoid this show featuring the gorey images of people being shot in the head and mowed down in a hail of gunfire. However, this is clearly not the case.

The opening seconds of the show captures the audience. Immediately, the fantastic camerawork directs the eyes from one brilliantly acted scene to the next. It is hard to overstate how great the acting is throughout the nine episode series.

Combined with exceptional writing and direction, the brilliant performances produce a riveting viewing experience. Though the episode ends in a bloody climax that might have turned viewers away from other shows, the production quality on Squid Game will capture the most hesitant viewers.

Those watching the first episode will be taken on an unforgettable journey of mystery, emotion, and misdirection. Each character’s death makes an impact, and leaves the viewer desperate to find a resolution before time runs out. And time eventually does run out.

Photo Credit: Google Images


TESS MULLIGAN
Staff Reporter

They might not hide under beds, but monsters haunt society in stories, books, and movies. Today, children dress up as different creatures to collect candy. However, at one time, people were terrorized by the undead, werewolves have appeared in our scary stories, but none are more iconic than zombies. Because unlike Dracula, there is no singular prominent mummy. Sorry.

The origins of the monsters that haunt our holidays and tales are full of history and detail that is too deep to wander the plains of the plants forever.

The undead consistently appear in our scary stories, but none are more iconic than zombies. From The Walking Dead to DayZ, zombies have become a staple in modern society’s media. However, it wasn’t until the movie Dawn of the Dead that they received their name. In fact, Night of the Living Dead, the movie that catalyzed zombies into the public eye, referred to them as ghouls. In terms of lore, zombies have been mentioned around the world in several cultures. In Haitian culture, the origin of zombies is tied to the slavery of Africans by the French. Slaves would be forced to work until their death, which would in turn cause more Africans to be imprisoned. While most believed that they would return to lan guue, or Africa, after they died, suicide prevented slaves from entering it. As a consequence, the slaves who ended their life would be cursed to wander the plains of the plantation for eternity.

I have not written about mummies because unlike Dracula, there is no singular prominent mummy. Sorry. The origins of the monsters that haunt our holidays and tales are full of history and detail that is too deep to summarize in one article. However, during this season when children and adults assume their likeness, it is good to remember their origins and understand why, after hundreds of years, we still do not tire of the fright they bring.