Catholic Celebrates Black History Month

FERNANDA RAMIREZ
Staff Reporter

Carter G. Woodson, an African-American author and journalist, wanted to celebrate the heritage of all African-Americans, not just a few well-known individuals. Woodson, with the help of philanthropic foundations, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASNLH) in 1915. This was Woodson's first step in his mission to acknowledge African-American contributions to our current society.

Almost ten years later, Woodson decided to do more with his fraternity, Omega Psi Phi, by establishing Black History and Literature Week. In February 1926, Woodson announced the first Black History Week through the ASNLH. February was selected by Woodson to commemorate the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14), two famous figures who helped to free African-Americans from slavery in the mid 1800’s.

Schools and organizations across the country began incorporating Woodson’s mission into their communities. The initiative grew rapidly and branches of ASNLH were opened across the United States.

A week was not enough though. Around the 1940s, some organizers began to extend Black History Week. The change spread to more branches in 1950, around the same time Woodson passed away.

During the 1960s, younger members of the ASNLH asked that the association change the length of the celebration to a month. The 50th anniversary of Black History Week, the association announced the beginning of Black History Month.

Since then, February has been reserved to spotlight the black community. Every year, the ASNLH picks a theme to center the celebration on. This year’s theme is “Black Health and Wellness.” Junior Rian Mofa explains that “researching about health in the black community over history helps [us] understand some differences in healthcare, treatments, and vaccines choices.”

Charlotte Catholic will celebrate Black History Month with several activities. Rian said that it is important for Charlotte Catholic to join in the celebration of Black History Month because “black people have a history of being suppressed in society, especially in their works.” Rian also said, “especially as Catholics, we should cherish equality in a nation built for equality.”

Around campus, classroom doors are decorated by the CCHS Student Council with significant figures that will be highlighted on the announce-ments throughout the month. Student Council and Phi Beta Sigma, a service-led organization, will sponsor bake sales every Friday in February, with proceeds going to the education needs of students. Students and faculty will also learn more about Black History Month in an assembly.

Outside of campus, events around Charlotte have been scheduled. The 2022 North Carolina Black Heritage Festival in Concord is set to take place on Saturday, February 19th. Attendees should expect performances with food and crafts from more than 40 local black-owned businesses.

One of Carter G. Woodson’s most famous quotes is “If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated.”

Catholic Bubbles in New Rules

ANDREW O’BRIEN
Staff Reporter

In recent years we have seen the digitization of society reach new heights. Everything from communicating with others to spectating sports games has become easier as technology has advanced. Even the infamous SAT, the grueling test meant to “measure a high school student’s readiness for college,” is going digital in 2024.

According to a statement released by College Board on Tuesday, January 25, the SAT will be subject to a variety of changes. The biggest of these changes is the digitization of the test, but other changes are equally noteworthy. For instance, the SAT will be shortened from three hours to two hours. Students taking the SAT will be “less wordy,” and students will have access to a built-in graphing and four-function calculator during all math sections.

While the SAT has undergone 16 major revisions since 1926, these upcoming changes mark a completely new era for students. Students from previous decades can no doubt painfully recall the stress of having their No. 2 Pencils sharpened and their answer bubbles completely shaded, but it seems students of the future will no longer be preoccupied with such mundane measures. And what’s more, this transition will happen much quicker than in the past. With the 2005 and 2016 revisions, test takers were given 33 and 29 months’ notice, respectively. The newest revision gives students only 14 months’ notice.

All these changes to the SAT come at a very interesting time because Covid-19 has interfered with the test taking process, nearly 80% of U.S. institutions have suspended score requirements in recent years. Harvard, a top five school in the nation, announced in late 2021 they would remain test-optional until 2026. College Board announced plans in early 2021 to discontinue the optional essay portion of the SAT because of complications with Covid-19.

While some disagree with the changes implemented by College Board, citing the changes as radical, others are on board with the Board. Some, like Junior Katie Redican, are annoyed because they feel the changes to the Math and English portions will make the SAT easier and less stressful for future generations. Others, like Junior Caroline Duffy, argue that the changes are long overdue and that the SAT is an unfair way of measuring college readiness.

Whatever your stance on the issue, one thing is consistent among current upperclassmen: resentment. Students of Charlotte Catholic bemoan the transition from paper tests to digital tests just after they will graduate. Senior Carissa Kropac said she was “jealous that College Board will change these things long after I’ve started college,” while Junior Freddie Fisher simply asked “Why now? Why not a few years ago?”

At the end of the day, the SAT is here to stay, even if it is in digital form. Regardless of the format, all students taking the SAT need good luck. No more No. 2 Pencils doesn’t mean the test is going to be less challenging.

Carter G. Woodson, Photo Credit: Google Images
**CYO Teams Get All Crossed Up**

**MADELYN BRONSON**  
*Staff Reporter*

Charlotte Catholic students participate in basketball leagues such as CYO, or Catholic Youth Organization, which collaborates with churches and rec centers to sponsor its teams. These teams are sponsored by Catholic parishes and by Jewish and Greek centers as well. The most popular CYO teams among Charlotte Catholic students are the St. Gabriel’s and St. Matthew’s teams. The player even has fan bases that dress up according to different themes for each game. As CYO competition has grown, the league has become a central focus for students throughout Charlotte.

The St. Matthew’s teams have drawn the most Charlotte Catholic students. Sophomore Brody Roderick said, “This year our St. Matthew’s team seems to be the tallest in the league and we are dominating.” They have only lost once in this year’s season. Brody stated that the most challenging team they have gone up against is the JCC (Jewish Community Center) mens’ sophomore team. He expressed confidence in his team’s chances. “Even though we can’t bench 225, nobody can beat us because we are all above 6’5,” he said.

However, their biggest rival is the Holy Trinity Greek Church sophomore team. The rivalry is evident on social media and in school as these two teams want to outperform the other week in and week out. Obviously, with fierce competition can come aggressive chatter, and this is where the rivalry has begun. Stemming from on-court arguments, the disputes have escalated to controversial social media pages between St. Matthew’s and the Greeks.

The biggest event in the rivalry so far involves players on the Greek team who snuck into St. Patrick’s and unplugged their ice cream machine. The player on the Greek team has admitted that he was involved in the ice cream machine scandal, but has yet to receive any punishment. After this incident, the heat between the teams rose higher. Players from both teams began to call the opposing teams out on social media.

On the girls side of CYO it is more about having fun and meeting new people. As of right now the girls teams do not have any known rivals. St. Gabriel’s is the most popular team amongst the girls at Charlotte Catholic. Sophomore Emily Burnett said, “I may not be the best player but everyone on the team motivates me and makes it a fun experience.”

The St. Gabriel’s sophomore girls team has not had the best record this season. They have only one win, but they have not let this dampen their spirits. Sophomore Summer Basrawala said, “this season has been a 10 out of 10 experience.” Both of these sophomores mentioned that even though they only practice once a week from 9 to 10 pm, they always end up learning something new and having fun. Summer also said, “CYO is a great league to get connected with new friends that go to your school and to be a part of a positive team.”

There is also a boy’s sophomore St. Gabriel’s league. It may not be as popular, but still has multiple Charlotte Catholic students on its roster for this season. Sophomore Bradley Deblitz has this experience as part of the CYO league has been great.

“We work hard and it’s all around a great team environment,” he added. All CYO teams’ last regular season games took place Sunday February 13. Charlotte Catholic students are excited to show their support at the championship tournament!

**Photo Credit: Google Images**

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**More Cougars Continue Their Sports in College**

**TESS VALKOVSKI**  
*Staff Reporter*

In the fall of 2021, six Charlotte Catholic seniors signed their NCAA National Letter of Intent to continue their sports in college during the NCAA’s initial signing period. On February 2, 2022 the NCAA held their winter signing day where six more seniors signed, making their commitments official: Marisa Montione, Nina Casingal, Robert McKerman, Tyler Mills, Jack Glassner, and Nick Smith. Marisa Montione and Nina Casingal, women’s field hockey players, signed to play at the collegiate level. Marisa Montione signed to play DIII at Washington & Lee University. Nina is looking forward to experiencing new things in college and studying something within pre-law. Robert McKerman and Tyler Mills both signed to play football at the collegiate level. Tight End Robert McKerman signed to play DII Football at Washington and Lee University. Robert is a three-time state champion and has been playing football since fifth grade because his brother played and he was inspired.

Robert believes that Washington and Lee will not only satisfy his football needs but will challenge him on the academic level. Additionally, Robert loves Virginia, because he is very outdoorsy and there is much to do. Something that Robert is particularly looking forward to is “introducing my father’s non-profit organization, Stew of Sustainability, to help feed those in need in the Lexington area,” he said. Robert plans to study business and finance in college.

Tyler Mills signed to play D2 football at Shaw University as a defensive end. Tyler started playing football in seventh grade and quickly realized that he had a natural talent for the sport and found it fun. In his senior season for the Charlotte Catholic team, Tyler got 14.5 sacks, 34 tackles, and 3 forced fumbles. When Tyler went to check out Shaw University he said “it felt like home” and he really liked the area which is what prompted him to commit there. Tyler’s goals in college next year are to start on the football team, make new friends, and study either sports management, finance, or real estate. Jack Glassner signed to play DIII men’s tennis at Hampden-Sydney College. Jack has been playing tennis since the age of five. Jack cracks the courts on the school team, making 2021 first all-conference team. For his senior season, Jack hopes to win the conference as a team. Aside from the school team, Jack also plays at Charlotte Tennis Academy.

Jack is very excited about attending Hampden-Sydney, feeling that he will fit in very well because he meshed well with his future teammates when he visited, saying “it just all felt right.” Jack wants to study economics in college.

Nick Smith signed to Tallahassee Community College as a first baseman for baseball. Following after his dad, Nick started playing baseball at the age of five, quickly falling in love with the sport and becoming extremely invested. He not only plays for the school team but travels with Team Carolina. One of Nick’s biggest accomplishments within his baseball career was leading the conference last year with five home runs, more than any team in the conference.

Nick chose to play baseball at Tallahassee Community College because “the coaches have gotten other players to the next level” and he looks forward to playing against some of the best competition in Florida while studying business.

Family, friends, coaches, teammates, and the entire Charlotte Catholic community congrats these seniors on their signing and wishes them well in college!

**Photo Credit: @chcscougarnews**
Leonardo Yon
Staff Reporter

With the end of the 2021-2022 NFL season comes the Super Bowl. This year’s Super Bowl LV1 was held in Los Angeles at the SoFi Stadium on Sunday, February 13, 2022. The championship game was between the NFC champions The Los Angeles Rams, who fought some of the top teams in the NFL for their spot, and the surprising underdogs and AFC champions, the Cincinnati Bengals, who have not gone to the Super Bowl since 1989. In the end, the Los Angeles Rams beat the Cincinnati Bengals 23-20.

While people like to focus on the latest news in the NFL, some enjoy reminiscing on past NFL experiences. Charlotte Catholic students recalled their favorite memories of past Super Bowls, from the games themselves, to the commercials, to the iconic halftime performances. The biggest part of any Super Bowl is the game itself. Sophomore Drew Warren’s favorite Super Bowl memory is the New England Patriots’ historic comeback against the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI. He said, “I really thought the Patriots were going to lose, but somehow they pulled through and it was an exciting game.”

Sophomore Caroline Powell shared her experience at a friend’s Super Bowl party for Super Bowl LII, in which the New England Patriots played the Philadelphia Eagles. Her friend’s father turned out to be the Eagles punter at the time, Donnie Jones. It was an exciting day at Carolina’s family party, considering the Eagles won by a score of 41-33. Some students said the Carolina Panthers making it to Super Bowl L was their favorite memory, though opinions about the game were mixed. Sophomore Caroline Quirk said she was “very excited about the Panthers making it to Super Bowl L,” while sophomore Max Norton said he gets “flashbacks from seeing Cam Newton throwing the game [away].”

Another special aspect of the Super Bowl is its famous halftime show. In previous years, musical stars like Paul McCartney, Coldplay, Shakira, Maroon 5, Bruno Mars, and The Weeknd have performed. This year’s performance was headlined by artists such as Snoop Dogg, Eminem, Dr. Dre, Mary J. Blige and Kendrick Lamar.

Sophomore Molly Canon said her favorite halftime performance was Katy Perry’s Super Bowl XLIX show because she “loved the spectacle of it as well as the choreography.” Sophomore Max Miller enjoyed Travis Scott’s performance with Maroon 5 during Super Bowl LII because, “he is hands down my favorite rapper.” Sophomore Giovanni Gyorylo loved Shakira and Jennifer Lopez’s performance during Super Bowl LIV, saying it was “simply amazing” and “my entire family loved seeing Shakira and JLo perform during the halftime show [since] we’re all Hispanic.”

Others remember the Super Bowl for its memorable commercials. Companies must capitalize on this opportunity to reach a massive number of viewers across the country. This year, NBC charged $6 million for a 30-second commercial. After asking several students, we learned the most popular commercial from previous years was Mountain Dew’s “Puppy Monkey Baby,” Sophomore Richard Latorre had this to say: “I really enjoyed the Puppy Monkey Baby commercial by Mountain Dew.

Alex Newell
Staff Reporter

The Olympics are by far the most prominent series of sporting competitions on Earth. Viewed internationally, the games are celebrated every two years, alternating between the summer games and the winter games, with each country attempting to win the most gold medals. While the Olympic Games have been around since ancient times, primarily a part of a religious festival in honor of Zeus in Greece, the modern Olympics began in 1896. The first Winter Olympics followed shortly after, beginning in 1924.

This year, the Winter Olympics are being held in Beijing, China, making it the first city to host both the Summer and Winter Olympics. Controversy accompanied the athletes in China with multiple countries declaring a diplomatic boycott of this year’s Olympics.

All countries sent their participants, but no political officials attended. The event is also strictly regulated regarding the COVID-19 virus. While fully vaccinated competitors will not be forced to quarantine, athletes, officials and journalists are being restricted in a bubble-like environment, similar to that of the NBA playoffs in 2020. As the 2022 Winter Olympics reach their ending, the games are shaping out to be a close finish. According to the medal count, Norway leads the race with the most total medals and gold medals accrued. Following Norway is a tight race for second between the United States and Germany.

Participants compete in exciting winter sports including alpine skiing, bobsleigh, luge, and snowboarding. American Olympic stars have made headlines, with Chloe Kim repeating gold in halfpipe and becoming the first repeat gold winner, and decorated veteran Shaun White officially hanging up his snowboard for good.

As these athletes compete on a global scale, some students at Catholic love their winter sports as much as the Olympians. Senior Michael McNulty expressed his fondness for snowboarding. He stated that “there is nothing like shredding the slopes early in the morning with the boys on a pow day.” A pow day is when the snow is powdery and lightweight, making it an easier snowboarding experience. He added that starting a day with snowboarding “just gets the blood flowing and [makes] you at peace.”

One of the most appealing aspects of the most popular winter sports, skiing and snowboarding, is the freedom of it. Connor Florianii, a senior and avid skier, stated that “the best part about skiing is that you are in control of your pace. Some days you can speed down the slopes and others it can be a mellow experience. That choice you have is really freeing and therapeutic.”

Nathan Pience, another senior, agreed, saying that “even though when you first start you get bruised a lot and the learning experience is difficult, once you get used to the control of it, skiing can be one of the most addictive sports out there.”

With the Olympic Games coming to a close, we hope to see some of our winter sport loving Cougars in the Games someday.

Photo Credit: Google Images

Photo Credit: Google Images

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GRACE GILRANE
Staff Reporter

For the average high school student, the college search and application process begins in the spring semester of junior year or the summer before senior year. Marisa Montione, a second semester senior, has been actively engaged in the college search process since her freshman year. She recently closed this chapter of her life by signing to play field hockey for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

While Marisa has been recruited throughout high school, her love for field hockey began in middle school. Her older brother’s friend played on Ardrey Kell’s field hockey team and when she was considering trying out for Holy Trinity’s team, Marisa went to watch a game. One of the girls on the field was injured so seriously she had to be wheeled off mid game. Despite this first impression, Marisa was still keen on playing, but her mom wasn’t so sure. “She got really nervous,” Marisa said. “She asked ‘are you sure you want to play this sport?’”

Marisa was sure. This is her 7th year playing field hockey. She played throughout her time at Holy Trinity and her past four years at Charlotte Catholic. Marisa also plays for Charlotte Ambush, one of two field hockey clubs in North Carolina. “I play year round,” Marisa explained. “During the winter it’s indoor field hockey, a regular season in the spring, and playing in small groups over the summer.”

According to Marisa, a player can not converse with DI schools regarding field hockey until their junior year. Anyone can get in touch with DIII schools starting their freshman year by simply emailing coaches. Marisa took her first phone call with a school back in 2019 and has been in the recruitment process ever since. “It gets serious in junior year. From there you can either commit to a DI school, or keep pursuing DIII schools,” she said.

MIT, a DIII school, came into the picture in March 2021. Marisa was playing an exhibition tournament in the Boston area affiliated with a different school. She said her “ACT scores had just come back and they aligned with what MIT usually requires,” so Marisa’s mom told her to reach out to MIT via email. “Who knows what could happen?” she asked. From there, Marisa attended virtual information sessions and conversed with the university and coaches for several months. While her athletic ability caught the eye of MIT scouts, her academic talent secured her a spot in their 2022-23 freshman class.

MIT has a “preread” process that comes prior to a student athlete’s acceptance at the university. Marisa explained it, saying “you send in all of your academic information, and from there the admissions office will tell you what your chances of getting into the school are.” This usually occurs some time during the fall, and Marisa was accepted in mid-December.

Marisa signed to play for MIT on February 2nd and is excited to spend her next four years in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She intends to study brain and cognitive sciences, hopes to get to know the Boston area better, and of course will continue to play field hockey, which she “can’t imagine life without.”

ELLEN MICHAELS
Staff Reporter

Ending January on a high note, Charlotte Catholic recently participated in Catholic Schools Week from January 31st to February 4th. Each day of the week focused on different aspects of our community to celebrate.

Monday was focused on celebrating our diocese and it’s 50th anniversary, and the school celebrated with a Catholic Schools Week virtual mass by Bishop Jugis, spiritual bouquets, and service projects.

There is no doubt that the enthusiasm level at Charlotte Catholic increased throughout the week as students and faculty looked forward to the festivities. When asked if he noticed a change in atmosphere during Catholic Schools Week, Father Reid said, “What I find when I go to all of the different schools, not just Charlotte Catholic, is that people get excited. We know that this is a special week to celebrate this gift that we have.”

On Tuesday, the school continued celebrating our community and nation with a red, white, and blue dress down day for all students. In addition, each theology class wrote letters to military, seminarians, or people in nursing homes.

Come Wednesday, CCHS celebrated faculty with various goodies, such as a take home dinner, dress down day, and a luncheon. Additionally, nominations for the Sister Paulette Awards kicked off.

On Thursday the school celebrated vocations, with an in-person mass followed by vocational visitors. Although a majority of students may find the faculty vs. students basketball game most exciting, “the masses are important as well,” said Father Reid. “It’s an important thing to come together and worship that way, because going to mass is the most important thing we do as Catholics,” he continued.

In celebration of the Feast of St. Blaise Day, all were welcome to attend the Blessing of Throats. Junior MK Burke attended and remarked, “It was a refreshing and amazing experience, and I hope I don’t get sick anymore this year.” She added, “I love Father Becker and he is an amazing priest. I’ve known him since eighth grade and he’s great at connecting with young people.”

Catholic Schools Week coordinator Mrs. Carano said. Last year only 25 seniors went into the gym for the basketball game while the rest of the school watched in classrooms, but this year both junior and senior classes got to go to the gym and watch the game. The game was a nailbiter, and tensions were high in the school gym, especially as a potential dress-down day was put on the line. The students beat the faculty by seven points, 49-42. When asked during warmups, faculty basketball team closing out the week with a slam dunk, on Friday CCHS celebrated our students. The day began with a dress down day for all, cougar and student section greeters in the morning, and ended with the much anticipated faculty v. student basketball game. “This year is very similar to last year, a little looser with Covid-19 rules,” Catholic Schools Week coordinator Mrs. Carano said. Last year only 25 seniors went into the gym for the basketball game while the rest of the school watched in classrooms, but this year both junior and senior classes got to go to the gym and watch the game. The game was a nailbiter, and tensions were high in the school gym, especially as a potential dress-down day was put on the line. The students beat the faculty by seven points, 49-42. When asked during warmups, faculty basketball team
To Trope or Not to Trope

People watch romance movies, read romance novels, and incorporate romance into their daily lives often, but particularly during the month of February. However, the tropes that fill these stories can have unexpected effects. So, what is a “trope” exactly? In simplest terms, a trope is a theme in a book or a movie that is so common that they are the center storyline. One of the most common tropes among romance stories is “forced proximity;” for example, when characters get stuck in an elevator or get snowed in at a remote cabin. Only when they are alone do they realize more about themselves and each other.

Mr. Galarde, a math teacher, placed “friends to lovers” as his favorite trope because “throughout the book or the movie, you’re rooting for them, and then when they end up together... it’s really exciting.” She continued, “If you’re really good friends before you go into a relationship it works out so much better.” She hopes that her future relationships start off on the right foot, just like the relationships in the “friends to lovers” category do.

Mr. Galarde, a math teacher, placed “friends to lovers,” “second chance,” and “belated love epiphany” as his favorite tropes. He felt that these relationships should be more of a model for young people than “enemies to lovers” or “forced proximity.” He said, “I’m a hopeless romantic, but [are] “enemies to lovers” and “forced proximity” actually allowing someone to build a true relationship with someone? Most of these tropes are based on a false pretense rather than a true understanding of each other.”

When Mr. Galarde watches young people surround themselves with unrealistic relationships, he gets worried that the people in the relationship will expect a perfect ending, which not everyone gets. He focused specifically on “second chance,” saying “this one scares me more than the false pretenses in the other tropes. I’m afraid that, while it can work, it should be founded by honesty from both parties to address why there was a split to start with.” As Mr. Galarde has pointed out, romance tropes can be detrimental to relationships outside of the pages or the screen. Surrounding oneself with these tropes can cause one to approach their own relationships with high expectations, setting up for disaster after those expectations are not reached.

Freshman Kate Powis said “enemies to lovers” is one of the tropes she finds to be the most “toxic.” She said, “If someone truly hurts you, you shouldn’t go right back to them.”

Enjoying a movie on a Friday night with popcorn on the table is harmless. It’s hard to find fault in relaxing after a hard day. However, it is important to remember that these relationship tropes are in fiction for a reason: because they are fictional. It’s fun to imagine being a character in a book or movie and getting caught up in the accompanying antics—but being able to close the story and go out to find your own is much more exciting.

Photo Credit: Google Images