

# The Colonial

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## *A Letter of Address From Your New Principal, Mr. Tim Pletcher*

INTERVIEWED BY SION SHEPLEY '19,  
WRITTEN BY MR. TIM PLETCHER

“I am extremely happy to return to the South Bend Community School Corporation, where I spent 14.5 years teaching English at Washington and Adams High Schools. I also served as the English Department Chair while at WHS. For just over the last five years I have served as principal at Oregon-Davis Jr/Sr High School, in Hamlet, Indiana. I had a wonderful experience there that helped shape my educational leadership philosophies and ideals. During my tenure, I was able to forge many great relationships and

gain expertise that has prepared me for this next chapter in my professional career.

And now, I am excited to begin my stint as principal at Clay High School because it is a real homecoming for me. As a 1990 graduate, I cherish the opportunity to walk the halls of the school again. I would also like to mention that my dad was a 1964 graduate, and my wife is a 1990 graduate as well. As a result, my Colonial Pride runs deep. I am ready to be part of the traditions at CHS again--yes, I have many fond memories, one in

particular of collecting canned food in an early season snow storm. It is thrilling to take the helm of my alma mater, returning to the school that helped shape me into the person I am today. I am eager to wear the purple and gold again, just as I did so many years ago. I look forward to developing strong working relationships with students, staff, parents, and the community as we collectively strive to make CHS the best school it can be.”

Mr. Pletcher



*Pictured above is Mr. Pletcher with the school social worker, Mrs. Jennings.*



*Photos by Susan Groves*

*Pictured above is Mr. Pletcher with Social Studies and Peer Mentoring teacher Mrs. King-O'Blenis.*

## Editor's Note



Photo by Sophie Ridenour

Didn't expect to see us back so soon, did you? Well, we will be releasing issues twice a month, so you can get more news and get more news quickly. Be sure to give us lots of feedback, and let us know what we can improve over the course of the school year. What articles would you like to read and what do you want to know? The most important people in this process are you, the readers, so spread the paper around as well! With that said, we would like to thank you on behalf of the entire staff and we hope you enjoy this issue!

Sion Shepley '19  
Editor-In Chief of The Colonial

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# Counseling Corner:

## STANDARDIZED TESTING: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

BY MRS. CATHERINE HENDERSON CLAY HIGH SCHOOL HEAD COUNSELOR



Photo by Jessica Aldridge

**I**-READ, NWEA, ISTEP, PSAT, ASVAB, SAT, ACT, and more. The average US student takes more than 113 standardized tests before graduation. Odds are that you'll spend at least fifteen to twenty hours this school year on these tests. How can you make them worth the effort and not a waste of time?

Don't study for standardized tests. -- I'm not suggesting that you should blow them off. They're just not things you sit down and study for. Instead, you should prepare for them all the time. Do the assigned work for your classes all the time. Complete one sample English and math question every day. Read the directions, every time. Carefully complete any forms and paperwork you come across in life. You'll be more comfortable with the next standardized test you have to take.

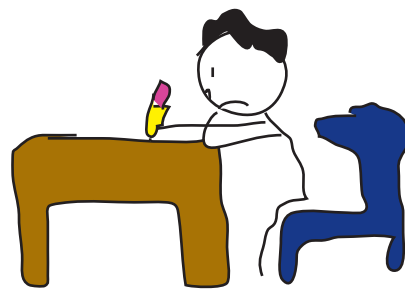
Listen to your parents. -- and grandparents, and teachers, and counselors, and all of the adults who share their sage advice. Get a good night's sleep. Eat a healthy breakfast with plenty of protein. Organize what you need ahead of time. [Got your #2 pencils? Calculator? Test ticket? Photo

ID?] Make a habit of doing these things. They are important all the time, not just the night before a test.

Give the test your best effort -- no more, no less. -- It may seem like some of the tests will make or break your future. That's not true. These tests can play an important role in getting into a career program or college but they are just one factor out of many that help determine your direction. These tests deserve care and attention but not anxiety, stress, and worry. Remember that they are only part of the picture

It's not over once you turn your test in. -- The point isn't just to see how well you can fill in bubbles. A test is only useful if you do something with the results. Learn from the experience. Take the time to read through your results and find out what your scores mean. Get help interpreting them if you need it.

The results might show your academic strengths and weaknesses, whether you've improved or mastered a specific skill, or how well you are likely to do in a particular class, career, or field of study. Use your test results to prioritize your studies, explore areas where you excelled, and to beef up your weak spots. See which colleges and careers could be a good fit for you.



"Artwork" by Sion Shepley



# Welcome New Staff

By JWEETU PANGANI '19

## Kathryn Buda



"I was raised in Mishawaka, graduated from Mishawaka High School in 2006, played basketball there and at my college, Earlham College, in Richmond, IN where I majored in psychology and graduated in 2010.

I earned my Master's Degree in school counseling from IUSB in 2014, worked at Mishawaka High School for four years, and started at Clay in September. I stay busy with my family, fiancé Sarah, two-year-old son Tuvia, and two rescue dogs Blue and Bella. In my spare time I love to read, nap, watch too much Netflix, exercise, and frequently visit all of the downtown South Bend restaurants and art exhibits."

## Dakota Foster



"This is my first full year teaching; although I did my student teaching at Clay last Spring and then left to teach at Washington for the rest of the year! However, when Mr. Eid called me to tell me there was an English

position open at Clay, it was hard to refuse coming back to the best school in the corporation.

I absolutely love teaching-- the longer I do it, the more I seem to enjoy it and Clay is undoubtedly the best school to begin my career in. Clay High School is home to some of the most beautiful, creative and life-giving people I have ever met. My hope is to reflect as much of that back to them as I can in the way that I teach them and love them in my classroom. My goal as a teacher is to provide a cozy space for my students to get to know themselves in and to be a safe person for them to talk to about anything. I'm so blessed to be teaching here this year!"

## Terrence Moore



"I'm a 1975 graduate of John Adams HS where I wrestled and played football. I am a 1981 graduate of Notre Dame where I was a member of the Army ROTC program. I retired from the military after 20 years where I was a helicopter pilot. I've been in education since 2001 having been a principal for over 10 years. I've been married for 43 years, have 2 daughters and 7 grandchildren. I love working with students, especially those who have obstacles to overcome and need support to be successful."

## Steffani Rondefelt



"I am from Grove City, Ohio. I went to Ohio State University and was a 4 year member of TBD-BITL. I have played violin and trombone for 12 years. I am the new orchestra director at Clay High School. Last year, I was the head band director at Adams High School. I enjoy running and biking, I have ran a few marathons and would love to start doing triathlons."

## Sharon Holston



"I have lived in the South Bend area my entire life and I am a graduate of South Bend Schools; I went to Navarre and Washington. My degree is from Indiana University South Bend. I was a Special Education teacher at Warren Primary for the past three years. Before that I worked at Coquillard Primary doing Title 1 instruction. So this is my first year doing Life Skills classes AND my first year teaching high school. So far, I really enjoy it though it is definitely different. My husband is a teacher as well; he teaches math at Washington High School. I have four children - two are adults and two are in high school."

## Carol Smoker



I have been a teacher with the SBCSC for 19 years. I started out at the JJC/Approve program, then was an Autism Specialist at Adams HS, and is now the Transition Facilitator for Clay HS. My main task is helping Special Ed students

with resources and support to reach future goals such as college, employment, or specific training. Before teaching I was a DJ at a radio station, worked for Child Protective services, sang in a band, and worked for a chair manufacturer that made chairs for all the air traffic control towers across the US. I got my Master's and teaching degrees at Indiana University and my admin license at Bethel College. I love to read, play the piano, sing, and hang out with my shelter dogs, Harley and Delilah.

I may be recognized as the lady on the walker. I broke my femur about two years ago and couldn't walk for a year. I'm having to retrain my leg to walk as well as work on balance. Even with a bad leg, I feel I'm a blessed person. I've been married to my husband for 33 years; he graduated from Notre Dame, works for the State of Indiana, and is an accomplished powerlifter. My daughter graduated from Ball State and she and her husband live in Indianapolis. My son attends IUPUI and is working on his Bachelor's in Social Work. I have seven brothers and sisters living all over the United States and I consider my parents the smartest most patient people I know.

So far, I think that people here have been very welcoming and I like CHS very much. I feel like there's a personality to every school building you work in. At Clay I feel a sense of spirit and a creative vibrancy that makes me look forward to coming back each day. Go Colonials!!"

Photos by Jweetu Pangani

# 10-Love



BY KYLA ANDREWS '20

Clay's boys tennis team finished this season with a 2-12 record. Despite the record, the team and coach are upbeat for the next season.

"They made improvements each and every match of the season," according to Emily Zablocki, head coach. "We will continue to improve our shot placement and hitting form."

Johnny Anderson, senior, believes that his fourth year was his best. "My favorite match was Bethany Christian. Jarod's mom made cookies and the hour-long bus ride was so much fun." Anderson hopes to continue playing in college. "I am pretty sure I am going to a school with a Division 3 team so hopefully I will make it on."

Junior Braydon Dukes started his first year of tennis this season. Dukes hopes to improve for next season. "I want to work on

communication skills with my teammates." Braydon feels "our team did an exceptional job motivating each other to play well in every match, regardless of who we faced." According to Braydon, "I am most definitely going to play next year. Once you first start playing tennis, you will certainly enjoy playing it."

Jarod VandeZande, also a junior, was starting his first year as well. "It was my first year playing so I was not very good at the beginning of the season but now I can hit the ball." Jarod says that their best match was the match against Riley high school. One thing Jarod learned how to do this season is to "not suck at tennis."

To tie up this season, Anderson says "I like tennis because it's so personal. It's all on you. That pressure always inspires me to do my best."



Photos by Beverly Haramia



# The Chromebooks Are Here, But Do Students and Staff Like Them?

BY OWEN CONYERS '20

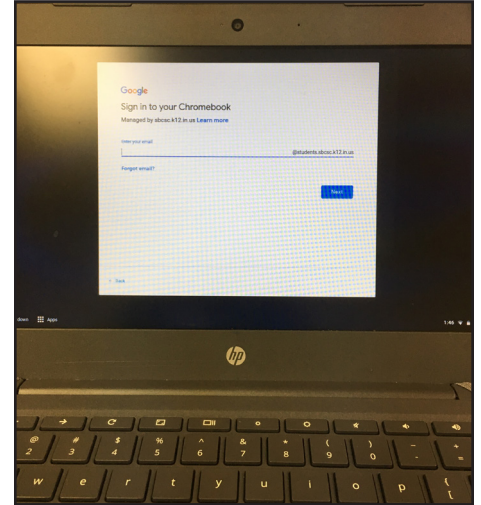
Now that it's been more than a month into the school year with our Chromebooks, every student in Clay has likely become accustomed to using the new technology. However, whether or not everybody actually likes these computers is still up for debate. Even though students have only had these computers for a few weeks, some students and even teachers dislike Chrome's operating system due to its restrictions and many more students are upset with the strict regulations. While its unlikely these restrictions will be changed anytime soon, they will likely become a common complaint from students (i.e. similar to the lunch menu and bathroom stall doors).

Currently, one of the most frequent annoyances students have to deal with is Lightspeed Systems. Lightspeed is a content filtering program installed on most if not all computers in the school system. And while it was rarely a nuisance on the computers in the computer labs, Lightspeed seems to be much more strict on the Chromebooks with a large portion of the images in any Google images search result

being blocked. While this does prevent students from looking for inappropriate images, it also filters many perfectly normal images and websites, which could make finding specific images and information for projects more difficult than it needs to be. Junior Elijah Downs, a Clay student, commented, "Some good information on Youtube gets blocked even though it's educational." Another junior, Austin Blevins agreed and said, "Yes, some of the images that are blocked are actually good." And even though the filter is extremely strict, it's not perfect; in some circumstances, students can still find explicit images that aren't blocked by Lightspeed.

Lightspeed aside, one of the other problems that Clay students have with the Chromebooks is Chrome OS' lack of versatility. Chrome OS is widely disliked by PC users due to it being made for web browsing and not much else. As a result, very few programs are supported by Chrome OS, making it nearly impossible to use non-Google programs without replacing the operating system entirely. This is rarely a problem for teachers and staff, math teacher Allen Westendorp comment-

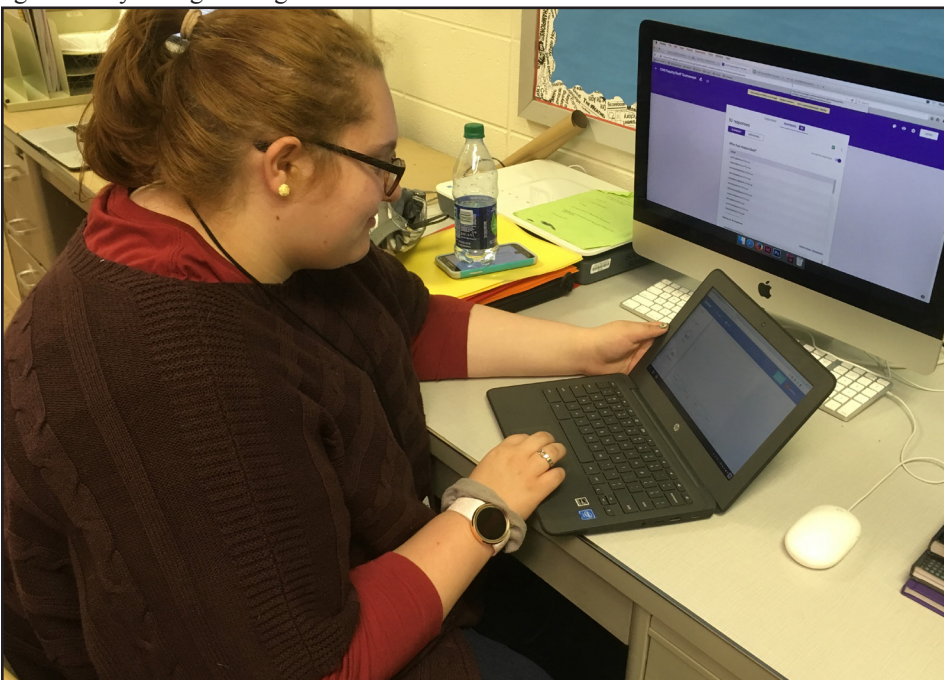
ed. "The Chromebook implementation has gone smoothly and as the teachers and students learn what blended learning is, the process will improve the utilization of Chromebooks."



*Above is a picture of one of the Chromebooks that was issued to all Clay High School Students.*

However, the lack of versatility may seem minor to most students, since they rarely need anything for a school computer beyond Google, but students in graphic design, newspaper, and other electives need third-party programs like Photoshop and InDesign to complete their assignments.

Because of the varying opinions of staff and students, only time will tell whether or not Chromebooks will be more utilized and preferred than pencil and paper. But disadvantages aside, Clay staff members prefer the new Chromebooks for a few reasons. Despite the strict censorship and lack of versatility, some staff members prefer the Chromebooks because they are cheap and currently one of the best options for using computers in classes. And as many students have likely noticed, many teachers enjoy being able to see what their students are doing on their chromebooks. So for these reasons, Chromebooks are here to stay for the time being.



*5 Pictured above is Kyla Andrews busy on her Chromebook.*

Photos by Jweetu Pangani



# ONE ACTS

BY SOPHIE RIDENOUR '20

The Festival of One Acts was on September 23rd and 24th. There were four one acts that had two seniors as directors of each. Mrs. Meghan Beard who does most of the directing at Clay High School said, "I was incredibly proud of the students and their commitment to directing these casts."

"Reality Stars: Greek Gods Edition" was written by Jonathan Yukich and directed by Lydia Potter and Cristian Marquez. "My one act was basically like Greek Gods Big Brother. All the Greek Gods of Olympus have been living on earth blending in with the mortals for years, until they are all invited back to Mount Olympus to compete in a competitive reality T.V. game show. They all go head to head and the last God standing will be King/Queen of Olympus. They all have very unique, quirky, and fun personas. It makes this hilarious show a

wild ride," said senior Cristian Marquez. In the end, someone stays and lives happily at Mount Olympus.

"A Cold Day In Hell" was written by Keith J. Powell and directed by Andrew Lester and Sion Shepley. "My one act was about a group of the worst people in hell working for the devil, but when a telemarketer named Steve shows up, he questions the devil which leads to him betting with the devil. Steve uses the devil's tools against her and wins," said Andrew Lester.

"The Losers' Club" was written Jonathan Turner Smith and directed by Carly Colvin and Shyanne Mitchell. "My one act was called, 'The Loser's Club'. It was about a group of high school students that were being bullied in school. On the night of homecoming, they kidnap their bullies, a cheerleader that was a queen nominee and the star quarterback. They then put the bullies on trial," said Carly Colvin. The show

tells the story of what high school can seem like. But in the end of the show the star quarterback has a change in heart but the queen nominee keeps to her ways. The losers realize that the most important thing is their friendship with each other and change their club name to the Winner's Club.

"Check, Please" was written by Jonathan Rand and directed by Mamie Hodges and Jackie Watterson. "Check, Please!" is an amazing comedy about a man who can't get a good date. He keeps meeting girl after girl for dates, but they always seem to fail in the end. He goes out with 13 girls in all. The waitress that serves him went through a break up of her own, and when she sees all of his dates failing, she takes her chance. Taking place in a cafe, the dates always end with the girls leaving him in the dust," said Mamie Hodges. Dating is never an easy thing but the main guy in the show knew them all too well.





## Ask a Colonial...

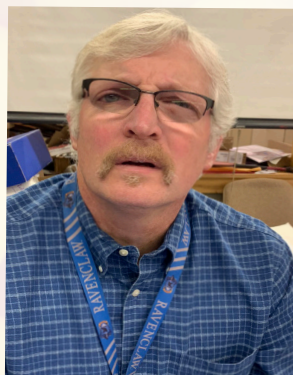
### "WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HALLOWEEN CANDY AND HALLOWEEN MOVIE?"



**Quin'Shawn Gordon**  
**Junior**  
"Snickers and Halloween 2!"



**Stella Yeaky**  
**Sophomore**  
"I like Twix and The Great Pumpkin."



**Mr. Jay Love**  
**Photography**  
"Hocus Pocus, and I gotta go with Tootsie Rolls."



**McKayla Noecker**  
**Junior**  
"Candy? Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. Movie? Hocus Pocus!"



**Billy Tull**  
**Senior**  
"Uhhh Three Musketeers, and Nightmare Before Christmas."



**Evante Sims**  
**Freshman**  
"I like the pumpkin shaped Reese's and Twitches."



**Dylan Peffley**  
**Junior**  
"Candy corn and Halloween."



**Grace Dobski**  
**Sophomore**  
"Twix, Halloween Town."



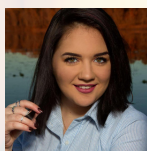
**Tyler Williams**  
**Junior**  
"Twizzlers and Halloween."

## Top 25 most popular Halloween candies



According to a 2017 survey by CandyStore.com the 25 most popular Halloween candies (according to pounds sold) are the following:

1. Skittles
2. M & M's
3. Snickers
4. Reese's Cups
5. Starburst
6. Candy Corn
7. Hot Tamales
8. Hershey's Mini Bars
9. Tootsie Pops
10. Jolly Ranchers
11. Taffy
12. Sour Patch Kids
13. Almond Joy
14. Butterfinger
15. Blow Pops
16. Milky Way
17. Swedish Fish
18. KitKat
19. Dubble Bubble Gum
20. 3 Musketeer
21. Lemonheads
22. Twix
23. Life Savers
24. Whoppers
25. Licorice



Reporting and photos by Jessica Aldridge '19



# A Symbiote of Bad and Awesome

BY SION SHEPLEY '19

Venom is usually thought of as one of the greatest villains of Marvel comics. He was created when Spider-Man inherited an alien suit that caused him to not only be more powerful, but to abandon the principles he held dear to him. Because of this, the suit, or a symbiote as it is called, latches onto Eddie Brock, a run down reporter. The symbiote uses Brock to cause chaos and destruction that would ultimately end up being stopped by Spider-Man every time. The character of Venom became so popular that he now has his very own movie. Despite the popularity of the character, the movie has earned a so-so reputation among critics.

In the movie "Venom," Eddie Brock (Tom Hardy) is fired from his job as an investigative journalist after going too far when interviewing the wealthy owner of the Life Foundation, Carlton Drake (Riz Ahmed). Drake has been testing the symbiote on humans trying to see who they'll bond with, but the experiments end up killing the test subjects. This doesn't sit well with one of his associates, Dora Skirth (Jenny Slate), who enlists the help of Brock to try to break in to the Life Foundation and stop Drake. Brock agrees, hoping that it will restore both his professional life and his personal life with his fiancée Anne Weying (Michelle Williams). However, after an accident, a symbiote attaches itself to Brock and finds that he is compatible with it, ultimately creating the iconic character of Venom.

Did I just give two completely different plot synopses between the comics and the movie? Yes, yes I did.

I ended up having to look at this movie in two different ways, what I wanted it to be and what it was.

What I wanted it to be was a psychological war between the symbiote and

its host, constantly fighting for control over the actions of Eddie Brock/Venom. This storyline has been attempted on screen before in "Spider-Man 3" (which also handled it poorly in my opinion) taking a lot of the dramatic elements that made the original story so powerful and turning them into goofy dance sequences with an emo Spider-Man. But while "Spider-Man 3" uses the dramatic moments to its own effectiveness at times, "Venom" surprisingly goes solely for comedy. It turns this idea of a twisted dual personality into a buddy road trip movie. The actors aren't to blame for this, Tom Hardy is a much better Venom than Topher Grace was in "Spider-Man 3," but his talents couldn't save a movie that had a lot of potential to be a psychological

thriller, but ended up just becoming a comedy. With that said, I actually did end up finding some joy with this movie.

Despite "Venom" being mostly a comedy and not at all what I was envisioning, when it made me laugh, it made me laugh hard, both intentionally and unintentionally. There are some good lines but there are also some cheesy lines that made me cringe but smile at the same time. That attitude extends to the action as well. The effects in "Venom" are bad, but there is something kind of enjoyable in how cartoonish they are. They create some really good fight scenes and some really bad fight scenes. Even though it wasn't the movie I wanted, I still ended up being entertained.

I had a very similar reaction to watching this that I did to 2017's "Justice League" or 2016's "Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice." Both of these movies were bringing something to the screen that I had always wanted to see, but ended up being disappointing in how underwhelming they were. With that being said, I have to acknowledge the movie for what it is, an entertaining waste of time. This is nowhere near what I felt that this story could have been, but I am still recommending it for the idea that it is kind of entertaining. If you're willing to go into a movie to just turn your brain off for a little bit and enjoy some mindless action, then I think you'll get your money's worth. But if you're looking for a proper adaptation of one of Marvel's greatest villains, you probably want to wait for a better symbiote to latch on to.

Artwork by Sion Shepley

SCORE:

3/10