



# JAGWIRE

Fall 2022 - Issue 2 - Homecoming



## All In the Family

Another year of homecoming activities was a success! This began with spirit days, soccer and volleyball games, and ended with table games, and memories that won't soon be forgotten.

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## Writing Center Returns

The writing center has returned to Jefferson Academy after a multi-year hiatus.

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As the cross country season comes to the end the team continues to push each other to reach not only team but personal goals.

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Another year of homecoming activities was a success! This began with spirit days, soccer and volleyball games, as well as two of the best teams kicking off in the final game of Peach Fuzz in front of the entire school. After a week of dedication and practice, the Juniors took on the Seniors but fell short by a mile, losing with a final score of 15-4. The seniors proved to be the superior volleyball players.

The Peach Fuzz and Powderpuff events proved to be more than just a game and were a great opportunity for the players competing to meet new people and create friendships. This is a result of spending the week practicing together, preparing for the game, and having fun together as a team.

“I think Peach Fuzz brings the school together by giving everyone a chance to compete against each other,” states junior Peach Fuzz player, Hudson Subach. “This allows for those teammates to develop friendships in order to play better with each other and just get to know each other.”

The Peach Fuzz counterpart that is always a staple during homecoming week is Powderpuff. The Senior and Junior girls, like the Peach Fuzz players, spent all week before school preparing for the big game Friday night. Though no amount of practice would have

prepared the players for the pouring rain that came during the game. Even so, both teams played their hardest and had a really good time.

“My experience was great. I loved playing with everybody, and we still played hard and pushed through even though it was pouring rain and really cold,” said junior Freja Hampton.

Even though the game was just for fun, some thought that the game was reffed in favor of the Seniors. There were many students who felt some of the ref's decisions throughout the game were biased.

“I think that the game was scored a little unfairly. There were some calls that were made that I have a feeling a lot of people were unhappy with. However, I think everyone had a good time, and despite the one injury we had, everyone was alright in the end,” said junior Anna Brenneman.

Peach Fuzz and Powderpuff were not the only events where the student body came together during homecoming week this year. Spirit days were another major part of homecoming week. With Monday being stoplight day, and Tuesday as twin day, Wednesday

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## All In the Family

By Gianna Gagliano and Makenzie Estep

# Fall Fest Fun

by Mackenzie Estep

Excited chatter fills the JA commons as dense packs of students make their way from the gym out to the field. No more busywork or boring lectures for the rest of their day, all they have to worry about is how long the line is for Kona Ice and who they are going to play spike ball with.

On Friday, September 30th, the JA annual tradition of Fall Fest returned after 3 years of its absence. Due to this time gap between the last fall fest event, this year was many students' first time experiencing it. The only students who had attended a fall fest were the seniors and juniors who have been at JA since middle school.

Grace Tomasko, a current junior who came during freshman year, commented on how little she knew about fall fest before the event, "I really have not heard that much about it. I have never been to one before, since I was not at JA when the last one happened, but I am excited to see what it is like."

At this National Honors Society event, each club at the school arranges their own booth or activity for the students. As an example, Key Club set up a candy apple booth this year. These booths take a lot of planning and were a high priority for many clubs during the last few weeks.

"I set up a committee in charge of working out the details for this booth. We first had to set a reasonable budget based on how much money we have as a club, then estimated how much we'll need for each ingredient, and then got people to go out and buy everything," said Key Club President Sofia

Hiller, regarding the planning process for their booth.

The majority of students had fun at Fall Fest, and thought it went well, though some thought that it was slightly lacking.

"I think in the coming years, it would be nice to have more activities. This year was good, but there definitely could have been a couple more things for



people to do," said junior and Junior President of NHS, Jessie Schaffer.

Fellow junior, Madisyn Dechant, added, "There were a lot of yard games,

but since there were so many people, they got taken up fast and you were left with nothing to do. I had a good time, but I wish there were more things to do. It was still really fun to have a break from school though."

Although there could have been a bit more for students to do at fall fest, there were many popular activities. Some of which, that were probably the most enjoyed, were the food trucks, including Kona Ice and a desert truck.

"Everybody liked the Kona Ice truck, so that was probably a highlight for this year's fall fest, and it is definitely something we should consider having again next year," said Schaffer.



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as Adam Sandler day, Thursday as anything but a backpack day, and Friday as generation day, these spirit days bring classes together and allow a different take on the learning environment.

"Spirit days allow the students to dress in attire they typically wouldn't," states junior Connor Scarboro. "This brings a more fun (and funny) learning experience, while getting students to show spirit and get excited for homecoming."

Along with spirit week, another tradition during homecoming week is STUCO decorating the hallways for the student body to enjoy. Normally this tradition is harmless fun, but this year there were some problems brought up with the decorations.

"Our theme was 'La Familia,' which was kind of difficult to decorate for, so we tried to decorate with more of a crime theme. Our thought was to portray it in a cartoonish way, which usually includes chalk-outlined bodies and caution tape. We did not even think about the implications behind the decorations because we were so focused on matching the crime theme in what we thought would be a lighthearted way," said junior class president Maisy Harris.

About halfway through the week, there was some concern brought to light over the body outlines. Once they heard that some students were feeling offended and unsafe, the decorations were taken down. Many were annoyed with this inconvenience, but many understood the reasoning behind it.

Junior Mark Leoni shared his opinion of the whole situation by saying, "I'm definitely frustrated. It's hard to see something that you've put work into having to be torn down in a single instant like that. I wish that we could have kept them up, but I understand the reasoning as to why some people took offense."

After homecoming week comes to a close, and all of the fun activities leading up to homecoming have passed, the main event, the homecoming dance, is the center of everyone's attention. From last minute attire shopping to dinner reservations and taking photos, the day of the dance is a very anticipated day.

"I got ready at my house, and learned how to tie a tie," states Scarboro. "I then drove to go take pre-homecoming pictures, where I met the group of people I was going to homecoming with. We all took pictures, then went to dinner. After dinner, we arrived at the dance, and had a really good time."

The environment of the homecoming dance was very light and fun. This atmosphere can be attributed to the theme of the dance, "La Familia." With the card tables filling the cafeteria, and a packed dance floor outside on the patio, as well as on-theme candy, and a student DJ, the dance should be considered a success.

"The card tables gave more of a party feeling in a way," states Scarboro. "It made the dance feel more sophisticated and 'grown-up.' Having a student DJ was new and exciting as well. The dance floor was compact, but was still a fun way to listen to music and dance with your friends. Overall, I had a really great time, as the theme of the dance made it even more fun."

# Banned Book Week Recognized

by **Eden Woodward**

For one week in September, caution tape was found criss-crossing bulletin boards. Pictures behind bars plastered the television screens across Jefferson Academy's hallways.

Announcements discussing difficult themes rang throughout the classrooms in the mornings. No, JA wasn't the scene of a crime, nor a hot spot for discourse. This was Banned Books Week, a national event meant to spread awareness of book banning and celebrate the freedom of expression.

Jefferson Academy's Student Library Advisory Board organized JA's participation in Banned Books Week, marking the return of the school recognizing the nation-wide event.

"I think the impetus was the number of books that were banned across the country last school year. More books were challenged and banned last year than any other year in US history and this year is looking to be even greater," Ms. Davis, the sponsor for SLAB, said about JA's participation.

SLAB president Tessa Stadler helped run and organize the celebration of Banned Books Week. When asked if Banned Books Week is important to her, she responded positively, stating, "I think it's really important that we are able to experience different worldviews and perspectives that we wouldn't otherwise be able to. I think it's also really important to be able to have access to books that make me feel more connected to myself and help me identify who I am."

Some of the events included in Banned Book Week were daily scavenger hunts to find and keep a banned book as well as both junior high and high school book clubs. Morning announcements ran

every day of the week to educate the student body on specific banned books. Banned Books Week culminated in a banned book themed read-in, held on Friday, September 23rd.

Book club allowed students from all grade levels to participate in Banned Books Week by reading banned books and discussing them with their



peers. Junior high students read *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexi, while high school students read *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.

"I think the most impactful discussion points were how the books were different from the lives of those who were in the book club," shared senior Elise Lien, a SLAB officer who was present at

both book clubs and led the junior high discussion. "Broadening your worldview and being able to read books by authors who have experienced things that you have not can let you see different things, which I think is really important and good for everyone."

Banned Books Week, however, has gone past these events and into the classroom, specifically into the consideration of teachers. Mr. Purcell, head of the high school English department, finds Banned Books Week important, saying, "It's important for all of us.

day and age. Among these conversations lies the question of how book banning affects education, or if it even does so. Some educators at Jefferson Academy believe that it does.

"I think that it's a fundamental lack of trust in students and in educators," states English teacher Mrs. Doyle. "Mostly because it's telling you guys that we as adults don't trust you to self-censor. I do believe there are some things that are age-appropriate and that sometimes, like, I'm not going to go ahead

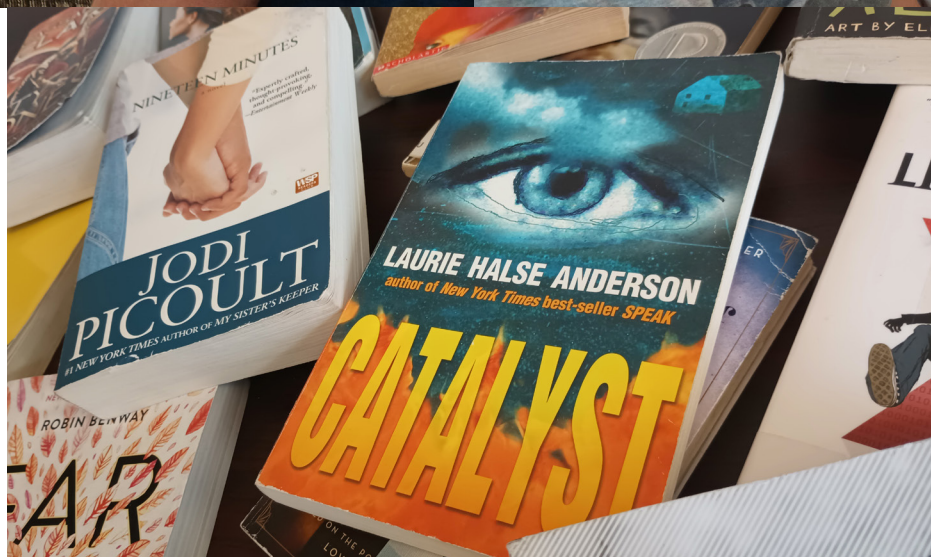
and assign *The Handmaid's Tale* to junior high. But I will also be honest with my students and say why not. Not just 'don't read it.'"

Students all have their own opinions on book banning. "In general, I'm not the biggest fan of book banning because I'm a big freedom of speech guy," states junior Levi Hinson. "But I also think that there are some books that push what I find to be acceptable in school. For example, if I remember correctly, *The Handmaid's Tale* has a couple somewhat descriptive and disturbing scenes in it. Those add to the book and help convey the message that the book is trying to present, but

also aren't really appropriate for a school setting, in my opinion."

When asked his opinion on banning books, Quach responded with passion: "I think it is terrible to restrict anyone's opinion or information. Even though you may not agree with someone's opinions or certain information, it is important to allow for that information to be out there. Even if it is fake news, it is up to the reader to choose if they want to align with the information given to them or not."

At the end of the day, book banning remains a highly debated and multi-faceted topic. In the face of this discourse, however, education soldiers on, as does the ever-long conversation on book banning. "I think the conversation that we need to have is about those feelings and those encounters," says Mr. Purcell in a final remark. "You cannot grow unless you are challenged."



If you take away access to books then you are short-changing people. You are preventing them from encountering viewpoints and experiences that may be unfamiliar to them. I think, especially in today's political climate, it is important as a way of inciting conversation."

Banning books can be a difficult topic to approach due to the possibility of hostility surrounding the topic, and has become a very partisan issue in today's

# Writing Center Reopens

by Memphis Larson

The writing center has returned to Jefferson Academy after a multi-year hiatus. Operated by Mr. Purcell's College English class, students have the opportunity to come in every Friday during the block within which the College English class resides, which currently is C block.

Current College English student Judah Weir states that it can be a beneficial thing to use the center, and that "Personally, it usually really helps me when I can get just that other pair of eyes on the paper."

Regardless of the assignment or state of the paper,

students are encouraged to come into the writing center if they need any sort of help in the writing process. Some classes may even have periods dedicated to them, such as Ketcham's US History class, where students had the opportunity to get help with their papers.

Many students may not remember a time in which the writing center was active, as it was paused due to complications with COVID. As mentioned before, it used to be run by volunteers which has since changed. This is not only for the benefit of those using the center, but also those running it.

"As I tell the students, the best way to learn something is to teach it, and that as a writing tutor, you are kind of teaching writing," says Purcell. "It is mostly there for the students that we serve, but it also is for the benefit those who are running it."

Another change that happened over the hiatus was the timing of the center's hours. It used to be held three times a week, either for thirty minutes before or after school.

"It is harder now to find enough students to staff it before and after school, especially with zero hour," states Purcell.

Students have become much busier, so a writing center open during a class is meant to not only make it available for people to staff it, but also make it more available for those who need to use it.

College English student Jayden Van Dam "feel(s) good about being able to help, whether it is with something like structure or if it is something more sentence level." Even if you do not know yourself what could be wrong with your own paper, you can come into the writing center and learn.



# Spiriting Soccer

by Jacob Brackney

Watching every move that is made, every slip, every step, and every shift of the player's feet with anticipation, the spectators know there is chance the ball will find the back of the opposing team's net as the clock ticks down.

The crowd at JA soccer games has always been an important part of their success, but this year things have been a little different.

As a leader of the student section at most of the home games, junior Payton Stevens stated, "The energy for the soccer games has been ok, but slowly going down due to the lack of cheers that have been allowed."

Stevens is referring to new rules and regulations that were put into place by the school administration this soccer season. Some of the student section's famous chants have been taken under review and turned into different chants, or the student section had to change the chants. This has created much frustration among students and administration with what is allowed and what needs to be rethought. However, there are some people working with the students to figure out new chants to sing.

"I think Ms. Ferb has been a good support by making STUCO make signs for the games and new cheers," remarked Stevens.

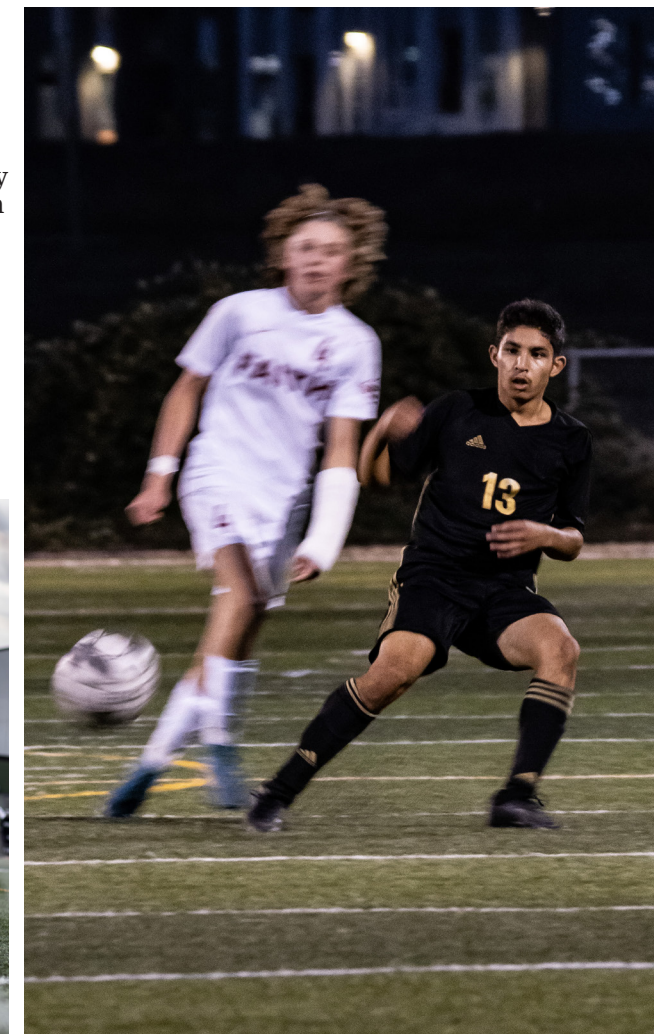
However, there is a marked difference in how much the crowd has been coming out to support the team when compared to last year.

"I would like to see the crowd be more engaged with the game and keep the energy up more consistently," commented junior Dustin Reidy who has shown up to support not just friends, but also the athletes of Jefferson Academy.

With the end of the regular season, the team has already secured their spot in the playoffs. The Jags had to deal with the haunt of Prospect Ridge Academy on the 18th and will face Colorado Academy on the 20th at home. Colorado Academy is the fourth-ranked team in all of 3A Soccer so it

will be a big game for both teams and a big trial for your Jefferson Academy Jaguars - they will be looking for that homefield advantage.

"JA crowds have always been the best. There should be a picture of our school in the dictionary under school spirit," remarked Coach Cassell.



# Swinging Season

by Jacob Brackney

As the temperature starts to change along with the leaves, Boys Golf comes to a close, with some of the players taking their last swing for the season and some taking their last swing as a Jaguar. Either way it was a year of learning and growth as the program continues to find its touch.

“This season taught me that golf is unpredictable and that you can easily lose your touch when you don’t practice for even a few days,” remarked junior Jackson Stillman.

With the golf tournaments coming to an end, it is time for the team to move forward with their plans for the off-season. For some, that looks like making tee times for themselves to work on the game, and for others, it is hitting the gym and working out to increase their power for next year or for the next step in their careers. But with that next season, there are also big changes coming.

“There is no next season for me; however, this has taught me to savor the things you have while they last because it goes by really fast,” commented senior Jack McLucas.

Along with being one of the only seniors on the team, Jack is also the only person on the team that is going to the state tournament. When asked about what he was looking forward to he commented, “Honestly, just the experience because I will get to play with some of the best players in the state and get to compete at the highest level possible.”

With McLucas being one of the only seniors on the team there is going to be a big gap left when he leaves the role of their leader.

“The team is going to need a new leader and there

is going to have to be someone to take over and step up for the guys and lead them,” predicted McLucas.

Hopefully that new leader will help continue to build upon the solid foundation that this season expanded upon next year as the Boys Golf team continues its climb in the state rankings.



# Jagesus X-Country Gaining on Goals

by Grace Beck

The sound of feet hitting the pavement, heaving breathing, and cheering from off the course all have to be zoned out as the cross country team tries to get their Jagesus Goals for the year.

The cross country team puts in many miles each week fighting to become better and beat their personal records and even school records. The coaching staff that consists of Head Coach Ben Hershelman, and Assistant Coaches Terry Witkowski and Theresa Stadler, have coined a phrase “Jagesus Goals” meaning personal or team goals that seem out of reach and only reachable if you can fly. They work to get the team to these goals and show them that the goals are indeed not unreachable, you just have to work hard.

These goals can be anything from not getting hurt to getting a new PR (personal record) or even winning a race. Many of the runners have already reached their Jagesus Goal and are now working on new goals.

Captain Sean Beasley won his first race at the St. Vrain Invitational. “The actual feeling of winning the race is unexplainable, it’s something you only dream about and never plan to achieve. Through the race I kept telling myself I won’t get first, I never saw myself as being a winner.” While he never thought the goal would come true, it did and was more amazing than he could ever imagine.

The cross country season is coming to an end very rapidly with State being on November 29th. The team has accomplished many things this season including both boys and girls being runners up at the league level, and heading into the rest of the

championship season they have hopes to excel at Regionals and State. Most of the cross country team trains year round with cross country, track, and then summer cross country, or even other sports. All this training helps the team get to championship season and make it far. “We have sent at least one team to the state championships for the last 14 years,” Coach Hershelman stated.

Teams celebrate together but, on the course, you are alone with the training you have put in. Team Captain Levi Hinson said, “At some point it just comes down to you and how much pain you are willing to take to get what you want, and that’s where a lot of kids fold.”

Cross Country is a grueling sport that has a lot to do with mental strength and personal challenges. The team pushes past the pain to keep getting better, and as Coach Hershelman says, “We just got a little bit better.”

The community of the cross country team is very special; running many miles together, they see the worst and the best of each other, and this creates a team community like no other. “My favorite thing about the XC community is that despite how difficult practices and competitions



are, athletes come early and stay late so that they can spend more time together. If athletes would rather be with their team than somewhere else, it feels like our team is a great group to be with,” remarked Coach Hershelman.

The team not only trains together but they are also friends who hang out before and after practice. There are also pasta dinners, sleepovers, nights out, and other team bonding activities that make the cross country team more than just a team.

“I can run anywhere, at any time. However, it’s not the same without the people. It’s a tight knit family and I am glad to be part of it,” stated Beasley.

# Successful Season

by **Gianna Gagliano**

A historic softball team's inaugural season is coming to a close. The first ever girls' softball season in Jefferson Academy history has worked through challenges that have built a solid foundation for a successful program.

With it being the team's first season together, and most players being inexperienced, practice is very important for the development and bonding of the players. This includes working on all aspects of the game by alternating what is practiced each day. This can range from hitting, to fielding, and even all the way down to fine details of the game such as pop-ups.

"During practice we alternate days between hitting and fielding," states sophomore softball player, Miles Schwartz. "It seems to be working, as I have seen some of the players grow throughout the season." Senior Softball player Samantha Duncan adds, "To get better in practice we have been doing fielding and pop-up practice. We also do a lot of hitting to work on our batting."

Improvement is a milestone with new teams like this one. It shows progress and the potential that each player has, and what they can bring to the team. With it being the end of the season, the improvement of the softball team from the beginning of the season is unarguable, and it all started with individual improvement.

"I think we have improved immensely," states

Duncan. "We all have gained confidence and have been doing a lot better since the beginning of the season."

In all high school sports, the roster is constantly changing from seniors graduating and new freshmen being added to the rosters. Due to this season almost ending, it is necessary to start thinking ahead to next season, and how certain players joining/leaving the program may affect



future teams.

"I think the seniors leaving will be different and a big change," states Schwartz. Duncan adds, "I think the next season will look a lot different. A lot

of the players are leaving, but I think that there will be a pretty decent team left."

Preparation for next season begins now. Shaking off the cobwebs after a long break from a sport can be difficult. This is why practicing in the off-season is so important. This off-season practice results in preparedness for the next season.

"My team is going to do some workouts during the off-season," states Duncan. "I know that some girls will be doing competitive softball during their time off, so they will be prepared when they come back to high school softball."