

The Gecko

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

Dear Concept Families,

We had an amazing Arts Festival last week! Our students are very creative and their skills were on display on April 25th. The work that we displayed throughout the building was top notch and the Sherlock Holmes play that followed was well done and hilarious. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend.

We recently mailed home enrollment contracts for next year. Please make sure you return your signed contract so we can firm up our plans for next year. Speaking of next year, I am sorry to tell you that Mrs. Marti Phillips, our transitions coordinator for the last seven years, is retiring for good. She completed 37 years in a public school and then joined us at TCS to formalize our transitions program. She has done a wonderful job and will be greatly missed by all of us.

I am happy to report that we have hired someone for the position next year. Her name is Ms. Anna Cuff and she will be completing her masters degree in school counseling at West Chester University this spring. Ms. Cuff will be spending some time with Marti as this year winds down to help her become acclimated to the job and our school.

Finally, we will hold our Senior Farewell Dance and Party on Friday, May 17, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and ending at 10:00 p.m. We are using a new venue this year: Thornbury Farms, not too far from our school. There will be a DJ, yard games, dancing, and dinner. We emailed permission slips home, and your child got a hard copy, as well. I hope we have a good turnout.

Sincerely,
Bill



<p>May 17: Senior Farewell Dance – 6:00 June 11: Awards Day – 12:00 dismissal June 12: Graduation Day – 12:00 dismissal June 13: Last day of school – 12:00 dismissal</p>



Unique Minds *Create* Unique Art

The Spring Arts Festival was an amazing success! I want to thank Mrs. Schwind for her hard work and dedication, tapping into our students' creative minds, and giving them an outlet to display their talents. The artwork around the school has brightened up the hallways and shown that our students can create stunning work. I also want to thank Mrs. Fredericks and her students for the awesome 3-D printed sculptures. They, too, displayed impressive creativity and showed that unique minds can create some unique art!

Lastly, I want to thank Mrs. Griffith and Mrs. Wright for their continued work with the theater class. The Sherlock Holmes play was hilarious, thrilling, and utterly entertaining. I am continuously impressed how well the students can perform, memorize their lines, and hit the right emotional notes in a scene. It is seriously impressive!

Reflecting on the Spring Arts Festival during Morning Meeting, it occurred to me that we can only feel successful when we do hard things. We are not likely to feel proud of ourselves after doing day-to-day routine acts that come easy. After all, what's to be proud of if we don't work for it?

I encouraged the students to set the bar high for themselves in all endeavors, work hard, and navigate any challenges that may stand in their way. The students have proven that they can do hard things. I hope they all feel proud of themselves and that they embrace new goals well beyond TCS that test their patience, stamina, and abilities. As they proved with the Spring Arts Festival, not only can they do it – they can do it so impressively that it brings joy to a packed house.

Mr. Schullery



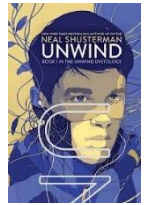


Mrs. Wright's ELA Class:

ELA 1



Students in first period ELA Literature have been using their writer's voice in a creative writing unit: "10 Things I've Been Meaning to Say to You". Thanks to Mrs. Griffith and her writing students for sharing this awesome writing unit featuring Young Adult Author, Jason Reynolds. Liam, Sophia, Zac, and Callie have had so much fun working on it in room 9! We have also voted as a class on which literary journey we will be embarking on next. I presented five book options: *Code Orange* by Caroline B. Coonie, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, *Runner* by Carl Deuker, *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie, and *Unwind* by Neal Shusterman. Votes were cast and *Unwind* took the votes. I do believe students will be on the edge of their seats with this fast-paced first book in Shusterman's "dystology"!



Shhh...

Callie and Sophia reading ahead in *Unwind*

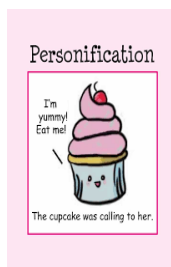


ELA 2



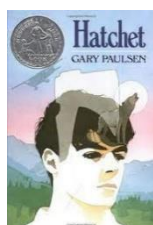
Students in second period ELA Literature have been loving the dually narrated book featuring a young boy and his fox, Pax. "Pax" means "peace." How can there be peace when war is approaching and your entire world has been ripped from you? Students will soon be able to answer this question! We have also dedicated time in class "keying" up our typing skills as knowing the home keys is a huge benefit in writing with technology.

ELA 4



In ELA Writing, we continue working on our writing skills, our writer's voice, and sharpening our writing structure and organization. Our most recent writing conquests included working with personification and a mixed-genre essay. In one piece, students were tasked with choosing a color and making it appear human-like. I am proud of their work! This was such a tough assignment, but with guidance and their bright minds, they knocked it out of the park! For the second piece students wrote their own versions of Jason Reynolds' "10 Things I've Been Meaning to Say to You". We continue to work on our writer's voice through journaling and creative writing!

ELA 5 & 7



Students in both of these ELA Literature sections have joined main character, Brian Robeson, on his survivalist journey in *Hatchet*! What an adventure we are having reading this book! We have witnessed Brian's plane crashing on his way to Northern Canada, making it through the crash, a close encounter with a wild bear, finding sources of food, water, and shelter. and just recently. To bring the book alive a bit, we have started to watch key scenes from the movie *Castaway* in connection with scenarios Brian has been through. The adventure continues!

Faith McAfee

ELA Writing

January 4, 2024

Pink is a Unicorn

Pink is a unicorn: cute, fluffy, and lots of fun. Pink is the feeling of finally meeting Cimorelli with family and friends. She is the love I feel from Mom. Pink is the pressure that relieves my pain, grief, stress, and anger, providing a release. Pink is the best friend you could ever ask for; inseparable, caring, and has my back. Pink is the smell of vibrant flowers that permeates my surroundings. She is the music flowing through my headphones; comfortably loud. Pink has the power to stop Autism meltdowns. Pink is the six-sister-singers belting out my favorite songs that put a bright smile on my face. She is the feeling of being calm and settled. Pink is the creative writing of my scripts about Cimorelli that I chit chat with Mom about. Pink is bright and pretty, talented, and creative, calming and supporting, loving and joyful. Pink is the medicine that fixes everything.

Featured Writers:

Zach Conte & Faith McAfee

Zach Conte

ELA- Literature

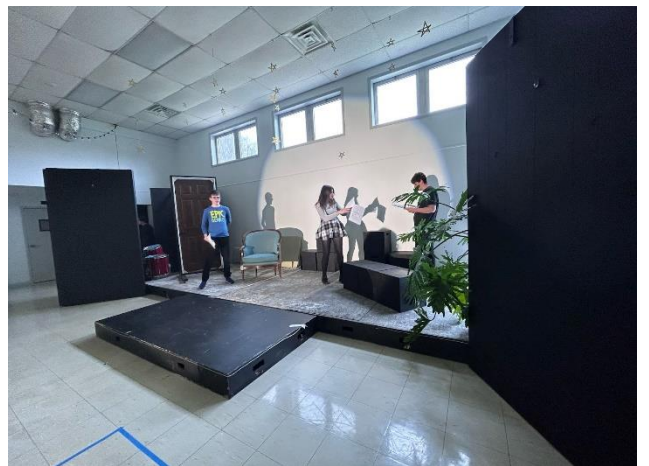
February 5, 2024

"Ten Things I've Been Meaning to Say to You"

Dear Star Wars Fans,

I am addressing this to all Star Wars fans, young, old, or even newer fans. Below are ten things I've been meaning to say to you:

1. I am so grateful that George Lucas came up with this wonderful franchise by basically ripping off *Flash Gordon* serials.
2. Please don't hate on the prequels. They really aren't that bad. Yes, the acting can be cheesy, *but* the love story between Anakin and Padme is just as good as Han and Leia are. I will agree that although Natalie Portman is a very smart and talented actress, Star Wars is her WORST acting performance.
3. Speaking of the prequels, don't take out your hatred for characters on the actors that play them. Jake Lloyd (Anakin in *The Phantom Menace*) had his life practically ruined because of the backlash he received for his role. The same with Ahmed Best (Jar Jar Binks) and Hayden Christensen (Anakin). This goes for characters in the sequel trilogy too.
4. I think we all can agree that *The Mandalorian* has basically saved the franchise from getting any worse after the sequel trilogy. It was the first Disney Plus tv series as it was launched with the streaming service the day it came out.
5. Give the media outside of movies and tv a little love too. The video games are excellent. A game called "Knights of the Old Republic", released in 2003, brought us to an era that existed over 2000 years before the events of the original trilogy. It had memorable characters and a plot twist arguably more insane than "I am your father".
6. Anakin had a better character arc than Luke. C'mon, we could all admit that.
7. The original trilogy's special effects still hold up to this day. The prequels mostly consisted of CGI, while the OG trilogy had practical effects such as puppetry and models.
8. Don't say "May the force be with you" to non-Star Wars fans. Trust me, they hate it.
9. Do not compare *Star Trek* to *Star Wars*. Aside from them both being Sci-Fi, they almost have nothing to do with each other.
10. Don't expect anything different with newer projects; this franchise is extremely predictable.

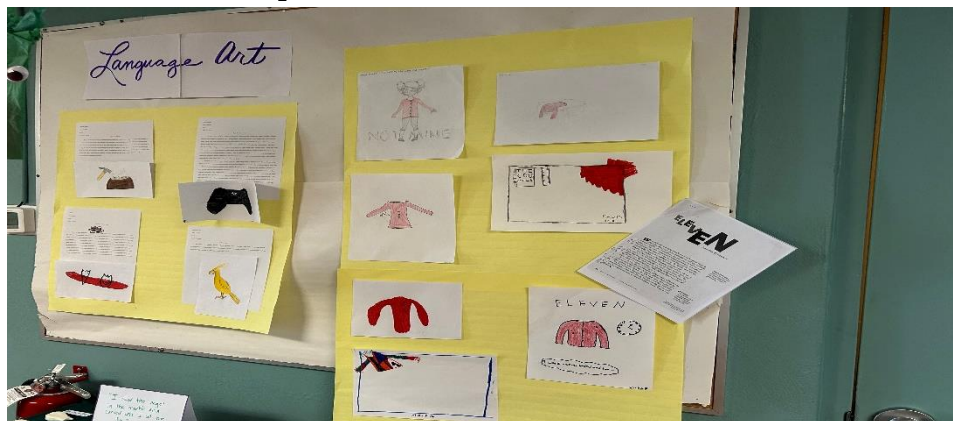
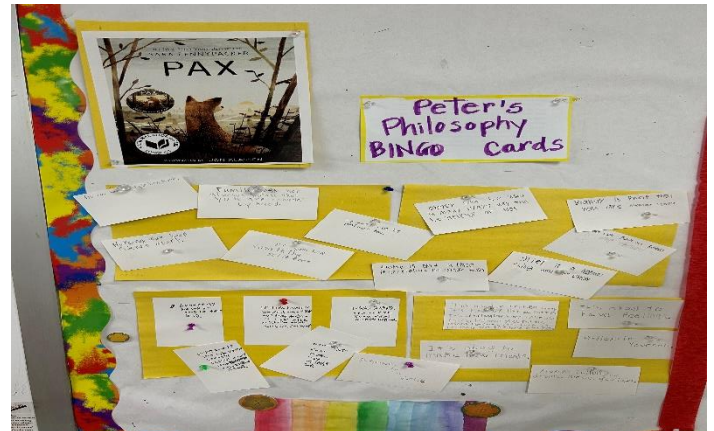


Mr. Giess' Music Class:



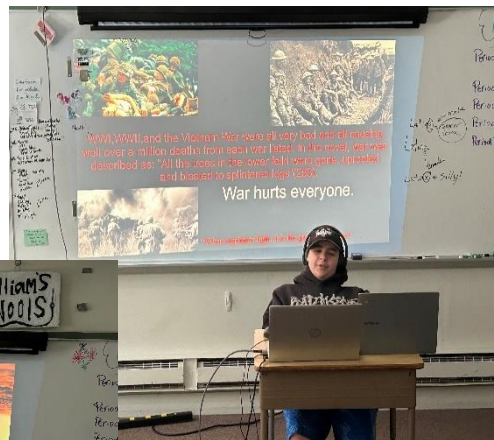
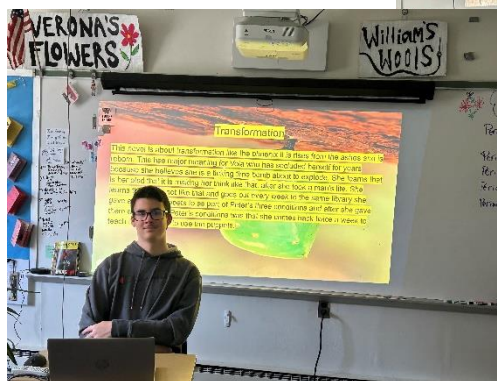
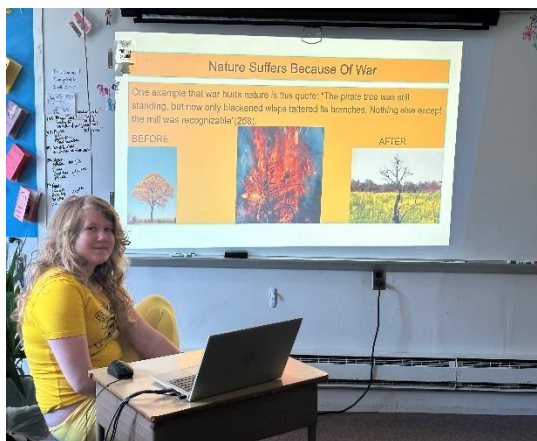
Mrs. Griffith's English Classes:

Mrs. Griffith's **Second Period Literature** class has been continuing their study of the hero's journey with the short stories "Through the Tunnel" and "Eleven". They have used illustration and role playing as ways to assess their understanding. Additionally, they have been studying poetry since April is National Poetry Month. They have examined the idea of choice in Frost's "The Road Not Taken" and the song "Watershed" by the Indigo Girls. This idea of the hero's decision making process will carry over into Jason Reynold's novel-in-verse *Long Way Down* which is up next!

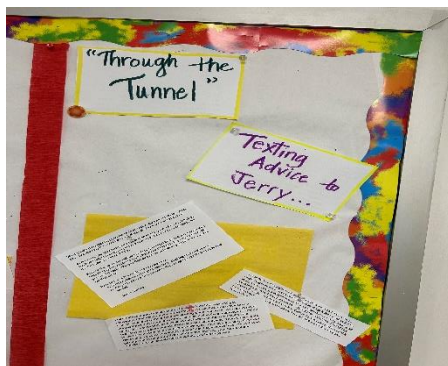
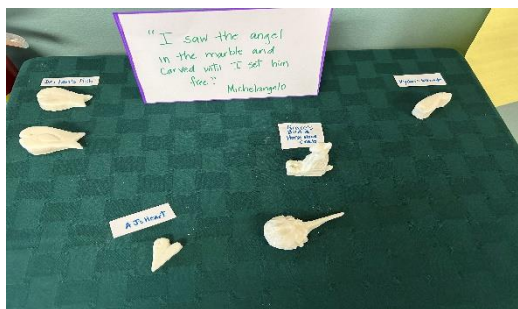


Her **Third Period Creative Writing** class has been dabbling with poetry pastiches, *NY Times* Connections, and Oreos! Yes, Oreos. We've looked at Oreo art, described Oreos using imagery (Tasting was fun!) and extended the description into process papers about the best way to eat the cookie! Next up, will be myth busting an Oreo experiment we watched. We will then read Kwame Alexander's essay "My Mother's Fried Chicken Was A Link to My Past-And My Daughter's Future" and write our own personal narrative associated with food.

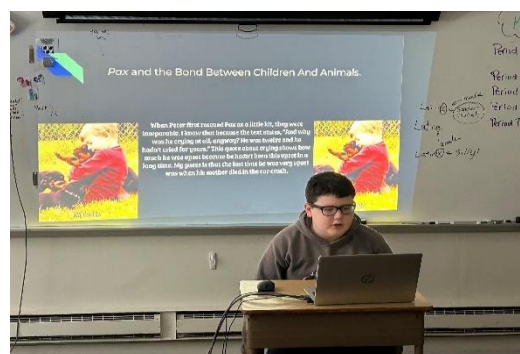
Fourth Period ELA class completed their study of *Pax* by creating google slides projects which they presented to their peers. Check them out in the photos! Color, font, format, words...they are all writing!



Vola taught Peter, and us, that when Michelangelo was sculpting, he said he "...saw the angel in the marble and carved to set him free" (172). Using Ivory soap and carving tools, students sculpted their own soap creations which were displayed at the Arts Festival.



Fifth Period will finish their odyssey of *The Odyssey* this week. They enjoyed tzatziki and pita while watching! Additionally, they had fun with the figurative language scavenger hunt! They will begin writing their McConaughey Oscar acceptance speech pastiche and head into short stories and film, as we continue extending the hero's journey trope.



Seventh Period Literature has been continuing to hone their annotation skills with short stories (“Eleven” and “Through the Tunnel”) and will dabble in poetry and film next. They have been practicing “get-in-and-get-out” paragraphs and making the connections among understanding the prompts, turning them into topic sentences, and using self/group annotations as support.



Mrs. Culler's History Class:

Mrs. Culler's Renaissance History classes have been studying the art of the Northern Renaissance and had fun recreating several famous works of art with modern interpretations.

Here are some of our recreations!

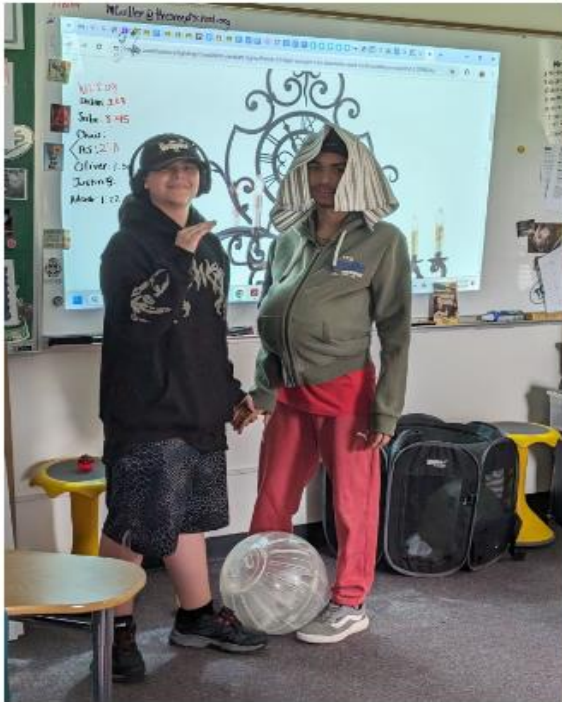
Man in A Red Turban by Henry Deputy



The year was 1433
John van Eyck
Man in a Red Turban



Portrait of Marguerite Navarre (1527) by Jean Clouet.
Recreation by Grace Wolff.



Arnolfini Wedding Portrait by Jan Van Eyck. 1434.
Recreation by AJ Cape and Christian Segarra (and Picklepuff).

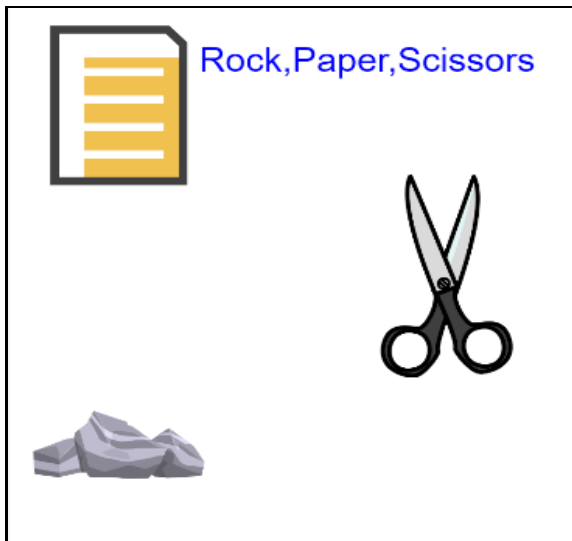
Mrs. Frederick's Technology Classes:

Mrs. Fredericks' 3D printing classes showed off their 3D creations at the Spring Arts Festival. They've worked extremely hard and had a lot to show for it! Some of our latest creations were a Yahtzee game (including a cup with text - difficult! And 5 dice), a superhero of their design, and a chess set totally of their design.

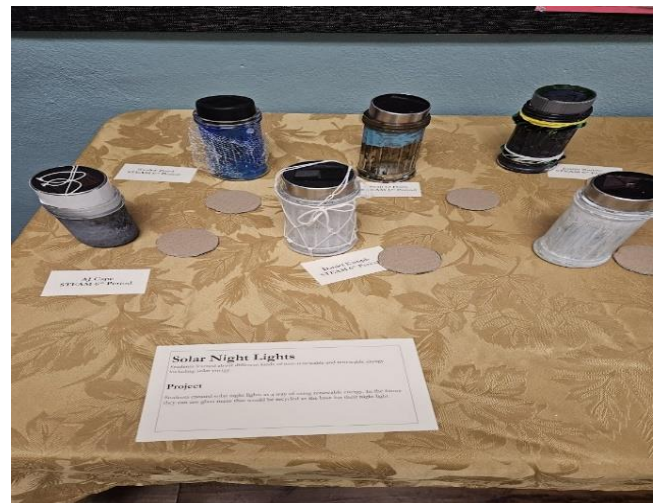
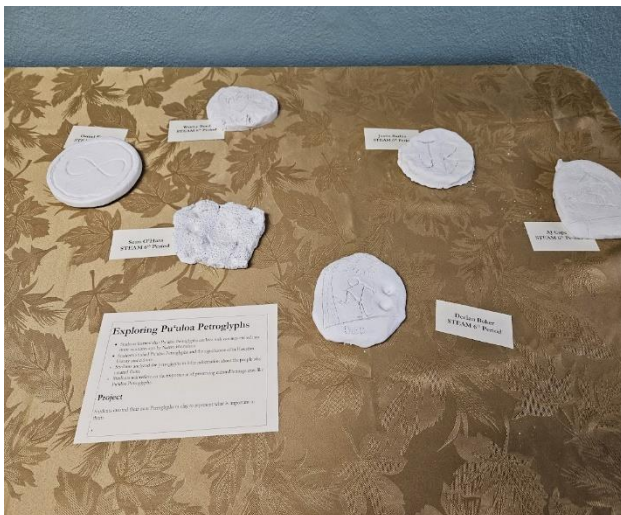


Mrs. Fredericks' Coding classes have been working on interactive cards and animations. They're learning how to make sprites move, collide with each other, bounce off each other, and other fun interactions. Soon, we'll be creating functions (code they create that can be called over and over).





Mrs. Fredericks' STEAM class showed off some of their creations in the Spring Arts Festival. They created solar night lights and petroglyphs. The solar night lights were part of the unit on renewable energy, and the petroglyphs were part of our Hawaiian Petroglyph lesson which even included talking with a native Hawaiian Park Ranger. Currently, the class has been learning about Newton's 3 laws of motion and having fun creating fun examples and experimenting with the laws. We're currently creating "Newton's Cradles" for the 3rd law. Next, we'll be learning about Roller Coaster Physics!





TCS STAR PARTY

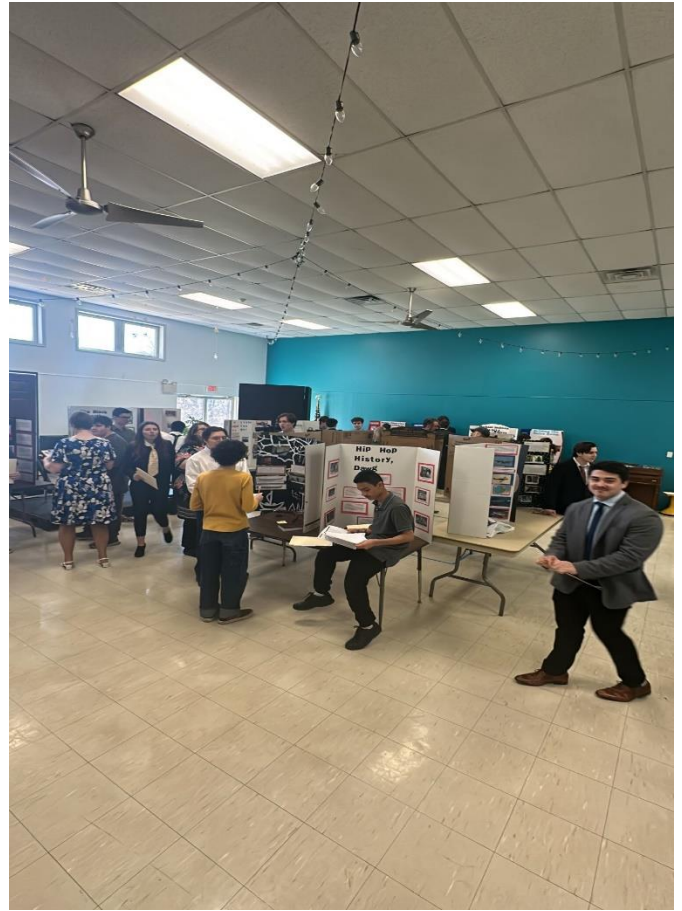
TCS hosted an exciting multi-activity STAR PARTY on March 12, 2024. Festivities started around 3:30 PM with sports activities, lively conversations, and good use of our high flying swings. Students enjoyed some snacks before board games were enjoyed by some in the APR while others built WarHammer figures in Mr. Brady's classroom. Outside activities resumed until pizza was served. As a preview of what was to come, Miss Tilmon gave a presentation about what it means to do "star hopping" aided by projected pictures of the constellations as they appear in the sky, as they appear with connecting lines, and as they appear with superimposed images of what the constellations appear to depict. As the sky began to darken, three telescopes were set up on the blacktop on the western side of the school, and multiple binoculars were made available. Students and adult chaperones were thrilled and amazed to see clear images of the craters on the Moon, which was in its crescent phase, as well as Jupiter and a few of its moons. Miss Tilmon gave us a guided tour of the constellations as she demonstrated how to do "star hopping" in the beautiful, dark night sky. Thank you, Miss Tilmon, and to everyone who helped to create wonderful memories that also strengthened friendships within our school community!

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY®

National History Day took place on March 1st. The following students were TCS school winners and runners-up and placed as follows:

LeSabien Brown:	Sr. Division/Individual Performance – advanced to regionals - Placed 3 rd in States and first alternate for Nationals
Sam Mandell:	Sr. Division/ Individual Exhibit – advanced to regionals - Placed 2 nd in States and advanced to Nationals
Mark Mack:	Sr. Division/ Individual Exhibit – advanced to regionals
Liam Simpkins:	Sr. Division/Individual Exhibit – advanced to regionals
DJ Tedrow:	Sr. Division/ Paper Submission
Ryan Stulak:	Jr. Division/Individual Exhibit – advanced to regionals
Oliver Allen:	Sr. Division/Individual Exhibit (Honorable Mention)
James Hansen:	Sr. Division/Individual Exhibit (Honorable Mention)
Tor Munson:	Sr. Division/Individual Exhibit (Honorable Mention)
Dylan Taylor:	Sr. Division/Individual Exhibit (Honorable Mention)
Grace Wolff:	Jr. Division/Individual Exhibit (Honorable Mention)

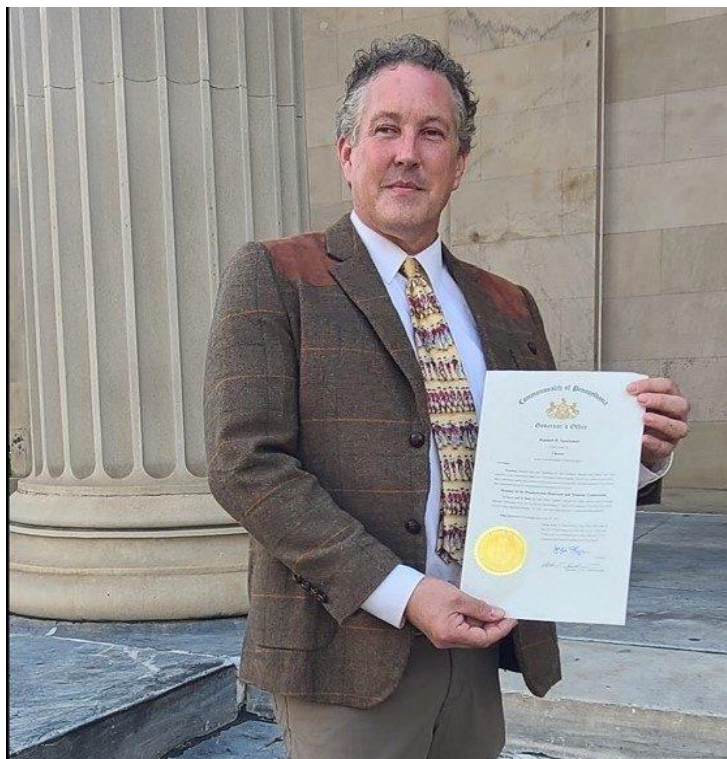




Student Spotlight

Randell Spackman '90 is not only one of the Board Members of The Concept School, but a past student as well. Among many other interests, Randell has recently been working on a documentary, and has been appointed to the state Historical and Museum Commission. Follow the links below for the full stories.

[Spackman appointed to state Historical and Museum Commission](#)

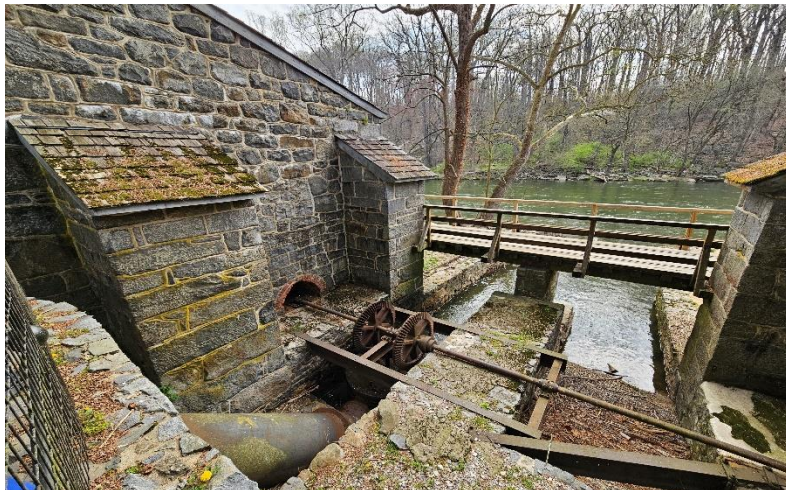


[Battle of Brandywine: Forging the American Spirit. Trailer #1](#)



Field Trips

Hagley Museum

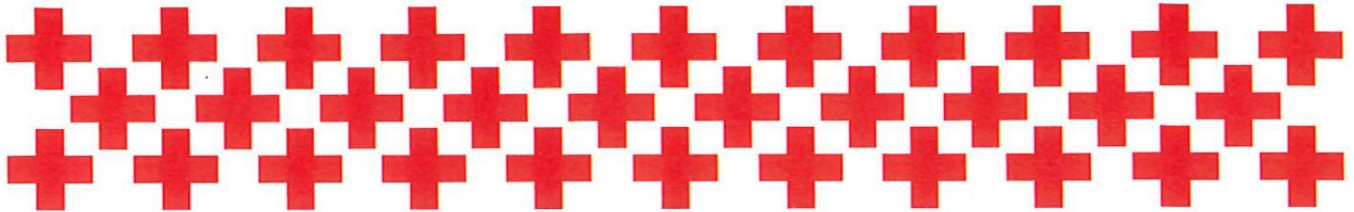


HEDGEROW THEATER



American Red Cross

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Blood Drive
The Concept School

MultiPurpose Room
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Saturday, May 11, 2024
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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TCS Picture Gallery

...just for fun!

TOTAL ECLIPSE [OF THE HEART]



Jack's Final Play Performance