

The Railroader Rundown

WHITEHALL JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

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A LONELY PLACE

by Mr. Burgess

We open the doors for our student body; you are the reason for the season. I'm writing this on the 33rd day of school from my makeshift office (Mrs. Short's room) and I know one thing for sure ... we are lonely. I miss students rushing in the door at 7:29, our homecoming, our conversations, celebrating your ups and helping with your downs. While I don't mind seeing you on Google Classrooms, something is missing.

I know everyone has heard that we might be able to open parts of the school in March. This is exciting news! I know many of us wanted the entire school to be open but it is all about progress not perfection. Over the next couple of months I will be having discussions with Mr. Dee on how to attack this new opportunity. My goal is to get every student into the building at some point in time but please understand that we are constrained by busing issues and that pesky covid-19 guidelines. I will keep the student body updated as I make decisions.

I know all students have had discussions with their class advisor. I am looking for any input in ways that we can bring our student body and community together during this virtual world. I miss gathering as Whitehall Nation and I am hoping we can work a few things out before Christmas time.

I know many of us are worried about the state tests and Regents tests. As of right now the state is requiring Whitehall to conduct all state tests and Regents but I have been pleading with the state to relax these regulations due to our dire circumstances. Space is limited and we might be able to find freed up desks in some of our neighboring schools such as Granville, Fort Ann, and Hartford. Of course much of this is just in the pre-planning stage and none of these decisions have been etched in stone but as soon as I know I will let everybody know. In January the ELA Regents that was supposed to be given to our Juniors has been canceled - it may still happen in June, though.

Like I said in the opening paragraph the student body is the only reason why we open the doors in the morning. Nothing is the same without y'all here and I hope that everybody realizes the amount of work that is being done to get our student body back. I wish everybody well and I hope everybody is healthy and I can't wait to see you all soon.



PROS AND CONS OF ONLINE LEARNING

by: Vinna Jensen

Due to the coronavirus schools all over the United States have taken online learning into consideration. In upstate New York, Whitehall Jr/Sr High school we are completely online. With this comes pros and cons to this way of learning. I think that if we as a community support our children we can get through this, we are not alone, we are in this as a community.

As a student at Whitehall Jr/Sr High school, I like that we are trying to learn off of the computer. It is set up so I can still get my education and be at home as well. Some of the pros of learning off of a computer in my opinion, I can manage my time much better than I can in school. Some of the cons of online school are when students are given an assignment that they are confused about the objective of the assignment they can't just raise their hand and the teacher will be able to come and see what you are doing.

Meanwhile, in other states such as Vermont, they have decided on the hybrid school year. I have a friend that attends Middlebury High school. I asked her about her school and her preference for hybrid schooling. I asked her if she would rather go to school in person the whole week, or continue what have been doing. Her response was, "Online schooling because you can do more things during the day and take breaks whenever needed, plus I think it is easier to focus." I believe we as a community can get through this year, even if we have to continue schooling off of the computer.

IT'S FALL!

by Jennifer Kelley

Since it's finally cold enough to say so, it's FALL! Personally my favorite seasons are fall and winter. During this time of the year there are many indoor and outdoor activities that you can do with friends and family. Since it's not so hot outside you could enjoy a hike to enjoy the fall foliage or a game of soccer outside in the yard, you can go apple picking and go to pumpkin patches.

What's your FAVORITE thing to do in the fall?



ANOTHER RACE DAY

By Kaleb Lyman

On August 3rd, 2020, I raced another Enduro series at Devil's Bowl Speedway. This race did not go as planned.

I started out by failing my first tech inspection. I failed it because I had a gas leak coming from my gas tank. So my father and I got right to it and fixed the leak and dried it all up. I passed the next tech inspection and we were ready to race.

The race started and I was doing pretty well. There were many dead cars out of the track early so it was hard to get around them. On the front straight away I was following this car pretty closely, getting ready to pass him because he was going slow. The car in front of me hit a dead car pretty hard, and then I hit the car in front of me really hard. When I hit the car my car was not doing well at all and I blew my radiator and battery. Shortly after that there was a red flag so all the cars had to stop and when that happened my car died completely and I was stuck there for the rest of the race.

Hopefully, my next race will run more smoothly!

COVID IMPACTS SPORTS

By Vinna Jensen

As summer ends, schools are starting to open up. As you may already know, due to the Coronavirus, New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that low-risk sports would be available. For example, cross country, tennis, and soccer could begin practicing and playing unlike the higher-risk sports such as volleyball and football. They were eligible for practice but could participate in games until further guidelines were provided.

However, the NYSPHSAA's coronavirus task force implemented a handful of new regulations for fall sports, including pushing the start of the winter season to March for football, volleyball and cheer. NYSPHSAA continually updates the regulations, so keep checking their website for the most current information.

As a student-athlete at Whitehall, I believe that if we follow the Coronavirus guidelines we can continue fall sports in the fall and not move to the later winter season. There are two different ways we could look at this situation, if we don't follow the guidelines then that would push all the seasons onto the winter season. If we continue to follow the Coronavirus guidelines and keep all our students and players as safe as possible then all fall sports may begin.



ONLINE LEARNING

by Jennifer Kelley

In my opinion online and virtual learning is harder to understand and it has negatively impacted my learning experience. I have WiFi issues so I cannot always connect to my classes when they are in session.

Most people learn in different ways than one another such as visual, physical and verbal learning so, learning through a screen is not always easy for the students. Keeping a normal schedule at home is also harder than the normal bell schedule that we've all been used to, we also don't have Mrs. Gonyea to keep our stuff organized when we're not there!

SCHOOL FOR NOW

by Kaleb Lyman

As we all know school is not the same today as it was a year ago. One year ago, the seniors got to go to school and enjoy their first day in person with all of their friends. They got to see all their beloved teachers. They got to dress up all nice for the first day, participate in Spirit Week, attend the Homecoming events, and all of the normal things that would happen on a non-covid first day.

But this year is 2020 and the year 2020 has been less than ideal. This year's seniors were not lucky enough to be able to go to school on their last first day. At first it was planned out to do a rotation schedule where half the students would go to school in a hybrid model. But because 2020 is a "great" year our school was damaged during a last Summer storm, so we couldn't even go to school and are now all on online classes until the school is fixed.

Many students are not happy with the online classes nowadays because they are stuck in front of a screen all day. They miss the personal interactions with their teachers and their friends. We are all trying to make the best of this situation for now. Hopefully, we can all be together again soon before the end of this school year!



WINTER SEASON PREPPING

by Vinna Jensen

It's getting colder now as winter is creeping upon us. We are starting to see bare trees and frost. We must get ready for this year's winter season. Here are some ways you and your family can prepare for the cold nights and days.

You can start by going around your house checking if there are any gaps around your windows and door frames, to keep the heat inside your home. Another way to prepare is taking the garden hoses and let the exes water out and rolling them up to store them somewhere where they are out of the way and are easy to find when you need them again. We can't know how hard it will be this winter, but it is a good idea to make sure your generators and heaters are in proper working condition. Also if you and your family are going to be traveling this winter make sure you have a winter survival kit, with extra clothes, a first-aid kit, and some jumper cables.

We have to prepare for the "what ifs" this winter season. It is in the back of everyone's mind, that one thing everyone is dreading. Whether or not there will be another wave of the Coronavirus. If there is another wave and we are forced to stay home again, it may be a good idea to have extra heavy blankets to keep you and your family warm. Another thing to do if you use propane or oil as a heating source, it is a good idea to make sure you have enough to get you through the winter. Always make sure you have food in your house for you and your family.

KEEP THOSE CAMERAS ON!

by Kaleb Lyman

Due to the online learning there have been many problems. One main problem that our administration has identified is with students not having their cameras on or just pointing their cameras toward the wall or ceiling.

Whitehall High School worries very much about having the cameras on and pointed toward students' faces. Should the school be so worried about having the cameras on? Some students don't feel comfortable being on a camera all day and they might get more stressed about it. Some students find that having their cameras on takes away from their bandwidth during class. And some other students don't mind having their cameras on at all.

Teachers do need a way to make sure students are there, however. Students who are pointing the cameras anywhere but at their face could be watching TV in another room! Teachers could ask those specific students some questions to make sure they are there. But if students start to turn the cameras off to their advantage, then they should be made to keep their cameras on because of what they did.

HALLOWEEN 2020

by Vinna Jensen

Almost every youngster's favorite is creeping up faster and faster. October 31st is the holiday known for receiving sweets, and kids dressing up as Disney princesses or scary monsters. They also get to walk around town with their friends and/or family. Who doesn't love that?

Although there may not be much actual Trick-or-Treating going on this year, there are some low-risk activities things you and your family may participate in at a safe distance. You and your family can have a scavenger hunt, where children receive lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outside from house to house admiring Halloween decorations at a distance. Your family and friends can host a pumpkin carving contest held outside so all families are at a safe distance. Or with all the members that live with you, sit down with snacks, drinks and have a Halloween movie night.

Any way you decide to spend this Halloween is up to you and your family, but please make sure you all are safe.



SOCIALLY DISTANCED HALLOWEEN

by Jennifer Kelley

Halloween in 2020 will be much different than it has been in the past years. Our generation has never seen anything like the pandemic but there are still ways to keep the Halloween tradition around and be safe!

Some people may feel safer in their own homes during times like this. Meanwhile some others have been trying to find creative ways to use household items, extra tools and pipes to give out candy and maintain 6 feet of distance. Many people are using PVC piping connected to stairs or a railing and sending candy down through the tube like a slide. Some people who prefer to keep their distance from their own homes are creating virtual Halloween costume contests and parties.

I also think a good idea for individual people or a small family to build or create a small "haunted" or scary walk-through similar to a haunted house.

NO MORE WEDNESDAYS!

by Kaleb Lyman

During this whole Covid fiasco and the Summer storm damage to Whitehall High School, our faculty and students are having a difficult time. The faculty and students have to sit on a computer all day and go to classes. Is 5 days a week too much for them to stay on the computers?

I believe that people spending the whole school day on computers is too much for them. I believe that these people should either get a full day off or a half a day during the school week. I think this break should happen on a Wednesday because it's in the middle of the week. With this break in the middle of



the week, students could get caught up on work and the teachers could, also. This also gives the students and teachers time to relax and get off of the computer. Teachers could even hold office hours to help students who need that extra 1:1 time with a teacher.

I think this is a day that all Whitehall High faculty and students could benefit from in the long run during this crazy school year!

MOVING FROM KENTUCKY

by Gabe Wilson

I lived in Kentucky for 4 years. It could be boring, but also fun at times, especially exploring the world around me. I met good people and bad people. I bought an xBox and a guitar in Kentucky, and I also built computers. I take my guitar with me everywhere I go. I used to do little concerts to get money. I would rap my songs in front of Starbucks and other stores to get money and they let me because it also brought them customers. I had some difficult times in life during these years, so I had to move back to my home state, New York.

Now I live in Whitehall, New York. This is hard because I don't know anybody here and I miss my friends. My life in Whitehall is much more quiet than my life was in Kentucky! I live with my brother and his girlfriend. She is from Whitehall. Now that I'm in school my dad wants me to graduate and pursue a career in the NFL. I want to focus on my music and pursue my dream of being a Rainbow Six Siege Pro League player. We'll see where life takes me next!

Have a great school year, Railroaders!

School Tool/Parent Portal

Parents/guardians have the ability to view their child's information online anytime. You can view your child's:

- Schedule
- Attendance
- Grades
- Report Cards
- 3-8 Assessment Results
- Emergency Contacts

Access to this resource can be obtained by visiting www.railroaders.net and click "School Tool" at the bottom of the page.

CALL OR TEXT: 518-499-6038 EMAIL: tips@railroaders.net

Upward Bound

Whitehall students have the opportunity to apply to one of two Upward Bound programs.

One program is being run through SUNY Adirondack and the other one is through Castleton State College. Upward Bound is a program that offers extra support to help college bound students overcome barriers to success so that they can successfully complete a four year college degree. See your school counselor for more details. For more information please visit <http://sunyacc.edu/upward-bound> for SUNY Adirondack's program

Railroaders Store

We now have a year round online store for All Railroader attire and gear!