

VIKING PRESS



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*What Legends
Are Made of*

Retired Whitehall Teacher Ken Jahn lives in a rustic home on the edge of Whitehall. While he has a number of neighbors, it seems like he lives in his own corner of the world. Jahn’s house is surrounded by green grass, gardens, and fountains. In a corner of his yard, under a tarp is his late mother’s car. Jahn enjoys being in the sound of nature, and trickling water can be clearly heard from sitting on his porch. Jahn moved to the Whitehall area in 1967. Here, he and his wife made a life for themselves, and he began teaching at the district as well as coaching. Jahn can now enjoy the peace with his wife in retirement.

Jahn retired from teaching



Pictured: Ken Jahn and his wife, Kim Jahn

last school year. His adjustment hadn’t been hard until fall started and he didn’t go back to school. He misses expressing emotions with his students and developing relationships with students. Instead of school, he’s spending his time on yard work and shows interest in writing. He likes collecting war artifacts and memorabilia, partly because of his family’s involvement in previous world conflicts. Despite having a hard time adjusting, he feels that the time was right to finish his teaching career.

He feels somewhat skeptical of retiring since he’s so used to coming to school and teaching. He says he has no real interest in traveling. Although he spends much of his time on yard work, he admits that most of his time will be spent with his wife. Another event he’s looking forward to is his daughter’s wedding. He misses his students and his career. Talking about his experiences really brings out a different person. Anyone can see that Jahn loved what he did just from talking to him; any mention of school or his students and a bright eagerness appears.

Jahn remembers how at the end of high school, in 1963, he had only a rough idea of what he wanted to do with rest of his life. Trying to get his dad out of his hair, he picked up a couple of classes including teaching courses and history. Things led from

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-What Legends Are Made Of-

one to another and he was close to becoming a teacher. On his way to unknown greatness, he met his wife and they have been together ever since. Soon after, he moved to Whitehall and accepted a position at Whitehall High School, where he would work the rest of his career. Jahn taught multiple classes and coached sports. Over his teaching career, Jahn developed ways of teaching that are now iconic of Whitehall High School. He excelled at trying to make personal relationships between himself and his students such as always calling roll. He recalls trying to make physical contact with very student every day whether that be a light tap, a high five, or a hug. He did this to develop a close relationship with his students. He said, "Kids are kids. They keep you young." He saw how the world changed technologically, especially in the education system and at his home. He feels technology will advance much more while he is retired. He acknowledged that his days were faster paced thanks to copiers and faster computers, not to mention the difference in students' lives. He knows that it is beneficial in many ways, but he is also somewhat skeptical of the technology. He said that "we have to maintain our humanity." Out of all the teachers that he has worked with, he was happiest to meet and work with James Morningstar. Jahn shares that he looked up to Morningstar for always teaching and coming to school with a great mood, despite his physical setbacks including his



Pictured: Ken Jahn and his wife, Kim Jahn

leg problems and pain. Jahn loved his career and he loved his students. He always worked very hard and formed relationships that were important to him. Despite retirement being a hard transition, he is looking forward to spending more valuable time with his family.

-Writer: Adam Warren

The Beginning of the End

As the new school year begins seniors are preparing to roll out into the real world. While earning their last credits, seniors are looking at colleges, applying for scholarships, receiving acceptance letters, and making plans on how to begin their future. Although it is only the beginning of the school year, these students have seven months to do all of this. While all of these things are important parts of the students' lives, many seniors look at these last few months as a last chance to be a kid and have fun before buckling down and beginning their futures.

In a way, each senior has their own personal bucket list of things that they would like to accomplish before leaving Whitehall High School. Some would like to improving academically, while others would like to try out a new sport, or take a trip to a place they have never been before. Many of these students have a constant fight within themselves over balancing time for fun between time for academics.

When asked what senior Jake Erdman wanted to do most before graduating high school, he said, "I would really like to visit Australia."



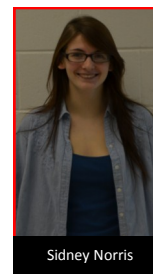
Jake Erdman

Another senior, Isaac Love said, "I hope to have a balanced senior year between fun and academics, but want to do well in order to have a great future."



Isaac Love

Senior Sidney Norris answered by saying, "I hope that my best friend, Virginia Campbell, and I will be able to take a road trip over spring break."



Sidney Norris

Hope Rillema said, "I'm excited to finish up my senior year, and head off to Morehead State University to play Division I volleyball."



Hope Rillema

(Continues to page 4)

Eric Veurink on the other hand said, "I'm excited to plan a senior trip to either Alaska or Canada, with my friends Jared Christensen and Joe VanLoon."



Eric Veurink

Whether or not students plan on attending college after graduating high school, it is still important to many of them to graduate and have a fun, eventful last year of high school. Between earning their last credits and creating a plan to begin their future, it is sometimes a fight for seniors to fit time into their schedule for fun and friends.

Throughout these last chaotic months of high school, seniors will have to create a balance in their schedules between work and fun. Some will work toward academics, while others will look forward to booking flights and hotels for senior trips. Between all of the fun and the hard work, it will be one of the most memorable years in these students' lives.

-Writer: Sam Sawyer

New Changes for a New Year

Last year, the classes of 2013, 2014, and 2015 were used to five classes in a day, trimesters, and



Freshmen Pictured Left to Right: Alyssa Myers, Kennedee Semans, Alexis Snyder, Sophia Stevens, Ian Devlieg, and Robby Jacobs.

the same start and end time all year around, but now things have changed. The high school added a sixth hour to the schedule, bells throughout the day indicating the start and end time of each period, core classes are now yearlong, a doorbell is at the two main entrances, and students get out early on Fridays. With all of the changes, it may be hard for students to adjust.

One of the big changes this year is that we have added a sixth hour to the school day. This allows students to have four core classes and two electives throughout the year. The length of a class is now 60 minutes, rather than 72 minutes long. The upperclassmen are used to having five hours in a day with longer class periods. "Only having five classes a day made the day go by faster," said junior Miranda Jacobs. "It's not really hard to adjust to the new schedule. The only difference is sixth hour seems to go by a little slower," senior Emmitt Mikkelson said.

Bells throughout the day also make up one of the many changes to the high school. At the beginning and end of each class a bell will ring. It will also ring five minutes before the start of the day, at the beginning of first hour, and at the end of the day.

"I really enjoy having bells again this year. It gives everyone an exact time to get to class and to leave class. This allows students to avoid tardies and for teachers to keep teaching right up until the bell," said junior Luke Westrate.

Another big change this year is that the core classes are yearlong, and most of the classes are based on semesters. By having core classes all year, teachers can spread their lessons out; however, by having shorter class times, teachers may not be able to fit an entire lesson in the hour. Instead of having to cram a year's worth of material into two trimesters, they can now fit it all evenly into a year. The school has also switched to a hybrid schedule, which consists of trimesters and semesters. With most electives being based on trimesters, students have a change in their schedule every twelve weeks. For upperclassmen, this may be harder for them to fit all their credits in. "The new schedule actually makes it harder to fit in your credits because you can't really retake any classes. You also have a lot of last minute cramming of classes," said senior Libby Gilhespy.

Outside of the east and west entrances, there is a silver doorbell next to the doors. This is a

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new safety feature that the high school is using. At 7:50 a.m. each day, all school doors will be locked. If a student comes to school late they will have to use the doorbell. The office will be able to see them through a security camera. They may be asked to identify themselves before the door will be unlocked for them. If someone is visiting, they will need to check in at the main office. "It's good that they have it because it makes things safer," said freshman Caleb Tallquist.

Before this year, some of us may not have even thought that getting out of school early on a weekly basis was an option; however for Whitehall, it is. This year Whitehall District Schools let their students out one hour and fifteen minutes earlier on Fridays. With these early releases, half days are eliminated. The teachers can now have professional development after school on Fridays rather than on half days. Students get to start their weekends earlier too. This new change affects students in numerous ways. "I can get my homework done earlier on Fridays," said freshman Alexis Snyder. "I enjoy this schedule better because it cuts half days which make parents take off work," sophomore Tim Hiemstra said. As one can see, the new schedule affects parents, as well as students.

With all of the new changes, there is always a negative side. "Trimesters are better because you have more change and moving of classes through the year. It's harder to fit your credits in because there is not as much time," said sophomore Hannah Uithoven. "I like that we get

out earlier on Fridays, but I don't like how there aren't any more half days," said Tallquist. "I'm not a big fan of the doorbell outside the entrances. I didn't know it was there the first week, so I went out to get my soccer stuff after school one day, and I got locked out. I had to wait until someone answered it," said Mikkelson. Jacobs said, "I have mixed feelings about the hybrid trimester schedule. We have more time to cover material in our core classes, which is definitely a plus; however, the new schedule also takes away some opportunities for certain electives."

Whitehall District Schools has made many changes to the flow of things this year. New scheduling, bells, and early releases add to this. With each new year, there will be new changes. How one handles the change, is what matters most.

- Writer: Leah Thompson

Welcoming New Faces

The start of the new school year brings many changes. Not only does a new wave of students enter the building, but a handful of staff members start a new career at Whitehall as well. This year, Whitehall High School welcomes Sara Blankstrom, Isaac Kopec, Marsha Butzer, Carrie Goodrich and Dawn Kennebeck.

Blankstrom was born and raised in Montague, Michigan. She previously worked at Tiara Yachts in Holland, Howmet Castings, and



Sara Blankstrom

Montague Area Public Schools. Blankstrom enjoys watching her two sons play sports and participating in fun outdoor

activities with her family such as skiing, kayaking, and biking. As of this year, Blankstrom is the new student services secretary at the high school. When asked how she felt about her position in the high school office, Blankstrom replied, "The staff is very nice and it is a fun environment to work in. It has been a great experience...I am very happy to be here."

Marsha Butzer recently acquired a position in the high school office as well. Although Butzer has been employed with Whitehall District Schools for 17 years, this is her first year working at the high school. Butzer previously worked in the middle school office. She decided to change positions because it was time for a change after 16 years in the middle school. She also was excited with the possibility of being able to work with Principal Dale McKenzie again.



Marsha Butzer

When asked how her job at the high school compared to her job at the middle school Butzer replied, "I was the administrative assistant at the

middle school and have the same title now that I am at the high school. There are a few things that are different, but I was lucky that so much of what I do now is the same, however, district-wide we have had to learn new student management software and new high-tech printing and copying devices, so I believe the start to the school year was a bit more hectic than normal. Also at the middle school I was not the first desk as people came into the office and at the high school I am, so that has taken a bit of getting used to, but it makes my days go super fast and I'm discovering that I really like working with this age group." Outside of school, Butzer enjoys watching her two sons play sports, camping in the summer, bonfires in the fall and spending time with a few close friends and family as often as she can.

Isaac Kopec is excited to begin teaching special education at Whitehall District Schools. He has



Isaac Kopec

spent his past eight years teaching students whose ages ranged from second through 12th grade in Muskegon Heights Public Schools. Kopec grew up in Muskegon,

attending Reeths Puffer High School followed by Muskegon Community College. He went on to earn his teaching degrees from Grand Valley University and Western Michigan University. When he is not in school, Kopec enjoys spending time with his son, Phoenix, and wife, Kendra,

weightlifting, mountain biking, golfing, and riding motorcycles and personal watercrafts.



Carrie Goodrich

Carrie Goodrich has taught as a math teacher with Whitehall District Schools for 18 years. This year, her position has

switched from part-time teaching to teaching one class of senior finance and then working in the counseling office as an at-risk advisor the rest of the day. Goodrich shared, "It is a new position for Whitehall High School. I am looking forward to the challenge of creating a new position. I will be working with a specific caseload of students. I will work closely with the teachers and students to create some strategies so that the students can be successful in their classes."

Dawn Kennebeck also has worked at Whitehall District Schools for 17 years. For the past 15 years, she was the assistant bookkeeper for the district until administration



Dawn Kennebeck

eliminated the position in July due to budget cuts. Kennebeck switched positions and now holds the title of Special Projects

Coordinator which includes overseeing the media center, in school suspension, and the computer labs. Outside of school, she enjoys camping, gardening, and reading. Kennebeck has not

always wanted to work in a school, but enjoys it so far.

-Writer: Lauren Throne

Preparing Solo

Along with the new scheduling and all of the changes in the district, some classes have been eliminated from the high school curriculum. The ACT preparation class that was taught to mainly 11th grade students last year was removed because of schedule conflicts. To make up for the ACT learning that students now lack, the state has released a new program for students to practice ACT questions in Reading, Math, Science, Writing, and English online. The benefits of the online program: it's free, it can be done anytime or any place with internet access, freshmen get to start practicing three years early, it's timed, the prompts are different, the results are instantaneous, and teachers can take students to the lab to prepare for the tests in all five subjects. Students in grade ninth through eleventh at Whitehall High School received letters in the mail with their personal username and password for this website. Teachers have also been given a list of all of the students' usernames and passwords. This allows them to check the level of their students.

-Writers Hannah Zwemer and Samantha Huebler

Biting Into Good Health

To promote students to eat healthier, Whitehall District Schools, along with other districts in the area, hosted the second annual Apple Eating Day on October 3rd. A grand total of 8,251 people participated which was short of the goal set last year. Some schools dropped out due to the lack of Michigan apples produced this year and the increased cost of the apples. Because of the rainy weather this year, students participated in this event indoors. Everyone chose an apple, and when the pre-determined time of 2:12 p.m. arrived, students all over Muskegon County bit into their apples.

This event's purpose is to promote good health and support local farmers. The idea behind starting



this event last year was to set a new world record for the most people eating an apple at the same time. The schools

that participated included all Montague Area Public Schools, Whitehall District Schools, North Muskegon Schools, Reeths-Puffer Schools, Oakridge Public Schools, Muskegon Public Schools, Holton Public Schools, and the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center. Unfortunately they did not beat their goal of 9,329 people last year or set a world record. Food Service Director Dan Gorman commented, "This event helps remind students the importance of eating healthy."

-Writers Hannah Zwemer and Samantha Huebler



Pictured left to right: Sabrina Chapman, Serenity Menzock, Kyleigh Carr.



Pictured left to right: Jordan Loudermilk and Jordan Jerome

October & November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Events to Remember

- ◆ October 30... Freshmen and Sophomore Academic Awards Ceremony
- ◆ November 1... Junior and Senior Academic Awards Ceremony
- ◆ November 8... Lip Sync
- ◆ November 9... Dodge Ball Tournament
- ◆ November 15-17... High School Musical "Beauty and the Beast" 7:30 pm and 2:30 pm on the 17
- ◆ November 19-20... Parent Teacher Conferences at 4-8:30 pm
- ◆ November 21-23 NO SCHOOL
- ◆ November 26... second term begins
- ◆ November 28... Laurie Stewart

The Link Letter

On September 8, 2012, the new freshmen joined the upperclassmen at Whitehall High School, as they do every year. A difference this year was the new Link Leaders program. This program is designed to give a small group of freshmen two mentors to guide them through their freshmen year. The leaders were selected through a process of applications and a written essay. The chosen leaders spent two days during the summer to practice challenges that they participate in with the freshmen. On the day of freshmen orientation, the leaders practiced challenges that reflected the struggles that upperclassmen have learned from experience. The Link Leaders and coordinators gave a pep talk to the freshmen and emphasized being enthusiastic and staying positive throughout high school. The Link Leader coordinators are Mr. and Mrs. Goodrich, aided by Mrs. Welsh, Mrs. McAllister, and Mrs. Mallory. The Link Leaders have had two meeting so far this school year, and have met

with their freshmen since orientation. The group hosted a tailgate party with their freshmen during a home football game. Leaders also created locker signs, paper links with their names on them, and Halloween goody bags with candy for their group members.

- *Writer: Amber Kelley*



A game played at the tailgate party at the middle school.

This newsletter is produced by the Viking Communication Class of Whitehall High School. Students in grades nine through twelve learn various skills producing this newsletter. Writing, photography, layout, interviewing, and communication skills are just some of the advantages students gain from participating in this class.

- VALHALLA -

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