

Mary-Michael O'Hara, Wando High School - Writer of the Year Contest

I remember sitting at my dining room table, opening up last year's book and being in awe. My excitement ripped through the wrapping paper and my breath hitched as I flipped through the pages. There are few experiences where you feel truly humbled, and your heart is pouring out with genuine gratitude as you physically hold something you and your staff have worked so hard on. In the midst of all of that joy, I felt myself creeping into this clandestine sadness. It was about two months into quarantine, and in that moment, I realized that book may have been my first and last contribution to Wando's *Legend*. The thought made my stomach go into knots.

When our staff began to meet this year, we were all very hopeful yet intuitive to the idea that it was going to be double the work to publish a book up to our standards. My challenge as a writer was figuring out how to get into contact with people when the normal route of pulling kids out of class or meeting up after school were not options anymore. Also, how could I find and write stories where the forefront of the topic was not just the pandemic over and over again? There was fear and confusion hindering all of my creativity and execution in theory, but the minute I set to work I remember feeling so at peace and exhilarated. I was able to write again. I had been missing it for so long.

I began to realize there was an opportunity here. My chiefs established our book's theme as The New Normal. Now, the entire world shares the sentiment that things have not been normal for a while and they never will be again. I thought of what a normal story would be. The words of my yearbook advisor have enchanted my mind from the minute I heard them back in my journalism class sophomore year: everyone has a story.

Throughout this last year themes of community and change have floated through neighborhoods, social media, tv commercials, schools and yes, writing. There was so much extra time that many of us did not know what to do with ourselves. If you turned to any form of media at all in the last 18 months you would see so much vocalization. These months have taught me that, in an era where you can blurt every waking thought to millions of thousands of people in seconds, humanity has become incredibly outspoken, but we have stopped listening.

Your main job as a writer, surprisingly, is to listen. Everyone has a story to tell. That opportunity I talked about? It was to be a good listener. So many students at my school were left without closure, without attention, without connection, without fulfillment during the times they needed it most. Being a writer for *Legend* this year was almost therapeutic. Students and staff would articulate to me exciting adventures that happened despite new restrictions. A friend who's mental illnesses were a bigger battle than COVID. How the music industry affects women. Life that went on despite things not being normal. This year I learned to be a truly good listener, knowing everyone has a story to tell, and made it my responsibility to take my love of writing and give my school a taste of humanity's, our, New Normal.



far from GOD

Senior strengthens faith while battling mental health

The spring season sparked a time of mindfulness for **Caroline Holland**, 12. She was finally in a good place with her mental health and felt like herself again. Then COVID-19 hit and everything started to get canceled.

Panic rose. Anxiety crept in with impeding thoughts. Then she relapsed.

"I felt myself start to be like, 'What's going on? This isn't my plan.' The second I [relapsed], I started sobbing," Holland said. "I called my friends [saying,] 'I don't know what I did and I don't know why I did it.'"

Holland's struggle with mental health began at an early age, as she suffered from depression, self-harm, anxiety, and body dysmorphia. During challenging times such as these, people often cling to their faith to find comfort and guidance. Holland's involvement with Christianity has been a major aspect of her life ever since she was a child and baptized at five years old. Her faith began to falter, though, as Holland's struggles grew.

"I just kind of lost myself. I was so far from God at that point. I did all the steps in my head of what I needed to do [and] be, but I was like, 'God's not here. He's not helping me. I'm alone. I'm gonna to fix it without him,'" Holland said. "That's where my head was at all of ninth and tenth grade.

Throughout that time, I was [an] FCA leader, I went to church, I talked in a small group. It

blows my mind [how] I was putting on a front."

Despite the benefit it would bring, seeking help with her struggles was an almost impossible task for Holland.

"I'm a perfectionist. I didn't want to admit anything was wrong [or] appear weak," Holland said. "I struggled with self-harm during ninth grade. I [had] panic attacks any

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time I would try to [do something]."

During freshman year, Holland met **Skye Slater**, 12. They clicked instantly, and explored their appreciation of faith as Holland opened up about her struggles.

"It's always hard and scary 'cause you don't know how to help, [or] know how bad things are," Slater said. "I could tell she was really busy and stressed all the time, but she is very good at being presentable."

Junior year arrived and Holland's anxiety grew worse. Panic attacks and sobbing fits became familiar foes.

"I was so embarrassed. I talked to mentors at my church and they were like, 'Are you

okay?' I was like, 'Yeah, my relationship has never been better with God.' I was hiding, honestly. I was ashamed of what I thought God would say," Holland said.

Spring 2020 came and, again, Holland convinced herself she was fine. After relapsing with self-harm, Holland was able to find solace in her new church, her friends, and especially her brother, **Nicholas Holland**, grad.

"Caroline and I had always been close, [but] for the longest time I didn't know about any of her mental health struggles. I felt like I let her down in a way. But it also brought us more together [since] I [had] been through some similar things," Nicholas said.

Soon Caroline made the decision to be baptized again. This time it would be her choice, opening her up to a healthier chapter.

"Since that point, I have been more intentional about my faith. [It brought] me closer to God. I still [struggle.] You build a reputation and you don't want to tell people," Holland said. "I think that's something Christians are not very open about—you're never done with the battle. I will forever preach accepting help. If I had done it [earlier], it would have been so much better."

Story by Mary-Michael O'Hara Designer Henry Jackson

INSIDE OUR BIBLES



ROBERT SILCOX

Returning FCA member, **Robert Silcox**, 12, shares his favorite passage. "My favorite verse is definitely Luke 9:24 because it focuses on how we need to put others before ourselves," Silcox said; photo by s. brownie



KELLI RICHARDSON

Longtime FCA member, **Kelli Richardson**, 11, voices her favorite Bible verse. "One verse that I think about every day is Romans 5:8 because it really captures how much God truly cares about us," Richardson said; photo by s. brownie

ciao ITALY

Pandemic forces student athletic trainer to move back home from Europe

JOB WELL DONE: (below) While working the sidelines, **Kayley Mims**, 9, takes a break to fill up water bottles. "I was filling up water bottles for the football players. It's not the best job to have on the sidelines, but it's a good break from running around. From time to time, players will get turf burn or rub off some of their skin and will start bleeding. We then have to wrap them up," Mims said; photo by a. shwinn

GATOR GRIP: (far below) **Emma Fair**, 10, and **Brooke Sneed**, 12, load equipment into the Gator for practice. "The spine boarding equipment is very helpful in case of a back or neck injury and provides safety and stability until the EMS are able to arrive and take over. The Gator is what we use on a daily basis to bring equipment to practice and game sites," Fair said; photo by b. burke



While attending classes at a boarding school in Italy, **Brooke Sneed**, 12, overheard conversations about the COVID-19 virus. Talk. Jokes. People pondering what-if scenarios. But those soon became reality as she was forced to fly back home, leaving everything behind. "It happened so quickly. I left, and in that week all of a sudden [COVID-19] was super serious there. It's crazy," Sneed said.

In December 2019, Sneed was granted a scholarship to attend the Canadian College of Italy in Lanciano, Chieti, but she never imagined her attendance would be cut short by a pandemic. Italy has been a major hotspot for the virus since February 2020, causing almost two million deaths and forcing the country to go into an extreme lockdown.

"I was planning to be there until June, but I had to leave in mid-March. We [were] only [going] back to our home country for a week, so it was more of a spring break at first," Sneed said. "But then we kept prolonging it and we never got to go back."

Despite her shortened experience, Italy affirmed Sneed's love of foreign cultures and traveling abroad. She wants to combine this love of traveling with her adoration for caring for people's health as

part of her career. Sneed has been developing her future in the medical field throughout her high school years.

"I have been a part of the athletic training program for three years now, and [this school year], I was co-head of the training department," Sneed said. "I really like the medical classes and it gives you hands-on experience."

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Bella Linville, 12, a close friend of Sneed, has seen how her unique attributes make Sneed stand out.

"She's very genuine and cares about everyone. She always makes sure that everyone is included," Linville said. "That translates to athletic training because she applies that same [care] with it too. She's a hard worker as well which definitely translates."

Attending the boarding school in Italy gave Sneed a taste of submerging herself in another culture while getting to expand her knowledge, which made her leaving that much more hard.

"My uncle went [to the Canadian College of Italy.] I have always wanted to [study in Italy.] I'm interested in doing

traveling nursing [or] doctors without borders. Something to experience different cultures," Sneed said. "I was really disappointed because it was a really great experience. I knew [COVID-19] was really bad there, but it was sad."

Over the past three years, the head of the athletic training program, **Katie Parker**, has watched Sneed grow, and bore witness to the strength Sneed brought to the program.

"[I] could tell in her demeanor [and] everything she did on the sidelines that she actually genuinely loved being there," Parker said. "[I saw] how well she interacted with the athletes. She's a go-getter, she takes initiative, and delegates things as well."

Both her development in the athletic training program and her experience in Italy has motivated Sneed to further her journey. Not even a pandemic could deter her from applying to out-of-state and international colleges to pursue medicine.

"I think [the pandemic] has confirmed the need for [medical professionals] and how there's such a big responsibility to impact people and help people out," Sneed said. "I definitely appreciate my experience and my future. [Making] the most out of everything."

**Story by Mary Michael O'Hara
Designer Elizabeth Meis**



DRY-FIT SHIRT

LATEX GLOVES

POWER FLEX

BLOOD BUSTER

HAND SANITIZER

FIRST-AID BAG

what's in my KIT

Co-head student athletic trainer, **Brooke Sneed**, 12, shows off the necessities for taking care of athletes on and off the field

the name does not make THE SHOW

Media Tech program overcomes challenges, rebrands student news

After a 15-year run, the reign of Tribe Talk came to an end in September 2020—or, at least, in name. Receiving the news the show would need to represent both Wando and Lucy Beckham High School, the Media Tech program braced themselves for the journey of rebranding the show.

Co-news director, **Isabella Davis**, 12, was sad to leave behind the name Tribe Talk, but quickly prepared herself, adding rebranding to the list of growing challenges facing the staff throughout the year.

“[It was] a long time running with that name. Tribe Talk is on everything. It’s on our graphics, our YouTube, Instagram, all that stuff, so we knew we were gonna have to start from scratch on a lot of things,” Davis said. “With that in mind, we need[ed] to figure out the [new] name. We [voted on] the name ECSN: East Cooper Student News.”

Trinity Hutzler, 12, head editor of ECSN, saw an opportunity with the rebranding to take the show’s artistic direction to a new level.

“A lot of times student news can come off very cheesy and unprofessional. I wanted ours to be different. I tried to make it a retro theme

even though it’s a modern show. I think the contrasts [make] it different than other years,” Hutzler said. “I hope [ECSN] becomes a part of that culture again, like Tribe Talk.”

Alongside Davis, director, **Paris King**, 12, wanted to create a fun experience and work environment for her staff. However, she soon found herself facing another challenge to

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overcome: a majority brand new staff.

“For our first episode it was difficult. We figured out who didn’t know how [broadcast news operates], and we helped them learn how,” King said. “It’s been tough, but we’ve adapted. I honestly didn’t know how I was going to change things up, because some people were online and some people were in person. Now we’re more experienced with what we’re doing, and it’s been really fun.”

Shortly after the staff began to understand their roles and work together in harmony, they were faced with the news that their adviser and mentor, **David Lemacks**, would be leaving in a week.

“It was a big shock. After everything, we were not expecting that. I remember when he was saying it, I totally thought he was kidding.

It was kind of a shock to him too. It was bittersweet,” Davis said. “[Hearing] our new adviser, Mr. **[Chris] Terry**, [give] his perspective has been great, just having a fresh, younger look on everything. He’s helped set the boundaries that we needed to set. He helped me grow as a director.”

As the staff worked their way through a list of challenges, Davis found herself seeing an overall positive within the production season.

“It is self-paced and it’s us. We’re running it. It is us. We’re doing this whole show. We stumble sometimes. I think those are the moments where it’s like, ‘Well you just have to pick up your feet and learn it for yourself,’” Davis said. “It wasn’t like we were afraid Tribe Talk would forever be forgotten, or it wouldn’t be as good. A name is just a name.”

**Story by Mary Michael O'Hara
Designer Lauren Guest**

wonders on the WATER

Sailor travels abroad, deepening his love of being on the water, and faces new changes to sailing

While on night watch in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, avid sailor **William Hussey**, 11, watched as the shooting stars and vivid meteor showers dance across the night sky.

This past summer, Hussey spent 50 days on a boat traveling along the United States East Coast, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Bahamas.

"We saw [the same] 19 people on the boat for 50 days. We only went ashore to get diesel and food," Hussey said. "We'd go snorkeling, we'd go diving, we went hiking on St. John National Park in the United States Caribbean."

As well as exploring nature's wonders, Hussey was able to get firsthand experience working on the boat, including conducting four-hour night watches. Some of these watches required adapting to dangerous situations.

"We had to hunker down in the middle of the Chesapeake [Bay] and wait out [Hurricane Isaias], [but] I like testing the boat. The captain was telling stories of sailing in 70 knots of wind, so he was completely prepared for it," Hussey said.

Some students participate in internships or summer camps to learn more about their passions. But for Hussey, this trip served as far more than that. It was a memorable experience full of sites, friends, and opportunities to expand

his knowledge about traveling on the water.

"This is one of the things that I plan on devoting my life to, [being on] the water," Hussey said. "I'm looking at [attending] Maritime schools that have sailing teams. I've done trips with them and met ex-Olympic sailors."

Sailing quickly became an important part of Hussey's life when his parents took him and his younger brother to sailing summer camp. He made it onto the school's sailing team as a middle schooler, and from there his appreciation for

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sailing grew beyond himself.

"The high school and college side [of sailing] has been growing at good rates," Hussey said. "That's something that has sustained nationally. [On] the younger side there is a generation of [people wanting to race]."

Unlike other extracurriculars, sailing is able to resume its season as scheduled. Sailing teammate, **Issy Good**, 12, said that the new health regulations did not alter much for their team. One big change is sailing with the same assigned mate each practice.

"We have sailing bibs that we keep on [as masks], and we have to be more responsible and bring our own [supplies]," Good said. "[Also,] some people went to Lucy Beckham [High], so we don't have them on our team anymore."

Co-team-captain of this year's sailing team, **Ian Bosse**, 12, has been working to make sure that the team has been as active as possible since they are no longer allowed to travel to races.

"That was a little disappointing, but we've worked our way around it since there are a couple of teams in Charleston," Bosse said. "We've been able to set up races with them each weekend, and make our own bracket for regattas."

Despite the changes to the season and routine, the dynamic among the team has been smooth sailing as the team has kept their bond tightly knotted together.

"After every practice, we still keep our distance, [but] continue our traditions, like eating dinners together. We're still making sure to keep the team spirit [high]," Bosse said.

Hussey's love of being on the water remains as strong as the team's bond, and after his trip this summer, he knows it is an aspect of his life he will never leave behind.

"I love it," Hussey said. "There's no other feeling like it. It's awesome."

**Story by Mary-Michael O'Hara
Designer Elizabeth Meis**



READY TO GO: (above) **Issy Good**, 12, and **Laura Johnston**, 12, tack up for a day on the water. "We were setting the boat up to get it ready to sail. I was excited to sail because it was windy that day," Good said; photo by j. grech



SAILING on FILM

William Hussey, 11, and **Tyler Pazant**, 12, sailed down the East Coast and around the Caribbean during the summer of 2020, capturing the trip on disposable cameras



photos by w. hussey

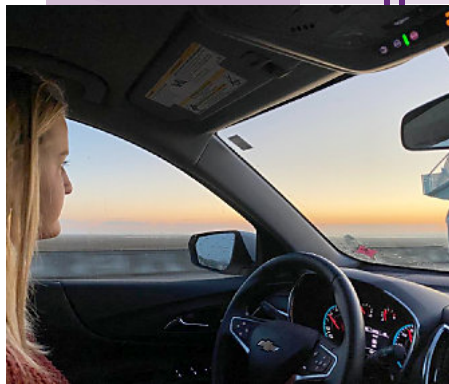


SOUNDTRACK

ASTROWORKOUT:

(above) Working out on the squat rack, **Riley McConnell**, 12, and **Zaria Ascue**, 12, spot each other through sets. "I always listen to music when I workout. My favorite workout song is *Houstonfornication* by Travis Scott," Ascue said; photo by h. jackson

TO OUR



HEADING SOUTH:

(above) Driving on the IOP Connector, **Caroline Richvalsky**, 11, enjoys listening to country music at sunset. "Country music is my go-to (choice) at sunset. I love Zach Bryan and Tyler Childers so much," Richvalsky said; photo by h. duffy

LIFE



SPIRIT OF THE RADIO:

(above) On the boat with friends, **Adger Johnson**, 11, enjoys listening to classic '80s and '90s music. "I love bands like Rush and the Rolling Stones. Music from then is so timeless. My go-to song if I had to pick is *The Spirit of the Radio* from Rush," Johnson said; photo by h. duffy

exploration and expectations OF MUSIC

Young artist finds love in creating music despite trepidations

For centuries, music has been an art form full of revolution, inspiration, and controversy. Eras in time are defined by the sounds played and listened to, and the influence of the artists behind the work.

In the 21st century, it seems music has no boundaries, yet tension remains high over what music is, who can make music, and how music should be made. For **Bella Wethington**, 11, the elements of music— songwriting, vocals, composition, production— exist as one and have been her source of comfort and expression.

"It started with songwriting. Then just getting serious with the guitar and my piano. It was just this compilation of learning things from different places," Wethington said.

"Whenever I start to think of a song, it happens out of nowhere. I'll be in the shower and run out and write something."

Songwriting serves as a tool to help Wethington clear and organize her thoughts while creating something beautiful.

"I like writing in a poetic way, because it's just kind of how my brain works," Wethington said. "The first time I wrote a song that I was really proud of was sophomore year. I went into chorus and I performed it for my classmates."

During the summer, Wethington worked with a long-time family friend and producer Brendan Cady to integrate her love for songwriting and mixing instruments to produce a polished song.

"She had this song idea [and] we sat down and sort of crafted a fundamental flow of how she wanted the song to go. What surprised me was her clarity of the backstory that she had in her piece. She had a strong emphasis on exactly what she wanted the song to say," Cady said.

As a young artist, Wethington finds herself pressured by the

stigma surrounding classical composition versus production.

"There's definitely a stigma about not going into a studio and recording versus setting up your own stuff and doing your own thing. I feel like a lot of independent artists are getting away from record labels. Everybody's just changing the ways that's gonna look in the future. I think that's something that should be changed," Wethington said.

As women like Taylor Swift and Britney Spears have shared their stories about their experiences, Wethington finds herself reflecting on what it takes to make it as an artist in the music industry.

"Everybody expects something. It's like that for every artist, but it's especially like that for women. Everybody wants to see something different, and it's not just about sound, it's about appearances. [It's] really frustrating, because they want a different person. It's scary," Wethington said.

"Subconsciously I'm always trying to make music in different genres. If I put out my own music, I feel like I'd have to be prepared to change everything to make it last."

Despite the trepidation artists can feel about finding their voice as a writer and musician, Wethington remains passionate, and her talent is evident to her closest friend, **Ryan Huber**, 11.

"Seeing someone who's able to write whole songs so quickly and make it sound good is super motivating as someone who [loves music]. When it comes to editing notes, [she transforms things] you wouldn't even think about, but impact the entire sound of the song," Huber said. "She really isn't super public with any of the stuff she works on, [but] she's super talented as an artist."

Story by Mary-Michael O'Hara
Designer Henry Jackson

"EVERYBODY WANTS TO SEE SOMETHING DIFFERENT, AND IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT SOUND, IT'S ABOUT APPEARANCES."



COME TOGETHER: (above) During a class playing of *Bad Moon Rising* by Creedence Clearwater Revival, **Raquel Doubal**, 12, moves through chord patterns. "I love when the class comes together as a group to all play songs, whether or not we are all on the same level it always sounds great," Doubal said; photo by a. morral

learn to play



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: (below) During guitar class, **Terrell Miller**, 11, strums out a G Chord. "I started playing about five months ago and guitar class is great because having a dedicated block everyday to practice makes learning much easier," Miller said; photo by a. morral; art by h. jackson

