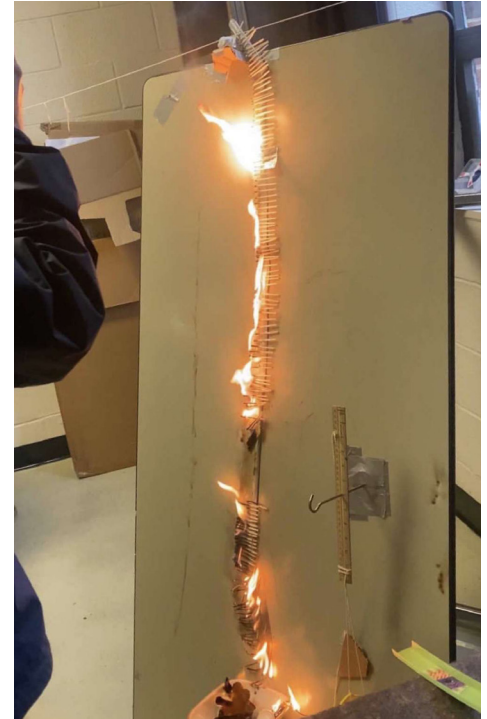




CHS Physics Class Wins Knox County Competition

The Carter High School Physics class won big a few weeks ago when they won a county-wide physics competition. The competition was called the Rube Goldberg Machine Competition, and the students had to create an effective machine of some sort and submit a video of the machine to UT. The students worked very hard to accomplish their goal and even beat schools like Farragut High School, which came in second place, and Anderson County High School, which came in third place. Students like Kylee Condra, who was in the class, feel ecstatic that they won this hard-earned challenge. Condra stated, “We split up in groups and designed our own parts of the machine. We eventually put all the parts together and recorded every trial until it worked properly. I know, as a class, we were all very excited when we won because we all worked extremely hard on it.” According to

I’ana Roberts, another student in the class, “I am super proud of my classmates and me. I’m just excited to see what else we could and can do.” Condra and Roberts volunteered the information that when they submitted their video of their machine, they put the song “Waterfalls” by TLC in the background. They jokingly admitted that this was the reason they won. No matter how they won, they are very proud to be winners of this competition. Condra and Roberts are excited to see what they do next in Mr. Adamson’s physics class.



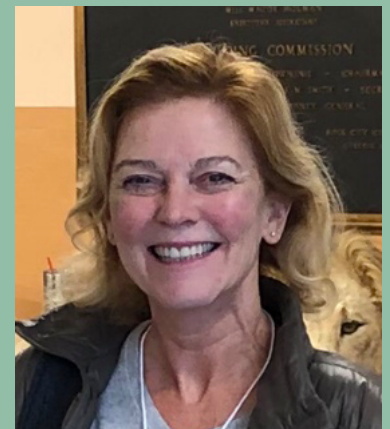
Left: Kylee Condra works on the physics class’s machine.

Above: A flaming chain reaction is a part of the machine.

Vision Specialist Ms. Hartmann Provides Important Role at Carter High School

Vision specialists accompany blind and visually impaired students in public schools and assist them in many ways. Gretchen Hartmann is one of them who works at Carter High School; she assists Zoe Strope, a student at Carter High. Gretchen arrives at Carter in the afternoon to assist Zoe in algebra, a more difficult class for a low-vision student, and then uses a few minutes of the next period to teach braille, independence skills,

and other blind-specific skills and concepts. “When I’m not with Zoe, I am working with other students,” explains Ms. Hartmann. “Right now, I have about fifteen students in six schools.” Ms. Hartmann also stated that Carter has done an excellent job accommodating for her and Zoe’s needs. “The teachers and staff are helpful and friendly, the administration makes sure we have what we need, and the students have all been very accepting.”



Above: Ms. Gretchen Hartmann, Vision Specialist

CHS LGBTQ Students Have Unique High School Experiences

Many LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) students attend Carter High School and have very unique experiences in the school. While all students have different lives that are unique to themselves, students in the LGBTQ community have vastly different experiences from heterosexual and cisgendered (i.e. identifying as the gender assigned at birth) students. One certain issue the students deal with is acceptance. Students who do not identify with a part of the LGBTQ community do not usually struggle with this. For example, many LGBTQ students at CHS remember how a few years ago when several students started the Equality Club (a club that was intended to be a safe space for students who felt they did not fit in, including LGBTQ students), the presence of such a club and its use of the pride flag created a huge controversy at the school. This is only one example of LGBTQ students struggling to be accepted. But acceptance is not the only struggle or experience the students deal with. Jason Dassaro, a junior student, is transgender. He came from another East Tennessee school and says the bullying, harassment, and overall vibe of the school he came from was awful. He was bullied for being part of the LGBTQ community and struggled with the experiences he had there. According to Jason, Carter is “pretty accepting overall, no aggression at all. Walking down the hall, you couldn’t tell the difference. Everyone is integrated. Everyone mixes with everyone.” He has not experienced any homophobia directed at himself while at the school, even if he is accidentally dead-named (called by the name

he went by before he came out as trans) by some people. At the school he came from, he would be misgendered and dead-named on purpose. Another place Jason feels accepted in is the color guard. The band of Carter High School is very accepting towards Jason. As a part of the color guard, Jason is made to feel accepted and safe. He wears the male guard uniform, is called by his preferred name and pronouns, and is overall completely accepted in the guard. It is much different from his last school--in a very good way. Students are not the only ones with unique experiences. Ms. Sharp, color guard instructor and junior English teacher, considers herself part of the community. She prides herself on creating a safe space for all students, including those in the LGBTQ community. Even though she has only been teaching here for a couple years, Ms. Sharp has noticed some very large differences in the atmosphere at Carter towards students of the LGBTQ community. “Some students at Carter are more blatant in the harassment of LGBTQ students,” Sharp commented when asked about one difference between the schools she has worked at and Carter. At another school she worked at in East Tennessee, the student population is larger, which means the LGBTQ student population is larger as well. This allows those who are part of the community to be more accepted in the school. On the other hand, she also taught in a small school in Georgia. With such a small student body, LGBTQ students are very few, and the school in Georgia was not very accepting of the LGBTQ community. The small number of LGBTQ students caused those who are there to be bullied,

according to Sharp. She concluded that Carter was what would be considered a middle of the road experience. There isn’t a horrible amount of bullying and harassment, but it does exist. Overall, Ms. Sharp sees Carter as the normal type of experience for most LGBTQ students and continues to do her best to support and accept those in the community. Through these varied perspectives, it’s clear that LGBTQ students of Carter high school have had good and bad experiences. But overall, Carter High is generally accepting towards them.

This article is the first of two articles about LGBTQ life at CHS. Read the newsletter next week for the second entry.

Carter Corps News is a product of the CHS Journalism class.

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