

1945

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear HILLCREST ACADEMY community,

AS I LOOK BACK ON THIS PAST YEAR, I am amazed at all we have had to endure, all that we have accomplished, and all the ways we have been blessed. We have experienced both ends of the spectrum, the highs and the lows. This has, without question, been a challenging year for all of us, dealing with Covid-19 all the way to the end, and in so many ways we could not have foreseen. We have also experienced the extravagant monetary support of our school community, evidenced by the incredible outpouring of financial support for our June 23rd Giving Day, as we closed our fiscal year. Our people have been with us through thick and thin, and for this, we are so grateful. Once again, and as promised to us (II Cor. 12:9), God's grace has been sufficient.

I am very appreciative of the work our Return to Learn Task Force Team put in during the summer of 2020 to prepare for the school year. Our goal was to stay on campus throughout the school year, but we also needed to be prepared to teach online as well as implement a hybrid approach involving both in-person and online learning. We achieved our goal and being together in-person for the entire school year was a major victory, especially as we consider many schools around us were not. The Task Force Team made up of faculty, staff, students, and board members, each played a vital role on the team. I cannot thank this group enough. An incredible amount of energy and time went into planning and making decisions. I am grateful for the assistance received from so many people.

It was wonderful to have a much more normal graduation to wrap up our school year. I am grateful for each of our 51 students, and proud of the Class of 2021, as this group did an outstanding job of navigating their way, and setting a positive tone for our student body through the year. We wish each of our seniors the very best as they transition, and we pray for God's abiding peace to be present with them in the days ahead.

A new initiative this school year was Homeroom. Homeroom has strengthened the connections between students and faculty members. We did this with the idea that should we need to go online at some point, the extra layer of support from faculty would serve our students well. We worked at incorporating social and emotional learning into Homeroom, and at the same time supported the students academically. Overall, it seemed like a positive change, even though we did not have to go online.

A good amount of our faculty in-service time was spent unwrapping the Standards, as we continue to bring our curriculum in line with the Iowa Core. An important benefit of this work is that we get things in place for teacher changes. This work is not yet done, but we are at a much better place than we were two years ago. Additionally, we are continuing to work at integration of Christian faith into the curriculum, and will give it focused attention in the 2021-22 school year.

Thank you to our Operating Board for the many ways they assisted through the year. I am grateful that the board and administrative team worked well together, and that we had the full support of the board as we worked through the many difficult decisions. Despite it all, we were truly blessed to have been able to do so much this past year, and for that we are thankful.

In Christ,

Dwight Gingerich, *PRINCIPAL*

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

The Hillcrest Academy community thanks all those who donated to the Annual Fund in the 2020 calendar year. The Annual Fund is the school's mission critical fundraising effort. The majority of our development efforts are directed towards the Annual Fund. Essentially, the Annual Fund is what helps us deliver The Hillcrest Experience to each of our students year after year.

Normally this second issue of the year would feature all the Annual Fund donors from the previous calendar year listed by graduating class. However, currently we are transitioning between Customer Relationship Management software and we can't guarantee the list we would generate would be 100% accurate. So to not risk missing someone, we will not be posting the list in this issue. Those of you who gave generously in 2020 know who you are and please know we are thankful for you.

We also would like to recognize those local churches who have continued to support us throughout so much uncertainty. The Congregational Support Plan (CSP) was implemented in 1995 to provide an equitable way in which area churches were able to assist with tuition costs for students within their respective congregations. Hillcrest Academy is considered by many as a local ministry and an extension of the work of the church. The CSP provides a way for supporting church members of all ages to participate in the life of the school in a material way. Thank you to the following churches and their members: East Union Mennonite Church, First Mennonite Church, Kalona Mennonite Church, Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Washington Mennonite Church, Wellman Mennonite Church, and West Union Mennonite Church. Without your generous support, we couldn't do what we do.



HILLCREST ACADEMY
ACADEMICS that INSPIRE. FAITH that LEADS.

HILLCREST ACADEMY
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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VOLUME 52 | ISSUE 02 | SUMMER 2021

PUBLISHER: Jeremy Ours
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ADMINISTRATION: Dwight Gingerich '76 | Principal, Rebecca Beachy Miller '93, Leanne Bender, Theresa Blossom '95, Chris Nachtigall, Jeremy Ours

welcome back! homecoming & alumni family weekend

Join us back on campus for **HOMECOMING & ALUMNI FAMILY WEEKEND ON OCTOBER 1-2, 2021!** This year, we hope to include all the traditional events like the alumni athletic events, the Joetown Classic 5K and the annual Pork Supper, plus we are planning to unveil the commissioned painting, Hillcrest by Kara Slaubaugh '11. This was originally planned for the 75 year anniversary celebration, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we needed to postpone the event. Now that restrictions are lifted, we are planning to try again. Kara is finishing up her painting this summer and it will be on display during Homecoming & Alumni Family Weekend. Signed, limited edition prints will be available to purchase and details will be communicated over the next few months. Stay tuned and don't miss your chance to take home not only a wonderful piece of art, but a meaningful and visual part of school history.

Another celebration will take place as we recognize members of the 1996 State Runner-up Cross Country team at the Joetown Classic, as well as the 1996 Fall Soccer State Runner-up team at the alumni soccer game. Join parents, grandparents, and former players as we celebrate the 25 year anniversaries of their accomplishments.



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YOUR LIVES ARE IMPORTANT TO US!
Please send your announcements, change of address or other communications to us via email, website, social media, postal mail or phone.
EMAIL: contact@hillcrestravens.org
WEBSITE: hillcrestravens.org/contact

THE COVER

A Kalona Bar makes everything better. We celebrated the beginning of a new school year with the opportunity to be together on campus by enjoying Kalona Bars together after the first day of classes. We enjoyed Kalona Bars together again after the last day of classes, as we celebrated the end of an unprecedented year and rejoiced in all the things we were able to do, feeling God's blessing on our school. That's a lot of Kalona Bars . . . 152 to be exact! *Garrett Durlinger '22, Reverie 2020-21*

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BRUIT

LIFE MOMENTS

FUTURE ALUMNI

BEAU MICHAEL to **KELSEY (BRINNING) '10** & **BRYCE STOUT** | FEBRUARY 7, 2021
 CALLAN REED to **ASENATH (LIBBY) '08** & **CRAIG SHETLER '08** | FEBRUARY 24, 2021
 NORA LELAND to **LAUREN (SWANTZ) '14** & **LELAND ROPP** | FEBRUARY 25, 2021
 MAVEN MARGARET to **ELYSIA (STASTNY) '14** & **WADE STUTZMAN** | MARCH 2, 2021
 THEA JOY to **ROSANNA & TYLER COBLENTZ '04** | MARCH 10, 2021
 LYDIA MARIE to **NICOLE (HERSHBERGER) '10** & **MATTHEW COSTELLO** | MARCH 12, 2021
 GRAHAM OSCAR to **KRISTI & JON MILLER '02** | MARCH 17, 2021
 RUSSELL ANDREW to **KATIE & ADAM YODER '00** | MARCH 17, 2021
 KATANA ZIGGY to **JESSICA ZIEG & DAVID RHODES '99** | APRIL 15, 2021
 NASH DOUGLAS to **NICOLE (ROPP) '08** & **NATHAN ELLIOTT** | MAY 6, 2021
 JACK LEICHTY to **CHRISTINA (LEICHTY) '04** & **CAM MICHELS** | MAY 7, 2021
 MENNO DAVID to **AMANDA (BEACHY) '03** & **JON (LEICHTY) '97** BLEICHTY | JULY 1, 2021
 NURIA LYN to **MAYA KEHR YODER F '11-21** & **MATTHEW YODER '05** | JULY 12, 2021

WEDDING BELLS

LINNEA SLABAUGH '10 & **JARRON STUTZMAN '10** | MAY 30, 2021
 APRIL NISSLEY '06 & **BRIAN SNIDER** | JUNE 16, 2021
 JUSTIN BOLLER '13 & **CAITLYN MONEYSMITH** | JUNE 19, 2021
 MITCHELL DREY F '20- & **EMILY HAMMEL** | JUNE 27, 2021
 JENNA BOLLER '16 & **JARED OYER** | JULY 3, 2021
 AARON ERB '10 & **MICHELLE MURPHY** | JULY 10, 2021

IN MEMORIAM

SAMUEL ZOOK '60 | JULY 20, 2020
 MARLIN ZOOK '54 | DECEMBER 4, 2020
 LUCY (GINGERICH) HOSTETLER '57, S '58-'59 | JANUARY 19, 2021
 JAMES ZOOK '56 | FEBRUARY 9, 2021
 OLIVER YUTZY '51, S '61-'62 | FEBRUARY 24, 2021
 CANDIE COOL '87 | FEBRUARY 25, 2021
 CINDY (SHETLER) '73 LITWILLER | MARCH 20, 2021
 KENNETH KING '56 | APRIL 3, 2021
 FRANCIS (GINGERICH) '64 NAFZIGER | APRIL 15, 2021
 JOSEPH HOSTETLER '56 | APRIL 24, 2021
 LOWELL MILLER '70 | MAY 31, 2021

The varsity basketball team from 1964 comes together before a game. This past year was certainly an unusual school year for all of us, but TOGETHER we got through it. We wouldn't be where we are today without the support of our community. By God's grace, together we can do anything. 1964 Reverie



IN-PERSON ON-CAMPUS EVERYDAY

EVEN under the unprecedented circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic, Hillcrest Academy was still able to show that our unique way of preparing students for the world—had a positive impact on our students and community. Despite the many challenges we faced during the 2020-21 school year, there is truly much to celebrate and be thankful for.

OUR traditional fundraising meals are not only important for our students to earn funds, but they are a vital and historic connection to our community. With restrictions in place due to Covid-19, we needed to pivot to new logistics around the Pork Supper, Chili Supper, and Turkey Steak Supper in order to accommodate hungry supporters, but also keep everyone safe. Adapting to offer these three meals for 'take-out only' seemed to be a successful way to be able to keep our community intact.

TAKE-OUT MEALS

EVEN when we needed to implement online learning at the beginning of the pandemic, we continued to meet three times a week for a virtual chapel. Despite our best efforts, being together for in-person worship was better. Because of our spacious auditorium, Celebration Hall we were able to continue having daily chapels, all while keeping everyone socially distanced. Daily worship is such a big part of the unique experience we offer students. The same can be said for our weekly small groups, which meet on Tuesdays. Small groups are just one more way we're growing into the people we want to be. The purpose of the groups is to strengthen our spiritual walks with each other through accountability, support, topic discussion, mixing of ages, and ideas.

'PROVOKE TO LOVE' HEBREWS 24



20

84

PEOPLE

2,165

FRITTERS

1,250

MEALS

100'S

MEETINGS

105

CHAPELS

SERVICE AND LEARNING TERM (SALT) is an innovative learning experience which takes place outside the normal classroom and is most often off campus. Due to the pandemic, we weren't able to do SALT as we typically would, but were thankful to be able to offer this unique approach to a well-rounded education to our students. This year, our Special Emphasis Week was called Adulting Days. Our students learned life skills, which will benefit them once they move beyond our campus. Students learned everything from the ins and outs of buying a car and how to maintain it, to renting or owning an apartment, to cooking healthy meals not only in the kitchen but over a campfire or grill.

SALT & ADULTING DAYS

OUR apple fritters have been a Kalona Fall Festival tradition since 1974, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Fall Festival was cancelled last year. That didn't stop our PTO from still accommodating the community's taste for these delicious fall treats. Once in the fall and again in the spring, along with other food vendors, which gathered at Kalona Mennonite Church to serve an anxious community craving their traditional fall favorites.

STILL APPLE FRITTERS

IN mid-September, we were able to offer free lunches for all students made possible by funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA will continue reimbursing schools for free meals to all students regardless of their income through the 2021-22 school year.

FREE LUNCHES FOR ALL

LOTS OF ZOOM

DURING the Covid-19 pandemic, online meetings and online learning became commonplace for almost everyone. Hillcrest Academy was no exception. Even though we were in-person for most classes, we still utilized the Zoom online platform to include students in quarantine, to stream chapel services, and to conduct general meetings such as our Operating Board meetings.

WHILE many schools were not participating in athletics due to their need for online learning, we were fortunate to continue to participate in every sport we offer, with very minimal cancellations. We are proud of how our student athletes embraced the challenges and made the best of our circumstances.

ATHLETIC EVENTS CONTINUE

OPTIONS

13

CAST

16

LUNCHES

5,400

GROUPS

14

GAMES

183

FOR the first time in school history, the Junior-Senior Banquet was held off campus. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and guidelines, The Banquet was held at Dick & Donna Swartzendruber's event barn on their farm, several miles west of the school.

THE BARNQUET

WOMEN WHO WEAVE

ADDING an additional show allowed our students to host the community in Celebration Hall for socially distanced performances of our spring drama, Women Who Weave. We were thankful to be able to entertain the community with something that, despite the masks and being 6 feet apart, felt normal.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

BECAUSE we were together on campus, our students were able to participate in the clubs and organizations we offer on a regular basis. Students took part in everything from FFA, to Compassion Club, to the school newspaper, *The Reflector*.

GIVING DAY 2021

THE 2020-21 school year was one unforgettable year! Throughout it all, we've seen how important our community is, and our Giving Day on June 23 was another example of how we can come together as a community to support one another. We were blessed with such an outpouring of support and because of the overwhelming generosity of so many, we shattered our goal and set another record for a one day fundraising campaign. The **\$171,855** raised from **222 donors** showed us that your heart for Hillcrest Academy is full!

5/1

DATE

17

SENIORS

24

EVENTS

13

GALLONS

222

DONORS

21



AS we celebrated with gratitude the graduation of our senior class, we also lamented with them the loss of so many things. Our prayer is that with God as their foundation and guide, (as our tagline states) they will lead others through their faith and go forward with joyfulness and preparedness to change their world for the better.

CLASS OF 2021

LIVESTREAM

DURING the 2020-21 school year, if you couldn't make it out to the game, fans of Ravens athletics could catch all the action on our new livestream network. We were fortunate to take advantage of numerous funding opportunities to build a robust livestreaming capability, allowing us to engage our digital network of alumni, friends of Hillcrest, and other constituents during a time of social distancing or isolation.

COVID-19

WE learned a lot this past year; lessons which will last a lifetime. The importance of our health, as well as our choices, our words, and our interactions with one another. Don't take things for granted, and be thankful for opportunities both big and small. We were fortunate in so many ways this past year. We celebrate with thankfulness the end of this unprecedented school year and with hopefulness, we look forward to the fall when we will welcome a considerable freshman class.

