



THE REVERE

By Students. For Everyone.



Inside this Edition...

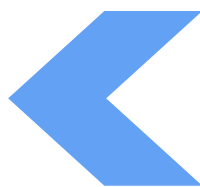


Prom King Griffen Metzger
and Queen Jenna Locklier



**PRHS 1st Prom:
'Diamond
Masquerade'**

**Bus
Drivers
steer
Covid
Safety
measures**



**Schools Chief plans
to propose mask
requirement after
mandate lift**

1 Year of COVID:

Patriots Recall the Unexpected

'Corona'cation

By Abbie Roach

Almost a year ago, we left for Spring Break and never came back.

In retrospect, it's still absolutely mind-blowing to recall how the last day of school was March, Friday the 13th, and how much has changed in only a year. The Revere has collected readers' thoughts and summarized them.

What were you thinking in the weeks leading up to last March? When all this started did you ever think we'd get here?

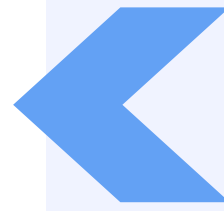
Overall most of us shared the same feelings of disbelief. Before quarantine started in March everyone believed this virus would blow over, it's not a real threat. Now, no one can believe it has been a year of masks and quarantining. People still wake up and think as Caitlyn Paymon phrased it, "Am I dreaming?"

See More on Next Page



What pop culture event was your favorite?

A side-effect that came with this pandemic is boredom. The virus has knocked out most social gatherings but there have been some clever and fun ways to get around that. Because in-person concerts were canceled the invention of online music concerts came to be and everyone is loving them! It has been a favorite pop culture event to enjoy and who knows it may continue to be an option even after the pandemic.



The virus has knocked out most social gatherings, but there have been some clever and fun ways to get around that.



What part of the last year affected you the most?

This last year has been hard on everyone. It has affected everyone in hundreds of ways but a large part of it was the panic it instilled in everyone. School shut down and there was fear of the unknown. Still is. Not to mention the loss of loved ones and memories.

“We will always joke about that time we had to wear masks or how many Zoom fails there were. But, I think one thing that will stick with all of us, was the initial fear of the unknown at the very beginning. Not knowing if we should leave our house, or the awkward silence of walking through a grocery store or Costco, but not trying to be near anybody.”

~ Patrick Darby

See More on Next Page



How did you spend the first few months of quarantine? Which interest or hobbies did you take on? Why?

The first few months of quarantine were a bit of a haze, everything was at a complete standstill till we learned how to operate in the new normal. Therefore we all found ourselves with an abundance of free time. Many of us found ourselves doing nothing at all. Others took the opportunity for more time with family and new hobbies: sewing, biking, working out, cooking, (lots of cooking.)

Some of our favorite new hobbies conveyed to us were from David Lewis, throughout quarantine he “picked up leatherworking, made a few things, then dropped it when we came back. I thought that it was an interesting medium to work with and that whatever I made could be used for a while and hold up.”

Of course, another hobby we loved to see being taken on was Christine Shelton and her venture into social media trends.

“I didn't even have the app, but I became obsessed with learning TikTok dances. I started annoying my family to death because every time they walked past me, I would be dancing. It was a way to blow off steam, get some energy out when I am bored from school, and have fun. Ironically, I haven't done a TikTok dance in months, and I forgot most of them.”



Christine Shelton (on right)

What do you think people will remember most in years to come? What's one thing about this past year you'll never forget?

The past year has been memorable, to say the least. Over the past year, we have been submitted to the chaos of a worldwide pandemic, stressful politics, all while we're still in high school. This all begs the question, what will be remembered? The collective agree it's the chaos and the normalization of it that followed that will stay with us all.

“I think that people will remember how life changed from normal to a new normal overnight.” ~ KJ Westry



KJ Westry

See More on Next Page



What lessons are you taking with you?

When last March hit, we lost things we didn't know we valued.

We realized how important it is to be with those far away and close to home, we learned how much it hurts to be without them for a time.

However, through all this, we learned to appreciate many things much more deeply than before. Our families, our healthcare workers, our restaurant and business owners. All of this separation and we only got closer to each other.

That's the biggest lesson we're taking with us: everything is worth appreciating.



Mrs. Jennifer Veres

“Be mindful of how your actions affect others and take greater care and responsibility to leave the world a better place after we are gone. Live each day to the fullest because you never know when it will be your last.”

~ Jennifer Veres

So far this week, 7 cases were reported in the Pike Road school district, according to the Alabama Department of Public Health



Covid on the Bus Goes Round and Round

By Sydney Baker

At Pike Road, nearly 1,250 students ride the bus to school every day. There are 32 buses that run in total, nine for the elementary school, nine for the intermediate school, ten for the high school, one special needs bus, and three performing arts busses.

Due to Covid, there have been some changes on the busses this year.

To no surprise, there are new rules on the bus regarding Covid. The rules for each bus are based on state guidelines, which are altered to fit each school's budget for things like protective equipment for drivers and students, substitute bus drivers, and cleaning supplies.

Simple things such as wearing your mask the whole bus ride, sanitizing your hands when you get on the bus, and trying to social distance are included in these rules. You may be thinking, how can students on a crowded bus social distance?


Well, they can't.



See More on Next Page



“My students are like my babies, and I’ll do whatever I can to protect them.”



Transportation Director Angela Lang says that there’s really no way to social distance on the bus. Some of the bus drivers have attempted to keep students distanced by placing siblings next to each other, spacing as much as they can, for example. Though there is not much they can do, bus drivers try their best to keep everyone safe.

In addition to this, drivers must sanitize the inside of their bus before and after students ride. “We don’t just spray a little bit, we coat it!” bus driver Sondra Pruitt says.


Ms. Pruitt, a nine-year driver on the route for Pike Road Intermediate School (PRIS), says, “My students are like my babies, and I’ll do whatever I can to protect them”.

Last year, bus drivers were extremely well taken care of when schools went virtual. They were still receiving regular pay and all their benefits. This year, some drivers are concerned about going virtual again. Some students think that this is why they’re so strict about all the Covid rules.

“I just do what they tell me to do,” says Pike Road High School (PRHS) bus driver Cynthia Fleeton. “It may not be my personal belief, but I still respect and follow the rules.”

Due to Covid, there is a major shortage of bus drivers. Some of the drivers have underlying health issues, at-risk friends and family, or just feel unsafe while driving the bus. And of course the fact that on any given day, the school can call and say that a student is sick, taking out the entire bus. This is also why we see some students being moved from bus to bus.

Due to the shortage of drivers, the current bus drivers have been extra strict about the Covid rules.



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See More on Next Page



While they'd like to stay anonymous, many students have experienced what they consider to be "unfair" write-ups.

Most of the write-ups have been about students not properly wearing their mask. Which most say they understand, even the bus drivers.

"I understand that you've been wearing a mask all day and you want to take it off"

Ms. Pruitt says,

"But you've got to keep it on! It's for everyone's safety including your own."

Luckily, most of the drivers have students who are respectful and follow the rules. When asked if they have frequent encounters with students about this issue, all of the drivers said no.

"Rarely do I ever have to write up a student for having their mask down,"

says "Mr. J," a PRHS bus driver,

"But every once in a while, I have that one student who causes a problem."

If there is a write-up that gets questioned by a parent, student, or administrator, Ms. Lang says, "We do our best to investigate it and resolve the problem. It goes case by case."

The transportation director adds: "We have cameras on each bus and can review the footage to see if a write-up is unfair or not."



In one case, a student claimed that they "had their mask down for just a second" and their bus driver still wrote them up. Administration agreed that this write-up was indeed uncalled for and the student got off with a warning.

"The bus drivers are under an extreme amount of pressure right now due to Covid," Ms. Lang says, and "their work is very important to keep the school running."

Photos by Piper Bedient

AL's Mask Mandate Lift May Not Apply to PRS

By Christine Shelton and Piper Bedient

Governor Kay Ivey has announced that the statewide mask mandate will be lifted on April 9.

Although the requirement will be lifted, stores, restaurants, and most prominently, school boards, will be able to make their own decision about whether or not they want masks to be required. It is widely believed that most school boards will continue to require students to wear masks due to safety concerns.

Superintendent Charles Ledbetter believes that it is in the students' best interest to wear masks. "Our learners are not of an age to receive the vaccine," he says.

On March 29, he plans to go before the school board to encourage the mask mandate within Pike Road Schools to be upheld through the end of the school year.

"We have closely followed our experiences within Pike Road Schools this year as it relates to the COVID spread," Dr. Ledbetter says. He added:

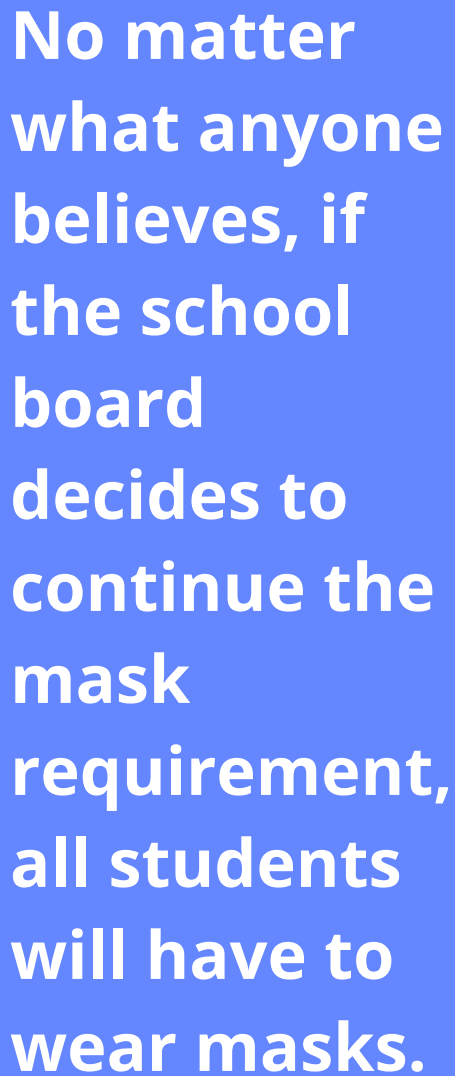
"We have had to quarantine many healthy people for being within 6 feet of a COVID positive person for over 15 minutes. When masks were in use, less than one percent of those healthy quarantine cases contracted COVID."

"We have closely followed our experiences within Pike Road Schools this year as it relates to the COVID spread. We have found that overwhelming evidence supports the idea that masks reduce the spread of COVID."



See More on Next Page

No matter what anyone believes, if the school board decides to continue the mask requirement, all students will have to wear masks.



Students have mixed reactions about the possibility of masks still being required, though. Some students feel that if people want to wear a mask, they should be able to. But if wearing masks is not required by the governor, they should not have to wear masks. Other students believe that it is in everyone's best interest to continue wearing masks because the safety of everyone is more important than what is comfortable and more appealing for most.

Davis Chancey, a junior, has no issue with the superintendent's suggestion to the school board. He says,

"Well I'll wear mine anyway, so keeping masks would certainly be beneficial because, you know, Covid is still a thing. Funny how people act like Covid won't be a thing after April 9th."

"I think we should wear masks," says student Kaitlyn Wilson, "because no class is really six feet apart." Classmate Alison Brown agrees, adding,

"We should wear masks, especially since students don't have the vaccine [yet]."

Junior Emily Klinger, who opposes popular opinion, says it may be wise to finish the school year requiring masks.

"I personally don't like masks, but I think we should wear them these last few weeks of school because people will complain if we don't. And I know people can get feisty when they don't get their way, but we definitely should not have to wear them next year."

No matter what anyone believes, if the school board decides to continue the mask requirement, all students will have to wear masks.

Pike Road Band Versus Covid?

The Show Must Go On!

By Tom Walker

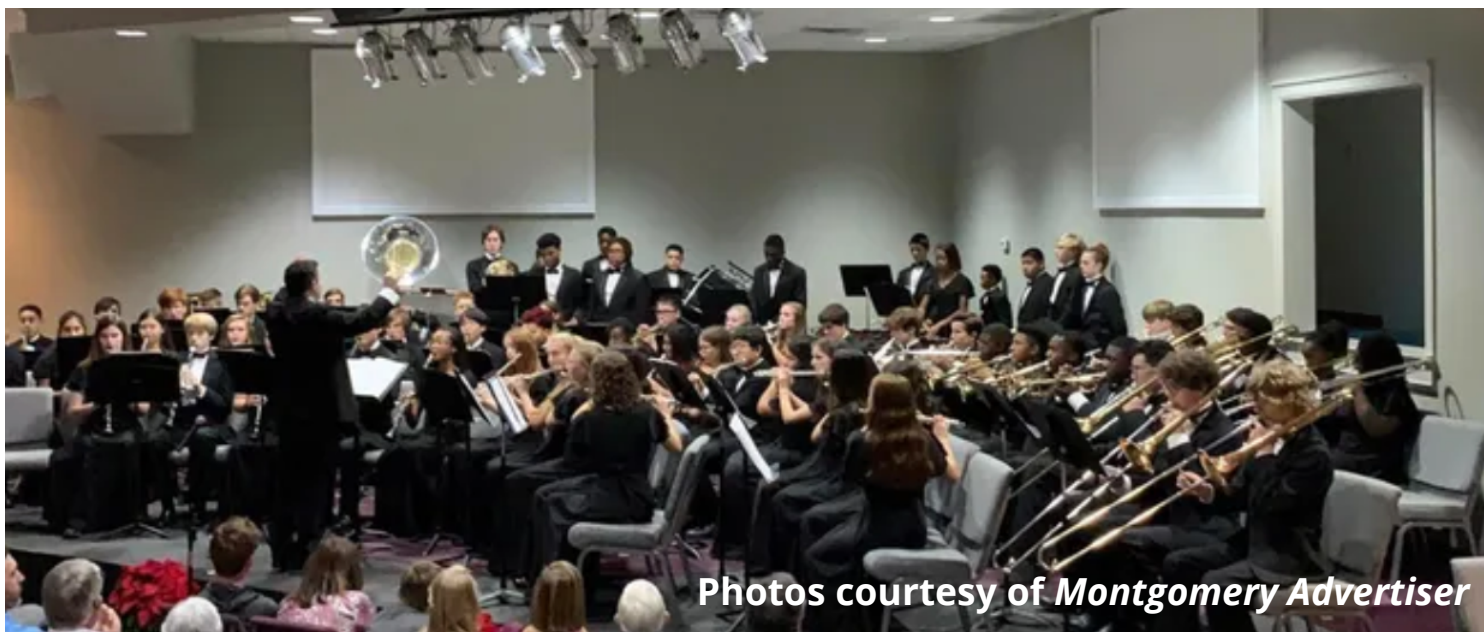
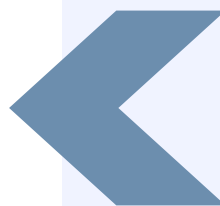
For The Marching Patriots, the mandated elements of Covid-19 -- quarantining, social distancing, and masking -- have not affected the show.

Many parts of school have had to change due to the risks of Covid-19 but, band provides a particular problem, because of large rehearsal sizes and the inherent risks of wind instruments. Thankfully for the band, in a 2021 study the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion found that "there is no evidence that wind instruments increase the risk of Covid-19 transmission."

See More on Next Page



Band provides a particular problem, because of large rehearsal sizes and the inherent risks of wind instruments



Photos courtesy of *Montgomery Advertiser*



Furthermore, band rehearsals have been implementing social distancing policies for extra protection from the virus.

“We are so fortunate to be a part of a school system that has taken the necessary steps to ensure the proper safety of our students during COVID, without taking away their abilities to continue the activities that they love,”

Band Director Patrick Darby told The Montgomery Advertiser.

“Many schools across our country have not been able to meet in person or continue their music programs. I remind our students as often as possible of how grateful we are to be a part of the Pike Road School system and the Pike Road community, for their commitment to their education, and their safety.”

“The show” for these students is a competition held by the ABA (Alabama Bandmasters Association) as well as a performance for the public. The ABA performance will be recorded and sent in for judging, while the public performance will be held March 11 at 7 PM at St. James United Methodist Church. This performance will include pieces from both the high school and middle school band such as “Aces of The Air” and “Armor of The Mystic.”

During the concert on March 11, guests will be asked to wear a mask during the performance, as well as practice social distancing for the safety of both guests and the students.

“Many schools across our country have not been able to meet in person or continue their music programs. I remind our students as often as possible of how grateful we are to be a part of the Pike Road School system and the Pike Road community, for their commitment to their education, and their safety.”

Student Spotlight

Student Artist Uses Raw Skills, Designs Logos for PRHS Media Programs

By Sierra Weitherspoon

Drawing for Johnathan Romualdo, a student artist at Pike Road High, is therapeutic and fun. But, he is currently not interested in a career in art.



"It's something I like to naturally do," says Johnathan, a graduating senior. He reflects on how his mother often tells the story of how he began drawing as early as the age of 3.

"I remember I had a lot of coloring books, probably more than I needed." Jonathan said, "and there was also a show called Dragonball whose characters I would draw all the time when I was little. I don't remember exactly how I started drawing, but if there was anything that got me into drawing it had to be those two things."

"I remember I had a lot of coloring books, probably more than I needed, and there was also a show called Dragonball whose characters I would draw all the time when I was little. I don't remember exactly how I started drawing, but if there was anything that got me into drawing it had to be those two things."

See More on Next Page

Now, he strives to be better than the last drawing, saying that he always goes for a challenge when it comes to illustrations.

Jonathan was challenged this year to create logos for *The Revere* student newspaper and One Nation Media, the student-led broadcast.

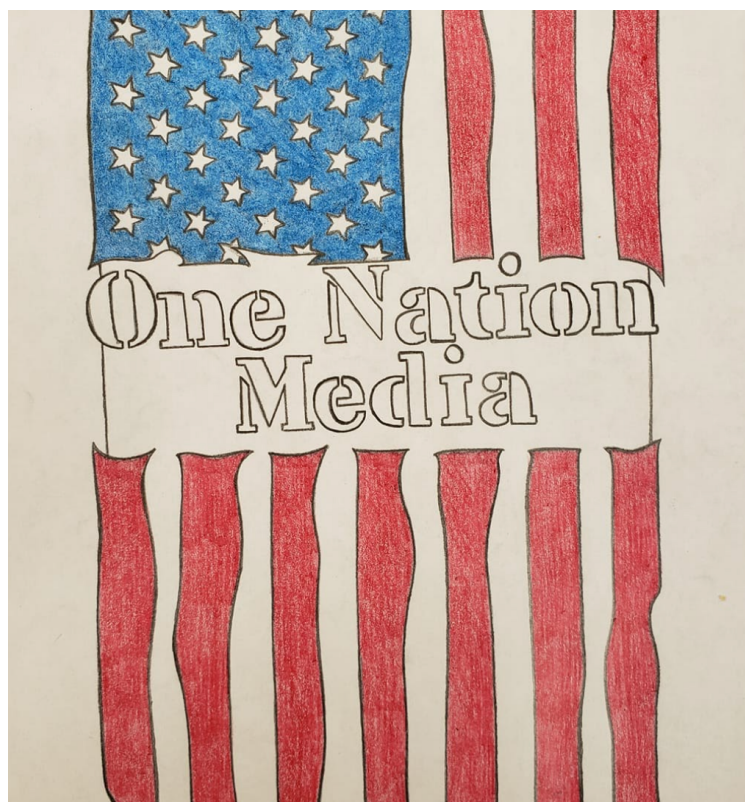
“It actually took me more time than I expected mostly,”

he says,

“because I had to think of what to draw and make it appropriate to use.”

When asked how long did it take to create the logos, Jonathan says it took about an hour.

While it can be assumed that people draw for different reasons, Jonathan says art helps him forget everything around him.



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By Students. For Everyone.

“At first, I would consider it a hobby,” he says, “but now it’s more like an escape from my own life.”

He draws to break free his own emotions. “I can do some stupid things whenever I’m angry or frustrated to calm myself down and drawing is probably the safest thing I could do.”

Along with the reason why he draws, the student artist says it gives him a more “neutral” feeling.

“I’d say that drawing gives me a neutral type of feeling with neither positive nor negative feelings going on,” he adds. “When I draw, it’s like I feel nothing at all since I am so focused.”

As far as going into art as a professional career with this, Jonathan says he’s not interested, but if an opportunity presented itself, he wouldn’t necessarily turn it down.

Ask

Paul!

How do you survive high school?

High school is not like what you see in the movies. It is going to be hard, it is going to be full of stress and disappointments. Surviving high school is all about time management. Schedule out when to do your assignments and study so you don't fall behind and get stressed. Time management isn't just for school though. Set aside time to take care of yourself, go have fun, relax, just try and make the most out of high school best you can.

Why do parents say that you have changed when all you have done is state your mind or just had a change of heart?

Adults mostly feel they deserve respect at all times and think that any form of explanation is an excuse or "talking back". As you get older and want your voice to be heard they think you have changed or maybe "rebellious" when really it is just you maturing. Don't take it personally just try to get them to see you respect them and want the same thing in return.

Two prong, single prong, or buckle for the belt?

Single prong for basic day-to-day, two prong if you're feeling like something different and a buckle for the redneck days.

See More on Next Page



How do you tell someone that you're worried about them when they suffer from depression, anxiety, and many more mental issues, and they also used to be suicidal?

This may not be the answer you want to hear but you have to be straight up about it. They may not want to listen or try to brush it off but you have to let them know you know something is up and make sure they know you are there for them in any way. If it gets bad go and tell an adult/authority figure. Your friend may not be too happy about it but it's better they feel that way and not in the hospital.

Have a Question for *The Revere*?

Ask Here!

All responses are anonymous. Feel free to ask us about some tough topics.

Calling All Students! Help The FFA 'Pick Up Pike Road'

By Sydney Baker

One of the many clubs and organizations at Pike Road High School is the Future Farmers of America (FFA), a program that helps prepare members for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

Levi Noles, the AgriScience teacher and FFA advisor at PRHS, has challenged his students to participate in a project called "Building Our Alabama Communities". This school year is the first time that PR students are participating in the project, but Mr. Noles plans to make it a yearly activity.

The project is a part of the Alabama FFA Organization, and the goal is to identify a need in your community and as an organization, find a solution.

The need students saw this year was that there is way too much trash around the school. So they decided to "Pick Up Pike Road".

"I was tired of seeing litter and trash around our campus,"

student organizer David Lewis says.

To achieve this goal, the class has designed posters to put up around campus, have morning announcements about the project, and they plan to put trash cans in more high traffic areas. David says that eventually they'd like to have a student-led committee dedicated to picking up the trash around campus.

"We have such a beautiful campus,"

Mr. Noles says, "and we should keep it that way."

To help support the AgriScience class and FFA organization with their project, pick up any trash seen on campus and throw away your own.

Prom 2021

Diamond Masquerade





Photos by Ken L. Spear, Jennifer Veres, and MaryAnn Johnson-Pitts

THE REVERE

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The Star-Spangled Crew

Sydney Baker
Piper Bedient
Caden Bishop
Aurora Breland
Shaniya Cintron
Sage Etheridge
Ashlyn Gibbs
Brayden Hayes
Allison Haynes
Emma Krasnowiecki
Christopher Mackey
DeAysia Moore
Jalen Raby
Abbie Roach
Jada Roberts
Jonathan Romualdo
Christine Shelton
Jack Trew
Jeremiah Tumpkin
Naomi Valentine
Thomas Walker
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Rebekah Wilson



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The Revere, a student-run publication, publishes an issue monthly.
Letters to the editor are encouraged.

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therevere@pikeroadschools.org, hand-delivered to Room 208, or given to any staff member.

Anonymity will be protected, if requested. The staff reserves the right to edit submitted material.

Editorial opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper staff or school administration.