

# Fort Hill High School

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Second Edition Newsletter  
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After welcoming new staff members, we would love to commemorate the staff that have a deep-seated dedication to the Fort Hill community, staff, and students. The Fort Hill community greatly appreciates their long standing commitment to their school.



Mr. Matthew Marsh has been an English teacher for 22 years, and all of those have been spent at Fort Hill. He doesn't believe that Fort Hill has changed very much over those years as far as its traditions go, but he does believe that things in the classrooms have changed. He indicated that there are new challenges for teachers and

students with the PARCC and HSA tests being prominent and also with students using cellphones and having access to social media. Because Fort Hill is a school steeped in traditions, there are many Fort Hill traditions that everyone, including Mr. Marsh, looks forward to each year, but there is one that he would especially like to bring back: in the past, each year Fort Hill would have a Homecoming pep rally during school. Then during the lunch period, members of the marching band would go through the halls playing the traditional songs that everyone loves. He also said that there were more opportunities for plays and assemblies to be presented to the student body, and he would like to see more opportunities like that for the student body and faculty. During most of his teaching career, eleventh-grade English has been his focus, and he plans to teach for years to come.



Mr. Jeffrey Brode, a Fort Hill Special Education teacher, who is also certified in the social sciences, has been teaching for 22 years, 21 of those being spent at Fort Hill and one year being spent at Alternative School. He has taught Government, World Cultures, and U.S. History classes and currently co-teaches with

several social science teachers. He has also been an EBS teacher. Mr. Brode has seen Fort Hill change over time a great deal and has also watched the overall school system change. He said, "As the county population changed, smaller high schools were closed, and consolidation had begun." One tradition he would still like to see carried on at Fort Hill deals with the selection of the Homecoming Queen; the selection process used to be done by the football team only, whereas now the queen is selected by the entire senior class. Mr. Brode really enjoys what he does here at Fort Hill. He loves to be able to help the students to be successful in everything that they do. –Mattison Jankey

## Upcoming Events

11/9 – STARS Breakfast

11/13 – Veterans' Day Program

11/14 – Report Cards available online

11/14 and 11/15 – All County Chorus

11/16 – Group pictures for yearbook

11/22 – 3-hour early dismissal, Thanksgiving vacation begins

11/23 to 11/27 – Schools closed

11/28 – Schools Reopen

11/29 and 11/30 – All County Band



Mr. Braden Shober, Fort Hill's Technology Education teacher, has been teaching here at Fort Hill for 24 years. He likes to jokingly say, "Forever!" when asked how long he has been teaching. Mr. Shober teaches four different subjects here at Fort Hill: Manufacturing, Communications, Power and Energy, and Foundations of Technology. Mr. Shober feels that Fort Hill has changed over his teaching career mainly in the use of technology. He finds teaching to be a very rewarding career – rewarding in that he is able to watch the students as they grasp and understand the content. He also likes that he gets the summers off. – Mattison Jankey



Mr. Bob Thompson has been teaching for 37 years and has been teaching vocal music at Fort Hill for 27 of those years. There have been changes during his tenure involving smaller numbers of students in Fort Hill than there were when he began teaching here and fewer activities now for the students to participate in than there were in previous years. The one thing he wishes the school would have more of is assemblies like Fort Hill used to have during his earlier years as a teacher. Mr. Thompson stays in teaching for the simple reason that he "likes kids."  
– Tiffany Carroll



Mr. John Howard, who has been teaching for over 30 years, has spent 24 of those years at Fort Hill High School. He feels Fort Hill has changed over those years because teaching is now harder and more time consuming. Mr. Howard teaches Environmental Science and Earth and Space Science. He has taught six other classes during his years at Fort Hill: Biology, Life Science, Physical Science, Physics, Chemistry, and Math. There are many traditions, policies, and activities that Mr. Howard feels have changed. He stated, "The phone policy used to be 'In your locker and turned off!' I miss that." He also misses that students do not participate in Homecoming as enthusiastically as they used to. "Parents decorate more for Homecoming than students do. The students did everything, and they did the entire school; they are not nearly as school spirit-oriented as they used to be." Although Fort Hill has changed, Mr. Howard still enjoys snow days and having the summers off! – Abbigail D'Atri



Coach Todd Appel has been teaching for 24 years. Out of the 24 years, he has been at Fort Hill for 23 of those years. Mr. Appel was originally a Special Ed teacher and a Resource Math teacher, but now he is a Physical Education teacher and Fort Hill's head football coach. This year marks his fourth year teaching Physical Education. Mr. Appel feels that Fort Hill has changed in some ways since he has been employed here as a teacher. One of the biggest changes has been in the school's physical structure with the cafeteria having been where the library is now. He believes that society has also changed so much as well because people feel more entitled to things in place of working for the good things that can come to them. One activity that has gone by the wayside that Coach Appel would like to see or have brought back to Fort Hill is a Pep Club group. He would also like to see more school spirit from everyone and the students being more involved in things around school. He also misses the horses that pulled the carriage for the queen at Homecoming, as well as the Homecoming floats Fort Hill used to use. Some reasons he stays in the teaching field are that he just loves helping young people. Because of the role models he's had in his life, he wants to give back as he tries to be a role model for young people today. Coach Appel loves seeing kids grow up and see the potential they have in life. – Alexa Neef



Mr. Dee Kalbaugh, Fort Hill's Special Education facilitator, has been in education for 42 years and has been at Fort Hill High School for his entire career. Fort Hill High School has changed for Mr. Kalbaugh with everything from the decrease in enrollment numbers to the shrinking numbers of teachers employed at Fort Hill. Mr. Kalbaugh decided to stay in the teaching field because of his change in responsibilities, leaving the classroom responsibilities behind, and assuming additional special education duties. Also, visiting schools with different special education departments has made it easier for Mr. Kalbaugh to stay in education because he gets to change his duties and the students and teachers he sees. "Change is good," according to Mr. Kalbaugh.  
– Nikia Schriner





One of our English teachers, Jane Roderick, has been teaching for 35 years with about 29 of those years having been spent at Fort Hill. Aside from now teaching English, she has also taught Journalism I, II, and III and has been the newspaper adviser while here at Fort Hill. Throughout the years, Mrs. Roderick has seen many changes in students and curriculum. In her time here at Fort Hill, enrollment has dropped significantly, and technology has altered the way students think and work. She has also seen many teaching methods over the years. In the early 90's, she noted that Advanced Placement (AP) classes were put in place. Of the many clubs that have come and gone over the years, one thing Mrs. Roderick wishes had stayed was The Thespian Club (Drama Club) which put on senior plays. She stated that these plays educated the student population. Its disappearance made for "a sad day," in Mrs. Roderick's opinion. – Maria Salinas



Ms. Mary Fuller, Fort Hill's Chemistry teacher, has been teaching for 45 years; 34 of those years were spent at Fort Hill. Prior to teaching at Fort Hill, she had taught at the Career Center for nine and a half years, after teaching at a private school in Baltimore County for one and a half years. Ms. Fuller has taught numerous subjects, along with teaching Chemistry. She has taught Biology, Shop Math, Physical Science, Human Dynamics, Family Life, Nursing Chemistry, and Cosmetology Science. Ms. Fuller believes that Fort Hill has changed so much over the years: "Recently students are way more interested in being on their phones than paying attention in class." She also says that teachers have started to put a lot more "rigor" in their classes, for classes are now set at more of a college level than previous years. One advantage that Ms. Fuller has from being a teacher at Fort Hill for so long is seeing all the traditions that had at one time disappeared from Fort Hill being brought back at some point. When asked why she has continued to teach after so many years, she said, "I enjoy watching the little light go off in kids' heads when they figure something out." Ms. Fuller takes pride in having so many people pursue and succeed with a career in Chemistry. – Carson Driver

## Homecoming Theme

Every year Fort Hill's Student Council, with the help of their advisor, Mrs. Imes, decides what the Homecoming theme should be. This year a theme featuring the school colors, red and white, was chosen- "We All Bleed Red!" This theme allowed the Fort Hill students to show the amazing pride they had for their school. A poster design competition was also part of the 2017 Homecoming experience as the Student Council searched for the best student-made poster that fit within the theme. The winning poster for this year was created by Jeremiah Mudge, Kylie Eckard, Ashley Armbruster, Jonathan Harper, and Kesalyn Smith.



Every year the students at Fort Hill are able to experience a new, fun, and creative theme; these themes also, whenever possible, flow with what the Sentinel band is performing for the half time show at the football Homecoming game.

- Mattison Jankey

# Locker Decorating



Homecoming locker decorating was held on the weekend of October 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup>. Locker decorating is a Fort Hill tradition that the students really enjoy. Many parents fill their child's locker with snacks and even gifts. Parents are able to come in on the set weekend to deck out their child's locker. Most of the lockers' decorations correlate with the Homecoming theme, while others may stray from that path. This year, because of the theme "We All Bleed Red," the locker décor included everything from the red and white traditional theme to sports-affiliated decorations to senior/school pictures. In every way, it is really enjoyable for students and parents alike to walk past each locker and look at all the hard work put into many of the decorations.

-Mattison Jankey

## The Girls' Empowerment Symposium

The Girls' Empowerment Symposium this year was held at George Mason University in the Johnson Center. Some of the speakers were Eileen Wheelan, ABC 7 Meteorologist; Maria Rose Belding, Executive Director and Co-founder of *Means*; Kate Fagan, author of *What Made Maddie Run* and feature writer for ESPN.com; and Debbie Phelps, Executive Director of the Education Foundation of Baltimore County Public Schools. Jayna Brown, semi-finalist of *America's Got Talent*, was the special singer at the event. Some of the activities were called "Under Pressure," "Love Yourself," and "Views," and these activities were designed to help young women with issues such as how to stay true to themselves, how to deal with peer pressure, and how to address stressful situations effectively. Two of Ms. Sibley's favorite speakers were Mrs. Phelps and Jayna Brown.

-Tiffany Carroll

## Halloween Parade

The annual South Cumberland Halloween Parade is an experience that many Fort Hill students look forward to each year, and the Fort Hill Band has participated in the Halloween Parade since it began. The band practices for parades starting in the summer by learning how to march, how to make turns, and how to follow drum cadences. The color guard learns its routines, and the Sentinelettes perfect their routines. They practice by marching around the school parking lot, Constitution Park, and the school. The band director, Joe Thompson, said that although the parade participation is not mandated by the county, he still feels it is good to give back to the communities that support the band, and for that reason, the band's participation in the Halloween Parade is a Fort Hill tradition. In the parade, Fort Hill is a feature band representing South Cumberland. The students enjoy participating in the Halloween Parade because it's for their community. There are thousands of people supporting Fort Hill, and because it's a relaxed performance environment, it has become an all-around great event that the entire band enjoys. Mr. Thompson feels it is pretty exciting that most of the town comes to watch the band, and it's obvious our community enjoys watching them perform and listening to their amazing music.

- Abigail D'Atri

# A Childhood Friend

An original Halloween story by Gina Franciosi

I open my eyes to the feel of someone pushing on my shoulder with small hands. I turn on my side table lamp and stare at my six-year-old sister, standing two or more inches from my face.

"Can I sleep with you?" she asks.

"Why?" I ask.

"Mr. Bones won't let me sleep," she says.

"Mr. Bones?" I think.

I smile a little. Mr. Bones was my imaginary friend as a kid. He was great. We'd sit in the basement and play Hide-N-Seek all day. I think he went away after I invited my first friend over. I don't remember. I can't remember. All I remember is the "accident" that day.

I shake it off, roll out of bed, and grab my sister's hand to lead her back to bed. The walk always feels long in the dark, night-time hallway. Her room is the last one down the hall, farthest from the stairs. It was mine when I was younger. I look back at her, focusing on my now darkened room.... she's whispering something unintelligible. We walk into her room, and immediately, she climbs into her bed.

"All set?" I ask.

"Will you check?" she asks.

Check for what? Monsters? I amuse her and check in her closet, under her dresser, and under her bed... twice. I kneel by her bed side, resting my head onto my hand.

"All clear," I tell her.

"I guess he's still in your room," she says.

Who is she talking about?

She sits up and smiles eerily to me. "He wishes you would've chosen him."

Chosen him?

She reaches over and flicks her side table light off, the darkness engulfing us both into its evil silence. From that silence the cracking of her closet door makes me jump to my feet. I stare ahead... at nothing... as a cold breath treads down my neck. All my fears, every bad memory comes back as I turn toward the nothingness. Mr. Bones?

# **Sentinal Newsletter**

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