

the falcon

ISSUE 1, VOLUME 77 | SEPT. 29, 2023



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Upper School prepares for a bold new future

CHIEF'S CORNER



Dear Reader,

There is an African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” At Kinkaid, we go both fast and far, all because of our Falcon family, the bonds shared between each member of the community and our strength in the face of adversity. Consider the construction of our new Upper School, an effort occurring at a superhuman pace, during which students and faculty have confronted changes and challenges. But throughout, the community has stood together as a village.

It is this “village spirit” that I hope to promote this year as I take on the honor of serving as your editor-in-chief. In the newsroom this year, we have 35 reporters, of whom 17 are editors. I’ve already seen close bonds of mentorship and friendship form and have been inspired by the drive of our staff.

It’s been heartening to see writers grasp the duality of journalism as an art and service. Our pieces are more than words on paper. Our role as scribes of Kinkaid history means we make a real impact on the community. We tell stories that matter about people who matter — you.

If you have a story you’d like to share, a voice you’d like to be heard, or any thoughts about our newsmagazine, feel free to email me at eshaan.mani@kinkaid.org.

Yours in art and service,

Eshaan Mani,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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NEW FALCONS

As the school year kicks off, The Falcon welcomes new teachers to the Upper School across various departments.

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COACH CANTRELL

The school's varsity cheer team takes time to honor a beloved coach who touched students' lives.

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is
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on the cover:



Photo by Payton Daly

It Takes A Village

US responds to rapid change

Construction workers help put finishing touches on the outside of the school's future fieldhouse. The next phase of campus renovation began with the demolition of the Upper School building, requiring its occupants to move into a temporary space.

Cover photo by Kimetris Baltrip

TO SOME, HEARTY WELCOME; TO OTHERS, WELCOME BACK

By Conlee Hodges and Sophie Lighvani
Designed by Conlee Hodges



DEIRDRE CARR has previously served at Kinkaid as a Middle School math teacher and more recently as a longterm substitute teacher for the Upper School. She is back full time as a math teacher in the Upper School.



OLEN RAMBOW worked at Kinkaid from 2014-22 as an Upper School math teacher. He returned as a longterm substitute teacher, but he is now back as a full-time math teacher in the Upper School.



LETTY REZA returned to Kinkaid from St. John's. She first joined Kinkaid in 2016 and held positions as a Middle School and Upper School math teacher as well as director of ESMI. She teaches Upper School math.

New Upper School faculty, staff share their faves



STEPHEN AYRES,
Honors geometry

Favorite junk food:
Fritos or Ruffles

"I am most excited to see my students succeed!"



BILL EPPS,
History and social science teacher

Favorite junk food:
Ice Cream

"I am most excited for the energy from the community at Kinkaid."



LIZ TANNER,
Learning specialist

Favorite junk food:
Double-stuffed Oreos

"...I am most excited about getting to know the students of Kinkaid and contributing my knowledge of learning differences to the Kinkaid community."



JAMES MCCRINK,
English teacher

Favorite junk food:
Oreos

"...I have been blessed to return to the classroom after a brief period of full-time writing; I certainly missed it, and I am thrilled to be back."



CLAUDIA SALINAS,
Dean

Favorite junk food:
Nachos with cheese and a generous amount of jalapenos

"I'm excited to get to know all the students and participate in Falcon traditions."

Familiar faces take on roles with different responsibilities



Mrs. **JENNIFER KEHLER** may be a familiar face to many people on campus. That's because she previously worked at Kinkaid for 16 years as the coordinator of student life.

This year, Mrs. Kehler was rehired as assistant director of The Gordy Family Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Finance, as well as a teacher for the ninth-grade class, Decisions for Healthy Living.

After her three-year absence from Kinkaid, Mrs. Kehler said she is very excited to be working with students more closely.

"This role combines two things that I love to do: build new programs and develop the leadership potential within students," Mrs. Kehler said. "I am excited to help all students find the leader within themselves."



Dr. **JAY GLYNN** was the Middle School counseling psychologist for 12 years, but now he serves in the same capacity in the Upper School.

Dr. Glynn said there is a big difference in maturity and independence when comparing Upper School and Middle School students.

"Students in Upper School are better able to manage their own schedule and have more off periods to drop in...," he said. "Of course, some of the issues Upper School students face are more complex and are heavier to deal with psychologically."

He first taught high school in 1984.

"In my new role, I am most excited about the opportunity to work closely with the US administration and faculty to help improve the overall well-being of our students," he said.



CHARLES HARRISON,
Choir and music teacher

Favorite junk food:
Buffalo hot wings

"What excites me most...is the potential of the students in the choir department. Not just their vocal ability, but the leadership qualities and passion that I see in them."



ANTHONY WATSON,
History and social sciences teacher and CLEF

Favorite junk food:
Doritos

"I'm excited to be a part of the community here and help get CLEF off the ground."



CAT MARTINEZ,
US visual arts teacher

Favorite junk food:
Chocolate

"I'm excited to see all of my students upcoming artwork. They are so talented!"



ANGIE FLOWERS,
English teacher

Favorite junk food:
Haagen Dazs Matcha Green Tea ice cream

"As a new faculty member, I am most excited about being in the classroom with my students and getting to know my new colleagues and all the Kinkaid community members."



LAURN COUBLE,
World languages teacher

Ms. Couble's responses were not available at the time of publication.

PHOTOGRAPHY PARTNER OFFERS BROADER OPPORTUNITY

CADY moves beyond just taking school photos to also teaching students key elements of effective photography.

Written by Jack Susman and Matthew Guyton

A trio wearing black sweatshirts took over the Kayem Library in Kinkaid's Middle School on a sunny Wednesday morning.

The three photographers from CADY Photography, unraveled green screens, adjusted tripods, and set their cameras up for middle school picture day.

The morning marked the beginning of a partnership between The Kinkaid School and a new photography company that has been tasked with managing all Kinkaid

student and faculty school photos. Formerly, this task was handled by Freeman Photography, which had worked with Kinkaid for 15 years since 2005.

Kinkaid has assigned CADY Photography to manage all directory photos for students and faculty. Additionally, Dr. Kimetris Baltrip, who teaches journalism and yearbook in the Upper School, encouraged hiring CADY because of the company's experience with mentoring young photojournalists like those in

her newsrooms.

CADY predominantly focuses on school portraits and senior photos but also has a classroom component.

"Students who work with the Falcon and the Kinkaidian would gain experience working side by side with a professional photographer skilled in training student journalists, and CADY would help bolster the curriculum in my classes," said Dr. Baltrip.

CADY sales representative Mr. Hunter Woods has organized a mentorship

A CADY photographer snaps a name card for a student in the Middle School before taking the middle schoolers photo. CADY, Kinkaid's new school photographer, set in up the Middle School's Kayem Library during its first-ever photo session on campus on Sept. 6, 2023

Photo by Jack Susman



CADY

CADY Photography offers a wide range of portrait styles for seniors. Image courtesy of CADY

OUR QUALITY / SENIORS



program for The Falcon and The Kinkadian staff members.

The newly devised curriculum ranges from beginner to advanced photography lessons that the CADY representative or the yearbook adviser can teach.

“Being a former teacher, teaching and working with students is my passion. I’m excited to see what all this new curriculum holds for my schools, and I cannot wait for it to fully roll out!” Woods said.

CADY’s Houston location also works with schools in Katy and Pearland.

One of three CADY photographers poses with a camera during the photo sessions for the Middle School. CADY takes photos for all three divisions.

Photo by Jack Susman



MARS MISSION MASTERED

Student participates in a competitive space program that included a hypothetical venture to Mars

Story and design by Rina Miriam Presley and Evan Paris

As she walked the paths that famous astronauts and astrophysicists have walked, senior Ellie Morrow reminisced on the out-of-this world dream she has had all her life.

Since elementary school, Morrow has wanted to work in the study of space.

"I found something I made in kindergarten here at Kinkaid: It said my name is Ellie Morrow, I am 6, and I love space, and when I grow up I want to be a person that works at NASA," Morrow said.

Twelve years later, during this past summer, Morrow entered the halls of the University of Houston-Clear Lake to participate in the

United Space School program through the Foundation for International Space Education, where the goal was to build a mission to Mars.

"Participants came from places like Mexico, Chile, Guatemala, Argentina, Bolivia, Wales, Netherlands, France and Italy," Morrow explained.

This diverse environment gave Morrow some troubles. For example, she used the U.S. customary system instead of the universal metric system.

Morrow was the only U.S. citizen who was selected for her subset team in the program, the red team.

"In total, I was one of three

Americans...there were thousands from the United States who interviewed," she said. "The application process was pretty rigorous. We had to write an essay, get rec letters, attach a resume, interview, and complete many prerequisite homework assignments that took hours each."

Even after an initial acceptance arrived, once she got to UH-Clear Lake, more



Student interns with NASA specialists, works with data and exploration

Story and design by Rina Miriam Presley and Evan Paris

Ellie Morrow's aeronautical adventures began long before this summer. She interned at the Johnson Space Center during this past interim term.

She was under the vehicle office, in the payload and hardware manifesting



interviews and assessments were conducted to place the 40 participants into five teams.

"I was on red team, which is orbital dynamics and propulsion systems," Morrow said. "There was blue, which was science experiments. Green was ECLSS (Environmental Control and Life Support Systems). Gold was mission control, so budgets, contracts and treaties. Maroon was landing and take-off from Mars."

Yet another one of Morrow's dreams was accomplished when she was placed in the red team, her preferred group.

"Red team ended up being the hardest," she said. "It definitely felt like we had the most work to do. I mean, we had to literally build the spacecraft. If this was easy to do we would already be walking on Mars."

At the end of the program, teams presented their findings and proposals to a board made up of Johnson Space Center rocket scientists.

Morrow is committed to play Division 1 tennis at Purdue University, where she will study aeronautical and astronautical engineering.

**"If this was easy to do we would already be walking on Mars."
— Ellie Morrow**



Ellie Morrow, senior, poses with fellow "Red Team" members and George Abbey, former director of Johnson Space Center. Photo courtesy of Ellie Morrow

section of the center.

"My main task was documenting the process of how all these hardware and science experiments actually get up into space," she said.

Besides desk work, Morrow was able to gain unique experiences that only hired NASA employees get to enjoy.

"Actually, I went into mission control one day while they were fixing the International Space Station in real time," she said. "They were communicating with the flight director

right in front of me."

Achieving these surreal experiences wasn't easy.

"I obviously did not have clearance for a lot...I had to get a background check, my visa checked, a lot to make sure I was an American citizen."

Morrow plans to travel to Europe on Kinkaid's science trip in January 2024.

"I'm most excited to see the Galileo Museum in Florence, and Bern, Switzerland, where Einstein thought up his theories," she said.

FEATURES

UPPER SCHOOL SPANISH
TEACHER MR. ESTEBAN
LONGORIA IN HONFLEUR,
NORMANDY, A NORTHERN
PICTURESQUE COASTAL TOWN.



ONE OF THE EXCURSIONS MR.
LONGORIA WENT ON WHILE HE
WAS LEARNING FRENCH WAS A
VISIT TO THE ABBEY OF SAINT-
ÉTIENNE.



MR. LONGORIA ON OMAHA
BEACH, ONE OF THE BEACHES
WHERE U.S. TROOPS LANDED
ON JUNE 6, 1944, D-DAY, TO
LIBERATE FRANCE.

All photos courtesy of Esteban Longoria



SPANISH TEACHER STUDIES ABROAD IN FRANCE

By Shaivi Moparthi and Isabel Cooper

It's not common to find someone with a 336-day learning streak on the Duolingo language learning app, however, that's not the case for Upper School Spanish teacher Mr. Esteban Longoria.

Mr. Longoria is dedicated to his knack for learning language.

Last school year, Mr. Longoria received the Jennifer Hicks Memorial Fund of Faculty Continuing Education. The fund honors the memory of Jennifer Hicks, a member of the class of 1998, and provides a grant supporting a member of the Kinkaid faculty in an activity or study that will enrich his or her teaching, advising, or working with students outside of the classroom.

As a Spanish teacher who is bilingual, Mr. Longoria wanted to expand his knowledge by picking up another Latin-based language: French.

"I've always wanted to learn a third language, and I thought this would be the perfect opportunity for me to do so," said Mr.

Longoria.

Through the grant, Mr. Longoria had the opportunity to spend five weeks in Normandy, France, this past summer.

"It was helpful not just for my work as a language teacher, but also to enrich my experience in France as a chaperone in the French homestay trips of which I have been a part," he said. "I chose this program by the recommendation of one of the members of the Kinkaid community as being an excellent program."

The five-week program at the Université de Caen was an intense course of six hours a day, with four block periods a day of 90 minutes each.

Mr. Longoria is fluent in both English and Spanish, learning the former at age 11. French has been challenging because it is not a phonetic language and it is difficult to memorize so many sounds and how they are spelled.

"I was really struggling the first week and couldn't understand what the teacher was saying because I was in a class

with students who had had two to three years of French, which was very frustrating," he said.

He spent two hours a night completing his assignments for class, and then gave himself more work in order to learn additional vocabulary and verb conjugations.

Through this, he began to adjust to the course and it became much more enjoyable for him.

Since French and Spanish are both derived from Latin, Mr. Longoria found that, after initial hiccups, learning French was not too difficult.

This was another helpful factor for him because of his Spanish and English fluency.

"English has a lot of French words. Spanish [helped me] understand a lot of the grammar parallels, but not everything," he said.

He added that the grammar in Spanish was very similar to French.

"What's a little frustrating is that some words that are cognates like 'miel,' which means honey, are feminine in Spanish and masculine

in French."

Mr. Longoria said his summer experience helped him sympathize with students who take a little longer to learn vocabulary and who struggle in language classes.

"I'm definitely more sympathetic," he said. "I try to do more activities to reinforce the vocabulary for students to learn."

As for the language-learners in the Upper School, Mr. Longoria said he learned that a good way to improve speaking skills is to practice a language every single day.

"That's the fastest way to becoming fluent, so you don't forget vocabulary."

Mr. Longoria encourages all students to be passionate, resilient and patient about their language-learning journeys.

He ended with a quote from a famous German author, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

"He who does not speak another language does not know his own because you learn a lot about your language as you're learning another," he said.

SUNRISE SCRAMBLE

Students adapt their morning routines to get to class on time

7:00 AM

The first sophomores and juniors arrive at the bus stop. Often, the earliest riders must wait for more students to arrive at MDPC before they make the half-mile trek to Kinkaid to start their school days.



Junior students aboard a Kinkaid-bound bus at MDPC.
Photo by Ellie Mehta

MEMORIAL DR.

Story and design by Camron Baldwin

Where some students race to make it to class by 9 a.m., sophomore Maureen Min's school day begins at 5:45 a.m.

"During the fall, I have cross country practice at 6 a.m., so I have to get to school super early," Min said.

One would think that Min's early practice means she'd get to miss what many Upper School students have come to expect out of their morning commutes — namely extensive carpool lines and long bus rides; however, she's faced her

own challenges while commuting to cross country practice.

"My dad and I had to figure out how to drive around construction all around campus," Min said. "Before school started, there was a pothole on our usual route to school we had to take the long way around..."

Her practice, she said, makes it easier to get to school on time in a year where many students, especially 10th and 11th graders, found

themselves relegated to parking at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church (MDPC) and bussing to campus beginning this year.

Some students have struggled with how to adapt their morning routines to accommodate the added hurdles to their commute.

Junior Caroline Pielop responded to the change by waking up earlier to make it to the bus.

"I felt like I used to get up at a reasonable hour," she said. "Now, I have to be out of the house by the time I

used to wake up."

Pielop said it took her 15 minutes to get to school on a regular day last year, which turns out to be an almost doubled commute with the added bus time. "It takes me around the same time to get to MDPC, but depending on how fast the buses are running that day, it could be around 30 more minutes till I actually get to school."

Once at MDPC, the wait for students, especially those who get there closer to 7 a.m., when the shuttles

start running, can be a while.

“When I’m early, I usually have to wait for more people to get to the buses,” Pielop said. “Usually, if someone new pulls into the lot, the drivers will wait for them to get onto the bus.”

Due to construction on campus slated to last until 2026, it was announced via school-wide email in July that “10th and 11th grade students who drive will be asked to park at a very nearby satellite church parking lot during regular academic school hours, from which shuttles will run on regular intervals at the start of the day.”

The changes were made to accommodate the new construction workers parking on campus and the

loss of usual faculty spots due to construction.

Seniors, however, still get to park on campus.

“I absolutely cannot wait for senior year to come, only for the parking,” Pielop said.

Where students such as Pielop have chosen to wake up earlier to make it to the bus on time, some students have decided against riding the bus entirely.

Junior Lili Lassoued was able to drive to school last year; however, due to construction, she decided to carpool for her junior year.

“I have my license, but I just decided to have my Mom drive me this year; it’s so much easier,” Lassoued said.

Lassoued said she still

takes her own car off school hours and to sports games, but getting to school, she said, is made far more efficient by just carpooling.

Lassoued and Pielop are juniors, but the conversation about off-campus parking also affects sophomores and, later, incoming freshmen.

Some students are reconsidering the importance of getting a driver’s license when options like carpooling are more appealing than ever.

“I think construction makes it harder to get to school than usual, so I was going to stick to my same routine after cross country is over,” Min said. “I might get my license junior year, but it isn’t a priority anymore.”



MEMORIAL DR.

3:30 PM

As school ends, students gather across the main entrance to the Temporary Upper School building to wait for the shuttles back to MDPC. The school has constructed walkways and built benches to facilitate students’ walking commute to the bus.



Junior Caroline Pielop boards a bus to get back to her car after school. Photo by Camron Baldwin

VILLAGE VOYAGE

Students adjust to more walking after temporary school site opens

Story by David Liu and Ian Overman
Design by David Liu

Complete with a library, dean's annex and new classrooms, the new temporary Upper School was completed during the summer and unveiled to students in time for the fall 2023 semester.

Though from a student's perspective, the construction may have seemed straightforward, the administration has given substantial consideration to even the most minor details, such as creating new walking paths and independent study spaces.

"The main considerations were making sure we had enough classrooms so that the availability of space did not limit students' schedules," said Assistant Head of School Mr. Peter Behr. "It took a fair amount of planning, from researching how many classrooms each department normally uses, to predicting the impact of new curricular offerings, like the new Fundamentals of Business and Finance class."

To allow students to easily walk from the Upper School to the Learning Village, the trailers that are now home to much of the science department, new

boardwalks were built across the Falcon Green and other grassy areas.

Despite being only a temporary learning space, the Learning Village has become a useful tool for high school education. Especially with biology and environmental science courses, proximity to green spaces will be useful for hands-on learning.

"We are so lucky to have access to so much green space in the middle of an urban setting and it makes for an excellent opportunity for wildlife observation, data collection on nature walks, aquatic studies, and citizen science studies related to local environmental issues," said Dr. Sonia Clayton, science department head and AP biology teacher.

The transition from old to new, however, hasn't gone without adaptation on behalf of both students and faculty.

"It takes adjustment time which was rather short because of construction time in this case," Dr. Clayton said. "So the beginning of the school year was a tough one for the science department. However, everyone was excited to welcome





Mrs. Erica Baker, director of student life, leads senior peer mentors into the new temporary Upper School building. They were the first students to formally tour the building. Photo by Kimetris Baltrip

the students to the new spaces, so there was a lot of energy and excitement, too.”

Among the most significant impacts of the new construction has been the new parking arrangement, which has increased commute times in the morning and afternoon.

Sophomores and juniors now have to park in the Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church parking lot and wait for a shuttle to bring them to and from school.

The new temporary school building has also changed student life in small ways.

Junior Juanito Miranda, for one, was used to playing basketball during

“I do mean whitewater rafting, working as a team to tackle and overcome difficult obstacles.”

— Ms. Alex Spencer, Head of the Upper School

lunch and after school in the air-conditioned Melcher and Fondren gyms.

Now with the increased walk times from the gym to the Upper School, Miranda has increasingly had to play in the scorching heat.

Head of Upper School Alex Spencer said that she recognized the difficulty in moving between buildings.

“It was challenging to know that

literally every student and faculty and staff member would have to change their routines,” said Ms. Spencer.

“Though the building projects are a wonderful kind of change, that doesn’t mean change isn’t hard.”

This year, Ms. Spencer has promoted a “go with the flow” mindset.

“I don’t mean getting blown away by the currents, or lounging in a pool,” she said in an assembly.

“But I do mean whitewater rafting, working as a team to tackle and overcome difficult obstacles.”

The new Upper School is only one of the phases of Kinkaid’s ambitious three-phase plan to renovate the campus.

“For me, I’m most excited about the new fieldhouse,” Miranda said.

“I hope that there’s at least one basketball court that we can use so we don’t have to play outside or wait for the Lower Schoolers to finish in the Fondren or Melcher gyms.”

Miranda and other lunchtime basketball players may be thankful

NEW CLASSROOMS IN THE UPPER SCHOOL ARE MORE SPACIOUS THAN PREVIOUS ONES

Story by David Liu

Classrooms in the new Upper School have 650 square feet of space, up from 425 square feet previously.

Though the classroom square footage has increased, teachers have had to share classrooms with other teachers.

“It’s true that our routines and spaces are almost entirely new in the Upper School this year, but we’ve made it a priority to create a safe and joyful transition into these spaces,” Head of Upper School Ms. Alex Spencer said.

“We will continue to work on having spaces that work both for socializing and for studying when students aren’t in class.”

The change in dimensions of the new classrooms has been noted by students.

“I definitely feel that the classrooms are more spacious now. In the old Upper School, I remember that it was tough in some classrooms to put your bag anywhere because there just wasn’t enough space,” junior Alexander Miles said. “Though the space is nice, I think classrooms are less collaborative now because there is just more room to space out.”

The more spread-out campus has led some students to use scooters and other small modes of transportation to move across campus.

Revolving chairs in the temporary Upper School building have more space between them as compared to when they were in classrooms in the now demolished former Upper School building.



because the fieldhouse, which will stand at two stories, will include an indoor track alongside courts for volleyball and basketball.

In addition, the Fondren and Melcher gyms will undergo significant improvements, including new locker rooms and spaces for the school's coaches.

The experience, Mr. Behr said, has shown him the resilience of the Kinkaid community.

"The most memorable moment was witnessing the efforts of our facilities staff bringing a trailer full of bookshelves to the new building while the Upper School faculty was setting up their offices and classrooms," Mr. Behr said. "It was just symbolic of the heroic efforts made to quickly move our faculty from the historic Upper School to your temporary new home."



The Kinkaid School disseminated information about new pedestrian routes as the campus is being renovated. The pedestrian walk paths that flow from the north areas of the campus to the south areas (mostly headed to athletics) were updated when the sophomore hallway in the former Upper School building was closed off for demolition. The school community began using alternate routes to get to the athletics complex beginning Tuesday, Oct. 10. Courtesy of Ed Jordan



Photo by David Liu

FROM CAMPUS TO CURB

Shuttle rides can be alternated weekly for juniors

Story and design by Ellie Mehta

Junior Caroline Nelson stood in the sweltering heat outside the Kinkaid Upper School. A backpack heavy with textbooks and supplies hung off her shoulder and she opened her phone to check the time.

She had stood there for 35 minutes and the shuttle still hadn't arrived.

The shuttle system is a recent addition to Upper School students' commute to campus.

Three buses make routine trips to and from Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, where sophomores and juniors are required to park.

The system was instated to

resolve the lack of parking spaces on campus during the renovation of the Upper School and athletics facilities.

In theory, the system was a smooth solution. In reality, it has been rife with faults, one of which is the unreliability of the buses' timing.

"It was really alarming to wait for a bus that never came," said Nelson. "There was no reason for it not to be there, and I was scared I was going to miss my first period."

For athletes, this inconsistency can result in serious inconveniences. With most sports ending at 6 p.m. (30

minutes before the shuttles stop running), extensions to commute can impede on both academic and free time.

Jordan Roberts, a junior who plays varsity volleyball, experienced this first-hand.

"Most of the time, our away games run way past the time when the shuttles are supposed to run," Roberts said. "I remember...wondering whether I'd even be able to get home to do work and study."

In addition, many sports including field hockey and football, have morning practices that begin before the buses start running. This forces sophomores

Jacob Karni (11) and Henry Wise (10) chat during the bus ride to their cars after school. Kinkaid started a shuttle system during construction on campus. Photo by Eliana Mehta





Abby Woo (11) riding the Kinkaid shuttle to Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church.
Photo by Eliana Mehta

and juniors to park on campus then repark at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church when practice finishes.

The delays that the buses produce have led many students to opt out of driving and instead have a family member take them to school. However, the rising number of students carrying out this option has led to additional traffic on campus before and after school.

“The traffic on campus is really held up and it takes my mom and I like 10 minutes just to get into Kinkaid from the entryway,” said Ray Tian, a junior.

The congested traffic on campus has led some parents to resort to dropping their children off on the side of the road where students are able to walk to school. However, this was quickly shut down and Ms.

Alex Spencer, head of the Upper School, sent an email out to all parents cautioning against this action and calling for them to patiently wait in carpool to drop off their kids.

Despite all this, the new system does grant some perks.

With all other students parking off campus, seniors are able to enjoy the ample available parking since there are no longer any pesky juniors to sneak onto the senior floor.

“I will say that there’s a lot of space on the third floor now,” said senior Jesus Lara. “I arrived like 15 minutes before school started and I still managed to get a decent parking space not too far from the stairs.”

Upon hearing this, a Falcon staff member went into the parking garage during school hours one day to count the number of

parking spaces available. In total, there were 110 spaces.

While this isn’t enough to fit a full grade level, it does offer the solution of splitting the junior class in half and alternating which group gets to park in the garage throughout the week.

While this wouldn’t appease both grade levels, it would allow for more students to be able to park on campus.

As of now, the shuttle system has its fair share of flaws, but campus leaders and staff want to reassure students they are working to smooth out all issues.

“At the moment, the system is going as smooth as it can be,” said Mr. Ray Reason, transportation coordinator and building operator. “But, we are making adjustments as we go to see if there’s anything we can tweak to make the experience better.”



Seniors listen as Mrs. Erica Baker, coordinator of student life and engagement, addresses them in the new temporary student center. Photo by Kimetris Baltrip

SENIORS DESERVE A PLACE OF THEIR OWN

As the school year unfolds, it's time to revisit a topic that has sparked numerous discussions within The Kinkaid School's community: the use and access to the student center.

While it has been a shared space for students of all grades for years, we propose a change: restricting the student center to seniors exclusively. This is actually simply a continuation — turning an unspoken rule that has been followed by dozens of senior classes in the past into a concrete one to enhance seniors' experiences.

One of the primary concerns with a shared student center is the potential for overcrowding and excessive noise levels, which can hinder students' ability to concentrate or relax.

By restricting access to seniors, we can alleviate this issue, providing a quieter and more conducive environment for seniors to work on assignments and prepare their college applications.

Seniors are the students who most merit

the amenities in the student center such as beanbag seating, a foosball table and a ping-pong table.

Seniors have spent several years diligently working toward their high school graduation. As they approach the culmination of their high school journey, seniors deserve a space where they can relax and de-stress.

Creating exclusive spaces for seniors in the student center fosters a sense of community and camaraderie within the graduating class. It allows them to form deeper connections with their peers and share experiences unique to their final year of high school.

This sense of belonging contributes to their overall satisfaction and fulfillment during this critical period of their lives.

And the restriction of the student center to senior students would also allow for a space for senior-specific activities or class-wide celebrations.

This is why we believe that converting the student center into a senior center will have a positive impact on the Kinkaid community.



Students laugh and chat while walking outside to the patio behind the student center in the temporary Upper School.
Photo by Kimetris Baltrip

SHOES FOR STYLE, COMFORT DURING CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION

Story by Sophie Mehta, Zoe An and Bennett Bowman
Design by Sophie Mehta, Zoe An and Bennett Bowman

After her first day of carrying heavy books and walking across campus, freshman Lindley Bowman developed red blisters on her feet.

Many students find themselves in the same position and aim to find more comfortable shoe alternatives.

"After the first day of school, I switched to HOKAS because they are more comfortable," Bowman said.

HOKAS, with their colorful design and running technology, offer a strong option walking across Kinkaid's expansive campus.

Students walk immense amounts of time between the learning villages, temporary Upper School, Student Life Building, Katz Center and the Dining and Learning Center, which is why a 10-minute passing period was instituted.

Many students opted for practical shoes to accommodate the new campus lifestyle.



Photo courtesy of HOKA website Women's Bondi 8 Shell Coral/Peach Parfait



Photo from Golden Goose website Women's Midstar laminated heel tab and glitter laces golden goose shoes.



Photo from Alexander McQueen website Women's White/Dark Burgundy oversized shoe

But many other students prioritized style over comfort in selecting shoes for this school year.

Sophomore Whitney Sturm said she loved the style of her Alexander McQueens and kept the same shoes she wore in the previous year.

Though high-end shoes like Golden Goose and Alexander McQueens look nice on, they can leave students' feet in pain.

"I wear my Alexander McQueens because they are cool and not really because they are comfortable," Sturm said.

Due to the high price of designer shoes, some students are not willing to switch to a more comfortable alternative.

"There is no way I am switching shoes this year," said junior Christian Murry when referring to his favorite pair of New Balance shoes.

Students who would like comfortable shoe choices often go for brands such as On Cloud, HOKA, New Balance and Hey Dude, the latter being popular among boys.

"I feel like at least 20 percent of the junior guys wear Hey Dudes on a daily basis," said junior John Klevenhagen.



Photo from Hey Dude website Sirocco Dual Knit Grey

Some boys prefer wearing open-toed shoes, which are only allowed during school if they are leather, except for free-dress Fridays.

Junior Gus Griggs and freshman Baird Snyder enjoy wearing leather flip-flops on a daily basis as a comfier alternative to tennis shoes.

"I look forward to wearing leather flip-flops," Snyder said. "I am a person who embraces my true self, and they are comfortable."

Students agree that wearing Crocs to school should be allowed because they are comfy and closed toes, but the Upper School handbook does not permit students to wear rubber shoes. However, with dress code going back to a less casual standard, students are re-evaluating their footwear choices and considering more of a balance between style and adherence to school guidelines.

Crocs are not allowed because "they are too casual," Mr. Josh Ramey, dean of students, said.

Regardless, the struggle between style and comfort rages among students as the construction has come into effect and walking distances have increased to that of a college campus.

"Running shoes or cross trainers (athletic shoes)," are the best shoe option for students, Mr. Ramey said.

What do you think is more important? Style or comfort?



Photo from Rainbow website Single Layer Premier Leather with Arch Support 1" Strap in color Cafe



Photo from ASOS: Crocs Classic clogs in ballerina pink

SOME OF WHAT'S NEW IN

2023-24 theme encourages self-reflection

"Me, Who Am I?" is the question performers, artists and many visual and performing arts members will be asking themselves throughout the entirety of this school year as they use this year's theme to embark on a search for self-identity.

Every year the Visual and Performing Arts Department focuses on a new theme that encompasses everything that the arts will be doing in that school year. This year, when choosing the VPA theme Mr. Scott Lambert, director of Visual and Performing Arts, looked to this year's spring musical, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella."

Mr. Lambert explained that the musical features a song titled "Me, Who am I?" that "helped crystallize what we were hoping to accomplish this season."

This ultimately formed the basis of this year's idea

with the VPA inviting everyone on a "journey of self-discovery, exploring the complexities of the human experience, and what it means to truly know oneself," Lambert said.

The message seeks to educate everyone on understanding that while the world might tell what or who you should be, people need to challenge themselves to discover their authentic selves. This year's theme hopes to provide a powerful tool that will lead to student's self-reflection and personal growth.

"From the stage to the screen, art has the power to inspire us, challenge us, and ultimately help us to see ourselves and our world in new and profound ways," Mr. Lambert said.

"Me, Who am I?" is intended for students to embrace and celebrate their power through a diverse selection of performances and events.

"Through this journey, we hope you'll find yourself inspired, challenged, and ultimately transformed,"
— Mr. Scott Lambert,
VPA director



Ms. Cat Martinez, the new Upper School sculpture teacher, assists senior Rayya James on a project. Photo by Emerson Heath

THE ARTS

Story by Emerson Heath and Jordan Roberts
Design by Emerson Heath

Former US math teacher moves to dance department



Also new this year, Mrs. Anjay Thakkar, who was previously an Upper School math teacher, now teaches dance alongside the school's other dance instructors Mrs. Mary Cable and Mrs. Danyale Williams.

"We have embarked on a teaching rotation that will allow every student who takes dance to learn from all three of us,"

Mrs. Thakkar said.

This year's art theme of identity is very impactful for the direction of dance this year because it allows all student and faculty choreographers to bring parts of their identity into their pieces.

"We hope every student can see themselves in our program, find joy in movement, and improve and expand their range as dancers," Mrs. Thakkar said.

This year's fall concert is themed "Feel the Spirit" and it will be choreographed by the three dance teachers with the help of Mr. Aaron Girlinghouse, production coordinator and former dance teacher.

To bring in a different perspective and talent, guest choreographer Lena Yeh, from Social Movement Contemporary Dance Theater, assisted the dance faculty along with Kinkaid alum Ashton Lambert '18, who took a break from touring on Broadway's "West Side Story" to help teach Kinkaid's dancers.

While exploring the joy and love of dance is paramount, the dance teachers are dedicated to challenging their dancers technically. They also are focused on educating their dancers on the art form and the history of where various dance styles, techniques, and disciplines were derived from.

Sculpture program to explore techniques under different artist

Kinkaid's visual arts program added new sculpture teacher Ms. Cat Martinez.

"Kinkaid's teaching atmosphere and culture aligns with my goals of building foundational skills and preparing students for their future," Ms. Martinez said.

Alongside letting her students explore their passions

and ideas, Ms. Martinez has a plan of direction for this year. She plans on using her personal sculpture expertise in her class to allow and aid her students in exploring innovative materials, themes and techniques to bring new concepts of sculpture the students might not have been introduced to.

Ms. Martinez wouldn't be able to achieve her goal without the students who are passionate about learning her ways and understanding the techniques she is bringing.

"The students are all capable of achieving greatness, and I'm there to support them every step on the way," Ms. Martinez said. "I have a genuine enthusiasm for sculpture, and this can be contagious and motivational for my students to engage more in the subject."

Ms. Martinez said she has been overwhelmed with the love and passion that the visual arts program teachers share. She was welcomed with open arms and all the available help she needed.

"We have a passionate team of educators and a supportive environment that allows students to explore their creativity to the fullest," she said.

Ms. Martinez said she is proud to be a part of the visual arts community as it offers a diverse range of creative opportunities for Kinkaid's students.



Members of the dance program listen to Kinkaid alum Ashton Lambert '18, son of Mr. Scott Lambert who is the director of the visual and performing arts department. Ashton Lambert, a professional dancer and actor, visited campus to help train dancers. He returned to Kinkaid for the week to teach both Middle School and Upper School dance classes. He taught everything from a condensed version of his pre-show warm-up to choreography from Broadway's "West Side Story." Photo by yearbook staffer

DCO TAKES ON NEW YORK

Dancers spend four days taking classes from professionals and exploring the Big Apple

Story and design by
Will Burba and Madison Burba

Jazz music filled the room as dancers leaped and turned across the studio floor. Behind them, the New York City skyline stretched across the horizon.

Kinkaid's Dance Company or, DCO, spent four days in New York City, taking dance classes from professionals and taking tours of the city.

The trip, organized in part by Upper School dance teacher Mrs. Mary Cable, was an opportunity for dancers to get to know each other before school started.

"I never understood why dancers met with guest artists before the dance faculty. There's no getting to know us as a family before going and bringing in a stranger who they're not going to see very much," Mrs. Cable said.

Through the Pearl Studio, DCO secured a private rehearsal space where they took a variety of dance classes from professionals, ranging from hip hop and jazz to musical theater and contemporary dance.

"Watching the students take their classes was incredible because you can see them grow in a short amount of time. They were really enthusiastic and willing to try anything even if it wasn't their favorite style and really go for it," dance teacher Anjaly Thakkar, said.

"All the teachers were really knowledgeable. We learned dance, choreography, and technique from them, but we also learned what it was like pursuing a dance career in New York," said senior and DCO president, Stella Hall.



DCO members enjoy a night out in New York City, where they were able to watch the Mark Morris Dance Group. The trip was meant to help them bond.



Photos by Stella Hall

“Seeing the difference in the relationship between dancers from last year to now is amazing. They’ve got this experience behind them. There’s a connection.”
- Mary Cable,
dance teacher



DCO members were able to practice in a private rehearsal space called Pearl Studio.

One of these professionals, Brian Martin, who is currently performing in "Some Like It Hot" on Broadway, taught DCO the opening number from the musical.

"He went to lunch with us and answered any questions we had about Broadway, college dance life, and dancing in New York," Hall said.

That night, DCO attended "Some Like It Hot" to see Martin perform.

"When the curtain was going down and bows were happening he looked for our dancers in the audience and waved hello," Ms. Thakkar said.

Martin posed for photos and gave autographs to the dancers after the show. He even told other cast members about Kinkaid's dance company, so after the show, other performers greeted DCO members.

"We also got to see the Mark Morris Dance Company, which was huge. They're legends and we got to see them in the theater that is known for great dance," Mrs. Cable said.

When not in dance class or watching a show, dancers were able to explore the city in groups.

"Some of us went to watch 'Book of Mormon,' while others explored the Broadway area," Ms. Thakkar said.

According to Hall, exploring the city was a highlight of the trip.

"Me and two other dancers found this really cute hole-in-the-wall restaurant. They had a live pianist playing show tunes, it was the best," Hall said. "I'm really hoping we can continue to do this trip every year in the future. I think it's super important for the morale of the company and will help everyone bond."

The trip was a great way for new members and veterans to bond before spending the year choreographing and rehearsing pieces together.

"Seeing the difference in the relationship between dancers from last year to now is amazing. They've got this experience behind them. There's a connection," Mrs. Cable said.

HONORING A CHEER LEGEND

By Matthew Berman, Lj Carrillo, Gavin Johnson

"I was in free fall, but he was right where I needed him," said junior and varsity cheerleader Abby Shi. "He caught me with ease before putting me down and encouraging me to get back up and try again."

Shi was referring to cheer coach Kaleb Cantrell who passed away in late May at age 25 after a tragic motor vehicle accident.

"His funeral was standing room only, a testament to his legacy," Ms. Jessica Hawkes, cheer coach and Upper School history teacher said. "Usually cheer is very upbeat and fun, and we don't have too many difficult emotional struggles, so the experience of losing a coach has made us closer as a team."

Varsity cheer captain and senior Helena Heath agreed.

"We all felt the same pain, and we were there to support each other throughout it," Heath said. "It was a little strange and sad this year just because we all knew he was supposed to be there, and some of the best memories the team has with him are from our retreat."

In response to Coach Kaleb's passing, Kinkaid's cheer team has dedicated its season to him and the values he represented: passion and dedication.

Additionally, the cheerleaders have planned to wear blue bows during their 2023 homecoming performance, as blue is the primary school color of Cantrell's alma mater, the University of Kentucky, where he was a member of the cheerleading team, including the 2018 national championship varsity squad.

"We are all putting our best into this season to honor him and make him proud," Heath said.

Coach Cantrell helped to hone the girls' tumbling and stunting skills, spotting many of their stunts and preventing a number of possible



Seniors Haley Patolia, Helena Heath and Mauli Patolia show their school spirit at the 2023 Homecoming game. Heath is wearing a blue ribbon to honor the memory of coach Kaleb Cantrell.

Photo by David Shutts



Coach Kaleb Cantrell performed as a cheerleader at the University of Kentucky.

Photo courtesy of family on digital gallery found at www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/houston-tx/kaleb-cantrell-11299921

training injuries both in small group lessons and with the team.

Cheerleader Bennett Bowman, a junior, said he was the embodiment of calm and reassurance, and he had the ability to boost the cheerleaders' self-confidence both on and off the cheer mats.

"His unique ability to motivate without overpressuring the team set him apart," Bowman said. "He also had a spirit that all the cheerleaders, whether on JV or varsity, experienced. He was all about doing things for the right reasons and he pushed us to be our best selves. He was easy to talk to as well, about cheer and non-cheer related issues."

The cheer coach Ms. Hawkes also commented on Cantrell's ability to encourage students.

"He had a really good balance between making you try your hardest and making you feel like you got it," Ms. Hawkes said. "His legacy is not just with the Kinkaid community, but in the cheerleading community."

Ms. Meghan McDonald, who is also a cheer coach and Upper School history teacher, said that Cantrell's role as a full-time coach at Elevate Athletics, a practice facility in Houston, and as a part-time coach

Squad dedicates season to coach, remembers a legacy that was 'special'

“His unique ability to motivate without overpressuring the team set him apart... He was all about doing things for the right reasons and he pushed us to be our best selves.”

— Bennett Bowman, junior cheerleader



Coach Kaleb Cantrell at a cheer camp with juniors Chloe Childress, Bennett Bowman and Kate Hyman. “He was easy to talk to as well, about cheer and non-cheer related issues,” Bowman said, remembering Cantrell who helped coach JV and varsity cheer squads at Kinkaid. Photo by Jessica Hawkes

at Kinkaid allowed him to better connect with members of the cheer team when he came for practices.

“Coming on campus to work with the girls was special because they had already developed a relationship with him,” Ms. McDonald said.

FIRST TO LAST?



BY CHARLIE LOBB

Football ranking overlooks history of Falcon wins

Texas Private School Football released its Southwest Preparatory Conference 4A rankings last month, sparking an uproar among players on the Kinkaid football team.

The Kinkaid football team was ranked last place at No. 5, which many believed was too low.

In the past two seasons, Kinkaid football has won the championship trophy twice. In 2021 Kinkaid defeated Episcopal School of Dallas, 42-17, and in 2022 defeated the No. 1 ranked Episcopal High School, 17-6.

Defensive back Gus Griggs, a junior, said the rankings did not take into account their wins from the most recent seasons.

“Since we have won two years in a row, our ranking should be carried over to this season,” Griggs said.

Many other players felt this way, including junior linebacker Gavin Johnson.

“Kinkaid should be top 3, at least,” Johnson said.

Texas Private School Football constantly updates its rankings weekly, so the Kinkaid Falcon football team is practicing extra hard to prove their doubters wrong.

TOO HOT TO HANDLE

Blazing heat melts cleats, affects practices for outdoor fall sports

Story by Chloe Wilson and Alexia Hoffman

The gleam of the Segal Field scoreboard crept into the spaces inside Will McMackin's helmet, as he geared up to play the last 10 seconds of the first half of a game.

Later, a cool, evening breeze juxtaposed the sweltering air McMackin felt in his traditional afternoon football practices.

Since preseason, football players have labored in over 100-degree weather, melting off the bottom of their cleats.

Like football, field hockey practices mostly take place in the afternoon.

Field hockey player Kate Mitchell describes her shin guards at the end of practice as sweaty, but still intact for the most part.

The heat changed practices: two hours in the sun were reduced to one and practices had a high likelihood of getting canceled because of the extreme

temperatures.

To ensure that the health of the players stayed intact, a system was created to break practices into 20 minutes on the field and five-minute hydration and shade breaks.

Head field hockey coach, Coach Jackie Ciconte, provided plenty of breaks for players across all types of practices. All the players wanted

to be able to get on the field for more than 20 minutes, so morning practices were widely accepted across the team.

"I really like morning

"IT'S ALSO REALLY FUN AFTER MORNING PRACTICES. I BLAST MUSIC IN THE LOCKER ROOM WHILE WE GET READY."

— KATE MITCHELL

practices because we get to go home early and get our homework done," Mitchell said. "It's also really fun after morning practices. I blast music in the locker room while we get ready."

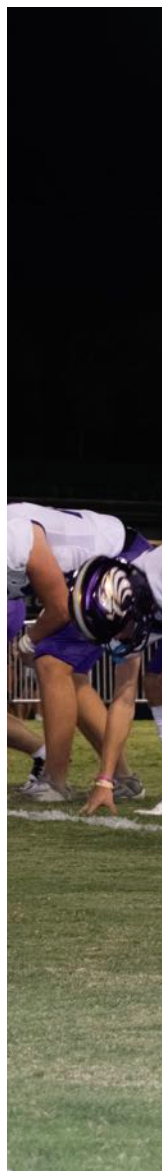
The early mornings, locker-room showers and rush of morning routines was not a foreign concept for cross country runner, Katie Whiteley.

Her and the team have been accustomed to early morning runs, but the extensive heat made these practices more prominent throughout the season.

"In the past, cross country has always had morning practices, usually three to four times a week," Whiteley explained. "Now, we only practice in the mornings due to heat restrictions."

The sprinkling of afternoon practices that occurred were more accommodating of the weather change, making it possible for players and coaches to enjoy a practice without excessive heat exposure.

"Our new afternoon practices usually take place inside, and on easy running days...we complete more core exercises [and] take this time to work on the mental side of the sport," Whiteley said.



Falcon finds ways to stay cool during appearances

By Chloe Wilson and Alexia Hoffman

Cheering for the Falcons has never been hotter for one student in particular.

While sporting the signature Falcon mascot, junior Liam Jamail Herrick has felt like he was melting in the humidity and fall heat. Inside the costume, the heat can reach more than temperatures 10 to 15 degrees higher than outside.

But the heat doesn't take away the accolades Jamail Herrick gets while exhibiting school spirit.

"The heat is pretty bad on most days, but I have a bunch of fans and stuff," Jamail Herrick said.

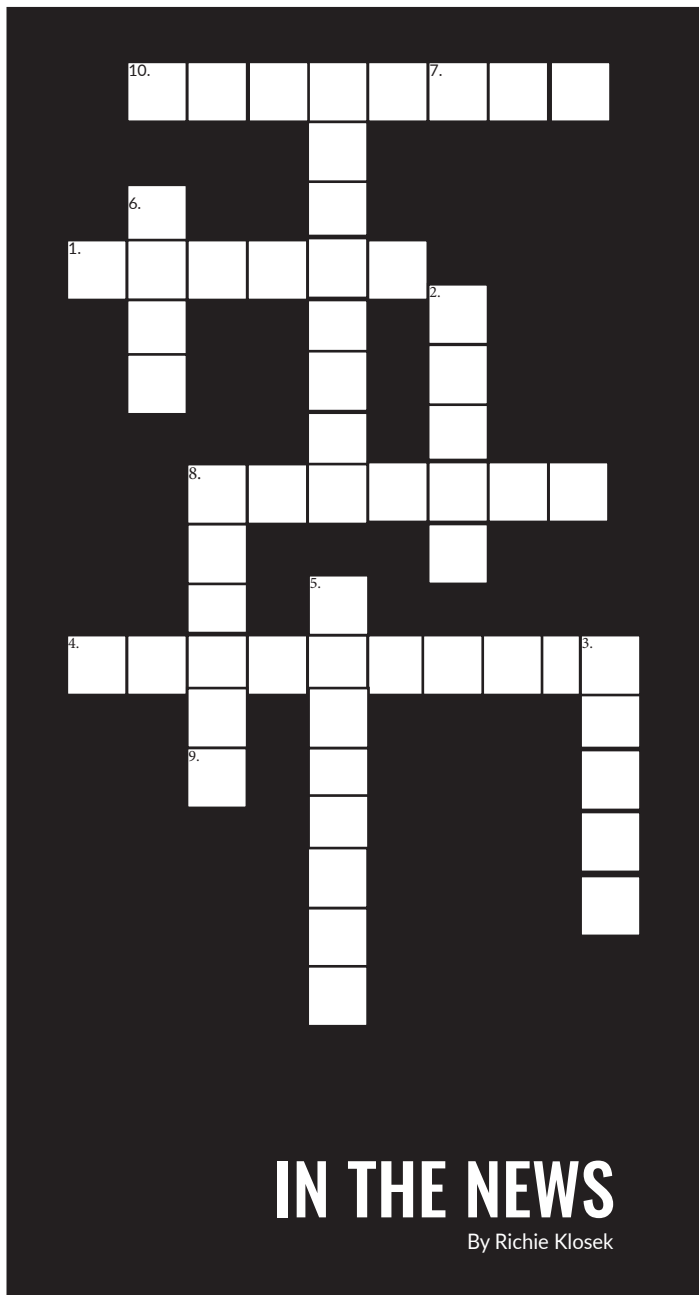


Football players dealt with melting cleats during practice because of the intense fall heat.
Photo by Chloe Wilson

Liam has had a fan attached onto the head of the falcon costume and he has used other ways to stay comfortable. "I have these ice packs that I wear around my neck," he said. One of the cheer coaches used to be a mascot, so the coach watches over Jamail Herrick. For the games that he attends, Jamail Herrick only participates in the first quarter and takes photos with fans. Pep rallies are when he mostly cheers. All in all, Liam said he still enjoys being the mascot. "It's pretty fun. It's a new experience. I definitely know why no one wanted to do it," he said.



A junior currently serves as the school mascot and wearing the costume can get quite uncomfortable in high fall temperatures.
Photo by David Shutts



IN THE NEWS

By Richie Klosek

1. A new faculty member who is a econ/history teacher Dr. _____.
3. The late and beloved Kinkaid cheer coach: ____Cantrell.
5. You can find science classes and electives in the _____ village
7. Juniors and younger now have to park at _____ Drive Presbyterian
9. This senior name Ellie _____ had the opportunity to intern at NASA .
10. You can find students in the _____ playing ping pong and relaxing on bean bags.

2. Mr. Longoria enjoyed his time over the summer by traveling to _____
4. _____ is a favoirt e shoe worn by the students.
6. _____ photography was in charge of taking the school pictures this year.
8. Due to the heat conditions, athletic cleats were _____ .

Need the answers? Find them on thefalcon.kinkaid.org.

The Falcon's mission is to be an accurate and reliable source of information for The Kinkaid School community by informing readers about school-related topics.

Questions or comments?

We welcome readers' feedback. Please email the editor-in-chief at eshaan.mani@kinkaid.org or call (713) 243-6591 or use the form at thefalcon.kinkaid.org. Letters can be sent to: The Kinkaid School, 201 Kinkaid School Dr., Houston, TX 77024

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The Falcon is published six times a school year. The magazine is available to Upper School students. There are 300 free print copies that are available to the Upper School community and available for pick up in the Upper School; there are about 40 subscribers. The Falcon magazine has been a member of CSPA and NSPA.