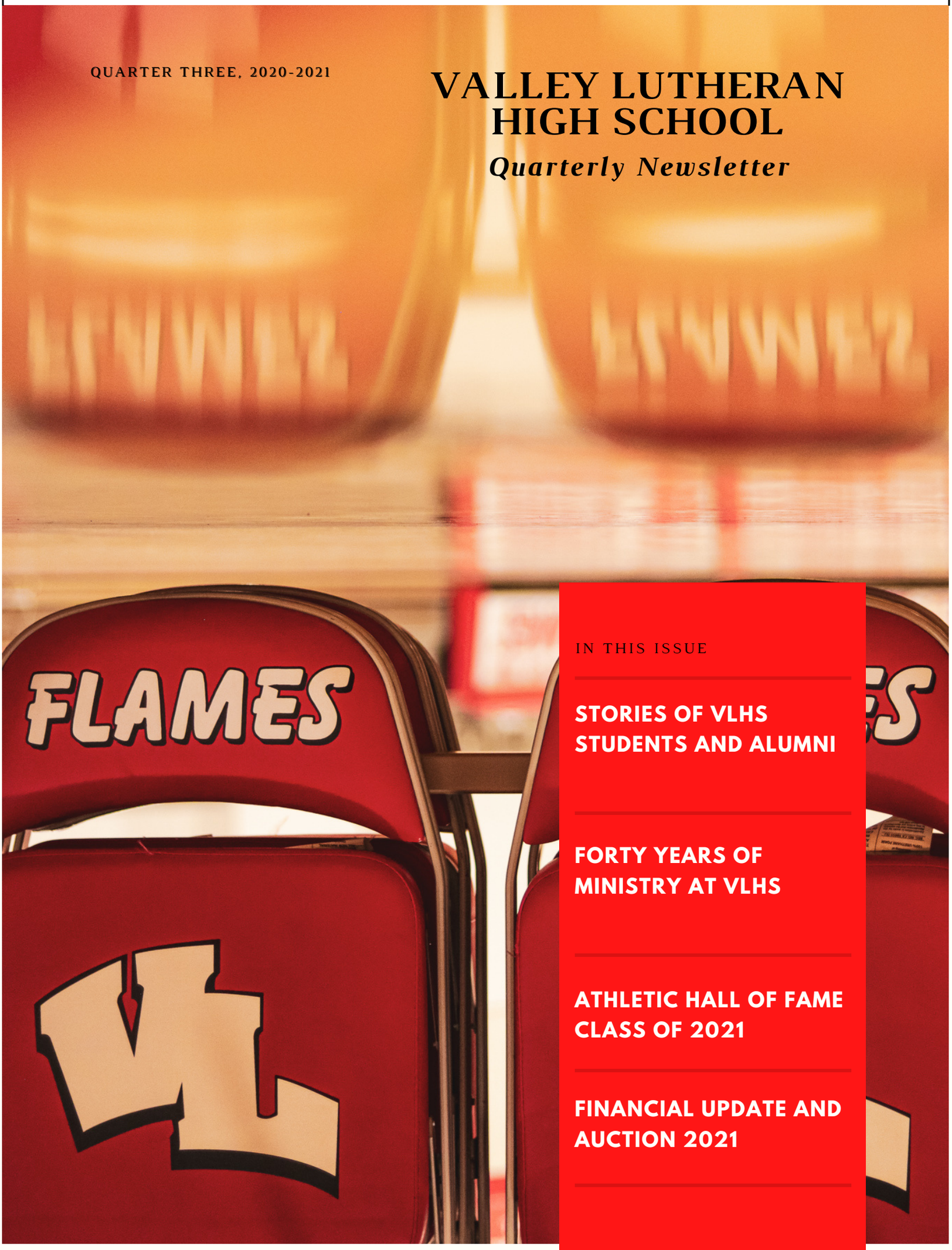
QUARTER THREE, 2020-2021

VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Quarterly Newsletter



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Student Voice

By Grace Sielaff, Senior at VLHS, Class of 2021

Valley Lutheran has always been a big part of my life. Both my brothers had attended before me so I was already acquainted with the high school well before I went. When I first arrived my freshman year, I was afraid that everyone would view me as my brothers' little sister, but instead I was my own person. Valley allowed me to grow into myself and become whoever I wanted to be. The confident person I am today can be accredited to the many caring teachers and friends that I met throughout the years. The honors program and ability to participate in multiple activities granted me the option to further my resume for college and helped me achieve multiple scholarships to help with it. The connections that I have made are long lasting and have impacted in so many ways that I will forever be grateful. Everyone is so incredibly kind and genuinely cares about your well being and it was such an amazing environment for me to experience high school in.

Student Voice

By Carlos Guzman, Senior at VLHS, Class of 2021

VLHS has been a huge part of my life and has been a great inspiration. Not only has Valley Lutheran been really good to me but it has also prepared me for the future. VLHS has helped me have a stronger connection with God and a better connection with all my classmates. Valley Lutheran makes me feel like I am part of something greater.

Valley Lutheran is more than just a community; it is a family.

Alumni Voice

By Maureen and Chris Hecker

VLHS holds a special place in our hearts, as both my wife and I are alumni (Maureen,'94/Chris, '92). The influence of a Christ centered education, small class sizesindividualized education, greater teacher-student interactions, and parentalInvolvement is so important. Some of our fondest memories were born out of what many would see as challenges of going to a small school. Things like eating lunches on the fieldbecause we had no cafeteria, attending classes in modular buildings, away games inplaces like Salome and Bagdad (remember the donkey and carpeted gym?), JoeRichter's many close calls in the lab, and how parents would host gatherings afterbasketball games for the student body and their families. There was a strong senseof community and pride that resonated through.

Some of our longest lasting friendships were carved out of these experiences, somewith peers and some with teachers themselves. There were many life lessonsoffered during our time at Valley. One in particular is I remember turning thecorner on my way to class after offering a sarcastic remark to a friend and seeingChuck Oliver standing in front of me. Having heard what I said, he put his armaround my shoulder and "Hecker, character is what you do when no one iswatching." Those words have stuck with me and have been a guiding principle inmy life. I have passed them on to business teams that I have built, kids that I havecoached, as well as my own children.

So, when our son, Landon, told us he wanted to attend VLHS, we didn't think twice. Itis great to see that the foundation laid by the many teachers and faculty of Valley'searly days continues the forging of the generations.

Alumni Voice

By Megan Ehlers Gotshall

Being an educator for the past 11 years has been an extremely humbling experience. I've been blessed by the opportunity I've had to play a role in the lives of children and families as their teacher.

My very first Call was to Zion Lutheran School in San Francisco to teach 3rd grade. That was followed by a Call to Christ Lutheran School in Phoenix to become the Service Learning and Outreach Coordinator. How crazy to end up teaching at the grade school that I attended in junior high! God sure has a sense of humor.

My time at Valley Lutheran High School played a role in setting me up for success in my professional career. I benefited from the small family atmosphere combined with personal relationships with my teachers. I felt like they invested in me as they spent a lot of time answering my challenging faith questions and helping me grow spiritually. My faith has been instrumental in my current role, and I attribute much of that growth to my time at Valley Lutheran.

Alumni Voice

By Korianne Krause

After four years filled with sports, clubs, supportive teachers, and wonderful friendships, I graduated from Valley Lutheran High School in 2014. I look back at my time there fondly and have carried what I have learned with me throughout the years. I went on to Northern Arizona University where I graduated in 2018 with a BSBA in Marketing. I moved around a bit after graduation, but now find myself back in Phoenix, AZ where I am a freelance social media manager and am looking at going back to school.

Valley gave me opportunities that I would not have found elsewhere, including the opportunity to grow in my faith daily, and brought me some of the most important relationships in my life. I will be forever grateful for the impact my years at VLHS had on me."

Alumni Voice

By Robyn (Renaud) Bergquist

My name is Robyn (Renaud) Bergquist and I graduated from Valley Lutheran in 1993. Through rigorous academics, extracurricular activities (choir, drama, peer counseling, student council), and opportunities to serve the community around me, I was taught to be a hard worker, a problem solver, a good listener, a servant leader, and a good communicator. I went on to NAU where I earned a B.S. in Zoology (minor in Chemistry). I felt God calling me to become an educator and went back to school to earn my Secondary Teaching certificate in Biology.

Most importantly, VLHS has given me a strong spiritual foundation. I learned about Jesus and how loved I was by Him every day in each of my classes, in every chapel, and in every activity I was involved in. I still hear this message from all of my past teachers whenever our paths cross. The spiritual foundation I received also gave me the confidence to earn my Masters of Arts in Theology. In fact, Valley Lutheran impacted my life so much I decided to make it my home once again and I have been teaching here for thirteen years. This school holds a very special place in my heart and I cannot wait for my children to attend here.

40 Years of Ministry at Valley Lutheran

1981-2021 - 40 Years of Learning, Serving, and Sharing Christ

Valley Lutheran High School began with a dream in the late 1970's. A group of people believed Christian education should be for all students and there should be a Lutheran high school in Phoenix. Valley Lutheran opened for business in the 1981-1982 academic year in a public school facility at 24th Ave and Thomas Road with six teachers and a few other non-teaching employees. However, in 1985, suddenly and unexpectedly the buildings were no longer available for use. God challenged the leadership of Valley, the school had students and a healthy start, but no facilities. Rescue came through the generosity and foresight of two churches that are key to the history of the school. Mt. Calvary, our present location, owned this large piece of land in a central part of Phoenix, but there were no adequate buildings for classrooms and offices. Portable buildings could be moved in and a campus developed, but the school still had to find a temporary home.

The answer came from Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church at 15th Avenue and Maryland. They offered temporary classroom space until later in that year when the school could officially live at 7th Avenue and Colter.

The transformation of this campus started with the assembly of the portable classrooms but has continued over the years. The current office/classroom building was converted to high school use from a daycare that was previously operated by Mt. Calvary. An old gym was removed which made way for the current gymnasium which was constructed and dedicated in 2007. The Joe Richter Academic building was added to campus in 2016. Valley has a rich history of providing quality, Christian education in central Phoenix and continues to thrive by God's grace.

We are excited and beyond blessed to go into the 2021-2022 school year celebrating 40 years of Learning, Serving, and Sharing Christ at Valley Lutheran High School.

Athletic Hall of Fame - Class of 2021

By Bob Parsons, Athletic Director

Late in 2019 a committee was formed for the purpose of establishing an Athletic Hall of Fame at Valley Lutheran High School. Drawing on nearly 40 years of amazing sports highlights, we announced and celebrated the first Hall of Fame class in February 2020.

Now one year later, I am excited to announce the Hall of Fame Class of 2021:

Megan Ehlers Gotshall - 2006 graduate, Soccer, Basketball, Track & Field

Glenn Gerbino - Tennis Coach 2007-2014

Aaron Koehne - 2013 graduate, Football, Basketball, Baseball

Jacob Krause - 2008 graduate, Football, Basketball, Baseball

Suzanne Selander Roberts - 1985 graduate, Basketball, Softball

Bob Wolf - Football Coach 2005-2015

This is an amazing group of people who made lasting impressions as players and coaches. And, each one of them were outstanding ambassadors of the culture of Valley Lutheran.

Go Flames!

The 2021 VLHS Auction

Join us April 17, 2021 for our annual auction! This year we are excited to announce that our auction will be virtual so people who support Valley can participate from around the globe. Please visit www.vlhs.org\auction for more info!

2020-2021 Financial Update

By Principal Kat Stokes

2019-2020 Budget:	$2,391,366.00
2020-2021 Budget:	$1,876,619.00
Expenses cut by	$514,747.00

At the beginning of 2020, Valley Lutheran sent out the call for aid as we were significantly below budget by $240,000. By God's abundant blessings, after reworking the budget and receiving gifts from generous donors adding up to almost $90,000, Valley Lutheran is now on solid ground financially. Although the work is not done, we are committed to financial security and setting up Valley for a long and prosperous future, and want to thank you for your gifts, prayers, and support. Looking ahead, if you would like to be a part of sustaining and strengthening the ministry of Valley Lutheran, please go to vlhs.org/donate and contact Mrs. Stokes at KStokes@vlhs.org or 602-230-1600.

Athletics Update

By Athletic Director Bob Parsons

We are now in the home stretch, and shortly will be wrapping up our Winter sports season. Our kids, coaches, and parents are to be commended for being understanding, flexible, and engaged as we have navigated through the Covid environment. There have been some amazing performances by both our girls and boys basketball teams. Congratulations to our Senior Winter athletes!

As we get into March, our Spring sports season will get underway. Practices will soon begin for Track & Field, Tennis, Softball, and Golf. I'm hopeful that the benefit of our beautiful spring weather and the ability to conduct these sports outdoors 100% of the time, will allow all of us to experience a greater sense of normalcy.

Our kids have been fun to watch this year, and I am proud of all of them for being resilient and staying the course. It has not been easy. Thanks for your continued support and prayers as we move forward.

GO FLAMES!

STAY INVOLVED WITH VLHS

To keep up on what we have going on at Valley Lutheran, follow us on our social media pages.

We're on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
Follow @valleylutheran for updates.

Special thank you and credit to VLHS Senior Andrew Baker for the photography used in this publication

We appreciate your support of Valley Lutheran.

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to navigate the unique realities of the 2020-2021 school year. If you feel called to donate to our programs and scholarships that we offer at VLHS, please do so at **www.vlhs.org/donate**