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Robbinsdale Cooper High School

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SMITH NAMED INTERIM COOPER HEAD PRINCIPAL



Photo by SHENG VANG

Prior to taking over as head principal, Ms. Smith (left) had experience working with elementary, middle and high school students.

By JESSE GARCIA
Quill staff writer

Long-time Assistant Principal Ms. Smith took over the role of Cooper head principal on March 1 following the retirement of Dr. Herman on February 28. Smith said she does not want to make too many sudden changes, but instead she wants to “keep our community together and not let us grow disconnected in the absence of Dr. Herman.”

Smith started in the Robbinsdale School District as an assistant principal at Armstrong High School before moving on to being assistant principal at Robbinsdale Middle School. After four years at that school, she moved on to being head principal at Lakeview Elementary School and then finally became an assistant principal at Cooper.

Smith said her long history at Cooper and in the district has led to her love of

the students, staff and greater community. The biggest asset Smith believes that she brings to her new position is “consistency and continuity.”

“Having worked with Dr. Herman at Cooper for a while, I possess the necessary knowledge and needed touch to be able to keep the school headed in the current direction while we look back at the loss of Dr. Herman,” she said.

While she will not be

making massive changes to shake up the community, Smith said she will be working on ways to increase student voice at Cooper. For example, she recently helped orchestrate the student summit in February in order to allow the students to voice their concerns about the community and school.

Smith said one thing she enjoys about Cooper is the “amazing diversity in the Cooper community.”

“Everyone expresses

Long-time assistant principal Ms. Smith took over after the retirement of Dr. Herman on February 28

themselves in meaningful and amazing ways to where I have nothing but hope for the community to blossom,” she said.

Smith said she loves to watch the productions of the Cooper theater department. In addition, she said she enjoys singing, which she would like to do more often, although she hasn’t been able to recently.

Outside of school, Smith has three children. Two of her children are adults and one is a student who will graduate next year.

Due to Smith’s many years of working at Cooper, current staff members have been able to form positive opinions about her. For example, English teacher Ms. Kope stated that Smith “is a consummate professional with a huge heart.” At first, Kope said she was intimidated by Smith, but soon came to recognize and appreciate her caring nature and passion for the students.

“I have learned a lot from Ms. Smith, including how to better hear student voices and how to go with the flow, finding joy even in the hardest days,” Kope said.

Former Head Principal Dr. Herman shared a similar sentiment about Smith’s professionalism.

“Her experience in

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Relay participants prepare for upcoming event

Relay for Life, the annual cancer awareness celebration and fundraiser, will be taking place at Cooper on May 6



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

There are many activities during Relay for Life in which students take part.

By REANA GREEN
Quill staff writer

The Relay for Life committee is currently working hard to raise money and gain community support to create an event for cancer survivors on May 6 at Cooper.

Relay for Life is an event that celebrates people closely impacted by cancer by

bringing everyone together. The event consists of speeches from survivors and caregivers, silent walks, luminaria walks, games and lots of entertainment.

“It’s a fun way to do something good for the world,” Hailey Namie (12), who is helping plan the event, said.

Planning for the event began in early October 2022 when the first committee meeting was held. To have a successful event with lots of people, the committee has been spreading information in many ways since October. Donation bucket-passes at games, Instagram posts, posters around the school and painting windows are all things that were part of what they called Kick-Off Week last fall, which was a great way to “cater to our generation,” committee member Julia Nordstrom (12) said.

Starting with Kick-Off Week, Nordstrom, Namie and other committee members spent a lot of time networking and spreading the word to family members and friends. Also assisting in the process are the staff advisors for the group, one of whom is Ms. Limbeck, who teaches Spanish and AVID at Cooper.

“The committee is very great and filled with enthusiastic students willing to put themselves out there to try new things for the better good,” Limbeck said.

The Relay for Life committee is built on leadership, effort and passion. These aspects create a strong environment for teamwork to take place. Group member Jenny Lee (12) said she finds that the committee is at its strongest when there are “a lot of people that care about the organization.” She added that they all bond over their passion for doing good and their personal connections to cancer that drives them to work harder.

According to members of the Relay for Life committee, one question they often hear from the Cooper student body is: “What does Relay for Life mean?” While every answer is personal to each member, the committee members all share the goal of helping others. For example, Ella Maki (12) said that Relay for Life “means responsibility

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Commencement process revamped for Class of 2023

After decades of holding graduation in the Cooper stadium, the event will now take place at the Minneapolis Convention Center

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

The annual Cooper graduation ceremony will be undergoing some major changes this year. While past commencements have taken place the evening of the last Thursday of the school year outdoors at the Cooper stadium, this year’s event will be on Monday, June 5 at 4 p.m. at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

According to senior counselor Ms. Hough, many factors went into making this transition.

“There has been talk about changing graduation from the football field to somewhere else for years,” she said. “The cost of having it at Cooper is way more than I’d ever guess, so I think money and resources was the biggest part of changing it. As a staff, when the ceremony is at Cooper, there is a lot of prepping that we won’t have to do anymore. Also, not having to worry about

weather will be an added bonus.”

Due to the number of elements that will be new to this year’s ceremony, Hough said that many of the details are still being worked out.

“A lot of planning is happening behind the scenes. There are so many unanswered questions since this is our first time having graduation at a different location,” she said.

Among the items staff members are reviewing prior to graduation are what the final week of school will look like for seniors, how the graduates will practice for the ceremony, how students and staff will be transported to the venue and what parking will look like for people attending the event.

“Once we have our final plan intact, we will definitely share it with seniors through advisory and Schoology. We also plan to have a senior meeting to do an unofficial walk-through. For now, we are sharing information as it becomes finalized,” Hough said.

Although many of the details are still unclear, there are some aspects of the graduation ceremony that have been determined. First, students in grades 9-11 will have an e-learning day on June 5 due to the need for school staff to get ready for commencement. Second, no tickets are needed for friends and family members who want to attend the event. Third, much like in the past, the senior advisory teachers will be reading the names of their graduates during the ceremony. Finally, it will be the convention center staff who will handle the security, the set-up and the tear-down for the event.

Hough said she had a chance to visit the convention center the first week of February as part of the initial planning process and she was pleased with what she saw.

“It’s a beautiful space and I’m so happy that it’s going to be at the Minneapolis Convention Center,” Hough said. “I think once we get everything situated, it will quickly become part of the Cooper tradition.”

Hall monitors try to support good behavior

From verifying passes to leading students to their classes, monitors are always on the move



Photo by SHENG VANG

Mr. Herman (right) was shadowed by Jesse Garcia (left) over several days in February and March 2023.

By JESSE GARCIA
Quill staff writer

Hall monitors are staff members students see on a daily basis. However, for the most part, many students are unaware of what they actually do. A large number of students have come to the conclusion that hall monitors merely sit around and occasionally “nag” them for a hall pass. In order to get a grasp of what it is that they do and what they go through on a daily basis, I shadowed hall monitor Mr. Herman periodically over two weeks in late February and early March 2023.

Everyone knows the school behavior rule that students are required to have a pass in order to be out of class. Despite that, many students can be found out of class walking around without a pass. This leads many people to wonder why the hall monitors don’t just send those students back to class.

According to Herman, hall monitors are incapable of sending everyone back to class and keeping them in class once they are there. In fact, many times, the hall monitors send someone to class only to find them back in the hallways again five minutes later.

Of course, the possibility of hall monitors getting students to class depends on the students actually acknowledging the hall monitors. As I witnessed when shadowing Herman, a large majority of students in the halls simply continue walking and ignore the staff member. This results in a dynamic where the staff member is forced to try and get the interaction with the student started, which Herman said can be difficult.

When hall monitors are not actively walking the halls to check in with students, they are asked to look after a general area, such as the second-floor Y. Most of the time, Herman and the other hall monitors can be found at specific stations like this. In these instances, they will ask students questions about their passes and try to guide students to class.

Fights and related commotions are additional issues hall monitors need to address. According to Herman, these staff members aren’t always technically expected or allowed to intervene physically in a situation, which makes it difficult to safely address fights.

However, there is another layer to these fighting situations that make things difficult for hall monitors: the commotion fights cause among the students who want to watch can be a hazard. Herman said the hall monitors have to try and direct a large group of students and their behavior during and directly after these fighting situations.

A related challenge for hall monitors is the fact that students tend to be physically involved with their friends in a “playful” way, which includes such actions as light jabs, body holding and verbal bickering. In these instances, the hall monitor is forced to make the judgment call of whether it is a friendly or

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Student group promotes school spirit

The Spirit Committee helps plan events and activities designed to get Hawks more involved in life at Cooper



Photo by SHENG VANG

Members of the Spirit Committee meet weekly in room 245 during advisory to plan upcoming school events.

By LA'SHAYA TAYLOR
Quill staff writer

Are you interested in deciding on the spirit week themes and getting involved in pepfests? If so, you should join the Cooper Spirit Committee.

The Spirit Committee can be a great way to be introduced to new people and get more involved in school. The Spirit Committee helps with things like toy dives, homecoming week, the kindness campaign and getting students to have more school spirit.

“The purpose of the Spirit Committee is to promote a positive image of Cooper and work to inspire the community to come together and celebrate one another,” Ms. Heck, who is the advisor in charge of the committee, said.

In order to join the Spirit Committee, students must complete several steps.

“In the spring, students complete a Google form to indicate their interest and talk about ideas they have that they want to contribute to the group. Then, they are invited via email to become part of the Spirit Committee advisory,” Heck said.

There is a lot of responsibility that comes with joining the committee.

“Responsibilities include attending our planning meetings during our advisory meetings, helping create decorations, coming up with other ideas to promote events, planning and helping at pepfests, and coming up with the various spirit dress-up days,” Heck said.

Being a part of the Spirit Committee also means taking part in a lot of school activities.

“We help plan pepfests and the spirit weeks, homecoming, kindness and snow days. Our biggest event is running the annual Cooper toy drive before winter break,” Heck said.

Taking part in the Spirit Committee can also come with many leadership benefits.

“Committee members get to make decisions about events and show leadership among their peers. They also help to promote events on social media and have an opportunity to work with various people in the committee,” Heck said.

Heck said she became the advisor for the group because she enjoys taking part in school spirit.

“I decided to be the advisor of this group because my favorite part of school is to help students feel like they belong

and help them in supporting one another. Spirit is a great way to show interest in the school and to be a part of the community,” Heck said.

A student who is making contributions to the Spirit Committee is Noemi Gonzalez (12). She said she believes that the committee helps encourage other students to care about their school.

“The purpose of the Spirit Committee is to help encourage people to be more involved with events at school and to remind them of the events happening at Cooper,” Gonzalez said.

According to Gonzalez, participants should have a positive attitude when joining the group.

“In order to join spirit, you have to be in 11th or 12th grade and be ready to help with all of our projects,” she said.

Another element Gonzalez emphasized is that committee members must have an open schedule.

“The responsibilities of someone in spirit is mostly just being available because there are times where we have to do cleanup or decorating after school hours and it helps when everyone is there. Showing up to all of the meetings during HLL is another responsibility because that’s when we do all of our planning and start making the things we put up around the school,” Gonzalez said.

Since joining the committee, Gonzalez said she has learned to work with others.

“The benefit of being in the Spirit Committee is that you learn to listen to others and work as a group to make a final decision,” she said.

Also important to Gonzalez is the amount of fun she has had while serving on the committee.

“I wanted to see how everything gets prepared for these events. I’ve had a lot of fun being in the Spirit Committee,” she said.

If you think you want to join the Spirit Committee, then you should see Heck in room 245.

E-learning replaces snow days during bad weather

The district decision to eliminate traditional snow days was made just before the February 22-24 winter storm

By YUSEFF SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

The three-day winter storm that took place February 22-24 led the Robbinsdale School District to move to distance learning rather than have three snow days. The decision to have students do distance learning during bad weather as opposed to canceling school is based on a larger recent decision made by the district on February 2.

“For the rest of 2023, the only alternative to e-learning days on days when we cannot have school will be adding extra days in June. We hope not to do that,” Robbinsdale Superintendent Mr. Engstrom said in a statement. “Accordingly, from now through June 7, if a school day can’t take place in person, it will become an asynchronous e-learning day as described in the e-learning plan.”

In light of this decision, if severe winter weather or inclement weather occurs, in-person school will be canceled as well as some activities and practices depending on the urgency. While they are at home, teachers and students will be expected to take part in distance learning according to the district’s e-learning plan.

According to the district plan, any teacher that would have a class or student contact time is asked to use Schoology to post assignment information and lesson resources to stu-



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

The snow that first arrived on February 21 led to three days of e-learning.

dents. This work may include activities like online discussions, quizzes, assignments and readings. This work is also expected to be a continuation of content from the previous day of school.

On the days that distance learning occurs, teachers are asked to post their lessons as an “Update” on Schoology. Additionally, this information is supposed to be sent home via an email from the teacher. During the normal school hours, teachers, principals and other staff members are required to be available by email or voicemail to field student questions.

As for attendance during e-learning days, students need to “like” the lesson plans posted by their teachers before the end of the school day, at which point teachers will mark them as present or absent. Parents are asked to call the attendance line if their family does not have reliable internet access.

On the day that students return to school in person following e-learning, teachers are asked to give students time to work on tasks that were not completed during distance learning. They are also asked to give students who did complete their e-learning work a chance to extend their learning

in some way.

When asked about the district’s decision to move to e-learning, Head Principal Mr. Herman said he’s not sure e-learning days are “more useful” than snow days, but that they are “an option to continue the curriculum without having to pause the progression of the course.”

“We did have some traditional snow days this year already before winter break and I am sure there were benefits from those days as well,” he said.

Herman said one important benefit to students from e-learning days relates to the end of the school year.

“Having an e-learning day helps prevent us from having to make up for lost days at the end of the school year. That is a benefit to both students and staff,” he said.

Additionally, Herman said e-learning days also may help some students to “catch up on missing assignments and work at their own pace” during that time.

As for the student perspective, the majority don’t seem to be too concerned about the change from snow days to distance learning days.

“As long as I get to sleep in, I’m chillin’,” Jacob Hernandez (12) said.

Meanwhile, Rachel Tidjani (12) said she likes e-learning better than a snow day because she doesn’t “miss out on learning” when the weather is bad.

College and Career Center welcomes new coordinator

Mr. Rosenblum, who previously worked in the nurse's office, will now help students with their post-high school plans

By REANA GREEN
Quill staff writer

Mr. Rosenblum has taken over the role of coordinator of the College and Career Center following the retirement of Ms. Wamdahl in November 2022.

Rosenblum had been working at Cooper for five years in the school nurse’s office before he moved to be the College and Career Center coordinator position. Rosenblum explained that, while attending Colorado State University, he worked in the admissions office, which made him realize

how much he loved getting people involved with colleges.

As far as changes go, Rosenblum said he wants to keep the College and Career Center the way it is, but his goal is to get the office “more coordinated” with all the other people within the school.

Rosenblum said most students are unaware of the College and Career Center at Cooper and how beneficial it is to the school. The center hosts colleges when they visit Cooper, hosts the military when they visit the school, helps organize standardized test-

ing and works with other school organizations that share the goal of helping the students who need college and career support. The office also helps students complete the FAFSA, helps push high school transcripts along to colleges and even assists with writing resumes.

Many seniors and juniors are faced with the decision of whether they are ready for college or if they want to go straight into working. This can be a tough decision that comes at students fast. Rosenblum advises students not to give up on their education, even

if it means pursuing a job while attending college.

“If you’re unsure, try at least one or two classes,” he said.

Rosenblum added that a lot of jobs offer college tuition reimbursement.

“Keep your eyes open for opportunities,” he said.

For any questions about college or for any advice about careers, Rosenblum said students should feel free to stop by and see him in the College and Career Center in room 211, right across the hall from the student services office.

Tech use in class is not always beneficial

While the use of devices is sometimes effective in helping students' learning, old-fashioned tools like pencils and paper can be better

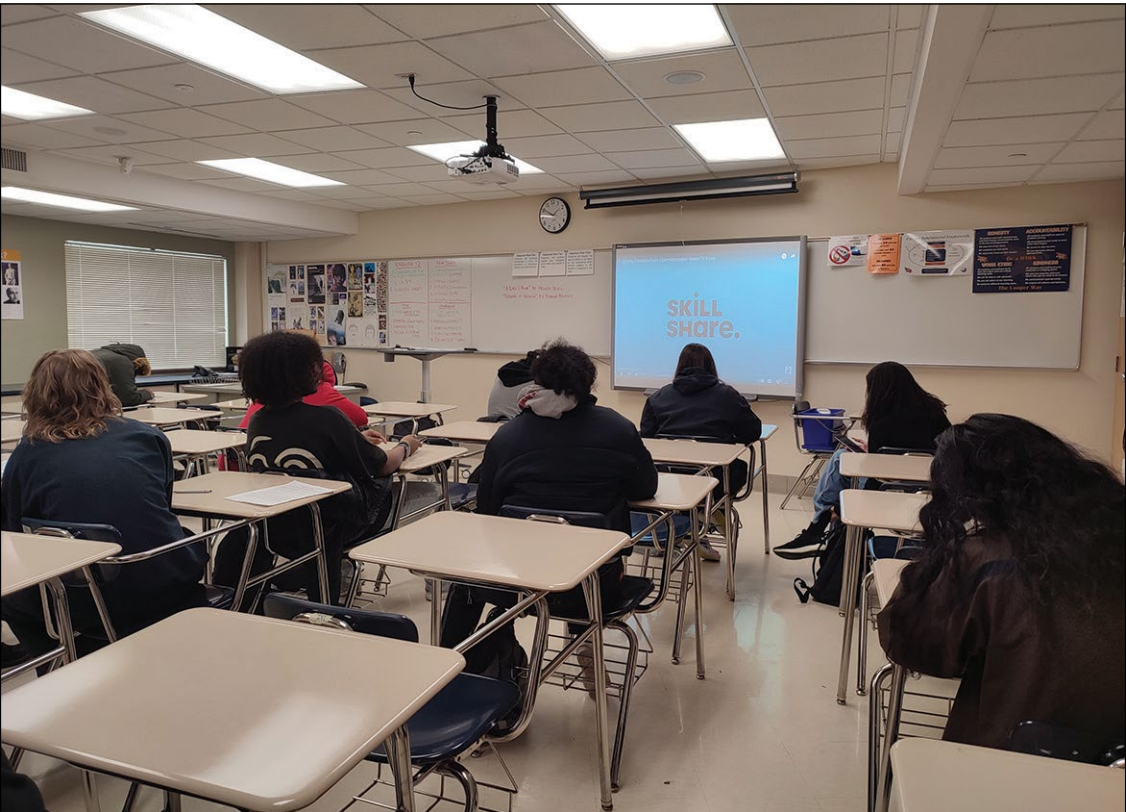


Photo by SHENG VANG

The daily use of Smartboards to view and convey information is commonplace in most classrooms at Cooper.

By OWEN SANDLUND
Quill staff writer

Something I like to think about is the role of technology in schools, both present within the curriculum and outside of it. Our generation is really the first one to be greatly affected by these factors given the wide accessibility of computing devices, our access to internet services and our tech-centered culture. Twenty-first century technology has found its way into our school

in the form of Chromebooks, smart phones and even smart boards. But what effect does all this technology really have upon students and how should it be properly utilized?

I love my phone, as do most students at Cooper. When you walk into a class, chances are you will see around half of the students glued to a mobile device, playing games, using social media or even watching movies. This isn't only applicable to our school. A 2019 survey by Pew Research Center found that 45

percent of teens were nearly constantly on their phones, even during school hours. I personally find my phone distracting at times, and while my grades aren't negatively hurt, that is not true for all students. A Harvard meta-study conducted in 2022 illustrates that phones are correlated to a significant decrease in academic performance. When students say they can "multitask," that is simply not the case and this is evident by declining educational outcomes nationally within the past

few years.

As far as personal use at school goes, phones cannot be effectively banned. However, having a school where phones are allowed at nearly all times is harming school culture. The Harvard study even found that there was a correlation between phone accessibility and a lack of school safety, as fights are more often to occur when they can be recorded.

Technology is oftentimes used within the classroom in an attempt to further our instruction. I think that is an issue. Firstly, a smart board costs between \$2,500 and \$7,000 upfront, not including electricity, maintenance and replacement fees. This device could easily be replaced by a combination of a traditional whiteboard and Chromebooks. When our schools are heavily underfunded, money needs to be spent in high-return areas, not on contracts for resources that are non-unique and heavily redundant.

Furthermore, Chromebooks are a great tool for education, but I think they need to be properly utilized. If we are meant to be writing a lab report or taking notes, that should be done on paper. As *Psychology Today* reported in 2021, studies found that writing things down leads to more robust brain activity and retention than simply typing items on a device. To me at least, this means that teachers

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To the Editors

Students should engage in elections

People ages 16 and older can become election judges

By MR. VIDAL
Cooper staff member

This letter is in response to "Concerns about U.S. elections do have merit" by Owen Sandlund (12), which was published in issue five of *The Quill* on February 28.

While people on both sides of the issue may quibble with particular points made in the opinion piece, I would like to offer a concrete step that many within the Cooper community can take to engage in the election process and view its integrity first-hand.

Minnesota residents who are U.S. citizens ages 16 or older are eligible to serve as election judges (or, specifically, as student election judges in the case of 16- and 17-year-olds). In Minnesota, election judges have required training prior to the election, work under the supervision of experienced head election judges and are paid for their service.

Both Hennepin Elections and Minneapolis Elections would be happy to hear from anyone interested in serving as a judge. Additionally, they have a special interest in anyone who is sufficiently fluent in a language other than English to be able to provide voter assistance in that language.

I have served as an election judge for more than a decade, and during this time I have learned and witnessed so much about how Minnesota's elections are administered. My favorite story, and one that speaks directly to the editorial piece, was when I worked with a voter who drove from another county to serve as an election judge. She took that step because she didn't want to be seen engaging in the voting process by anyone she knew. Her goal of serving as an election judge was to either validate or disprove her belief, shared by her friend group, that election administration was rigged.

When I spoke with her halfway through election day, she told me why she was serving and, with a laugh, admitted that even before the end of her training session, she realized there were so many redundancies that it was impossible for the voting process to be rigged. She also shared that she planned to inform her friend group about her experience at their next get-together.

As I noted at the top, if you have questions about the integrity of the voting process, one of the best ways to have those concerns allayed is to get involved with it and see how it works first-hand. I hope that you consider joining me in helping Minnesotans continue to have, as Mr. Sandlund put it, accessible and efficient elections.

Attending college is personal choice

Although there is pressure to attend, college is not for everyone

By NEMO PONDER
Quill staff writer

The choice to go to college after high school depends on different components, such as your career objectives, financial situation and learning inclinations. Additionally, you do not fundamentally need to go to college right away either. Some students decide to take a gap year to save up cash and go the following year after graduating from high school. Another option some students choose is to apply for the spring semester rather than the fall after graduating. While there are many factors that go into the decision to attend college after high school, the one thing to remember is the choice and the path will be different for each person.

For numerous careers, having a college degree can give you a critical advantage when showcasing yourself for a job. What is more, many careers require a college degree to even be considered for hiring. College can offer students not only a chance to develop scholastically, but a chance to build a network of peers and mentors that can help in your career. Ultimately, you will have more options for careers when you have a college degree.

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Elective classes can play a key role in student learning

Although they are often overlooked, classes in areas like the arts and physical education can help Hawks expand their horizons

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Elective classes are the "fun" classes at school. If there was something to look forward to when choosing classes, electives were always the most thrilling; well, at least for me. Some examples of elective classes are painting, choir, personal finance and creative writing. Due to the fact that these classes are more "easygoing," there is a misconception that they are less important. However, these classes are just as important as required courses.

Taking elective classes allows one to acquire and improve life skills. Many may not think so, but one can learn quite a lot from an elective class. Take me as an example. I joined journalism in my junior year. I am not writing about journalism because I am currently in it but because the class changed my life.

Before joining the course, I struggled to interact with strangers and get comfortable seeing new faces. However, journalism is a class involving social interaction, so I had to step out of my comfort zone. At first, it was challenging, but as I continued the course, I got to work on my communication and social skills. These practices gradually became a part of my life, and, now, I am not sweating when I need to spark conversations with new faces.

In addition, my writing skills improved through journalism. Since writing is a huge part of the class, practicing writing articles and stories helped me improve my grammar, transitions and variety of word choices. For example, instead of using words like "because" repeatedly, I now use words like "thus"



Photo by SHENG VANG

Fine arts classes allow Cooper students to work on their creativity.

or "hence" to connect my ideas.

These skills also became essential outside of school. When I interviewed for internships, I felt less pressure since I had practiced talking with staff and students of all ages at school. This connects to the next reason why you should take elective classes: they allow you to meet new people.

If you have not noticed, most of your required courses in English, Science, Social Studies and Math consist of students in your grade level, which is especially the case for freshmen and sophomores. I am not saying it isn't good to connect with only students in your grade level, but sometimes it is good to connect with upperclassmen or lowerclassmen.

Being associated with people in other grade levels allows you to see the different perspectives of each student, the different vibes each grade holds and

the things you can learn from them. For example, senior friends can help lower-classmen with classwork since they've been through most courses. They can also advise juniors about applying for college or scholarships. You can share interests and form stronger bonds with a bigger social circle. Getting involved in elective classes is significant because you get to connect with other students outside of your grade level.

However, if connecting with others is not your thing, another reason why you should join elective classes is because they can help you find yourself. Many students may not think this, but elective classes are good places for an interest in certain subjects to be sparked or eliminated, which is useful for a student's future. Traditionally, students attend college after high school and get a career based on their interests and likes. Finding your interest and

knowing your likes and dislikes can be helpful because you would know what type of career you want and what occupation you should avoid. Having this knowledge thanks to high school electives allows you to focus on your target and ensure a solid career path.

Likewise, interests learned through electives can be used as coping methods. For example, I enjoy dancing. Whenever I feel stressed or need to clear my mind, I dance. By dancing, I release my stress and I feel happy since I enjoy the hobby.

The last reason to take electives is the cost of these classes. As you know, these elective classes do not cost money. Cooper offers free elective classes specific to particular careers, like the EMT and CNA courses, while others are classes many high schools offer, like the AP Computer Science class. There are even more options that Cooper offers, like the career investigation, culinary arts and forensics classes. If you did not know about these options, this would be the only time that you get to take these elective courses for free. In college, to take elective classes like these, you will have to pay to be enrolled, and it's a massive amount of money.

In conclusion, you should take elective classes and take them seriously because they can help guide you in life. Elective courses will expose you to new interests and skills and help you build your network. This is the only time you will ever get free elective classes, so take advantage of that fact and join those courses. Even if you end up disliking the class, at least you got to learn something from it and you can avoid topics learned in that class in the future.

Completing homework is critical part of school success

The number of students who do not take care of their assigned work outside of class is a growing area of concern at Cooper

There are many reasons why some students do little-to-no homework. Although it may not be good to skip homework, some students feel overwhelmed by it. Meanwhile, other students may not have enough time to do homework. In most cases, though, students just do not like doing homework. The unfortunate thing is that not doing homework can contribute to students not doing well in class, which in turn can set up a situation in which students do not pass a class and earn their required credit.

Generally speaking, it is important for students to do homework. Students need to understand teachers do not give homework to be difficult.

They give homework because it is important to proper learning. Homework is designed to make sure you understand what the class is trying to teach you. Homework is also meant to help you make sure you are doing what you are supposed to be doing in class.

If you feel overwhelmed with homework, do not do it all at once. For students who work a part-time job, you could do some homework before you go to your job, whether it is for three minutes or 30. Sometimes, you can even do homework while you are at work. The most important thing is

to avoid overwhelming yourself with homework. Don't feel like you have to do it all at once because you don't. It is okay to do it chunk by chunk.

Whether they have a job or not, some students may feel like they do not have time to get through all of their homework. If you think you don't have time, then you need to

make time. For instance, cut out a few unnecessary activities. It might seem lame to blow off your friends to stay home and do homework, but it is honestly worth it.

Of course, some students may

not do homework because they simply don't like to. Sometimes, homework just feels like an extra, unnecessary burden. It is important to remember, though, that homework is important because it results in a grade. Taking advantage of time in class or study hall to get your work done will pay off.

Homework can be stressful, annoying and irritating. However, at the end of your four years in high school, doing your homework can have a huge impact on your grades. If you are a student who doesn't like doing homework, try to do it a few times until you get the hang of it. Homework is an important part of the learning process.

From the Editors

Legislature off to a brisk start

While good has come from some bills, others are less sound

By OWEN SANDLUND
Quill staff writer

Whilst national politics are in gridlock, a Democrat-controlled state government in Minnesota is making record progress. Already this legislative session has seen the passage of multiple laws, including legislation on renewable energy, civil rights, voting laws, driver's licenses and even the creation of the Office of Missing and Murdered Black Girls. While at first glance these initiatives are a step in the right direction, some of these bills harbor some darker details.

The renewable energy legislation seeks to continue encouraging Minnesota's switch to co2-free energy by requiring a 100 percent clean energy Minnesota by 2040. The Democrats (DFL) point to a recent Greenhouse Gas Report that found utilities have already reduced co2 emissions by more than 50 percent since 2005 in Minnesota. That sounds like significant and needed progress and it is a step in the right direction for the state.

However, according to the most recent information from the Environmental Information Agency, only 21 percent of consumer energy in Minnesota is derived from what would be "clean energy" under the new bill. Additionally, while progress has been significant up to now, the infrastructure needed to transport this clean energy to the grid is already falling behind, with the *Washington Post* reporting in 2023 that regional regulators are struggling to make the needed transmission lines for the renewable energy boom. Despite their best efforts, at the national level, fewer lines are made every year while the demand continues to go up. *The New York Times* further elaborated in 2023 that fewer than one-fifth of all renewable energy projects actually make it on the power grid.

Furthermore, according to the Portland Business Journal, dozens of renewable energy projects like solar panels are being heavily delayed or canceled due to the immense demand caused from both extensive state subsidization of clean energy in the U.S. and the race toward renewable energy abroad, a move that has become even more urgent in Europe, which is now effectively cut off from Russian energy and desperately looking for alternatives. Additionally, billions of dollars in wind turbines and solar panels are imported from China annually, a trade relationship that is perpetually under stress in today's geo-political climate. This has led to a situation in which our infrastructure is struggling to catch up to the new demand and the construction of these energy production methods is in jeopardy in the short term and long term.

These and other factors are concerning, especially when neither of these situations appear to be alleviating anytime soon. So why did Xcel Energy and other utility providers in Minnesota applaud this bill? The better question is, how could they not? The DFL has a supermajority in the state government and have every incentive politically to regulate the utility companies into the ground if they don't go along with the new plan. So, the big companies will get subsidies and a pat on the back for attempting to "switch" to clean energy, which may not be feasible.

Meanwhile, the Republican (GOP) minority pushed on multiple occasions to amend the legislation to allow the construction of efficient, effective and clean nuclear energy or even to just put some safeguards in place if clean energy goals could not be met, but they were shot down repeatedly. These amendments had no strings attached. There was no package and there were no games. The Republicans just wanted the bill to allow the possibility of nuclear energy plants being constructed in Minnesota. Nuclear energy does not have the same restraints as the other clean energy options and it is becoming cleaner and more efficient as time goes on. However, the DFL did not support this idea.

Due to one-party rule, it's very likely that, near the end of the decade, we will have energy shortages in Minnesota. In fact, the state GOP warns that this possible outcome will be similar to California's blackouts. I think we all know that in Minnesota's punishing winters, blackouts or even increased prices due to energy shortages could be very deadly, especially for our most marginalized communities.

The state legislature also appears to

LEGISLATURE
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Relationships can affect school performance

A student's romantic and friendship connections may lead to them being more or less engaged in their school work

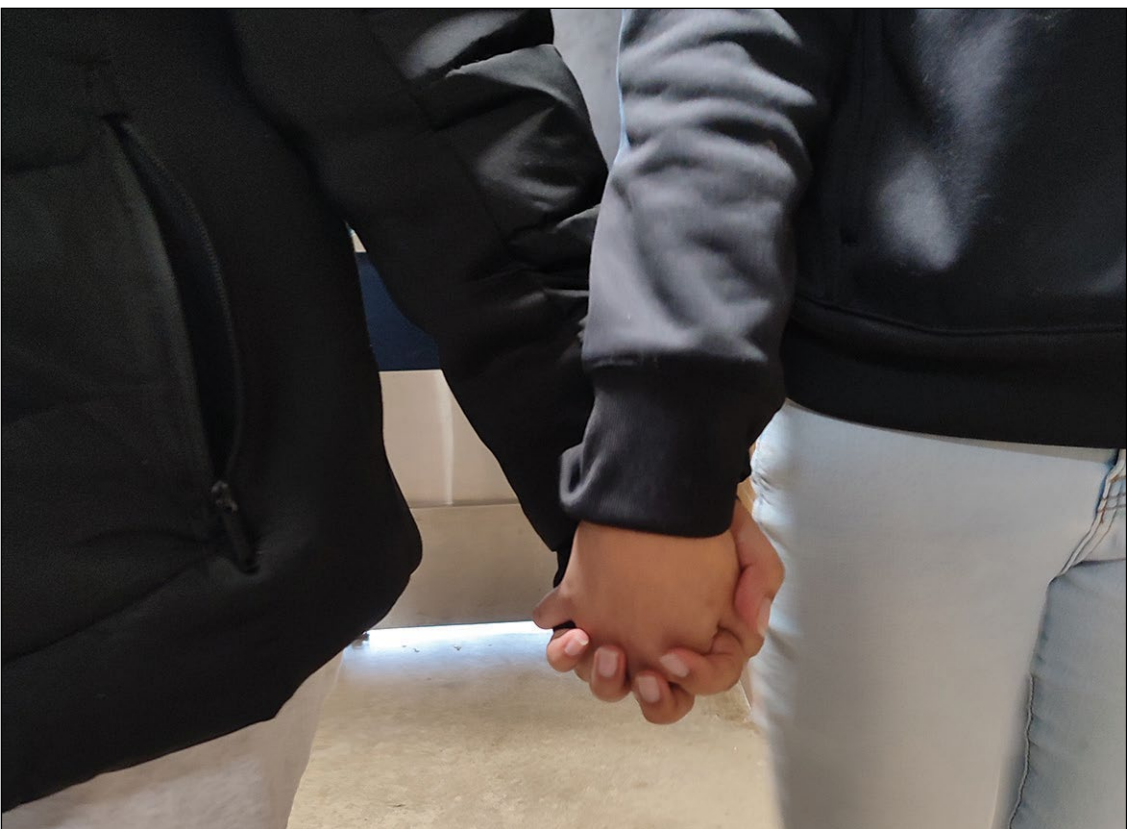


Photo by SHENG VANG

Having a partner or friend who takes learning seriously may have a positive impact on a person's focus on school.

By DAMARIUS HAMILTON
Quill staff writer

A student's romantic and friendship relationships can affect how they are doing in school. For some students, if a certain relationship is going well, they may be more inclined to do well in school, while a bad relationship may lead to the student having problems in class. For other students, the opposite may happen as a good relationship may distract them from school while a bad

one may prompt them to focus more on their education. Overall, the academic impact of being in a relationship can be both good and bad.

Perhaps the top concern is that some people can't maintain a relationship while properly focusing on their academics at the same time. For these students, focusing on their partner becomes more important than paying attention to anything else, including school. Instead of doing what is needed to stay on top of their classes, these people spend all

of their time making sure they treat their partner like they are perfect. While their motivation is understandable, students who focus on a relationship at the expense of an education may be making a mistake.

On the flip side, some students can be affected by a relationship in a positive way that motivates them to do better in school. Some partners thrive off each other's academic success, which is how healthy relationships are supposed to be. At the same time, a partner might see

Student use of bins for recycling, trash is problematic

When recyclable items are not put in the proper spot, there are repercussions for the school and the broader environment

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Students not using recycling and trash bins properly is becoming a major issue at Cooper. Since the start of second semester, there has been an influx of people practicing inadequate recycling. In addition, people have been leaving trash around the school at an increasing rate.

The reason I feel so strongly that this disruption within our school ecosystem is becoming a problem is that, the more times anyone enters the bathrooms and hallways, the more and more trash they will see on the floor from unknown sources. Not only is this ruining the school environment, it's inevitably motivating students to add more trash to the already bad littering problem by throwing things on the floor.

One change this year that is contributing to the trash problem is the absence of outdoor tables at lunch. Last year, it was possible to get a table to eat outdoors during lunch. However, since the eating area wasn't properly maintained, it had to be closed down to prevent further damage to the environment. The fact that this problem hasn't been solved yet



Photo by SHENG VANG

The clearly marked bins were introduced at Cooper at the start of this year.

is rather concerning. I believe if we practice recycling and just being responsible with where our garbage goes, the closing of this area could've been prevented.

The decline of recycling is becoming a major issue outside of school as well. The fact we are not recycling used materials means that those items are ending up somewhere else, usually in landfills. This is never a good thing for

any ecosystem. Since every resource is finite, if recycling is neglected, eventually so will be our environment.

Another reason I believe students should be more responsible with recycling is its potential impact on the future. If everyone was to take care of the ecosystem more, even if it is a minor contribution such as throwing away your used papers, in the long run, it should have a

positive impact on our environment. Remember: good habits lead to better things. If someone contributes to something positive, it will influence others, too.

Recycling not only helps influence a safer environment, it reduces the amount of garbage produced. Given the presence of mice in the school, if we exercise recycling regularly by throwing used soda cans or food trays into recycling bins, I believe this can also diminish the amount of mice that linger in the building.

While it is true that some recyclables will take longer to decompose than others, isn't it better to attempt to do something positive for our environment rather than not? I genuinely think we could improve a lot more than we expect in this situation. Recycling is not only helping our environment, it is also helping our futures.

Learning to do something new like recycling or putting trash in the proper place takes time. There's nothing wrong with that. However, we shouldn't take things for granted because our actions surrounding recycling and trash disposal now will influence our future more than we might expect.

Fights at school have negative impact on everyone in building

From reduced student learning to the community's poor perception of Cooper, the fallout from altercations can be widespread

By DAMARIUS HAMILTON
Quill staff writer

It seems that a week does not go by when there is not at least one school fight. In fact, there are some days during which multiple fights break out. While some students act like school fights are entertaining, these fights have more of an impact than we might think. Overall, school fights have a negative impact on the school environment in several ways.

First, school fights can create a sense of fear and insecurity among students, staff and parents. When students witness fights on campus or hear about

them, they may feel bad for the victims or afraid to attend school. This can lead to decreased attendance rates and a higher level of anxiety among students. Not only does it affect the students, it affects the staff. They have to be the ones to break up the fight and they are putting themselves in harm's way to try to keep other students as safe as possible.

School fights also can disrupt the learning process and create distractions for both students and teachers. When a fight breaks out, classes are often interrupted and teachers may have to stop their lesson plans to deal with the situation. This can lead to lost instructional

time and a decrease in student academic performance.

Third, fights can result in damage to school property. Many of this year's fights have caused broken windows, damaged lockers and other costly repairs. This can divert resources away from other areas of the school, such as textbooks, technology or teacher salaries.

Next, school fights create the need to implement disciplinary actions. This can result in consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school for students involved in fights. Those students then experience lost class time, which will impact their grades.

Finally, frequent fights can create a negative reputation for the school. A school with a bad reputation may be less attractive to prospective students and parents. As a result, that school will see lower enrollment rates and decreased funding.

As these many repercussions show, school fights can have a significant impact on a school. Whether it is safety concerns, disruptions to learning, damage to school property, increased disciplinary actions or a bad school reputation, the downsides to fighting are many and obviously negative. We need to ask ourselves if fighting or watching fights is really worth it.

ATTENDING COLLEGE IS PERSONAL CHOICE continued from page 3

gree, and the higher the degree, the more you will get paid in many occupations. In these instances, getting a degree right after high school will benefit you and help lead you to a high-paying job in any occupation.

Be that as it may, college can be a costly monetary investment, and it may not be the right choice for everybody if finances are an issue. In the event that you're not convinced beyond a doubt that college is right for you, it may be a better idea to not spend great amounts of money on a degree you will not use. In

these instances, it is a good idea to talk with your counselor, career advisor or college admissions officer to evaluate your options and what may be the best fit for you. Fortunately, some colleges can provide you with financial help, which can make attending that school more affordable. In situations where money is an issue, taking a gap year or applying for spring semester can give you a chance to work and earn a little cash that you can put toward tuition.

For some individuals, the thought of going back to school after graduating

does not sound appealing. Recent graduates may not feel the desire to go through more late night hours of studying for a huge test in college after doing so for four years in high school. In these cases, it is important to remember that you don't need a degree to make a living. There are occupations that don't require degrees that can allow you to make up to \$100,000 a year, especially careers in the technical trades. This may be a good option for people who cannot commit to more school.

Ultimately, the decision to go to

college is a personal one that should be based on your individual goals, values and circumstances. Everybody has their own path and will take their own journey. It's up to you to figure out how the future looks for you. I will say that the most financial and career success awaits people who have at least a two-year degree, but that is not always the case. I know I am going to college in order to have a better life, but not everybody makes that same choice. It is up to you to trust yourself and trust the process.

Eighth Grade captures middle school life

Comedian Bo Burnham's directorial debut is a heartfelt, realistic character study of a teenager named Kayla Day



Photo by A24

The strong performances by the film's leads, including Elsie Fisher as Kayla Day, is one of the many great elements of *Eighth Grade*.

By IAAN ERICKSON
Quill staff writer

Eighth Grade was a film created by the director and comedian Bo Burnham. It was released in 2018 and I saw as soon as it came out. I first saw this movie in eighth grade, funnily enough, and it hit me pretty hard as someone who understood exactly how the main character is feeling at the time. It's such a scary time to be in mentally and socially. I also really like Bo Burnham as a content creator, so I wanted to review a film made by him. The music and sound in Bo Burnham's *Eighth Grade* really highlight the importance of being yourself.

The movie is about Kayla Day, an eighth grade student finishing her final week at a public middle school in the state of New York. She posts motivational videos on YouTube about confidence and self-image that get almost no views. Kayla also struggles to make friends at school, eventually winning the "Most Quiet" award from her classmates. Meanwhile, Mark, Kayla's single father, struggles to connect with her and break through her reliance on social media.

While watching *Eighth Grade*,

the music (or lack thereof) in certain scenes is probably one of the things that helped the movie feel as impactful as it did. Music choices make the film feel more raw and more real, which helped me take it more seriously. For example, there is a great scene when Kayla and her dad are sitting by the fire and watching her stuff burn. They then begin having a really heartfelt conversation. Throughout the scene, as they're talking, there is only the soft crackle of the fire every now and then, but not any music. That really lets the actors' performances shine and made me feel more invested in the characters they are playing. As a result, the viewers get a scene that legitimately makes them bawl their eyes out for five minutes, especially viewers named Iaan. The music direction really helped me feel like they were real, not just characters acted out in a low budget CW show, and that really helps audiences feel so much more invested in the characters.

Another effective filmmaking technique is the use of asynchronous sound. This element is used in a way that lets you see and connect with who the character is. In a scene at a party early in the film, Kayla puts herself out

there for the first time and offers to sing the next karaoke song. As this scene unfolds, we get to see the person she was talking about at the beginning of the movie, the one who's being herself, because she looks really happy. However, instead of hearing her singing or talking, audiences hear one of her YouTube videos where she talks about putting yourself out there and being confident. We get to hear that video as she's doing the karaoke song, which is far more impactful than hearing her singing. Hearing her sing wouldn't be relevant and it would cause the viewer to judge her based on her talent at singing, which isn't the main focus at all. In fact, it's the opposite because this moment is about putting yourself out there regardless of the consequences. Hearing her asynchronous speaking lets the audience appreciate her for who she is as a person.

The message I saw throughout *Eighth Grade* is how the people who actually like you won't make you do anything to earn it. This idea contributes to the overall theme of the importance of just being yourself. One good example of that in the film is in a scene that takes place in a car, during which Riley tries to take advantage of Kayla

and force her into doing what he wants. He guilt trips her and pressures her to just stop struggling and listen to him. He tries to make her do something she is obviously uncomfortable with doing, which shows that he doesn't actually care about her at all. Instead, he just wants to use her, rather than appreciate her like her father, Olivia and Gabe do. The biggest part of this scene that displays the film's message is when she says, "No." This shows that she has changed from earlier in the film when she always tried to win people over. This is a really good message because it's so important for people to realize that there will be people who like you for who you are and not for what you can give them.

Overall, the music and sound of the Bo Burnham's film *Eighth Grade* really highlights the importance of being yourself. This movie moved me so much and I absolutely love it. Truth be told, I had actually already known about Bo Burnham from back in 2017 thanks to his comedy specials, but the movie really impressed me with how well he can convey such important messages. I can't say enough about how good this movie is. *Eighth Grade* deserves five out of five stars.

(500) Days of Summer puts new spin on romcom formula

The film, helmed by Marc Webb, uses an unconventional narrative structure to subvert the audience's expectations

By JANELLY CASTILLO
Quill staff writer

(500) Days of Summer is a 2009 film directed by Marc Webb. This movie is a perfect depiction of one-sided affection and how it can impact people. Webb does an amazing job of showing that not all romance movies need to end the way it seems like they should end and that your soulmate isn't always the first person you come across. *(500) Days of Summer* uses effective cinematography and costume design to show viewers how easy it is to fall for the wrong things.

The main character in the film is, Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), an aspiring architect who currently earns his living as a greeting card writer. Early in the film, Tom's boss hires a new secretary named Summer (Zooey Deschanel), who becomes the focus of Tom's affections. Tom discovers that he and Summer have some interests in common, despite the fact that she's seemingly out of his league. Tom believes in the concept of soulmates and he is convinced that Summer will fill that role. We then follow Tom and Summer as their relationship unfolds over 500 days, often jumping back and forth in time as we see whether or not Tom's pursuit of Summer is successful.

Cinematography is what ties any movie together. Good cinematography can tell a story, make it visually appealing and make it fun to watch. In *(500) Days of Summer*, cinematography consistently accomplishes



Photo by SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

The relationship between Summer and Tom unfolds in unpredictable ways.

all three of these things. One specific scene where this can be seen is during the introduction to the characters Tom and Summer near the beginning of the movie. This scene shows Tom and Summer growing up. Cinematography plays a role by incorporating a split screen; you see both Tom and Summer growing up side by side. This scene helps the viewer develop a connection with the characters as you see them become the people they are as adults.

Costume design is another filmmaking technique that is sometimes overlooked in movies because viewers might think there isn't much significance to it. However, what the characters wear is essential in helping make them believable in a film and in providing the audience with some insight

into what they are like as people. A scene that perfectly shows how much costumes add to a movie can be seen in *(500) Days of Summer* when Tom suddenly goes into a dance sequence due to his excitement about Summer. In this sequence, everyone around him is dressed in blue as they dance to the song "You Make My Dreams" by Daryl Hall and John Oates. Costume design plays a role in this scene because blue is the main color Summer wears throughout the film. As a result, the dance sequence shows that, at this certain point in time, Tom's whole world revolves around Summer. Everywhere he looks, Tom is reminded of what he thinks is the love of his life. This helps the viewer realize how much Summer means to Tom and how emotionally

dependent people can be.

In fact, emotional dependency is an important theme in *(500) Days of Summer*. There isn't one scene that happens in the movie that doesn't show this theme. The viewer constantly sees Tom being happy when Summer is with him or sad when Summer isn't paying attention to him. A specific scene that illustrates this theme is when Tom recites the "worst things" about Summer. In this moment, he names all the things he hates about her, but viewers who are paying enough attention will realize that he's actually repeating what he earlier says are his "favorite things" about her. This scene is strongly connected to the central message of the movie as Tom suddenly hates Summer due to her lack of interest in him. As the movie demonstrates, it is so easy for people to get caught up in the thought of trying to make a relationship work even when they know deep down that it is not a good fit.

In *(500) Days of Summer*, we witness a non-traditional romantic comedy in which people fall for the wrong things in a prospective partner. This movie shows the harsh reality of relationships and how they aren't always what you wish them to be. It is a refreshing break from all other romance movies since the main characters don't end up together and they both find their own "happy endings." Overall, the movie is pleasing to watch thanks to the cinematography and the unique way in which the story is told. *(500) Days of Summer* earns five out of five stars.

Men in Black is still the best in classic franchise

The chemistry between Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones keeps the film grounded



Photo by SONY PICTURES

The original movie spawned two direct sequels and a reboot with new characters that came out in 2019.

By AMIR DUNN
Quill staff writer

The movie *Men in Black* is directed by Barry Sonnenfeld and was first released on July 2, 1997. I decided to review this film because I watched it all the time as a kid. I loved it so much because the aliens in the movie looked so realistic. Although I couldn't wrap my head around it at the time, I realized as I grew older that it was special effects. The Barry Sonnenfeld film *Men in Black* is an excellent example of how special effects and art direction can be used to create a futuristic and dystopian society.

The film focuses on a secret, private agency called Men in Black. This agency has been created to do extraterrestrial surveillance given the large number of aliens who are secretly living on Earth. As the movie begins, one of the agency's top agents, Kay (Tommy Lee Jones), is in the process of recruiting a new addition to the agency. Kay decides to choose New York City police officer James Edwards (Will Smith), who is given the name Jay. When a flying saucer crashes into Earth early in the film, its occupant, a member of the bug race, takes over the body of a farmer (Vincent D'Onofrio) and heads to New York on a mission to find an energy source called The Galaxy. Agents Jay and Kay must then stop the bug before it can escape with The Galaxy.

Art direction plays a critical role in this movie. After Agent Jay accepts a job with the Men in Black, Agent Kay gives him a tour of the Men in Black facility. The facility has a lot of glass windows, all-white furnishings, touchscreen doors, holograms on the desks and white LED lighting. All these things make the facility look futuristic and believable, as if it were a real professional or government building. This use of props and background setup makes viewers wonder more about what things we don't know about in our world, what the future could look like or even what parallel universes there could be. It lets the audience get in touch with their imaginative side.

Although art direction is essential, so are special effects. Special effects are used throughout the movie and significantly impact the story. One of the many scenes with special effects takes place right before Agent Jay accepts his job with the Men in Black. Agent Kay is trying to prove to Agent Jay that there are a lot of hidden aliens all over their city and that people he knows or often interacts with are possibly aliens. To do this, Agent Kay shoots a character named Jeebs. Before Agent Jay could even process it, Jeebs' head begins growing back on its own and his voice starts from very squeaky to normal again once his head is back to normal. Special effects were used in this scene to create the effect of Jeebs' head being blown off and growing back, which is humanly impossible. Special effects in this scene show the strange mysteries and endless ideas of alien traits that humans aren't aware of, leaving the audience with something to think about. This contributes to the au-

MEN IN BLACK
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Premier Performers

The story of the musicians and artists who bring their talents to Cooper

Logan Johnson

By ALEXIS WILLIAMS
Quill staff writer

Logan Johnson (12) is in the Cooper orchestra program. Johnson, who plays cello, has been in orchestra since fourth grade.

"I first joined the orchestra because I thought it would be a lot of fun," Johnson said.

Johnson said that one aspect of orchestra he has enjoyed is social in nature.

"I like the orchestra because it gives me a chance to hang out with the other people who are in the orchestra," he said.

As he looks back over his last four years in the Hawks orchestra program, Johnson said one of the best things he experienced was the Halloween concert during his freshman year.

"It was during this event that a

pumpkin may or may not have been thrown at a clock by me," Johnson said.

Currently, Johnson is the vice president of Orchestra Leadership Council.

"I basically help with whatever Ms. Pflaum needs," he said.

As the group heads toward the end of the year, Johnson said they still have things going on in orchestra. The winter concert, the spring concert and the orchestra trip are three events he is looking forward to.

When it comes to school, Johnson said he enjoys his EMT class because he gets to learn about patient care, which will help him

when he is a surgeon. In his free time, he enjoys taking care of his axolotl, Grog-nak the Destroyer, Attorney at Law.

Next fall, Johnson is going to attend the University of Minnesota, Rochester as a pre-med student.

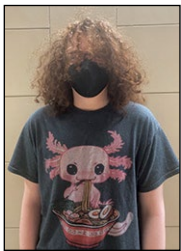


Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Samantha Ojeda-Graves

By ALEXIS WILLIAMS
Quill staff writer

Samantha Ojeda-Graves (12) has been involved with Cooper choir during her time at the school. She first joined choir during her freshman year.

"It started off just as a class I had but it became fun," she said.

Another reason she enjoys choir is her passion about music.

"I love all different types of music," she said. "In the choir, we experience different kinds of music."

Of the many memories she had made in choir, some of her favorite are connected to the cultural concerts the group has had over the years.

"I enjoyed being able to give appreciation for others who express their culture and music," she said.

Although she does not currently have any leadership roles in choir, Ojeda-Graves said she has often had a chance to participate in small choir groups and perform solos during choir concerts.

Outside of her music classes, Ojeda-Graves said she likes her Ethnic Studies course.

"It's really interesting learning about different cultural backgrounds," she said.

When she is not at school, Ojeda-Graves spends a lot of her time working. On her days off, she likes to spend time with loved ones.

Ojeda-Graves said she is still deciding on where to go to school after graduating. However, she said she is interested in continuing to learn American Sign Language to become an interpreter. She also said she is interested in possibly seeking a major in American Indian studies.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Jermaine Mack-Lynch

By ALEXIS WILLIAMS
Quill staff writer

Jermaine Mack-Lynch (12) is a Hawk who takes part in the school's Marching Band program. He has now been in Marching Band for two years.

"I first joined Marching Band because I like the way that all of the musicians come together to make one sound," Mack-Lynch said.

While he enjoys Marching Band for several reasons, one that jumps out is connected to the community the musicians form.

"Marching Band gives me a chance to be around a lot of cool people," he said. "I also enjoy having fun doing what I do best."

One of the highlights of Mack-Lynch's 2022-2023 season in Marching Band was when they had a senior night

celebration.

"I also enjoyed it when the Marching Band went on a trip to Wisconsin," Mack-Lynch said.

Although he does not have a specific leadership role in Marching Band, Mack-Lynch said his status as a senior in the group inspires him to help the younger musicians.

Even though the biggest events of Marching Band happen during the fall season, they still have things going on for the rest of the year. One thing Mack-Lynch is looking forward to is their trip to Chicago.

Outside of school, Mack-Lynch likes to make music and hang out with his friends.

Next fall, Mack-Lynch plans to attend the University of Texas.

"I definitely plan to continue with Marching Band in college," he said.

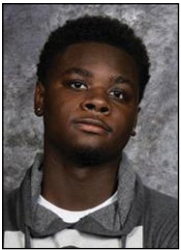


Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Tommy Rejsa

By ALEXIS WILLIAMS
Quill staff writer

Tommy Rejsa (12) has been part of the Hawks theater program for three years.

"During the first two years, I was the light guy, but this year, I decided to step into acting," he said.

In fact, Rejsa said both of his parents either are or were involved in theater for their careers. This inspired him to work in lighting at Robbinsdale Middle School since the "tech side of theater always interested [him]." According to Rejsa, his favorite part of theater is making friends.

"Everyone is like-minded and easy to get along with," he said.

Rejsa said he has many unique memories from his time in theater.

"My favorite memories from theater are either the cast parties or that one

night where we all got our roles down perfectly and performed an amazing show," he said.

Although theater has been a big part of Rejsa's high school experience, he is also involved in other activities.

"I'm the captain of both the robotics and drone racing teams," Rejsa said.

"Both robotics and drone racing are an absolute blast to be in. Helping people solve the myriad of problems that arise from these activities is a lot of fun."

When it comes to his coursework, Rejsa said science is his favorite subject. He is currently taking HL Physics, HL Chemistry and Computer Science.

Next fall, Rejsa will take general classes at North Hennepin Community College before transferring to the University of Minnesota to get a degree in mechanical engineering.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Newsies featured firsts for cast, crew

The team behind the winter musical overcame challenges to put on the 2023 show



Photo by ANNA NIEMANN

The plot of *Newsies* revolves around characters connected to the newspaper strike of 1899 in New York City.

By JOSEPH METZGER
Quill staff writer

The Cooper winter musical *Newsies* brought great songs, tap dancing and challenging technical elements when it ran at the school February 23-26.

Newsies is about the newsboy strike of 1899 in New York City. The story focuses on a boy who dreams of being an artist away from the big city. The show has music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Jack Feldman and a book by Harvey Fierstein. The musical is based on the screenplay of the original 1992 Disney film, which was written by Bob Tzudiker and Noni White.

The cast and crew did a great amount of preparing to put this show on the Cooper stage. Practice for *Newsies* started in January 2023 after winter break. According to director and Cooper theater teacher Ms. Wurzer-Palm, putting on this complicated

show came with a fair number of challenges. One issue in February was actors who were not showing up for rehearsal, which set the entire cast and crew back, making it harder for them to progress. This was especially



Photo by ANNA NIEMANN

Newsies is a stage adaptation of the original 1992 film released by Disney.

challenging because most of the cast had little-to-no experience tap dancing.

"Attendance was our biggest challenge," Wurzer-Palm said.

While it made rehearsals difficult, the show's tap dancing was one of the things that made

this year's musical something special to work on. Student actor Elizabeth Menges (12) said the dancing forced her to improve her skills.

"Learning how to tap dance has been both a challenge and an enjoyable experience," Menges said.

One thing the cast and crew members of *Newsies* all seemed to share was their favorite song from the show. According to student director Chelsea Fontaine (10) and student actor Tommy Rejsa (12), "Carrying the Banner" was everyone's favorite number.

Now that the musical has finished its run, Wurzer-Palm said she hopes the people who came to see the musical enjoyed the new things her theater troupe was trying for the first time.

"The tap dancing is something that has never been done in a Cooper musical and it brings the story and the music together," she said.

Bullet Train is a brash but predictable blast

Deadpool 2 director David Leitch brings the film to life with great action choreography

By YUSEFF SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Bullet Train is a 2022 action film directed by David Leitch. Leitch, who is known for his work as the director of *John Wick* and *Deadpool 2*, brings a similar approach to his work in *Bullet Train*. In addition to Leitch's fast-paced direction, the movie features a large, ensemble cast that includes Brad Pitt, Sandra Bullock and Joey King. While not a groundbreaking movie, *Bullet Train* is an entertaining film that fans of the action genre will enjoy.

The plot of *Bullet Train* revolves around a group of assassins who board a bullet train from Tokyo to Morioka, each with their own agenda and their own target to eliminate. At the center of the story is Pitt's character, codenamed Ladybug, who is coming out of semi-retirement to complete what he is told will be an easy job. However, things take a turn for the worse for him and the other assassins on the train when they realize that they are all in danger and must work together to survive.

The movie's strongest point is its action sequences. As Ladybug fights with the other assassins



Photo by SONY PICTURES

Bryan Tyree Henry (left) and Brad Pitt are part of a large ensemble cast.

sins on the train, their battles are expertly choreographed and executed, always keeping the viewer on the edge of their seat.

One thing that makes the action sequences more enjoyable is the strange assortment of characters brought to life by the big cast. All of the actors deliver solid performances, especially Brad Pitt, who carries the movie with his charisma and on-screen presence.

However, the movie sometimes suffers from a weak and convoluted plot. While they are eccentric, some of the charac-

ters feel underdeveloped and their motivations are unclear. Additionally, some of the action scenes feel gratuitous and unnecessary, adding nothing to the story or character development.

Overall, *Bullet Train* is an enjoyable, action-packed movie, but it falls short in terms of storytelling and character development. If you're looking for a mindless, adrenaline-fueled action flick, *Bullet Train* delivers, but if you're expecting a well-crafted narrative with well-rounded characters, you may be disappointed. *Bullet Train* earns three out of five stars.

MEN IN BLACK IS STILL THE BEST IN CLASSIC FRANCHISE continued from page 5

dience's opinion of the strange things around us and possibly even makes them paranoid about the people around them.

The main message in *Men in Black* is that you can learn from anyone and that there are always more things to learn about. At the end of the movie, Agent Kay has taught Agent Jay everything he needs to know to be a successful agent, but then Agent Jay learns he has done this because Agent Kay would like to retire, which leaves

Agent Jay heartbroken. Agent Kay then teaches Agent Jay how to use the memory wiper, which Agent Jay must then use to wipe Agent Kay's memory before they go their separate ways. This scene shows us that you can learn endless things from the people around you and that the things we learn are meant to be passed on to each other and not held onto for yourself. I agree with this lesson because you can always learn from your surroundings.

Men in Black, directed by Barry Sonnenfeld, demonstrates how special effects and art direction play a part in futuristic, fictional movies. This movie is excellent and very enjoyable for viewers of all ages. I enjoyed it because of the mix of action and comedy scenes throughout the film. The director did an excellent job of bringing the movie to life and making it realistic, even though it's fictional. *Men in Black* is a five-star movie that you should see if you have not already done so.

Arcane creates brilliant narrative out of game

The new animated series takes place in the world first established in the classic video game *League of Legends*

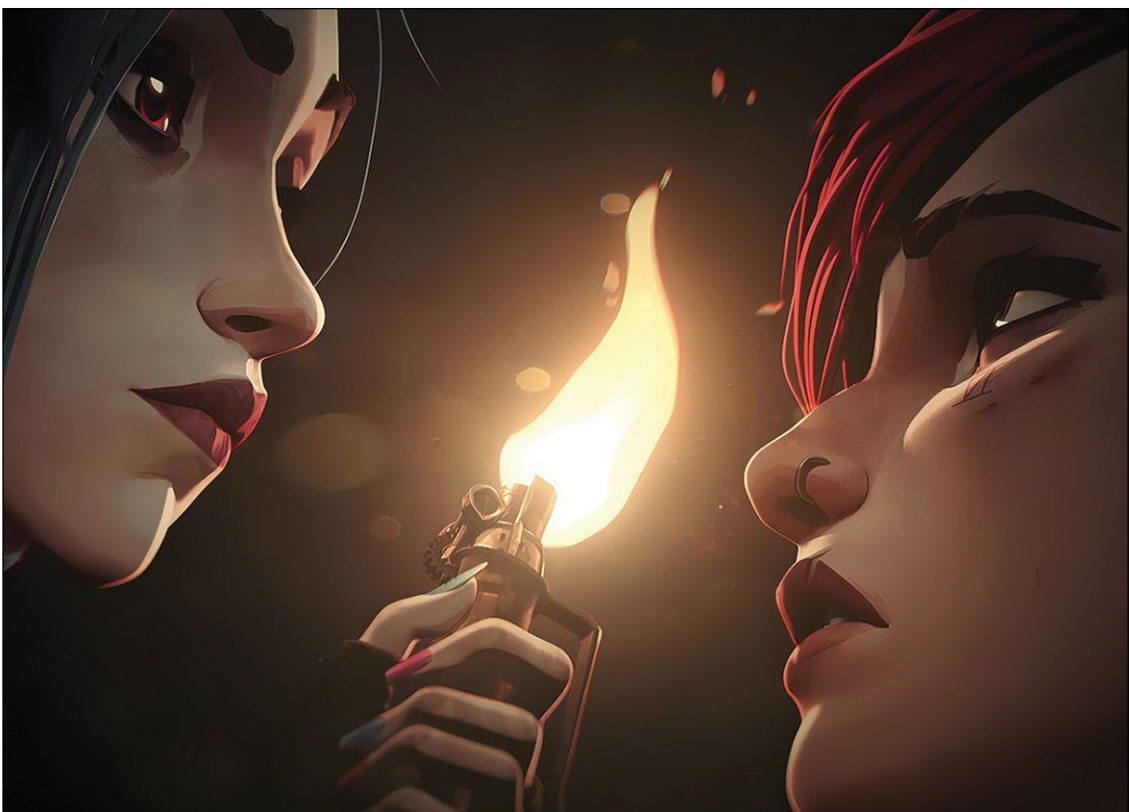


Photo by NETFLIX

Central to the show is the relationship between Vi and Powder, two sisters in a dystopian future.

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Arcane is an animated, action-drama-thriller series written by Christian Linke and Alex Yee for Netflix, under the supervision of the studio Fortiche. Set in the fictional world of the Riot Game’s video game *League of Legends*, the story follows two sisters, Vi and Powder, and their experiences in the utopian city of Piltover and the dystopian city of Zaun. The show’s focus on the political power differences between the “overcity” and the “undercity” makes for an interesting series.

As *Arcane* begins, we meet the two main characters, Vi and Powder. They are two orphan sisters that survived a civil war between Piltover and Zaun. After their parents are murdered by the enforcers of Piltover, Vander, a man from the Zaun undercity, adopts them as daughters of his own after he retires from the frontlines and becomes the peace-maker of Zaun.

In episode one, “Welcome to the Playground,” Vi and her crew of four, all adopted children of Vander, trespass into the overcity of Piltover and infiltrate a science scholar’s laboratory in order to

rob it. Given the poor living conditions of Zaun, many of its citizens steal from the overcity of Piltover in order to survive. During this attempted robbery, things don’t go according to plan when Powder causes an accident in the laboratory. The four are forced to retreat, chased by enforcers, but manage to get back into the undercity of Zaun. Their heist unsuccessful, Mylo calls Powder a jinx for always screwing up in the most crucial moments. Inadvertently, this attempted robbery begins a horrendous conflict between Piltover and Zaun.

In episode two, “Some Mysteries are Better Left Unsolved,” the science scholar, named Jayce, is arrested for endangering the public. After the explosion in his laboratory, people suspect him of conducting illegal research due to how the components left behind at the scene were considered highly unstable. Put on trial by The Council, he confesses to attempting to create magic, which is in violation of the law. As a punishment, he is expelled from the academy grounds and his research is to be destroyed. Meanwhile, enforcers visit the undercity, still continuing their search for the four culprits who attempt-

ed to rob Jayce’s lab.

In episode three, “The Base Violence Necessary for Change,” Zander decides to turn himself in to put the safety of his people first and to prevent another civil war. After arresting Zander, the enforcers guiding him are assassinated when Silco, an old friend of Zander’s, abducts him as revenge. Silco is an industrialist who has invented a deadly serum called “shimmer,” a highly reactive and addictive stimulant that enhances the constitution of the body into a mutation-like state. Witnessing this incident, Ekko, an aspiring mechanic and Powder’s friend, contacts Vi and her crew in an attempt to rescue Zander. They decide to leave Powder behind to keep her safe. Unsatisfied with this, Powder nevertheless follows, accidentally destroying the shimmer factory in an attempt to save Vi and the others.

In episode four, “Happy Progress Day,” 10 years have passed. Jayce’s research of magic becomes a success thanks to the assistance of Viktor, an aspiring scientist who helped Jayce regain his research. Although born in the undercity of Zaun, Viktor’s accomplishments earned him his citizenship in Piltover. To-

gether, the two scientists invent Hex Tech, an elemental energy that fuses with spiritual magic to power any device or artifact, enriching Piltover’s economy. At the same time, the exportation of this technology is taken advantage of because it makes it easier for drug runners to smuggle shimmer through the same routes. This prompts the creation of a resistance group, The Firelights, who are committed to destroying shimmer.

In episode five, “Everybody Wants to be My Enemy,” we again meet Vi, who is now older, rougher and a completely different version of herself. Vi is now imprisoned in Still Water Hold, where she is interrogated by Caitlyn about an assault against a member of Silco’s crew. Under the direction of Jace, who is now a counselor, Caitlyn bails Vi out to help in the investigation. Meanwhile, Jinx is in the process of developing a weapon using the Hex Core she has stolen despite being traumatized by the fact that it accidentally killed her friends and father. As Vi returns to the undercity, she sees the changes that took place while she was imprisoned for 10 years. After a fight against Sevika, Silco’s assistant, she learns the truth about her younger sister, Powder.

In episode six, “When These Walls Come Tumbling Down,” Vi is rescued by Caitlyn just in the nick of time before she is killed by Sevika. Meanwhile, Vi and Caitlyn are unaware that they are being followed and watched by the leader of The Firelights. As Caitlyn criticizes Vi for her violent demeanor, Vi finally expresses to her that she absolutely despises enforcers because they killed her parents years ago and is only cooperating with her until she finds her long-lost sister. When Vi finally encounters Jinx, she is relieved yet saddened, apologizing for everything that has happened to her over the last 10 years. Interrupting their reunion are The Firelights, who attack the three of them and abduct Caitlyn and Vi, leaving Jinx behind.

In episode seven, “The Boy

ARCANE
continues on page 8

Wednesday pulls Addams family into 21st century

Filmmaker Tim Burton brings his distinct vision to the small screen for this Netflix series



Photo by NETFLIX

Jenny Ortega's performance as Wednesday Addams has made this show a viral hit since its 2022 release.

By YUSEFF SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Wednesday is a new streaming show on Netflix about Wednesday Addams, from the iconic Addams Family group of characters. Directed and produced by Tim Burton, the show follows Wednesday, who is played by Jenna Ortega, as she attends a boarding school. Wednesday is known for her bold personality and a special gift to tell how people will die through psychic visions. Although Wednesday and the other Addams Family characters have been around for decades in comic book, television and movie formats, the new show manages to make them appealing to a modern audience.

As the show begins, viewers see that Wednesday is not your average high school student. In fact, she was expelled from her last school. Her parents make her go to Nevermore Academy, a private school for mutants and monsters. Even in that setting, Wednesday makes a bold first impression on her new community just by being different. Wednesday is immediately drawn to the mystery of the monster that lurks in the forest near her new school. Although she hates the idea of Nevermore and her parents controlling her life, she stays to discover the truth of Nevermore.

I really liked how they introduced Wednesday as a character. The show is centered around her and goes in depth on her individual story separate from the rest of the Addams Family. We see what her motives are, learn what she likes and discover why she is how she is. We also get to see her grow as a character and learn even more about herself as she makes allies and friends.

One thing that stands out about the show are the special effects, which are consistently pretty cool. Since Nevermore is a school full of mutants and monsters like werewolves, sirens and vampires, the need for convincing special effects is high. Fortunately, these effects show the different traits of these extreme characters, making them seem realistic. This is especially the case when characters go through a physical transformation.

The production team also does a good job with the location design and art direction. The unique setting of the school is a castle surrounded by a deep forest. The school campus is so different from the rest of the larger community that it creates the feeling of two different worlds. As we discover over the course of the show, it is the history of the town that eventually merges the school and the town together.

Overall, I think the show is really good. It kept drawing me in through its inclusion of new information in each episode, which got me interested in trying to solve the show’s mysteries. There are constant curve balls, unexpected funny moments, plenty of suspense and a good amount of action. I recommend *Wednesday* to anyone looking for a good show to watch in their free time. *Wednesday* deserves four out of five stars.

TECH USE IN CLASS IS NOT ALWAYS BENEFICIAL continued from page 3

should be using the more efficient and effective tools at their disposal, not the slightly easier ones.

When I have to write something on paper, I personally remember it much better, and when completing short, fill-in-the-blank notes for general courses, completing it on paper is preferable and should be actively encouraged or insisted upon by all teachers. Secondly, paper is actually really good for the environment. It is produced by trees, primarily on farms, which encourages corporate entities to maintain carbon sinks. It is made nearly completely with biodegradable material and is recyclable. Overall, studies find the paper industry to have a net neutral-to-positive carbon emission impact on our planet.

In contrast, our Chromebooks are primarily fueled by electricity derived from fossil fuels, which does have a negative impact. Of course, there are instances when

Chromebooks should be used, primarily for group projects and research assignments. Lesson plans utilizing Chromebooks should account for the near-limitless resources available on them. Notes for social studies courses, for example, should be completed nearly completely virtually using a wide range of sources instead of one mandated textbook. Chromebooks should be utilized based on their strengths and they should be utilized to encourage student growth in the areas of research and critical thinking.

I feel like technology needs to be implemented directly into the curriculum as well. For example, the new computer science course offered at Cooper is a great opportunity that should be expanded upon. I applaud the fact that the district has recently decided to do so and will be offering more classes next year. The U.S Department of Labor projects that the computer science sector will expand by 14 percent in

the next decade, making it one of the fastest-growing industries in the nation. When we have the tools at our disposal already, it must be fully utilized and I think that requiring at least one computer science class as a credit would be a shrewd way to improve graduates’ outcomes in a changing world.

In addition to expanding computer science offerings at Cooper, introducing a video editing course could also provide a useful art credit to many students who are interested in social media creation, while engaging them in a valuable and in-demand skill. I also feel study halls should have some instruction about how to use the internet effectively as an educational tool. It is the case that many students outside of certain IB and AP courses are completely unaware of the many internet resources Cooper students have at their disposal.

I hope that the new principal at Cooper will at least attempt to

introduce some kind of policies to address these issues, or at least have a discussion that is geared toward getting new policies in place. For example, phones could be allowed during lunch, passing time and even class time once work is complete; however, when teachers are instructing a class, it needs to be an expectation that eyes are on them and the phones are tucked away.

As far as class instruction goes, the administration needs to be more pragmatic with its funding. Teachers should attempt to use paper when it works best: writing short and concise notes for memorization. Similarly, computers should be used when they work best: doing research and developing their concise notes for later use in class.

Cooper and its students have not been meeting academic expectations. Action must be taken on this slew of issues and technology use in our school is a great place to start.

The Quill

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LEGISLATURE
continued from page 4

be pushing forward on voting rights for felons on parole, which seems to affect some 55,000 primarily minority individuals currently serving parole in Minnesota. On a surface level, this, too, seems like a commendable effort. According to Minnesota law firm Keller Law Offices, some of the most common felonies in Minnesota are things like theft, multiple DUIs and drug possession. Depending on the context, we can all agree that these are often benign crimes, and as such, they carry shorter paroles. The Democrats are right that these people should be allowed to participate in governance and research does show improved outcomes in states that have passed similar legislation.

Republican legislators were quick to point out, however, that for all of these crimes, the parole period is capped at five years maximum, according to the current Minnesota sentencing guidelines. This means a very small portion of felons are really losing their right to vote in the long term. Therefore, we should ask who is actually affected by the passage of the legislation? Perpetrators of sexual violence, repeat violent criminals and murderers are some of the criminals that are exempt from the five-year parole maximum. These individuals are some of the worst people in society, and for the most part, their very freedom from prison in the first place is incredibly morally questionable. I couldn't care less if these people are "welcomed" back into society; I think most people with common sense want them out of society entirely. Similarly to the green energy legislation, Republicans offered amendments to shore up some oversights in the bill (like not letting murderers vote during their parole), but were once again blocked by the DFL super majority.

In Minnesota, there are ongoing and impactful debates on what the future of public safety will look like in our state. I for one do not want thousands of violent felons unnecessarily influencing those debates. Most of these 55,000 felons should be allowed to vote and even encouraged to do so, but not all of them. This legislation was passed under a veneer of justice, but no just society can let those who break the laws to this extent be part of the process of changing the laws. No right is absolute. For instance, the DFL would never pass legislation restoring a violent felon's right to bear arms, nor should they, but for some reason, voting, something that can also be harmful, is entrusted upon them. I think this perfectly encapsulates the lacking morality of Minnesota's DFL and their continued emphasis on winning the media spin over passing concrete, truly moral and practical policy.

These first two pieces of legislation are part of a disturbing trend of well-organized and well-funded activists hijacking the Democratic party's policies on all levels. It is exactly why more right-leaning or independent Minnesotans need to participate in primary elections to reduce the influence of these radicals on the DFL. More importantly, these bills are examples of why a one-party state does not serve to pass effective policy. It is incredibly important to have a strong opposition party in state politics so bills like these can be properly amended and passed in a constructive manner.

At the same time, some positive legislation has been passed, including driver's licenses for all. This will allow thousands of undocumented Americans to drive safely on our roads and receive the proper and needed driver's education without fear. It remains to be seen if elections will be undermined by this, but as of right now, it is a positive thing for thousands of Minnesotans. Another positive decision is increased funding for the Attorney General's office, which will allow an additional seven state prosecutors to be hired. The creation of an office of Missing and Murdered Black Girls is another positive step toward addressing the out-of-control human trafficking occurring in the state. In fact, Minneapolis is currently 13th in the nation in human trafficking according to the FBI. Finally, I find the nuanced Crown Act to be promising, as it clearly outlines and combats employment and workplace discrimination toward African Americans based upon hairstyle. This law will make hairstyle-related discrimination prosecutable while also acknowledging for pragmatic exceptions to the law.

A common trend with these latter bills is that all but the driver's license proposal received broad bi-partisan support. In contrast, the two bad bills were only partisanly supported. Going forward, I hope we see an increase in the quality of legislation and more fruitful discourse between both parties in the Minnesota state legislature. If that does not happen, Minnesota will pay the price in more ways than one.

The Menu serves up a twisted taste of horror

Released in winter 2022, the darkly humorous film has quickly become a cult favorite of moviegoers who have seen it



Photo by SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Anchoring the excellent cast are award-winning actors Anya Taylor-Joy (left) and Ralph Fiennes.

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

The Menu is a 2022 horror film directed by Mark Mylod and produced by Searchlight Pictures that recently started playing on HBO Max after running in theaters during winter break. I chose this movie because of its intriguing premise and the fact that it features an all-star cast of award-winning actors, including Ralph Fiennes, Anya Taylor-Joy and Nicholas Hoult. The film follows a group of cultural and business elites who

pay to visit a remote island to participate in a one-of-a-kind culinary experience only to discover that they are the main course. Overall, I believe *The Menu* is a well-executed horror movie that delivers on both scares and suspense.

The Menu centers around a group of hand-selected, ultra-rich people from the world of business, finance and entertainment who are invited to a special dining experience on a remote island put on by the famous Chef Slowik (Fiennes). However, the meal quickly turns into a fight for survival as the

guests realize that they are not just getting a meal but a reckoning for the bad things they have done in their lives. The fact that the movie takes place on a private island where the characters are isolated just adds to the tension and horror of the situation.

One of the strengths of *The Menu* is its cinematography. The film is beautifully shot, with stunning visuals that add to the atmosphere and mood of the movie. The island location is captured in all its eerie beauty and the camera work during the tense moments adds to

the suspense and terror. Also clever is the way in which the camera displays each course of the meal as if we are watching a cooking show on television.

Another positive aspect of the movie is the acting. The ensemble cast delivers strong performances, with each character having their own distinct personality and motivations. The chemistry between the actors is palpable and their interactions add to the tension and horror of the situation. Particularly good are Fiennes as the murderous chef and Taylor-Joy as an unexpected patron. Both actors received Golden Globe nominations for their performances.

The special effects in *The Menu* are also worth noting. The practical effects used to create the gruesome dishes are realistic and unsettling, and the movie doesn't shy away from showing the gore and violence. The use of sound effects also adds to the terror, with the sounds of chopping and cooking creating a disturbing atmosphere. These elements are especially effective in the final scene of the film, which features a dessert that the characters and the audience won't soon forget.

In conclusion, *The Menu* is a well-executed horror movie that delivers on both scares and suspense. The cinematography, acting and special effects are all impressive and add to the overall experience of the movie. I would recommend this movie to horror fans who enjoy a mix of suspense and gore. I give *The Menu* a rating of four out of five stars.

HALL MONITORS TRY TO SUPPORT GOOD BEHAVIOR continued from page 2

violent interaction. According to Herman, the hall monitors on average see at least two interactions of this type every day.

Another aspect making the hall monitors' job difficult is how students react to them. As I shadowed Herman, many students acted as if he was only there to annoy them. Also, they would try to ignore him when he was just trying to do his job. This results in a potentially toxic interaction between the students and the hall monitors.

In fact, another Cooper hall monitor, Mr. O'Toole, who is also known to students by his nickname "Speedy," recalled a recent incident when a student threatened to push him down the stairs. While that is an extreme example, my shadowing experience showed me many instances of students being rude to the hall monitors, ignoring them, cursing at them and trying to mess with them verbally.

One part of the hall moni-

tors' job is to participate in hall sweeps, during which students who are found outside of their classrooms without a pass when the bell rings are collected together and receive behavioral

alerts many students who tend to wander the halls to change their behavior.

Despite the advanced warning, there was still a large number of students who got caught in the hall sweep that I shadowed on March 3. During that sweep, there were 36 students caught on the second floor alone. Of those 36 students, five tried to ignore Mr. Herman and the other staff members.

Despite the advanced warning, there was still a large number of students who got caught in the hall sweep that I shadowed on March 3. During that sweep, there were 36 students caught on the second floor alone. Of those 36 students, five tried to ignore Mr. Herman and the other staff members.

consequences. While sweeps can take place any period of the day other than period five, students and staff are usually notified before they happen, which

in the hall sweep that I shadowed on March 3. During that sweep, there were 36 students caught on the second floor alone. Of those 36 students, five tried to ignore

Herman and the other staff members who were trying to talk to them. While it was fairly hectic at first, soon enough, all the students were taken to the check-in station at the second-floor Y, where they were issued a pass back to class. Although a few of them tried to stay in the halls, most of them went back to their classrooms.

After my time with Herman, it was clear that hall monitors have trouble trying to get students to behave in a respectful way. Hall monitors are mistreated by students as they struggle to do their intended job, which is getting students to class. Also, a lot of the work of hall monitors goes unnoticed as it happens during class time. In fact, hall monitors serve other positions in the school, with some helping as substitute teachers and others helping with cleaning. In these many ways, hall monitors serve an important role in the school's structure.

ARCANE CREATES BRILLIANT NARRATIVE OUT OF GAME continued from page 7

Savior," it is finally revealed that the leader of The Firelights is Ekko, Powder's childhood friend. After Vander died, he took it into his own hands to rebuild the undercity, fighting against Silco to restore what was lost and raising his own resistance to retaliate. Ekko and his group have now stolen the Hex Core from Jinx, but Caitlyn explains to him that, with the Hex Core stolen, enforcers will come storming into the undercity of Zaun to recover it, so she has decided to bring it back before another conflict happens between the two cities. Ultimately, Ekko sets one condition for Caitlyn: she must return to the overcity of Piltover with him, and he will be the one that returns the Hex Core.

In episode eight, "Oil and Water," Vi and Caitlyn have made it across the bridge only to realize that everything was in vain because Jinx has already swapped out the Hex Core. Caitlyn decides

to return home and tell her mother, a counselor, what she has witnessed in the undercity and demand that a diplomatic solution is found. In the meantime, Silco

about how the counselor would never understand the undercity, but to his surprise, the counselor had retired for that very reason. Eventually, Vi and Caitlyn

Overall, I give *Arcane* five out of five stars. Honestly, I wish I could give it more. As the thoughtful and complicated plot demonstrates, the show manages to do something special in a short span of time. *Arcane* is a masterpiece.

recovers Jinx's wounded body and asks a doctor of the undercity to treat her, showing how he genuinely cares for her. Elsewhere, Ekko, recovering from the explosion, encounters another counselor wandering near the bridge that connects the two cities. He jokes

are given an audience with The Council to state their case. When they are unsuccessful, Vi is furious and decides to split up with Caitlyn.

In episode nine, "The Monster You Created," Jayce decides to stop his retaliation in order to

avoid further subjugating the already dying citizens of the undercity. He chooses to meet up with Silco and broker a peace that allows the undercity independence as long as Silco promises to no longer produce shimmer and to turn in Jinx. Meanwhile, after recovering from her wounds, Jinx abducts Vi, Caitlyn and Silco. As Jinx asks Vi if they are still sisters despite everything that has happened, Silco breaks out of his chair and attempts to shoot Vi, but Jinx kills Silco to protect Vi. Later, Jinx weaponizes the Hex Core and fires it into the Council Hall building, which lets audiences know that peace is no longer an option.

Overall, I give *Arcane* five out of five stars. Honestly, I wish I could give it more. As the thoughtful and complicated plot demonstrates, the show manages to do something special in a short span of time. *Arcane* is a masterpiece.

SMITH NAMED COOPER INTERIM HEAD PRINCIPAL continued from page 1

past leadership roles has helped in moving our school towards greater success by grounding us in focusing on the students, supporting staff and reaching out to families.

I have enjoyed working with her on projects, new initiatives and on teams as she is a great listener, has great insight and is willing to do what needs to be done," Herman

said.

Herman added that he believes one of Smith's strengths is that she will be able to keep a calm presence in the building. He said

she is vocal about her expectations and "communicating those out to all."

"Ms. Smith has shown herself to be a true leader," Herman said.

Hawks celebrate signing day

Six Cooper athletes committed to competing at the college level after graduating high school



Photo by SARA THURSTON

A National Signing Day ceremony was held in the Cooper foyer on February 1 to honor the Hawks competitors.

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

Cooper hosted a National Signing Day event after school on February 1 during which athletes committed to play sports at the college level. Six Hawks signed to their colleges that day: John Barrow (12) for football, Danari Connors (12) for football, Corey DeLoach (12) for football, Nemo Ponder (12) for football, Peyton Sanders (12) for track and Logan Voigt (12) for swimming. As they plan on taking the leap to becoming collegiate athletes, these seniors reflected on their time competing for Cooper.

John Barrow

Barrow will be playing football next fall for the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Helping Barrow make the decision to sign with this school was the atmosphere of the campus and team when he visited the school.

“They really made it feel like home,” he said. “They really showed me that they wanted me to be there.”

In fact, Barrow said representatives of the team even made an effort to come watch him play at Cooper and visit him and his family at their home.

While he is at college, Barrow intends on joining the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science as a communications major.

“My career goal is to get my degree and proceed to take over in whatever the man above has planned for me,” he said.

As he reflects back on his path to playing college football, Barrow said he appreciates the guidance of his Cooper coaches and the support of his teammates.

“Coming to Cooper was the best decision I’ve ever made in my life,” he said.

Danari Connors

Starting next fall, Connors will join the football squad at Southwest Minnesota State University. Connors said he selected this school for several key reasons.

“It is close to home, my father went there and I’m familiar with the team,” Connors said.

According to Connors, his older brother helped inspire him to pursue football at the collegiate level.

“We’ve always been competitive with each other,” he said. “We push each other to be better.”

Connors said he has many fond memories of his time on the Hawks football team.

“I enjoyed going to state and scoring my first varsity touchdown,” he said.

While he is attending college, Connors said he will pursue a degree in business.

“I want to open my own training

facility for athletes,” he said.

Corey DeLoach

DeLoach committed to playing football at Augsburg University in Minneapolis next fall. He cited the team’s similar feel to the Hawks squad as one reason why he signed with that program.

“I love the family environment they have there,” he said. “It feels just like Cooper’s team.”

Helping DeLoach make his decision to attend Augsburg was Cooper’s head football coach Mr. Howard.

“He played a big part,” DeLoach said. “He ended up helping me choose my school.”

Although he is excited to play college football, DeLoach said he will be equally focused on his studies.

“My major will be physical education,” he said.

Now that he is taking this step to playing football at the next level, DeLoach said he is looking back with fondness at his time with Cooper’s football team.

“My favorite memory was beating Armstrong to go to state,” he said.

Nemo Ponder

Headed to Augsburg University next fall along with DeLoach is Ponder, who said that the school’s financial package and welcoming attitude were important parts of his decision.

“The people there were so nice,” he said.

Ponder cited the influence of Howard and his family as primary reasons for his success in football.

“They helped me because, when I broke my ankle, they kept my spirits up,” Ponder said.

Although the broken ankle made Ponder’s final season of high school football a challenge, he said his experiences with the team helped him create life-long memories.

“My favorite moment is going to state my junior year,” he said. “It was a crazy experience playing in front of Vikings players.”

In addition to football, Ponder will be focusing on a double major in exercise science and business during his time in college.

“My goal is to have my own training facility and be able to train young people in sports or even teach them about athletic training,” Ponder said.

Peyton Sanders

Heading to Iowa Central Community College next fall as a track athlete is Sanders. The actions of the coaches from that school during his recruitment were important to his eventual decision to go to Iowa Central.

“I chose Iowa Central because, from the start of my recruiting process with them, they showed the most inter-

est in me and told me that I would be a big part of their long jump program,” he said. “They made me feel welcome when I went on my official visit and showed me that I would be a great fit for the program.”

According to Sanders, a variety of people helped guide his experience and success as a track athlete.

“The people who helped me were my mom and older brother, my head track coach Mr. Connors, my head long jump coach Ms. Schuelke, my AAU track coach and my teammates,” he said.

As a college student, Sanders is interested in majoring in business. He also hopes to pursue his real estate license.

“My career goals are to hopefully manage my own business and invest in properties,” he said.

Before taking his track career to the college level, Sanders is looking forward to his final season as a Hawks track athlete.

“My favorite memories of running track and field at Cooper is when I jumped 20.06 feet at the sections meet my junior year and jumping in finals,” he said.

Logan Voigt

While the five other Cooper athletes who signed with college teams take part in sports that are on the land, Voigt participates in a sport that is in the water.

“I will be swimming at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia,” he said.

Voigt cited his positive impression of the Marymount coaches as a central reason why he will swim at that school.

“I felt a strong personal connection with the coaches right away and their training techniques are similar to Cooper’s,” Voigt said.

During his search for schools, Voigt made use of the NCSA College Recruiting app to locate college swimming programs he might like. In addition to this resource, Voigt said his former Cooper swimming coach was also a help.

“My former coach Luke Johnson shaped me into the swimmer I am today,” Voigt said.

Voigt said he is hopeful that his college swimming experience will be as enjoyable as his time swimming at Cooper. He pointed out a number of things he enjoyed during his years swimming with the Hawks.

“I enjoyed all the meets and the bus rides that followed, all the water polo after practices and, most importantly, all of the amazing people I met along the way,” he said.

When he is not swimming, Voigt will be spending his time in college majoring in fashion design.

“I would like to work in the fashion industry, primarily designing,” he said.

Cooper Competitors

The story of the athletes who strive for success in Cooper sports

Brady Enger

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

In the winter season, Hawks athlete Brady Enger (12) does swimming, and in the spring, he plays golf. He said he first joined the swim squad during eighth grade.

“I knew a couple of people in it and they convinced me to give it a try,” he said.

As a veteran swimmer, Enger said he has enjoyed being active and having fun with his teammates. He also has enjoyed setting and meeting his performance goals.

“At sections last year, I had a goal time I wanted and my teammates were telling me I could beat that goal, which I did,” he said. “When I saw I had it, it felt amazing because I had put in the time and effort into getting that time and showed my team-

mates I could do it.” During the spring, Enger plays golf. He said this year will be enjoyable because they have a new head coach. However, he said they “still need more players for the team.”

As he wraps up his final year at Cooper, Enger said he has two favorite subjects, math and clay.

“Math is relatively simple. If you put everything in the correct formula, you get the right answer. With clay, it’s all over the place,” he said.

Outside of sports and school, Enger plays video games, rides snowmobiles, goes sledding and walks around the mall with his friends.

For college, Enger plans to attend Hennepin Technical College to become a hydraulic technician. He intends to continue swimming and playing golf.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Trinidi Clarke

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

Trinidi Clarke (12) plays basketball all year round. She has been playing since she was a young girl, discovering her passion for the sport by chance.

“It was kind of something that I just wanted to try,” she said. “I didn’t know I would fall in love with it.”

Along the way, Clarke has “met many great people,” but also faced some challenges that opened her eyes to new perspectives. In fact, Clarke dealt with an injury last year that forced her to focus on her recovery.

“I worked so hard to bounce back quickly,” Clarke said.

Fortunately, Clarke has been able to perform well in the 2022-2023 season, building strong relationships with her teammates.

Outside of playing for Cooper, Clarke finds playing AAU basketball to be “a great way to stay in shape and prepare for the next high school season.” Once the current Cooper season is done, she will return to AAU in the spring.

In addition to her focus on sports, Clarke works hard in the classroom.

One subject she is interested in is math. However, she explained that, although she used to excel in math, she “found it becoming too difficult in the 10th grade.” On the other hand, she said she has always enjoyed English.

Aside from basketball, Clarke loves to dance, having previously performed with a Praise Dance group when she was younger.

After graduation, Clarke said she will attend college and become a psychologist who provides family therapy. She also will continue playing basketball.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Isabella Davison

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Isabella Davison (12) plays on the Cooper girls basketball team. She does not play any fall sports but will continue with basketball in the spring and summer on a basketball club team. Davison said she has been playing basketball ever since second grade and what sparked her interest in basketball was her cousin.

“I used to go watch my cousin play basketball at her high school and that is what inspired me to play,” she said.

Davison said she enjoys the team’s games and leaving after school to get food with her teammates. She said one of her favorite memories was when they had an away game and “one of the girls brought a speaker and blasted music from the

back of the bus.” As a senior, Davison feels obliged to be a “good role model to the younger girls.” She said she hopes they see her as a leader on the team.

When it comes to school, some of Davison’s favorite classes are AVID and science. She said her AVID class is fun and her classmates are “just a fun group of kids.” For science, she likes it because it is a subject that interests and challenges her.

Outside of school, Davison enjoys reading, sleeping and painting. She also likes to fish and go to different amusement parks in other states.

As for Davison’s future plans, she is still undecided about where to go to further her education but she aims to major in sports marketing and management and hopes to continue basketball in college.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Laura Erfurth

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

“This is my first year doing cheerleading,” Laura Erfurth (12) said. “In my country, Denmark, we do not have cheerleading as a sport, so it was something I have always wanted to try.”

Erfurth is a foreign exchange student from Denmark. She participated on the Cooper soccer team in the fall and the cheerleading team in the winter. In the spring, Erfurth is considering doing track as it is another sport she has never tried before.

Erfurth mentioned her soccer season “went really great” and the team “won the majority of [their] games.” She is considering continuing playing soccer after high

school but only for fun. As for the cheerleading season, what she has enjoyed the most is being able to “support the girl basketball team.”

“It is super fun to cheer them on from the sidelines,” she said.

When it comes to school, Erfurth said acting is one of her favorite classes.

“I took acting class in the first semester and it was a lot of fun. The teacher was great and I met so many fun people,” she said.

Erfurth added that, outside of school, she enjoys hanging out with friends and cooking and baking.

After returning to Denmark, Erfurth has three more years of high school to continue. She plans to go to medical school after high school.



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

RELAY FOR LIFE PARTICIPANTS PREPARE

continued from page 1

and the community of youth trying to make others’ lives better.”

Meanwhile, Limbeck said it means “more people will survive this horrible disease” when it comes to the committee’s hard work to raise money and spread awareness about cancer. Relay for Life also is a place where cancer survivors and caregivers get to come together to support each other and bond with people that understand what they’re going through.

Although cancer is a serious subject, the committee members empha-

sized that getting involved with Relay for Life can still be fun.

“What you’re doing is making a difference and your effort is appreciated,” Namie said.

In fact, the committee members emphasized that more student involvement and community support would make the event even better than it is already. Namie said that more support from the school, the addition of more committee members and a reduction in the number of people discouraged by cancer would

make Relay For Life “10 times more exciting than it already is.”

Ultimately, Limbeck emphasized that joining the Relay For Life committee is a fun way to get involved in the community while leaving your mark on the school before graduating. Additionally, raising awareness for cancer is a great way to fill up extra time while gaining critical skills for the future.

Students are encouraged to see Limbeck in room 125 to join the committee.

Hawks athletes strive for spring sports success

After making it through a long Minnesota winter, hundreds of Cooper competitors are getting outside to take part in their chosen spring events

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

With winter sports at their end, Cooper is heading into the spring sports season. According to spring coaches and athletes, there is much to look forward to in 2023 at Cooper.

CI Softball

Mr. DeMorett coaches the CI softball team at Cooper. He said he has great admiration for the people who played on the team last year and he is looking forward to working with his returning athletes this season.

According to DeMorett, a typical softball practice has many routines.

"Players arrive from the various schools they attend and socialize with one another until all arrive. Warm-up stretches are led by the captains. Also, catch is played to warm up arms, grounders are hit by the coach to practice those, hitting and pitching practice is then done, and we finish with a practice game," he said.

DeMorett explained that CI softball is similar to regular softball except for the fact that they use a whiffle ball in competition. DeMorett added that players who join CI softball "gain friendships while also enjoying the feeling of belonging to a group."

Girls Softball

Mr. Dreher is heading into his first season as the head coach of the Hawks girls softball program. Although this is only his first season coaching, he said he is confident about what is to come.

"This year brings a lot of new differences: new head coach, assistant coaches, players, game styles, new conference and a new, winning season," Dreher said.

Dreher is developing his plan for how practices will be conducted.

"A typical practice usually starts with a little team talk and stretches. Then, we get into batting practice and fielding drills," he said.

When it comes to games, Dreher said the team will start with warm-ups and a "hype speech to get them going."

"That will be followed by a win, of course," he said.

There are many benefits for the girls who join the softball team.

"I really want to encourage all new players and returning players to come out this year and help to make new friends, build great skills and have tons of fun," he said. "I really look forward to the excitement of a new season."

Girls Golf

Another first-time head coach at Cooper this year is Mr. Bruce, who is working with girls golf. Bruce has a positive outlook heading into the 2023 season.

"My number-one priority this season is to build the numbers of the golf program. Last year's team only had three members, and, fortunately, they are all coming back to play this year. Two of these players, Jenny Lee (12) and Luna Moon (10), have done an amazing job in recruiting girls to come join in the spring," he said.

According to Bruce, the larger team roster will help the team be more competitive in Cooper's new conference.

"In addition to increasing the numbers, the main goal is to create a team environment that will encourage the girls to come back the next year and continue to build up the program," Bruce added.

When it comes to practice, Bruce said he wants the team to develop consistency.

"Practice will be held at either a golf course or a driving range, weather permitting. When we are at the driving range, we are doing putting and chipping drills to hone in the short game and doing a lot of teaching of the finer points, such as knowing how to read the green and where to land the ball when chipping," he said.

In addition to the drills, Bruce said he will try to add some fun into the mix by giving players challenges to meet, such as having everyone make a putt from a certain distance or having the golfers try to get the closest to the hole on a chip.

Bruce said he also hopes the girls get many chances to practice on local courses prior to their matches.

"On the golf course, we will be sending the girls out in groups to go out and play. They will either be keeping individual scores or playing best ball, which is when, after every shot, you take the best-hit shot, no matter who hit it. This will provide learning opportunities for the girls to simulate meet conditions while having some fun in the process," he said.

When the weather does not coop-



Photo by ERIN MESSER

The Hawks baseball squad is looking forward to growing its roster after losing many seniors to graduation in 2022.

erate, Bruce said they will spend time indoors hitting into nets and putting.

"We will also make sure that we understand the rules and regulations of golf and the importance of etiquette on the course, including where to walk, how to ask questions, where to put your golf bags, etc.," he said.

Due to golf having an individual and a team component, it is different than most other spring sports.

"What typically happens in a golf meet is that two or more schools bring a team of six players to play nine or 18 holes depending on the meet. Depending on how many schools come, players will be paired with two or three other players to play as a group of three or four. If it is a dual meet, meaning that one school comes, then usually it would be a group of four, with two players from one team and two players from another. After the meet is complete, we tally the scores of all the golfers and each team will take the four lowest scores of their team and add them up. The team with the lowest score at the end of that wins the meet," Bruce said.

Bruce cited several reasons why students should join the golf team this season.

"There are too many benefits to count in taking up the sport of golf. This is a sport that you can play for the rest of your life. This is a way that you can get great exercise by walking around the golf course and being outside. It is an excellent way to challenge yourself and build character," Bruce said.

Boys Golf

In addition to girls golf, Cooper offers boys golf, which is coached by Mr. Oscarson.

Oscarson is coaching the boys golf team for the first time this year after coaching the girls golf team for the last three seasons.

"I am looking forward to working with a new group of student athletes this year," he said. "I also look forward to joining a new conference at both the varsity and JV level. I anticipate this season being much more competitive, which should make things more enjoyable for our golfers."

Unlike most teams at Cooper, the boys golfers do not practice at Cooper.

"We practice at Columbia Golf Course and the New Hope Golf Course. Some practices are spent at the driving range working on the swing and short game and others are spent on the course," he said.

When it comes to a golf match against other schools, Oscarson said there are many things that make the competitions interesting.

"Competitions consist of nine holes of golf. Some matches are with one or two other schools and some are with the entire conference. Typically, golfers get out of school a little early for matches," he said.

Oscarson recommends that students take part in golf whenever they can.

"Golf is a sport that anyone can play," he said. "It is also something that you can do at any age. Golfing has many social benefits and is a good excuse to get outside and hang out with your friends. As you get older, golf is also a great way to network, get to know new people and often advance your career."

Girls Track

One of the top returning girls track

members is Attoria McDonald (11), who said that last season was a good one for the team.

"One highlight of the 2021-2022 season was running the middle school meets and seeing the future potential for the 2022-2023 season. Another highlight was hanging out with my friends every day and laughing all the time, which made track and field more fun," she said.

As she looks toward the 2023 season, McDonald said recruiting should lead to success on the track.

"The outlook is very promising. It should be a good upcoming season. We have good numbers and continue to gain more and more athletes throughout the months. One of the main reasons we have numbers is because of all the different friendships throughout the team," McDonald said.

During a typical track practice, the girls meet in the gym after school at 3:35 p.m.

"We go over any needed information for the day. Then, we head to the track as a team, warm up, and then split into our events with our coaches. We usually end around 5 or 6 p.m.," she said.



Photo by JULIE BOSWELL

Coach Mr. Whiteis said he hopes the lacrosse team builds on 2022 success.

Track meets are unique compared to other sports because there are always multiple events going on at the same time.

"We start by getting to the school our meet is at, setting up the tent where we put our belongings, going over our event times and heading to our events. When we aren't competing, then we cheer on our teammates," she said.

New girls track athletes gain a lot of benefits from joining the team, McDonald said.

"If they are playing other sports, then track and field will keep them in shape. It can help improve healthy habits, vertical, stamina and speed. You can also make new friends and stay active while also being outside," McDonald said.

Boys Track

One of the leaders of the boys track team is Peyton Sanders (12). He noted several positive aspects of the 2021-2022 season.

"Some highlights from our previous season was that we had multiple athletes qualify for sections and hit new personal records at our conference meet. We had a hard-working team full of athletes that wanted better for themselves and for their events as well. We had strength in numbers overall," he said.

Sanders added that many of the elements from last season should carry into the new season as well.

"The outlook for our team coming into the 2022-2023 season is to hopeful-

ly have more athletes join our team who want to put in the work, dedication and time to get stronger and faster at whatever event they excel in. We are always welcoming new athletes to the team and people that want to succeed and grow. We hope to have more athletes that qualify for sections and state as well," he said.

The boys track team has several routines they follow during a typical practice.

"We normally start with two laps around the track, then 10-15 minutes of very important dynamic stretches and walking stretches as well," Sanders said. "After that, we break off into our event groups, either sprints, distance, hurdles, jumps or throws and focus on how we can maximize each rep of whatever workout we are doing."

According to Sanders, track practice gives individual athletes a chance to work on the skills they need to improve during the meets.

"We fill in and critique specific flaws that we make and try to correct them with consistent reps over and over again," Sanders said.

The chance to put in hard work

need everyone we can to step up," he said.

On the positive side, Whiteis added that 2023 should be a good season on the defensive side.

"We bring back almost our entire defense," he said. "We will lean on the experience of our defense, but I'm excited to see who steps up on the offensive side of the field for us."

During practice, Whiteis said he puts a big emphasis on having fun.

"Our practices tend to be really fun," he said. "It's one thing I loved about playing the sport myself."

At the same time, Whiteis said they try to follow some set routines during practice time.

"Practice starts with a quick warm up and team stretch. We then work on catching and throwing, or what we like to call stickwork. We try to break up into smaller groups learning offensive or defensive skills, and then combine our groups to learn how to use those learned skills in game situations. We will usually do some kind of fast-paced transition drill after that where the ball moves up and down the field," he said.

When it comes to games, Whiteis said lacrosse shares some things in common with hockey.

"Lacrosse games are fast-moving, physical and chaotic. We sub players onto the field on the fly like hockey. Body checking follows similar rules to hockey and we give you metal sticks to hit people with as long as they have the ball," he said.

Overall, Whiteis said he presents his lacrosse players with three main goals: have fun, get better and win games.

"I can promise you we will always meet our first two goals, and if you ask anyone from the team last year, I promise they will agree. We all had a lot of fun and we all got a lot better," he said.

Boys Tennis

Axel Zirbes (10), Tristan Jay Tolentino (10) and Remi Desalu (10) are the three returning Hawks tennis players. Zirbes said there were several highlights to last season.

"My favorite part of the season was the practices," he said. "They were always fun and full of action, so I always enjoyed going to practice."

According to Zirbes, practices usually consist of working on accuracy and other tennis skills. He added that the focus of practice varies based on whether or not the athlete plays singles or doubles.

Looking forward to the new season, Tolentino said that conditioning will be important to the squad.

"As the captain, I am hoping we can all work on the team's aerodynamics and endurance," he said.

According to Desalu, one thing he enjoys about tennis is the chance to play as an individual or as a pair.

"There are two divisions: singles and doubles. You tell the coach which one you're interested in and you get to play in that category," he said.

Tolentino said he looks forward to seeing the team add players this season.

"Not only is it fun, but you can gain skills like better reaction time and you can also become more attentive in all aspects of life," he said.

Boys Baseball

Blake Hansen (11) and Blake Everhardt (11) are two people with not only the same first name but also the same love for baseball.

According to Hansen, one highlight of last season was a game against a conference rival.

"We tied Benilde-St. Margaret's, who went on to win state," Hansen said.

According to Everhardt, he is hopeful that this kind of success will continue in the new season.

"To win as a team, we need to try and just be better players," he said.

In order to set themselves up for spring success, Everhardt said the team starts working out during the winter.

"We go to school at 7:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays and do arm training until 8:30," he said.

It is the dedication of the team's members that coach and Cooper graduate Mr. Moore said will play a critical role in improving the baseball team in the years to come.

"We're in the process of rebuilding the program after a few pretty down years. About 10 years ago when I played here, the program was very strong. I think we would like to eventually get back to that. Even if you haven't played baseball in quite a few years, or ever at all, now is a great time to get involved with the school team," Moore said.