



America would benefit from a coordinated response to COVID

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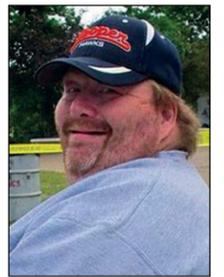
# The Quill

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Long time "Voice of the Hawks" passes away at the age of 58

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Robbinsdale Cooper High School

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## DISTRICT HITS PAUSE ON IN-PERSON LEARNING PLAN

Efforts to bring back elementary students for face-to-face instruction postponed due to COVID

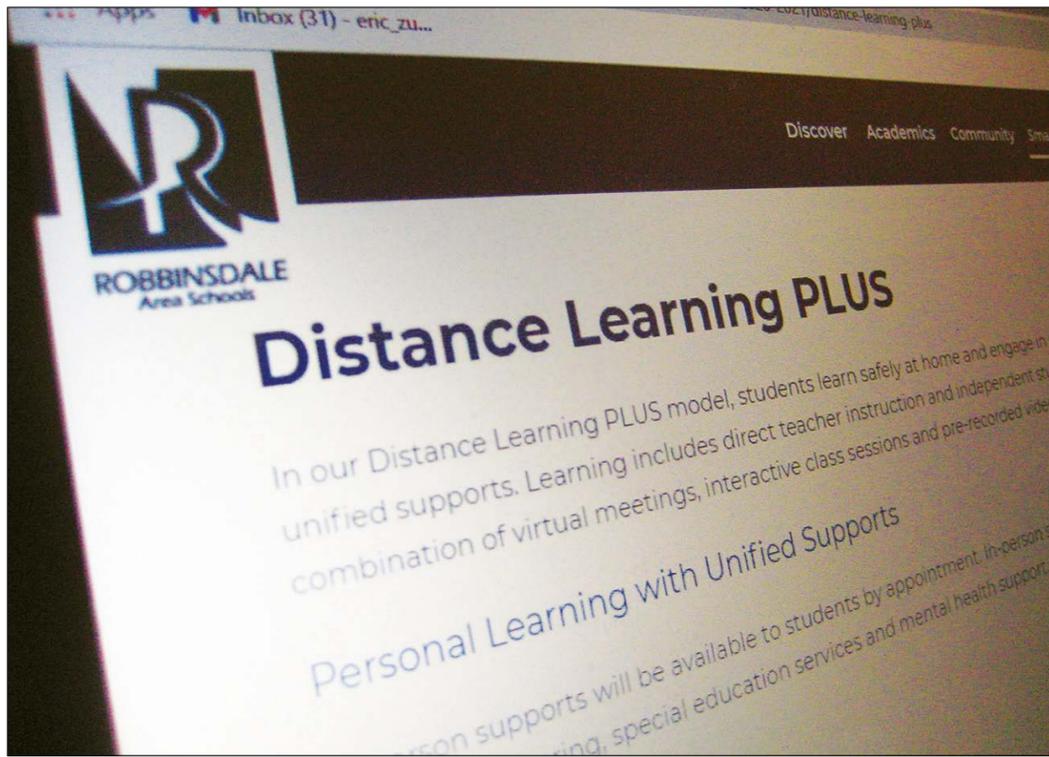


Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

While the district will roll out some limited in-person supports, the majority of Robbinsdale students are staying at home.

By YORDANOSE MULAT  
Quill staff writer

The district decided on November 5 to cancel plans for elementary school students to switch to hybrid learning at this time due to the rise of COVID-19 cases in the Twin Cities metro area and the rest of the state.

The 2020-2021 school year started with distance learning for all of the district due to the COVID-19

pandemic. Recently, elementary school students were on track to start going to school in a hybrid model on November 16 because it is a more effective learning environment for them. However, in an email sent out on November 5, Robbinsdale School District Interim Superintendent Ms. Burrage informed families and staff members of the change in plans.

"I am writing to share the news that our district

will remain in Distance Learning PLUS for all students," Burrage wrote. "This means we will not begin a tiered start into hybrid learning. Based on this decision, we will postpone the start date of the 281 Distance Learning School. This means elementary students will remain with their current teachers."

The main reason for changing plans is to ensure the health of students and staff.

"We have met with our regional team of health experts several times this week, and while they initially supported the decision to move to hybrid learning, they no longer agreed with the plan to shift models," Burrage wrote.

Moreover, the independent COVID command team for the district recommended that all learners remain in a distance model "based on the

rising trend of COVID-19 cases in both the county and local communities."

Distance learning has had different impacts on all students. However, Burrage reminded families and staff that there is a "plus" to the Robbinsdale model, which allows students in all grade levels a chance to reach out for help. Additionally, Burrage explained that all of the district schools have school support centers which can "be accessed virtually or in person."

While this change in plans will not affect Cooper in the way that it affects the experience of elementary students, there will be an impact on some of the supports Cooper will provide. For example, the student support options being provided on Wednesdays starting November 18 at Cooper will have additional protocols.

"What will change for us is adding the options for students to come into the building to work with a teacher face to face starting on November 18," Cooper Head Principal Mr. Herman said. "There will be a sign-up process for this to ensure we follow safety protocols."

Furthermore, students, teachers and staff who will

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## Students can access support for writing, math

The Write Place and Math Lounge are now available during the school day for Hawks who need academic help



Photo by LOU VANG

During a normal year, the Write Place and Math Lounge are located in room 246.

By SAO MOUA  
Quill staff writer

Virtual versions of the Write Place and Math Lounge are now available to help support Cooper students who need help with their writing in any class or support for their work in a math class. During in-person learning, the writing and math support was available on alternating days in room 246. While an alternating-day schedule is still in effect, the support this year is provided through a Google Meet and students must register in advance to get help.

"We now have what is called the Cooper Academic Support Request Form, where a student can sign up for help in the Write Place [and] the Math Lounge," Ms. Olesen, who helps oversee the two services, said.

Students who want to access the sign-up form can do so in one of two ways. First, you can go to the Cooper homepage, click on "Student Support Center" and choose "Student Support," where the form itself is located. The second method is to go to Schoology, find the page for your grade level, click on "Materials" and select "Academic Support," which is where the form can be found.

"During distance learning, students must sign up for the Math Lounge and Write Place on the Cooper Academic Support Request Form to access help during their study hall or a time that they do not have another class," Olesen said. "They will need to sign up before the class period they want to meet begins. Students cannot sign up for a meet after the hour has started. They will then receive a Google Meet code via email that will give them access to this support."

Depending on a student's needs, the Write Place and Math Lounge can provide different types of support. Teachers in the Write Place work with students on Mondays and Fridays to clarify writing prompts, to brainstorm, to organize essays, to draft or revise a writing assignment and to answer any questions regarding reading or writing assignments in any subject area. According to English teacher Ms. Eisfelder, who oversees the Write Place on Mondays during first period, the reasons she sees students making use of writing support this year are similar to past years.

"They want to get help on an assignment, talk through a problem they are having with grades and classwork, review a paper or take a test they might have missed," she said.

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## Schoology provides critical tools to students, teachers

Distance learning has raised the role played by the Schoology system in conducting class, submitting work and getting feedback

By JAWENAH FREEMAN  
Quill staff writer

The importance of Schoology as a tool for students and teachers alike has become apparent as school has moved to a distance learning model due to COVID in 2020-2021. Whether it is completing assignments, reviewing course materials or communicating with a teacher, Schoology is a central part of each student's day during this school year.

One way in which Schoology plays a role in the school experience this year is through

the review and completion of assignments.

"It is important to check Schoology to see when assignments are due so you don't forget about them or turn them in late," Logan Voigt (10) said. "It's best to stay on top of things."

Helping students stay on top of their assignments is Schoology's calendar feature, which English teacher Ms. Prillwitz said is an important function to make use of.

"The calendar feature of Schoology can help students plan and organize their work by due dates," Prillwitz said. "This can allow students to be proactive in turning in their work on time."

Another way in which teachers are using Schoology to help students is through the posting of the recordings of each class session. Students can then access these videos after the fact for additional help or if they were absent from class.

"Teachers record all of their lessons so students that miss a lesson are able to get caught up and stay caught up," Administrative Intern Mr. Nelson said. "It also gives students an opportunity to rewatch lessons

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## SCHOOLGY

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if they are struggling with the content. If you think about it, the recordings give students more opportunities than in-class learning, because a student can stop, rewind or pause during the lesson while they think out what they're learning."

Voigt added that class recordings can also help if students get distracted during the 90-minute class session "because the teacher might have assigned something or given important information that you wouldn't want to miss."

As students have likely noticed during the first quarter of the school year, teachers are posting daily updates to the Schoology pages for each class. That makes it important that students check in every day so they are not missing critical information.

"The daily updates are a way for teachers to communicate timely, important information to students," Prillwitz said.

Another component to these daily Schoology updates is the information that is conveyed to students from Cooper's administrators.

"Things come up unexpectedly daily," Nelson said. "The teachers, administration or Cooper staff may send out information or news that will affect the way your day will go. If you don't check the updates every day or multiple times a day, you could miss something important."

While Schoology has been used this school year in an increasingly broad number of ways, one of the central past uses of Schoology still remains

**"The daily updates are a way for teachers to communicate timely, important information to students," English teacher Ms. Prillwitz said.**

important during distance learning: it is a place where students can check their grades.

"It is important to check your grades in Schoology to see where you're at," Voigt said. "You don't want to be surprised later on or find out that you could've raised your grade if you redid an assignment."

Additionally, Prillwitz pointed out that with most assignments being assigned through Schoology now, "students are able to access their assignments through the hyper-linked assignment titles that appear on the grades page."

"This allows students to see and also open each outstanding assignment that needs to be completed," Prillwitz said.

Another feature of Schoology that has been useful in 2020-2021 is the ability of students and teachers to communicate with one another using the message system.

"If a student has questions about their classes or about their progress in a class, it is important for them to contact their teacher," Nelson said. "Since most teachers are not teaching from the Cooper building, the easiest way to contact your teacher is by email. During a normal school year, teachers find it easier to notice when students are struggling or need extra support. Since we are in Distance Learning Plus, it is important for students to reach out if they need help."

From the student perspective, this communication feature of Schoology may be its most valuable asset.

"It is important to email your teachers on Schoology if you have questions because they will answer something," Voigt said. "It's not always good to guess or be unsure so you should ask your teachers if you have any questions."

# Counselors adjust to distance learning

The grade-level counselors have found new ways to interact with their students and guide them to school success



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The Student Services Center is where the Cooper counselors are located during in-person learning.

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN  
Quill staff writer

The Cooper counselors have faced various challenges and opportunities as they learn how to do their jobs differently during COVID and distance learning. However, their central goal remains to help support students on their journey through high school and beyond.

Knowing that the school year was starting with distance learning allowed the counselors to make some preparations before the first day of classes. For 10th grade counselor Ms. Hough, that in-

volved working on student schedules and welcoming new students.

"As counselors, during the summer we have two really big jobs. One of the jobs is to finalize schedules for students for when school starts in the fall," Hough said. "Another one of our main summer jobs is meeting with students and families of a newly enrolled person. We've always spent summer days sitting down with the new students going over information about Cooper and going over class options. This summer, we had to call or email families."

Meanwhile, for 11th grade counselor Ms. Ritter, the summer

preparations involved getting juniors into the PSEO program.

"Since I am the junior counselor, I spent quite a bit of my summer helping kids apply to the PSEO program. With the colleges also doing things at a distance, students needed more support from me in the process than they typically needed in the past. Previously, students would go into the college for an orientation and advising meeting, but with the pandemic, they were doing everything online and that has been more difficult and leaves them with more questions. I did my best to answer those questions and connect stu-

dents with the correct people at the colleges," Ritter said.

Once the school year started, the counselors had to adjust to working virtually by meeting with students and families through phone calls, Google meetings and emails. While technology has helped make these interactions possible, ninth grade counselor Ms. Senger said it has been tough not having in-person interactions with her students.

"I am spending more time communicating with parents rather than students. I think part of the reason for that is that students don't read the email," Senger said.

Agreeing with Senger is Ritter, who said she misses the flexibility in-person learning brings to working with students.

"The most difficult part has been connecting with students that are struggling with attendance, grades and motivation," Ritter said. "When we are at school in person, I can find a student in a classroom and speak with them. When we are in distance learning, it can be really tough to connect with students, especially if they won't respond over email, phone or text. I truly miss that personal connection and seeing my students."

Just like teachers, Cooper counselors said they struggle with understanding how students feel about their online learning experience. To address this, Hough said that they have designed a digital way to reach out to students in order to figure out their problems.

"We used to have these small yellow pieces of paper for students

**COUNSELORS**  
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# Media Center remains a resource for students

Even during remote learning, the Media Center can help students access resources and solve issues with their technology

By JACK ATKINSON  
Quill staff writer

The Media Center has long been the place where students can access classroom materials and get support for their technology. While the way these services are provided has changed this year during distance learning, Cooper's Media Center staff continue to focus on helping students succeed in school.

The Robbinsdale School District's decision in August that the year would begin in a distance learning format led to some unprecedented preparations for the Media Center staff to help get materials to Cooper students. Media Center Specialist Mr. King said he and his colleagues had two main tasks to tackle before school started.

"First, we had to prep and bag every student's materials," he said. "That meant actually printing the schedule for every Cooper student, and staging every textbook teachers would use, and bagging each student's books and Chromebooks, if needed. Educational assistants helped with a lot of that physical work. Second, I started working on my Virtual Media Center, because I wanted to have a kid-friendly way for students to access our resources."

Once the start of the school year arrived, the Media Center



Photo by MS. NEUMANN

The interior of the Media Center was updated during the late spring of 2020.

helped organize and oversee material distribution events during which students could come to the school and get their materials.

"[Administrative Intern] Mr. Nelson and [Education Assistant] Mr. Bennett actually did a lot of that work. It was good that they did, because my staff and I had multiple emails and phone calls every hour," King said.

At the same time as those supply pick-up events were taking place, King said he and his staff were also operating as technical support for students as they started their online classes.

"We also had to closely monitor the district's Distance Learning Technology Support requests and there were a lot of issues in those first weeks," King said.

Once the school year got underway, King and his colleagues transitioned into supporting classroom teachers as they introduced various resources and tools to their students.

"I've been asked to visit some classes to provide instruction on using NoodleTools and MackinVia," King said. "I've also been promoting MackinVia to the students directly, via Schoology updates and in the Vir-

tual Media Center. And, recently, we created the Virtual News Stand, with instructions on how to access many of our periodical subscriptions online."

Although much of his interaction with students and teachers is done virtually, King said he is still coming to Cooper every day to work in the Media Center.

"In a typical work day, I still go in to the Media Center. I field emails, phone calls and in-person visits from teachers and students. Providing tech support remotely can be challenging," he said.

King added that another benefit of coming to Cooper each day is that he can help students who have immediate needs for materials.

"We also have to deliver a lot of Chromebooks, chargers and books to the front office for families to pick up," King said.

At the same time that he is adjusting to the many new aspects of working in the Media Center, King said there are elements of his job that have remained the same.

"I'm always looking for new books to order and websites to recommend to students. I'm in a professional learning community with the other middle and high school media specialists, and we meet and work toward a goal for the year. I'm also on a couple of building committees, so there are meetings once or twice a week," he said.

# Several Cooper staff members continue teaching from building

Working at the school has given some teachers a chance to access their materials, while others enjoy being away from home

By SANDY VUE  
Quill staff writer

Distance learning has led to nearly every Cooper teacher delivering their daily lessons to students from home. However, some Hawks teachers are spending their days at Cooper while they teach their classes.

Member of the science department Mr. Stanton, who teaches Forensic Science and Anatomy and Physiology, is an example of a teacher who is going to school.

"I try to get to Cooper just a bit before 7 a.m. and leave before 3 p.m. every day," he said. "Now that classes have been going for a while, I decide the day before if I

need to go in or not."

Stanton said there are various practical reasons why he decided to teach from school.

"[It is] where all my resources are. I have assignments, videos, labs, demos, models [and] stuff," he said. "[Also,] the internet is better here. My home internet is not that good."

Stanton said an additional benefit of being in the building relates to focus.

"Being at work helps me focus on work. It gets my mind in the right place," he said.

On a given day, Stanton said he may see as many as "20 people" in the building. However, he said there is really no collaboration

as teachers in the building have to keep their distance from each other.

Ultimately, while Stanton said he likes to go to Cooper to do his job in the best way he can, he also knows that teachers who do not are doing just as well from home. He said he hopes that his students will be successful thanks to the work he has put in.

Another example of a Cooper teacher who is coming to the building is Ms. Schaffer, who is a physical education and AVID teacher. Unlike Stanton, who comes in on teaching days, Schaffer said she usually works from Cooper on Wednesdays.

"I usually get there around

6:30 a.m. and leave around 3:30 p.m.," she said.

Schaffer said she chooses to come in because it makes her feel connected to the Hawk family as well as the building.

"I get to see other staff members and have conversations that I would normally just casually have in between classes. It lifts my spirits to be around my colleagues," Schaffer said.

Similar to Stanton, although other teachers also work in the building, Schaffer said she doesn't collaborate with them physically.

"All of my PLC work and my AVID team meetings are virtual," Schaffer said.

# America's COVID response is disgraceful

Although individual states are doing their best to battle the pandemic, the lack of a national response is resulting in deaths

By ANDREA TRIBBLE  
Quill staff writer

COVID-19 cases are continuing to surge after eased shutdown restrictions nationwide. When news of the pandemic and its danger first hit, we underwent a lockdown. Stores closed and people stocked up on supplies so they would be able to stay in their homes to avoid contact with others. Almost nine months later, the virus is still thriving and deadly, yet I see people at Thanksgiving parties, restaurants and nightclubs as if we're not still in the midst of one of the deadliest diseases to date. It is incumbent upon us all to do everything we can to take this disease seriously by adjusting our personal actions and advocating for a better government response.

Our nation's response to COVID-19 has been embarrassing to say the least, but that is to be expected when we have a leader who disregards the severity of the virus and is more concerned with its effect on the economy rather than its effect on human life. The U.S.'s response to COVID has been one of the worst in the world and our death toll and numbers of cases show it. Many other countries took appropriate precautions early and have a much better handle on this virus than the U.S.

Take Taiwan, for example. On October 20, 2020, they marked the 200th con-



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The Park Nicollet COVID testing center in St. Louis Park is one location seeing a big uptick in traffic.

secutive day without a locally transmitted case of the disease. Taiwan never had to carry out a strict lockdown. Instead, they took this threat seriously from the jump and focused on moving quickly and diligently to make sure their island was secure. They screened all incoming flights and proceeded to ban all foreign nationals from entering the island.

In order for us to get some type of control on this disease on a national level, people will need to learn to adapt to the times and accept that things are different and

will be different for a while. Also, we need government officials that understand the severity of this virus and will put the lives of Americans before any economic shortcomings that may occur.

As for our state of Minnesota, I believe the policies put into place have been appropriate. With that being said, the problem in our state isn't the lack of policy, it's the arrogance and ignorance of some of the citizens. For reasons I'll never understand, many Minnesotans believe this virus isn't real, it's not as "serious" as the CDC claims or that

they just won't get infected with it. Of course, there will always be people who believe the rules don't apply to them and this is directly related to the fact that cases in our state are on the rise.

Ultimately, I think people who decide that they are above the mask mandate should be fined or even jailed for their disobedience. At this point, it's a matter of life and death at both a state and national level. I believe there should be zero tolerance for those who would like to be careless and put the health of other people at risk.

## Breonna Taylor verdict shows systemic racism

It is troubling to watch yet another person of color fail to get justice

By ERIN CHUNN  
Quill staff writer

What do you feel when you hear the name "Breonna Taylor?" You might know that she was a black woman who was killed in her sleep by the Louisville Police Department when they unexpectedly sent bullets into her home during a botched arrest attempt. This killing led to protests that have been in the media's spotlight for months. When I first heard her name and story, I immediately thought that she would become another beautiful martyr who would keep us pushing for a much better future. While this would be great, the question keeps popping up in the black community: "How many more people need to lose their lives?" People of color deserve better in this country.

Breonna Taylor's untimely death stemmed from a search warrant that was issued for her home. The reason for the warrant was that the police department had reason to believe Taylor was connected to a drug dealer because they said he had a package dropped off there. In effect, when they entered her residence, the police were searching for someone who didn't even live there.

After breaking into the apartment, officers blindly fired their guns, striking Taylor five times. With officers present, Taylor struggled for air before finally taking her last breath. An ambulance didn't arrive until 20 minutes after she was shot, which raised concerns because there is supposed to be an ambulance present during a raid.

Actions like these prove officers and the justice system couldn't care less about minorities. A search warrant to find a person who didn't live in the home being entered gave officers the authority to break down a door and fire their guns at a sleeping woman after midnight. This whole incident left minorities once again wondering why we have to see our own kin hunted and killed without real consequences.

The lack of true consequences became clear when this case went to court. The grand jury did not charge the officers for the murder of an innocent woman, the damage to her property, blindly firing their weapons in her apartment, or dismissing the ambulance before the raid even began. Instead, the charge was for "wanton endangerment" because bullets went into a neighboring apartment.

After watching news coverage of those officers committing a handful of crimes and not being punished for the main one, I know I'm not alone when I say I'm tired. However, we have to make sure to stay loud and keep speaking her name so that people never forget what happened. Fortunately, since the death of Taylor, people have continued to protest, especially in Louisville, Kentucky, where the incident took place.

Overall, I say the officers in question should have gotten punished much more severely for their roles in the death of Breonna Taylor. Although we lost yet another soldier, we are still fighting on. If you feel the same fury over the murder of Taylor, keep signing petitions and keep protesting for the equality minorities deserve. It is the bare minimum we've been begging for over countless years.

## Ongoing distance learning is largely a positive experience

Despite occasional technology-related issues, the health and safety benefits of being at home make remote learning the best option

By JACK ATKINSON  
Quill staff writer

We now know for sure that online school will continue at least through the end of first semester. I think this decision is good and bad at the same time. Some of the good things about distance learning is that it is easier to work, wake up later and only have four classes a day. However, there are negative aspects as well because your internet can go out and Schoology can go down.

In general, I feel good about doing online school. I really enjoy waking up later than normal on school days. Since I don't have to get on the bus at 6:40 a.m., I now can wake up at 7 a.m. in order to be on the computer for first period by 7:20 a.m. That means I can sleep in a lot longer than normal, which also means I can stay up later. Of course, one negative related to sleep is that it is possible that you

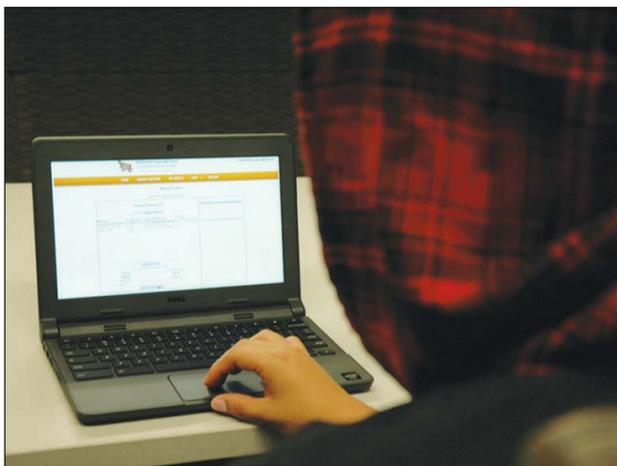


Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

Distance learning will last at least until the end of first semester.

won't wake when your alarm goes off and then you'll miss a class or two.

I also really like that we only have four classes a day. It makes it a lot less stressful to have fewer classes, especially because online school does not always give you the same one-on-one help you get from

teachers in the classroom. Additionally, on Wednesday we get to have a catch-up day. While some students just use it to get some extra sleep, it is still good to have a break for mental health purposes.

On the other hand, one big negative about distance learning is the technical is-

suess. Since there can be a lot of people on your internet at once when you are learning from home, it can make your internet slow down. A slow connection can cause issues when you are in a Google Meet, potentially resulting in you getting kicked out of the class session. You then have the stress of trying to get back into the class when there are still other people in your household using that same connection. These technical issues can make it harder to do your school work.

Overall, I am happy with the district's decision to keep us in the distance learning format until the end of the semester. This is clearly a good decision from a health and safety perspective. While online school can be good and bad in some ways, as long as the students and teachers do their best to manage the stress of the situation, we can make the best of distance learning.

## Surviving excessive screen time requires students to take action

From physically moving around to staying hydrated, there are many simple strategies to maintain your focus while learning online

By SAO MOUA  
Quill staff writer

Teenagers typically spend a lot of time doing things that involve a screen. From streaming shows to playing video games, we get no shortage of screen time every day. Now, however, we also have screen time during school thanks to distance learning. This begs the question: what is the best way to survive being in front of a screen all day long?

I think it's important to know a couple tips if you're not really enjoying being in front of a screen all day. While I personally think it's not very hard to be in front of a screen, I know other people who do not enjoy it. Hopefully, these tips can make screen time less stressful for you.

One way to stay focused and stay relaxed while facing a screen all day long is by doing some sort of physical activity. Try getting up, stretching and walking around every so often. This is especially helpful in

**A helpful idea is to grab a drink of water or a snack throughout the day. It's important to stay hydrated and fed if you want to stay focused on what you're doing. Without water and food, you may find your attention wandering.**

between classes so you don't feel stressed or tired. Though this is something most students commonly do, it definitely bears repeating since it is simple and it works.

Another helpful idea is to

grab a drink of water or a snack throughout the day. It's important to stay hydrated and fed if you want to stay focused on what you're doing. Without water and food, you may find your attention wandering. Also, the process

of drinking and eating can help you concentrate while you are in front of the screen all day.

A third tip is to make good use of your breaks during the day to get away from the screen, even if it is just for a few minutes. You

can go outside, talk to someone or play a game that doesn't involve a screen. I think this is especially important during the 10 minutes you have off in between classes. This is an awesome way to incorporate non-screen time into your school day.

Hopefully, these tips on how to survive being in front of a screen all day long will help you during your distance learning experience. Staying focused and relaxed during school can be easier if you get up and stretch, stay hydrated and fed, and take a break during

the time in between classes instead of just sitting there, waiting for next period. I encourage you to follow these tips if you don't already do so because they will have a positive impact on your screen-related stress levels.

From the Editors

## Focus essential as we approach end of semester

Even during distance learning, you still need to pass your classes and earn your credits

It is always important to not lose focus on school, because if you lose focus, your grades can drop easily and fast. While this is true in any given school year, it is especially the case during distance learning as the end of first semester approaches. It is not as easy right now to do school work when you do not have to get up early in the morning to travel to school. An additional issue that can make focus difficult is having more freedom during the actual school day. However, if you want to close out first semester with all of your credits, you need to stay focused and make the final weeks of first semester count.

As students do school online, the temptation is there to get lazier and lazier. The structure of being at school in person usually provides more motivation to students to get their work done. When you can sleep in and pick and choose when to work on assignments, as is often the case during distance learning, losing focus can happen easily. Most of us at one time or another decide to take a break during online classes in order to rest our

## Watching movies, playing video games and hanging out with friends online are easy ways to get distracted during distance learning.

brains, but it is hard to make sure these breaks don't last too long because it is so easy for them to take our focus off of school.

Losing focus on school while learning from home will make you fall behind in your work, which will make it even harder for you to do it once you decide to get back on track. However, if you try to plan your time out a little better, the work load will be easier and you can still manage to relax. For most people, the best way to do this is to get the work done right away and then relax at the end of the day. This is ultimately less stressful and it gives you more freedom once you get your work done because you are no longer worrying about it.

Watching movies, playing video games and hanging out with friends online are easy ways to get distracted during distance learning. While these activities might make you feel better at the time, they will also help you lose focus on your school work. In order to finish the semester strong, be sure to keep dialed in to Schoology and attend your classes every day. Also, try to do the work first and relax second, since all of your teachers are giving you time during the class periods to complete the assignments. These are the best ways to maintain your focus and avoid having your grades drop during distance learning.

# Biden win provides hope in dark times

In addition to a sense that we will return to established presidential norms, the election results give us an inspirational vice president

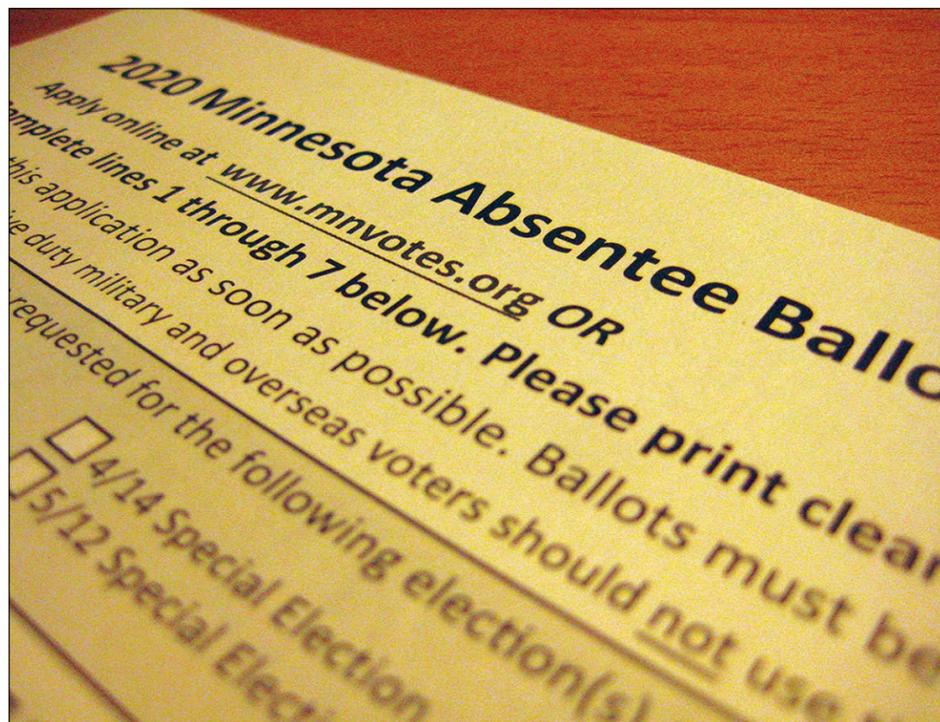


Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The eventual Democratic win hinged on the large number of absentee ballots cast in many states due to COVID.

By ANDREA TRIBBLE  
Quill staff writer

The results are in. Joe Biden will be the next president of the United States, alongside the first female vice president, Kamala Harris. As I watched the nation react to this news in the hours following the election results, it seemed as if many Americans felt something they hadn't felt in a while: a sense

of optimism. Optimism in our country's ability to be unified and our ability to create change.

Many Americans believe this election was a major win for the future of our country, but there is still work to be done. America's "normal" has never been good enough, whether we had Donald Trump in office or Barack Obama. Police brutality and systemic racism have revealed themselves to

be alive and kicking within our nation, we are actively in one of the deadliest pandemics in history, our Earth is dying as global warming has yet to be properly addressed, there are children being ripped apart from their families and put into cages on our borders, and mass shootings have been far too common as our gun laws make it too easy for people with bad intentions to purchase

firearms. Although we have a lot of issues to tackle, the election outcome was a good first step.

Whether you believe Biden offers a newfound sense of hope or not, it is clear that Vice President Kamala Harris provides much-needed representation for black and brown women, immigrant women, white women and HBCU (Historically Black College or University) graduates. Harris attended Howard University, a HBCU in D.C., and worked her way up the ranks of politics. There has never been a woman in the position of vice president. Harris has opened a door that many women hadn't even considered opening. In her own words, "While I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities."

As this shift in power takes place, there is hope that our nation can begin to heal. This past year hasn't been short of challenging and life-threatening issues and many Americans believe that with the right leader in office, we can begin to transform into the well-respected and united nation we aspire to be. It's important to note that this change is not only up to the people in political office; change also needs to happen with each of us as citizens. Unity and respect need to be our default positions as Americans.

## Taking care of mental health critical during online learning

The isolation that comes with social distancing during the day can take a large toll on students and staff members alike

By SANDY VUE  
Quill staff writer

Distance learning has not been good for the mental health of our teachers and students. On a scale of one to 10, my happiness level from the start of distance learning would be a 4.8.

I didn't feel excited to start school this year because it really felt like school wasn't starting. At first, the interactions I had with some of my teachers were bland and dull, and although I got to see my friends on camera, it wasn't like before. I even felt like some teachers were grumpy or frustrated because they didn't have enough student interactions.

As the days kept passing, I kept feeling more and more isolated from the world. On my stressful or emotional days, my friends and teachers weren't there to check up on me. So, at times during distance learning, I have struggled to keep up the motivation to do my work. I kept procrastinating during the beginning of the week and then on Thursdays would do an all-nighter to catch up on all my work. Hence, on some days I would even miss my first period class because I was too tired and unmotivated to wake up to a "fresh" day at school.

These first quarter experiences have led to me feeling like distance learning has had a negative impact on the mental health of students as well as teachers. The three main issues I see are the lack of communication between students and teachers, the struggle to balance school work and life, and the repetitive effect distance learning has on our everyday routine.

To start with, there is a lack of interaction between students and teachers that impacts their mental health. This is mainly because, for one, most



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

The temptation to just give up is increasing in some students this year.

students don't want to turn on their cameras or talk and teachers are constantly jammed with a lot of work. A teacher I spoke with who wants to remain anonymous said there are times that they get so overwhelmed balancing all of their responsibilities as a parent, person and professional that they feel "completely frozen and unable to do anything."

"I feel like it is just wave after wave of stuff I need to do and it never stops. What is the point? There will be just tons more to do," the teacher said.

A senior student who also wants to remain anonymous had similar concerns about distance learning.

"I just feel like teachers assign us too much work for our circumstances. Also, I feel like most of my teachers just expect me to teach myself everything, which makes me become overwhelmed and stressed," the student said.

When one puts together the feelings expressed by this teacher and student, it is clear that both parties

feel anxious and overworked and they can't really show their "true" feelings because of the barrier distance learning puts between them. I can tell from some teachers that they are stressed during class sessions, which leads to them having a bad or grumpy attitude. Thus, it makes me even more scared to reach out or say something in class.

Another one of the biggest problems distance learning brings is that there is no physical separation between someone's personal life and their school life. Thus, teachers and students struggle to balance both aspects of their lives. I have a loud environment that I have to work in and it's hard to just focus on what my teacher has to say. Additionally, as a scholar, sister, daughter and employee, I have many responsibilities that I have to keep track of at the same time. For instance, I have to watch after my brother while he is in class so that he can keep his grades up; meanwhile, I must do the same thing for myself during my classes. While I am doing all of that, I have to make

sure that I get to work on time while balancing sports and extracurriculars.

The moral of the story is that students and teachers have a lot on their plates and distance learning doesn't make it better. There is no separation between my life at home and online learning because most of the time when I talk in class, there is always something going on in the background, like my brother playing his trumpet for class. I have to be honest: I am on my Chromebook so much that I don't know when to put it away anymore because most of my school life is in there. Sometimes I even feel detached from the sunlight and my family members because I am constantly always in my basement on my Chromebook or phone. I really do feel like I have been deprived of sunlight as well as sleep due to computer screens. This underscores the concern that it is tough to separate school time from personal time during distance learning.

A third issue with distance learning is that it makes one's everyday life feel too repetitive. Sometimes, I feel I am stuck in a time loop. I just wake up and do the same things during school hours: open my Chromebook, type, scroll and repeat. By doing this constantly every day, it's not surprising that people are getting depressed and having their mental health situation become worse. Students and teachers aren't conditioned for this because, for the past years of their lives, they have been conditioned to a different type of in-person, hands-on learning.

As days pass and we all face the same boring school lessons over and over again, I can see that these repetitive days can lead to a lack of

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## NCAA Football 14 brings gridiron fun

The classic game is the best substitute around when your favorite college teams have their matchups cancelled due to COVID



Photo courtesy of EA SPORTS

One highlight of *NCAA Football 14* is the great attention to detail in the settings, which are designed to look like actual stadiums.

By NOLAN ANDLER  
Quill staff writer

From the creators at EA Sports comes *NCAA Football 14*, a college football video game that some people say is better than any *Madden* game. First released in 2013, the game is mainly based on the 2013 football season. Despite being an older game, as the years have gone by, its popularity has continued to grow. This is even more the case in 2020 with the coronavirus keeping us all at home. In the game, you can play as the major D1 college teams, such as those in the Big Ten, Pac 12 and SEC. This flexibility and the various game modes make *NCAA Football 14* an engaging release.

While there really isn't a main plot in *NCAA Football 14*, there are different play modes you can select. If you do career mode or season mode, you can start as a young, hotshot high school player or an up-and-coming coach, and get signed to the school of your dreams and lead them to a Natty. Additionally, you can just pick your favorite team and lead them to

a title. One thing to remember is that college is not like the NFL, where you can have three or more losses and make the playoffs. In college, you cannot have more than one loss to even have a chance at making the national championship. The game also has an exhibition mode, in which you can just play, and a mascot mode, through which you can play as a university's mascot.

The thing about gameplay that makes *NCAA Football 14* so good is related to the in-game effects. Yeah, it basically is the same as *Madden*, but for a game that was released in 2013, it still is impressive. The players move smoothly and in a believable way. It is basically a simulation in which the players perform to the standards of their positions in an accurate way. For example, you will not have a fat offensive lineman running faster than a running back. Additionally, it is easier to pass and run in this game than in other football games. Players have more awareness on offense and defense and the user has more control over what moves they want to make.

Another positive aspect of the game is its in-depth, realistic settings. Whether it is the great details on the players' jerseys or the signs with the names of sponsors on them, the design is realistic. The realism applies to the ability to play in the stadiums of each college team and those stadiums are accurately reproduced. In the game, you also can play at high school fields, random neutral game fields, conference championship fields or bowl game fields. Why I say "field" here instead of "stadium" is because some stadiums host multiple games in an actual college season. For example, the Dallas Cowboys stadium, AT&T Stadium, hosts a season-opening game called the Advocare Classic and a famous bowl game called the Cotton Bowl, and you can play in both environments in this game.

Another appealing component of the game is how it recreates the natural environment. For instance, you have the option of playing games at noon, which leads to you having a full blue sky. You can also play at 3:30 p.m., which has elements of the sun going down, and primetime,

which takes place at night under the lights. Additionally, there is an option where you play at the time to which your system clock is set. Added to the lighting are a variety of choices related to the weather. Finally, the grass on every field is well toned and they do a good job at showing players' shadows falling upon the grass.

The rules in *NCAA Football 14* are the same as actual college rules. While rules at the college level are close to the same as they are in the NFL, there are some things that are different. This can be seen specifically when it comes to overtime play. In the NFL, the first team to score a touchdown wins. In *NCAA Football 14* and college rules, both teams get a chance no matter what. However, the goal is to have your team score and hold the other team to no points.

For a fan of college or professional football like me, *NCAA Football 14* is a must-get game. While it is not the world's greatest game, all of the effects make it pretty awesome. It is a shame this game hasn't had a new version since 2013. I give *NCAA Football 14* five out of five stars.

## Grimm Legacy is exceptional fantasy story

Polty Shulman's 2010 novel features a high school setting all readers will relate to

By ZACARI WATSON  
Quill staff writer

*The Grimm Legacy* is a fantasy novel written by Polty Shulman and published in 2010. If you are a fan of fantasies, I suggest you check out Shulman's excellent addition to this popular genre.

The story takes place in New York. The main character, Elizabeth Rew, gets a job as a page at the New York Circulating Material Repository, which is basically a library, but for objects instead of books. She discovers the Grimm Collection, where they keep all the objects from fairy tales. As these objects start to disappear, she and her friends, Marc, Anjali and Aaron, have to figure out who is responsible while also trying to deal with a dangerous creature.

This book is written in the first person from Elizabeth's point of view. When books are told in the first person, it makes you feel like you are the main character, and since Elizabeth is a relatable character, *The Grimm Legacy* does a great job of making you feel like you are in her shoes.

One of the main reasons Elizabeth is such a relatable character is because she is still in high school. Excluding the magical stuff that happens in the book, she has to deal with real-life things like step siblings and relationship drama.

One of the key highlights of the story is the character development. Elizabeth and the other main characters go through a lot of changes over the course of the novel. There are many trust issues between the characters, but eventually, they come together to solve the problems that are happening.

*The Grimm Legacy* is a really excellent book and I would recommend it to anyone interested in fantasies and adventures. I give this novel five out of five stars.

## Third installment in Diablo series still stands out

Released in 2012, *Diablo III* gives players a chance to wield magic, fight monsters

By ZACARI WATSON  
Quill staff writer

*Diablo III* is the third installment in the *Diablo* video game series. It was designed by Leonard Boyarsky, Kevin Martens, Stone Librande and Jay Wilson. The game was produced by Blizzard Entertainment and first released on May 15, 2012. *Diablo III* is a fantasy game in which players can use magic, equip armor and have access to powerful weapons. It is a good game to play if you are into magic and fighting monsters.

In the game, you start off in a small town called Tristram, where the dead have been awakened by a fallen star that crashed into an old cathedral. You have to find the fallen star, which leads to an adventure where you will have to fight the undead, monsters and even Diablo, the lord of terror.

Since *Diablo III* is an MMO/RPG (massively multiplayer online role-play-

**DIABLO III**  
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## Potter movie series brings comfort in tough times

Escaping into J. K. Rowling's wizarding world is a great means of forgetting about a reality filled with woe

By ZACARI WATSON  
Quill staff writer

The Harry Potter movies are based on the Harry Potter book series by J. K. Rowling. The different movies in the series were directed by different filmmakers, including David Yates, Chris Columbus, Alfonso Cuaron and Mike Newell. They were produced and distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures. The first movie, *The Sorcerer's Stone*, was released in 2001, while the eighth movie, *The Deathly Hallows Part 2*, was released in 2011. I chose this movie franchise because it is, in my opinion, one of the greatest movie franchises ever made.

The movies take place in Britain, where the main character, an 11-year-old orphan boy named Harry Potter, lives with his Aunt Petunia, Uncle Vernon and cousin Dudley. He isn't treated the best; okay, he's treated like trash. One day, he learns that he is a wizard and that his parents were wizards. Hagrid then gives him a mysterious letter, inviting him to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There, he meets Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, who become his best friends. Once they get to the school, they learn spells and other magical things. Throughout the series, the three characters go on countless adventures and come face to face



Photo courtesy of WARNER BROS. PICTURES

The main trio of Harry Potter, Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley is the glue that holds the series together.

with Lord Voldemort, the wizard who killed Harry's parents.

The lead actors in the movies are Daniel Radcliff as Harry Potter, Emma Watson as Hermione Granger and Rupert Grint as Ron Weasley. Other actors in the movies include Robert Pattinson as Cedric Diggory, the late Alan Rickman as Professor Snape, Tom Felton as Draco Malfoy, Bonnie Wright as Ginny Weasley, Robbie Coltrane

as Hagrid and Evanna Lynch as Luna Lovegood, who is my favorite character.

One of the aspects of the series I enjoy is its themes. Perhaps the main theme in the series is the battle between good and evil. Harry constantly finds himself in situations where he has had to face evil, whether that be a monster or another wizard.

Another thing I enjoy about the Harry Potter series is that it has

its own history. There are things that are mentioned that happened years ago, such as wars and the creation of spells and potions, that add to the richness of the story.

Overall, Harry Potter is a great movie franchise and I'd recommend it to anyone interested in magic and the concept of good vs. evil. I give it a rating of five stars because of the great characters, the special effects and the great storyline.

## Premier Performers

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

### Lyrik-Arie Krogfus

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

Lyrik-Arie Krogfus (12) is a student who has succeeded in art throughout her time taking art-related courses at Cooper.

Although she has only been in art courses for the last two years of high school, Krogfus said that the many art classes she has taken have helped improve her artwork significantly. At this point, Krogfus has taken Clay 1, IBMYP Photography and IBMYP Digital Arts, the class in which she is currently enrolled.

According to Krogfus, taking IBMYP Digital Arts this year has improved her artistic skills greatly.

"The things I enjoy about art are taking pictures and getting recognition for it," Krogfus said.



Photo by L. KROGFUS

In fact, Krogfus has received an award for her art work, which was something she "enjoyed very much."

When it comes to school, Krogfus said her favorite subjects are any art class and any science class.

Krogfus' involvement in the arts is not limited to her classes at Cooper. Outside of school, Krogfus is a dancer.

"I love expressing myself like that," Krogfus said.

As for future plans, Krogfus plans on going to a Historically Black College or University to major in nursing. One of her main goals after college is to start an organization to help people who don't have sustainable healthcare.

Krogfus also hopes to stay connected to the arts in the future. After she is done with school, Krogfus said she would like to explore photography and get more recognition for her work.

### Anna Kisor

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

Anna Kisor (12) is a student who has thrived in her art activities throughout her time at Cooper.

At Cooper, she has taken Digital Arts 1, Digital Arts 2, Drawing 1 and IB Art. Her favorite art class is IB Art.

"I really think the class has a huge impact on me growing as an artist and a person in general," Kisor said.

IB Art was a great class for Kisor to express herself through her artwork. For her final project, she created a piece that focused on body positivity, which she connected to issues of race, LGBTQ+ and women's rights.

"I was able to use my craft in a way that could speak for those who



Photo by LIFETOUGH

couldn't, which is something I want to continue to do through my life and career," Kisor said.

Kisor has been doing art since she could pick up a pencil. In middle school, she really got into art by drawing her favorite anime characters.

"I love to draw my favorite characters and really express myself through drawing, painting and any or all art forms," Kisor said.

Currently, Kisor is a full-time PSEO student and is taking an art class at Normandale Community College.

Kisor's plan for the future revolves around getting her Associate of Arts degree from Normandale Community College and then her Bachelor's of Education degree from Minnesota State, Mankato. She hopes to focus on elementary education.

### Kylee Hulett

By YORDANOSE MULAT  
Quill staff writer

Kylee Hulett (12) is involved in Cooper arts activities through her participation in Symphony Orchestra as a violin player. Hulett has been playing the violin for eight years.

"I began doing lessons on violin pretty quickly after I really discovered it through my aunt, who had been playing since she was in school as well," she said.

Hulett said she enjoys learning the new knowledge of pieces she is taught and then eventually performs in Symphony Orchestra.

"I really enjoy learning new pieces in class and performing them," she said.

One of Hulett's favorite memories in orchestra is "the Fall Festival at Orchestra Hall each year."



Photo by LIFETOUGH

"It is really cool being able to perform at a place like that and we always play really fun pieces," Hulett said.

According to Hulett, sitting in the front row is considered a sort of leadership role in orchestra because "everyone else in the section has to match" the person in the front. She herself has had this position multiple times.

"I have sat front in symphony for many performances, so I think this is a leadership role" she said.

When it comes to school classes outside of orchestra, Hulett said her favorite is chemistry.

"I really enjoy the research and challenge to chemistry," she said.

In the future, Hulett plans on pursuing a career in pediatric nursing. She also would like to continue with playing the violin, potentially in college orchestra.

### Jordyn Saddler

By YORDANOSE MULAT  
Quill staff writer

Jordyn Saddler (12) is a student who has widely contributed to arts activities at Cooper. Included among her many arts pursuits are Wind Ensemble and Marching Band.

Saddler had different motives for being part of these activities.

"I've been in band for seven years and I started doing it because I've always wanted to make music but I liked how powerful the band was so I chose it over orchestra. I've been doing Marching Band for three years and started doing it because getting to be a part of the football games is an awesome opportunity and it is always mandatory," she said.

Saddler said she enjoys the arts because she likes seeing the outcomes



Photo by LIFETOUGH

of the final performances and the places where she performs.

"The thing I've enjoyed the most about Wind Ensemble is getting to play in Orchestra Hall. The thing I've enjoyed the most about Marching Band is when we complete our shows and getting to see all the movements, dances and music put together during halftime," she said.

When it comes to academics, Saddler likes her current business class.

"It's something I've never learned before and Ms. Hershey is a really good teacher," she said.

Outside of school, Saddler likes "playing and training for soccer."

Saddler has vivid future college goals as well. She said her plan is to "go to Northern Illinois University to play soccer and major in human development and family services."

## Fellowship remains the best Ring

The first release in Peter Jackson's epic trilogy also works well as a standalone film



Photo courtesy of NEW LINE CINEMA

The main characters of the movie band together to destroy the One Ring before it falls into the wrong hands.

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

Written in stages from 1937 to 1949 by J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* is one of the best-selling books ever written. Decades later, in 1997, writer and director Peter Jackson won the rights to *The Lord of the Rings* so he could make a fantasy-epic trilogy of films. The first installment in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, was released in 2001. It remains not only the best film in the trilogy, but one of the best fantasy films ever made.

At the start of the film, Peter Jackson brilliantly recaps the past and sets up what is to come in the main story through a narrator that provides a brief overview of the world in which *The Lord of the Rings* takes place. The story follows a basic hero-versus-villain narrative in which the good guys are a collection of humans, elves, dwarves and hobbits, while the bad guys are orcs.

Once the setting is established, the main cast of characters is introduced. The four main characters are hobbit Frodo Baggins (Elijah Wood), who serves as the main focus of the trilogy because he is given the most responsibility out of every character; wizard Gandalf (Ian McKellen), the wise, old mentor who helps teach life lessons to Frodo and the other characters; Aragorn (Viggo Mortensen), a sword-wielding ranger who has to step up as a leader and avoid his temptations; and hobbit Samwise Gamgee (Sean Astin), Frodo's loyal companion. Other characters include hobbits Pippin (Billy Boyd), Merry (Dominic Monaghan), Legolas (Orlando Bloom), Gimli the dwarf (John Rhys Davies) and Boromir (Sean Bean).

The main goal of the entire trilogy is for Frodo to destroy the One Ring, a magical object created by the dark lord Sauron, who needs the ring to take over Mid-

dle-earth with an army of orcs by casting it into a mountain of fire in the orc-homeland, Mordor.

The first aspect I love about *The Fellowship of the Ring* is the Jackson's ability to combine various filmmaking elements into a cohesive whole. The music, composed by Howard Shore, mixed with the beautiful New Zealand locations makes Middle-earth feel like a real place. Since the film was made in the early 2000s, CGI was not as advanced as it is today, so most of the special effects and costumes are practical. For example, the orcs look freakishly realistic thanks to the outstanding costume design. I think modern-day films could learn from *The Lord of the Rings* by using more practical effects rather than animating

fantasy battles with hundreds of soldiers on screen along with smaller-scale fights. A good example of this is in the battle scene toward the end of the film, which includes amazing camera angles and movements. Meanwhile, the quieter, dialogue-driven scenes rely on the great acting of the cast. Every main character feels like they would exist in Middle-earth, with each displaying their own unique personalities.

This leads to the final aspect I love about *The Fellowship of the Ring*: its characters. Although Gollum, one of my favorite characters in the trilogy, does not appear until the sequel, *The Fellowship of the Ring* features the excellent character Aragorn, who struggles with various internal conflicts. Aragorn

is tempted to use the One Ring for good, but he knows the weakness that men have when it comes to possessing things of extreme power. In fact, it was Aragorn's ancestor who refused to destroy the One Ring when he had the chance.

Another character who experiences feelings of temptation is Boromir. Boromir is a mirror of what Aragorn could be. Boromir's father is the leader of Gondor and Boromir is set to replace him. This results in Boromir being tempted to use the One Ring to be even more powerful. Unfortunately, Boromir's desire to use the One Ring for power, even in a good way, leads to the eventual downfall of the party.

In conclusion, while I do love both sequel films in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*, I think *The Fellowship of the Ring* will always stand out as the best for its perfect pacing, its balance between intense action sequences and interesting moments of dialogue, its amazing Howard Shore score, and the genius of Tolkien's fictional world. I give *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, and the entire trilogy, five out of five stars.

## Quill Comics Corner

Uhhh...Working Title

By Davis Ruppert-Kan



# Mandalorian blasts new life into *Star Wars*

The Disney+ series expands George Lucas' original universe in ways not accomplished in the recent movie trilogy

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

*Star Wars* has been one of entertainment's most popular franchises, spawning several films, TV shows, novels and holiday specials all in a galaxy far, far away. George Lucas, the creator of *Star Wars*, had incredible vision, engineering a universe that inspired writer, director and actor Jon Favreau to make the first live-action *Star Wars* television series in late 2019, *The Mandalorian*. With season two of the show now arriving on Disney+, it is a good time to revisit the highly successful first season of *The Mandalorian*.

The first season follows a Mandalorian bounty hunter (Pedro Pascal) who accepts a job from Greef Karga (Carl Weathers), a leader of the bounty hunter's guild the Mandalorian is part of, to acquire a quarry for the Galactic Empire, the evil organization which was believed to have been ended in the climax of *Return of the Jedi*. The Mandalorian eventually comes across the quarry: a small alien child who pop culture has given the name "Baby Yoda." Being that it is forbidden for a bounty hunter to go against his employer, the Mandalorian becomes a wanted figure in the galaxy after he decides to keep the child from the Empire. Secondary characters that the Mandalorian and the child encounter include the Ugnaught alien Kuiil (Nick Nolte), a humble and honorable farmer who assists the Mandalorian on some of his adventures; Cara Dune (Gina Carano), who had aligned herself with the Rebel Alliance during their war against the Empire; and Moff Gideon, a leader in the Empire and the main antagonist.

One of the first things I



Photo courtesy of WALT DISNEY PICTURES

The top-notch writing, acting and special effects bring a cinematic approach to the small screen.

noticed when rewatching *The Mandalorian* is the father-son bond between the Mandalorian and the child. Toward the beginning of the series, the Mandalorian is faced with a threat that almost kills him until the child intervenes to save his life. Although the child does not speak, I can tell by his actions that he has developed an affection toward the Mandalorian.

The affection between the Mandalorian and the child also relates to the role of the audience. Because the Mandalorian has a "blank expression" on his face due to his ever-present helmet, it allows the viewer to see themselves as the Mandalorian. Much like the Mandalorian, we as viewers begin to care about the child. Also elevating our ability to feel the Mandalorian's emotions is the excellent music for the series,

which is composed by Ludwig Göransson.

Another aspect I really enjoy is the sense of adventure in the series. Toward the middle of the season, there are three episodes fully centered on expanding *Star Wars* lore by showing the Mandalorian and the child go on one-off adventures that do not affect the main story in a huge way. These three episodes will bring *Star Wars* fans a sense of nostalgia while also introducing new, likeable characters who we hope will appear again in the future.

A final thing that surprised me about *The Mandalorian* is the story itself. The three most recent *Star Wars* films felt too similar to what I had seen before in other *Star Wars* films. In fact, an argument can be made that *The Force Awakens*, *The Last Jedi* and *The Rise of Skywalker* are much worse than

some of the earlier *Star Wars* installments. In contrast, *The Mandalorian* tells a completely original story with unique characters, which is a breath of fresh air following the disappointment I experienced when watching the recent *Star Wars* films. Jon Favreau, the writer for six of the eight episodes in the first season, clearly has an actual story planned out, unlike the creators of the new *Star Wars* films.

In conclusion, *The Mandalorian* is one of the best forms of *Star Wars* media in many years mainly because the show does not try to duplicate what has already been done before. Jon Favreau has an incredible vision that is fully realized in one of the best TV shows of 2019. I give season one of *The Mandalorian* five out of five stars and I am excited about what will come next in season two.

# Music provides the central hook in *Your Lie in April*

Anime series follows the relationship between an emotionally damaged pianist and a violin virtuoso

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN  
Quill staff writer

Kousei Arima is a piano prodigy that was well known across Japan, and all child musicians knew his name. After the passing of his mother, who was also his instructor, he had a mental breakdown while performing at a recital, which left him with the inability to hear the sound of the piano, even though his hearing was completely fine. Over the next few years, he doesn't touch the piano and he lives in a monotone world until he meets Kaori Miyazono, a free-spirited and pretty violinist who tries to help him return to the world of music. This is the premise of the excellent anime series *Your Lie in April*.

*Your Lie in April* is a product of A-1 Pictures, an animation studio that has created hit shows like *Darling In The Franxx*, *Erased*, *Sword Art Online*, *Anohana: The Flower We Saw That Day* and more. A-1 Pictures is known for their tragic love stories about characters who have internal struggles. This is definitely the case with *Your Lie in April*, which tackles heavy subjects such as grief, loss and PTSD by giving



Photo courtesy of FUJII TV

The show takes a mature approach to mental health issues.

the audience each character's perspective to create a sense of empathy.

One highlight of the show is that it strives for realism when it comes to the musical performances. The creators of the show filmed actual violinists and pianists and studied their movement to create the characters of Kousei and Kaori. In a way, the series teaches us a bit about the piano and violin throughout the course of each episode.

When I started the show, I was expecting a predictable plot and a cheesy romance

where the main characters have a happy ending. But *Your Lie in April* isn't anything like that. What kept me hooked to the show is how Kousei faces his own fears and proves to the other pianists that he still is a pianist himself. It is enjoyable seeing his growth and witnessing him and Kaori participate in competitions.

The realistic approach A-1 takes allows the audience to think about the ways in which people handle the loss of a loved one and grief. In the show, we follow Kousei as he embarks on a journey of self-healing in

order to find himself again. We also see immense growth from all the other characters who are also dealing with their own problems. I think A-1 Pictures does a great job allowing the audience to relate to and empathize with the characters.

Another amazing part of *Your Lie in April* is the soundtrack. For a musical anime, this show does not disappoint because the music throughout the series is phenomenal. Adding to the music is the extremely gorgeous animation, which is vibrant and colorful during the instrumental portions of the show. Even though the show covers a dark topic, the artists and animators help lighten it with amazing visuals and effects.

In conclusion, I think *Your Lie in April* is worth checking out and I give it 4.5 out of five stars. The storyline is fairly interesting and the animation is good. The pacing of the show tracks with the original manga quite well as it takes viewers on a rollercoaster of emotions. Additionally, the show teaches the audience many valuable lessons about overcoming internal struggles. You can watch this show on Netflix and CrunchyRoll.

# Chilombo puts Jhene Aiko at top of charts

Third release from singer mixes R&B, soul, hip hop and pop into appealing whole

By MAKAYLA HOTT  
Quill staff writer

Jhene Aiko is a singer-songwriter who mixes R&B, soul, hip hop and pop into a sound that speaks to her many fans. She is an artist who says how she feels and I can relate to every word she sings. When you listen to her songs, it is clear that she is passionate about her music and the subjects she sings about. My interest in Aiko started with the song "Spotless Mind" from her 2014 album *Souled Out*. I also enjoyed the tracks "New Balance" and "Oblivion" from her 2017 album *Trip*. These songs made me interested in checking out her latest album, *Chilombo*, which came out on March 6, 2020.

Released by ArtClub, AR-Tium and Def Jam records, *Chilombo* features Aiko's usual mix of classic R&B sensibilities and modern sounds. Although it was released right as the pandemic was hitting our country, *Chilombo* debuted at number two on the Billboard 200 charts with 152,000 albums sold. This not only made *Chilombo* the highest-charting new album released in the U.S. that week, it also marked Aiko's best sales numbers compared to her two previous albums.

Aiko's work on *Chilombo* shows that she is a strong woman who knows how to express her feelings through her lyrics. She brings so much passion to her songs and her voice is like a bird that soars into the sky when it needs to get away from the world. You can hear the hurt in her voice when you listen to her lyrics and she brings a vibe to her songs that no other artist can match. I believe a lot of females can relate to what Aiko has to say in her songs. What is more, I think all of her albums, including *Chilombo*, are pieces of art that can connect with any listener.

One noteworthy aspect of *Chilombo* is its production. The album was produced almost entirely by Lejkeys and the duo Fisticuffs. Those producers help give the album a soft and hushed sound with subdued percussion throughout each song. This approach to the production gives Aiko's songs the feeling of a quiet storm. Since the record is largely about a woman enduring a heartbreak and emerging from that experience stronger, the production helps support that theme.

Of course, the production only works because it emphasizes Aiko's central appeal: her voice. Aiko has a voice that contracts and expands into waves, which gives all of the songs on *Chilombo* a certain kind of power. This is especially noticeable on the song "Surrender," which features a controlled vocal delivery over a tempo that never rises above a resting heart rate.

This leads to another thing I like about Aiko's work on *Chilombo*: she knows how to be subtle. Aiko is not a singer that needs to be fancy or complicated with her vocal performances. Instead, she is an artist who gives listeners just enough of her voice to suit the song. This is one thing I like about *Chilombo* and her previous albums.

In conclusion, Jhene Aiko's *Chilombo* shows that she is a strong, independent woman who brings a lot of passion and creativity to her music. While I think female listeners will definitely connect with this album, she has something to offer to other listeners as well. I think *Chilombo* shows that Aiko is a true artist who has something important to say. I give *Chilombo* 4.5 out of five stars because it is an album that proves that Jhene Aiko never disappoints.

# THIRD INSTALLMENT IN *DIABLO* SERIES STILL STANDS OUT

ing game), it allows you to choose between six different player classes: Wizard (my personal favorite), Demon Hunter, Witch Doctor, Monk, Crusader and Barbarian.

Each player class has its own unique set of skills. For example, Wizards have mostly ranged magical attacks and make use of wands, staves and other magical weapons.

Meanwhile, Crusaders and Barbarians have mostly melee attacks with a few ranged attacks, and they both use melee weapons. Next up are Demon Hunters, who have ranged attacks and the ability to use dual-wield crossbows. Monks, in turn, have a decent amount of ranged and melee attacks. Finally, Witch Doctors have attacks based on

summoning undead creatures.

*Diablo III* can be played online with friends or you can use the co-op to play with up to four people that are with you. Playing co-op allows players to share loot, such as gold and gear. Playing with multiple people is especially good when you are facing a boss.

Overall, *Diablo III* is a great game and anyone who

continued from page 5

is interested in fantasy MMO/RPG should definitely consider getting it. The game has a total of four acts, each of which is engaging. Moreover, if you get the ultimate evil edition, which is called *Diablo III: Reaper of Souls*, there is an additional fifth act that adds in an extra boss fight. *Diablo III* deserves five out of five stars.

## Big Ten teams deal with impact of pandemic

Cancelled games have become more routine as COVID keeps spreading

By ANDREW HAGGE  
Quill staff writer

The Minnesota Gophers football season started about two-and-a-half months ago. By now, the season probably seems pretty normal and you most likely forgot that the Big Ten football season was originally canceled. This was due to concern about the impact that COVID-19 would have on players. However, when they decided to bring this season back, COVID-19 infection rates were briefly down compared to now, which led to the decision to restart Big Ten football.

Since restarting, the Big Ten and other conferences have had some pretty big-name coaches, players and teams test positive for COVID. COVID also caused colleges to cut some sports, mostly money-losing activities, to help football stay afloat this year due to the amount of debt schools will experience without football fans in the stands. Even football coaches and other staff members have needed to take sizable pay cuts due to the budget impacts of COVID.

According to [usatoday.com](https://usatoday.com), coaches are taking anywhere from a five percent to a 20 percent pay cut. Most colleges are promising that they will pay the coaches their full check by the end of their contract, but for some, that may be a few years. College coaching contracts usually are longer than NFL contracts and you have a much lower chance of being fired since it is not as high stakes as professional football. Most college football coaches spend around five years on a single team according to [athleticdirector.com](https://athleticdirector.com). What is more, the site also reports that less than 20 percent of head coach changes were before that coach's fourth year on the job.

Colleges this year will probably be less harsh on coaches to be successful considering that they will have to be ready for random players possibly getting COVID-19. While the pressure to succeed is still there, there is a lower chance of penalties. This year's coaches will have to do a lot for their teams, ranging from taking pay cuts to taking the blame if the teams don't perform well. However, they will also get the credit for the football season if it is successful.

What happens if a college team is struck with COVID-19 and can't play? The Big Ten conference hadn't had any COVID issues that were big enough to cancel a game until the Wisconsin Badgers had an outbreak among the team, prompting a game cancellation. The Big Ten will cancel a game if necessary and will not count that game against the affected teams' records. They will use a different tie-breaker system to figure who moves on to the playoffs, like many other sports have done.

When it comes to individual players, anyone who gets COVID is forced to quarantine for at least 21 days and their team will have to stop practices and competitions over the week if the team has a five percent infection rate over a rolling, seven-day time span. Players who test positive also have to take multiple scans and tests that are heart-related to help the league gain a better understanding of what this disease does to athletes far and wide.

After all of the COVID protocols were established, the Big Ten eventually started its eight game regular season. The championship will be played by the top team in each division. The teams who don't finish top in their division will play the team at the same position in the opposite division in an exhibition match. This means everyone will play an extra game no matter what happens in relation to where they finish on the leaderboard. The Big Ten also said that some match ups could change to avoid rematches from past years.

Everyone who is participating in these activities is taking a huge risk in Big Ten football this season. Big Ten players and coaches are risking their health for college football. They are the ones who deserve gratitude from everybody who enjoys watching them play.

## "Voice of the Hawks" passes away at 58

Mr. Sullivan worked for more than 30 years at Cooper sporting events ranging from football to basketball

By MAJAY MURPHY  
Quill staff writer

Long-time Cooper sports announcer Mr. Sullivan passed away on October 16, 2020 at the age of 58.

Known as the "Voice of the Hawks," Sullivan worked at Cooper sporting events for more than 30 years as the public address announcer during basketball, volleyball, football and soccer games. He also contributed as a timer and score keeper during these many sporting events.

"Lloyd was a member of our Cooper family for over 30 years," Cooper Activities Director Mr. Oelfke said. "Lloyd announced almost all of our events. He was incredibly dependable. He always showed up early and loved his job as much as we appreciated having him."

One Cooper staff member who had a chance to interact with Sullivan on many occasions is social studies teacher Mr. DiSalvi, who helped as an announcer in several sporting events at which Sullivan also worked. He said Sullivan was an important part of the sporting events.

"Lloyd was a great person to work with," DiSalvi said. "He was always excited to work at Cooper sporting events. As an alumnus of Cooper, I know he took a lot of pride in being able to

help the Cooper athletic department. He was also always very supportive of me when I would announce games. He would gently correct me if I made a small mistake and he would always laugh at some of the cheesy things I would say during our games. I am really going to miss seeing him at our games."

From the perspective of the coaches who were at the events Sullivan announced, his contributions to the games were noticeable.

"He was a great announcer for the all the years that I've been here at Cooper," Head Varsity Football Coach Mr. Howard said. "He was always on time to everything and very positive."

One thing Sullivan was known for was his choice of music during the games, which often consisted of older songs from the 1980s and 1990s.

"He liked to play music from his era, which some of our fans loved, and some of our students, not as much," Oelfke said.

Despite the reactions of some students and players to the music, DiSalvi pointed out that they still enjoyed the consistency Sullivan brought to the games at which he worked.

"I think he provided a sense of consistency for everyone," DiSalvi said. "You could always count Lloyd working every basketball game I at-



Photo courtesy of GEARTY-DELMORE

Cooper Activities Director Mr. Oelfke praised Mr. Sullivan (above) for what he brought to school sporting events: "He always showed up early and loved his job as much as we appreciated having him."

tended. Again, he was always very excited to be at every game. The high school basketball season is probably one of the longest in high school sports and yet he approached every game as if it were a play-off game and I think students really appreciated that."

DiSalvi added that Sullivan was also well liked by the referees, with whom he developed friendships over the years.

"One thing I also remember is how the referees

would always be happy to see Lloyd. Lloyd had been working games for so long [that] all the referees recognized him because they saw him so often. They knew that they could count on him in order to help manage the game well," DiSalvi said.

In addition to his work at Cooper, Sullivan was a field attendant for the city of Crystal. Sullivan is survived by four siblings.

"Lloyd will be deeply missed," Oelfke said.

## STUDENTS CAN ACCESS SUPPORT FOR WRITING, MATH continued from page 1

Of course, distance learning has led to some changes in the role students must play in seeking out the help they need from a resource like the Write Place.

"The ability to drop in for help is no longer available as students have to preregister for help," Eisfelder said. "I also don't see teachers signing kids up or sending kids to the room for help to make up the work. Teachers can definitely encourage kids to sign up, but ultimately it is more on the students to be responsible and say, 'Hey, I need help with this,' and sign themselves up. Also, with staff having office hours on Wednesdays, students can get a more personalized help session with their own math or English teacher just by contacting that teacher and getting help on Wednesday."

For students who want the extra support offered in the Write Place, Eisfelder said they will get great help from various members of the English department on any writing-related issue.

"Distance Learning is hard and we all are showing a lot of grace, patience and flexibility.

Take advantage of the extra one-on-one time you can get with a teacher. It seems like there isn't enough of that to go around online, and my sense is that students are more hesitant to ask for help in a class setting, so get the help here," she said.

For students whose need for support involves their math class, the Math Lounge is also

with understanding math concepts that may need more clarification," math teacher Ms. Meredith said.

Much like previous years, the Math Lounge is accessible to students during study hall and it is available every period of the day on the two days of the week it is offered. However, Meredith stressed the im-

portance of students planning in advance when they want to get help in the Math Lounge.

"An appointment must be made at least one day prior to the meeting," she said. "This way, the Math Lounge teacher can email the student information about the Google Meet appointment, which will most likely be sent early on the day of

the appointment." Another aspect of getting help in the Math Lounge is for students to make sure they know specifically what kind of help they need. "My advice for students who want to make the most out of their visit to the Math Lounge is...to have specific questions outlined and ready to share so you can maximize and utilize the time wisely, effectively and efficiently," she said.

For students who plan on making use of either the Write Place or Math Lounge, Olesen reminds them to make sure they are signing up for the proper period.

"The biggest error that we have had is students signing up for a teacher on the wrong day. For example, a student will sign up for the

Math Lounge to meet with Mr. Rivers period one on a Monday, when Mr. Rivers is only available during period one on Thursday. Make sure you look at the days and hours that teachers are available. The days teachers are available are listed after each teacher's name on the Cooper Academic Support Request Form," she said.

**"Distance Learning is hard and we all are showing a lot of grace, patience and flexibility. Take advantage of the extra one-on-one time you can get with a teacher. It seems like there isn't enough of that to go around online, and my sense is that students are more hesitant to ask for help in a class setting, so get the help here," English teacher Ms. Eisfelder said.**

available. The Math Lounge is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays for students who want to strengthen their math skills, get individualized homework help and prepare for tests.

"The things students can accomplish while visiting the Math Lounge are getting help with questions on their math homework and/or getting help

learned to do during distance learning that they will continue to do once it comes to an end.

"Before distance learning, we were doing a lot of things on paper still," Hough said. "One small example is when students have schedule change requests at the beginning of the year. We used to have these small yellow pieces of paper for students to fill out. Now that we're not in person, we've created an online form that students can use. That's something we can continue to use when we get back in person. Moving more towards being paperless has been a good thing. Also, this time has given

all of us a chance to become a little more tech savvy."

Echoing Hough is Ritter, who said she has developed new ways of interacting with students and families that she can continue to use in the future.

"I have learned new ways to connect with students and families," Ritter said. "As counselors, we have developed new presentations that can be viewed virtually and are continuing to develop more virtual presentations that families will be able to view in the future. These presentations will be shared on the Cooper website so families and students can view them at any time."

## COUNSELORS ADJUST TO DISTANCE LEARNING continued from page 2

to fill out. Now that we're not in person, we've created an online form that students can use. That's something we can continue to use when we get back in person," she said.

Of course, the counselors pointed out that technology can be an issue for students who are trying to stay on track in school.

"I wish everyone in their homes could have internet access that is more accessible and available," 12th grade counselor Ms. Burkholder said. "The district provides hot spots but it seems it's not a seamless approach. Everyone is doing the best they can under the circumstances."

While the technology aspect can be a challenge, Senger said it can also push students to become more responsible for their own learning, which is a good skill to have after high school ends.

"I think students have to be more organized, so they have an opportunity to figure that out," Senger said. "Distance learning forces students to do some independent learning. Some students will excel at this, others will struggle."

As they look ahead to an eventual return to in-person learning, Cooper's counselors agree that there are things they

## DISTRICT HITS PAUSE ON IN-PERSON LEARNING PLAN continued from page 1

come back in person for these sessions will be asked to do so with safety measures in mind.

"There is no doubt that we miss our Hawks by not being able

to see everyone in person, but we also do not want to rush into starting something where we have the potential of spreading the virus to others," Herman said.

Although all students are remaining in distance learning as of right now, plans may change in the future once again.

"As we continue to review our

county and local data, we will be monitoring for a consistent decline in cases before looking at transitioning into a hybrid or in-person learning model," Burrage said.

## Teams tweak banquet plans

COVID forces sports squads to rethink how they conduct end-of-season celebrations



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

After being able to congratulate runners like 2020 graduate Jeanette Wu (right) in person at the 2019 cross country banquet, Head Coach Mr. DiSalvi (left) delivered care packages to his current athletes in lieu of a team banquet this year.

By FAITH KING  
Quill staff writer

COVID has affected the fall sports season in many ways and that doesn't exclude the end-of-season banquets held by teams. Considering the COVID guidelines and the health and safety of players, some fall teams chose to revise their approach to a banquet, while others chose to skip a banquet altogether.

Banquets are typically face-to-face and they offer a fun way for teammates and coaches to come together and celebrate all their success and they many accomplishments that they've experienced throughout the season in order to end it on a good note. For example, Mr. Mau, the Cooper girls swimming and diving coach, said at their banquet last year they shared a meal together, presented awards and viewed a slideshow of the season. Meanwhile, Mr. DiSalvi, the girls cross country coach, said the banquet last year was a large gathering of both the girls and boys runners in the school cafeteria, where food and drinks were served.

The banquets for both of these sports were significantly different this year due to COVID. The girls swimmers held a virtual banquet in order to practice social distancing. Mau said he arranged to have the awards delivered to his athletes and they were still able to watch their slideshow of the season together as a team online.

"While the format may be different, our celebration, passion for our individual and team accomplishments, along with our Hawk pride, still came through very strongly," Mau said.

As for cross country, the

girls and boys teams decided on two different plans to accommodate the wishes of the athletes. According to DiSalvi, the members of the girls team decided against doing an online banquet.

"My student athletes were not interested in doing a virtual banquet. We couldn't do a banquet in the school and I didn't want to do one outside because I was afraid of the weather. It turns out that was a good call because it was cold and snowy on the day we would have held our banquet," DiSalvi said.

In order to still give the runners a banquet-like experience,

**"Instead of a banquet, I drove to each student athlete's house and dropped off her awards at her home," Mr. DiSalvi, head coach of the girls cross country team, said. "Although there was not as much pomp and circumstance handing out awards this year, every student athlete still got her award."**

DiSalvi still prepared awards for each team member.

"Instead of a banquet, I drove to each student athlete's house and dropped off her awards at her home," he said. "Although there was not as much pomp and circumstance handing out awards this year, every student athlete still got her award."

In contrast, the boys cross country runners decided that they did want to have a virtual banquet online. Prior to the banquet, Zuccola used a method similar to DiSalvi to get the awards to each athlete.

"We did a virtual banquet using Google Meets this year,"

Zuccola said. "Prior to the banquet, I assembled a gift package for each athlete that included an end-of-season yearbook, a T-shirt, a bag of treats, the certificates and letters they earned, and any plaques they were awarded. I then delivered those packages to each athlete's home on the afternoon of the event and they were instructed to keep them closed until the actual banquet that evening. Athletes, families and coaches then met online at 6 p.m. that night for the banquet itself."

Zuccola said that he kept most of the banquet traditions the same, such as the voting process for awards.

"The process of voting for awards was largely the same as prior year, although the delivery of those awards was different. We also tried to maintain some of the same traditions as typical years such as the production of an end-of-season yearbook and an end-of-season T-shirt," Zuccola said.

Despite the obstacles and challenges COVID has caused for fall sports teams, the coaches

said that athletes adapted and kept a positive outlook, even when the end-of-season banquets looked different.

"We have learned this season that different does not mean worse and that outcomes are still up to us," Mau said.

Zuccola added that the COVID-related alterations to the season and to the banquet had some unexpected upsides.

"I know we had more families and extended family members who were able to participate in this year's banquet because they were able to dial into the event from the comfort of their own homes," Zuccola said.

## TAKING CARE OF MENTAL HEALTH CRITICAL continued from page 4

motivation. This is why students don't want to talk or turn on their cameras during lessons. They feel isolated, lonely and stressed. The easiest solution for many students is to "ghost" their online learning and give up on school or just do what they can do at any given moment to get their grades up.

These are just three of the main reasons why distance learning is bad for our mental health. In fact, there are many more reasons, but I would need to have at least the whole newspaper to myself in order to go through them all. However, if we just complain about how our mental health has gotten worse and that distance learning is unfavorable, we cannot work to improve the situation. Therefore, there is some advice that you can make use of in order to help you during this time.

First, just try your best to act toward and communi-

cate with your friends and the people around you with a happy attitude. I try not to act as tense as I was at the start of the school year when speaking with friends and family. I also take some time out of my days to go outside and see the sun. By just trying to go with the flow, I feel better and more happy. Obviously, there are those days when I feel unmotivated or angry, but I try to give myself a day off or just let run it out.

There are also digital resources students and teachers can use to improve their mental health. The teacher who prefers to remain anonymous said they have been listening to the podcast *The Happiness Lab* with Laurie Santos.

"That has helped me understand how the brain works and I have learned strategies for dealing with stressors and challeng-

es," the teacher said.

On that teacher's advice, I took it upon myself to check it out. I found that the podcast has helped me become more aware of my happiness.

Furthermore, a junior dealing with depression who wanted to remain anonymous said they use "hotlines and online therapists" as resources during distance learning.

Another tip is to try to engage more in your classes. During school, try to say or share at least one thing in each class. You can also reach out to friends in class or email your counselor for help. Overall, although we are stuck in this time period of distance learning, there will be a day when we will be back at school and will hopefully see an improvement in our mental health. We will never take for granted those people we see around us again.

## Cooper Competitors

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

### Aryanna Jiron

By FAITH KING  
Quill staff writer

Aryanna Jiron (12) plays soccer at Cooper in the fall. Jiron has been playing soccer since she was in kindergarten.

"My mom got me into sports early, and as I grew older, I decided to focus on soccer more than basketball. I enjoy the feeling I get from making a diving save and being able to keep my team in the game," she said.

One of her favorite memories has been going to the house of the Snapko family, who have been connected to the school soccer program for several years.

"They really made me feel a part of the team," she said.

As a goalkeeper, Jiron has to be a leader on the field.

"I see what they don't and that is everyone on the field," Jiron said.

When she isn't playing at Cooper, Jiron plays off-season soccer to help her prepare for the next season.

Jiron's favorite subjects in school include gym and English.

"I always liked gym because, no matter what sport we played, as an athlete, I caught on fast. I also like English because it's easy," Jiron said.

Outside of school, Jiron enjoys rapping and going to the gym. She also enjoys motivational speaking.

After high school, Jiron plans on trying college for two years, and if she likes it, she will continue, but not for more than four years. She plans on attending college in California and starting a life out there after school.



Photo by ARYANNA JIRON

### Lamiaha Irons

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

Lamiaha Irons (12) is a volleyball player for the Cooper Hawks in the fall sports season.

According to Irons, she started playing volleyball in eighth grade. She said she was just trying to find something to do that she enjoyed in order to keep her mind off of other things in her life.

"What I've enjoyed most about volleyball is getting closer with my teammates and being able to recognize my improvement skill-wise," she said.

Irons said her favorite volleyball memory took place during her sophomore year. She said it was at this point that she was finally confident enough in her hitting to jump at the net.

Being that this is her senior year, Irons said that she and the other seniors are role models for the younger players on the team.

"We have to watch how we behave and show the other girls what to and what not to do because their actions affect the whole team," she said.

Outside of school, Irons works at a Golden Valley retirement home.

"I really enjoy working with the elderly because I just feel like they ooze with history," she said.

For college, Irons plans to attend a four-year institution. She said she wants to major in finance and minor in advertising and marketing.

"I am currently deciding between attending Augsburg University and Florida Memorial University," Irons said.



Photo by LAMIAHA IRONS

### Isabella Grandbois

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
Quill staff writer

Isabella Grandbois (12) is a soccer player for Cooper in the fall and a club soccer player in the winter and spring.

Grandbois was one of the three captains of the girls soccer team this fall.

"I picked this sport because a family I am super close with put all their daughters through soccer, so my mom decided to put me with them," Grandbois said.

Grandbois' favorite soccer memories were the two wins Cooper had against Chanhausen, which produced some joyful bus ride back to the school.

"We sing the Cooper soccer song after we win an away game," Grandbois said. "It's the best feeling."

When it comes to school, Grandbois' favorite subjects are science, math

and engineering.

"I am super STEM motivated, so these classes are always so fun for me," Grandbois said.

Grandbois is only in math class at Cooper. The rest of her day is spent doing PSEO at the University of Minnesota.

Outside of school, Grandbois enjoys going on runs and hanging out with her friends.

"We love to go on coffee runs and just spend quality time together," Grandbois said.

Next fall, Grandbois will attend North Dakota State University. She plans on continuing her soccer career and majoring in mechanical engineering with a

specialization in aerospace engineering.

"My career path I am hoping for includes Boeing or the Air Force and possibly my own company," Grandbois said. "I want to design eco-friendly jets."



Photo by LIFETOUGH

### Maritza Munn

By FAITH KING  
Quill staff writer

Maritza Munn (12) plays volleyball in the fall and runs track in the spring. Munn has been playing volleyball since her freshman year.

"What prompted me to pick volleyball was just picking something new," she said.

What Munn has enjoyed most about volleyball has been the "countless bus rides" with her teammates. She also has a pair of favorite memories from the sport.

"My favorite memories are from team bonding snow ball fights and getting lunch before a game," she said.

While Munn does not have a leadership role on the Cooper team, she said it was important to her as a senior to help the younger girls with tips and encouragement.

During the winter, Munn plays club volleyball.

"It was fun to travel but, sadly, it got cut too soon," she said.

As she looks forward to spring, Munn said she hopes that track will resume because her 2020 season was lost to the pandemic.

Munn said her favorite subjects in school are English and art.

"I feel as if I get to express myself in writing and painting," she said.

Outside of school, Munn said she enjoys spending time painting.

As for college plans, Munn is planning on attending Minnesota State University, Moorhead next fall to be an art teacher. Munn said she also hopes to continue with her volleyball and track careers in college, although her main focus will be on getting her education.



Photo by LIFETOUGH

## Loons players kick it into gear as playoffs start

Solid performances at the end of the season set team up for playoff success

By ANDREW HAGGE  
Quill staff writer

Minnesota United has kept up with the rest of the Major League Soccer (MLS) teams this season. In the Western Conference, they were fourth in the standings with 34 points, only five behind the first place Sporting KC. After the regular season ended on November 8, the fourth place teams played the fifth place teams in their conference. The final regular season games were taken as a win and a loss to help the team advance up the leaderboard in preparation for the playoffs, which started on November 20. The good news is that the Loons kicked off the postseason with a 3-0 victory over Colorado on November 22.

With MLS using the same game format as the NBA did due to COVID-19, the Loons adapted well to the constantly evolving safety rules in the bubble. Having to work around COVID-19, MLS teams had to follow new procedures and bubble rules in Orlando, Florida, where these games were taking place early in the season. Teams arrived in Orlando and had to quarantine for 14 days with testing every other day to ensure they were not infected. After those 14 days, teams and players were cleared for play as well as practice, thus beginning the abnormal MLS season.

After some players were traded away, Minnesota needed to add to their lineup if they wanted to keep up. Mason Toye, who had put up a good amount of assists and goals, wanted out after Minnesota traded for Kei Kamara, for whom the Loons gave up a 2022 Superdraft pick and a \$150,000 in 2021 general allocation money. The Loons were able to trade Toye away to Montreal for a 2021 second round draft pick and \$600,000, consisting of \$150,000 in general allocation this year and the remaining \$450,000 in 2021.

One problem besides injuries that keeps hurting the Loons is suspensions. Minnesota has recently been undisciplined with a red card every few games. Red cards are a soccer player's worst nightmare. These offenses get players ejected from the game and slapped with a suspension, typically for a couple games depending on the severity of the foul. Not only are you relieved of playing for a few days, but during the game you are ejected from, your team loses that player position, reducing the roster to 10 players instead of 11. Leaving a position open can really strain your team and leave some weak spots that are bigger than before. This could potentially lose the game for your team if they can't rely on the 11th player to make a play. Similarly, having another player go out of position to take over that area can really mess with the team's gameplan.

Minnesota has been moving toward the playoffs just like past years and with hard work has come great success. The Loons have had multiple chances in the playoffs and have been pretty consistent with talent in their lineup. With multiple wins in a row, Minnesota is threatening to go far in the playoffs. Moving forward, with the Loons starting the playoffs with a win, it could play a key role in the team being able to take home a great playoff run. The Loons will face Sporting KC in the next match. The playoffs will eventually close out with the MLS Cup on December 12.

## Marching Hawks return for football

Cooper musicians have been able to add a note of normalcy to a fall football season that was nearly cancelled

By NOLAN ANDLER  
Quill staff writer

The Marching Hawks are still finding a way to play on despite the COVID outbreak. At first, members of the Marching Band didn't know if they were going to have a season because of the initial postponement of football to the spring. However, once the Minnesota State High School League changed course on September 21 and announced the return of football to the fall, everything else that comes along with football had to adapt, including the Marching Band.

According to Marching Band Director Mr. Hahn, he knew it was important to consult with his students immediately to let them know that there was a chance to still play at games.

"When I saw that we had the opportunity to have a season, I reached out to the students. Many of them were excited to be able to make music in person and interact with their friends," he said.

After gauging musician interest, it was time to figure out how practice would look with COVID safety measures in place. Paige Hennen (12) said she knew that the start to the season was going to be weird, but she was up for it.

"It was difficult at the beginning because we didn't have the three weeks of practice time in August that we normally have to prepare. That made it more difficult to learn our music," Hennen said.

Helping navigate the rushed



Photo by MR. HAHN

Marching Band members take to the field during halftime of the October 16 home football game.

band experienced.

"The practices this year have been very different. We're obviously wearing masks, and when the band members aren't playing, they are required to have them on. We had to write our own drill to ensure that it was socially distanced and all of the band members were safe. It's also different because we haven't been able to do rehearsal in the band room. In my opinion, those rehearsals are essential so the band can get together and hear how they sound when they

our own section, but now we sit on the track in a distanced chair formation," Sarah Lehnertz (12) said.

One part of every game during which the Marching Band takes center stage is halftime. While that is still the case this fall, things have been adjusted due to COVID.

"Everyone still gets to play," Borisevich said. "I'd say it's just a little more laid back. We're not wearing uniforms. We're also just walking on to the field instead of marching from the back of the field."

While the season has been different for the band members, it has still meant a lot for them to be able to play together.

"The games are my favorite part of being in the band. Everyone is socializing, we're playing some very fun music, and we get to watch the football game. We still get to do those things with COVID, it's just a little more difficult," Borisevich said.

Emily Hernandez (12) added that the members of the band are still having a good time whether the football team wins or loses.

"The great mood has stayed the same," she said. "While at first it was hard in getting into this new routine, we all still manage to make good memories and have fun. We are able to play music together and enjoy the little things during practice. The games still get us going, but like Hahn says, 'If the team loses, the band never does.'"

Despite the COVID virus being an issue throughout the season, some people decided to join Marching Band for the first time this year. Newcomer Bianca Hott (12) said it has been a really fun experience.

"I decided to join color guard because I thought it would be a cool experience to do with my friends," she said.

Of course, for veteran members of the team, the choice of

whether or not to play this year was easy, especially given the fact that, at first, it looked like this season was heading for cancellation.

"I wanted to do this season because this is my last year in Marching Band and my last year as drum major. I wanted to make this year as best as it can be," Hennen said.

Agreeing with Hennen was Borisevich, who said she did not hesitate to join the team when contacted by Hahn.

"When Mr. Hahn reached out to Paige and I saying there was a possibility that we would be able to play, I jumped at the opportunity because being a part of this band is a huge honor and I enjoy being able to make music with these people. That's why I decided to participate in the band. Going to Marching Band rehearsals have been the highlight of my week and there's nothing I'd rather be doing," she said.

Another important aspect of taking part in Marching Band this year relates to the role the group plays during football games. Since there is no student section this season, the football team has to rely on the band to give all them the energy this season.

"Marching Band adds to the sports experience at Cooper by creating more of a fun and upbeat environment at football and basketball games with the music we perform and the halftime shows at football games," Harms said.

Now that the football season is over, Hahn said he has been really impressed with how his band has reacted to this year's challenges.

"The band has responded to the challenges with perseverance and hard work. We know what the limitations are and we do our best to work through them while having fun and making memories," Hahn said.



Photo by MR. HAHN

The October 30 game gave musicians a chance to dress up for Halloween.

nature of the start of the season was Hahn's leadership staff.

"During the pandemic, I do believe these opportunities are important for the well being of young people and they don't exist if an adult doesn't step forward to run them," he said. "My staff of Connor Sparrow and Katie Holfock were on board, which allowed us to have a successful season."

During those early practices, the team had to make changes like athletes had been making in all of the fall sports in order to stay safe. Emma Borisevich (11) said there were several key changes that the

are done," Borisevich said.

According to Natalie Harms (12), two additional changes had an impact on instruments and what the musicians do during a sports event. She said there are "no flute players" and "no parade marching" to lessen the risks of spreading COVID.

Changes have also come to the team during the football games themselves. In a normal year, the band has a section in the home stands that is reserved for them. Now, with the pandemic, they have been relocated for safety purposes.

"We usually sit in the stands in

## Minnesota Wild trading toward brighter future

A disappointing conclusion to the 2020 season has prompted the Wild's owners to make some bold moves

By ANDREW HAGGE  
Quill staff writer

The Wild made almost any trade they could during the month of October. It seems the team has entered a rebuilding phase starting with Jordan Greenway, who was taken by the Wild in the 2015 second round NHL entry draft. A few years later, the Wild are starting to move on from many of their trusted veterans. This could be seen when the team traded away both goalie Devan Dubnyk and forward Ryan Donato to the San Jose Sharks for a 2022 seventh rounder as well as a 2021 third-round draft pick.

While their October moves grabbed everyone's attention, some of the Wild's changes started in the summer. In mid-September, for example, the team traded away center Eric Staal to get forward Marcus Johansson. While this and other trades seemed out of the blue and were not liked by some Wild fans, they were not totally unexpected since the team has not done well for

a while. Wild GM Bill Guerin, who came in after the unforeseen firing of Paul Fenton, had been hinting at these kind of moves ever since he came into office. Bill Guerin fired Bruce Boudreau in February, then hired the interim head coach, Dean Evason, as the full-time head coach. With Evason and Guerin at the helm, things were inevitably going to change.

Another group of moves came in the NHL Entry Draft. When the Wild traded forward Ryan Donato to the San Jose Sharks for a third-round pick in the 2021 draft, it was clear the Wild were planning for the future. The Sharks also ended up sending over a fifth-round pick in the 2022 draft for goalie Devan Dubnyk as well as a seventh-round pick in the 2022 draft.

In the first round of this year's Entry Draft, the Wild took center Marco Rossi as the ninth pick overall. The Nashville Predators exchanged forward Nick Bonino and pick 37 as well as pick 70 in this year's draft for forward Luke

Kunin, 101st pick in the 2020 Entry Draft. This was a pretty big deal for the Wild as they planned out who they would draft and when they would draft them.

Through more trades, the Wild were able to acquire the 65th pick and the 146th pick for some lower draft positions. They ended up drafting center Marat Khushnutdinov at 37th overall, defenseman Ryan O'Rourke at 39th overall, defenseman Daemon Hunt at 65th overall and center Pavel Novak at 146th overall. Within a few years, these players will likely be on the Wild starting bench or being traded for other players, which will help the team move up in the ranks.

In addition to the draft moves, current Wild players then began getting extensions and new contracts. The team re-signed defenseman Matt Bartkowski and center Kyle Rios to one-year, two-way contracts. A two-way contract means that the player will be paid different amounts based on how long he plays on the NHL team and

the AHL team, which is the minor league of the NHL. The Minnesota Wild also signed goalie Cam Talbot, a solid backup who has never gotten his chance to start until now, to a three-year contract. Two additional players who were signed onto two-way contracts were forward Joseph Cramarossa and defenseman Dakota Mermis, both of whom got one-year deals. Finally, Jordan Greenway, who has played for three years under the Wild administration, was re-signed to a two-year contract, as was goalie Kaapo Kahkonen. Greenway can be seen now as the face of the Wild as he has been on the team for a few years and can be a leader for those who are new to the squad.

Clearly, this is an interesting time to be a Wild fan. Since the team has only been around for 20 years, they have not needed to rebuild at this scale before now. Fans now just need to wait for more trades to come soon as the team continues to add new players to a growing Wild bench.