



Relationships are strained as people isolate during COVID

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The Quill

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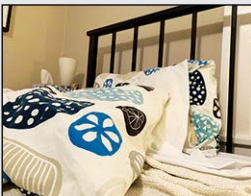


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COOPER HAWKS ADJUST TO WEDNESDAY CHANGES

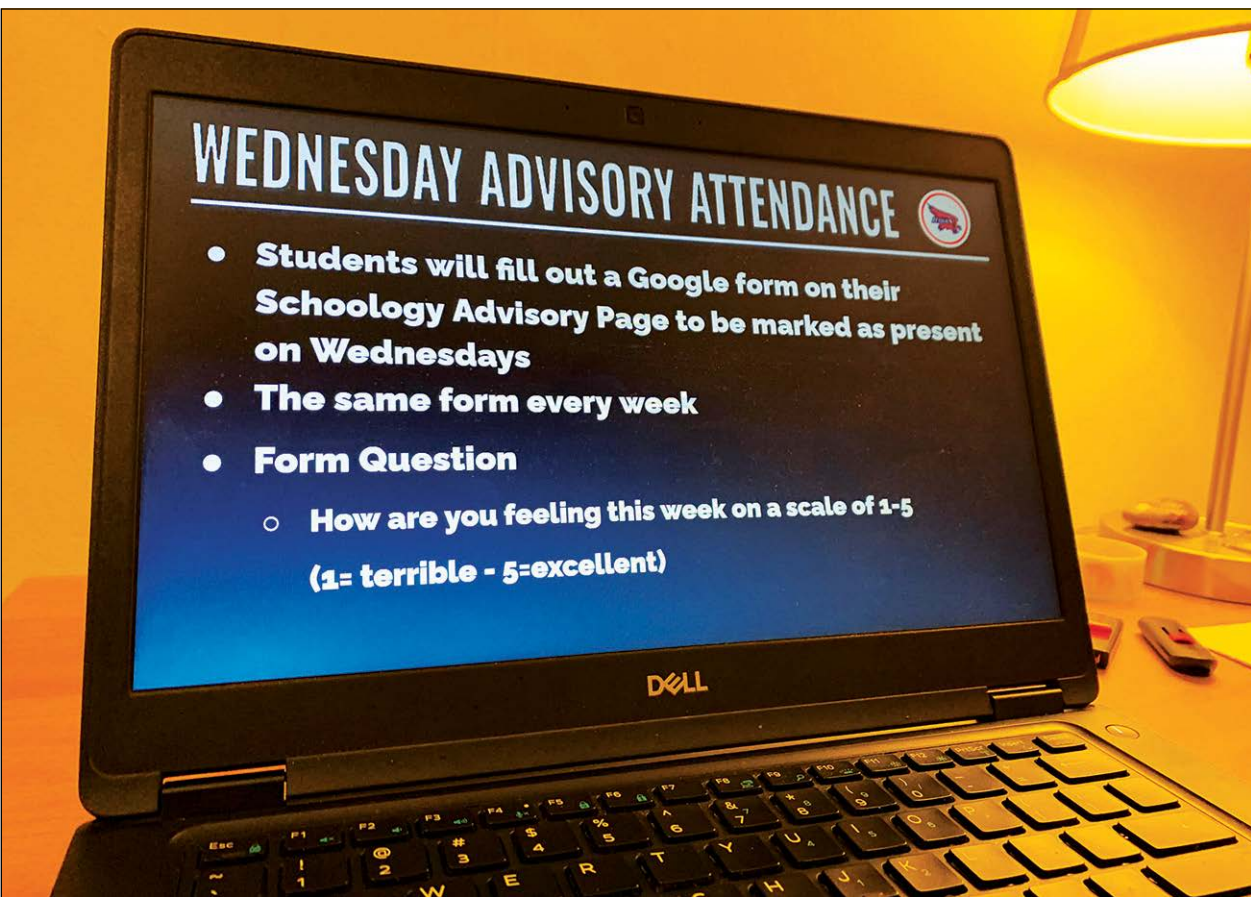


Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

Students are asked to complete a Google form in which they indicate how they are feeling during that week of school.

By MAKAYLA HOTT
Quill staff writer

Cooper introduced a pair of changes to the Wednesday student support day at the start of November. The first change involved the start of a Wednesday advisory check-in that is designed to monitor how students are feeling about school. Meanwhile, the second change was the beginning of in-person sup-

port through which limited numbers of students can sign up to work with teachers on Wednesdays.

The Wednesday advisory check-in is an extension of the weekly advisory class, which takes place on Mondays during fifth period. On Wednesdays, students are now required to fill out a Google form on their Schoology advisory page on which they respond to the question, "How are

you feeling this week on a scale of 1-5?" In order to be marked as present, students must complete and submit a response.

"After the school year started, we discovered that the state requires some sort of attendance-taking mechanism to be in place each day of the week," Head Principal Mr. Herman said. "Instead of revising our schedule, we decided to offer a quick check-in for

students around academic and social-emotional well being so we can better support our students."

The larger change to Wednesdays was the introduction of an in-person teacher support option. Through this new system, students can sign up to get support during an 8-10 a.m. or 12-2 p.m. slot. Up to three students can be with a teacher during each two-hour session and there is at least one

In-person assistance, advisory questionnaire added to the existing student support offerings

teacher available from each subject area.

"As part of the Distance Learning Plus model, the goal was to increase support for students this year," Herman said. "We started out the year by creating our Student and Family Support Center with the plan of moving to in-person support as the year progressed. During September and October, we worked on transportation, how many students could come in, set COVID protocols to follow and other details before we could roll this option out."

The first step in accessing this support is signing up, which must happen in advance. If a student needs transportation, the student must call 763-504-8478 or email nicole_williams@rdale.org to set up transportation by Thursday before the Wednesday they want to come in for support. If a student does not need transportation, they must sign up by calling 763-504-8478 or emailing nicole_williams@rdale.org before 2 p.m. the Monday before the Wednesday they want to come in for support.

Students who come in for support have a

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Graduate gets national notice for published essay

Donny Pearson, who graduated from Cooper in 2013, had an article featured on the Huffington Post website in October 2020



Photo by CEYLON MITCHELL II

Donny Pearson is currently doing scientific research at the University of Illinois.

By ANDREA TRIBBLE
Quill staff writer

Stuck between two worlds, many biracial Americans struggle with being "too white" for one crowd but being "too Black" for the other. Cooper graduate Donny Pearson is a 26-year-old writer and

scientific researcher who has faced this battle himself.

Growing up in white suburbia and being raised by his white mother's side of the family, Pearson had little-to-no exposure to Black culture. When his father died, Pearson said he grieved the absence of his Blackness and resented that he never got the opportunity to embrace this side of himself.

In his published work, Pearson digs into intergenerational trauma, struggling to claim his Blackness and the importance and power of voting. Pearson initially got involved in writing after publishing a piece on the murder of George Floyd. He got into contact with a family friend who was familiar with journal writing and taught him about the importance of telling your truth and being vulnerable. His writing eventually came to the attention of the Huffington Post website, which published his article, "I've Grieved The Absence Of My Blackness. Now I Want To Make My Black Vote Matter," on October 23, 2020.

After this article was published, Pearson said he received many responses. Pearson recalled people sharing how moved they were by his work and how well he showcased his belief in the power of feelings and vulnerability. Pearson credits Cooper and his time in IB English HL for the development of this belief.

"I believe it is important to be authentic to ourselves and find a way to express our emotions. I spent a lot of time at Cooper learning how to be a good writer, particularly in my time in IB English HL. Our voice can be a powerful thing, especially when it tries to transform great pain into hope," he said.

Pearson graduated from Cooper in 2013. He also earned a full IB diploma during his time as a Hawk. Whilst discussing his time at Cooper, Pearson said he had many important connections with his

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Teachers become students on professional development days

While Cooper students have the day off, their teachers spend days like January 25 learning new ways to do their jobs

By JACK ATKINSON
Quill staff writer

Students are about to have a day off of school on January 25 as Cooper staff members take part in a professional development day. These days take place several times throughout the school year so staff members can take part in workshops and meetings to help them better perform their jobs.

"We have large group meetings about standards and best practices, updates on policies and procedures, and get-to-know-each-other morale boosters," English teacher Ms.

Kope said. "We also have department meetings where we talk as a department about the work that needs to get done, or for all advisors of a certain grade to be trained in how to proctor state tests, help kids register, or plan for the next big Cooper event. Sometimes, we have specialized district meetings for all secondary language arts teachers or other district-level groups to meet and work on district-level alignment, standards, and best practices."

The trainings that happen during professional development days are designed both at the district level and at the building level by different groups.

"There really isn't a district group that plans professional development. Instead, there are people, mostly former teachers, that are part of the district curriculum and development team. These people help implement district-level initiatives by creating training for building staff," Cooper Administrative Intern Mr. Nelson said. "At Cooper, there is a group called the Instructional Leadership Team made up of teachers, counselors, and administrators. The team meets monthly to discuss the needs

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of the school and what types of training or professional development is necessary.”

Making professional development days challenging this year is the reality of distance learning. In order to follow COVID protocols, staff members attend professional development days virtually much like students do during distance learning.

“The biggest hurdle for the team this year has been the unknown,” Nelson said. “We, as educators, are new to distance learning, too. Last year, we were trying to adapt as fast as possible; this year, we are being much more intentional. However, there is still a learning curve for the most effective way to teach during distance learning.”

Kope pointed out that this year’s professional development days have helped them appreciate what students go through during distance learning every day.

“We have the same issues that students have: we feel distant, separate, far away from each other. One of my students said it really well when I asked how they are feeling right now about distance learning. They said, ‘We can’t talk to each other to take the edge off,’ and that sums up my feelings about professional development perfectly. We don’t have the ability to communicate privately with each other in real time except by texting, and we all know that it just isn’t the same without the face-to-face contact,” Kope said.

According to Nelson, the

“We have the same issues that students have: we feel distant, separate, far away from each other,” English teacher Ms. Kope said.

inability to socialize has had a negative impact on this year’s professional development days.

“In the past, teachers would use professional development days to have a breakfast potluck, where everyone would bring food to share. We would eat the food and socialize before starting the day. Everyone would get to know each other better. Since the start of COVID last March, we haven’t had the opportunity to do that. That sense of community and bonding, while it is still a part of the Cooper community, has suffered this year,” he said.

Although the format of professional development days has changed this year, the benefits to staff members of the various workshops have remained the same.

“We work on being a better team, a unified force,” Kope said. “It’s really important that teachers and administration communicate with each other often in order to make a school work, and professional development offers some sheltered, protected time to do this. We also tackle some of the more complicated tasks on days like this, like standards work or curriculum alignment.”

Nelson added that professional development gives staff members a chance to continue learning, which is an important part of being educators.

“Teachers are lifelong learners by nature and they are constantly reflecting on their teaching,” Nelson said. “During and after professional development, teachers will apply their new knowledge to their classroom. They also benefit from being a part of a community and sharing time with people who can sympathize with their situation. Professional development is a very cathartic experience for most people.”

Debate squad excels in virtual season

Despite a smaller-than-normal roster and changes to the competition format, the Hawks team is having success



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The January 2020 practice pictured above was one of the last in-person sessions before debate became virtual.

By FAITH KING
Quill staff writer

Cooper’s award-winning debate team is heading into the final weeks of a 2020 regular season impacted by the pandemic and the COVID rules currently governing school activities.

“All of our practices are being done online this season,” head coach of the debate team Mr. Brynteson said. “It has definitely caused us to rethink how we coach debate and interact with the students. We have had some students decide to take the season off due to the online na-

ture of debate.”

Although some students chose to skip the current season, Brynteson said that those students who returned had some unique opportunities that would not have existed in a normal, in-person season.

“Our tournaments are online,” Brynteson said. “What has been exciting is that the entire country is online, so it’s given us an opportunity to participate at tournaments we would have never been able to in years past. At the start of the season, we took our students to the Duke University tournament. Later

this year, we will be attending Harvard and Stanford debate tournaments as well.”

Agreeing with Brynteson about the unexpected benefits of the virtual debate season is team member Andrew Tran (11), who competes in the category of Congressional Debate, in which he said participants “emulate the United States Congress and debate over draft bills and resolutions.” Tran said he has enjoyed the flexibility he has with online practices and competitions.

“Because everything is online, the travel aspect is gone

and I can wake up later than normal before a debate tournament. There’s no more waiting on the bus or sitting on long bus rides to different schools to debate. It’s very comfy wearing sweatpants while wearing a dress shirt and blazer on top when doing debate virtually. All of our debate practices are also virtual, which allows us to practice together with debaters at Armstrong, which is very nice,” Tran said.

Due to the lack of travel to practices and tournaments, Brynteson said he has tried to recreate virtual versions of these trips to maintain some normalcy in the debate season.

“We have tried to keep as many of the normal traditions alive,” he said. “For example, typically we would have all met at Cooper and rode the bus to wherever the tournament was being held. This year, we are doing a virtual bus so all the students can still meet in the morning. Then, we jump back on the virtual bus after the tournament so we can talk about our successes.”

During the tournaments themselves, the processes look different this year due to the online nature of the competition.

“Debating in a Zoom call with 10 to 20 other people is a lot different than debating with that many people in person,” Tran said. “In every session, there’s one debater elected as the presiding officer and their job is more important than ever to make sure the session runs

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Proper sleep is key during distance learning

Experts agree that teens need to be consistent about their sleep habits to maintain their physical, mental health as the pandemic continues

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN
Quill staff writer

COVID-19 and distance learning have led to students and their families feeling more stressed and worried. These feelings of anxiety don’t disappear when your head hits the pillow at night, which can lead to students not getting enough sleep.

Getting proper sleep is crucial. According to Cooper school nurse Mr. Rosenblum, sleep is essential for students who want to do well in school and feel better outside of the school day.

“Sleep for students is way more important than students want to believe it is,” he said. “When we sleep, our bodies process our food for energy, recharge our brains for good decision making, and circulate important oxygen so our muscles stay strong and we can make it through the day.”

When students get proper rest, they can focus more in class and be more energized throughout the day.

As the school year continues forward with distance learning, Cooper teachers have seen the



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

Removing electronic devices from one’s sleep area is one key to good rest.

effects of poor sleeping habits. Health teacher Mr. Rooney said that bad sleeping habits can manifest themselves during the school day in many ways.

“When students lack sleep, it can cause a myriad of problems, like poor attendance, lower grades, concentration issues, anxiety and greater risk for depression,” Rooney said.

When students and adults fail

to make sleep a priority, a number of different sleep disorders can result. First, there is insomnia, when you’re unable to fall asleep and stay asleep. According to the Marsh and McLennan Agency’s publication “Invest in Your Rest,” this is the most common sleep disorder.

A related disorder is hypersomnia. This problem leads to people being unable to stay

awake during the day. Included in this category of disorders is narcolepsy, which causes extreme daytime sleepiness.

Circadian rhythm disorders are another category of sleep problems that are connected to the sleep-wake cycle. People suffering from these disorders experience the inability to sleep and wake at the right times.

Some sleep disorders happen at night. One is sleep apnea, which is when a person stops breathing for 10 seconds or more during sleep. There is also restless leg syndrome, which is a tingling sensation in your legs that causes a powerful urge to move them while sleeping. Finally, there is parasomnia, which is when people act in unusual ways while sleeping, including walking, talking or eating in their sleep.

Given its impact on performance in school and mental health, getting proper rest is clearly important for students. According to “Invest in Your Rest,” there are several ways students can get

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number of protocols they need to follow. First, students must fill out and submit the district’s “Health and Safety Screening Google Form” the morning they are coming to school. Bused students enter through the Virginia Avenue entrance, while student drivers will enter through the performing arts entrance.

All students must be masked upon entering the building and are expected to maintain a six-foot physical distance from other people while in the building. There will be free masks available at both entrances for students who might forget to bring one.

After entering, students must check in and then report directly to their assigned classrooms. Students who arrive later than 8:15 a.m. for the first session and 12:15 p.m. for the

second session will not be able to attend that day’s support sessions and will be asked to sign up for the next week.

Once in their rooms, students must be seated at least six feet apart from one another. Students are expected to remain in their assigned rooms for the entire two hours. Students are not expected to assist with the cleaning that teachers and staff will do before and after the sessions.

Students who attend the first session will have the option of getting a prepared lunch. These students must tell the security staff at check in if they want a meal pack to bring home. The meals will be waiting for them at the second floor Y as they leave the school at 10 a.m.

Similarly, students who attend the second session will

tell the security staff at check in if they want a meal pack to bring home. The meals will be delivered to the classroom so the students can bring the food home when leaving at 2 p.m.

During dismissal from in-person support, students will be staggered and organized to maintain social distancing. Students who are riding the buses will not be released from their rooms until the buses are waiting outside, while students who have a ride or who are driving will go directly to their cars.

The first Wednesday for in-person support took place on November 18. Although the new systems established for this support went according to plan, a statewide increase in COVID cases and infection rates prompted the district to pause all in-person support starting on November 20 based

on Minnesota Governor Tim Walz’s recommendations.

“After learning about the governor’s recent COVID restrictions, along with reviewing the local, county and statewide data, the district’s Incident Command Team, which I am a member of, recommended to the superintendent’s cabinet to pause most in-person support on Wednesdays,” Herman said.

According to Herman, the hope is that the in-person support will continue in a virtual form until it is once again safe to have students and staff in the building.

“In-person support is set up for those students that may need that face-to-face interaction where something may get missed in the virtual setting. Students can still set up virtual meetings with their teachers,” Herman said.

Relationships are being tested by COVID

From interactions with family members to touching base with friends, staying at home makes staying connected harder



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

Seeing one's closest friends can be a challenge when one is trying to stay safe during the pandemic.

By SANDY VUE
Quill staff writer

A human relationship is the state of connection between two people. There are many types of relationships that people have, including friendship, romantic, familial or professional. During COVID-19, relationships have been subjected to stress as people have either been forced together or forced apart due to various

stay-at-home orders. This is a reality that has been faced by Cooper students, whose access to the people with whom they have relationships has been affected by the pandemic this year.

Ashleigh Sailer (11) said COVID has caused her to distance herself from the outside world.

"Since COVID started, my dad wouldn't let anyone over or have anyone leave because I live

with both my dad and grandma and they both have bad health," she said. "I have bad Wi-Fi, so when it comes to talking to friends online, it's frustrating."

Sailer added that maintaining long-distance relationships is not her strong suit, so she is staying away from having a romantic relationship for the time being.

Another relationship challenge Sailer has faced is not being able to visit her mom and

siblings since her parents are divorced and she mainly lives with her dad. COVID has also impacted her relationships with the people with whom she lives.

"I feel like we either argue the whole day and stay away from each other or we're the complete opposite," she said. "Our emotions I feel like are just all over the place because we don't really talk about it too much."

On the other hand, some things have been easier for Sailer during the pandemic. She said school has become easier because she now doesn't have people distracting her from her work.

"I would definitely say that I needed a break from others. It helped me see what I can truly do," Sailer said.

Even though Sailer said it's difficult to maintain the energy to do things in school, she sets goals for herself and does not give up on things easily during distance learning.

At the same time, Sailer said there are things she misses about seeing her friends. For example, she said she misses hanging out, being around people and being in a loud environment.

"I miss not having to worry about people I care about getting sick. Thankfully, I haven't lost anyone close to me from COVID," Sailer said.

COVID has also impacted the relationships of Christina Nguyen (12).

"I feel that physical interac-

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Students share resolutions for brand new year

Hawks set various academic, personal goals as they head into 2021

By ANDREA TRIBBLE
Quill staff writer

The new year represents a fresh start for many people. The start of a new year is also a chance to set goals that will help you have the most productive year possible. After the year 2020 turned out to be, it's safe to say people will have a long list of things they hope to bring into their lives in 2021. Personally, I'm going to hold myself accountable to be consistent with practicing gratitude and acknowledging and prioritizing my mental health. I also am going to continue to get better with saving money. The following are some resolutions fellow Cooper students have made for 2021.

Tori Dalton (9): "Get good grades and eat healthier."

Somah Kamara (9): "Save more money."

Bre Frazier (10): "I want to get my first car."

Olivia Lauter (10): "I want to get my license."

Aaliyah Newman (11): "Try new things and be open to learning more."

Khadir Ahad (12): "I want to grow spiritually and work on being less judgmental."

Lyrrik Arie-Krogfus (12): "Getting accepted into North Carolina A&T and into their nursing program."

Ramon Arrington (12): "To begin to discover my purpose in life and to get closer to God."

Tabitha Bergeson (12): "My main goal is to start to dig deeper into the bible."

JJ Collier (12): "I want to weigh 235 by the end of 2021, graduate in June with all As and have a car."

Lamiaha Irons (12): "I want to make sure I work out every day of the week once my volleyball season is over."

Cyrus Jarjay (12): "I want to learn how to edit photos through professional programs and work hard enough to achieve my ideal body figure."

Jewel Lee (12): "I would love to pick up painting again. I started to paint over quarantine but slowly faded out of it. It'd be nice to pick it up again."

AJ Massaquoi (12): "Be more active and be consistent in exercising."

Victoria Ombuna (12): "I want to make a decision on what college I'm going to attend in the fall."

Jayla Reliford (12): "I need to work on being more grateful for the things I have."

Henry Suah (12): "I want to work on staying true to myself."

Meme Wheeler (12): "I'm going to become more independent and work on being responsible."

Whether they're big goals like saving money for college or smaller ones like working on keeping your room clean more often, new year's resolutions can help you create some order in your life and give you a reason to hold yourself accountable. Make those goals and dedicate yourself to accomplishing them. Carpe diem!

Winter weather requires teens to drive with extra care

Preparation before leaving home and precautions while actually driving can help make winter travel safer for everyone

By MAX REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Winter has finally arrived, and thus, cold weather has, too. One of the main concerns about winter arriving is that the roads are going to get slippery, wet and icy. This can be a huge hazard, not only for adults, but also for teens who are just learning to drive. Thankfully, there are various ways to commute safely during this winter season despite all of the hazards on the road.

1. Scrape down your entire car before leaving for your destination

Clearing your car of snow and ice will greatly improve your vision on the road. First, you should start your car and let it warm up. Then, you can carefully scrape your windshield, your side windows and your rear window by hand.



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

Ice and snow can make a daily commute anything but routine.

There are two specific types of scrapers you will want to use depending on the condition of your vehicle. If your vehicle is covered with snow, one of the best snow scrapers on the market is a Hopkins 532 Mallory 26"

Snow Brush. This scraper includes a snow brush on one side, which is beneficial for scraping off snow. Also featured is a scraper blade with tough ice chippers to break through the ice on your windows.

However, if your vehicle is covered in ice, one great ice scraper to use is called the Scrape-A-Round. This is a circular, small scraper that is excellent for scraping ice off your car. Plus, it only requires one hand to use.

2. Know the road conditions before leaving for your destination

Knowing what to expect on the roads before you leave for your destination can greatly reduce the chance of an accident taking place. There are great traffic apps available for download that tell you the conditions on major roads.

One excellent app for Minnesotans to download is called Minnesota 511. This app will show you the conditions of the roads and free-

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teachers during high school.

"Ms. Kilsdonk and I bonded over *Star Wars* in her History of the Americas class and she is such a delightful person and teacher," Pearson said. "20th Century Topics with Mr. Gagnon was one of my favorite classes, mostly because he was always a fun teacher and gave us a lot of freedom with projects. Theory of Knowledge with Mr. Zuccola was a fun class, too. He and I both love film and have a similar sense of humor. One of the compliments that has stuck with me from high school is that I reminded an old friend of Mr. Zuccola. Sra. Whitehead is about the same age as my older brother, so she and I always clicked, and she was always like a big sister figure as a mentor in my time at Cooper."

Pearson also acknowledged his former English teachers Ms. Pulling and Ms. Kope, along with retired Cooper

guidance counselor and published author Mr. Stewart, for challenging him to be a better and more passionate writer.

"That has stuck with me to this day and I think a lot about what they have instilled in me as a writer," Pearson said.

In addition to writing, Pearson is also passionate

pursuing a career out in those fields," he said.

In fact, Pearson eventually went to Clark University, where he majored in both physics and chemistry. During his junior year, he studied abroad in England, where he felt he got the opportunity to really experience living on his

tant of the year. Pearson later packed up and moved to the cornfields of University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign to follow his Ph.D. advisor and continue his Ph.D. in physics.

As for what his next steps might be with respect to his career, Pearson explained that he does not know what exact physics avenue he wants to go down.

"It's okay," he said. "I just turned 26 and still don't know what I want to be when I grow up."

Although his future in physics is undecided, his time at Cooper has taught him something that will stick with him.

"If it is one thing I have learned since my time at Cooper, it's to trust that things have a way of eventually working out in the end and things will be okay," Pearson said.

You can read Pearson's article on the Huffington Post's website at www.huffpost.com.

"Ms. Kilsdonk and I bonded over *Star Wars* in her History of the Americas class and she is such a delightful person and teacher," Pearson said. "20th Century Topics with Mr. Gagnon was one of my favorite classes, mostly because he was always a fun teacher and gave us a lot of freedom with projects."

about scientific research and traces that passion back to his time in Cooper's science department.

"IB Physics HL and Chemistry HL were two of my favorite classes in high school, with Mr. Geldert and Ms. Hawkinson, respectively. They both challenged me and I ended up

own and grow his passion for his field.

After graduating with high honors in physics, Pearson was accepted into a Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland, College Park. He assumed a teacher assistant role and won a runner-up award for being an outstanding teaching assis-

From the Editors

Hitting deadlines important during distance learning

The temptation to take advantage of teacher flexibility can lead students to bad habits

The end of the semester is a time when every student is scrambling to turn in their assignments in order to earn a decent grade. This is also a time when some students take advantage of teachers' tolerance toward late work as a way to turn in their assignments after their original due dates. Unfortunately, when teachers tolerate late work, it causes students to turn in their work whenever they feel like it, which creates a negative cycle that hurts student learning. Even during distance learning, it is important for both students and teachers to stick to the established deadlines for assignments.

One type of assignment where late work seems to be an issue is formative assignments. These are the day-to-day assignments students have to do to demonstrate their learning and develop the skills they need to eventually do well on the summative. Many teachers are lenient on when the formatives come in, so students learn that they can turn them in late. What happens in this case is that students try to finish up all of the late formatives right before the summative, which does not help them learn or demonstrate their skills. As a result, the summative performance tends to suffer.

When a majority of students in a class get in the habit of turning in their work late, it causes the teacher to slow down his or her lesson plan. That is because teachers cannot move on with a new lesson when half of the class is behind on turning in materials from the old lesson. One can see how this quickly turns into a cycle that it is hard to escape from. While it is definitely the case that many students have jobs and other responsibilities outside of school that sometimes keep them from working on assignments, not turning in work on time holds the entire class back and takes away learning time from students who want to go forward.

Another bad aspect of turning in work late is that it eventually has an impact on the summatives in class. In some cases, students will rush at the last minute to finish all of the formatives before the summative, but this rush does not help them to learn the necessary content or skills to do well on the summative. Instead, it is often just one students copying the answers from another student's sheet.

Making matters worse is that students will even be late in taking care of their summatives. If they learn that teachers will take formatives late, they assume the same thing

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Altered grading policy brings benefits

While there are some downsides to the new approach to grading, the guarantee of at least 50 percent can give students hope

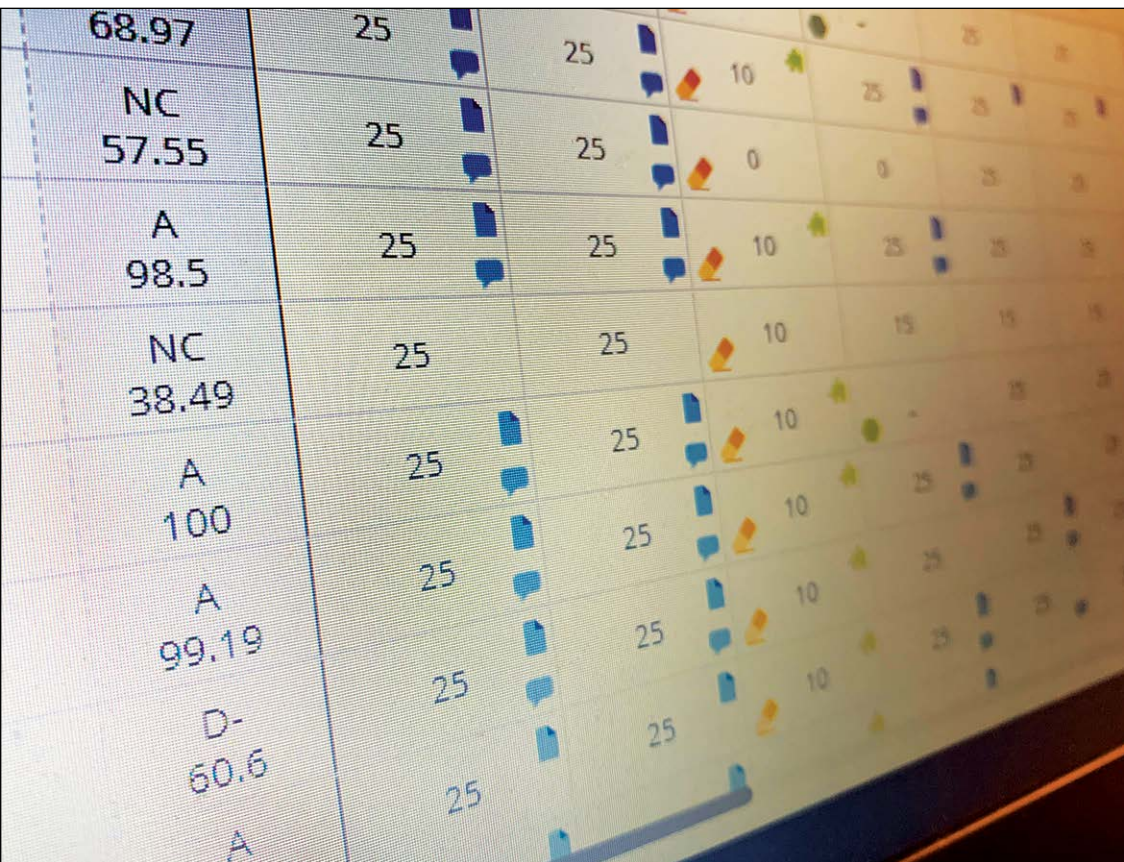


Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The revamped approach to assignment scoring can give struggling students a chance to pass at the semester mark.

By YORDANOSE MULAT
Quill staff writer

The 2020-2021 school year has been proceeding in a virtual model since the first day of school on September 8 due to COVID-19. This change in model from in-person to virtual learning impacted many things about school, including the grading system. One way the grading system was adjusted is that the lowest score that a student will receive on a summative or formative assignments this year is 50 percent of the total number of points for that task. For example, if a test or quiz is worth 30 points and a student receives 10 points out of the 30 points, then the student will automatically receive a 15 out of 30 instead. This means that even if a student doesn't complete a task, they will still get half of the points that it is worth after a set amount

of time.

This new grading system has both pros and cons. First, it is good for students because they have a better chance of raising their grades. Additionally, it is less stressful for students when they know that they for sure will receive 50 percent of the points. However, the bad impact of this policy is the fact that students get points for tasks they did not complete, which may lead to them relying on this system to the point that they do not complete their work.

The change to the grading system has a good impact on students' ability to raise their grades. This is especially important when one considers the fact that virtual learning is not as effective as in-person learning. Many students have a hard time understanding and completing tasks because of the lack of in-person contact between students and

teachers. However, if a student gets 50 percent of the points that are able to be earned, then it is much easier to get a better grade since starting at half is clearly higher than starting at zero. For example, a student who has an overall grade of 30 percent would need to raise it by another 30 percent to get to a passing grade, which would be difficult. However, if that same student is already at 50 percent, it would be much easier to raise their grade the 10 percent that is necessary to earn a passing grade.

The relative ease with which a struggling student can get a passing grade brings the benefit of less stress for students. The times we are living through have been difficult for many students and teachers. What is more, the fact that students are not able to ask their teachers questions freely and easily has affected everyone's learning. All of this

adds up to the fact that students are stressed about their grades in classes. However, always being guaranteed 50 percent of the points on any given assignment can relieve student stress to an extent. Knowing that they will for sure get at least 50 percent of the points on a challenging summative may prompt students to actually do the summative without the usual stress that might hurt their performance.

However, it must be noted that the change to the grading system might cause students to choose not to do their work since they will rely too heavily on the 50 percent policy. Since we are in a virtual model of learning, many students already feel tempted to not complete tasks, especially if they feel like they have less oversight. Add to that the guarantee of 50 percent and those students may stop working in class.

Moreover, this new grading system also awards students with points they did not earn. For example, if a student does not complete an assignment for any reason, that student will still get half the points. This leads to an over-reliance on the 50 percent policy, which is not a good lesson to learn for the future, when those same students will face a college experience in which the traditional methods of grading are used.

Overall, the change to the grading system has impacted students in both a good and a bad way. Students may now find it easier to improve their grades, which relieves their stress during these difficult times. Although some students may overly rely on the new system, its positive impacts may outweigh the negative. What matters most is how students approach and use the system. If students use the change to the grading policy with good intentions, then it will have a good impact on us all and may continue to be used in the future.

Second semester may give Hawks a chance to return to Cooper

The promise of eventual in-person learning would be welcome to students who do not enjoy virtual school

By MAJAY MURPHY
Quill staff writer

The Robbinsdale School District is getting close to announcing its decision about how school will start in second semester. After going through one semester of distance learning, I am not sure I want to go through another. Distance learning can be hard for some students thanks to its impact on our mental health and the stress of knowing we have a lot of work to do without feeling like we have the personal support to keep up with that work. While the teachers are doing their best in helping us get through the work, distance learning is still a tough way to do school. This is especially true for seniors as they try to finish up their last year of high school.

The first reason I think the district should not stick with distance learning relates to attendance. Basically, it is too easy and tempting to decide to skip class. One reason many older students skip class is because they have jobs and they are working more



Photo by LOU VANG

Some students are starting to miss the crowded school hallways.

hours during the pandemic to help make money. Students find it hard to wake up in the morning after working a 3-10 p.m. shift and then doing homework when they get home. While this same problem exists during in-person learning, the fact that we have to go to school makes students less likely to skip class.

The second reason we shouldn't stick with distance

learning relates to screen time. It is hard to be on the computer all day and that is why some students decide to skip or leave class early. Relying on a device to do all of your school work also means that your technology needs to be working properly. If it isn't, it is hard to do your work and do it successfully. Between the screen time and technology issues, it is easy to see why stu-

dents get stressed out, which can have an impact on their mental health. While in-person learning can also be stressful, it is a different type of stress, a type that students are more used to.

The final reason why I enjoy in-person learning more than distance learning relates to extracurricular activities, especially sports. When you are already at school during the day, it is obviously much easier to stay after school for whatever sport or activity you might be involved in. Having to attend school at home all day and then go to the building for your practice leads to students rushing around and wasting gas money as they have to go back and forth from home to school.

It is clear that distance learning is serving a purpose. We need to be learning but we also need to be safe, and the decision to stay at home for school has been for everyone's benefit. Still, I am ready to get back to school. For me, and many students like me, in-person learning works better. I hope we have the chance to return to Cooper at some point this year.

The Quill

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First *Home Alone* is holiday perfection

If you are feeling the post-winter break blues, the classic Chris Columbus film can be the best way to raise your spirits



Photo courtesy of 20TH CENTURY FOX

Kevin's clever battles with the hapless home invaders Harry and Marv are at the heart of the humor in this Christmas-set movie.

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Home Alone is one of those movies everybody knows. Its iconic scenes, lines of dialogue, and memorable moments have molded the movie into a pop culture phenomenon. As an innocent, early '90s Christmas movie, *Home Alone* has a certain charm to it. The direction by Chris Columbus (who would later direct the first two *Harry Potter* films), the musical score composed by the legendary John Williams, and the acting by the famous child star Macaulay Culkin resulted in an intelligent yet very goofy and entertaining family movie that still satisfies viewers to this day.

One of the best things about *Home Alone* is the music. John Williams, best known for composing music for films such as *Jaws*, *Star Wars* and *Superman*, delivers one of his absolute best scores in this film. His composition just screams Christmas whenever I hear it, regardless of the time of year. While I do not think Williams' score here is as

iconic as his work in the original *Star Wars* trilogy or *Superman*, the *Home Alone* music is, hands down, one of Williams' greatest achievements.

Another one of my absolute favorite aspects of *Home Alone* are the moments that provide comic relief. These moments make the world of *Home Alone* feel very lived in while at the same time remaining fresh with each view-

thing you see, but watching the movie five years later with more knowledge and insight about things you didn't know as a kid adds to the charm of *Home Alone*. It is ridiculously easy to escape into this world and its many iconic scenes.

Finally, one of the best things about *Home Alone* has to be the characters. Kevin, played by Macaulay Culkin, starts off the film as a self-

and Daniel Stern. I think what makes Harry and Marv such an iconic and entertaining duo is the great chemistry between Pesci and Stern. Aside from them falling into dumb house traps set by an eight-year-old boy, Harry and Marv are actually pretty smart house robbers. One of my favorite moments is in the beginning when Harry is disguised as a police officer investigating Kevin's family's house so he can plan to rob them once they go on vacation. It is a small detail but one that reinforces the importance of character development in the film.

In conclusion, *Home Alone* remains one of my favorite Christmas films to date, primarily because of its incredible soundtrack, the charm of its fictional universe and the performances of the main actors, especially Macaulay Culkin, whose portrayal of our protagonist is perfect. Although it is very unrealistic for any family to accidentally leave one of their children at home for a vacation, *Home Alone* is both a classic Christmas and '90s film that deserves four out of five stars.

One of the best things about *Home Alone* is the music. John Williams, best known for composing music for films such as *Jaws*, *Star Wars* and *Superman*, delivers one of his absolute best scores to date. His composition just screams Christmas whenever I hear it, regardless of the time of year.

ing. For example, there are the original crime films featuring an obnoxious psychopath armed with a tommy gun; there is the pizza delivery boy hitting an outdoor statue twice; and there is the infamous "Old Man Marley" and house-trap sequence. When you are a kid and around our main character Kevin's age the first time you watch *Home Alone*, you believe pretty much every-

ish brat who gets bullied by his entire family into wishing they all disappear. Culkin's performance is what makes the character of Kevin as likeable as he is because, on paper, Kevin should not be very likeable. I doubt *Home Alone* would have been a success if it weren't for Culkin.

The two other main characters are the antagonists, Harry and Marv, played by Joe Pesci

Werewolf myth gets revamped in novel *Shiver*

Maggie Stiefvater's 2009 book is an entertaining paranormal romance tale

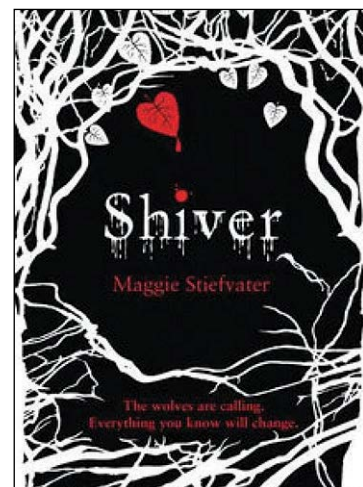


Photo courtesy of SCHOLASTIC CORPORATION

Shiver led to an eventual series of novels featuring the central characters.

By ZACARI WATSON
Quill staff writer

Shiver was written by Maggie Stiefvater and published by Scholastic Corporation on August 1, 2009. *Shiver* falls under the paranormal romance genre. When I first read this book, it was hard to put down. I found myself wanting to keep reading.

Shiver is about a girl named Grace Brisbane and a boy named Sam Roth. Sam is a werewolf, and in this book, werewolf transformations are triggered by the cold. During the winter, Sam sits at the edge of the woods outside Grace's house, where she watches him through her window. They continue this routine for six years.

One day during the school year, thanks to certain circumstances, they meet in person and they get to know each other. She learns more about Sam and more about the other wolves. He then becomes more involved in Grace's life.

One of the most interesting elements of the story relates to how it handles werewolf mythology. In *Shiver*, the wolves don't need the full moon to turn; instead, it's the cold that turns them. They also explain in the book that the warmer it is, the less cold it takes to turn the people into werewolves.

One of the most interesting elements of the story relates to how it handles werewolf mythology. In *Shiver*, the wolves don't need the full moon to turn; instead, it's the cold that turns them.

Another aspect of *Shiver* that I enjoy is that the story expands over the length of the novel and its subsequent sequels. As the series progresses, the stakes get higher as Grace and Sam, along with two other important characters, Cole and Isabel, are placed in more danger. There are people who want to hunt the wolves, not knowing that they're people. Grace has to try and keep Sam safe, not only from people who want the wolves dead, but even her own parents. Grace, Sam, Cole and Isabel eventually come together in the end to help the wolves survive.

I also enjoy how *Shiver* goes into the characters' backstories a lot. The novel talks about Sam's tragic childhood and Cole's past. Sam has a lot of childhood trauma, while Cole has a lot of problems with his old life. Meanwhile, Grace helps Sam deal with his problems and Isabel tries to help Cole.

I recommend this book to anyone interested in werewolves, romance and fantasy. If you are interested in those things, you might like this series. Overall, *Shiver* deserves five stars out of five.

WINTER WEATHER REQUIRES TEENS TO DRIVE WITH EXTRA CARE continued from page 3

ways you plan to travel on. It will tell you whether the road is slippery or dry, where construction is on the road, and the amount of traffic you will encounter on the road. Using this app will greatly increase your safety on the road and reduce the risk of an accident happening due to the various winter driving risk factors. With this app, you can find the safest route on the road and, potentially, even a faster route, too.

3. Keep cold-weather gear in your car

Keeping a cold-weather gear bundle in your vehicle will help keep you safe in the event of an accident. The essential items to keep in your cold-weather gear bundle are a blanket, a flashlight, a mask, warm winter clothing, a first-aid kit and a glass scraper.

The blanket and the warm clothing will help you stay warm if you are stranded in the cold and are waiting for someone to pick you up. The first-aid kit can be used to provide aid to yourself or those in the vehicle if there is some sort of accident. If you end up getting into an accident in the later hours of the

day, having a flashlight will help you see your surroundings much better. Finally, with the COVID-19 pandemic still proving itself to be deadly, bringing a mask along will help reduce the spread of the virus when talking to police or other drivers if you are stopped along the side of the road.

4. Drive extra cautiously

Operating with extra caution while you are driving in the cold weather is essential to being safe while on the road. Driving slower than the speed limit will greatly reduce the chance of slipping on snow or ice and help you avoid skids.

Another thing to know is how your car's brakes work. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, keeping your foot on the floor and using the ball of your foot to provide steady pressure on the brake pedal is key in case of a sudden stop.

In addition, increasing your following distance to about six or seven seconds from the vehicle in front of you will prevent you from rear-ending the car in front of you and give you enough time to stop. The main reason why

the usual "three-second rule" won't work during winter is due to the amount of ice on the road. If you need to come to a sudden stop, your vehicle may slide across the road and rear-end the car in front of you.

Finally, you should practice accelerating and decelerating slowly. Applying the gas slowly will help you regain traction on the road and, thus, avoid skidding. It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.

5. Refrain from using your phone while driving

This one may seem obvious, but some people (especially teenagers) still use their phones while driving. Using your phone while driving is dangerous enough, but using your phone while driving in the cold weather during harsh conditions can prove fatal. Last summer, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz passed the "hands-free" law. This law prohibits Minnesotans from having an electronic device like a smart phone in their hands while at the wheel.

A good recommendation if you absolutely need to use your phone is to get a phone holder. One of the best phone

holders to use is called the Mpow car phone mount. All you have to do is attach the suction cup to your dashboard or window, and place your device inside. The telescopic arm on the Mpow car phone mount goes from 4.6 inches to 6.6 inches, so drivers have easy access to their devices. The Mpow car phone mount can hold devices between 1.6 inches and 3.5 inches wide. Using a phone holder will help you navigate to your destination in a much safer fashion.

If you do not want to purchase a phone mount, another recommendation is to pull over to use your phone. You can also have a passenger in the car go on your phone for you. Better still, you could just put your phone away if you don't need to use it. That way, you won't feel tempted to use it while driving.

Driving in the winter can be a frightening experience for many. As long as you are ready for the endeavors of winter driving, you can keep yourself safe. These tips will prove beneficial to you during this winter season and help you commute safely to your destination.

Premier Performers

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

Paige Hennen

By MAX REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Paige Hennen (12) is a student who has thrived in her arts activities throughout her time at Cooper. Hennen participates in Wind Ensemble and Marching Band. According to Hennen, this is her third season in Marching Band.

"I joined Marching Band because I really enjoyed playing in the band at Cooper and wanted to continue learning more about music," Hennen said.

Hennen is also entering her second year as a drum major for the Cooper Marching Band.

"In the Marching Band, I am the senior drum major," Hennen said. "This means that I am the lead conductor of the band and help our directors with tasks in and outside of rehearsals."



Photo by PAIGE HENNEN

For Wind Ensemble, Hennen said she enjoys the Fall Festival performance every year.

"It's a really fun day and an amazing opportunity to play in an amazing hall," Hennen said.

In school, Hennen's favorite class is the history and pop culture course she takes at North Hennepin Community College. She said it teaches her how to evaluate history in today's society.

As for her plans for the future, Hennen wants to attend the University of Minnesota or North Dakota State University to major in civil engineering.

"Civil engineering is interesting to me because the profession helps build the roads and cities we live in," she said.

Outside of school, Hennen said she enjoys working and listening to all types of music.

Bianca Hott

By MAX REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Bianca Hott (12) is a student who has excelled in her Cooper arts activities. Hott participates in choir, theater and color guard.

"I have been in choir all of my life, but I started to take it more seriously in high school," Hott said.

For choir, Hott said she enjoys the "fun events" and activities the most, like performing at Orchestra Hall and going to Texas.

"Some of my favorite memories are from after the concerts where we just talk and sing in the choir room," Hott said.

In choir, Hott has held various leadership roles, such as music librarian, robe manager and section leader.

As for theater, Hott joined in her junior year, taking part in the musical



Photo by BIANCA HOTT

Ragtime.

"I joined to see if I would like it and to try something new," Hott said. "It was a very welcoming atmosphere and I made some pretty great friends."

In the classroom, Hott's favorite subjects are AVID, choir, IB chemistry and history. Hott said AVID is one of her favorite classes because it helps her get ready for life "outside of high school" and develop an "open mindset."

Hott is still undecided about what college she would like to attend. However, she plans to major in nursing or pre-med. Hott said she would love to continue choir after high school, whether that is joining the college choir or minoring in music.

"I will continue choir after high school because it has always been a huge part of my life and I enjoy it very much," Hott said.

Lois Mokaya

By FAITH KING
Quill staff writer

Lois Mokaya (12) plays in the Cooper orchestra. She has been part of orchestra since she was in fourth grade.

"I started doing it because I thought it was really cool and something new to try out. I chose to play the violin because, compared to the other instruments, it was smaller and sounded way better to me," she said.

Mokaya said she has enjoyed the environment that exists in the orchestra.

"It is very positive and everyone builds each other up," she said.

Mokaya's favorite orchestra memory was performing at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis during the Fall Music Festival.

"This was an amazing opportunity because we got to perform in front of



Photo by LIFE TOUCH

hundreds of people. It's also the biggest stage I've personally played on, so it was really fun," she said.

For the remainder of the year, Mokaya will be playing in the school's Chamber Strings group.

"Chamber Strings is a small orchestra group that uses their music to perform for others and impact the community in a positive way," she said.

Outside of orchestra, Mokaya's favorite subjects are English and AVID.

"I like these classes because they have amazing teachers that have helped me prepare for my future," Mokaya said.

When she is not in school, Mokaya enjoys playing soccer, traveling and cooking.

For college, Mokaya plans on "majoring in nursing to become a nurse practitioner," she said.

Isabelle Peterson

By FAITH KING
Quill staff writer

Isabelle Peterson (12) plays the viola in the Philharmonic Orchestra at Cooper. Peterson has been involved in orchestra since she was in fourth grade.

"I decided to start playing the viola because my oldest brother had played it in middle school and I wanted to be just like him," she said. "My grandmother was also a huge inspiration to me since she played the piano and I wanted to play with her."

Peterson said that performing at concerts and hearing their hard work pay off is something she enjoys about orchestra. Meanwhile, she said one of her favorite memories involves performing at their Halloween concerts.

"I liked the fact that we got to dress up in costumes and perform Halloween



Photo by LIFE TOUCH

songs in front of little kids who would hopefully be inspired to join orchestra," she said.

In addition to orchestra, Peterson said her favorite school subject is English.

"I enjoy the orchestra due to the creative activities we get to do and getting to learn new music that I normally would have never listened to. I enjoy English because of getting to read different types of literature and genres of books," she said.

Peterson also has a few hobbies she enjoys.

"I spend a lot of my free time reading and writing," she said. "When I'm not doing that, I like going on drives with my friends exploring different locations to take photos."

After high school, Peterson plans on majoring in psychology or pre-law, although she is not sure yet which school she will attend.

Gamers should move to Arkham City

This 2011 release gives players the experience of living in Batman's world



Photo courtesy of ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS

The developers of *Batman: Arkham City* pack the game with countless Easter eggs for the true Batman fans.

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Batman is one of the most well-known comic book heroes in the world and his popularity has spawned several films, games, television shows and other projects across various forms of media. One exceptional release related to Batman was the 2011 video game *Batman: Arkham City*, which is a sequel to the highly praised 2009 video game *Batman: Arkham Asylum* developed by Rocksteady Studios. For a variety of reasons, I think it is the greatest Batman video game ever made.

The story is set several months after the events of *Arkham Asylum*, which had one of Batman's enemies, the Joker, take over the prison for the mentally unstable, Arkham Asylum, and enact a scheme in an attempt to release an army of performance-enhanced criminals into Gotham City. However, in that game, he was stopped by Batman. Now, in *Arkham City*, a whole chunk of Gotham has been walled-out into Arkham City, a giant citywide prison created by shady Dr. Hugo Strange to house the criminals. This raises the suspicions of Batman, who decides to investigate what Strange is really planning.

The first element for which *Arkham City* and the *Arkham* series of games deserves praise is that the world feels lived in. Based on clues within the game series, it appears that Batman is in his eleventh year as a crime fighter and almost all of his villains have been established or are introduced in these games. It is clear that the developers are massive Batman fans because of the countless number of Easter eggs they have placed throughout the

game. Rocksteady clearly wants the avid Batman fans to feel respected and even honored for doing all of their "research" on the Dark Knight. In effect, the world of Batman within the game feels real and it helps the players feel like they are part of that world.

Another one of *Arkham City*'s greatest strengths is its use of built-in Batman lore and its references to other forms of Batman media. There are certain points in my playing of the game when I catch something new that I really like. For example, I like how the police officers who speak about or acknowledge Batman's presence show that they respect him and think of him as a leader instead of an outlawed vigilante, which is how he is portrayed in

feels accurate to the character being used. In sections of the game when the player is not Batman, the combat and stealth abilities are scaled down and the battles are more difficult. This makes perfect sense in light of the fact that Batman would be the most well-prepared character out of them all.

My favorite gameplay encounters would have to be stealth missions, or "Predator," as they are called in the game. In these sequences, Batman is forced to use high vantage points and dark areas to hide from enemies and pick them off silently, one by one.

Another aspect of *Arkham City* that I really like is the pacing of the story. Every change in level or upgrade acquired along Batman's quest in the citywide prison feels natural and not forced. For the duration of the main story, Batman is running around the entirety of Arkham City to pretty much every major location in order to accomplish his goal. This creates fun encounters with villains such as the Joker, the Penguin, Mr. Freeze and many more.

A final aspect of the game I enjoy is the voice acting. The performances of Kevin Conroy as Batman and Mark Hamill as the Joker are spot on. Also perfect are the assorted supporting voice actors throughout the game.

In conclusion, *Arkham City* is an excellent game that features one of Batman's greatest stories. Whenever I look back at the game, I am going to remember my positive reactions to the lore built into the world of the game, the effective gameplay and the all-around pacing of the story. I give *Batman: Arkham City* five stars out of five. It is both a great Batman game and a great video game in general.

Quill Comics Corner

Uhhh...Working Title

By Davis Ruppert-Kan

Instead of the planned, several-issue exposition arc, due to the issue limit and school censoring, enjoy this watered-down version consisting of the other characters ranting about why they each respectively hate Kevin



Art staff makes the most of virtual learning

Hawks art teachers are transforming their usual curriculum to meet the needs of students working at home

By SANDY VUE
Quill staff writer

COVID-19 has made necessary some changes to the art curriculum and art teachers are developing ways to reach students in the new virtual environment.

Mr. Molitor who teaches Clay 1, Clay 2 and Sculpture has recreated his usual curriculum to do hand-building projects. The Clay curriculum is normally rooted in the process of teaching students how to make pottery on the kick wheels, which they do not have access to this year during distance learning.

“[We work on] subtractive sculpture as well as additive sculpture. Some examples include wire sculptures, cardboard sculptures, rolled paper sculptures, and carved foam and plaster,” Molitor said.

To help his students have a productive class experience, Molitor has clay bagged individually for students to pick up at school. In addition, he “also delivered clay for students who cannot arrange transportation during the hours that the school is open.” Molitor added that it would be easier if he could send tool kits to students at home, however the tool supply at Cooper was only designed for students to share in person, which means it isn’t accessible to them at home.

Working as an art teacher, Molitor finds that he has a mixture of good and bad moments throughout his days of distance learning. He said he rates his whole experience in distance learning at a three or four out of 10. One reason for that stems from his struggles with the energy levels of students while in the virtual classroom.

“Talking to a blank screen and waiting for typed responses is draining [and] asking students and families to bring clay, which can be quite messy, into their living space is also a significant challenge,” he said.

Another challenge Molitor

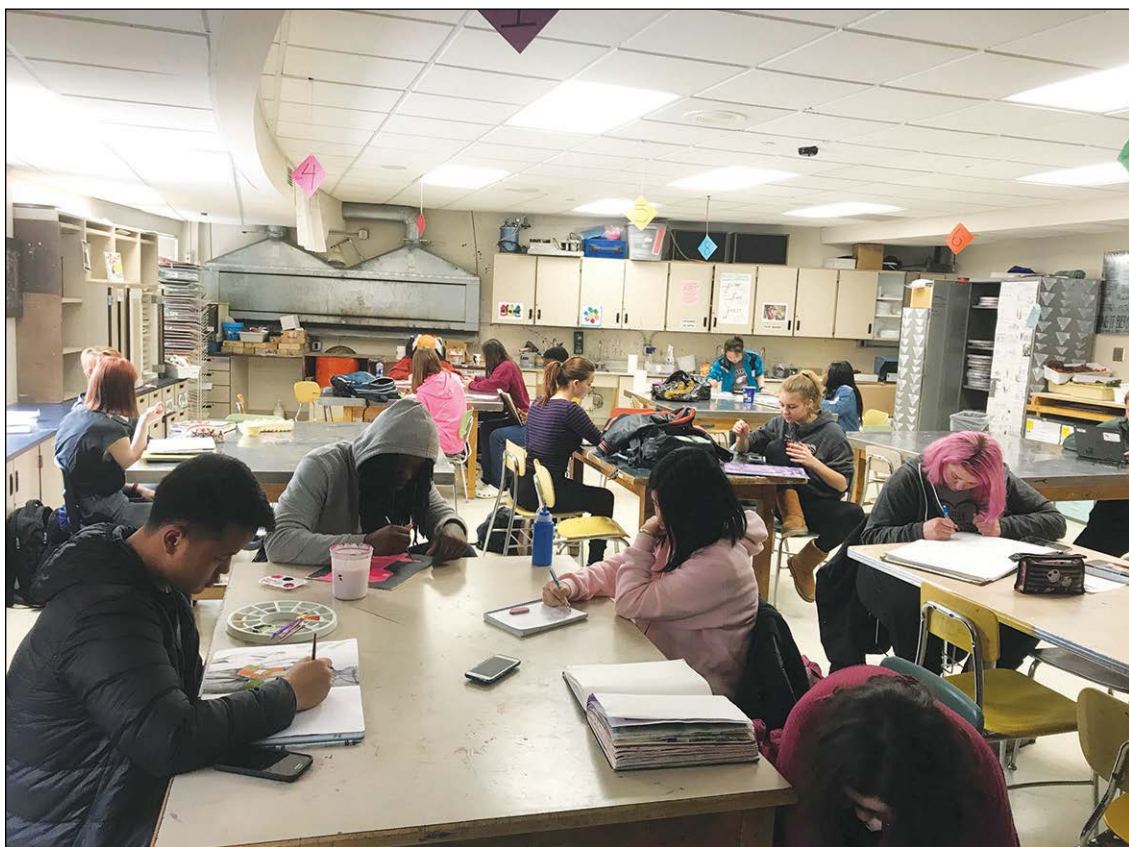


Photo by LOU VANG

The access to supplies students normally get during in-person learning is not possible this school year.

faces is that there is a difference in seeing a student’s artwork on camera and not in person.

“If they follow the steps [and] methods I have instructed, I can get a very good idea of how they did on the assignment,” he said.

Despite these challenges, Molitor said he has given a lot of thought and time to developing new ways to give his students more meaningful learning opportunities that do not “burden them with busy work.” Furthermore, he points out that he tries his best to keep the workload of his students within the 90-minute time-frame of class and makes sure to have private meetings with his students to help with their projects individually.

Also adjusting to distance learning is Ms. McNeil, who teaches Drawing 1. In her classes, McNeil said her students are learning observational drawing and improving their drawing accuracy. Along with this, they are also learning shading techniques

and other drawing standards. McNeil explained that she tries to have students use household items on their projects.

“For drawing, we have been exploring what household items one can use,” she said. “Pens, pencils, markers, whatever.”

Similar to Molitor, McNeil said she rates her experience with distance learning at a three or four out of 10.

“It has been pretty difficult. I’m new at Cooper and have never met any of my students in person. I miss seeing them enter the classroom and getting to ask about their lives,” she said.

Another thing that has been challenging for McNeil is not being able to provide all students with supplies.

“It’s also tricky not being able to provide all materials necessary: nice drawing paper, charcoals, fun kneading erasers. All the best parts of art,” McNeil said.

Furthermore, McNeil said it is a struggle to not see the progress

of her students’ artwork in person. She only gets to see the finished products and misses out on the highs and lows of the creation process.

“It’s difficult to encourage students to do more, try something else, or point out where fixes might need to be made,” she said.

To make sure her students get the most out of her class, McNeil said she spends time at the beginning of each period trying to get to know the students.

“Truthfully, we’ve started with just a lot of chit chat at the beginning of class, and that makes it feel good. It helps keep students engaged, too,” she said.

Overall, McNeil said she misses her students and looks forward to eventually seeing them in person.

“I just miss in-person class,” McNeil said. “I also believe that distance learning is keeping us safe and healthy. I really look forward to a time where we can gather again safely.”

Sports drama *All American* has wide appeal

Season three of the CW show is about to debut in late January 2021

By ARIEL CHRISTENSEN
Quill staff writer

The CW show *All American*, created by April Blair, is an excellent drama that captures what it is like to be in high school. This show first debuted in October 2018 and currently has two seasons with a third season on its way starting in January 2021. *All American* is a sports drama revolving around a main character named Spencer, who is a football player. The show is based on a true story that shows the challenges it takes to get to where you want in life. The show also makes you understand the importance of family and friends.

There are many important characters throughout the show. Spencer, the protagonist, grew up in a rough area known as Crenshaw, Los Angeles and attends Crenshaw High School. After working hard all his life at playing football, a coach from Beverly Hills High School notices him and gives him a life-changing offer to play for that team. When Spencer moves to Beverly Hills, everything changes and he meets new people. Coach Baker is an important character who has an impact on many people’s lives, including his own kids, Olivia and Jordan Baker. Throughout the story, you see the many challenges each character faces and the changes that happen.

One of the best scenes that demonstrates why this show is worth seeing takes place when the Beverly Hills football team plays against the Crenshaw football team. At this time, Spencer is playing for Beverly, so the game against Crenshaw means Spencer is facing his old teammates. During this scene, Chris, who is Spencer’s friend, ends up getting hit, which results in him being paralyzed. As you watch this unfold, the acting by everyone during this scene is incredible. Each person reacts differently and it’s a very emotional scene that makes viewers feel like they are right there with the characters.

Another great scene that highlights the good acting in the show is when Spencer, played by Daniel Ezra, and Jordan, played by Michael Evans Behling, get pulled over by the police. Coming from the very different areas of Beverly Hills and Crenshaw, respectively, Jordan and Spencer were taught different ways of how to act around police. During the scene, the police pull them over for no reason, and when the police are interrogating both of them, you can see how scared they are and it makes you scared for them. Ultimately, it becomes clear that the actions of the police are based on race and that becomes an important part of the story. The show deals with what is really going on in our society.

Another interesting aspect of the show is its focus on the character Layla, who is played by Greta Onieogou. She is an only child who lives in Beverly Hills with her dad, a music mogul who is always on tour. Added to the challenges of her dad’s frequent absences is the fact that Layla’s mom recently passed away. Layla goes through a lot being alone and ends up showing signs of depression. During one episode, she has a panic attack and trashes her whole house while her dad is gone. Onieogou’s acting in this sequence is perfect. After her dad eventually tells her that her mom had depression, Layla’s actions start to make sense, and Layla’s struggle with depression becomes an important part of the show’s plot.

I highly recommend *All American* for everyone. The series teaches viewers many life lessons about the importance of having family support and the importance of dealing with life’s difficulties. Programs like *All American* show viewers that they are not alone and that many other people deal with similar problems in life, no matter what their skin color or socio-economic status might be. I give *All American* five out of five stars.

Makoto Shinkai's *Weathering* is anime at its best

Changes in the weather serve as a compelling metaphor for the developing relationship between the film's main characters

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN
Quill staff writer

Hodaka Morishima is a teenager who runs away from his rural home to Tokyo. Upon arriving in Tokyo, he realizes that the city is experiencing an odd phenomenon of extra rain. He soon befriends Hina Amano, a girl who is able to manipulate the weather. Together, they start a business and she uses her power to clear the rain in limited areas for the citizens. This is the premise of the excellent 2019 film by Makoto Shinkai, *Weathering With You*.

This film is the most recent release from CoMix Wave Films Story, Inc., a studio responsible for producing stunning movies like *Your Name*, *The Garden of Words* and *Children Who Chase Lost Voices*. This studio is also known for the short films and feature-length movies created by Makoto Shinkai, who is arguably one of the best anime filmmakers in the business. Shinkai writes, directs and draws most of the elements of his films. He has a very specific style as a writer and artist that sets him apart from other animators. In *Weathering With You*, he combines the realism of his Tokyo setting with the use of various science fiction concepts. This film represents a huge advance from



Photo courtesy of BEIJING ENLIGHT PICTURES

The 2019 film features consistently excellent animation.

his last release, *Your Name*, while still making use some of the core components one expects from a Shinkai movie, such as teen romance and drama.

The first element of *Weathering With You* that deserves praise is the animation. I remember the awe I felt when I first sat down in the theater to watch this movie and experienced its animation. Makoto Shinkai always delivers when it comes to illustrating his movies and *Weathering With You* is no exception. The animation quality is especially apparent when it comes to the various forms of weather depicted in the film.

Also contributing to the incredible cinematic experience is the character development. Shinkai displays each character’s emotions through changes in the weather and uses this symbolism to communicate various messages to his audience. It is enjoyable seeing Hodaka and Hina try to make a living in Tokyo while also getting to see a bit of fighting action in the film. Additionally, throughout the film, there are several cameos by characters from Shinkai’s other films, which I think is cool.

Something worth mentioning is the fact that you can learn

some valuable lessons from the film. Some topics on display in the movie include the impact of cultural differences, the importance of perseverance, the value of hard work and the benefits of love. The overall message of the film is that one must find the inner strength to face life’s challenges. Although I thought this message was corny at first, it eventually was eye opening for me.

The soundtrack to *Weathering With You* is also amazing. Shinkai pairs excellent music with his beautiful animation to create an impressive mix. The music and colors used in the film are vibrant, which makes the film seem happy in contrast to the gloomy state Tokyo is in. Not surprisingly, this movie won the Japan Academy Prize for Outstanding Achievement in Music, not to mention the Japan Academy Prize for Animation of the Year and a Bandung Film Festival award for Imported Film.

In conclusion, I think *Weathering With You* is a must-see film. The storyline is unique and the animation is incredible. The movie teaches you about facing life’s challenges and finding your strengths. Additionally, the film’s pacing is good and it might get you emotional. You can watch this five-star movie on YouTube or on Blu-ray and DVD.

HITTING DEADLINES IMPORTANT DURING DISTANCE LEARNING continued from page 4

will apply to summatives, so students will procrastinate and take care of the final assignments well after the due date, usually suffering a reduction in points as a penalty. Much like finishing the formatives at the last minute, late work on summatives also tends to be of

low quality and does not properly reflect one’s skills and learning.

Clearly, late work is a problem at every school, not just Cooper. Moreover, late work issues are even more exaggerated this year due to distance learning. At the same

time, these realities don’t excuse the fact that students and teachers need to stick to the established deadlines for work. The only way to solve this problem and get students to start turning in their work on time is for teachers to start setting stricter rules on

when work will be turned in. If teachers decide to no longer accept any late work after its due date, it will encourage students to keep up with their school work. This is especially important as we wrap up first semester and make the transition into second semester.

DEBATE SQUAD

continued from page 2

smoothly. Delivering a speech is different because I no longer have to project my voice but I've had judge critiques about not making enough eye contact."

Another challenge pointed out by Tran is related to the technology itself. He said there have been some occasional issues with internet connectivity that have had an impact on tournaments.

"At every single debate event I've been to, at least one person has lost connection in their middle of their speech, which makes everyone wait up to five minutes for them to reconnect. A few times, the platform where we debate on has crashed and everyone lost connection. Sometimes, cameras just stop working during debate sessions, too," Tran said.

Despite these challenges, the debate team has looked to continue its successful ways during the 2020 season. Hawks debaters have had a history of success over the last two decades at the state and national level. In fact, Brynteson said the team "finished as the top-ranked debate school in the state" during the 2019 season. While the loss of some debaters this season due to the pandemic has made it unclear how the postseason competitions will go for the team, they have managed to maintain their winning ways during the regular season so far. For example, Connor Brynteson (10), who also competes in the Congressional Debate category, has scored several victories in 2020.

"I have taken first at the Minnetonka Invitational Tournament, I got first at the MDTA Jamboree and I placed 18th at the largest tournament of the year, the Miniapple, which is attended by students from across the nation," he said.

Despite the changes to how practices and meets are conducted, the debate season is still going forward with its usual end-of-season competitions. Mr. Brynteson said the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Section tournament and the National Speech and Debate Association National Qualifier both took place in December and more events will occur in late January 2021.

"Cooper students will still be able to participate in both state and national year-end events and we are excited to be able to keep that option for them," he said. "Hopefully, we will have students competing in January then at the MSHSL State Tournament and the National Tournament in June 2021."

Although it is unclear what format debate will take in 2021 based on the status of the pandemic, Tran encouraged students to consider getting involved. He said there are a collection of benefits to joining the debate team.

"Debate has made me a better speaker and presenter," he said. "It has also improved how I approach research and has taught me how to identify bias in sources. Through the research I've done in debate, I've learned so much about the current state of the United States domestically and its position in the world. It allows one to be really knowledgeable with current topics in the U.S. and the world. It also really helps with understanding civics and the structure of the United States government."

Tran added that the team welcomes members from any grade level and that first-time debaters are always supported when they become part of the squad.

"The debate we do at Cooper is very friendly to beginners and has no prerequisites for joining. First-year debaters often debate with other debaters at the same skill level, which makes learning debate comfortable," he said.

Riverdale remains relevant after five seasons

Based in the world of the original *Archie* comics, this CW series makes murder and mayhem entertaining

By ZACARI WATSON
Quill staff writer

Riverdale is a TV show on the CW that was created by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa and is produced by Aguirre-Sacasa, Greg Berlanti and Jon Goldwater. The show takes place in the world of the classic *Archie* comics, but it has been updated and transformed into a drama. The show is filmed in various locations in Vancouver, Canada. First released on January 26, 2017, *Riverdale* is heading into its fifth season in January 2021. If you have not yet given this great program a try, this may be the perfect time to do so.

The series starts off with the disappearance of Jason Blossom, the twin brother of Cheryl Blossom. After days of searching for him, two teens who are in the forest stumble across his body and see that he has been murdered. This opens up an investigation and starts the plot of the show. Now, Archie, Veronica, Betty and Jughead have to find out who killed Jason. They realize that it could be anyone, even the people closest to them.

The cast of the show is one reason for its appeal. Included in the cast are KJ Apa as Archie Andrews, Camila Mendes as Veronica Lodge, Cole Sprouse as Jughead Jones, Lili Reinhart as Betty Cooper and Madelaine Petsch as Cheryl Blossom.



Photo courtesy of THE CW

Riverdale stacks up mystery after mystery to keep longtime viewers wondering what will happen next.

Important supporting actors include Casey Scott as Kevin Keller, Vanessa Morgan as Toni Topaz, Luke Perry as Fred Andrews and Ashleigh Murray as Josie McCoy.

One of the many things that make *Riverdale* such a good show is the suspense in every episode. After watching the first episode, you find yourself wanting to know what happens next. Between the mystery, mayhem and murder, *Riverdale* is a show that will constantly have you on your feet.

Another impressive thing about the show is the character development. All the main characters go through a multitude of experiences that make them grow as people, but they never lose sight of who they are. Archie experience a lot of loss, but still tries to look after everyone else. Veronica gets betrayed by her family over and over again, but she always gets back up. Jughead and Betty both deal with drama in their families, but they keep each other grounded.

Although *Riverdale* is a

show of mystery, mayhem and murder, it's also a show about family, friends that have your back, and having a place to hang out after getting chased by various serial killers. Anyone interested in those things should definitely consider watching *Riverdale*, and if you do, try binge watching it before season five comes out. You don't want to miss it and you really don't want to start on one of the later seasons with no idea what's going on. Overall, *Riverdale* is a five-star series.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE BEING TESTED BY COVID continued from page 3

tion with friends and families is a must for relationships. But now that we are restricted, it's hard to maintain a stable relationship and or my sanity," she said.

According to Nguyen, COVID has separated her from her friends and family and she often finds it depressing and hard to maintain her relationships. However, she said she has no problem wearing a mask because it keeps everyone safe as we work to beat the virus.

Nguyen also said distance learning has been easy for her. Nguyen said that being in school with hundreds of kids can be very tiring; therefore, she thinks that taking a break from the world over the last few months has been beneficial for her.

"It made me focus more on my studies, my mental health, my overall health and just reflect and go at my own pace," she said.

However, Nguyen

does feel that she has lost many friendships and is missing out on the interactions she would normally be having with other people.

"Now it seems like everybody is busy in their own world trying to figure out their own agenda. I definitely feel disconnected from everyone and everything. I feel like I have stopped being social and checking up on people," she said.

When it comes to the relationships she has with the people she lives with, Nguyen said she feels like they have gone downhill. She notices that her family has more arguments and that they are feeling more agitated than

normal because everyone is stuck together. In addition, she said her relationship with her boyfriend has faced similar struggles.

"I think that everyone deserves personal space and distance for themselves and being cooped up together in the same area or house can get very conflictive," she said.

Nguyen recognizes that the relationship issues caused by COVID have affected her mental health severely.

"I feel at times that I am more depressed and don't have a will or desire to do anything because there's nothing to do," she said.

Another student who has had

position that would make the other person want to depend on me and that I'm always there for them if needed. The challenge is that I'm not always going to be there," he said.

Unlike Sailer and Nguyen, Xiong said he did not need the break from other people that COVID has caused because having social communication with other people is something that he misses. Xiong also said he misses the brotherhood he gets through participating in organized sports or the fun he used to have attending parties.

"I feel disconnected every day even from my family and close friends. Going to parties or small events with friends and fam-

A challenge Nyabuto has faced with his relationships is losing contact with the people in his life. Nyabuto observed that the relationship challenges caused by COVID can show you who your closest friends are. Other than being able to meet friends a couple times face to face while following health guidelines, Nyabuto said he has struggled to maintain his relationships.

Furthermore, just like Xiong, Nyabuto said he hates being alone and did not need this break from other people.

"Yes, I'm with family, but I really need to be around my friends to feel the most comfortable," he said.

What he misses most about his friendships is being able to go out without any restrictions on what you need to wear, when you can go, and how big of a group it can be. While Nyabuto said he has not lost any friendships, he has gotten more distant from his friends

due to COVID. At the same time, he said his relationships with his family members have not changed.

As these students demonstrate, there are many ways that COVID has impacted Cooper students and their relationships with other people. While it has given some students a chance to reflect on themselves and get closer to their families, it has caused other students to lose friendships or watch them go downhill. In every case, the challenges of COVID have taught students to recognize the value of relationships and what one must do to be able to build a strong and trusting bond with someone else.

"I feel disconnected every day even from my family and close friends. Going to parties or small events with friends and family puts a smile on my face, but I always feel disconnected," Timothy Xiong (11) said.

some challenges maintaining his relationships during COVID is Timothy Xiong (11). COVID has brought his family closer together, but it has also distanced him from his friends. What is more, his relationship with his girlfriend did not last during quarantine due to a lack of communication.

A relationship challenge Xiong has noticed is that people are not the same and they are having different experiences during COVID. As a result, while some people may need someone to be there for them, others may not. This has led to Xiong's main challenge, which he said is "being too nice."

"Being too nice puts me in a

ily puts a smile on my face, but I always feel disconnected," he said.

However, even though his relationships may be put on hold due to COVID, he is trying to focus on himself and do hobbies that he enjoys.

Like many other Cooper students, Jason Nyabuto (11) also feels it has been difficult to stay in contact with his peers or get together because of regulations placed on people to stop the spread of COVID.

"We can stay in contact over our devices, but you can only do it for so long before you start to miss seeing and being with a person face to face," he said.

PROPER SLEEP IS KEY DURING DISTANCE LEARNING continued from page 2

the proper rest they need.

1. Be consistent in your sleeping habits

The first thing students can do is be consistent about when they sleep. This means creating a proper schedule for your body to rest and wake up. Over time, your body will eventually get used to this schedule. Following your body clock, which is called the "circadian rhythm," will help you get better sleep.

2. Be careful about caffeine

Another tip is to avoid caffeine, especially later in the day.

Caffeine use can prevent you from falling asleep "when consumed in the afternoon or evening," according to "Invest in Your Rest."

3. Make time to exercise

Exercising is a good way to release some of the leftover energy you have left. It'll tire you and will help you fall asleep faster. It also reduces your chances of having insomnia, anxiety and depressive symptoms. According to "Invest in Your Rest," "exercise increases body temperature and the post-exercise decrease promotes falling asleep." However, much like caffeine use, one should avoid exer-

cising too late in the day.

4. Set up your bedroom to support good sleep

In order to get good sleep, a person must be comfortable and have a quiet and dark space to go to bed. "Invest in Your Rest" suggests having a cool room at around 60-68 degrees, which stimulates melatonin production and helps you fall asleep faster.

5. Avoid electronic devices at bed time

Most students have electronic devices in their bedrooms. Whether it is a Chromebook, a smart phone

or a television, there are many distractions that can make it harder to go to sleep. According to "Invest in Your Rest," noises, bright lights and electronics in the bedroom are "a recipe for disaster at bed time."

6. Try meditating before bed

Meditation and mindfulness have been getting more attention in recent years, especially since the start of the COVID pandemic. Research has shown that the calming impact of meditating before bed time can help people get better sleep. There are many apps students can download for free that can teach meditation and mindfulness techniques.

Football season ends with win

After nearly being canceled, the 2020 campaign saw the Hawks achieve a 4-3 record



Photo courtesy of MINNESOTA SCORE

Cooper claimed a 39-19 victory over Southwest in the section semifinal game before the playoffs were canceled.

By NOLAN ANDLER
Quill staff writer

The 2020 season for the Hawks football team will long be remembered as an unusual one. After going 6-2 last season, falling just short of an appearance in the state tournament following a loss in the Section 5A championship game, the Hawks came into the 2020 season with some great returning talent and rising talent on both sides of the ball, including two transfers from Benilde-St. Margaret's. But complicating things right away was the reality of COVID.

At first, the fall football season was going to be postponed to spring due to concerns about the virus. This decision caused a lot of anger and confusion for everyone on the team. The athletes were even unsure if there would ever be a season. As time went on, the MSHSL eventually decided to cancel the postponement and, instead, allow a shortened fall season for football. After a short preseason preparation, the first game finally took place on October 9 at Waconia.

Cooper vs. Waconia

The October 9 game against Waconia was a rematch from the 2019 season opener, during which the Hawks fell short to Waconia 14-12. This season, the game went the other direction with the Hawks earning a "W" by a score of 20-13. Although Cooper won, it wasn't always pretty. Waconia's rushing attack dominated the game and they pounded out 212 total rushing yards. In response, Cooper's quarterback Joe Russell (11) went 12/17 for 184 yards and two touchdowns, which was enough to hold off Waconia.

"Personally, the game against Waconia was kind of tough for me. I wasn't able to do much against their team but I kept pushing and played until the end," player Nico Easley (12) said. "As a team, we came out and fought. It was tough because we didn't get much practice as a team."

Cooper vs. Orono

The home opener on October 16 was another tough game against an Orono team that was improved from last season. It was a physical game that saw both defenses dominating the entire first half. The Cooper defense, led by the D line and Raheem Akindele (12), kept Orono out of the end zone and kept the game alive. However, in the second half, Orono was able to grow their lead to 15-0. In response, the Cooper offense found its mojo and they were able to cut the deficit to 15-13 in the fourth quarter. Later in that quarter, some self-inflicted wounds hurt Cooper when, on an option play, Orono's Graham Beltrand (12) found the team's star player Noah Arneson (12) deep for 64 yards and a touchdown to go ahead 22-13, which was the final

score. As a result, Cooper fell to a record of 1-1.

"The game against Orono was a fun game," Easley said. "The defense was able to execute and play the whole time. We gave a few touchdowns but we kept up and kept going."

Cooper vs. St. Louis Park

Week three brought an October 23 away game against St. Louis Park. This game was all Cooper as the Hawks dominated the overwhelmed Orioles. In fact, Cooper dominated in all phases of this game. On offense, Russell went 17/22 with 221 yards and two touchdowns, while on the ground, Camden Royal (11), Terrence Matthews (11) and Elvin North (12) each amassed some impressive rushing yards. In addition, wide receivers Dave Connors (11) finished

"The last game against Southwest was a awesome game," Nico Easley (12) said. "The team came out and played like we should have through the whole season. Seniors played their hearts out. The underclassmen came out and played like it was their last game as well."

with 68 total yards, Donte Williams (11) finished with 45 total yards and Jaxon Howard (10) finished with 48 total yards. While the final score was 41-20, it should be noted that 13 of St. Louis Park's points came during garbage time, so the game wasn't even that close.

"The game with St. Louis Park was a game full of excitement," Easley said. "It was a fast-paced game where we kept going and fought hard."

Cooper vs. Holy Angels

During week four, Cooper faced off against Holy Angels. This October 30 game was another case of costly mistakes that ultimately saw the Hawks lose. When Cooper jumped out to a 29-14 lead, it looked like they were going to dominate the entire game. One place that dominated was on the line of scrimmage. In fact, running back Royal had a monster game, pounding out 172 yards. However, Holy Angels had a player named Emmet Johnson (11), who, unfortunately for the Hawks, had an even better night, running for 281 yards and scoring all five of the team's touchdowns as they escaped with a 35-29 win.

"The game against Academy of Holy Angels was a game that we could have won," Easley said. "We just couldn't finish out the game."

Cooper vs. Jefferson

Cooper's November 6 game against Bloomington Jefferson was an example of the old saying that all that matters is the win. Cooper jumped out to a 21-0 early lead, but then Jefferson started to climb back,

eventually closing the gap to 21-19. Fortunately, Royal once again had a great game with 180 yards and a touchdown. Also helping were the 54 yards from Connors, the Hawks' leading receiver. Ultimately, Cooper was able to grind out a 33-26 win. In a season like 2020, this was an important win for the team.

"The team came out and played like they should have," Easley said.

Cooper vs. Benilde-St. Margaret's

Last year's game against Benilde-St. Margaret's was a 35-0 blow-out loss during Cooper's homecoming week. The Hawks played much better this time around during the week six matchup on November 11. Cooper's quarterback Russell had himself a night, going 22/30 for 327 yards, while wide receiver Williams had 10 receptions for 119 yards. Meanwhile, Royal had four

receptions for 109 yards and two touchdowns, despite not having a big night in total rushing yards. However, Benilde saw good performances from veteran running back William Petty (12), who went for 113 yards on 22 attempts, and quarterback Jackson Leischow (12), who went 10/16 for 267 yards and three touchdowns. Cooper went on to lose the game 36-34.

"We played as hard as we could but we just couldn't make the last touchdown to win," Easley said.

Cooper vs. Southwest

Cooper finished the regular season with a 3-3 record, which gave them the second seed in the section 5A playoffs. In the November 20 section semifinal game, Cooper faced Southwest. While it wasn't a pretty start, Cooper went into halftime with a 19-13 lead. The Hawks then cleaned up their play in the second half and thoroughly dominated Southwest with 528 total yards of offense and the defense shutting down the Southwest run game. The Hawks eventually put their stamp on this one, winning 39-19.

"The last game against Southwest was an awesome game," Easley said. "The team came out and played like we should have through the whole season. Seniors played their hearts out. The underclassmen came out and played like it was their last game as well."

Cooper vs. COVID

Unfortunately, the semifinal win was the last game of the season. Due to a dramatic rise in COVID cases across the state, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz had to make the call to end the fall football season early. Even though the Hawks did not get their chance at the state tournament, they went out in style. All the uncertainty and adversity the Hawks had to overcome in 2020 should only make them better heading into 2021.

"We came out and played as a family through the whole season," Easley said.

Cooper Competitors

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

Grace Hambike

By FAITH KING
Quill staff writer

Grace Hambike (12) runs cross country in the fall, competes in snowshoeing in the winter and takes part in track at in the spring.

Hambike has been snowshoeing competitively since the fourth grade.

"I picked up this sport after my elementary school took the fourth grade class skiing and snowshoeing," Hambike said.

What Hambike said she enjoys most about snowshoeing is the freedom that comes with the sport.

"To me, It feels like I am running in a cross country race," Hambike said.

Hambike said that snowshoeing can be difficult. In fact, her favorite snowshoeing memory was when she fell into a

pond her first time trying the sport.

"It was so embarrassing," she said.

During the fall, Hambike runs cross country. She was a team captain in 2020 and said the season "was awesome."

In the spring, Hambike runs track and serves as a team captain.

"Last season was a little weird because of COVID. We had about four practices before everything became virtual," she said.



Photo by LIFETOUGH

Hambike's favorite subjects in school include chemistry and math, although she said she "love[s] all [her] classes and teachers."

Hambike's outside-of-school hobbies include running, baking, cooking, reading, volunteering and sewing.

After high school, Hambike's plan is to major in either epidemiology or anatomy in college.

Makiah Burnaugh

By FAITH KING
Quill staff writer

Makiah Burnaugh (12) plays volleyball at Cooper in the fall and rugby in the spring. Burnaugh started playing volleyball in sixth grade.

"I got into it because I wanted to try something new. Basketball was not my strong suit, so I picked volleyball and have loved it ever since," Burnaugh said.

What Burnaugh has enjoyed most about the sport is learning how to be disciplined. She also said she likes being a role model for her team through her position as a co-captain.

"I hold a high leadership role and I love it. I feel that I bring a high level of positivity and energy to my team that is very contagious," she said.

According to Burnaugh, her favor-

ite volleyball memory has been spending time with her teammates during practice and all the after-game bus rides throughout the season.

During the spring, Burnaugh plays rugby. Although her 2020 season was canceled due to COVID-19, she looks forward to the potential of the upcoming season.

"I am excited to see what this season will hold for me," she said.

As for school, Burnaugh said her favorite subjects are English and history. Meanwhile, when it comes to hobbies, Burnaugh said she is a "shopaholic" who spends hours shopping in stores and online.



Photo by M. BURNAUGH

After high school, Burnaugh said she plans on attending a two-year college to save money and give herself "time to find a career [she] genuinely love[s]."

Trophina Mentoe

By YORDANOSE MULAT
Quill staff writer

Trophina Mentoe (12) plays volleyball in the fall and runs track in the spring. Mentoe has been playing volleyball since seventh grade.

"I picked this sport because many of my friends were playing it in middle school and I found a love for it," she said.

One thing Mentoe enjoys about volleyball is the "combination of individual work and teamwork."

"Everyone's actions contribute to the team as a whole. I also enjoy getting a great hit as a middle hitter," Mentoe said.

Mentoe has favorite memories in volleyball dating back to her freshman and junior years.

"My favorite memories are from freshman year. I loved sitting in the

bleachers cheering on the varsity team with my friends. Another memory is being moved up to varsity during my junior year. I also love when I get a great block or hit," she said.

In the spring, Mentoe runs track. The last season of track was canceled due to the pandemic.

"We had a week of practice until COVID-19 canceled the whole season," she said.

When it comes to academics, Mentoe enjoys English and history.

"I love manipulating letters to make beautiful words. I also love learning about history because knowing your history will tell you your future," Mentoe said.

As for college, Mentoe will attend North Carolina A&T State University and major in international business management or supply chain management.



Photo by LIFETOUGH

Abby King

By YORDANOSE MULAT
Quill staff writer

Abby King (12) plays girls tennis in the fall, she skied on the Nordic team last winter and she will be playing girls lacrosse in the spring. King has been playing tennis for two years.

"I started my junior year. I joined because I wanted to get out there and do a high school sport and Coach Navalta encouraged me to join tennis," she said.

One thing King enjoys about tennis is how "close-knit and welcoming the sport is."

"Everyone on the team is very helpful with tips and still makes you feel good even if you felt like you had an off day," King said.

King was one of the captains for tennis this season.

"[I enjoyed] being able to see all

the girls on the team improve over the season," she said.

Last winter, King participated in Nordic skiing.

"I got most improved for the season, which felt good because it was definitely a struggle at first," she said.

Although King will not be participating in Nordic this season because of her new job, she hopes to play girls lacrosse in the spring.

When it comes to academics, King's favorite class is AVID.

"Right now, we are getting help applying to colleges, which is very helpful," King said.

Outside of school, King's activities include "hanging out with family or friends and working."

As for college, King said she wants to major "in pre-physical therapy then get into a physical therapy school."

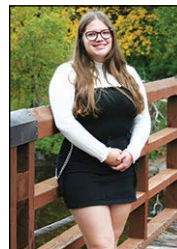


Photo by ABBY KING

NFL strategies to fight COVID are falling short

While games are still getting played, it is often with shorthanded teams

By ANDREW HAGGE
Quill staff writer

The 2020-2021 NFL season started with many anomalies. Due to COVID-19, the league had to figure out how to organize the season and whether they would keep teams in a bubble or allow teams to travel from city to city with some quarantining protocols in place. The NFL eventually decided to let teams play as normal and have fans in their stadiums based on the rules of the local governments. This has created some advantages as some teams' fans are allowed at games, while others can't have supporters in attendance.

Due to the decision to cancel the usual pre-season games, week one and two of the NFL season brought with them many injuries to well-known players. In fact, some of these players were even sidelined for the whole season after very little playing time. Our own Minnesota Viking Anthony Barr, for example, was injured early into the season with a pectoral muscle tear. Meanwhile, torn ACLs took down both Odell Beckham, Jr. and Saquon Barkley for the remainder of the season. As these injuries accumulated, more teams faced problems with having to find qualified players to fill positions.

What has hit teams harder than these injuries has been the many players testing positive for COVID-19. Not only do these positive tests affect the player who has the virus, they also affect the other people with whom they have had contact. Additionally, according to [sportingnews.com](https://www.sportingnews.com), players and personnel who are in close proximity with players get daily testing with faster results than typical tests. However, many problems have arisen with the faster tests. Some players have been getting false positive tests, which has sidelined them for a while until they get more reliable testing done.

Following positive tests, players have to sit out either 10 days after the test, or five days if the player is asymptomatic and has two negative nasal swab tests spaced out by at least 24 hours. If they are symptomatic, the player has to wait at least 10 days since they first experienced symptoms and 72 hours since their last signs of symptoms. This can sideline a player from out of nowhere, which could play a factor in who wins that week's game.

There are many ways that the NFL has dealt with this year's oddities. For instance, in order to address empty stadiums, the league decided to add fan noises into the background through speakers. Yes, it is weird, but it helps make the games a lot less abnormal while giving the players some cheers. Additionally, some stadiums have been adding cardboard cutouts of people. In fact, Denver has used cutouts of characters from *South Park* to help with the absence of fans.

The NFL also had to create a way to force players to be responsible outside of the playing field. They instituted a \$5,000 maximum fine if players are caught doing reckless activities during the pandemic, according to [sportingnews.com](https://www.sportingnews.com). Players who refuse to wear a mask will receive fines up to \$15,000 after repeated offenses. Individuals teams have even been willing to cut players who try to evade these rules, as was seen in Seattle after a player was caught trying to sneak in someone dressed to look like a player.

After the rescheduling and postponement of several games, including the Thanksgiving Day matchup between the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Baltimore Ravens, the hope is that the rest of the NFL season will go forward as planned. However, you never know with the rising number of COVID cases, which could cause possible changes to when teams play. Stay alert for an odd NFL postseason in the coming weeks given the number of players who are still testing positive around the league.

World Series provided a thrilling diversion

The matchup between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Tampa Bay Rays went to six engaging games



Photo courtesy of MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

The Los Angeles Dodgers take to the field to celebrate their World Series triumph, the first title for the team since 1981.

By NOLAN ANDLER
Quill staff writer

The 2020 World Series was a pretty interesting end to the season. The top two teams from both leagues, the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Tampa Bay Rays, both made the World Series, which seemed appropriate. However, they didn't have the easiest roads to get there, which one would not expect for the top-seeded teams.

First, during the American League Championship Series, the Rays faced the Houston Astros, who made an impressive playoff run just a year after their cheating scandal. The Rays barely held off the Astros by winning the final game in the best-of-seven series 4-2. Meanwhile, in the National League Championship Series, the Dodgers came back from a three-games-to-one deficit to edge out the Atlanta Braves 4-3 in game seven.

This set up what was clearly going to be a pretty fun World Series. Also making the series interesting was where it took place. Traditionally, the games would have taken place at each team's field: Dodger Stadium for the Dodgers and Tropicana Field for the Rays. However, due to the coronavirus, the whole series was held at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas so the teams could stay in a quarantined bubble and there could be fans in

attendance. Ultimately, this was a pretty intense series that had some huge storylines.

Game one was all Dodgers. With the final score of 8-3, it was a struggle for the Rays all game long. They had no answers for the power hitters of the Dodgers. Right fielder Mookie Betts and first baseman Max Muncy led the way for the Dodgers with two runs each. It was a perfect start to the World Series for Dodgers Manager Dave Roberts.

During game two, the Rays answered in a big way. They had a fast start in this one, jumping out to a 5-2 lead. Helping maintain this lead was Rays pitcher Blake Snell, who had a great performance. He shut down the Dodgers hitters and held them scoreless for four innings. In the end, the Rays held on to win 6-4 and tie the series at one game a piece.

Game three saw the momentum swing back to the Dodgers. A first inning homer by Justin Turner set the tone for this game as the Dodgers cruised to a 6-2 win. Star pitcher for the Dodgers Walker Buehler had a great game, holding the Rays to only three hits and one run. The only other run for the Rays came against reliever Kenley Jansen. The Dodgers reclaimed the series lead 2-1 and looked to take a commanding lead in the series heading into game four.

As it turned out, game four

developed into the baseball game of the year. It seemed as if both teams had answers for everything the other team threw at them. The Dodgers' Corey Seager and Justin Turner and Rays' Randy Arozarena and Kevin Keirmaier carried the load for both teams. However, in the end, it was the Rays' Brett Phillips who was the hero. Late in the game, Phillips came up to the plate when the Rays were down 7-6. With two outs and two men on base, Phillips got a base hit to center field and, with a little help from mistakes by the Dodgers, drove home the two base runners, Keirmaier and Arozarena. The Rays won and got the series back to 2-2. The momentum looked like it was starting to swing in the Rays' favor.

During game five, it was the Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw that took over. Kershaw is a player who always seemed to fold when it came to the postseason. However, he became clutch during this game, holding the Rays scoreless for four innings and setting the tone for the Dodgers' eventual 4-2 victory. In fact, the Rays only scored two runs in the third and were then shut out for the rest of the game. The Dodgers took the series lead back and had the World Series in their hands if they could win just one more game.

However, the Dodgers did not have an easy time in game six. They had to face the Rays'

ace Blake Snell, the pitcher who already shut down the Dodgers in game two. Snell had himself another amazing game, holding the Dodgers scoreless for five innings. However, the Rays' manager, Kevin Cash, made the controversial call to pull Snell out of the game in the sixth inning after he allowed his first two hits. This decision would cost them dearly as the Dodgers' Mookie Betts got a double that helped the team go up 2-1 and a home run that put them up 3-1 in the eighth inning. This sealed the deal for the Dodgers, who won their first World Series since 1981.

For the Dodgers' manager, Dave Roberts, this win was critical. The team's players and fans had to go through the Dodgers falling short in the World Series in 2017 and 2018, and then losing in the 2019 playoffs to eventual National League champions the Washington Nationals.

While the World Series win was great for the Dodgers, it produced some unexpected drama related to the coronavirus. It turned out the Dodgers third baseman Justin Turner learned in the middle of the game that he had tested positive for the coronavirus. Despite that, he came back out at the end of the game to celebrate with his teammates, which violated league protocols. Aside from that, it was a great World Series that should lead into a great 2021 season.

Columbus wins second crown during MLS playoffs

After Seattle defeated Minnesota 3-2 during the conference finals, they were downed by Columbus 3-0 in the championship

By ANDREW HAGGE
Quill staff writer

The 2020 Major League Soccer (MLS) season was an abnormal one due to the COVID pandemic. After the nail-biting season ended with Minnesota almost losing a home game to start the playoffs due to a tie, MLS moved toward the postseason. Much like the regular season, the postseason, which ran from late November to the championship game on December 12, took many unexpected twists and turns.

The eastern conference has two more teams than the western conference. With there being two extra teams in the eastern conference, four teams played for a chance to move into the playoff bracket with the play-in round. In this round, New England (the eighth seed) beat the Montreal Impact (the ninth seed), while Nashville (the seventh seed) beat Miami (the 10th seed). Those winners then moved on to play in the next round, which was

where most other teams were set in the playoffs.

Throughout the first round of the playoffs, there were only a few upsets, but those that took place were quite big considering the seeds of the affected teams. The biggest upset was when Philadelphia (the top seed) went up against New England. The New England Revolution managed to pull away with a 2-0 win against Philadelphia, despite them being the number one team in the eastern conference. Another unexpected outcome was when Nashville beat Toronto (the second seed) by one in a shut-out against a very consistent Toronto club.

Although it was not an upset, a big surprise in the first round was when the number-one seed, Kansas City, beat San Jose (the eighth seed) in a game in which San Jose managed to send Kansas City into penalty kicks. Kansas City managed to go 3-0 during the penalty kick phase.

During the second round, also known as the conference semifinals, fireworks exploded for some teams, while for others, they fizzled out. Minnesota (the fourth seed) took on Kansas City in the conference semifinals and won with a shocking 3-0 victory. This win was helped by Kevin Molino, who carried the Minnesota team on his back with multiple goals in two consecutive playoff games.

Meanwhile, New England managed to pull off another stunning victory by beating Orlando (the fourth seed) 3-1. Nashville then lost to Columbus (the third seed) by two in a game where they couldn't put in any goals. Finally, Seattle (the second seed) barely escaped the sixth-seed Dallas by a final of 1-0.

Next up were the conference finals, which ended with the top teams pulling away. In its match against Seattle, Minnesota went up 2-0, only to be stunned late in the game when

Seattle scored three goals in the last 18 minutes to steal victory from the Loons. Meanwhile, the amazing run of eighth-seed Seattle finally was stopped by Columbus, who won 1-0.

This brought around the long-awaited MLS final game, which was a matchup between Seattle from the western conference and Columbus from the eastern conference. Seattle was going for back-to-back championship wins while Columbus was there to win their second cup in club history. Columbus eventually scored in the 25th, 31st and 82nd minutes while managing to shut out Seattle for the entire 90 minutes.

This was a surprising finish compared to Seattle's game against Minnesota, during which they were able to come from behind and score three goals within the final 18 minutes. In the end, for the second time in Columbus' existence, they were able to hoist up the MLS cup for all to see in an amazing 3-0 showing.