



Marching Band wows crowd in final performance of season

Page 4

The Quill

Fri, Dec. 1, 2023 Vol. 60, No. 2

Students in clay classes embrace challenge of learning new skills

Page 6



ALSO INSIDE

News

New teachers adjust to Cooper
Whether they are new to the profession or just new to the building, there are many teachers in their first year as a part of the Hawk family
Page 2

News

Health mentor supports Hawks
Ms. Reese, who comes from the Annex Teen Clinic, can assist students who need guidance with sexual health issues
Page 2

Opinion

Drivers accept road work woes
Major streets near Cooper have been under construction for many months, disrupting the commute of Hawk drivers
Page 3

Variety

Audiences cheer for Fall Festival
The annual concert, which took place on the professional stage at Orchestra Hall, highlighted the talents of Robbinsdale music students
Page 5

Sports

Athletes raise funds for teams
The process of seasonal fundraising is an important part of a sports squad's ability to purchase equipment, participate in events
Page 8

BLOOD DRIVE COLLECTS RESOURCES FOR RED CROSS



Photo by AMANDA LIESER

Participating students, including Emmanuel Hernandez Arias (11), posed for photos and ate snacks after donating blood.

By LEO PEREZ
Quill staff writer

Cooper hosted an American Red Cross blood drive in the school auditorium on October 2. AVID Coordinator Ms. Lieser, who helped organize the event, said the drive was successful. “We had 49 people show up for their appoint-

ments and collected 30 units of blood for the Red Cross,” she said. Lieser has helped run the Cooper blood drives for the last six years. In earlier years, these events have taken place in the Community Gyms and on American Red Cross trucks. However, in more recent years, they have been held on the stage in the

Cooper auditorium. Students are informed about the blood drives through signs and Schoology posts. Lieser said volunteers are offered “a wonderful experience that saves lives.” In addition, she said they receive rewards for donating, such as snacks and a picture of them holding up signs that say, “I’m a Hero!”

These blood drives are held every four or five months and require testing to check if the individual is able to donate blood. Christian Vang (12) was one student who went to the blood drive. However, he said he was unable to donate blood because his blood pressure was over the limit by two points. In order to off-

The October 2 event saw the successful collection of 30 units of blood

set this, Vang said he found a friend who was willing to donate blood for him. Vang said he first found out about the blood drive a year ago on a Schoology post and felt like he “just wanted to do it.” Although he was unable to follow through, Vang stated that his friend “felt amazing after donating” and his experience was great. Another participant in the blood drive was Gian Ventura (12), who described the event as “very formal.” He said the donation process was quick and students were left with an “invigorated feeling” after donating. “[It was] like a rush of energy, even though they’ve been giving blood,” he said. Ventura said that students were treated well and only essential amounts of blood were taken, not enough to make a person feel “dazed or impaired.” Ventura added that the event was fulfilling and suggested that those who are in good health should also donate blood. Everyone who participated in the blood drive felt that they made a difference and wholeheartedly suggest that other students should donate. Lieser said she is

BLOOD DRIVE continues on page 7

Grab and Go breakfast process enters year two

First introduced to make sure students could get food during last year's late bus issues, the cart is still being used in 2023-2024

By HEATHER HOLZERSMITH
Quill staff writer

It is said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. The Grab and Go Breakfast Cart at Cooper serves breakfast to students for free before class every morning. The school first introduced the Grab and Go Breakfast Cart to decrease the number of tardy students last year due to the issues with late buses in the morning. “We decided to give this a try in hopes that it moves students along to class faster,” former Head Principal Mr. Herman said last year in a statement announcing the cart’s creation. As of this year, the late bus problem has been fixed, so there is one less need for the Grab and Go Breakfast Cart. Buses show up to Cooper on time at about 8:20 a.m. each morning, which gives students enough time to get breakfast if they choose to. One issue that is seen with the breakfast cart is the sheer amount of trash being left in the hallways and classrooms. When students are walking to class, there is often a mysterious bagel left in the corner of the hallway. How did it get there? While no one knows for sure, the breakfast cart is often the source from which that mysterious bagel came. “I always see some form of trash laying on the ground each morning,” Zachary Wittig (12) said. The hallways also often smell of food, which Wittig said is kind of off-putting. If breakfast was only held in the cafeteria like it formerly was, the smell would be contained within the cafeteria walls and the trash would more likely to be kept in the cafeteria as well. The cart may also lead to issues with rodents and pests. As winter nears, rodents look for a warm place to hunker down. What better place than a school filled with mysterious bagels laying on the ground in the hallways? Additionally, there is a lot of garbage being kicked around the hallways and classrooms due to the crowds of students. In some rooms, there are families of ants crawling around in the cracks of the trim that lines the walls of the classroom as they seek out food scraps.



Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

The line for the breakfast cart is a daily sight at the second floor Y. In light of these concerns, teachers have been expressing the importance of students cleaning up after themselves if they bring their breakfast to class. “I don’t mind when students eat their breakfast in class as long as they clean up after themselves,” English teacher Ms. Major stated. According to Major, it is crucial that students clean up after themselves or else there will be an increase of bacteria, insects and rodents scurrying around on the floor. Meanwhile, social studies teacher Mr. O’Brien said that he sometimes wonders if there are enough of the carts. Now that everyone qualifies for free

GRAB AND GO continues on page 7

Cooper offers resources to students struggling with drug use

There are multiple staff members at the building, district level who can help teens who are facing issues related to using chemicals

By DRIANA SANMARTIN
Quill staff writer

The issue of drug use at high schools is a significant concern and addressing it requires a comprehensive approach involving parents, teachers, administrators, law enforcement and students. When it comes to Cooper, there are many specific strategies and initiatives that building and district officials have been employing to tackle this problem and promote the well-being of students. Helping oversee chemical issues at a district level is Ms. Stout. She highlighted the fact that drug use among students has adverse effects that can impact their mood, cognition and emotional well-being. This leads to declining academic performance and heightened symptoms of various health condi-

tions, which underscores the urgency of addressing this issue to support students. “When students use mood-altering substances, we often see a decrease in attendance and grades, making graduation more challenging. Substance use also affects mental health and physical health and can worsen symptoms such as depression, anxiety [and] asthma. It can also create mental health concerns if there weren’t any mental health concerns before, like depression, anxiety or psychosis, as well as physical health concerns like asthma and bronchitis. Use in the school can also create very unsafe environments,” Stout said. When it comes to a building level, Ms. Wade, an educational assistant at Cooper, said the school has implemented a system to detect and address smoking and vaping issues among students. They use a beeper machine that senses smoke in the restroom stalls and

alerts the front office, enabling a timely response to such incidents. This technology serves as a proactive measure to curb smoking and vaping within the school premises and maintain a healthier and safer environment for students. “The concern is that students should partake in such activities outside of school and school hours. This approach allows them to focus on their education without interruptions, striking a balance between personal choices and academic responsibilities,” Wade said. One staff member who often works with students dealing with substance use issues is Ms. Mersy, Cooper’s social worker. Mersy explained that there are numerous accessible resources for students seeking help, guidance or even just a friendly conversation

DRUG USE continues on page 7

FAFSA helps seniors obtain college money

The system for getting federal student aid will soon be open to students nationwide



Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

Applying for federal financial aid takes place through a secure website.

By **DRIANA SANMARTIN**
Quill staff writer

The FAFSA is the gateway to financial aid for high school students aiming for a college education.

FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This is a vital tool for those students pursuing college or a higher education. The FAFSA is a free and readily accessible application that can offer crucial financial support for tuition, books and living expenses at universities, community colleges or vocational schools. Completing the FAFSA opens doors to various financial aid options, such as federal grants, loans and work-study programs.

“FAFSA is the largest provider of financial aid for students who wish to pursue a higher education, i.e. a two-year or four-year degree and beyond, within an accredited educational institution. It essentially assesses a student’s financial need so the government knows how much money to give to a student so they can pay off education expenses,” Ms. Yang, who works with Cooper’s Get Ready program, said.

According to Mr. Rosenblum in the College and Career Center (CCC), there is some essential information students need to know regarding the FAFSA. He said that completing the FAFSA is a vital step toward accessing financial support for higher education. Additionally, he reminded students that the process now requires obtaining a free FSA ID for both students and their parents. The FSA ID will serve as the key to the FAFSA application once it becomes available in December 2023 or January 2024.

“You need to fill out the FAFSA form to allow you to receive any money for college. The process is currently being overhauled and both you and your parents must sign up for a free FSA ID, which is step one. Once the FAFSA application is available in December or January, you and your parents will use the FSA ID to fill out the FAFSA application,” Rosenblum said.

Another person who consults with seniors about the FAFSA is Ms. Walters, the 12th grade counselor. She highlighted key considerations for students regarding the FAFSA application. In addition to the need for a FSA ID, Walters emphasized the application’s straightforward nature, and pointed out potential changes this year, specifically relevant to those with prior FAFSA experience.

“You can send [the FAFSA] to up to 20 colleges, and you can do that even if you haven’t applied yet. There are some changes this year, but that would only be apparent if you have filled it out before,” Walters said.

For seniors starting the FAFSA process, Yang highlighted the fact that students can seek support from the Get Ready office, the CCC and grade-level counselors. Additionally, Yang emphasized that students with residency status challenges can turn to Get Ready for guidance regarding the MN Dream Act, which provides financial aid for undocumented students attending Minnesota public colleges and universities.

“To file the FAFSA, students can go to the CCC or their counselor for help. Get Ready is also here to help. Get Ready will be hosting FAFSA workshops during HLL starting January when FAFSA opens. There will be FSA IDs, creating a FAFSA account and workshops in HLL in December with Get Ready,” Yang said.

New teachers adjusting to life at Cooper

Whether they are new to the profession or just new to the building, there are many teachers in their first year as a Hawk

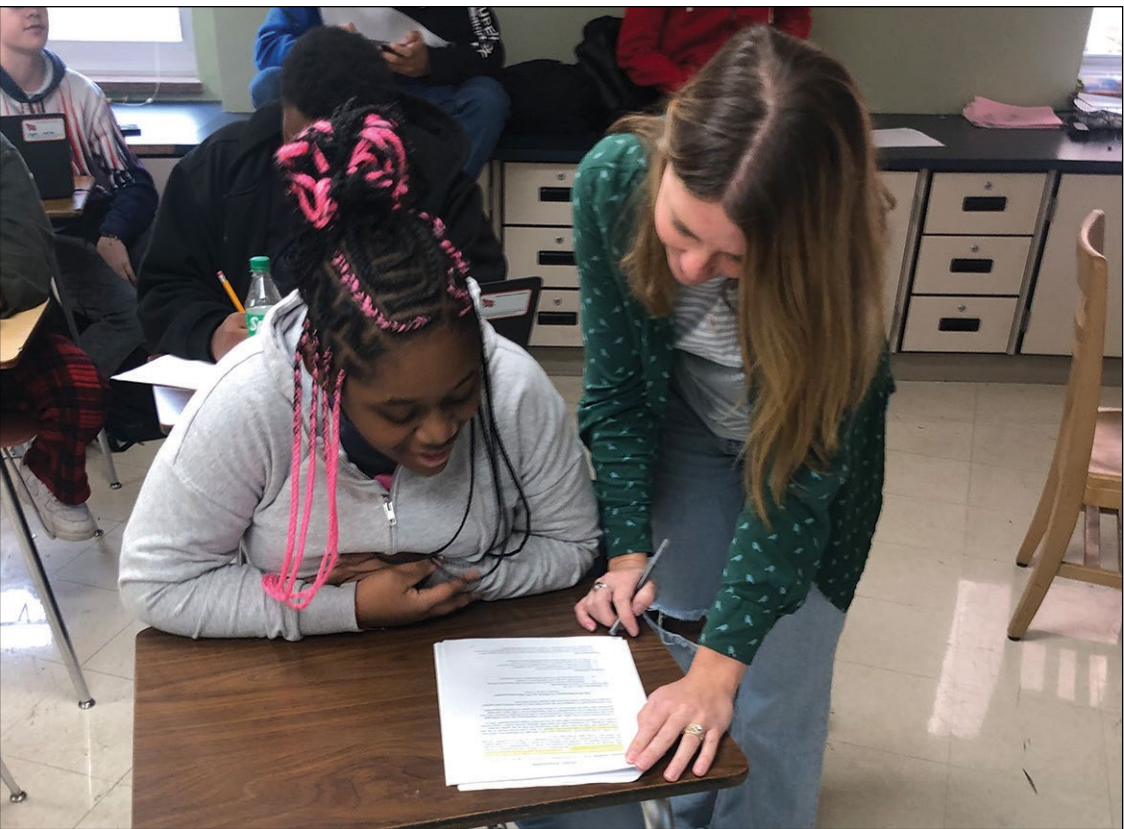


Photo by NOAH PLAHN

While Ms. Wavra is a brand new member of Cooper’s English department this year, she is not new to teaching.

By **NOAH PLAHN**
Quill staff writer

Cooper’s teaching staff has experienced a rocky road of highs and lows this year. The school has had multiple open, unfilled positions due to teachers being temporarily out or quitting altogether. Luckily, some new faces have joined the school workforce this year and are off to a quick start. Four teachers new to Cooper this year who are transitioning into being a Hawk are Ms. Dear, Ms. Wavra, Mr. Spetsieris and Ms. Enselein.

Ms. Dear

Heading into the school year, the English department needed to fill multiple teaching positions. Cooper found one candidate in Dear, who now teaches ninth and 11th grade classes.

Before coming to Cooper, Dear grew up in Iowa but wanted to leave the Midwest lifestyle and move to a bigger city. She eventually moved to Boston, where she majored in Archeology and Anthropology at Boston University. During school, Dear studied abroad in Guatemala before moving back to the United States, where she found herself in New York along with a group of friends.

Dear said she decided then to join an AmeriCorps program named FoodCorps that worked to make schools healthier for young children. She then was hired by the nonprofit she served with, Bubble Foun-

dation, to be their education coordinator and, eventually, program manager.

Teaching food and garden education for that organization sparked a desire in Dear to spend more time in the classroom, so Dear decided to become a full-time teacher, which meant she would have to return to school. Dear took a gap year before going to graduate school at Harvard University.

Following this, she decided to move to Minnesota due to having family in both Iowa and Wisconsin. She started her teaching career at Tartan High School, primarily teaching ninth and 10th grade. Following three years at Tartan, Dear moved, and with that, she needed a new school at which to teach, which is what brought her to Cooper.

“It’s been ups and downs for sure,” she said. “I think anytime you’re starting in a new district at a new school, you’re just learning a lot of new processes. Each district and each school has their own way of doing things, so there’s definitely a steep learning curve, but in terms of getting adjusted to classes and things, I’m still teaching high school English. There’s a lot of similarities between what I’ve been doing the last few years. It’s been nice to dive back into content and working with kids. Just getting to know the Cooper community has been great,” she said.

Dear said a significant difference between Cooper and her past school that has been difficult to adjust to involves the

Modern Classroom system.

“I’m not trained in Modern Classroom. A lot of teachers here are using that format, and so working through and translating that curriculum that is built for that format into a more traditional teaching format has definitely been a challenge. I am in the Modern Classroom training, so coming up at the end of this semester and the beginning of this next semester, I’ll be able to take advantage of the fact that Cooper supports this really cool modern learning project, but as of right now, translating those materials just takes a lot of time,” she said.

Although there are some tribulations in this transition, Dear said there have also been triumphs.

“[I have enjoyed] building relationships with my colleagues and students. I think we’re at the time of year where I’ve established a decent amount of trust with students and them with me. I’m starting to see kids, in their terms, lock in and kind of tap into their English work, get used to their routine, get used to me and what’s required, and so I love seeing that, and I love being able to celebrate that and see their work and their diligence pay off and the trust that we’ve built show up academically,” she said.

Due to her expansive resume, upon moving, the choices in schools were plentiful. In the end, Dear said she is glad she chose Cooper.

“I really appreciate Cooper’s strong

values in terms of the HAWK values. I don’t think every school can explicitly name their values as well as Cooper does, so I really appreciate that. I really love that Cooper has an IB program. I love that it really focuses on teaching students to think critically, and be able to express their ideas well, and also think outside of themselves in terms of thinking in a global context. I just feel that Cooper has a really strong and positive staff and culture. A lot of schools have kind of a disconnect between administration and the teaching staff, and I really don’t feel that as much here. It feels like we’re all on the same team,” she said.

As she plans for the rest of this school year, Dear has several goals.

“I am super excited to get to know the Cooper community. On an English front, I love having kids think critically about texts and about their relationship to those texts. On a more relationship-building front, I love building community in my classrooms, so that would be something I’m looking forward to as we get further and further into the year and get to know one another,” she said.

Ms. Wavra

Another newly hired English teacher is Ms. Wavra. Although new to Cooper, Wavra is a veteran in the teaching realm. She taught for eight years at West St. Paul and, before that, two years at Richfield. Following this, she left her teaching career for six years to stay home with her daughters, during which time she did freelance writing and editing. She spent the last two years at Fridley, teaching 10th and 11th grade within the IB program.

This year, Wavra decided to switch to Cooper instead of Fridley.

“It’s much closer to my house, and I heard good things. Everything turned out to be true. I really liked when I met the English department during my interview with Ms. Kope, [Ms. Eisfelder] and [Mr.] Nelson. I just got a really good vibe. They seemed like really good people to work with. Just a solid crew,” she said.

According to Wavra, the transition into being at a new school has gone well so far.

“I feel supported. Everyone is great. If I have a question, there’s people there that will answer it. No one expected me to know everything right away. I started with Ms. Dear, and we are kind of helping each other through this first year together. The transition has been smooth. It’s been really fun,” Wavra said.

One highlight Wavra pointed out

NEW TEACHERS
continues on page 5

Health mentor hopes to support all Hawk students

Ms. Reese, who comes from the Annex Teen Clinic, can assist students who need guidance with sexual health issues

By **MILO ATHIAS FINN**
Quill staff writer

Cooper recently welcomed Ms. Reese as the school’s new health mentor in Room 145B. Reese, who comes from the Annex Teen Clinic, is experienced in her field, possessing a background in forensic psychology and victim advocacy. Reese said she provides a number of services to Cooper students.

“Students can come to my office to get menstrual products, safe sex supplies, educational information and some random fun things sometimes too. Students can request a one-on-one meeting with me, where we can talk about many different topics from consent, body anatomy, boundary setting, LGBTQIA+ and much more. While it’s not done from my office, I will also be teaching health classes during the winter and spring semesters,” Reese said.

Reese also has an after-school internship group called Youth Leadership Council (YLC), which gives students who are passionate about sexual health and community advocacy a chance to express their desires. Information about this group can be found in Reese’s office but informational fliers are displayed on bulletin boards throughout the school.

Reese said a health mentor’s presence can bring benefits to students.

“One way the health mentor benefits students is by having access to information and resources on the spot, thus making them more accessible. I can also help students feel confident in making decisions about their sexual health and life choices. I am here as a resource and support person who can



Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

Ms. Reese is located in room 145B, which is on the first floor near the gyms.

connect students with further assistance,” Reese said.

Reese’s office hours on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays are especially convenient to students as it gives them a safe space to handle personal matters with comfort and security. For example, due to society’s historical patriarchal background, she said the topic of menstrual products has been somewhat of a taboo despite the fact that women make up half of the world’s population. Menstruation is a natural occurrence, and products like tampons and pads, which are available in her office, can provide comfort for those in need.

Reese also offers condoms and other reproductive products. Although condoms are relatively inexpensive, free condoms can be helpful for those struggling with their financial situation.

Although she is currently at Cooper three days a week, Reese added

that her schedule will be changing, which will soon allow her to be in the building four days a week. With Reese’s schedule becoming more accessible, she advises students to schedule appointments via a Google form that is connected to a QR code posted on the door to her room. If it is an absolute emergency and she is not in her office, she said text and email are also permissible ways to get in touch.

Reese said there are a few frequent reasons why students typically visit her office.

“Lately, I get lots of questions about period cycle tracking, birth control methods, signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships and questions about boundary setting,” Reese said.

Reese said she enjoys these meetings with students because they connect with her motivations for getting into this line of work.

“I have a passion for advocacy and awareness and working with

youth. It is important to me that young people have the tools and skills to not only navigate difficult situations, but also to build safety within healthy relationships. I want young people to feel confident in their decision-making skills as they are the masters of their own lives and experiences. This is my first time doing this kind of work in an educational setting, but I am very excited about this new journey,” Reese said.

Reese’s optimistic approach to improving young adults’ lives reveals itself in her work. She said it is important that students have a safe haven to learn to maintain healthy relationships, ask questions and learn bodily anatomy. If students are more educated about their bodies, they might be less likely to carry certain stigmas regarding an individual’s sexual health.

Reese urges Cooper students to visit her room and utilize her resources.

“My office is a judgment-free space. You can come as you are and who you are. To any student nervous to come in, that’s okay. Feel free to pass by my door as many times as you like before you come in, but know all are welcome. I am an ally to all identities and communities and my sole purpose here is to provide you all with proper sex education, access to resources and a connection to an amazing low-to-no-cost clinic. While I am a mandated reporter, many topics discussed in my office remain confidential, and will never leave that room unless you, the student, want me to share the information. I am here to support you, the students of Cooper, and to amplify your voices,” Reese said.

Road work is irritating but necessary

Major streets near Cooper have been under construction for many months, disrupting the commute of Hawk drivers



Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

The intersection of Boone Ave. N. and 42nd Ave. N. just reopened the weekend of November 4.

By HEATHER HOLZERSMITH
Quill staff writer

No matter where you are headed in Minnesota, there seems to be at least one road under construction. During the months of May through October, construction is at its peak and won't stop until the cold months of December through March come.

All the students at Cooper either take the bus, drive or get driven to school. However, construction

shuts down important roads people use every day to get to the school. A prime example is the intersection of Winnetka and 42nd Avenue. That intersection is needed for many people to get to and from school every day but it underwent many weeks of sidewalk repair that disturbed the flow of traffic.

The application of road maintenance can be dramatic and immediate, impacting our lifestyle. It is irritating to have to navigate around construction. Roads that

are commonly used may get closed down before you have time to prepare an alternative route. As Cooper students who use Winnetka or 42nd Avenue have discovered, road construction is very hard to deal with, especially when commonly used roads are closed for months.

While construction may seem like a huge waste of time, it actually is for the better and keeps our public places looking nice and functionally accessible. Over the

winter, the concrete expands and contracts from the cold, causing cracks and dents in the concrete and leaving behind things like big potholes or unlevelled sewer covers. The repair of our roads reduces the risk of car accidents and makes transportation safer. Most of our tax dollars go to such things as road infrastructure. A good transportation network is crucial to getting to your job, school or health care.

Road restoration also saves money. Smooth rides are more comfortable to travel over, and transportation is consistently faster. This means that goods or services arrive at their destination intact plus on time. There is less vehicle damage from surface defects such as potholes. As a result, the owners of vehicles have reduced costs, freeing some income to use for other things.

Road construction is a very important public asset. Society relies on effective transportation systems to get to where they need to go. It is crucial that the development of a community is safe and functional because a country's economic growth depends on it.

If you stopped and thought about how substandard life would be without paved roads, you would quickly realize how vital an updated and consistently repaired transportation system really is. To keep the existing and future highways, roads and freeways in good condition means we need to annually deal with road maintenance.

From the Editors

Distracted driving poses real danger to teen motorists

Recent statistics reinforce the importance of paying attention to the road while driving

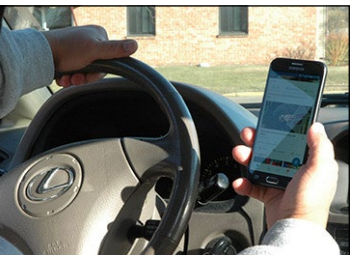


Photo by DOMINIQUE WILLIS

Checking a phone can divert one's focus from dangerous traffic.

The Office of Traffic Safety reported in 2023 that more than 32,000 crashes in Minnesota between 2018-2022 were caused by distracted driving. That amounts to one in every 11 accidents. These statistics underscore the need for drivers to put away their phones when behind the steering wheel.

Distracted drivers are the worst. Instead of following the rules of driving, they do things that make the roads unsafe. When you text or make a phone call while driving, you put other drivers at risk.

Being a teenager and driving for the first time makes the issue of distracted driving important to all high school students. We all want to be safe, but young drivers are more prone to being distracted, which puts everyone at risk. There are many teens who find themselves thinking twice about driving. It scares many new drivers because of the crashes they see on the roads caused by distractions like phones.

Of course, there are benefits to driving as a teen. You can help your family get groceries and don't need to ask for rides from your parents. You also can get yourself to school without needing to take public transit.

On the other hand, teen drivers are young and can get distracted easily by their phones. That causes many crashes, which can be deadly. Is a text or a phone call really that important to answer while you are on the road? Just think to yourself while you are driving: Is it really smart to be looking at your device?

Overall, teens and adults should not text and drive. We all need to be very aware of our surroundings while driving and cautious about our mobile phones. Don't be selfish. Be aware of your attention span and keep your focus on the road and your surroundings.

Correction

The November 1 issue of *The Quill* featured the story "New state policy leads to removal of school resource officers." This article covered the recent changes in the relationships between Minnesota schools and their local police departments following newly passed legislation limiting the actions school resource officers can take when using force against students in a school setting.

Due to the legislation, a majority of Minnesota police departments that had officers placed in local schools decided to remove those officers until the wording of the new legislation is clarified. Much like these other police departments, the New Hope Police Department chose to remove their school resource officers from Cooper until changes come to the legislation.

Some phrasing in the *Quill* story about this process made it unclear whether it was the school district or the police departments that were making the decisions to remove the officers. We apologize to our readers if there was any confusion.

New phone policy has positive intentions

Although they may grumble when asked to put away their devices, students should benefit academically from the changed rules

By AKEYA EASLEY
Quill staff writer

The recent introduction of the no-phone policy within Robbinsdale Area Public Schools has brought diverse reactions and I find my own thoughts on the matter rather mixed. On one hand, the policy is intended to enhance classroom focus, yet, on the other, it may be perceived as overly harsh.

The motivation behind this policy is clear: addressing classroom distractions caused by mobile devices. Many of us have been lured into checking our social media feeds when we should be focused on lessons. Nonetheless, it's crucial to acknowledge that phones can serve as educational tools. They allow students to do research, collaborate on projects and communicate with peers and family. Therefore, a complete ban appears somewhat excessive.

Efforts to enforce this policy are notable, as they reflect actual concern for our education. However, it's understandable to recognize that some students may disregard the rules regardless of strict enforcement, showing the policy at times to be ineffective.

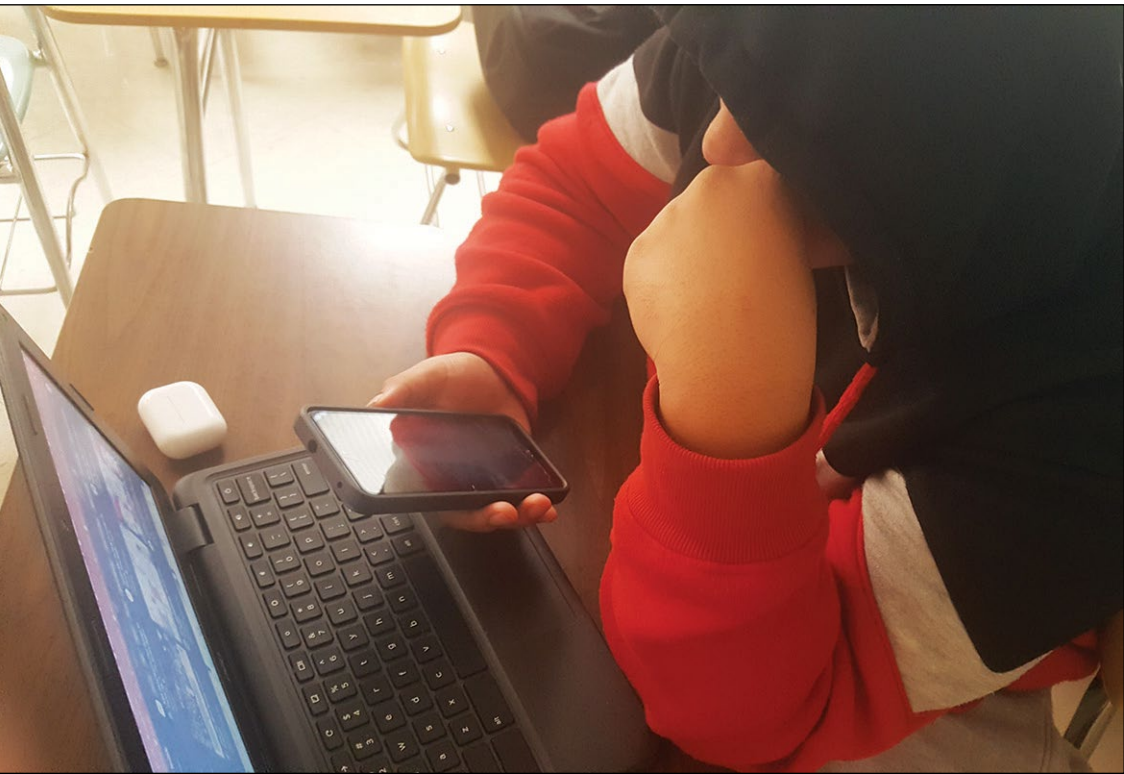


Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

Some students are still struggling with the temptation to keep checking their phones during class time.

Rather than focusing solely on enforcement, it might be useful to consider an educational approach that emphasizes responsible phone usage.

As we continue to consider the implications of the policy, it is important to raise questions about its long-term effects. While

a phone ban may contribute to improved classroom attentiveness, concerns remain about its potential impact on creativity and independent thinking.

It is for this reason that an ongoing dialogue involving students, parents and educators is essential. After all, school is not

just about subjects; it's where we acquire the skills to engage with technology responsibly. My opinion remains conflicted, and open discussions are crucial to strike the right balance, particularly when some students are persisting in disregarding the rules.

Repercussions of the pandemic are still being felt

Although a majority of Americans are living their lives without thinking about COVID, the impact of the illness has not gone away

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Governments across the world declared the COVID-19 outbreak as an official pandemic in March 2020. This move sent the world into a global lockdown. Quarantines and restrictions were established as countries across the world began to close their borders.

The pandemic affected many people's lives and jobs. Economic growth evaporated due to the lack of trade and many businesses failed, which left many families suffering from bankruptcy. Meanwhile, many people with weaker constitutions fell ill and passed away, young and old alike. The effects of the pandemic were felt by everyone.

Even after three years, many countries are still in the midst of reconstruction. Businesses are still recovering and economic trades are now heavily regulated. Moreover,

according to the CDC, COVID is still the third-leading cause of death in the U.S. So this raises the question: Are we really out of the pandemic or are we still in it?

Personally, I believe that we are out of the pandemic, but the pandemic is still not out of us. Many of our lives have been forever altered due to the pandemic.

Among the people still feeling the impact of the pandemic are those who have had loved ones pass away, those who have suffered from the chaos of the street riots and looting, those who have dealt with the violence of inequality on a daily basis, those who have coexisted with poverty and those who were left behind to deal with the aftermath of it all.

If you live in or near a city like Minneapolis, I'm sure you have seen the collapse of businesses, the flaws that many corporations have, the failure of insurance companies

and the broken promises that stem back to the pandemic.

If you live in the suburbs, I'm sure you have seen the worst of people who profited from the chaos and took advantage of others in the midst of the pandemic. The pandemic-related social unrest saw people retaliating with so-called justice or making hollow speeches as people were driven to despair and the brink of death.

If you live in the countryside, I'm sure you have witnessed the agonizing solitude of those you couldn't help and the hellscape as everything around you fell apart, leaving you alone to deal with the many consequences of the pandemic's aftermath.

Whatever you experienced or wherever you were, I'm sure we all have a unique and personal side of the pandemic story. The reconstruction is still occurring with no news of when progress will lead to com-

pletion. We still don't know when all businesses will recover their losses from those months.

In retrospect, the pandemic was a great reminder to everyone that life can change in an instant. In some ways, we were lucky. If a virus outbreak much more deadly than COVID-19 had occurred, who knows what the disastrous outcome could've been.

I suppose the best advice post-pandemic is to just keep going. It's not healthy to keep on lingering on something negative like the pandemic experience. Sometimes you have to push some things out of your mind to make more room for the future. Just remember: when you respond positively to something negative, you're conditioning your mind to stay positive when things get hard. I hope those who have dealt with everything related to the pandemic can understand that.

Central mystery in *Pretty Dead* is pretty lacking

Some interesting characters do not make up for a plot that fails to thrill the reader

By AMARILYS BALMACEDA
Quill staff writer

Pretty Dead Queens by Alexa Donne was published in October 2022. It is a good book if you are looking for some teenage drama. *Pretty Dead Queens* gives you the sensation of being in high school thanks to the tense feelings it creates and the day-to-day situations it presents. While this is a decent book if you are looking for mystery, there are aspects to the story that will lead some readers to think this is not a mystery novel at all.

Pretty Dead Queens takes place in a small town in California, where the main character, Cecelia, goes to live with her famous grandmother after her mom dies. She has to adapt herself to a new life and friends now that she is in California.

Cecelia's grandmother is a famous writer who wrote a book about a murder that actually happened in her high school during the past. Now, in the present, the homecoming queen in Cecelia's school is found dead, and Cecelia feels the need to find the killer. As she begins to investigate this new mystery, she can trust no one because even her closest friends might be connected to the crime.

If you are looking for a mystery with an interesting plot, I don't recommend you read this book. I was expecting a thrilling mystery in the very beginning, but as I read through the first chapter, which serves as an overview that allows readers to get to know the main character and her backstory, it doesn't make you want to keep reading the book. As you continue going into the story, the author just keeps letting you know about the main character's emotions and how she feels about her new life.

Given the fact that Cecelia's friends are all written in the same, one-dimensional way and that most of them are white, blond and rich guys, I didn't feel connected to the pain of the Cecelia character. Moreover, the book featured a school fight or something similar every five chapters, which did not create a lot of tension in the story. As a result, I didn't see the mystery in the novel. Instead, it feels more like a teenage drama.

At the same time, there are some well-written characters who occasionally make the book a really good read. One is Cecelia's famous grandmother. This character's past story and how she builds a relationship with her granddaughter despite the weight from the past are two highlights of the book. It was compelling to see how she went through the process of being a mother in the past and now she has to do it again with Cecelia. Her story is built to make you feel the presence of someone who has control and authority over the past situations as well as the present reality of her home and her granddaughter, for whom she serves as a mother figure.

On the other hand, even though some characters like the grandmother are well written, the dialogue that she and other characters engage in is sometimes hard to read. That is because everything in the book is told from the first person point of view. Due to this narrative approach and how the book is formatted, it often feels like you are reading an essay instead of an actual novel, which might be why the interesting moments do not feel interesting. While I think that the conversation sequences between characters could be really interesting, the way the narrative is formatted just ruins the experience.

Pretty Dead Queens is a good story for anyone who wants to read a teen drama set in a high school. Although there is a murder involved in the plot, that element is not a highlight of the book. If you want a novel that catches you from the beginning with an interesting mystery, this is not the book for you. My personal rating of *Pretty Dead Queens* is two out five stars.

Marching band wows in final '23 show

The season-ending indoor concert, which took place on November 4, brought music lovers to the Cooper auditorium



Photo by NOAH PLAHN

According to band instructor Mr. Hahn, the musicians had a lot of say in what songs the group performed for their final show of the year.

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

Following a win-or-go-home loss for the Cooper Hawks football team at the hands of Armstrong in the section championship game, the marching band was left without a squad to cheer for. However, the marching band still had one final task. On November 4, the group participated in the 8th Annual Indoor Marching Band Concert. This event, which took place in the Cooper auditorium, featured songs by Queen, Taylor Swift, BTS and others.

Leading the marching band is music teacher Mr. Hahn. According to Hahn, two weeks before the concert, he realized he needed a master of ceremonies and reached out to fellow performing arts teacher Ms. Wurzer-Palm to fill that role.

"Mr. Hahn approached me two weeks ago and said, 'What are you doing on November 4?' I said I was not really sure, and he said, 'Do you want to be our MC?'" I said, 'Are you sure you don't want my sister?' So the joke was my sister is on the radio, and he listens to my sister on the radio," she said.

Wurzer-Palm provided comic relief and sparked constant crowd reactions in between songs, receiving much praise from everyone in attendance.

"I said it a million times during the performance: this is one of the most respected and well-rehearsed groups at Cooper High School, and for this to be the showcase of Cooper, we are very, very lucky to have Mr. Hahn and the caliber of kids that we have that are in the marching band. The show was amazing, and if people didn't love it, I would be very surprised. This is one heck of a group of kids and they deserve the best," she said.

The set list had a variety of songs that marching band members chose. Hahn asked them for a theme and to select fun music. He then took that list to the band and had the members vote on which songs to play.

A huge part of this concert and the marching band as a whole are the drum majors. Drum majors conduct the band and make sure the train keeps rolling correctly. The two drum majors of this year's marching band are Addie Grimes (11) and Elias Contreras Tapia (12). Both are in their fourth year of marching band despite the grade-level difference because Grimes started marching band in eighth grade.

Grimes said she instantly liked marching band and is glad she stuck with it. Although she has been a member for four years, she became a drum major for the first time this year.

"This is my first year as [a] drum major, and I think that it was really fun to see the differences between playing and not playing and having to be in charge of people. I think it's been fun," she said.

Following the concert, Grimes said she was proud of the group's performance.

"I think it went really good. It was amazing. It was very, very fun, and I think everybody did really good. It was the best we could've hoped for," Grimes said.

Meanwhile, Contreras Tapia, who is in his second year as a drum major, also played a part in ensuring things went well. Although he did not know if he had a future with the marching band, he said he stuck with it regardless, and now he is enjoying his high rank.

"Honestly, I started freshman year, but that was COVID year, and I felt like that really didn't count, so I was like, I'm going to try and join again. I was moved to snares and I had a lot of fun. I just like instruments," he said.

After his final marching band concert, Contreras Tapia said he relished the chance to play with the

We get to end the year with a performance that's all about the marching band, with music the kids picked. This concert is the summit of each year," Hahn said.

The concert also featured a silent auction to raise funds for marching band. Parents of the musicians talked to local businesses and got them to donate merchandise for people to bid on.

One of the parents who helped with the auction was Mr. Allen, father of musician Zach Allen (12). Allen has played a big part in supporting the marching band behind the scenes throughout the year, recording marching band performances at the Music Along the Chippewa event in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin and the halftime performance at the Minnesota Gopher's football game on September 9. Allen also used a drone to capture a video of the Hawks drum line performing.

"I'm just a dad excited to watch

the song that the drum line did: 'Fresh Trash.' Watching them rock out with five-gallon buckets was a lot of fun," he said.

Leading up to the concert, Hahn and the marching band had been rehearsing twice a week in the auditorium, memorizing the new music and learning the movements to their music. One band member who took part in this process is lead trumpet player Niko Her (10).

"A lot of it had to do with learning a lot of new music and remembering how to replay some of the music that we haven't played in a while, but a lot of it also goes to the movements that we do on stage. Where we move, where we hold and just overall what we're supposed to do onstage and how we're supposed to do it," Her said.

Her has quickly proved his worth to the marching band, becoming a lead trumpet player as a sophomore and having a solo during the concert.



Photo by NOAH PLAHN

The segment of the show featuring the drumline was one highlight of the marching band concert.

group one last time.

"I think it was fun. I think it went really good," he said.

Post-concert, Hahn was also riding high given the great concluding performance put in by his crew.

"I was super stoked about how things went knowing that everything they did on stage was from memory. That was a lot of music to play from memory, and it looked like the kids had fun up there. You know, for me, so much of this is about the process, and when the final result is something that the students can be excited about and remember fondly, it makes everything worthwhile," he said.

Hahn said he is proud of how everything turned out during the marching band's season.

"It's been an awesome year with the marching band. The kids have really been putting out great music and we've done some really cool events.

his kids play some great music," he said.

In addition to helping with the auction on November 4, Allen also helped set up the concert.

"This is the third time I have been able to volunteer on the Indoor Concert Committee, which has included setting up [and] tearing down, and helping with the financial aspects of each event," he said. "The committee is comprised of some great parents who volunteer so much time and talent, and the support they show is really a lot of fun to be a part of each year."

While Allen helps support marching band during its many performances, he said that the indoor concert is one of his favorite events each year.

"I love hearing the band play their set and then watching the individual sections add their own flavor to the concert. Being a percussion dad, my favorite would have to be

"Realizing that I was getting a solo was definitely one of my biggest highlights. Another one of my biggest highlights was actually being one of the lead trumpets and one of the section leaders of the trumpet section, so I've been able to help a lot of the younger kids and younger people that are new to the marching band. I've been able to help them learn how to play the style of music we play and learn how to march on the field, so it's definitely been a great season for me this year," he said.

Her's solo during the Queen song "Bohemian Rhapsody" left the crowd cheering, and Her said he enjoyed the night thoroughly.

"Overall, I think this indoor marching band concert went very well. We all played well [and] we all did our movements correctly, so I think we did pretty well. I think next year, other people should come and watch it," he said.

Fall Festival brought district musicians to Minneapolis

The annual concert, which took place on the professional stage at Orchestra Hall, highlighted the talents of Robbinsdale music students



Photo by ANASTASIA VERDOLJAK

One element of the concert enjoyed by Cooper musicians was the size and scope of the stage at Orchestra Hall, which added a unique dimension to the show.

By EMILY CARRILLO ACEVEDO
Quill staff writer

The Robbinsdale District 281 Fall Music Festival took place at Orchestra Hall on November 13. This event featured performances by the Armstrong and Cooper Bel Canto, Cantori and Concert choirs, Wind Ensemble groups, Symphony Orchestra and the Robbinsdale Elementary All-District Choir.

The Robbinsdale Fall Music Festival is a yearly event that happens in November. High schools around Minnesota have similar showcases at Orchestra Hall to perform for the public during the fall and winter months.

This event was suspended in 2021 due to COVID-19 hitting the United States. The festival resumed in the 2022-2023 school year. These concerts are well known around Minnesota due to the number of high school students participating and the friends and family that go to see their friend or child playing at a professional music venue.

This year, all of the music teachers from Cooper attended with their classes. Ms. Verdoljak took the orchestra students, Ms. Rowan and Mr. Vidal took their choir students and Mr. Hahn took his band students.

As a new Cooper staff member, this was Verdoljak's first time in this event as a teacher. She had been to the event back in 2022 as part of the audience.

"I remember seeing Cooper orchestra and Armstrong orchestra violinists and violists up in the green room. I just helped with tuning, but it was nice to be a part of it. This year is [my] first year as director," she said.

One highlight of the show is that there is always a guest conductor. This year, it was G. Phillip Shultz III, who

is a founding member of Vocal Essence Singers of This Age. Verdoljak said he came to Cooper a few weeks before the concert to work with students on the song they performed together at the show.

Throughout the show, strings, band and choir musicians played multiple pieces.

"It's a huge festival, but we're all going to be on stage the whole time and highlight [the] different parts of the Symphony Orchestra and choirs," Verdoljak said.

In fact, Verdoljak said she had a chance to play at Orchestra Hall before when she was in All-State Orchestra in high school. She also played there last February in an ensemble. However, when it comes to leading the student musicians, she said Hahn, Vidal and Rowan all have more experience than her.

Hahn said that he has now been

part of this festival for six years.

"The band program started participating in this event in 2003. This will be my sixth Fall Music Festival. One was canceled due to COVID; the other one, I was on paternity leave," he said.

The band that plays at this event is the Wind Ensemble. They meet during eighth period to rehearse for their large performance like this one. Hahn said the chance to play at Orchestra Hall is a special one for students.

"Making music in that space is very special due to the history and the acoustics," Hahn said.

While playing instruments at Orchestra Hall can be fun, the choirs from Cooper got to sing at the festival. Choir teachers Vidal and Rowan are the ones who helped students rehearse for the concert. Rowan has been a part of this festival since 1999, which was the first year this festival took place. The choirs

that take part are Cooper's Bel Canto and Concert choirs. These are all auditioned choirs that meet fifth period during Hawk Lunch and Learn.

"I enjoy witnessing the awe when our performers take the stage for the first time," Rowan said. "Our students have the opportunity to rehearse and perform with a guest conductor, which allows them the opportunity to gain new rehearsal and performance techniques and perspectives. Watching the final piece being performed is a mix of so many emotions: pride, gratitude and joy. Our students have worked so hard to get to that moment."

Playing at a professional venue such as Orchestra Hall is an experience many have gone through, including the teachers. Rowan said she performed at Orchestra Hall back in college. She has also sung at the hall since then in various choirs and as a soprano soloist for the Fall Music Festival in the early 2000s.

The final performance on November 13 lasted about two hours. The rehearsal for the students who were in the concert took place at Orchestra Hall the afternoon of the concert.

Although the Cooper music teachers played an important role at the show, students were the ones who were on stage. One musician who shared his experiences is Kindric Yang (12). Yang is one of the Cooper students who was part of multiple music groups.

"I was part of both the orchestra and choir group," he said.

According to Yang, his experience at the festival was a positive one.

"My favorite part of the event is seeing the reaction on students' faces when they make music in that hall for the first time. It's very special to play on the stage that has been used by some of the best musicians of the 20th and 21st century," he said.

Although Symphony Orchestra is a high-level orchestra class, Yang said the current freshmen are able to audition to be part of the orchestra for their sophomore year, which allows them the chance to play at the Fall Music Festival. This allows other musicians the chance to experience what Yang said was his favorite part of this festival: the audience.

"My favorite part was probably when we got to play for everyone at the concert," he said.

NEW TEACHERS ADJUSTING TO LIFE AT COOPER continued from page 2

about the first few months at Cooper has been the students.

"The kids have been great. I love my classes. We have a lot of fun. The basketball hoop was a big hit. It makes the last few minutes go by a lot faster," she said.

At the same time, Wavra said she has experienced some difficulties as well.

"[There are] a lot of tardies. So far, we don't have any solutions to kids coming chronically late to class. There is nothing we can do, and there's no follow-up, really. That's been frustrating," she said.

In the end, Wavra said she has a positive outlook on the rest of the year.

"I'm still getting to know everyone's names as far as teachers go. I feel like once you kind of get the hang of things, then you can really dig into your job. I'm looking forward to that. It's a steep learning curve. It's sort of a baptism by fire; okay, now go teach. Thirty kids coming in every 45 minutes. It's just a lot and can feel overwhelming at first, but then, once [I] feel like, okay, my feet are on solid ground now, I can dig in and have more fun with my curriculum and things we do in class," she said.

Mr. Spetsieris
New to Cooper's special education

department is Spetsieris. Before teaching at Cooper, Spetsieris was a full-time substitute at a high school in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where he taught seventh grade through 12th grade. He not only taught general education but special education as well. The year before he came to Minnesota, he also was a career and technical instructor licensed in Arkansas, where he taught culinary arts to individuals with disabilities from high school age up to age 60.

Upon reaching Minnesota, Spetsieris wanted to work at another school, but life threw him a curveball.

"I actually applied to be an education assistant at Meadow Lake Elementary, where my nephews go, but during the interview, they stopped me and asked if I would apply to be a teacher because I had the degree they needed. I had experience teaching for several years even though I wasn't a full-time licensed teacher, and so I applied and got the job. I took it because I was obviously excited," he said.

Following this significant change, Spetsieris knew his workload would be very different.

"The transition was profoundly stressful because, obviously, my responsibilities increased by a hundred times. Instead of being a sub where all I had

to do was teach, I'm now responsible for all aspects of the teaching. It is a lot being the case manager as well. I have to oversee IEPs for certain students and then also teach at the same time. All I can say is I'm so grateful that I like Cooper because this job is tough, but everyone has been great. My colleagues have been great, the students have been great. I do like this place quite a bit, so the transition was much smoother than if I hated my job," he said.

As he has settled into Cooper over the last few months, Spetsieris said he has enjoyed spinning a seemingly immovable obstacle into a learning moment.

"One of the biggest challenges I had was I had a couple of classes where the students [didn't] like to talk. They didn't talk to me for the first two or three weeks; literally wouldn't answer me and wouldn't say really anything. What was happening was these students were teaching me how to teach them. [I] can walk into a classroom, and I can lecture at [someone] all day long until [they're] like, 'Shut up, dude.' Not everybody can sit and listen to a lecture; you need to figure out how everybody is learning," he said.

Following this rocky start, Spetsieris said he quickly landed on his feet and is

now looking forward to the rest of the year.

"I'm looking forward to knowing how to do my job without feeling like I'm going to hyperventilate every single day because I have a lot of things I have to be on top of, things like IEPs, grades and lesson plans. I'm looking forward to just having a successful day every day that I come here. I'm not even really thinking about next year or the spring; I get up and go, 'Let me have a good day today. Let me be effective today.' So, I'm looking forward to that morning when I get up and go, 'I got it. I'm good. I don't have to stress. I don't need 15 cups of coffee. I'm going to be okay,'" he said.

Ms. Enselein

Enselein is the new reading teacher at Cooper. Before arriving at Cooper, Enselein taught at Robbinsdale Middle School for 13 years, where she oversaw reading and English classes at each grade level. She also did an alternative-to-suspension program for one year.

Last year, she taught eighth grade English at Sandburg Middle School before jumping ship to Cooper to fill the school's new reading teacher position. So far, Enselein said she has relished the change.

"I love it at Cooper, love it. Students are welcoming, staff are welcoming. It's really nice connecting with former students and seeing how people have matured into the leaders that they are," she said.

Enselein said she is excited about helping develop the reading department.

"We're building a community of readers at Cooper. Students are really loving their choice reading books and are able to have conversations and discussions around their reading books," she said.

While Enselein is used to teaching, she added that high school classes operate differently than middle school, which has sometimes been a struggle.

"[It's been difficult] getting used to the short class times where it's not on the block schedule and trying to make sure that I'm meeting everyone's needs in every class in such a short period of time," she said.

Regarding the future of her reading classes at Cooper, Enselein said she hopes to work with more students and staff.

"I'm really excited to have a new group of students second semester and continue to help other teachers and students at Cooper when it comes to different reading skills," she said.

<div>The Quill</div> <div>Leadership Staff</div> <div><div>Editor-in-Chief</div><div>Noah Plahn</div></div> <div><div>News Editor</div><div>Chimual Vang</div></div> <div><div>Features Editor</div><div>Amarilys Balmaceda</div></div> <div><div>Opinion Editor</div><div>Heather Holzersmith</div></div> <div><div>Variety Editor</div><div>Leo Perez</div></div> <div><div>Sports Editor</div><div>Milo Athias Finn</div></div> <div><div>Copy Editors</div><div>Akeya Easley</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Driana Sanmartin</div></div> <div><div>Advertising</div><div>Samaria'h Shabazz</div></div> <div><div>Circulation</div><div>Bethzy Arias-Pliego</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Emily Carrillo</div></div>		<div>Staff Writers</div> <div><div>Bethzy Arias-Pliego</div><div>Leo Perez</div></div> <div><div>Milo Athias Finn</div><div>Noah Plahn</div></div> <div><div>Amarilys Balmaceda</div><div>Driana Sanmartin</div></div> <div><div>Emily Carrillo</div><div>Samaria'h Shabazz</div></div> <div><div>Akeya Easley</div><div>Chimual Vang</div></div> <div><div>Heather Holzersmith</div><div>Alexis Williams</div></div> <div>Support Staff</div> <div><div>Photographers</div><div>Noah Plahn</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Bethzy Arias-Pliego</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Chimual Vang</div></div> <div><div>Advisor</div><div>Eric Zuccola</div></div> <div><div>Principal</div><div>Shaunece Smith</div></div>		<div>Letters to the Editor</div> <div>The Quill welcomes Letters to the Editor. If you would like to send <i>The Quill</i> your thoughts about a story that ran in the paper, or your thoughts about an issue affecting our school or community, please word process and email your letter to eric_zuccola@rdale.org as a text-only file. <i>The Quill</i> reserves the right to edit all Letters to the Editor for space.</div> <div>Advertising</div> <div>To advertise, please write to <i>The Quill</i>, Robbinsdale Cooper High School, 8230 47th Avenue North, New Hope, MN 55428; call at 763-504-8500; or email eric_zuccola@rdale.org.</div>	<div>Editorial Policy</div> <div>The Quill is an open and public forum for the thoughts and opinions of all students at Robbinsdale Cooper High School. Editorials contained in the Opinion section of the newspaper are the views of their respective authors alone. They do not necessarily represent the views of Cooper High School or Robbinsdale School District 281.</div> <div>Robbinsdale Cooper High School's <i>The Quill</i> is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association.</div> <div>NSPA</div>
--	--	--	--	---	--

Premier Performers

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

Nicole Lehnertz

By SAMARIA'H SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Nicole Lehnertz (12) is involved in many of Cooper's music programs. "My freshman and sophomore years, I was in orchestra and played the violin. All four years of high school I've been in choir, with the past two being Concert Choir. I have also done stage crew in theater," she said. Lehnertz credits her sister with inspiring her to pursue music. "My sister initially got me interested in orchestra as she played the violin," she said. Lehnertz added that last year was the first time she joined an extracurricular choir, Bella Voce. "I am still in this group and am a recent addition to the Chamber Singers group," she said. According to Lehnertz, a highlight



Photo by C. VANG

of choir is the community she forms with the other singers. "There will always be ups and downs, and everyone can always feel them, but we always power through looking for ways to improve," she said. When it comes to her favorite choir memories, Lehnertz said she enjoys events at which alumni can take part. "One of my favorites was getting to perform with my sister at the spring concert my sophomore year. Every year, there's a chance for alumni to perform," she said. As for school, Lehnertz said she enjoys AVID. "It's nice to have a su-lper-chill class and it's a good place for advice regarding my future and college plans," she said. Next fall, Lehnertz plans to start at a four-year college or work on a two-year degree before transferring to a university.

Alyssa LaFountain

By SAMARIA'H SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Alyssa LaFountain (12) is a Cooper student involved in choir and art. "This is my first year in choir. I would have started earlier, but schedule-wise, it didn't work out. I started because I enjoy singing," she said. One highlight of her time in choir has been LaFountain's ability to perform with friends. "My best friend Addison is in there," she said. "I enjoy singing." Meanwhile, LaFountain said she has enjoyed art because "everyone is really nice." One recent project in that class that she enjoyed was making a bird. Whether it is in choir or art, LaFountain said she enjoys being supportive of the people around her.



Photo by C. VANG

"I'm a good helper and cheer on my classmates," she said. As she looks forward to the rest of the school year, LaFountain said she will continue being part of choir and participating in art class. Not surprisingly, when it comes to the school day, LaFountain said her favorite class is choir. "I love to sing," she said. Outside of school, LaFountain said she has many hobbies and activities. "I like bowling, horseback riding, taking care of pets and being with family," LaFountain said. After graduating, LaFountain said she hopes to work in a hospital. Additionally, she said she will continue singing thanks to her karaoke machine. "I enjoy my karaoke machine," LaFountain said.

Mel Hayes

By SAMARIA'H SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Melvin Hayes (12) is currently a musician in Cooper's Wind Ensemble and Marching Band groups. "I've been in band since fifth grade," Hayes said. "My dad was a musician and the topic always interested me so I joined." One part of his experience in band Hayes said they have enjoyed is the impact it has had on their understanding of music. "Band has elevated how I understand and analyze music as a whole. Learning how to play instruments has helped me better understand aspects I otherwise wouldn't have known," Hayes said. Looking back on their time in band, Hayes cited two offsite concerts as

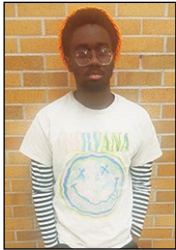


Photo by C. VANG

personal highlights. "My favorite memory is Orchestra Hall that took place last year. Also, the year before, the band traveled to Chaska for a band festival," Hayes said. In addition to the two groups in which Hayes currently plays, there will be a third added during winter. "Jazz Band starts in December and I plan to be in that as well," Hayes said. Beyond their work in music, Hayes said their Psychology class is one they particularly enjoy. "It is a career path I am interested in," Hayes said. "I want to major in psychology and hopefully become a therapist. I am also interested in computer science and forensics, but not as much compared to psychology." As for their future in music, Hayes said they are not likely to continue playing in band at the college level.

Luke Foster

By SAMARIA'H SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Luke Foster (12) is a member of the Hawks band program. According to Foster, he knew he wanted to get involved once he arrived at high school. "I started so I can have fun making music with my friends," Foster said. Foster cited a number of aspects of his band experience that he has enjoyed. "I have enjoyed the field trips," Foster said. "I have also liked making music." When it comes to trips, Foster said a few longer band adventures are among his favorite memories of his time in music. "I enjoyed going to Chicago for the St. Patrick's Day parade. I also have enjoyed our trips to Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis," Foster said.



Photo by B. ARIAS

Thanks to his four years in band, Foster has helped fill some leadership roles. "I help organize things within the band," he said. "I also help the drumline with learning how to march." In addition to his work in music, Foster said he has branched into art classes as a senior. He cited his clay class as one of his favorites alongside band and math. Outside of the arts, Foster is also involved in athletics. He plays lacrosse on the weekends and with the Hawks team during the spring sports season. After graduating this spring, Foster plans on furthering his education. Currently, he is not sure if he will be going to a four-year university or to a technical school. As for music, he thinks it will continue to play a role in his future.

Clay students learn new skills

Clay 1, Clay 2 classes emphasize the importance of making mistakes in the learning process



Photo by NOAH PLAHN

Mr. Molitor (center) shows students the proper technique during his first period section of Clay 1.

By AMARILYS BALMACEDA
Quill staff writer

Making art with clay is one of the skills you can learn in Cooper through the elective Clay 1 and Clay 2 classes. In those classes, students have a place to meet and create clay artworks with teacher Mr. Molitor. The Clay 1 class has 27 students in each section this year. Molitor explained that Clay 2 is smaller because students cannot always fit the class into their schedule. Working with clay is a new experience for most students. In the clay classes, students can get more knowledge about and experience with clay-related techniques. Molitor said the class helps students explore their abilities and be resilient about their mistakes. "The processes help students learn to accept mistakes and that failure is a vital part of the learning process," Molitor said. "Working with clay is a great way to understand that lesson in real time."

According to Molitor, it is important to see clay as an artwork and avoid the term "craft" because that implies that working with clay is somehow of less importance. Instead, this form of art takes time to learn, time to practice and time to become an expert. That is why this class does not have a HLL session attached to it. Molitor said the clay class is different from other classes. It is about working with something that you can touch, feel and give shape to based on techniques learned in the first month of the school year. While students in Clay 1 learn how to make mugs, bowls, vases and a sculptural piece at the end of the semester, students in Clay 2 students go farther and make a teapot with four matching cups with an original and personal design. They also make a slab container, similar to a fairy house, Molitor explained. Moreover, Molitor added that Clay 3 is a class that is run based on student demand. Students in this class have the ability

to work on projects that are variations on past assignments but bigger and with more details. Even if the process of making clay projects is messy due to the materials used in the class, Molitor knows how to keep the clay studio and the students clean. "We work hard to keep the clay room clean in order to prevent health hazards. That said, it is a very messy process, so students need to use aprons or other pullover clothes to keep the mess off their everyday clothes. But, trust me, it's worth it," he said. According to Molitor, the skills and the process of working with clay are special for every student in class. Plus, at the end of each project, students can take their own creation home or give it as a present to someone special. Students interested in registering for this class for next school year will have the chance beginning in January 2024. Molitor encourages students who are interested in art to sign up for a clay class, where new experiences await.

Modern Family remains a stellar sitcom

The second season of the show saw the cast and writers hit their stride when it came to being funny

By AKEYA EASLEY
Quill staff writer

Modern Family, created by Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd, is an 11-season series that started broadcasting on ABC in 2009. It features three modern families: Claire and Phil, a heterosexual married couple with their three kids; Cameron and Mitchell, a homosexual married couple with their adopted daughter from Vietnam; and Jay and Gloria, a married couple with a 25-year age difference who are raising Gloria's son, Manny. The cringe-comedy, mockumentary-style sitcom stuck out to me earlier this year thanks to a funny clip I saw on the internet. Its filming style, which is like *The Office*, is what caused me to continue watching the show. The season of the show I will be focused on is the second one, which I believe is the best of the series. After the breakout success of the show's debut season, season two continued to delight audiences with its winning blend of comedy and heartwarming family dynamics. The show maintains its mockumentary-style storytelling in the second season. Thanks to its continued clever writing and endearing characters, season two made *Modern Family* a standout in the comedy genre. The Pritchett-Dunphy-Tucker clan's second season further develops their storylines, offering both humor and relatable themes that resonate with viewers. One of the show's strengths lies in its ability to infuse humor with genuine, touching moments. Whether it's Phil's endearing attempts at being the



Photo by 20th CENTURY FOX TELEVISION

The large ensemble cast is one of the strengths of *Modern Family*. "cool dad," Cam and Mitchell navigating the ups and downs of parenthood, or the classic misadventures of being in a family, each episode strikes a balance between laugh-out-loud comedy and heartfelt, relatable situations. This delicate blend of humor and emotion is what sets *Modern Family* apart and makes it a must-watch for fans of smart, feel-good comedy. The characters continue to evolve in the second season, allowing viewers to further connect with and invest in their stories. From Jay's journey as a stepdad to Claire and Mitchell's experiences as parents, the show deftly explores the complexities of modern family life. The relatable nature of these storylines, combined with the stellar performances from the cast, ensures that *Modern Family* remains a beloved and enduring series. Additionally, the second season maintains the show's signature mockumentary format, providing a unique and engaging storytelling approach. The confessional-style interviews allow for intimate insights into the characters' thoughts and feelings, adding depth to the narrative. This technique not only enhances the comedic elements, but also fosters a deeper connection between the audience and the characters, creating a more immersive viewing experience. *Modern Family*'s second season is a delightful continuation of the series, delivering an irresistible mix of humor, heart and relatable family dynamics. With its well-crafted storytelling, endearing characters and moments of genuine emotion, the show remains relevant for contemporary viewers. Whether you're a longtime fan or a newcomer to the series, the second season is a must-watch for anyone seeking a heartwarming and hilarious portrayal of modern family life. I give season two of *Modern Family* five out of five stars.

Orchestra trip exposed Hawks to new music

The group went to St. Paul on October 16 to see a performance of the nationally renowned group Sphinx Virtuosi



Photo by ANASTASIA VERDOLJAK

Cooper musicians attending the trip had a chance to see the historical Ordway Theater building in downtown St. Paul.

By BETHZY ARIAS-PLIEGO
Quill staff writer

Orchestra students went on a field trip to the Ordway in St. Paul on October 16 to see a performance by Sphinx Virtuosi. This group, which describes itself as the most diverse chamber orchestra in the country, played music written by Black and Latin composers.

Each orchestra student who went on the field trip to the Ordway said there were many things about the concert that they enjoyed.

“I liked the different types of music that they had and played and the different stories behind the music,” Gabriella Vessel (9) said.

Another thing that Vessel liked was how the “instruments’ bows were all in sync” and how one of the members of the group was dancing and moving around as he played, which showed how much he enjoyed the music.

One popular moment of the show came at the end. Sphinx Virtuosi played some popular songs that a lot of the students in attendance knew. Vessel said she thought that it “was pretty cool how they played different pop songs at the end.”

Another highlight of the concert was seeing the Ordway in person.

“Something that I liked about the trip was the actual setting of the concert, which was really pretty,” Ryanne Dutton (10) said.

To add on to that, Dutton said the physical performance of the musicians was noteworthy.

“They did tend to move around a lot, which is something that they do to let the others know when to come in,” Dutton said. “It’s something that I want to learn more, especially in Chamber Strings.”

Much like Vessel, Dutton also praised the group’s choice

of pop songs, including “Golden Hour” by JVKE.

“A lot of the students there went crazy because they started playing ‘Golden Hour’ and other music that others knew as well. It was also nice how others were joining and singing along as well,” Dutton said.

Another student who enjoyed the field trip was Leah Blanchette (11). They thought that it was a really fun experience and a good opportunity to go to the Ordway to see professional musicians play.

“They are a very inspiring group,” Blanchette said.

Blanchette added that they enjoyed the concert even though they are not normally the type of person to listen to orchestral music outside of class.

“I think that it’s really fascinating, especially when they put in pop songs because it’s really awesome,” Blanchette said.

Also interesting to Blanch-

ette was the performance aspect of Sphinx Virtuosi. Blanchette said it was “really cool that you were able to hear them breathe from afar,” even when they were sitting in the back of the stage. Additionally, Blanchette liked the group’s movements, which helped bring people into the music.

“If they are moving, it makes you want to move too,” Blanchette said.

Kindric Yang (12) is another student who went on the orchestra field trip to St. Paul. He said that one thing he liked most about the event “was listening to the music.”

Much like the other Cooper musicians who attended the concert, Yang added that he enjoyed the last section of the concert, when the group played popular songs.

“I had recognized the songs but didn’t know the songs’ names,” he said.

Get Out is a horror film that strives for more

Thanks to its clever, thoughtful plot and its exploration of compelling themes, Jordan Peele's movie transcends its genre

By MILO ATHIAS FINN
Quill staff writer

Get Out, directed by Jordan Peele, was released to audiences February 24, 2016 after premiering in the Sundance Festival a month earlier. I chose to review this film because of its stellar acting performances coupled with its compelling plot and overall storyline. However, it is the attention to detail that dramatically raises the quality of this film. Peele simply doesn’t gloss over anything, as almost every piece of dialogue in the first act is direct foreshadowing for the latter half of the film. Despite this film being his directorial debut, Peele’s knowledge of filmmaking makes *Get Out* an absolute masterpiece. This film is my personal favorite horror movie of the 2010s.

The film follows a calm and collected Chris Washington (Daniel Kaluuya) as he accompanies his girlfriend, Rose Armitage (Allison Williams), on a visit to her childhood home to meet her family. Chris’ close friend, Rod (Lil Rel Howery), a TSA agent who makes this known several times throughout the film in comedic fashion, is critical of the trip as he is convinced that something bad may happen to Chris. After all, Rose is a white woman, and she hasn’t mentioned that Chris is Black to her parents. Rose shrugs this notion off, claiming her father “would have voted for Obama a third time if he could.” Chris is eventually persuaded to look on the bright side, as he sets his fears about the trip aside.

During the drive to Rose’s childhood home, suspicious omens begin to occur. As they near their destination, Rose accidentally slams into a deer and is forced to call the cops. Rose

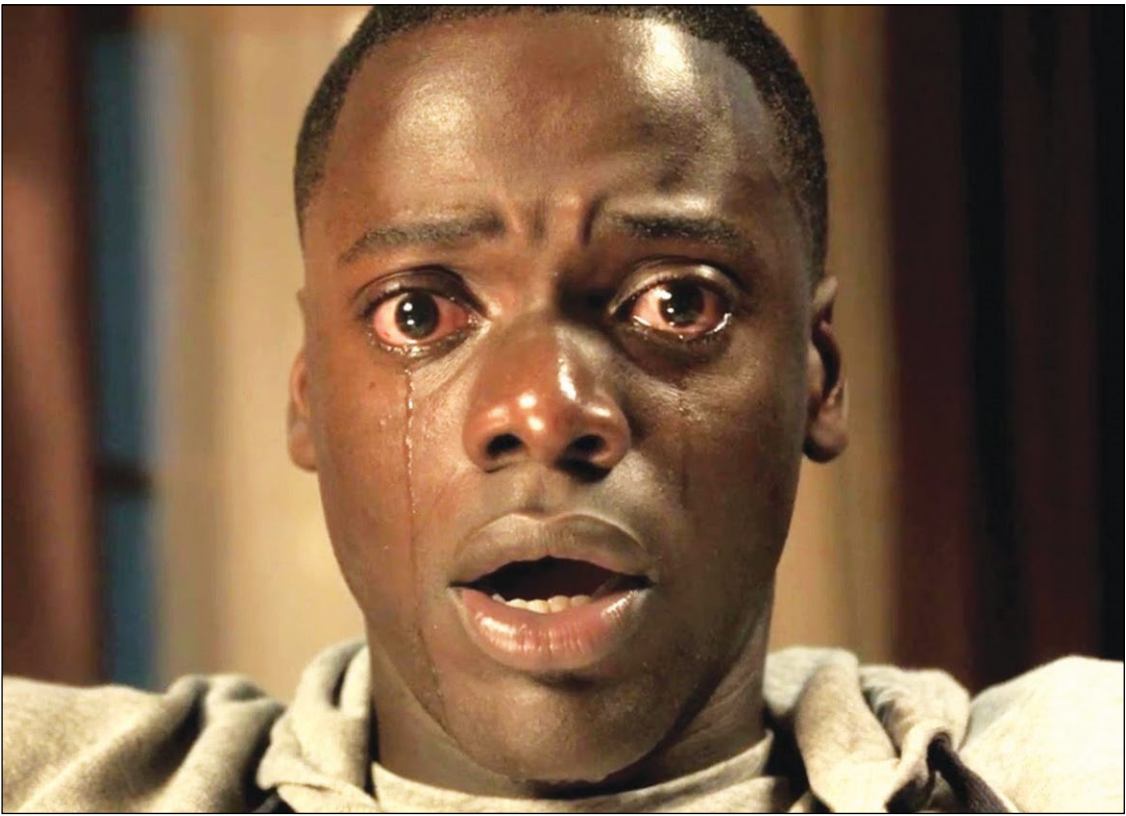


Photo by BLUMHOUSE PRODUCTIONS

Daniel Kaluuya's performance as the central character Chris helps anchor the film and its suspenseful plot.

defends Chris from giving any sort of identification to the authorities, who now have no record of Chris being involved in the crash. While it appears Rose is being a protective girlfriend, and safeguarding her boyfriend from a racist cop, we begin to question if she has ulterior motives as the movie progresses.

As the two eventually arrive at her house, Chris notices things are strange. There is something off about Rose’s parents as well as the other black people on the property. It is then that Chris realizes his safety may be in jeopardy.

Get Out tackles the themes of racism, fetishization and cultural ap-

propriation. The issue of white people stealing Black people’s creations and belongings is an ongoing concept that is demonstrated in a menacing fashion during the film. There are many instances of race being dealt with during the story. One notable moment is when Chris is at a party and conversing with an older white man. The white man tells Chris that, “Black is in fashion.”

Another form of degradation Chris experiences is at the same party when a middle-aged white woman asks Rose, “Is it better?” The “it” in this case is having a Black man as a romantic partner. With Chris standing in the vicinity of this conversation as

it takes place, the innuendo makes the situation extremely uncomfortable.

Chris being fetishized for his body is a common theme in *Get Out*, and it is also a recurring issue in America. When a person’s only concern for another person relates to their race and bodily appearance, that first person is disregarding the other person’s knowledge and character. This point is driven home by Peele, as Chris doesn’t rely on brute strength to defeat his adversaries, but on his intuition and cognitive awareness.

GET OUT
continues on page 8

GRAB AND GO

continued from page 1

breakfast and lunch due to increased state funding, the breakfast lines are a lot longer. If they only have that one cart and the lines are too long, he said they need to get another cart.

Having students eat breakfast in class may be a bit of an inconvenience to teachers, but for the most part it gets students to class on time, aside from the few students who hang around in the halls regardless of breakfast.

Students have some different opinions about the breakfast cart when compared to the teachers. One issue relates to the fact that the buses are now on time.

“The buses aren’t even late anymore so what is the point?” Wittig said.

Another issue is the impact that cart has on school cleanliness.

“The hallways are especially crowded and it smells weird because of the food,” Wittig added.

Another issue relates to crowded halls. There is a portion of the hallway blocked off for the breakfast line, but still large crowds gather in the hallways as students stand around and eat their breakfast. In this way, the breakfast cart is sometimes a disturbance to the already busy mornings at Cooper.

“The school should go back to having breakfast in the cafeteria,” Wittig said.

At the same time, teachers and staff deem the breakfast cart as a helpful and innovative way to get students breakfast in the morning.

“I think the Grab and Go Cart helps get students to class more quickly, especially with buses continuing to be late,” Mr. “Speedy” O’Toole, a hallway monitor, said.

Agreeing with O’Toole is Major. “I think we should keep the Grab and Go Breakfast. I like it because it makes it easier for students to get to class,” she said.

While there are a lot of conflicting opinions around the breakfast cart and whether it should stay in the hallway or should be moved back to the cafeteria, there currently are no plans to change the operation of the cart.

DRUG USE

continued from page 1

concerning chemical use. These support services are a cornerstone of the school’s commitment to the well-being of its students. Students can turn to these resources for emotional support, academic advice or assistance with personal challenges.

“Students can go to their grade-level counselor, school social worker or school psychologist if they need help with concerns about drug use,” Mersy said. “Nikki Stout is the district chemical specialist and she can be a resource for students as well. She can meet with students individually to talk about how chemical use might be affecting them and talk about how to possibly reduce use. She is also a good resource for students who might want resources about possible treatment options.”

One thing the district and building resources emphasized is that they will help students who are hoping to move away from their chemical use in a non-judgmental way.

“Oftentimes, students who are using mood-altering substances feel very misunderstood and labeled as bad kids, which is not true. No kid is bad, but some do try very hard to escape their reality and believe substances will help with this. But it only ends up making things worse. My final thoughts would be to please don’t hesitate to reach out if you need help or have questions. There are staff all over the building, myself included, who want to help support you with substance use struggles. You are not alone. I see you and I am here for you,” Stout said.

BLOOD DRIVE

continued from page 1

going to continue the blood drive every four or five months for the foreseeable future.

“We will be having two additional blood drives this year [on] December 15 and March 15,” Lieser said. “We’d love to fill the 70 appointment spots for the next two drives, so think about donating. [People] 16 years of age and older can donate.”

Cooper Competitors

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

Michael Morgan

By SAMARIA'H SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Michael Morgan (12) is a three-sport athlete at Cooper. He runs cross country in the fall, swims in the winter and plays lacrosse in the spring. Morgan said he has enjoyed running since fourth grade, but did not decide to join cross country until his sophomore year.

"I chose to join because the cross country captain said it was a good way to get ready for the swimming season," Morgan said.

Morgan cited a trio of things he has enjoyed about his time in cross country.

"I enjoyed the snacks because you can never get enough. I also enjoyed the pasta parties, which is a good way to carb-load before our meets and chat with friends. Finally, I like the feeling after

you run," Morgan said.

Now that the fall season is over, Morgan is setting his sights on swimming. He said he is looking forward to his final season as a Hawks swimmer.

"I want to PR as often as I can," he said.

Once the cold weather wraps up, Morgan transitions to lacrosse in the spring. He said that lacrosse is a more recent activity.

"I started last year as something to fill the time. I got to love it later," Morgan said.

During the school day, Morgan said he enjoys his math classes because "it is fun to problem-solve." In fact, solving problems will be part of Morgan's college path as well.

"I haven't yet decided on a school, but I know what I want to do: architectural engineering and computer science," Morgan said.



Photo by B. ARIAS

Marwen David

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Marwen David (12) is a volleyball athlete who plays the sport during the fall. David has been playing volleyball ever since she was in middle school.

"I started in seventh grade. At first, I thought it would be boring and only started to play because my friends were interested in it. I thought it would be fun to play it with them. But as I continued to play volleyball, I saw myself constantly improving," David said.

David said her biggest achievement and joy is seeing herself and her teammates improve, building the sisterhood of the group. With respect to her favorite memories from her fall sport, she stated that she enjoyed Sisterhood Friday, being on the varsity team and taking part in senior

nights.

After the fall, David dedicates herself to Step Team in the winter.

"[I enjoy] creating more new steps to pass down to the underclassmen after we graduate," she said.

During the school day, her favorite classes are IB Math and IB Chemistry. She said she enjoys the satisfaction of being able to solve complex equations and finding the perfect solution in math, while she loves the thrill of discovering the results of unknown chemicals collaborating to synthesize into something new in chemistry.

Outside of school, David enjoys dancing and making her hair.

Next fall, David's plan for college is to become a neonatal nurse practitioner. Additionally, David added that she will continue with athletics after high school.



Photo by B. ARIAS

Sondo Miles

By EMILY CARRILLO ACEVEDO
Quill staff writer

Sondo Miles (12) is a fall sports athlete who plays football.

"I have been playing football since I was three years old," he said. "I fell in love in love with the sport a long time ago watching NFL games and [the] NCAA."

Miles said he has had a lot of fun playing for the Cooper football team. There are so many things he enjoys about being in this sport with his teammates.

"Growing as a person and player is something I've enjoyed in football," he said. "I also enjoy watching my team get better."

Miles has his fair share of favorite football memories.

"I liked practicing with my friends, working on our craft, hitting drills and

going over drills," he said.

Moving away from sports, Miles said he enjoys two classes the most during the school day.

"My favorite classes are English and Drawing because in English, we read and go over different books and stories. Drawing is really relaxing to me because I enjoy drawing anything that comes to mind," he said.

Miles also has his own set of interests and outside-of-school hobbies that he enjoys.

"I like to work and just chill at home," he said.

College is something almost every senior is interested in. Miles said he is currently finalizing his plans for college.

"My plans are to go to a community college. I don't really know what I want to major in for college, but I will figure that out," he said.



Photo by C. VANG

Phillip Modupeoluwa

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Phillip Modupeoluwa (12) is a Cooper football athlete who plays during the fall season. Only joining the team this year, he said he was excited for the challenge.

"I started playing this year. I have always wanted to play but this year I actually joined," Modupeoluwa said.

According to Modupeoluwa, his motivation and joy for playing football connects to his dedication to the team. He sees his teammates as brothers, and when they play, they play as a family.

Modupeoluwa's favorite moment from playing football was during their summer practices, which allowed him to get to know new people and form lifelong bonds. The most challenging

thing this season was his role as a senior, which meant he was expected to be someone great, both for his team and for underclassmen.

"Underclassmen in the team often ask for advice and sometimes tips, so I try my best to help them out," Modupeoluwa said.

After football, Modupeoluwa said he looks forward to joining the wrestling team during the winter season.

When it comes to school, he said his favorite class is art because he believes that it allows him to be the best version of himself as he displays his creativity.

After graduating, Modupeoluwa's plans for college are to attend a trade school because he wants to start a business of his own someday. Though he hopes he can still continue with sports after graduation, he may not due to his busy schedule.

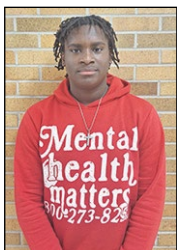


Photo by B. ARIAS

Hawks raise funds for teams

The process of seasonal fundraising is an important part of a sports squad's budget

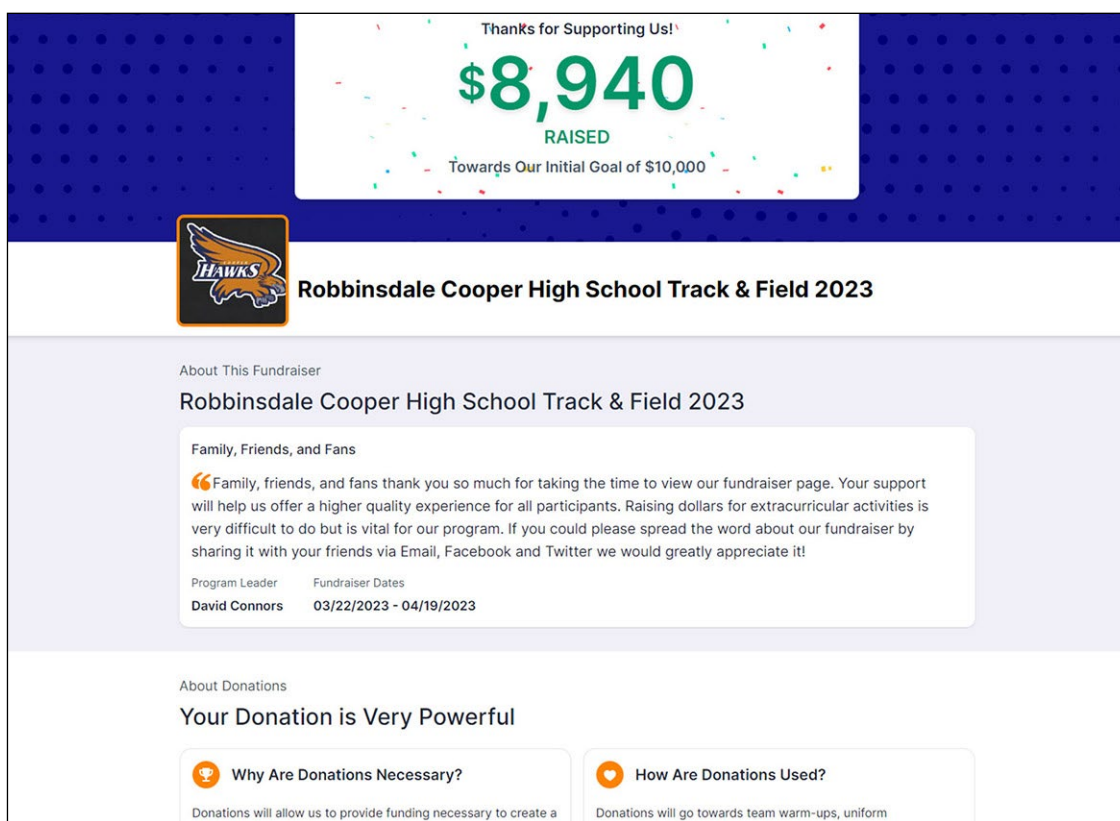


Photo by CHIMUAL VANG

The Snap fundraising platform, which largely takes place online, is a popular choice for Cooper teams.

By BETHZY ARIAS-PLIEGO
Quill staff writer

Each Cooper sports team raises money in different ways to cover various needs related to equipment purchases, getting new uniforms or having end-of-season banquets. While some teams use online platforms to raise money, others go around the neighborhood or volunteer by helping in public places.

Isabelle Atkins (10), who runs on the girls cross country team, said the squad is looking into raising money at Cub.

"[We] haven't done anything yet to my knowledge, but they were talking about doing Cub bagging," she said.

According to Atkins, those funds will help the runners get some new things that the team needs.

"We need running gear [like] watches. I was lucky to have one from the few that they had," Atkins said.

Another fall athlete working to raise money is Attoria McDonald (12), who is on the varsity Cooper volleyball team. She said they do cookie fundraisers every year. In addition, they also go to Cub Foods and they bag groceries. She said that customers tip them for doing that for a couple hours. In fact, she said they raised thousands of dollars over the years just from helping bag people's groceries.

According to McDonald, the funds help the team get new volleyball jerseys and other new volleyball equipment. She said the main thing she enjoys about fundraising is that they do it out in the community.

"We are also going to start the Krispy Kreme fundraiser for next year," she added.

The football team also has a number of fundraisers. Varsity quarterback Kameron Fox (12) said the team usually works at Crystal Frolics in the summer.

"One of the things that we do is serve meals and food while people are playing softball and have a big softball game," he said. "There are probably about four games and there are about 35 teams there, which means a lot of people are eating. We cook food and hand out the food to the people to fundraise for our team."

According to Fox, something that he likes about raising money is

that he is able to interact with his teammates as they are all working together. He added that they are often divided into groups and they challenge each other to see who has the most sales.

Fox said that one thing that they use the funds for is getting more sports gear. Extra money helps make more options available for jerseys and more helmet customizations. He added that he would like to be able to get more branded gear from companies like Addidas.

Overall, Fox said the team likes to help raise money because they know where the money is going and it will help them in the long run.

Agreeing with Fox about the value of fundraising is another football player, Lucas Johnson (12), who is a team captain.

With the money the boys and girls track team has raised using the Snap fundraising platform, they were able to buy new pole vault standards and new uniforms last spring to accommodate the growing number of athletes on the squad.

"During summer, we have to go house to house and you have to sell 20 discount cards. They are a pack of 10 and the fundraising is \$20 a piece. You can sell as many as you want to the general public. During the fall, we do this thing with a dollar. It's a monthly thing. An example is that, if it's the 30th of a month, then you have to donate \$30; if you donate on September 1, you give a dollar. That is then put into a raffle and you get season tickets for free," he said.

Much like Fox, Johnson stressed that all of the money that the team raises goes to the program and nobody personally keeps the money that they make. Johnson said he likes to help because he knows that the money that the players raise goes to getting new things for the football team.

As the season shifts from fall to winter, the fundraising efforts continue for Cooper sports. Ms. Meredith, an assistant coach of the Nordic skiing team, said the squad has done Cub bagging and stuffing newspapers in the past. She said most of the students tend to sign up for two different slots, and some even sign up for more if they can.

According to Meredith, most students tend to participate, which is helpful for the team.

"One of the biggest fundraising successes is around Thanksgiving and Christmas because people are very generous and they give us good tips," she said.

The main event they raise money for is a trip to Maplelag, a ski resort in northern Minnesota. During winter break, the team goes on a retreat and they get to stay at the resort for two nights, during which time they ski, they get meals and they bond with their teammates.

In the spring season, teams also do many different things to raise funds. Mr. Connors, head coach of the boys track team, said they use the Snap company for fundraising. Through that company, students use a website to reach out to family

and friends who they think would help them out financially through donations. Connors said athletes are responsible for collecting 20 email addresses each in order to meet the Snap requirements. According to Connors, the team has raised about \$13,000 using Snap over the last

three years.

With the money the team has raised, Connors said they were able last spring to replace the pole vault standards and buy new uniforms because the team has been getting bigger.

"Right now, I think it's getting more students to commit to the assignment, and there is no telling on how much money we can raise. We usually set a goal of about \$5,000-8,000 each year. If we can get more students involved and more committed to the cause, we can double the goals that we set," Connors said.

Also raising money in the spring is the girls golf team. Mr. Bruce, the head coach of the team, said that last year's golfers sold braided bread and this year they are doing a fundraiser using Snap, just like the track team. He said the girls golf team raises money about once a year and that most of the girls like to help raise money for the team.

According to Bruce, the main thing that they need to raise money for is golfing equipment.

"Last year, we were able to raise about \$1,000, which was pretty good, even though we only had about three people," Bruce said.

GET OUT IS A HORROR FILM THAT STRIVES FOR MORE continued from page 7

Daniel Kaluuya is phenomenal as Chris, earning an Oscar nomination for Best Actor at the 2018 Academy Awards. However, his talent is matched by the rest of the cast, as everybody plays their role to a T. Catherine Keener unleashes one of the best performances of her career as Rose's mother, Allison Williams is extremely convincing as Rose and Bradley Whitford does a great job as the sinister Dean Armitage, Rose's

father. Peele ties everything together in genius fashion. His Oscar nomination for Best Director is deserved as he maintains his structure throughout, holding everything together.

Get Out is a cleverly devised horror film that rivals many of its well-performing predecessors. The film is meant to be viewed multiple times, as Peele's hidden Easter eggs become even more apparent the second and third time around. Every as-

pect of this film is done to perfection. Its uniqueness makes it a refreshing watch as it feels like the first movie of its kind. This notion is especially rare nowadays, making the film of even greater importance. *Get Out* is truly a breath of fresh air. If you are an avid horror fan, or just in need of a well-constructed example of what quality cinema looks like, I highly recommend this film. *Get Out* earns five out of five stars.