



Spoken Word Poetry Club makes its debut at Cooper

Page 2

Art classes teach students new ways to approach problems

Page 6



ALSO INSIDE

News



Hawks reflect on homecoming

From September 30 through October 5, Cooper students were able to attend multiple sporting events, a pepfest and a dance

Page 2

Opinion

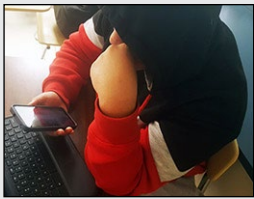


Getting involved benefits students

Whether it is through competing in sports or taking part in an activity, there are many ways for students to get out of their comfort zones

Page 3

Opinion

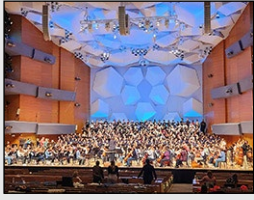


Use of electronics can hurt, help class

How one uses their devices can make the difference between excelling as a student or failing to earn a required credit

Page 3

Variety



Cooper musicians prep for fall show

Students across the school's choir, orchestra, band programs are practicing the songs they will play at annual concert

Page 4

Sports



School purchases new mascot suits

The Robbinsdale Cooper Alumni Association helped fund the purchase of two new mascot costumes in hopes of raising school spirit

Page 7

RESOURCE OFFICERS COME BACK TO COOPER



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

Mr. Janson (left) and Mr. Arthur (center) serve with the New Hope Police Department when they are not at Cooper.

By ROSE VANG-LOHNES
Quill staff writer

The School Resource Officers (SROs) have come back to Cooper this year. Administrators believe they will improve the school's safety and security. Head Principal Ms. Smith welcomed the SROs back this year for better

safety and to reflect "myself and the student voice." The SROs said they are here not only to protect students and staff, but to also help the school in any way they can. Smith added that they are here to be a resource, not for discipline. "We don't just arrest people," SRO Mr. Arthur said.

Both Cooper SROs, Arthur and Mr. Janson, are from the New Hope Police Department. They are at Cooper from 8 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. The SROs did not work at Cooper last school year due to changes in state laws that saw SROs across the state leave the school buildings in which they

worked. Once the wording of those laws were changed, SROs were able to return to most schools in which they had been working, including Cooper. When Janson was asked to come back to Cooper, he said he decided to because "I like it." He said he enjoys coming back to the school after

Head Principal Ms. Smith hopes their return will help make the school safer

getting done with patrol during the summer. He said he is ready for the change of pace a new school year provides.

When Arthur was asked to come to Cooper, he was also excited about the opportunity.

"This is something I've been wanting to do for a while," he said.

Arthur said he has a background in working with young people. In fact, he used to help the youth out in the streets and set up basketball tournaments for them. He wanted to give them something structured but fun, so he wants to continue to do that in his new career as a SRO.

"It definitely looks different but it's the same concept," he said.

The kind of relationship the SROs would like to build with Cooper students is one based on students being comfortable to talk with them.

"Come to me and talk to me about anything," Janson said. "You know, talk to me about grades or school work or home life. If they're having problems with their significant other, a friend, or just want to know if I watched the foot-

OFFICERS continues on page 2

Parking passes are key to driving to school

Not having a properly displayed parking pass can result in one's car having a boot placed on it, which costs \$20 to have removed

By LESLY TIPANQUIZA ESCOBAR
Quill staff writer

Cooper allows responsible juniors and seniors to access school parking. While all upperclassmen are allowed access to the parking lot, some students are not okay with the fact that younger students do not have the same option. Qualifying students are able to purchase a one-semester parking pass for \$90 or a full-year pass for \$170. All students who decide to drive in the morning but do not have the semester- or year-long pass must make sure to visit school bookkeeper Ms. Rucker in the main office to purchase a parking pass for \$3 daily.

"Students whose cars are parked in the lot without a pass will receive a warning and then a boot will be placed on the vehicle that ignored the warnings," Rucker said. "Applications for semester permits are on the wall by my door in the office."

Students have a variety of opinions about the benefits of driving to and parking at school. Domenica Amangandi (11) said it makes sense that juniors and seniors have access to parking passes because they are older, more mature and more responsible than sophomores and freshmen.

"It does not make sense to give a parking pass to sophomores and freshmen, who are not old enough to have so much responsibility when driving a car and do not have the driving knowledge they need to know," she said.

On the other hand, Yaidery De la Fuente Valdez (12) said she did not agree that only 11th and 12th grade students should have access to parking, since everyone has "the opportunity to get a license at age 16."

Another student who does not agree with the fact that only 11th and 12th grades can acquire a parking pass is Melat Kiflu (12).

"I think all students should be able to purchase a parking pass because



Photo by ROBIN JARMAN

Passes cost \$90 for one semester and \$170 for the full school year.

it allows students to have more convenient methods of transportation, especially if they encounter, or have encountered, bus issues," she said.

Another student, Vidal Lopez Leon (11), said that everyone should have the same opportunity to have a parking pass, especially since some ninth and 10th graders may have their own car and "deserve the same rights."

For students who do have a parking pass, Rucker said there are areas of the lot where their cars are not allowed.

"Students are not to be parked in the staff lot, by the football field where the fence side entry is or at the church," she said.

Student council loses funding for New York City trip

Members of the group are now looking at alternative methods to pay for a trip to receive award recognition

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Members of the Cooper student council were scheduled to take a trip to New York City in September 2024, but after the organization that was going to provide money for that trip lost funding, the students were unable to go.

The trip was scheduled for the weekend of September 20-23. The Cooper students were originally meant to go to celebrate their first-place win at a ceremony hosted by the organization Multiplying Good. Multiplying Good is an organization that recognizes community service and acts of good that students do all over the country. They awarded Cooper for community service work student council did during the 2023-2024 school year.

"I was honestly upset about it," Students in

Action liaison Kendall Carscadden (11) said. "[The trip] was, like, very exciting, but what basically happened was that Multiplying Good shut down and the whole award ceremony shut down. It was a really big upset, especially since, last year, I was the one who kind of planned to get the big group together and [the service project] was, like, my baby."

The first place prize Cooper won for the state of Minnesota came with three invitations to a ceremony in New York City and a spot at competing in nationals. The council did not want to exclude the rest of the group's members, as most members of the council helped with the planning and execution of the project, so they decided to raise funds so the rest of the council could attend as well.

In light of the group's success in the state contest, the members of student council were devastated when they found out that the organization behind the contest lost all its funding and all their hard work

was thought to be wasted.

"It was really hard," student council vice president Chad Hill (12) said. "Funding-wise, it was like, 'Well, what do we do now?'"

According to student council advisor Ms. Geise, the entire group was ecstatic when they learned that they won first place and had the opportunity to go to New York City. However, even though they lost funding, they still want to make this trip happen.

"Our hope is that we'll go in January just to celebrate the winning opposed to going to the ceremony," Geise said.

In order to help raise money for the potential trip, the group is doing every form of fundraising they can think of, from online fundraising to bagging at Cub Foods. As a result, Geise said the group is, as of now, on track to take their trip to the Big Apple.

OFFICERS
continued from page 1

ball game last night, we can talk. It is just a friendship, I guess.”

Arthur wants to make it clear that SROs are not at school to discipline students.

“Nine-and-a-half times out of 10, you’re not going to get in trouble,” he said.

Both officers emphasized that if students need someone to talk to, they can talk to the officers. Their core values as SROs are patience, approachability, willingness to teach and the ability to listen.

“We are more than a school cop,” Arthur said. “[We are] not just a ‘school officer,’ we are ‘School Resource Officer.’”

Smith said she was happy to bring the SROs back. She said she believes it is highly important to have SROs and for law enforcement to build relationships with students.

“I think it helps our students to understand that law enforcement officers are human. I think we can hear and see some negative things sometimes. Some of us have trauma in relation to law enforcement, so it’s nice to see our SROs communicate with students and talk with students,” Smith said.

Mr. Nelson, a Cooper assistant principal, played a part in getting the SROs back to Cooper. He advocated at the Robbinsdale district office to help make clear how much Cooper needs the SROs in the building.

At the same time, Nelson said he was concerned about how the student body would react to the SROs coming back. He said students may have trauma when it comes to law enforcement, but he knew how well the SROs would get along with the students. He knew they could build good relationships with the students.

“They’re not there to punish our students. They are there to help [the students] grow and keep our building safe,” Nelson said.

Ms. Wade, one of the front office staff members, said she has noticed how “the students aren’t as rowdy” due to the SROs being back in the building. She expressed how she felt unsafe when the SROs were taken out of the school last year.

“There are too many of us here to not have any type of protection,” Wade said.

While she is in the front office, Wade can see who comes in and out of the front doors. However, she said she cannot see all the doors in the building. As a result, she was sometimes scared and nervous for the students because sometimes they accidentally let people in who do not go to Cooper, which is a key reason why SROs are important.

“If you’re letting people in, we don’t know who’s in the building, so anybody could be in here doing God knows what,” she said.

Many members of the student body like having the SROs back.

“I personally feel a little bit more safe here,” Dominic Swanson (11) said.

Agreeing with Swanson was Marnida McCrownsey (11), a student council president. She

OFFICERS
continues on page 4

Cooper starts Spoken Word Poetry Club

The group, which meets after school on Wednesdays in the Media Center, is preparing for a poetry slam against Armstrong



Photo by ROBIN JARMAN

Helping to guide the writing of the students in the club is professional poet Frank Sentwali (back right).

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Cooper has introduced a new Spoken Word Poetry Club, which meets after school in the Media Center every Wednesday from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Many people might wonder what spoken word poetry even is. Media Specialist Mr. King, who started the club, said he would describe it as a live form of poetry.

“Spoken word is a type of poetry that is intended to be performed before a live audience. It is both personal and intended to

reach the listeners,” King said.

The club started on September 18, but new members are welcome to jump in at any time.

“We meet every Wednesday in the Media Center,” King said.

King said he started the club because of his love for spoken word.

“It’s a powerful way for students to engage with poetry and express themselves to the world. I also wanted to work more closely with students, which I don’t get to do much as a Media Specialist,” he said.

Through the club, students have a chance to compose their

own poems and learn how to present them in spoken-word style.

“Students will also work with a professional poet, Frank Sentwali. They will write and refine their own work,” King said.

Eventually, participants will have the chance to perform at a poetry showcase and a poetry slam against students from Armstrong High School.

“We intend to have a poetry slam against Armstrong, but we have to have enough poets to compete. A poetry slam is a competition where poets perform their best poems and are judged by non-par-

tisan judges. We plan to hold this event at Rockford Road Library,” King said.

The number of people King wants in the club in order to compete is between eight and 10.

One of the current members of the Spoken Word Poetry Club is Armonn Burns (11). He said he got involved in the group because it is unlike anything he has done in the past.

“The reason I decided to go to the Spoken Word Poetry Club is that I’ve never done anything like this in the past and I like trying new things, especially if it’s some form of competition,” Burns said.

Since joining the club, Burns said his favorite part is been hearing other people’s stories.

“My favorite part of the meetings is listening to the interesting stories people have to tell and the performances we watch,” he said.

One benefit Burns hopes to get out of the club is becoming more confident while speaking to other people.

“I think it’ll definitely help with my public speaking, speaking in front of an audience and just getting more comfortable with speaking my mind,” Burns said.

Burns said he encourages other people to join the club.

“We’re going to have a competition against Armstrong and we need at least four or five more people to do so. Also, everyone in it is nice and snacks are always provided,” Burns said.

The club is currently being paid for by a grant from the National Education Association Foundation. The grant is called an Envision Equity grant.

Hawks homecoming week deemed a success

From September 30 through October 5, students were able to attend multiple sporting events, a pepfest and a dance

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Cooper students and staff enjoyed homecoming week of September 30 to October 5. The festivities were not just limited to the dance on October 5. Instead, there was an entire week of theme days, events and sports to celebrate homecoming.

Monday, September 30 was “dress up as your class day.” Freshmen dressed up as babies, sophomores were toddlers, juniors were adults and seniors and staff were senior citizens.

“Dressing up as an infant or a baby was fun for my first homecoming week,” Stella Wu (9) said.

Tuesday, October 1 was “anything but backpack day.” Objects like kayaks, mini fridges, big rubber ducks and even a table made an appearance.

“My favorite thing was anything but a backpack day because it was so funny to see all the crazy and creative ideas people came up with,” Heavyn Xiong (10) said.

Wednesday, October 2 was a “pink out” day. This coincided with an effort to raise cancer awareness among students.

Thursday, October 3 was “barbecue dads and soccer moms” day. Students wore outfits that fit one or the other cli-



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

The October 4 pepfest was held to get Hawks ready for the football game.

che adult look.

“I wished the soccer moms carried more snacks and juice boxes like actual soccer moms,”

colors of blue and orange on that day.

October 4 was also the inaugural Cooper Hall of Fame

“My favorite thing was anything but a backpack day because it was so funny to see all the crazy and creative ideas people came up with,” Heavyn Xiong (10) said.

Malik Williams (12) said.

Finally, Friday, October 4 was “spirit day.” Everyone was encouraged to wear the school

induction ceremony, pepfest and football game. Inducted into the hall were Dan Johnson from the Class of 1978,

Mike Sunvold from the Class of 1986, Erin Brophy Brown from the Class of 1995, Rodney Williams, Jr. from the Class of 2009, Dr. Mike Favor, former Cooper head principal, and John Oelfke, former Cooper teacher, coach and activities director.

The pepfest was after eighth period on October 4 and all of the classes were cut a few minutes short to accommodate the event. Different student groups performed at the pepfest, including the Step Team and the cheerleaders.

Finally, the football game was from 7:15 p.m. to 9:50 p.m. and the opponent was the Jefferson Jaguars. The Hawks won the game 19-0.

Closing out the week was the homecoming dance on Saturday, October 5 from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. The dance was held in the gym.

“I got to go to the homecoming dance, which was a lot of fun. I also had a lot of new experiences that definitely made it worth going to,” Jackson Whaley (9) said.

Also enjoying the experience was foreign exchange student Carmelle Bouvard (12).

“I was with friends so it was fun, but as an international student, I didn’t know a lot of the songs, so for me, the music wasn’t that great,” Bouvard said.

The Quill

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The Quill welcomes Letters to the Editor. If you would like to send The Quill 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. The Quill reserves the right to edit all Letters to the Editor for space.

Advertising

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Editorial Policy

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.

Robbinsdale Cooper High School's The Quill is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association.



Personal growth helped by getting involved

Whether it is through competing in sports or taking part in an activity, there are many ways for students to get out of their comfort zones



Photo by TESSA LENOCH

The debate team is an after-school, academic activity that has helped participants become more confident with public speaking.

By ROSE VANG-LOHNES
Quill staff writer

When trying to get out of your comfort zone, you have to do challenging things that make you get out of your usual routines. For example, I was never comfortable speaking in front of a group of people but I wanted to be, so I joined the debate and speech teams. It was nerve-racking, I will admit. I wanted to quit when it was starting to get more challenging but I'm glad I didn't. It helped me build my confidence to speak and I got to meet some amazing people. As this example shows, joining school activities and sports is a good chance for students to grow as people.

I believe that joining any school activity or sport will build your confidence. The best way to build your confidence is to push

yourself past your own limits. Speech and debate pushed me past my limits when it came to speaking in front of a group of people. As a result of that discomfort and having my limits pushed, I gained the confidence to speak in front of people and to speak up for myself. Being able to have confidence in yourself will help you get far not just in school, but in life. You will develop faith in yourself and you won't need others to constantly validate your decisions or what you do because you will have that confidence for yourself.

Along with the confidence you build within yourself, you will also build a sense of community. When you are part of a club or sport that you enjoy, you will build bonds with your teammates and coaches. Having a sense of community is crucial for students. According to the California Department of Ed-

ucation, "students will learn and thrive" when they have a support system. Joining speech and debate helped me meet very skilled people. I get along with my teammates and my coaches, so I always look forward to our practices since I know I will have a good laugh every time. Having built this sense of community, I became more confident in the work that I did. Both speech and debate require a lot of research and writing. Having built these skills and having a community that wants to help me improve, I got better at writing essays and doing research for my classes.

Many sports and clubs will help you learn what group responsibility is. Everyone has a job and a task to complete to help the team grow and succeed. During your time on a team, you may need to practice a skill that you are lacking or you may need to provide

assistance to your teammates. For instance, during debate, everyone on the team is assigned a topic to research. We are all depending on each other to get our research done so, on tournament day, we can look at each other's documents to get the information we need to debate the topic. This is a group responsibility we all share as teammates. Group responsibility helps you learn how to keep yourself accountable when others are relying on you.

There are many benefits to joining a school sport, club or activity when trying to get out of your comfort zone. Three key benefits to getting involved are building your confidence, becoming part of a community and learning what group responsibility is. Getting out of your comfort zone is not easy but it is necessary. This is your chance to get as much as you can out of high school.

The Graduate

Former Quill editor-in-chief and member of the Class of 2024 Noah Plahn shares his insights about life after high school in the first installment of an ongoing series

One must take advantage of time in school

Although it is a cliché, the high school years go by faster than one would expect

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

As Cooper enters its 61st year of educating students, it welcomes in a new batch of freshmen as each grade level progresses, filling in the holes left by the previous graduating class. In the blink of an eye, four years go by, and in even less time, you're slowly erased from the everyday thoughts of most members of the building.

Luckily for me, I have been given the opportunity to reinstate myself in the community at Cooper as The Quill's inaugural alumni writer. My first task of the year for issue one is to discuss what it's like to graduate from Cooper and reflect on the last four years.

The Class of 2024 was the last class to graduate after enduring COVID-19 and distance learning as ninth graders. Although the ripple effect of the virus was felt all the way down to students as young as kindergarten, I can only speak from my experience as a high school student during that trying time.

To put things into perspective, during my eighth-grade year, I had no vision for life after middle school. I was simply coasting my way out of that building, hoping Cooper would come sooner.

When COVID-19 hit, students rejoiced as they were sent home expecting to see each other in a mere two weeks. As time progressed, those weeks began to stack up, and eventually, the news broke that we would not be returning to school that academic year.

At the time, I had no heartfelt sentiment toward my school. Looking back now, it saddens me to think about everything I missed out on. Suddenly, my temporary goodbyes to friends and staff gave way to a storm of distance learning madness. Still, to this day, there are staff and students that I have never spoken to after saying, "See you in two weeks!"

But as they say, time heals all wounds, and as the 2020-2021 school year started, freshmen began their high school experience at home on a computer. For months, students tried to adapt to distance learning. Some succeeded, but many struggled. After months of tribulations, triumphs were finally ahead.

In the last few months of that school year, Cooper attempted a social distancing environment that allowed students to attend school in person. Although it wasn't what we envisioned as a high school experience, it allowed us to get out of our house and get some idea of what everyday life once was.

As time progressed, the pains of missing out on middle school graduation, the endless hours of online learning and missed social interaction faded away. The mask mandate was lifted, public events became acceptable and the high school experience was finally coming to fruition.

My junior and senior years became filled once again with exciting hobbies such as sports and journalism. Despite the weird dynamic of only getting a truly "normal" year of high school three years in, when you become an upperclassman, you begin to watch the clock run out on your academic career.

If you're at that point, or soon to be, slow down, smell the roses and enjoy the scenes while they're still there. Although it's cliché, time really does move faster as you get older. However, it's cliché for a reason, so listen up.

Senior year is one of the best years of your life, but don't rush it. What makes that year so special is the journey to get there. This is it, you've made it to the top, so finish strong and

TAKE ADVANTAGE
continues on page 6

Electronics hinder, help classroom learning

How one uses their devices can make the difference between excelling as a student or failing to earn a required credit

By LORPU SUMO
Quill staff writer

Having electronics other than Chromebooks in class during lessons can be distracting. I notice at Cooper that many students use electronic devices in class during lessons, especially phones and earpods. I have a friend who goes to a school that is very strict about where or when you can use your phones or earpods. Not only are they not allowed to be on their phones or other electronic devices during class, they are not even allowed during lunch. That strict electronics policy helps students at that school be more focused and successful in their academics. In contrast, here at Cooper, students get distracted very easily because of the use of phones or earpods while the teacher is teaching or giving instructions. At the end of the day, students get left behind in the lesson and tend not to be successful in their academics because of electronics.

Using electronic devices in-

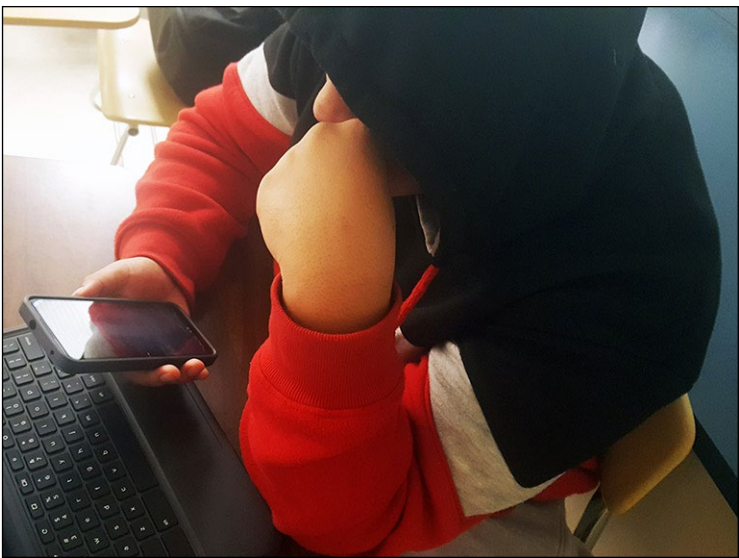


Photo by CHIMUAL YANG

Students often can be found on their phones when teachers look the other way.

appropriately can be harmful to students at school. Imagine being on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram while the teacher is teaching. That student then leaves the class without getting the lesson for the day. Imagine how frustrating it is for a teacher to explain one thing more than five

times because students choose to be on their phones instead of listening. Imagine a teacher not completing the lesson for the day because they had to spend half of the class time telling students to put their electronics away. These are just a few reasons why electronic devices can be

a problem.

Even though electronics in the class can be distracting, they can also be helpful. For example, when getting prepared for tests or other assessments, we use our Chromebooks or phones to play games like Kahoot or to take quizzes. Sometimes, we use our headphones or earpods to listen to music while doing our work. Electronics in school can also help some people work faster. For example, when teachers put notes on the board and both the teacher and students are running out of time, taking pictures of the notes can be helpful for both the teacher and the students.

All of these are reasons why electronics should only be used in appropriate ways during school. Electronics are very tempting and distracting, especially when you have a smartphone with social media. Students are most likely to be successful in class when the use of technology only happens for school-related reasons.

Full editorial policy of the Cooper High School Quill

The purpose of The Quill is to function as an open and public forum for the thoughts and opinions of the student body of Cooper High School, as a means of expression for the Quill staff, and to help create a more solid community for our school through news, information, thought, humor and opinion. Student editors are responsible for all Quill content decisions.

The Quill's policy regarding profanity and obscenity will reflect the practice of professional daily publications of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. It is under the final control of the student editors to strike any unneeded words from

quotes that are considered offensive if these changes are within reason and still accurately retain the meaning of the quote.

Editorials will be presented in their respective section of the paper if the issue concerned is timely and of consequence to the community. However, editorials will not be printed that intentionally offend or hurt any racial, ethnic, gender or religious groups in the school.

All news stories, editorials and advertisements should be of a

content pertaining to the interests of the Cooper community and surrounding communities. No material will be refused based solely on the views expressed therein.

News and feature stories are under the creative control of the staff and editors. The staff of The Quill

will attribute each article to its own writer and will make every effort to retain accuracy in facts and quotes. If a mistake of significance is made, the following issue will address it in a correc-

tional section.

Illustrations and photographs should be tasteful and not be offensive toward any groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Advertising space will be available to all advertisers, yet the editors reserve the right to deny space to any advertisement based on the previously stated policies. The cost of advertising will be determined by the advisor and the advertising manager.

Electronic distribution of The Quill will be handled by staff members on the day of the paper's release.

From the Editors

Midnight Cowboy remains relevant critique of U.S.

Award-winning film has more to offer than just its most famous line of dialogue

By TESSA LENOCH
Quill staff writer

Midnight Cowboy is a film directed by John Schlesinger that was released on May 25, 1969. While the film would go on to win the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1970, its largest impact is arguably the famous “I’m walkin’ here!” line that is now cemented as a recognizable quote in pop culture and the mouth of any high schooler imitating a New Yorker. However, *Midnight Cowboy* offers so much beneath the surface of its iconic actors and lines. It is a story about the American Dream and the struggles that come with pursuing it. To avoid falling into the same traps the film’s bright-eyed and naive protagonist Joe Buck (John Voight) falls into, the audience must look past the glamor and categorization of this movie as a classic “buddy movie” and delve into the melancholy of its themes.

In the film, Joe Buck, a stereotypical Texan cowboy, moves to the big city in an attempt to re-invent his life by becoming a hustler. Bringing along only a few necessities and his trusty hand-held radio, he’s ready to bring some sparkle and some money into his life. However, despite the beautifully illustrated ads and promise of opportunity, making it in New York is not easy, even as a tall white guy in the 1960s. This new dream just isn’t quite working out for him, as his naive optimism and trust are taken advantage of repeatedly.

Luckily, Joe makes a friend. A sickly and suspicious Rico “Ratso” Rizzo (Dustin Hoffman) offers the cowboy a new opportunity to get his business off the ground. For just \$20, he’ll introduce Joe to a pimp. Joe, being as trusting as he is, finds himself even more dejected after he discovers he’s been conned. After a few nights of aimlessly searching, Joe finds Rico sitting at the bar of a diner. For a moment, even though he is unbelievably angry, his face lights up. Despite his failures thus far in the city, and the fact this man has stolen his money, Joe cannot help but smile at a recognizable face as if he is a friend. After a back-and-forth fight, Rico offers Joe a place to live. In reality, he offers to let Joe squat with him in an abandoned apartment, which the cowboy accepts begrudgingly.

It is at this point in the story that the audience learns Rico’s dream: to move to Florida. Unfortunately, he is homeless, sick and a con man with no means to receive help for his illness, let alone move to Florida. Similar to Joe and his warped perspective of New York, Rico believes his life will automatically be better when he gets to Florida. Trying to move up from their pasts of being a simple shoe-shiner’s son and a dishwasher, respectively, both characters believe in their dreams wholeheartedly. Of course, these dreams are what has been sold to them through flashy advertisements and embellished stories. In America, you can “reinvent yourself, live the life you deserve, and succeed.” Through selling blood, going to artsy parties, and sacrificing health and safety to cross that border into utopia, the pair work hard to achieve a move to Miami. Sadly, Rico is only getting sicker, and Joe can’t seem to pick up the work he needs.

Midnight Cowboy presents the audience with two characters from different parts of the country, with different pasts and different aspirations. Despite this, their journey and their relationship are relatable to many Americans, past and present. Throughout the lessons the film shows us, their friendship is clearly the highlight of the movie, so much so that some are even distracted from the commentary the movie is making on America as a whole. Interpreting the movie in any way will still lead one to the conclusion that the connection between Joe and Rico is a strong one, which leads to the conclusion that, even if the attempt to chase a dream is destined to fail, there is still hope. That hope is friendship, it’s kindness. This is the non-advertised and non-corporate American dream.

Being the first and only X-rated film to receive the Academy Award for Best Picture, it is indisputable that *Midnight Cowboy* had a great impact on film and helped further film as an art form. Whether you look at its story and characters from the perspective of 1969 or 2024, it’s relatable, it’s funny and it’s relevant. Overall, it is a five-star movie.

Hawk musicians prep for Fall Festival

Students across school's choir, orchestra, band programs are practicing the songs they will play at annual concert



Photo by ANASTASIA VERDOLJAK

Much like last year's show (above), the 2024 concert will take place at Orchestra Hall and feature musicians from across the district.

By TRISTAN JAY TOLENTINO
Quill staff writer

The Robbinsdale District 281 Fall Music Festival will take place at Orchestra Hall on November 11. This event is scheduled to feature 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 every November. High schools around Minnesota have similar showcases at Orchestra Hall to perform for the public during the fall and winter months.

With the night of the event approaching, Cooper musicians are working hard to prepare. According to orchestra teacher Ms. Verdoljak, the theme for this year’s concert is “opera-adjacent music.” Helping shape the festival is guest conductor Dr. Dale Kruz, who will be working with Cooper musicians in preparation for the show. Currently, each music program at Cooper is getting ready for their part of the event.

Choir

Members of Cooper’s choir program are performing an assortment of songs at this year’s fall festival. One song is “When the Foeman Bares His Steel,”

a comedic number from *The Pirates Of Penzance*. The song tells the story of men going into a battle and being sent to “glory and the grave.”

Next up is a piece of music about having fun while being a little tipsy. “Dance a Cachucha” is a fast-tempo song from the opera *The Gondoliers* that has a ballroom dancing feel. Choir teacher Ms. Rowan said it is an intriguing piece of music that

off soft and gentle before gradually becoming more dramatic as the story continues.

“It can get challenging in some parts, but other parts are really easy and, overall, a really good experience,” choir member Jeremiah McClellan (12) said of this song.

Orchestra

Also prepping for the fall show is Cooper’s orchestra pro-

moving.

A second song for orchestra students is “Intermezzo” from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. This piece is about love and betrayal. As a result, the melodic tone changes as the song moves from a feeling of love at the beginning to sorrow and sadness at the end. According to musician Leah Blanchette (12), the piece’s slow tempo is providing some challenges.

“‘Intermezzo’ is oddly hard for a slow song, but I like it,” she said. “‘Evening Prayer’ is easy but the key signature keeps messing me up.”

Band

In addition to playing on “Make Our Garden Grow,” “When the Foeman Bares His Steel” and “Evening Prayer,” Cooper band members will also be featured on “Skyward Spirits.”

“It’s a brand new piece that premiered last year and was published this year,” band teacher Mr. Hahn said.

“Skyward Spirits” is a song that creates an atmosphere of soaring through the sky and finding an adventure. The piece is loud and dramatic, a mini symphony that creates a movie in your mind.

“The band is playing really strongly this year and I’m very excited for them to show off on their feature,” Hahn said.

The Robbinsdale District 281 Fall Music Festival will take place at Orchestra Hall on November 11. This event is scheduled to feature performances by the Armstrong and Cooper Bel Canto, Cantori and Concert choirs, Wind Ensemble groups, Symphony Orchestra and the Robbinsdale Elementary All-District Choir.

moves and swings, “making it a fun piece to listen to.”

A third song that will be performed is “Make Our Garden Grow” from *Candide*. This song is set against the backdrop of a wedding as two people make their vows to each other. The choir singers will be accompanied by the orchestra during this heartwarming piece, which starts

gram. One track they will be performing is “Evening Prayer” from *Hansel & Gretel*. This song occurs in the opera as Hansel and Gretel are alone in the woods and beginning to fall asleep. For this song, the orchestra will be joined by members of the band. According to Verdoljak, the piece is peaceful and “reminiscent of a lullaby” as each note is gently

Theater program readies its fall performance

The 2024 fall show, *A Midsummer Night's Debacle*, will make its Cooper debut at the end of November

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

The theater department plans to perform an original piece for its fall play, *A Midsummer Night's Debacle*. This show will be performed four times between November 29 and December 2.

“I find the script quite funny,” cast member Anna Smith (12) said.

Smith plays the role of Elena in the show.

“It’s a comedy and there are a lot of pretty amusing moments that are really fun to act out,” Smith said.

The cast consists of 22 members of all grades. Tryouts and rehearsals for the show started

in late September. The set will be brought to life by the students, who are helping with the technical aspects of the show. The

teacher and show director Ms. Wurzer said. “The students cast in the show are helping me put together the second act. We rehearse

a chance for them to showcase their hard work, not only on the acting side of things, but on the technical and script sides as well.

“Opening nights are usually so full of energy,” Smith said. “Everyone is excited and nervous to finally show off a show we have been working so hard on. It feels very rewarding to do.”

Performances of the play include a senior matinee on November 29 at 4:30 p.m., and regular shows on November 30, December 1 and December 2 at 7 p.m. All shows will take place in the Cooper Auditorium and tickets will be available for purchase in advance and at the box office window the night of the event.

“Opening nights are usually so full of energy,” cast member Anna Smith (12) said. “Everyone is excited and nervous to finally show off a show we have been working so hard on. It feels very rewarding to do.”

students are even writing some of the script.

“I’ve been working on the script all summer,” Cooper theater

every day after school.”

Cast members said they are excited for their first performance of the school year. Smith said this is

RESOURCE OFFICERS COME BACK TO COOPER continued from page 2

said the school has had situations involving threats. Knowing that the SROs are at Cooper can help her be in school more comfortably.

Taking a different point of view was Samuel Momanyi (12), who said he is personally “neu-

tral” in his feelings about the SROs being back. However, he added that he thinks their presence is “a positive thing” for the school.

Finally, Kevin Caples (11), who has had encounters with SROs in the past, said the rela-

tionship between students and SROs can be complicated.

“It was not always on the best of terms, but the SROs were just doing their jobs,” Caples said.

Ultimately, Janson and Arthur want students to know they

are here to be someone to talk to and someone you can go to for help. Also, they added that, if students need that little push to talk to them, they have a whole bowl of free Skittles in their office for whenever students want to stop by.

Harold and Kumar is worth revisiting

The classic "stoner" comedy, which was first released in 2004, holds up well thanks to its ridiculous humor, good acting

By AKEYA EASLEY
Quill staff writer

Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle was directed by Danny Leiner and released in 2004. I chose to review this film due to its unique mix of comedy and social messages, its focus on a diverse cast and its status as a cult classic. Additionally, the film's focus on themes of friendship, identity and perseverance caught my interest. *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle* uses effective makeup and cinematography to enhance its comedic elements and highlight the protagonists' journey.

As the title suggests, the main characters of the film are Harold Lee (John Cho) and Kumar Patel (Kal Penn), who are best friends and roommates. Harold works for an investment bank while Kumar is being pressured by his father to go to medical school. On a Friday night after smoking marijuana, the duo get a case of the munchies and decide to head to White Castle. However, after learning that the nearest White Castle has been closed down, the duo set out to find a different White Castle location. This decision results in an epic journey that presents Harold and Kumar with one comedic challenge after another.

In a scene during which Harold and Kumar meet the character named Freakshow, a mechanic with extreme skin conditions and boils, makeup plays a critical role. This scene is important as it marks a significant point in the protagonists' journey. Harold and Kumar's car breaks down and they are forced to seek help from Freakshow. As they enter his garage, they are initially horrified by his appearance. Freakshow's grotesque makeup, featuring exaggerated boils and scars, is carefully crafted to elicit a strong reaction from both the characters and the audience. The makeup in this scene plays a crucial role in establishing Freakshow's character. It visu-



Photo by NEW LINE CINEMA

The performances of Kal Penn (left) and John Cho (right) help anchor the more exaggerated moments in the film.

ally communicates his rough, outlandish persona without the need for extensive dialogue. The grotesque appearance not only provides comedic shock value, it also sets the tone for the absurdity that Harold and Kumar continuously face. The makeup design enhances the story by making the character memorable and emphasizing the surreal, comedic elements of Harold and Kumar's journey. The impact of the makeup on the audience is significant, as it immediately creates a visceral reaction, drawing them into the bizarre world of the film. The exaggerated features help to maintain the film's comedic and absurd tone, ensuring that the audience remains engaged and entertained by the peculiar characters the protagonists encounter.

Another filmmaking element well utilized in the film is cinematography. Camera use is

especially evident in the scene when Harold and Kumar finally reach White Castle. This climactic scene marks the end of their wild and funny journey. In this scene, the camera captures the relief and triumph on Harold and Kumar's faces as they finally see the White Castle sign. The use of wide

scene by visually emphasizing the culmination of their quest. The bright, inviting lighting of White Castle contrasts with the darker, more hectic scenes earlier in the film, symbolizing the end of their struggles and the reward for their perseverance. The use of wide shots and steady camera movements creates a sense of resolution and accomplishment. The impact of the cinematography on the audience is profound, as it visually underscores the themes of perseverance and reward. The careful framing and lighting help to convey the emotional payoff of the journey, making the audience feel a sense of relief and satisfaction along with the characters. This technique effectively enhances the comedic and narrative impact of the film's climax.

The central message of *HAROLD AND KUMAR* continues on page 7

The central message of *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle* is the importance of friendship and perseverance in the face of adversity. One scene that directly shows this message is when Harold and Kumar, after numerous setbacks, finally reach the White Castle restaurant.

shots showcases the bright, inviting lights of the restaurant, which is in contrast to the dark, chaotic journey they have been on. As they walk toward the entrance, the camera follows them with smooth, steady movements, emphasizing the significance of their achievement. The cinematography plays a crucial role in this

Viewers wanting Halloween treat should see Coraline

With the film returning to movie theaters for its 15th anniversary, it is a perfect chance to catch *Coraline* on the big screen

By EVANELY FRAIRE MORALES
Quill staff writer

Coraline was directed by Henry Selick and released to the public on February 6, 2009. I chose to analyze this film because it is a stop-motion, animated movie that combines elements of fantasy and horror. Thanks to its unique visual style, captivating storytelling and its ability to appeal to both children and adults, *Coraline* is a film that will appeal to a wide assortment of viewers. The Henry Selick movie *Coraline* uses effective editing and special effects to teach the audience the importance of bravery, curiosity and the consequences of seeking perfection.

As the film begins, Coraline (Dakota Fanning) moves to a new home, where she feels bored and alone. One day, she finds a bricked-up passage in the wall as she explores the house. Soon after, she discovers that, during the night, the passage opens up. After traveling through the passage, she finds a new world that seems to be an alternate version of her life with a slight difference: everything is better.

One additional difference that Coraline finds odd is that everyone has buttons for eyes. In this world, Coraline's Other Mother (Teri Hatcher) invites her to stay forever if she lets her sew buttons on her eyes. It is at this point that Coraline begins to realize this alternate



Photo by FOCUS FEATURES

The film depicts the journey of its title character as she discovers a new world.

universe is a trick designed to lure her in so that her Other Mother can essentially take her soul. Coraline must then save herself and rescue her parents from this world before it is too late.

Coraline features stunning special effects and meticulous editing to create a captivating and immersive world that draws viewers into Coraline's adventurous journey. The filmmaking technique of editing helps to create a seamless flow of the story and enhances the overall viewing experience. One scene in which editing plays a critical role is when Coraline discovers the hidden door that leads to the other world in her new house. Editing is a powerful storytelling tool that shapes how the audience experiences the film. In the scene when Coraline finds the door, the ed-

iting builds suspense with the series of cuts that highlight her discovery and the door's mysterious qualities. The editing pace quickens as she approaches the door, creating a sense of urgency, and then slows down as she examines the door, drawing the viewer into her curiosity. This use of tempo and rhythm in editing emphasizes the significance of the door and sets the tone for the fantastical events that follow. Editing manipulates time and tension making the viewer feel Coraline's growing curiosity and unease. The scenes quick cuts between her face, the tiny door and the door lock crank up the suspense, making your heart race a bit. Then, when she finally opens the door, the slower cuts allow you to soak in the moment, creating a mix of awe and anxiety about what

is on the other side.

In *Coraline*, special effects bring the magical and otherworldly elements of the story to life. One scene in which this filmmaking element is used is when Coraline discovers the Other World for the first time. The special effects allow the viewers to see a mesmerizing transition from the gray, mundane reality of Coraline's real world to the vibrant, alternate universe that she is entering. The use of special effects to create the color contrast underscores the allure and initial charm of the new world. The audience is drawn in by the visual spectacle, which not only serves to captivate but also to establish a sense of wonder and the potential for hidden dangers, mirroring Coraline's own mix of excitement and apprehension.

The central message of *Coraline* is to appreciate what you have and understand that seemingly perfect alternatives can often be deceptive and dangerous. In the scene when Coraline realizes that the Other Mother's world is a trap and her other parents have sinister intentions, it directly conveys the central message of the film. This moment highlights the dangers of chasing after an idealized reality and the importance of valuing one's own imperfect life. The scene connects to the central theme

CORALINE continues on page 7

Dune: Part Two improves upon original film

The filmmakers bring the action, drama and storytelling up a notch in sequel

By HODAN HIRSI
Quill staff writer

Dune: Part Two is directed by Denis Villeneuve and its release date was March 1, 2024. I chose to review *Dune: Part Two* because I enjoyed *Dune: Part One* and wanted to see the continuation of the story. I also chose this film because it is an adaptation of the well-known 1965 novel *Dune*, written by Frank Herbert. *Dune: Part Two* uses outstanding costume design and special effects to convey a story that teaches viewers that everyone has to take their own journey to find who they really are.

Following the fall of House Atreides in *Dune: Part One*, the sequel finds exiled Duke Paul Atreides (Timothée Chalamet) continuing his journey of enlightenment in the barren deserts of Arrakis. As Paul embraces the ways of the Fremen warriors who have taken him in, and falls deeper in love with the Fremen fighter Chani (Zendaya), rumors about Paul's status as the prophesied Dune Messiah divide the tribe. Meanwhile, the members of House Harkonnen tighten their grip on Arrakis and exploit the planet's spice-rich terrain for their own power and profit. These two factions are on a collision course as the film moves toward its action-filled conclusion.

One filmmaking element that is central to *Dune: Part Two* is costume design because it is integral to each character's identity and culture. Near the end of the film, we see the Fremen in engage in a massive battle with the Harkonnens along with the other great houses. During this extended battle scene, you can differentiate the warriors from both sides based on the costume design. The Fremen are wearing clothing that is tailored to their desert lifestyle, while the Harkonnens are wearing outfits that seem more appropriate for their home planet. This filmmaking technique is quite useful for the viewer as they are able to differentiate the Harkonnen soldiers from the Fremen warriors, which makes it easier to tell what is happening in the battle and who we should be rooting for without having to second guess ourselves.

Another key filmmaking element is special effects, which play a vital role in creating the dystopian world of the movie. While the concluding battle clearly makes use of special effects, an equally important use of special effects occurs much earlier in the film when Paul summons and rides a sandworm as a rite of passage. A physical special effect is the device Paul plants in the sand to summon the worm. As the creature eventually approaches, CGI is used to depict the approach of the sandworm and its movements beneath the sand. The sandworm eventually makes its way to the dune where Paul is located, causing it to cave in and giving Paul a chance to mount the worm. Clearly, the sandworm itself is not real; it is made up of computer-generated visual effects and supported by other practical, physical effects. This combination of approaches helps the viewers comprehend the movements of the sandworm and makes the creature seem as realistic as possible.

Among the various themes

DUNE: PART TWO continues on page 7

Premier Performers

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

Max Maldonado

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Max Maldonado (12) is a Cooper musician who participates in the school's orchestra program.

"I've done orchestra ever since sixth grade, but didn't sign up for orchestra freshman year," he said. "I eventually signed up for orchestra because I wanted to play the same instrument with a friend."

Maldonado cited the chance to play more advanced music and the ability to expand his music knowledge as two reasons why he is glad he returned to orchestra. He also said the chance to perform live is a fun part of orchestra.

"I enjoy being part of the Fall Festival at Orchestra Hall the most," he said. "Also, the winter concerts at Cooper are



Photo by M. WASHINGTON

always fun."

As a bass player, Maldonado has become an important part of the orchestra.

"Basically, I need to be at every concert due to the limited number of basses we have," Maldonado said.

Given his long involvement with music, Maldonado said his orchestra class is the best part of his school day because "playing music at school is fun." He also said he enjoys math as a subject.

"I really like my math classes because I find math to be fun," Maldonado said.

Outside of school, Maldonado's chief hobbies are skateboarding, snowboarding and cooking.

After graduating, Maldonado plans to attend college.

"I want to major in mechanical or computer engineering," he said.

Leyton Unzicker

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Taking part in multiple music groups at Cooper is Leyton Unzicker (12), who currently has a role in Concert Choir, Symphony Orchestra, Marching Band, Chamber Singers and Drop the Octave. Additionally, he plans to participate in the school musical this winter.

"I enjoy singing and I like the choir, which is why I also sing in the other groups," Unzicker said. "As for playing instruments, I joined orchestra in freshman year and Marching Band in tenth grade. I play the standing bass and bass drum. Tenth grade is also the first year I worked with the winter musical."

The long list of groups in which he takes part has created many favorite music memories for Unzicker during



Photo by M. WASHINGTON

his time at Cooper.

"Singing at Orchestra Hall and playing with the Symphony Orchestra for the Fall Festival was a great experience," he said. "Marching at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Chicago with Marching Band was also an amazing experience."

Unzicker cited his choir class as a highlight of his school day. However, he added that chemistry and AVID are two additional courses he enjoys.

"Chemistry is a fun and interesting topic, while my AVID group has been together for a long time and we support each other," Un-

zicker said.

As he looks toward next fall, Unzicker said he will attend the University of Wisconsin, Madison to study botany.

"I will also play music as much as I am able to," he said.

Eliana VanSistine

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Eliana VanSistine (12) is involved in choir and theater at Cooper as well as dance outside of school.

"I'm in Concert Choir, Chamber Singers and Bella Voce. I also stage manage the fall show and am in the winter musicals," she said.

VanSistine has been part of choir since sixth grade and theater since tenth grade.

"I joined choir because I didn't want to take a general music class in middle school," she said. "I joined theater my sophomore year because all of my friends were in the shows and said the director was cool."

Meanwhile, dancing has been part of VanSistine's life for 11 years.

"I had wanted to be a dancer ever since I watched *Barbie and the 12*



Photo by R. VANGLOHINES

Dancing Princesses," she said.

VanSistine's involvement in these many activities has given her a chance to take on some leadership roles.

"In choir, I am a choir assistant, so I organize and sort choir robes and music. In theater, I stage manage the fall show, which means I oversee the crew and make sure the stage is set properly. At dance, I am an assistant, which means I work with the kids and help teach them dance," she said.

While the arts are a passion for VanSistine, she said history is the subject she finds most interesting when it comes to school.

"I just enjoy learning about history and have had very good history teachers," she said.

Next fall, VanSistine will be starting college. While she is not sure if she will have time for the arts, she is already certain she is heading for law school.

David Hole

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

David Hole (12) is a Hawk musician who plays in band. He also takes part in the Marching Band and Jazz Band groups.

"I have been in band since fifth grade. My father encouraged me to play trombone because he did in school as well," he said.

Of the many aspects of being in band that Hole enjoys, he said that his peers are the highlight.

"For all three groups, I enjoy the people the most, but playing music is also fun," Hole said.

Given Hole's long involvement in band, he has been given many leadership roles this year.

"I am first trombone in Wind Ensemble as well as Jazz Band, and I am



Photo by R. VANGLOHINES

section leader of Low Brass in Marching Band. I offer guidance and support for the second- and third-chair trombones," Hole said.

As he looks ahead to the rest of the year, Hole said he is excited for the band's trip to Washington, D.C. and for the chance to play in the Pit Orchestra for the winter musical.

Outside of music, Hole's favorite subjects in school are math and science. It is that combination that is influencing his thoughts about college.

"I like to build things," he said. "I plan on going to college for engineering or piloting."

However, Hole added that music will likely remain a part of his life after high school.

"I plan on minoring in music," he said. "I am looking at Mankato State and the University of Minnesota."

Art classes challenge students

Teachers like Ms. Mielke hope to teach Hawks how to solve problems in novel ways



Photo by ROBIN JARMAN

Ms. Mielke works with students in her International Baccalaureate (IB) Art HL class on September 25.

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Many Cooper students take art classes as an elective in order to cover their credit requirements for graduating from high school. According to the students who take these classes and the instructors who teach them, there are many benefits to having an art class experience during one's high school career.

Art teacher Ms. Mielke said that art class has a positive impact on students. In fact, she said that is one thing that drove her into teaching art.

"I have always wanted to be a teacher," she said. "When I went to college, I thought about being a social studies or history teacher, but after having one semester without visual art, I decided to change my major to art education. It was clear to me that I should go into something that doesn't feel like 'work,' something that is challenging, and an area where I am able to express myself"

Her many years of teaching experience have shown Mielke that art class has a beneficial impact on students.

"Visual art classes support social and emotional health and development. I truly cherish working with kids and young adults and giving them the tools to be creative and express themselves," she said.

The ability to express oneself is a key goal of Mielke's when it comes to teaching art.

"My main goal in teaching visual art to students is to give them opportunities to creatively express themselves, learn the tools to analyze and read visual media in their everyday lives and to become creative problem solvers," she said.

Of the many art classes she teaches, Mielke said the most challenging is

International Baccalaureate (IB) Art SL and HL.

"They are the most wonderful group of creative weirdos and my challenge is that I always want to engage and amaze them. I am always looking for new ways to get them excited and the best part is they respond so well. Our expectations of each other are so high that we are always challenging each other to be greater and work harder. Other than them, ninth graders are always tough the first few weeks of school, but they're more exhausting than challenging," Mielke said.

Although art classes are electives, Mielke said that she feels fortunate to work at a school where art is valued by

When it comes to the student perspective, there are many reasons why they take and stay in art classes. One student, Alaina Anderson (12), said she enjoys learning new skills.

"It was interesting learning different art techniques," Anderson said.

Meanwhile, Sam Peterson (12) cited their enjoyment of a specific medium.

"I just really like drawing," they said.

Thanks to their time in art classes, students have experienced different benefits.

"It made me more passionate about art and gave me more motivation to work on my own personal art," Lynette Jaimes (12) said.

Agreeing with Jaimes was Anderson, who said that art is now one of their favorite pastimes.

"I have started getting very into painting and it has become a hobby," Anderson said.

Those students who decided to take the challenge of continuing on in advanced art classes at the IB level said there are enjoyable differences between the introductory and advanced classes.

"With IB art, you have more free range to draw what you want, while in normal art classes, you have to follow specific guidelines for each unit," Jaimes said.

Another big difference is the amount of work required in the IB art class.

"In IB art, there's a lot more work, actual hard deadlines and creative freedom," Jaimes said. "In any normal art class, you're usually learning one skill, like painting or sketching with pencil, but in IB art, you can use whatever tools you want for a project and also learn about other tools. There isn't a specific way to do things, and if there is, you still get creative freedom."

"They are the most wonderful group of creative weirdos and my challenge is that I always want to engage and amaze them," Ms. Mielke said. "I am always looking for new ways to get them excited and the best part is they respond so well. Our expectations of each other are so high that we are always challenging each other to be greater and work harder."

ONE MUST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TIME IN SCHOOL continued from page 3

relish in your successes.

Despite our up-and-down journey, the Class of 2024 got back on track and made up for all the time that was taken away from us, and for that fact, we are lucky. Some people, such as Class of 2020, never got to go back. The

fact that we did is something I'll always appreciate.

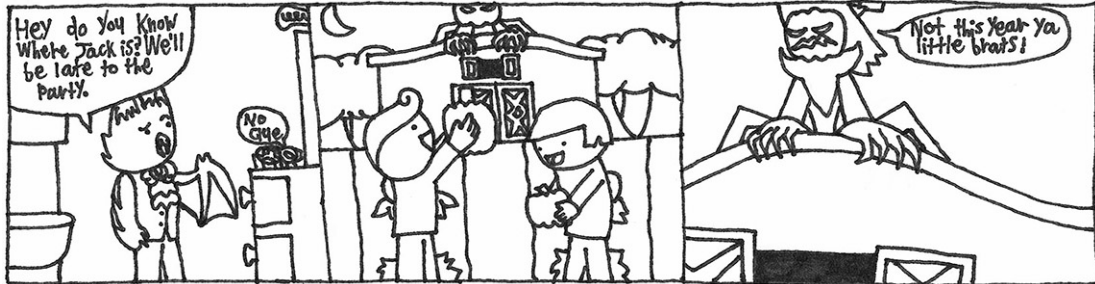
Looking back on the last four years, I do not think of how sad it was to endure such a confusing time or how much I wish I could've done. Instead, I look back with pride at how far we've come.

Maybe everyone has strong feelings of adoration for their class, and what we went through wasn't unique, but what I can say is what we went through, when we went through it, has tied a group of people together forever. I'm grateful to be where I am now.

Quill Comics Corner

Pumpkin Patch

By John Papenfuss



Mascot costumes get upgraded

The Robbinsdale Cooper Alumni Association helped fund the purchase of two new outfits



Photo by NED NELSON

The two new mascot costumes made their debut at the homecoming pepfest on October 4.

By TESSA LENOCH
Quill staff writer

Cooper has purchased new mascot costumes to increase the pride surrounding sports teams, academics and the school as a whole. Money for the purchase was made possible by a recent donation from the Robbinsdale Cooper Alumni Association (RCAA).

According to Activities Secretary Ms. Thurston, Cooper's Hawk mascot is a staple of the school. This year, students may have noticed the Hawk's face around the school more often.

With the main goal of Cooper's mascot being school spirit, the community came together to raise funds for the new costumes. In total, the new costumes cost \$3,300, including shipping. However, this amount did not come straight out of the Activities Office, as members of the RCAA were able to raise and donate the funds in just over a week.

Mr. Bauermeister, the RCAA Chair, elaborated on the RCAA's involvement in purchasing the new costumes.

"The RCAA typically supports students with scholar-

ships, but in this case, we felt we could also contribute to the pride and school spirit that the Cooper Hawk mascot represents. Plus, it was a fun project," he said.

After the donations were so quickly raised, the new costumes were ordered in mid-August and delivered six weeks later. Most of the manufacturing time was the result of the Hawk's custom-colored feathers.

"The hawk mascot has been around for more than 50 years," Mr. Bauermeister said. "There are a lot of alumni that have great memories being inside that mascot costume, but it was looking battered, tattered and worn, and we wanted to ensure that current and future generation of Cooper Hawks, and the Cooper Hawk community at large, would have a mascot they could be proud of."

According to Thurston, the new-look costumes will have many uses.

"These will be used for various school events, pepfests, games, assemblies and a variety of school functions," she said. "They benefit the school because they build school spirit."

Over the past two years at Cooper, concerns about spirit

and community among teachers and students alike had been rising. Looking for enthusiasm for sports and activities, as well as a rejuvenation of a family-like environment within the school, student council member Jazmin Tlaseca (11) said the new costumes will have a big impact.

"I feel that they will get people more excited and it will intrigue people to show up more to give the school more support with a new costume and re-awaken that school spirit," she said.

These predictions can only be proven with time. However, Cooper's investment in its more spirit-centered activities is a good sign for those worried about having more exciting high school experiences.

"The hawk mascot has been around for more than 50 years," Bauermeister

said. "There are a lot of alumni that have great memories being inside that mascot costume, but it was looking battered, tattered and worn, and we wanted to ensure that current and future generation of Cooper Hawks, and the Cooper Hawk community at large, would have a mascot they could be proud of. Go Hawks."

HAROLD AND KUMAR IS WORTH REVISITING continued from page 5

Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle is the importance of friendship and perseverance in the face of adversity. One scene that directly shows this message is when Harold and Kumar, after numerous setbacks, finally reach the White Castle restaurant. Despite the many obstacles they have encountered, their determination and support for each other ultimately lead them to their goal. This scene is connected to the central message as it demonstrates how the characters' friendship

and persistence enable them to overcome challenges. Their journey is a testament to the power of camaraderie and the idea that working together can help individuals achieve their goals, no matter how difficult the journey may be. I agree with the central theme of the film, as it effectively highlights the value of friendship and the importance of staying committed to one's goals, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

In conclusion, *Harold*

and Kumar *Go to White Castle* uses effective makeup and cinematography to enhance its comedic elements and highlight the protagonists' journey. Overall, I enjoyed the movie for its clever humor, engaging storyline and relatable characters. The director, Danny Leiner, successfully blends comedy with deeper themes, making the film both entertaining and thought-provoking. *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle* earns four out of five stars.

DUNE: PART TWO IMPROVES UPON ORIGINAL FILM continued from page 5

dealt with in *Dune: Part Two*, an important one is the fact that we all have our individual journeys to experience in life. One scene that demonstrates this idea in *Dune: Part Two* is the sequence when Paul drinks from the life water to help understand and better foresee his own future. The visions with which Paul is presented help

reveal things about his true identity, his family and his eventual fate. This scene parallels the fact that we each have our own journeys to take as we try to find our true identities and our purpose in life.

Denis Villeneuve's *Dune: Part Two* uses costume design and special effects to convey a story that shows the im-

portance of taking a journey to self-discovery. I enjoyed watching this movie from start to finish because of the characters and how they interacted with one another. I also found it fascinating to consider how strong the faith of people could be. *Dune: Part Two* is an instant classic that deserves five out of five stars.

VIEWERS WANTING TREAT SHOULD SEE CORALINE continued from page 5

by showing the consequences of not appreciating what you have, as Coraline's desire for a better world nearly costs her everything. I think the message is quite poignant, reminding us to find contentment in our own lives and to be wary of things

that seem too good to be true.

In *Coraline*, the editing and special effects are not just visually stunning but also serve to deepen the narrative, making the fantastical elements feel real. I enjoyed the movie for its creative storytelling and the

eerie, whimsical atmosphere it creates through stop-motion animation. The director, Henry Selick, showcases a distinctive style that makes the movie a captivating experience. *Coraline* is a five-star movie for audiences of all ages.

Cooper Competitors

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

Phoenyx Smith-Jordan

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Phoenyx Smith-Jordan (12) is a captain of the varsity cheerleading team.

"I started in 2022 during my sophomore year. I chose this sport because I wanted to be a cheerleader so bad in middle school," she said.

Smith-Jordan said her teammates are the highlight of being in cheerleading.

"I enjoy getting to meet new people, connecting with so many people and just having fun," she said.

During her three years of cheer, Smith-Jordan said her favorite memories revolve around working on skills.

"I enjoy when both stunt groups hit their stunt and I like learning new stunts," she said.

As a team captain, Smith-Jordan

said she loves the opportunity to inspire her teammates.

"I'm really funny and kind and I just feel like I have built a special connection with everyone," she said.

When she is not cheering, Smith-Jordan said she enjoys her classes at Cooper, especially Functions, Statistics and Trigonometry.

"I like it because it's very easy and not too complicated," she said. "Also, it's something that I think I will need when I get older."

As a graduating senior, Smith-Jordan is now thinking about her career path after high school.

"I want to go to college and get my degree in medical sonography to become an ultra-sound technician," she said. "I'm hoping to get in at Concordia University, St. Paul or the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities."



Photo by R. JARMAN

Emily Blanchette

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Emily Blanchette (12) plays volleyball in the fall, wrestles in the winter and manages boys lacrosse in the spring.

Blanchette has been playing volleyball since freshman year.

"I started because of a TV show that showed me the sport and made me fall in love with it," she said.

One aspect Blanchette enjoys about volleyball is learning new skills.

"I play right side front and back row, so I do some hitting and some passing. It's always a great feeling when I get a great pass or get a good kill," she said.

Blanchette said her favorite memory from her time in volleyball is a recent game against Holy Angels.

"I finally got a dig on one of their hitters. I struggled with pushing forward

when the ball was coming at my feet and I did it perfectly that time," she said.

In the winter, Blanchette competes in wrestling.

"I started wrestling last year. It was a rough start, but I did what I could until it hurt too much to continue. I won't let that happen this season," she said.

In the spring, Blanchette manages the boys lacrosse team. She said she likes being able to "take stats and run their Instagram."

When it comes to school, Blanchette's favorite class is English.

"English has been my favorite since I was little because I liked to write and wanted to be an author one day," she said.

Blanchette is now looking forward to her future in college.

"I either want to go to school for something language related or sports media related," she said.



Photo by R. JARMAN

Malik Williams

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Malik Williams (12) is a Cooper athlete who takes part in cross country and ultimate Frisbee in the fall, and track and ultimate Frisbee in the spring.

"I started doing cross country because I lost a race to one of their senior runners during my freshman year," he said. "As for Frisbee, it was something my friend wanted me to do back in middle school and I've been playing ever since."

While he enjoys being active through athletics, Williams pointed out that it is the relationships he has developed with his fellow competitors that are a highlight of his time on all of his teams.

"I liked the shenanigans that happened with the seniors of 2023. Those guys were super fun," he said.

Williams' skills and long involvement in his sports have led to him becoming a captain of each of his teams.

"I really have to lead by example," he said.

During his one off season, Williams said he pivots away from sports and takes part in Cooper's theater program.

"I'm really excited to see how that goes this year," he said.

Williams' favorite classes this year are Design in Clay, Photography and Government. He said he likes those classes because the teachers, Mr. Molitor and Mr. Gagnon, are "really cool."

Outside of school, Williams said he likes "to decompress" with video games and Legos.

Next fall, Williams plans to go to a technical college to study auto mechanics or carpentry.



Photo by R. JARMAN

Andrew Brooks

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

Andrew Brooks (12) is a three-season athlete who runs cross country in the fall, swims in the winter and runs track in the spring.

Brooks is now in his fourth year of cross country and has served as a captain for the last two years.

"I wasn't too familiar with running before the pandemic, but I used to run races with my mother, who was training to run marathons, so I figured, 'Why not take up running again?' That was one of the best decisions I made in my life," he said.

Although he enjoys running, Brooks said it is his teammates that serve as the best part of being in sports.

"I think that the people are going to be what I miss the most because that is

the best part of sports generally," he said. "The members are all great and are a fun and jubilant bunch of folks."

As the fall season draws to a close, Brooks is setting his sights on swimming.

"Things for the team went well last season," he said. "It was the first year of the Armstrong-Cooper co-op team, which has given a better chance for the team as a whole to do better at meets."

Given his interest in athletics, Brooks said his gym classes at school have been among his favorites. He also said he enjoys history as a subject, along with

his Theory of Knowledge class this year.

As for the future, Brooks said he is considering multiple pathways, including "learning a trade and making a career of it, going to college, or going into the military."



Photo by R. VANGLOHNS