

FALL 2024 EDITION

The Spartan Speaks

AMITY ORANGE MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Top Stories

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Sports Report

Today we interviewed the boy's Cross Country captains Sam S. and Colton K.. Sam's favorite part of Cross Country is getting a workout. He thinks the best benefit is getting into shape and spending time with friends. Sam runs 2 miles at each meet. Colton's favorite part of Cross Country is running in the meets. He thinks it's fun and helps him get faster. Colton has come first in 2 of the 3 meets. The Boys cross country team has had an amazing season.

Written by: Anthony C. (Grade 8)



Trick-or-Treat Safety Tips for Halloween

Halloween is easily one of the best nights of the year—cool costumes, endless candy, and just chilling with friends. But no one wants their spooky night to go wrong, right? To keep things safe and fun, here are some must-know tips to make sure your trick-or-treat game is strong.

1. Pick a Safe Costume

- Stay seen: Dark costumes are cool, but you also need to be visible, so you don't end up in someone's blind spot. Add some reflective tape or grab a glow stick. It's functional, and can be made cute, but if you really don't care, just grab a flashlight.
- No tripping: Make sure your outfit doesn't drag on the ground or have you tripping over yourself all night. And, trust me, wear comfy shoes—you'll be walking a lot, and blisters aren't cute.
- Ditch the mask: Masks can block your vision, and you'll want to see where you're going. Use makeup or face paint instead. Pro tip: test it on your skin first in case of breakouts.

2. Stay with the Group

- No solo missions: Always stay with your friends. More fun, more safe. Plus, splitting up is how people end up in horror movies—don't be that person. If you're older and going solo, just agree on where you're heading and when you'll be back.

3. Watch out for Cars

- Stick to the Sides: Please stay on the sides of roads and cross at the appropriate places. Don't dash across the street like you're in a video game; cars can't stop on a dime.
- Eyes up: Always look both ways before crossing. Also, stay off your phone while walking. Streaks aren't as important as getting hit.

4. Check Your Candy

- Don't just eat anything: You know the drill—check your candy before you eat it. If it's unwrapped, looks weird, or is homemade from a random house, just toss it. Better safe than sorry.
- Allergies: If you've got food allergies, read those labels!

5. Keep It Lit

- Stay in the light: Stick to well-lit streets and hit up houses with their lights on. If it looks dark and sketchy, maybe keep walking.
- No shady shortcuts: Avoid sketchy back alleys or shortcuts. Stay where it's safe and well-lit. It's not worth the risk.

6. Try Some Alt Halloween Activities

- Trunk-or-treat: Some places do trunk-or-treat, where people decorate their cars, and you collect candy from them. It's low-key and usually in a lit spot like a parking lot. Super safe.
- Halloween parties: Tons of towns throw community Halloween events or parties, sometimes even friends do, which are a fun way to celebrate. Just be sure to keep your phone off of silence that way your parents can get a hold of you.



Written by: Annabella L. (Grade 8)



Mrs. Jones

Mrs. Jones, Team T Math teacher, is originally from Bronx, NY and moved to Connecticut at the age of 9. She started college at UCONN but didn't like it, so she went to Southern for her undergraduate degree and the University of New Haven for her graduate degree. She said she always wanted to become a teacher. In college she was a substitute teacher and a waitress. Mrs. Jones has a history degree, 2 kids and a gigantic family. Some fun facts about her are that she loves bruschetta chicken, her favorite color is coral, favorite tv show is The Bear and her favorite sports teams are the Yankees in Baseball and the Saints in football.

Written by: Musa K. (Grade 8)



Mrs. Hashemian

Mrs. Hashemian is the Team Y Spanish teacher. Mrs. Hashemian is from Connecticut, but her parents are from Puerto Rico and The Dominican Republic. She went to Western CT University for her bachelor's degree and got her master's degree from Wesleyan University. She decided to become a Spanish teacher because in 3rd grade her teacher took the time to teach her English, so she knew she was going to teach kids Spanish. Mrs. Hashemian worked in customer service at the mall in Waterbury and was also a retailer.

Mrs. Hashemian has written two books and this year was recognized as the Poet Laureate of Milford. She also loves to sing. Some other notable facts are that her favorite food is pollo guisado y tostone, favorite color is purple, favorite movie is La Bamba, she loves John Steinbeck books, favorite team are the New York Mets, and her favorite song is Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood.



Written by: Anthony C. (Grade 8)

The Monarch Butterfly

A Common Autumn Insect



The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is part of the milkweed butterfly family group. Monarchs are a fairly recognizable species of butterfly, with their black bodies, with orange wings, black veins, and a speckle pattern, and a wingspan that can stretch to almost 5 inches, being one of the largest species of butterfly. Monarch butterflies are very important to the environment as they act as vital pollinators. According to Britannica.com, the monarch butterfly can be found in North America, Central America, and South America as well as Australia, Hawaii, and India. Monarch butterflies typically migrate September through October. The monarch butterflies gather together in autumn to travel south, where, once they arrive, hibernate in sheltered areas such as tree trunks and branches to cluster over the winter. Monarch butterflies will end their journey in California, Florida, and Mexico, and in Spring travel back, laying eggs along the way. Their migration can take up to about 2 months and according to Tyler Flockhart, a biologist at the University of Guelph, located in Ontario, Canada, it can take 4-5 generations of monarch butterflies to complete their migration trip. Adult monarch butterflies live only about 4-5 weeks as stated by the WWF (World Wildlife Fund).

There has been a noticeable 59% decline of monarch butterfly populations in 2024, this could be due to urban and agricultural expansion which has caused acres of milkweed to be plowed over. Milkweed is the only plant monarch butterflies will lay their eggs on, which of course makes this plant very important to the monarch butterflies. They only lay their eggs on milkweed because of the toxic contents the plant contains. Milkweed is also the only plant that supports monarch butterflies through their early stages of life, acting as a food source for monarch caterpillars who feed on the plants' leaves, the toxicity of the chemicals making monarchs distasteful to predators. In return, monarch butterflies, along with many other insects, pollinate the milkweed. Monarch butterflies also become poisonous to predators due to the toxins ingested from milkweed.

Written by: Myi H. (Grade 7)



Stalk of
milkweed
pictured to
the left



Below are pictures of your Amity Orange Middle School staff members when they were in Middle School. **Guess who** they might be.



ARTIST OF THE MONTH



Artwork created by: Annabella L. (Grade 8)
AMSO Art Club

Spooky and Delicious Fall Recipe – Pumpkin Spice Cookies



Ingredients

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup white chocolate chips (optional)
- Decorative candy eyes or Halloween sprinkles (optional)

Nothing says Fall quite like the comforting aroma of pumpkin spice, and these Pumpkin Spice Cookies are the perfect Halloween treat. They're soft, chewy, and filled with all the flavors of the season. Whether you're hosting a spooky Halloween party or just want a delicious snack, these cookies are sure to please.

Instructions

1. ****Preheat oven****: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. ****Cream the butter and sugars****: In a large bowl, beat the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar together until light and fluffy (about 2-3 minutes).
3. ****Add wet ingredients****: Add the pumpkin puree, egg, and vanilla extract, and mix until well combined.
4. ****Mix dry ingredients****: In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, pumpkin pie spice, and cinnamon.
5. ****Combine ingredients****: Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, mixing until just combined. Be careful not to overmix. If using white chocolate chips, fold them into the dough.
6. ****Scoop the dough****: Use a cookie scoop or spoon to drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 2 inches apart.
7. ****Decorate****: If desired, add candy eyes or Halloween sprinkles on top of each cookie for a festive look.
8. ****Bake****: Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until the edges are lightly golden. The centers may look slightly underdone, but they will set as they cool.
9. ****Cool and enjoy****: Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Serving and Storing Tips

- ****Storage****: These cookies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to a week, or frozen for up to 3 months.

Enjoy these cookies with a glass of milk or a warm cup of spiced cider for the ultimate fall treat.

These Pumpkin Spice Cookies are sure to be a hit at any Halloween gathering or as a cozy Fall snack. The combination of pumpkin and spices makes them taste like Fall in every bite, and the optional Halloween decorations add a fun, spooky touch!

Written by: Annabella L. (Grade 8)

Name: _____

Fall Word Search

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| V | V | F | A | L | L | G | Y | C | W | R | L | A | F | C | K | O | D | S | X | U | T | J |
| U | L | G | D | R | K | N | N | Z | C | I | N | N | A | M | O | N | L | P | V | O | V | G |
| J | M | G | Q | F | O | A | V | A | M | P | I | R | E | H | A | C | K | O | R | D | O | J |
| C | H | N | P | A | S | E | L | P | A | M | I | K | V | Z | B | O | W | O | T | T | W | M |
| P | M | C | C | U | E | K | D | Y | T | S | A | P | P | L | E | L | P | K | X | E | T | X |
| I | I | C | B | I | M | W | O | R | C | E | R | A | C | S | R | O | L | Y | M | K | N | U |
| E | G | K | Y | W | U | P | L | O | X | A | K | T | Q | N | U | R | W | N | K | V | O | U |
| C | R | U | H | I | T | F | K | S | W | U | D | N | K | P | H | S | N | M | U | T | U | A |
| R | A | H | G | T | S | U | I | I | Y | E | K | R | U | T | A | J | M | P | I | T | U | C |
| C | T | B | A | C | O | V | G | T | N | N | O | T | E | L | E | K | S | A | X | C | J | A |
| Q | I | R | K | H | C | A | N | Z | U | T | S | E | V | R | A | H | V | R | S | P | D | N |
| C | O | R | N | M | A | Z | E | X | X | T | N | E | E | W | O | L | L | A | H | C | P | D |
| N | N | Q | U | C | H | J | Y | X | L | G | N | I | V | I | G | S | K | N | A | H | T | Y |
| S | V | Q | T | E | A | V | B | T | S | E | V | A | E | L | G | N | Z | J | J | S | O | K |
| E | B | R | I | S | K | W | P | N | O | G | D | I | D | H | S | S | T | Y | C | K | J | O |
| K | Z | H | Z | M | W | I | W | E | E | S | E | I | E | X | A | G | H | O | S | T | S | E |

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden     and .

THANKSGIVING
SCARECROW
HALLOWEEN
MIGRATION
CORN MAZE
COSTUMES
SKELETON
CINNAMON

PUMPKIN
HARVEST
VAMPIRE
AUTUMN
COLORS
LEAVES
GHOSTS
SPOOKY

TURKEY
CANDY
WITCH
APPLE
BRISK
MAPLE
FALL
PIE

Created By: Musa K. and Anthony C. (Grade 8)