

the courier

the appleton east student newspaper



—GHOULS, GOURDS, AND GOOD TIMES—

Get ready for a howling good time with our spooky season guide. Here you can find events, tips, and treats to make this the most spooktacular Halloween yet. What is Halloween all about? That depends on the person. Some people like to feel the adrenaline coursing through their veins and other people prefer to take time to relax and spend time in the lovely fall weather. No matter which you prefer there will be something here for you.

First of all, for my adrenaline-seeking folks, I suggest a haunted house. There are many in the area including, Green Bay Fear which is found off Highway 41 at 1950 Bond St, Green Bay, WI, 54303. It is open every weekend until November 1, and this year it includes new electrifyingly scary attractions.

Buy tickets here: <https://greenbayfear.com/>

Another amazing option is Burial Chamber, which can be found off Highway 41 at 500 N. Lake Street, Neenah, WI, 54956. It is open every weekend until November 9 and includes four amazingly horrific attractions: Adrenaline and Insanity haunted houses; Phobia haunted woods, which is a chilling journey through the dark woods of the property; and finally the Buried Alive experience where you get to feel the panic and fear of being trapped underground, yet remain totally safe.

Buy tickets here: <https://burialchamber.com/haunted-house>

Finally, The Realm of Darkness can be found at W2091 County Road JJ, Kakauna, WI, 54130. It is open every weekend (Saturday and Sunday) until November 1. Although it is just a haunted house, it will push you to your limits and leave you breathless. After having to face your biggest fears head on in this terrifyingly delightful and extremely immersive experience.

Buy tickets here: <https://www.therealmofdarknesshaunt.com/>

For those who don't love adrenaline and fear but still love the fall season, skip the fright fest, relax, get cozy, and enjoy some of the best spooky movies including:

- Hocus Pocus
- Friday the 13th
- Beetlejuice
- Halloween
- Casper
- The Addams family
- Scream
- Coraline
- The Nightmare Before Christmas

All of those movies are great, but what is a great movie without a bite to eat?

Here are some spooky snacks that are just to die for.

Rice crispy mummies are a good option for an easy sweet treat. These can be made by lining a 9x13 pan with parchment and setting it aside. In a pot, on medium-low heat, melt $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of butter (a half stick) and then after it's fully melted add 5 cups of mini marshmallows, stirring constantly until they are combined. After they are combined, take the pot off of the heat and immediately mix in 6 cups of rice cereal. Pour the mixture into the pan and let it cool fully. Once it's cooled, cut them into even rectangles and set on a separate pan so that they are spaced out. Microwave white chocolate in 15 second increments until it is fully melted, then drizzle it over the rectangles in ropes. To finish them off, place two candy eyes on the "face" of the mummy or two pieces of milk or dark chocolate chips.

A more savory snack you could make is a mummy dog. You'll start with preheating your oven to 350 degrees. Next, bring eight hotdogs of any kind to a boil until they are warmed through. Strain the water off and dab the water off of the hotdogs. Open a container of crescent rolls, and separate them into eight thin strips. Wrap the hot dog like a mummy would be wrapped, and make sure to leave a space for the eyes. Bake the mummy dogs in the oven for around ten minutes or until they are golden brown. Put two dots of mustard in the leftover space to look like eyes and serve. These could be dipped in many sauces such as ketchup, mustard, or ranch.

There are so many things to do in the fall like going to a pumpkin patch to pick the perfect pumpkin or going on a hay ride. You can do both at Mulberry Lane Farm. It is \$16 admission from ages 2-92 which includes a free pumpkin from one of the many acres of pumpkin patches they grow every year.

Whether you're a fan of crisp air and cozy activities or spooky fall fun, fall has something for you. So get out there and enjoy the season!

- **GINEVRA GRABOWSKI**





Inside the Mind of Fear

Halloween is a season devoted to fear: haunted houses, horror movies, and jump scares are everywhere. But why do people want to feel afraid?

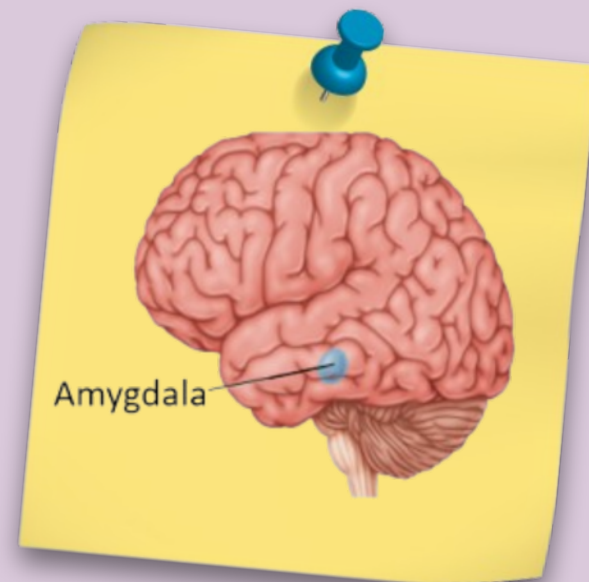
Fear is one of the most powerful emotions, and it's designed to keep us alive. Yet during Halloween, millions of people seek out fear through haunted houses, horror films, and spooky stories. The psychological and biological foundations of fear, how the brain reacts to perceived threats, and why people often enjoy being scared in safe situations, explain why Halloween is the ideal occasion to experience fear as both thrilling and harmless.

According to the University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB), fear is a universal emotion that evolved to help humans survive threats in the environment. Yet, when fear is experienced in a safe, controlled way, like during a Halloween event, it can actually be enjoyable.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) explains that fear begins in the amygdala, a small, almond-shaped structure deep in the brain that detects potential threats and prepares the body for action. Once activated, the amygdala triggers the sympathetic nervous system, producing the classic fight-or-flight response: faster heartbeat, quick breathing, and tense muscles.

Simply Psychology describes fear as “a natural emotional reaction to a perceived threat” that involves both physical and psychological changes. These include adrenaline release, heightened senses, and a focus on survival. The site notes that this response helped early humans escape danger but can now be triggered by non-life-threatening events such as scary movies or roller coasters.

When the brain recognizes that the threat is not real, fear becomes mixed with relief and excitement. This releases dopamine and endorphins, chemicals that produce feelings of pleasure—explaining why many people find being scared thrilling instead of distressing.



Halloween allows people to “play with fear” in ways that are socially accepted and psychologically rewarding. The University of Texas Permian Basin outlines three key reasons people seek fear during Halloween:

Safety and Control – The brain knows the danger is not real, allowing enjoyment of fear without actual risk.

Adrenaline Rush – Fear activates the body’s alert system, creating an exciting, high-energy experience.

Social Bonding – Shared fear—such as friends screaming together in a haunted house—creates connection and laughter afterward.

Simply Psychology supports this, noting that fear triggers powerful bodily sensations that can be interpreted as either unpleasant or exciting depending on the situation. When the mind feels safe, those same sensations are experienced as fun.

According to UNC, Halloween events are designed to activate the brain’s fear centers while ensuring safety. Elements such as darkness, suspense, and surprise keep the amygdala engaged, while costumes and masks symbolize the unknown—one of humanity’s oldest fears.

These “safe scares” let people test their boundaries and gain a sense of mastery over fear. As UTPB explains, Halloween gives individuals the chance to explore uncomfortable emotions in a supportive environment, which can build resilience and reduce anxiety in daily life.

Fear is a double-edged emotion: it protects us, but it can also entertain us. During Halloween, people transform fear from a survival instinct into a source of fun, community, and even personal growth.

As Simply Psychology explains, understanding fear allows us to better control it—and Halloween offers a chance to do just that. In the flicker of a candle or the shadows of a haunted house, we learn that fear doesn’t always have to control us; sometimes, it reminds us we’re alive.



- CYNTHIA VANG

East Tackles Cancer

Friday night lights blaze across the field. The Star Spangled Banner is sung as the Scarlet Guard marches onto the turf, proudly bearing their flags. The referees blow their whistles and the ball is snapped. The clock begins to count down, and the fans cheer. The East Tackles Cancer game, featuring two cross-town rivals, is incomparable.

Around Pickett Field, supporters donned their East Tackles Cancer shirts and contributed to the night's fundraising. Some placed bids on silent auction items such as a football autographed by Jordan Love, or entered tickets into the numerous raffle baskets. Fans pulled out their wallets to donate to the "miracle minute" or took the time to purchase and decorate luminaries to commemorate those who have had cancer. Hope, compassion, and remembrance lingered throughout the stadium as the night's events continued.

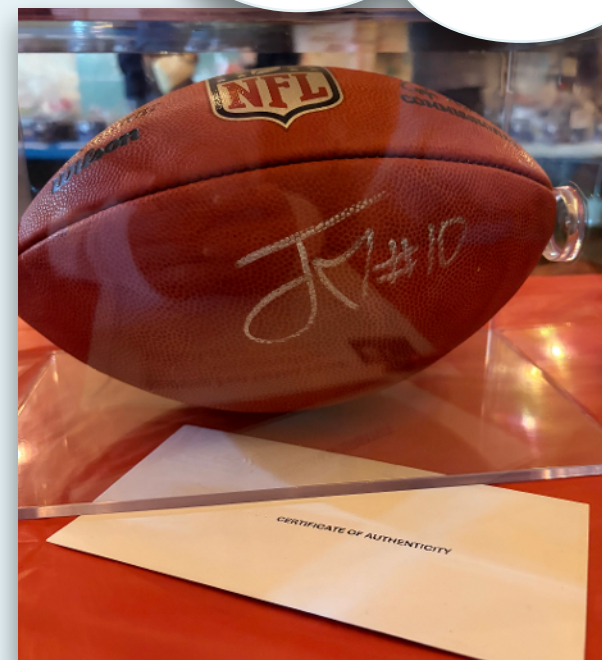
An exhilarating victory by Appleton East's football team over Appleton North added exuberant air to the already bursting atmosphere. Minutes after the clock marked the end of the game, supporters and football players gathered to line the track for a lap of remembrance. It was a touching spectacle as football players set aside their victory or defeat and ran around the field, ensuring the path was continuously lined for those who participated. Some spectators were even moved to tears, whether by memories or the emotion encapsulated within the stadium.

In brevity, East Tackles Cancer was a successful victory, not just that of football, but something much greater. It was a triumphant and resonant win, in which one town took on one fight against cancer.

"This moment is bigger than football right now, so let's think about the people who battled cancer, the ones we lost, the ones that are battling now, and let's keep them in our hearts... I am so honored to be here and have played on this great night. So thank y'all again for coming here and supporting the cause. This is a win for Appleton School District. It's not about the scoreboard right now, it's about unity." - Coach James during his post-game speech



One of the numerous raffle tables at the East Tackles Cancer game.



A football signed by Jordan Love was one of the many silent auction items.

"As someone who has family members affected by cancer, it's really nice to see people come together at the East Tackles Cancer game every year. The energy in the stands was amazing, and it was a really fun game to watch!" - Olivia VanDenEng



Seniors Maddy Smasal and Hailey Berndt show support at the game, bringing their RealCare babies from Child Development class.

- GRACE BOE

2025 Total
\$32,048

Grand Total
\$206,057

"It was super exciting, the energy was fantastic, and I absolutely loved it! I'm glad that we won for so many reasons: to support our cause, because we are Patriots, and it's just fun to win." - Mr. McElrath



A luminary that lined the track.



The Appleton East football, cheer, and dance teams watch the presentation of the flags by the Scarlet Guard.



Supporters line up for the luminary lit walk around the track.

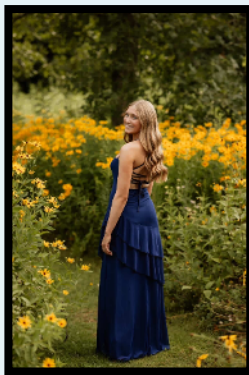
ALL ABOUT



WHAT IS AE VOICES?

Appleton East has a very talented and exciting a cappella group that performs well-known songs at concerts and annual tours around the East Side elementary schools. This high-energy group is a combination of seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen, as well as captains of each vocal part: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass.

MEET THE CAPTAINS!



MACY JOHNSON:
SOPRANO CAPTAIN

“Hello! I’m Macy Johnson, a senior at East High School, and I’ve been a proud member of AEVoices since my sophomore year. My passion for music runs deep, especially within the East community. Being part of this acapella group has empowered me to express my true self while enjoying every moment. Our mission as a contemporary group is to share love and rhythm, inspiring positivity throughout our school. Outside of school, I enjoy snowboarding and spending time with my friends and family.”



ZOË EVERSON:
ALTO CAPTAIN

“I’m Zoë, and I’m a senior. I’m also the alto captain. I’ve been in AEVoices for four years now, having joined at the beginning of my freshman year. I love being in AEVoices because the group very quickly becomes closer to a large friend group, rather than simply another choir. It gives me the opportunity to do what I love most, singing with friends. I also love getting the chance to grow musically and help others do the same, all while having fun. Outside of AEVoices, I go to Renaissance School for the Arts and enjoy dancing, reading, and photography.”



ISAAC MOSCINSKI:
TENOR CAPTAIN

“This is my fourth year in AEVoices and my second year as the tenor captain. I enjoy being in AEVoices because it allows me to share my love of music with like-minded and talented individuals. I also enjoy the community we develop throughout the year and watching the group grow not just as musicians, but also as people.”



THAI VANG:
BASS CAPTAIN

“AEVoices has been an integral part of my life ever since I started attending Appleton East. Even if I've had a bad day, I always know that there will be an AEVoices rehearsal to cheer me up! Now that I am a captain this year, I cannot wait to bring that joy and camaraderie to others. The best part about AEVoices is that you all go through the creative struggle with one another. Whether it be learning a new part, blending with different sections of the group, or even just building relationships with one another, it's always better to do it with people you can empathize with and relate to. As for personal affairs, I've been working steadily on my music career, along with building an internship at a radio company. Oh, did you know that I love red pandas?”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION!

If you are interested in seeing this choir showcase its talent, come and see the concerts: their first one will be Thursday December 18, at 7:30 pm. Additionally, audition information for the 2026-2027 school year will be open to those interested at the beginning of the next school year.

- JO BUCK

Next Courier Meeting!

Thursday, November 6, during Flex! Room 1112
Sign up for Mr. Otis. We hope to see you there!

My Spirit SINGS!

[*Click HERE to Watch Appleton East's Choir Concert!*](#)

Last Thursday, Appleton East Choirs glowed with the radiance of musical spirit after their first concert of the school year: My Spirit Sings. Performed at Lawrence University Chapel, Appleton East Choirs featured guests of Madison Middle School Choirs as well as Johnston Elementary School students for this musical memory. Choirs from Appleton East included Patriot Bass, Patriot Treble, Varsity Bass, Varsity Treble, Chamber Choir, and a special send-off by Easterners, the honors chorus.

Lawrence Chapel, a gorgeous domed space with breathtaking acoustics, has been Appleton East's performance venue for at least 15 years now, according to Mr. Dan Van Sickle, director of Appleton East Choirs. "It's designed to highlight live, non-amplified music - and so the voices always sound majestic in the space. There is an extra 'ring' as the sound echoes for longer than our school's theater. In past years we have sung in the aisles and also in the balcony. The 'surround sound' options are always exciting - Also, the space feels elegant and 'fancy' - so it's always inspiring to sing there."

Additionally, East has always featured special guests from nearby elementary and middle schools for this event. "We cycle between all six of the Eastside elementary schools - Horizons, Richmond, Johnston, Foster, McKinley, and Berry," says Mr. Van Sickle. "Each school has an opportunity to participate every six years. We invite the eighth grade choir from Madison each year to build a bridge between East and our future Patriot singers... They got hooked by choir - and they kept doing it each year after that."

Songs particularly enjoyed by audience members included "I Will Sing" by the collective choir ensemble finale, as well as "Bright Blue Sky" and "Viva la Musica" performed by Easterners.

Appleton East Choir's next performance will take place Thursday, December 18, at 7:30 p.m. in the Stanley Ore auditorium for the annual winter Sounds of the Season concert.

- ELLA RANES

BATHROOMS: Additions at East!

Say goodbye to last year's out-of-date restroom constraints: The new floor plans at Appleton East now feature first-and second-floor, brand-new sets of male and female bathrooms with a special feature in mind.

With changing times and increased risk of underage vaping, smoking, and other illegal behaviors, Appleton East's 2025 addition features an insightful design to prevent these activities common in bathrooms. Shaped with a set of stalls around the corner from sinks that are set out in the open, these new restrooms are designed to detect telltale signs of vape residue and scent easily whilst still allowing privacy for students and staff.

Many staff and students have mixed feelings about the new layout. Principal Smedberg describes this part of the addition in a positive light, highlighting school spirit: "It was important to me that we keep our East colors as present as possible in our school to show our Patriot Pride so that is why we have the red and blue tile." Anna Behnke, Appleton East senior says, "I do like the new bathrooms for a lot of reasons, they're a lot cleaner and the lighting is much better compared to the other bathrooms in the school."

However, "They are also a little small," Anna continues. "I've had to wait for a stall almost every time I use them, and when I use the old bathrooms I almost never have to wait for a stall. But, I still think they are an improvement for our school."

You can locate these new restrooms near the Schaefer doors on the ground floor and near Mrs. Herrick's room (2502) on the second floor.

**Stay tuned for our continuing series:
delving deeper into the new spaces
inside East additions!**

- ELLA RANES

New Patriot Staff



Ms. Allison Bayer

What did you do before coming to East?

Registered Dental Hygienist

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

I'm looking forward to building connections with my students and helping them grow.

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

Outside of school, I spend most of my time with my four children. We stay busy with sports, activities, and family adventures.

Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself?

A fun fact about me is that I studied abroad in Spain. It was an incredible experience!

Do you have anything else you would like to share with East staff and students?

I'm looking forward to a great year together!



Mrs. Madelynn Wagner

What did you do before coming to East?

I taught art at Einstein and James Madison last year. Before that, I taught elementary art in Hudson, WI.

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

I am excited to work exclusively with sculpture and ceramics. There is so much to learn about clay, glaze, kilns, and other equipment. Ceramics is my passion, and I received a BFA with a ceramics emphasis from the University of Minnesota.

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

My favorite thing to do is hang out with my husband and our dogs, Chewy and Willow. I also love being active, trying new local restaurants, and working on our 1930s house.

Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself?

I have played hockey my whole life. I played for Appleton United when I was in High School.

Do you have anything else you would like to share with East staff and students?

Try to fit ceramics & sculpture class into your schedule! It's a really special opportunity to create with clay!

What did you do before coming to East? Middle School Science Teacher
What are you looking forward to this year at East? Helping students who frequent the library.
What do you do in your free time outside of school? Gardening, boating, dog walking, and reading.



Mr. Joe Hameister

What did you do before coming to East?

I was the Facilities scheduling Administrative Assistant at West and North, and was a building engineer at Berry, in between those times.

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

Getting to know the staff better :)

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

Travel, golf, bowl, and go to concerts.

Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself?

I saw Elvis in concert...TWICE!

Do you have anything else you would like to share with East staff and students?

Thank you all for being so welcoming! :)



Mrs. Connie Newling

What did you do before coming to East?

Before East, I was studying at UW-Oshkosh and l'Université Catholique de Lille

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

I look forward to having fun in class and getting to know my students.

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

Outside of school, I play with my dog, Kai, and I like to stay home to read and watch movies.

Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself?

A fun fact about me is that I have siblings and parents who speak Spanish, but I am the only one in my family to speak French.

Do you have anything else you would like to share with East staff and students?

I hope that everyone has a great year and continues to grow to be the best they can be!



Mrs. Jessica Ketter

What did you do before coming to East?

LMC Para at Madison Middle School

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

I'm looking forward to getting to know more students this year and reconnecting with those that I knew from Madison Middle School.

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

I love going on walks and bike rides with my husband (Mr. Ketter) and our son. I enjoy playing Minecraft and building LEGO towers with my son, Henry.

Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself?

In 2013, I lived in New Zealand and toured many of the filming locations for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* movies.



Mr. Bryan Lemke

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Before East, I was studying at UW-Oshkosh and l'Université Catholique de Lille

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

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Do you have anything else you would like to share with East staff and students?

I hope that everyone has a great year and continues to grow to be the best they can be!

What did you do before coming to East?
Graduated from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point with a major in Family and Consumer Sciences Education and a minor in Health Education!
What are you looking forward to this year at East?
Teaching for my first FULL year, since I graduated college in December, my timeline has been a little funky, but I can't wait to see my students grow as learners, whether it's in the culinary lab, fashion, and even at the middle school.
What do you do in your free time outside of school?
Sewing, thrifting, playing with my puppy Uecker, and trying new food.
Do you have any interesting or fun facts about yourself? I'm getting married in August!



Miss Karisa Parker

What did you do before coming to East?

Taught at North

What are you looking forward to this year at East?

Learning!

What do you do in your free time outside of school?

Hike, read, bike, and cook.



Mrs. Skylee Kromanaker

- GRACE BOE

EVERYBODY
CUT LOOSE!

TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW!

APPLETON EAST PATRIOT PLAYERS PRESENT

Footloose

The Musical

NOVEMBER 7-8, 13-15 AT 7:00 PM

NOVEMBER 9 AT 2:00 PM

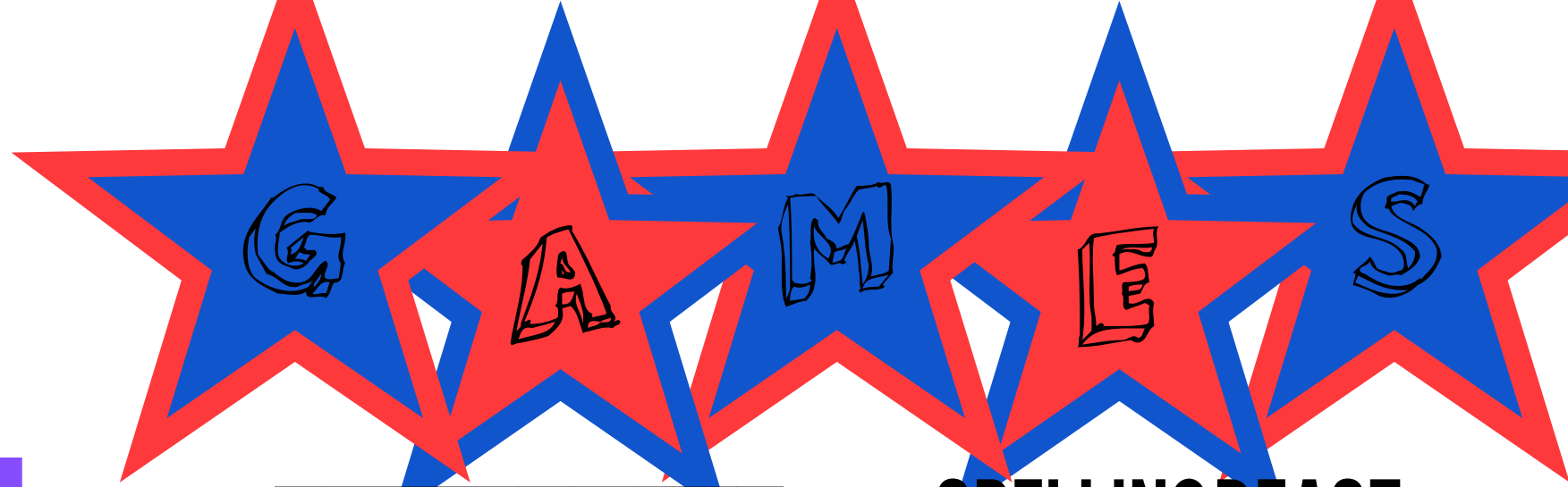
aepatriotplayers.org/



Footloose follows the story of Ren McCormack, a city kid who moves to a small town where dancing is banned. He then decides he needs to shake things up and starts to challenge authority, break expectations, and inspire a community to reclaim its lost rhythm. *Footloose* is a high-energy and electrifying musical about fighting for joy, finding your voice, and dancing through the chaos.

Students and staff can buy their tickets at the Box Office 4th Hour through 6th Hour in person. Or go ahead and buy them online or at the door on the day of the show, but hurry, seats are filling up quickly!

- JO BUCK



CONNECTIONS

Connections is a word game that challenges players to find themes between words.

Players are given 16 words and find groups of four items that share something in common.

For example:

- FISH: Bass, Flounder, Salmon, Trout
- Things that start with FIRE: Ant, Drill, Island, Opal

Each group is assigned a color (Yellow, Green, Blue, or Purple), with Yellow being the easiest category and Purple being the trickiest.

[Play here!](#)

Find all the words based on the hint!

Strands

[Play here!](#)

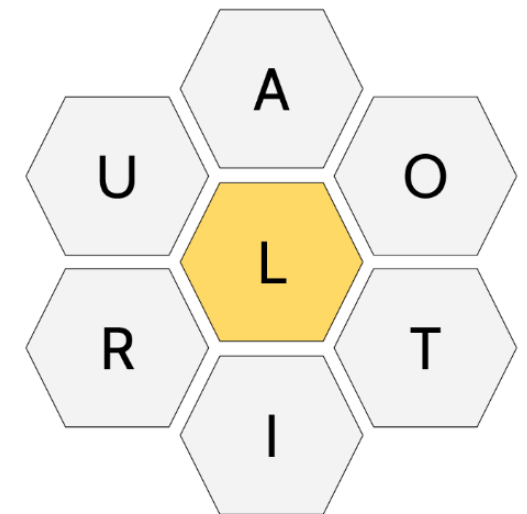


Try to guess the hidden word in six guesses or less!

- R** = the letter does not appear in the word
- O** = the letter does appear in the word, but in a different spot
- W** = the letter appears in the word in that spot

[Play here!](#)

SPELLINGBEAST



Make as many words as possible with the given letters!

- All words must contain the center letter
- Words must be at least four letters long
- Letters may be used multiple times within one word
- Four-letter words are worth one point, any words longer than four letters are worth the number of points equal to the number of letters in the word
- There is at least one word that can be made using all seven letters, called a pangram. A pangram is worth seven bonus points plus the word's length, so a seven-letter pangram would be worth 14 points. *Answer on last page of The Courier!*

- MATS RIDLHOVER

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Courier Contributors:

Grace Boe: New Patriot Staff & East Tackles Cancer

Jo Buck: AEVoices & Footloose

Oren Gleiss: The Courier Survey

Ginerva Grabowski: Spooky Season Guide

Ella Ranes: East Additions & My Spirit Sings Choir Concert

Mats Ridlehoover: Games

Cynthia Vang: Inside the Mind of Fear

JOIN NOW!

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Jo Buck

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Cynthia Vang

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Mr. Otis

The Courier, Appleton East's student newspaper, is written, edited, and distributed by Patriot students and staff.

Thoughts on The Courier?

If you're reading this right now, then you obviously read The Courier, but does everyone? We want to know how many people read it, and we value accurate and honest information. We want you, yes, you, to take this survey. We need your help to gather precise data. To ensure that, we need a diverse range of voices to ensure our information reflects the true views of our community. Please, not only should you take the survey yourself, but also share it with your friends, classmates, club members, and even your teachers! The more people we can include, the more accurate our results will be. It's short if you want to give brief (boring) responses, or long if you want to give detailed feedback! Tell us what you want to see in The Courier, from student interviews to activities in the community!

Click Here for The Courier Survey!