

THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXV-No. 3

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

November 22, 2024

Trades Week Explores a Variety of Career Opportunities

by Shreya Viswanathan '27

Amity's 3rd Annual "Trades Week," held from Monday, November 4th, through Friday, November 8th, was a resounding success. This event brought together an impressive array of representatives from 19 different career options, offering students and staff an invaluable opportunity to explore a diverse range of trades during lunch periods.

The week kicked off with an enlightening session on Monday, featuring a speaker from the Connecticut Department of Labor. This speaker delved into the benefits of registered apprenticeships, highlighting how apprentices can earn while they learn. This combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction offers a practical pathway to mastering a trade without the burden of extensive schooling.

As the week progressed, the excitement built up with representatives from various trades arriving at the school. The Bethany Fire Department, Orange Police Department,

The Bethany Fire Department captivated students with stories of bravery and teamwork, while the Orange Police Department emphasized the importance of community service and public safety. CT Dental Services provided a glimpse into the world of healthcare, showcasing the vital role dental professionals play in maintaining public health.

Meanwhile, representatives from Yale New Haven Hospital highlighted the diverse career paths available within the medical field, from nursing to technical roles like ultrasound technicians.

The impact of Trades Week was profound, leaving students with a deeper understanding of the trades and the opportunities they offer. It broke down the misconception that a successful career requires a traditional four-year college degree, instead showcasing the viability and value of vocational training and apprenticeships.

One sophomore described the experience as "eye-opening," expressing her newfound realization that she could pursue a career as an Ultrasound Technician without the lengthy schooling typically associated with medical careers. This sentiment was echoed by Tyler Frantz '26, who remarked that Trades Week revealed "so many direct paths to a high-demand career and unexpected opportunities within our community."

It was a week of discovery, inspiration, and connection, reminding everyone of the diverse career paths available to Amity students after graduation. These interactions were not only informative but also inspiring, as students learned about the various trades that keep our society functioning smoothly. The representatives shared their personal journeys, challenges, and triumphs, painting a vivid picture of what it means to work in their respective fields.

Gabriel Geary '27 describes this event as a very wholesome gathering, saying, "It was an amazing way to see a snapshot of our whole community within one week."

Donald Trump Wins Both Schoolwide Mock Election and U.S. Presidential Election

by Alex Klee '25 and Eve Marin '27

While analysts were expecting it to take days to know the outcome of the national presidential election, by the time most of America woke up the morning of November 6th, the race had already been called for former President Donald Trump. And, less than one week before, on Friday, November

1st, Trump claimed victory in the Amity Mock Election as well.

Polling from numerous and well-respected institutions had Republican candidate Trump and his Democratic competitor, Vice President Kamala Harris, neck and neck in key swing states like Michigan and Pennsylvania. However, once the dust settled, Trump ended up winning all seven swing states and racked up 312

Continued on page 2



Photo contributed by Claire Hubbard '26
Members of the Critical Issues class work at the Mock Election.

Mock Trial Takes on Arson and Attempted Murder in Tilly v. Tanks

by Charlotte Stannard '26

On Tuesday, October 29th, the Amity Mock Trial Club held their first practice trial. The club was split into defense and prosecution to argue a case titled State of Tilly v. Tanks. The defendant, Jimmie Tanks, was charged with first-degree arson and attempted first-degree murder. The charges were filed after an incident on July 1, 2024, when Tanks allegedly set fire to a house owned by Bertie Darrow, causing significant damage and serious injury to Darrow.

The state carried the burden of proof, meaning they had to present evidence to prove that there was

no alternative explanation to the defendant committing the crime. In turn, the defense had to poke holes in the prosecution's line of reasoning to prove that there was insufficient evidence to meet the prosecution's burden of proof.

The prosecution began with their opening statement, where they argued that Tanks deliberately used gasoline to start the fire as an act of revenge against Darrow, who had previously reported Tanks to the police for theft, leading to Tanks' imprisonment. They stated that they were going to present compelling evidence that would place Tanks at the scene when the crime was committed, then call

Continued on page 2



Photo contributed by Lynn Cocco
UI linesman John-Paul MacPherson talking with students during Trades Week.

CT Dental Services, and Yale New Haven Hospital were just a few of the organizations that participated.

Their presence provided students with firsthand insights into the myriad career opportunities available within our local community.

IN THIS ISSUE



Mock Trial News, 2



Thanksgiving Features, 6



New Haven Filmmaker Arts, 9



UMttr Volleyball Sports, 11

Student Delegates Shine at ChargerMun Conference

by Emma Imanov '27

On October 27, Amity High School's Model United Nations team participated in the Charger Model UN (ChargerMUN) Conference, hosted by the University of New Haven. Competing against schools across the New England region, the team earned numerous individual awards and the prestigious Honorable Best Delegation Award.

The conference featured two committees: the Security Council, which debated the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts and the General Assembly, which tackled Ensuring Equitable and Inclusive Access to Education. Despite many members being new to Model UN, they excelled in their roles.

Reflecting on the experience, Luca DiSorbo '28 representing China, shared, "ChargerMUN was amazing! The other delegates were great, and we got a ton done in our end resolution."

Several students were recognized for their performances, including Emma Imanov '27, who represented the United States in Security Council 2 and won Best Delegate, Jack Cubanski '28, who represented Türkiye, was named Distinguished Delegate. DiSorbo, who represented China, received Outstanding Delegation and Best Position Paper, Jack Goldberg '25, who represented the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, won Best Speech, Hana Mirza '28, who represented Slovenia, earned Best Position Paper, and Alexandra Palcic '28, who represented Iceland, was recognized as a Distinguished Delegate.

For many participants, this was their first Model UN conference, making their success even more notable.

Mattia Vessicchio '27, who attended as a new delegate, said, "ChargerMUN was a great first conference and super fun. It was a great start to the season, and I feel that the delegates communicated well."

Mock Trial Takes on Arson and Attempted Murder in Tilly v. Tanks

Continued from page 1

Bertie Darrow and expert investigator Harley Blaze to give testimonies.

Next, the defense had the opportunity to present their opening remarks, where they insisted that their client, Jimmy Tanks, had absolutely no involvement in the arson. They said that they were going to present evidence that pointed to Bertie Darrow setting his own home on fire in hopes of an insurance payout and call upon Jimmy Tanks and Investigator Renolds to give testimonies. Both sides then started calling up their witnesses.

Aprile Allen '26, a prosecution attorney, who had the job of directing Bertie Darrow, says, "It was a daunting task to ask the correct questions to extract the information I wanted Darrow to reveal in order to get him the justice he deserved."

Haley Han '26, who was one of the various witnesses called on to give a testimony, says, "I was tasked with playing Dr. Harley Blaze, which was one of the hardest roles. I spent days preparing for the cross-examination where the defense interrogated me as I tried to exert my character's extensive

knowledge of crime scene analysis."

After closing remarks from both sides, the jury stepped out to deliberate. The final verdict was that the defendant, Jimmie Tanks, was not guilty of first-degree arson or attempted first-degree murder.

Jessie Zheng '25, who served as a judge, said, "As the judge, I was tasked with sustaining or overruling objections and giving feedback to the teams. Both sides did a great job for their first mock trial of the year."



Photo contributed by Charlotte Stannard '26
Members of the Mock Trial team.

Donald Trump Wins Schoolwide and U.S. Presidential Election

Continued from page 1 electoral college votes to Harris' 226. He also won America's popular vote, a feat he did not accomplish during his last presidential victory in 2016, with just over 50% of the vote to Harris' 48%.

The winner of the Mock Election was solely based on the popular vote. Trump won 48% (557 votes), Harris won 43% (509 votes), Jill Stein of the Green Party won 5% (62 votes), and Chase Oliver of the Libertarian Party won 4% (44 votes). The actual voting went smoothly and had high levels of participation. Students came to the front of the school during their social studies classes on the day of the election, split up by grade, crossed off a list, and then given a unique ballot key to enter into the laptops in each polling booth. After students cast their ballots, they turned in their sheets and received an "I Voted" sticker.

The whole production was made to closely mirror a real election so that students could practice and be prepared for voting in a real election in the future. Students picked up on this attention to detail, with Tyler Franz '26 remarking, "I liked the Mock Election a lot actually. I thought it was really cool to go through the voting process and see what it's like to be a voter and active participant in our democracy. It was also interesting to find out who our school elected."

The Critical Issues class and the Trident also collaborated to have exit polling for the Amity election. Volunteers randomly selected voters to ask a series of questions that asked for the student's grade, who the student voted for, what influenced their vote, and what was the most important issue to them in this election. All data collected was anonymous, and completing the survey was optional. Throughout the day, Trident editors released the live results of the exit

poll on the Trident Instagram page. Once the official results were released, the exit poll was found to have accurately predicted the 5% gap between front runners Trump and Harris.

This whole production would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the Critical Issues class and teachers. They ran everything from the Spartan Seminar lesson on educated voting to running the actual polls. When asked about why Critical Issues students thought offering this opportunity was important, Michael Audie '25 shared, "It's important for people to be familiar with and comfortable with voting, and know how the issues they care about connect to a political party."

Other students also felt strongly about having this unique learning opportunity, as the Mock Election allowed students to practice some of the skills they have covered in their civics and social studies courses.

Shane Grogan '27 explained, "Mock Election was a great opportunity for students to experience what it is like to be part of the democratic process that has shaped our country. We have learned in APUSH about the evolution of our democracy. It was interesting to see it in action. I enjoyed the whole thing."

Additionally, some students who are eager to turn eighteen and register to vote in an official election were grateful to still have a way to politically participate. Luke Lamour '27 said, "As far as the Mock Election is concerned I think it is a great bridge between now and what we will [eventually] do with our civic duty. We get this sense of formality and honor which we should associate with our democratic rights."

Friendly Competition - and Popcorn - Highlight Link Crew's Trivia Night

by Aiza Amir '28

Link Crew hosted a freshmen trivia night on November 4th.

The event was free for 9th graders, Link Leaders, and teachers. They enjoyed the friendly competition, which included fresh popcorn and fun trivia questions.

There were five to 10 questions per major topic, which included "2024 Pop Culture," "Guess the Movie," "Spotify's Most Streamed Songs," and "All About Amity," with one round worth double points. Students tested their knowledge on recognizing popular songs from a short audio clip, titles of movies, common trends, and facts about the school.

More than 10 teams competed for the winning prize. Competition was close, with Team "Tired" winning by a single point. Other games, such as an interactive "True or False" game, were also played for prizes.

Approximately 125 students attended the event. While this would be considered a good number of attendants, Link Leader Sarayu Rao '26 said, "Because this event



Photo contributed by Tasia Kimball
9th Grade students and Link Leaders at Trivia Night

was not advertised much, few freshmen attended. Next time, to combat this issue, events like these could be advertised more to encourage a ninth grade audience."

The purpose of all Link Crew events is to enhance the connectedness of freshmen at school, and the freshmen who did turn up had a fun time. Jaycee Lee '28, who was present at the event, said, "I liked how lively the trivia event was. Everyone was locked in on winning the competition!"

Since this trivia night was the first hosted by Link Crew, English teacher and Link Crew adviser Tasia Kimball was asked what inspired her to run this event. She said, "We used to run a Link Crew movie night the night before election day. This year, however, because we could not reserve the auditorium, we pivoted and came up with the idea of having our first trivia night."

Ensuring the opportunity of another trivia night further along the year requires more ninth graders showing interest in such activities. So, if you are a freshman, check Student Happenings and look forward to more upcoming Link Crew events!

Editorial

Why I'm Stubbornly Optimistic, Even Though Our Country Feels Like It's Drifting Apart

by Alex Klee '25

Recently found that 77% of adults are stressed about the future of our nation and that 69% are specifically worried about the upcoming election. It's not hard to see how America's political environment became like this – the biases of news sources have become more extreme, disinformation runs rampant on social media platforms, and people have begun to isolate themselves in echo chambers where their views drift farther from center and go unchallenged. It feels like we are being dragged offshore by a political rip current, and that there's nothing there to keep us above the waves.

It may sound hard to believe, especially after reading that last paragraph, but I'm stubbornly optimistic for the future of our country, regardless of who wins the presidential election. As Christiana Figueres, the architect of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, explains, stubborn optimism is not a "sunny day attitude, but a gritty, determined, relentless choice each day, achievable through radical collaboration with each other."

She's saying that we can no longer sit and watch our political system drown. There is this common notion that a presidential candidate can "save" America, yet, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris are the last people I expect to throw us a life jacket. I believe that the only people that can "save" America from this political turmoil are people like you and me. We are the ones that have to do the hard work of coexistence.

Radical collaboration requires a leap of faith. Faith in normal people. Faith that we can reunite across differences in ideology. There are no magic words that a president can utter to erase our divide, so we need to find another agent of change. I believe that through effort from all people, from all parts of our country, from all walks of life, we can actually work to make the change we desperately need.

This starts with coming to understand one another on a level deeper than platform, talking points, and issues. While it's important to be

Polling conducted by the American Psychological Association recently

familiar with "the other side's" ideas, understanding the values that motivate and guide us are the key to finding common ground, something that's almost entirely eroded these past ten years. Our modern political landscape has turned values and identity into political platforms, which in turn has transformed even simple disagreements into personal, unforgivable attacks.

While it's true that politics are personal, and that policy decisions have real consequences for real people, when we start to hold a political party at the forefront of our identity, we make it incredibly difficult to see a complete version of others. In fact, one of the problems fueling our political fear is that we see those that disagree with us as evil. Because we are so detached from what makes people think and vote the way they do, it becomes much easier to believe that people make choices to spite another group and that another party's control of the executive office will be catastrophic. What we need to do is turn that narrative around and cultivate an environment of civility and understanding.

And this environment exists at Amity. Critical Issues, a contemporary politics course led by LeeAnn Browett and Chris Borelli, champions these values of tolerance and understanding. It is in this classroom where I have learned skills that are incredibly useful for the society I'm about to venture off to. It's proven to me that working with peers on all ends of the political spectrum is possible.

Maybe it's foolish to have faith in humanity, but I certainly think it's a little easier to place my faith in over 345 million Americans. So, regardless of who wins this presidential election, I'm confident that we will still have the opportunity to work hard, together, in our community and in thousands of communities across the country. We will always have the power to create a positive future for ourselves and the next generations of Americans.

Ultimately, fixing our problems doesn't need to start with an election or a new president, it can start at any moment. Every day is the perfect day to make the changes we wish to see, and while this presidential election is bound to be divisive, I'm still stubbornly optimistic for our country.

Note: Alex Klee '25 wrote this editorial prior to the Presidential Election and was not at all influenced by the results.

Cell Phone Ban: Reasonable? Extreme?

by Sophia Li '27

New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker and that city's Superintendent of Schools Madeline Negrón recently introduced their district-wide cellphone ban policy. This forces students to put their phones in pouches made by Yondr that will be locked and stored during the school day. This policy is said to be carried out in high schools by the fall of 2025. Elicker suggests that students will have a better learning experience and be more productive in class under this policy.

While acknowledging the distractions that phones have on students, banning cell phones altogether seems too harsh. Cell phones give instant access to information and allow for efficient communication with parents and peers. Students can use their phones to quickly clarify concepts and facts that seem confusing when doing assignments. Some may argue that a cell phone isn't needed for this process, as computers can get the same job done. Computers can easily look things

up online like phones can, but who wants to boot up their computer to find the definition of one word?

The ban on cell phones would also be a real burden in making e-hall passes. In a class, like math, where computers aren't used often, it would take several minutes just to boot up the laptop and sign in to securely pass. Creating e-hall passes is tedious enough but the added time from creating it on the laptop makes it more frustrating. This idea of efficiency can also be applied to communication with parents and friends. It's way easier to just send a quick message to a parent asking to drop something off than taking time out of class to go down to call them at the main office.

What do you do if you need something from a friend but you don't know what class they're in? While it's true that these events don't necessarily take place every day, it can be a real hassle navigating through them without a phone. This problem of inefficient

Continued on page 4

The Amity Trident

The Amity Trident
Amity Regional High School
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525
203-397-4830
amityregion5.org

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Aachal Gupta '25
Soumya Wijesekera '25
Hannah Guo '25

NEWS

Alex Klee '25
Eve Marin '27

FEATURES

Libby Grant '25
Jacqueline Miller '27

OPINIONS

Joy Deng '26

ARTS

Nicholas Lu '26

SPORTS

Soma Kim '25

SOCIAL MEDIA

Scarlett Zhai '25

FACULTY ADVISOR

Emily Clark

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Shreya Viswanathan '27, Charlotte Stannard '26, Emma Imanov '27, Aiza Amir '28, Sophia Li '27, Luke Lamour '27, Jake Ricciardi '26, Olivia Cummings '26, Grace Millard '27, Catherine Kohncke '28, Sarinah Zamir '27, Aitan Herman '28, Karishma Balamurugan '27, Claire Theiss '26, Akshay Bulsara '26, Manaal Akbar '25, Janet Fan '26, Victoria Pelton '27, Claire Hubbard '26

To view the newspaper online go to <http://ourschoolnewspaper.com/Trident/>

To sign up to write or take photographs for *The Trident*, contact the Editors-in-Chief, Mrs. Clark, or email amitytrident@amityregion5.org

The Amity Trident, *Amity Regional High School's* monthly student newspaper, is printed by Valley Publishing, 7 Francis Street, Derby, Connecticut 06418.

WRITE FOR THE TRIDENT

Great opportunity to get involved!
Check your email and listen to the announcements for information on a writers meeting for the December issue.

Get involved. Write for the Trident!



Instating an Election Week Is Necessary to Expand Our Democratic Privilege

by Luke Lamour '27

In our American democracy, the most fundamental aspect of it is cited to be having a government that is “for the people, of the people, and by the people” and this is a mission all of us strive towards each day through small successes and perseverance. In the wake of the election, a thought occurred to me about how democracy could be improved in a small yet impactful way, by changing the time frame of Election Day to being a whole week rather than only a day.

The concept of an election spanning multiple days isn't new. In fact, for much of the 1700s and early 1800s, it stood as a norm. The very first election took place over two years, from December 15, 1788, to January 7, 1789. This was mainly caused by the limited transportation of the period and the long amount of time it took to gather votes across the country, even if said votes were primarily of the upper class.

It was only in 1845 that a singular election day was established. This was mainly because the majority of the population worked as farmers and with all of the traveling complications that would take at least one day, and November was an optimal month since the harvest season came to a close.

This idea of accessibility and elections now poses a different problem from that of the 19th century. In a poll conducted by YouGov, 48% of Participants cited being too busy on a specific election day as to at least some extent or reason why they didn't vote in the 2020 election. It's becoming increasingly clear that one of the primary issues as to why people can't vote even if they are eligible is because of a lack of accessibility due to issues with work. The government has a responsibility to change as the people change.

Extending election day into a week is a much

more flexible time frame. Plans for voting become much more feasible when there are seven days to choose from, two of which are weekends, hence the demotivating factor of work that impacts 48% of voters can be accommodated. This is especially important considering how the main election period, whether it is a day or week, will mainly be when most citizens will vote because of all the buildup towards the time frame. Therefore, creating an elec-

As a whole, it is clear that an election week and similar concepts that extend voting time are beneficial to our democracy overall, even with these claims.

tion week has unique benefits over other voting extensions such as early voting.

Concepts of extending the voting period through methods such as an election week or even others such as early voting have received many more critics than proponents in recent years, but ultimately many of these claims fail to factor in a wide scope.

Some arguments claim that early voting leads to lower turnout rates. This position is based on multiple studies including the University of Wisconsin and The Heritage overseeing lower voting rates

with counties implementing early voting, however, both of these studies were made in 2013 and 2016 respectively, years before the concept of early voting would completely come to fruition.

When it did come to fruition in the 2020 election, the voter turnout rate surged by 6.5% compared to 2016 and as it gained more utility and purpose, especially in unique contexts such as the pandemic where voting in-person was discouraged and early, mail-in ballots became commonplace. In a world where we can apply similar concepts such as early voting into a more sustainable, well-known, and widespread election week, voting will become more accessible.

Other arguments say that an election week and early voting would lead to less informed decisions due to a time crunch for election ads and persuasion. However, voters likely have an established view of political candidates regardless of how voting times are extended, whether it is directly through an election week or not.

Even then, election ads don't have the purpose of directly convincing voters in a month's vicinity of the election because they would have established themselves further before and the true purpose of the ads is to allow candidates to become more memorable in the eyes of voters and specifically supporters. As a whole, it is clear that an election week and similar concepts that extend voting time are beneficial to our democracy overall, even with these claims.

For the sake of increasing voter turnout and bestowing the American privilege of voting to more people, it is time to make reforms and finally expand Election Day into Election Week. If we want to prove our nation as a democracy to a further extent, we need citizens to know that we are regurgitating old laws for the sake of tradition, but relaying new laws based on sound logic and contemporary needs.

Cell Phone Ban: Reasonable or Extreme?

Continued from page 3

communication becomes more pressing in a case of emergency.

Superintendent Negrón reasoned that banning cell phones would promote more face to face interactions among students, further developing their social skills. On the contrary, cell phones can help students form bonds at school. This could be from sharing interesting news online, watching videos, and taking silly pictures. There are so many things that can be done on the cell phone to spark conversations and create strong relationships with peers.

The driving reason behind this ban is that cell phones have become too disruptive in the learning environment. Rather than prohibiting cell phones altogether, teachers

can restrict them in class at their discretion. Many teachers have already asked students to place their phones in the designated phone pocket chart at the beginning of class. This limits the distraction of phones completely, letting students properly focus in class while also allowing them to contact others if needed. The phones can be simply taken out of the pocket to be used for making e-hall passes, sending urgent messages, and clarifying subjects online.

Banning cell phones may seem like an easy solution to classroom challenges, but it overlooks the convenience and opportunities the devices provide. With thoughtful policies and guidance, cell phone use can be limited effectively to help students get the most of their learning experience.

Have you missed the crossword puzzles from years gone by?

Check out pages 8 and 9 for not one, but two cultural crosswords to challenge you!



Caring for small & farm animals since 1999.

116 Old Amity Road
Bethany, CT
203-393-PETS (7387)

Kimberly McClure Brinton, DVM
Shannon Brighenti, DVM
Dallas Passerino, DVM
Dana M. Perry, DVM

www.countrycompanionsvet.com
LIKE us on Facebook



Academic Hall of Honor Celebrates Its Newest Inductees

by Jake Ricciardi '26

The Amity Alumni Hall of Fame recently had their first induction ceremony for the Academic Hall of Honor and Athletics' Hall of Fame since Covid times.

The Hall of Honor was created in 2006 and Co-chair of the Hall of Honor and Amity social studies teacher Richard Bourdeau says, "It was started by the district because we wanted to recognize some great things that people who went to the school have done in their careers."

Anybody can be nominated as long as they were a student or educator in this district. After being nominated, it goes to a committee that checks if the nominee has displayed traits like innovation in their field, dedication, and leadership throughout their career. If the nominee has displayed those traits and more, they then get inducted. After the induction ceremony they receive a plaque on the wall that can be seen by Amity students in passing.

This year's inductees consist of four people. One is Erik Stocklin who graduated from Amity in 2001. He is now a successful actor living in Los Angeles with his wife Colleen Ballinger who is also a successful actress and is known for her internet character Miranda Sings.

When talking about Stocklin's visit, Performing Arts teacher Robert Kennedy says "Eric told us that he loved to be here, he couldn't have been nicer". Stocklin is known for his roles in shows such as "Mistresses," "Good Trouble," and "Haters Back Off." Stocklin attributes his career to his teachers Jonathon Furst, a retired teacher who taught English and Ashley Nichols, who used to teach English and Theater at Amity. Furst had Stocklin read a monologue from Shakespeare's Macbeth. Impressed by his abilities, Furst encouraged Stocklin to audition for the school play, Our Town. Eventually, Stocklin agreed and was given the male lead role by Nichols which sparked his career.

The second inductee this year is Jason Klein who played varsity baseball and graduated from Amity in 1996. Klein is the Executive Chairman and the founder of his company FORCE3 PRO GEAR. This company manufactures sports equipment to drastically lower the risk of concussions or other head related injuries. After taking a foul-tipped ball right to the chin while umpiring a Triple-A game, Klein felt like he needed to make a change to the masks used by umpires and catchers in baseball. He put an immense amount of effort into his mask. The Force3 Defender is now worn by over half of the active catchers in the Major League Baseball (MLB).

This year's third inductee is Robert Slie, an educator who dedicated his career to helping children in the Amity District. Slie began his career teaching social studies at Amity Junior High School Orange in 1970. Six years later, he became the department head of social studies in Orange while also working as a history professor in SCSU. Slie then worked as an assistant principal in all three schools and ended his career as the principal at the Orange Junior High, now the Middle School.

While he was the principal, he hired English teacher Tasia Kimball. "Bob Slie was my first principal when I came to Amity. I worked in the Orange middle school and he was

always calm and understanding," she said. "When I was a young teacher he was always really helpful. A whole population of local people for whom he was their social studies teacher and their principal." He oversaw the middle school's renovation and was an active member and leader in many organizations in Connecticut.

Another inductee from this year is Robert Flaumenhaft who is Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Chief of the Division of Hemostasis and Thrombosis at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Flaumenhaft is a physician and has published hundreds of articles about blood clotting and vascular biology. His work has been of great use in blood clots in relation to heart attacks and his studies have been cited over 13,000 times in various articles and videos. Flaumenhaft has won a multitude of awards and has nine patents. Additionally, he founded a company, PlateletDiagnostics, that he created with Mike and Alan Flaumenhaft, his brothers.

This year's Amity Hall of Honor inductees have highly impressive careers that all stemmed from our very own district. They serve as a reminder of the dedication and spirit that defines the Amity community.



Photo contributed by Hannah Guo '25

Erik Stocklin (center) speaks to a class along with his wife Colleen Ballinger and Visual and Performing Arts teacher Robert Kennedy

Veterans Day

Tom Norton's Path of Service and Education

by Olivia Cummings '26

On Veterans Day, we honor the men and women who have served our country, recognizing their sacrifices and role in defending the freedoms we cherish. Tom Norton, a social studies teacher at Amity, is one of these veterans.

Norton, now an American Government and Economic Policy teacher, served in the Army reserve A-Company, 1st Battalion-102nd Infantry Division out of the Goffe Street Armory in New Haven. He jokes that being in the reserves is often referred to as "Fort Living Room."

His decision to become a teacher after his service stemmed from the desire to do something meaningful with his life.

Norton spent some time in the TV and radio industry, but remarks, "It was quickly apparent to me that I wasn't going to serve anything but myself in that vocation."

He eventually determined that teaching was where he could find real meaning. "What I found was that the most meaningful thing that I could do was teach. So I did. I hope I was right; I was told once by someone I respect that he had perhaps never seen someone as suited to what they do as I am, so maybe!"

The military has many values that come to mind when considering what a service member might bring to the classroom. Norton jokes about this when asked what values from his time in the military he aims to bring to his teaching and his students today.

"Ha! One might expect me to say, Discipline! Determination! Focus! Intensity! Can-Do Spirit!"

So what does he really aim to bring to the classroom?

He says this: "a sense of humor. My time at basic training was the best 13 week comedy event of my life! Nothing will ever match it for sheer volume of absolute hilarity. Literally a laugh a minute!" A surprising answer, perhaps, but one that makes sense. Anyone can appreciate the importance of good humor when facing difficulty.

Taking after a long line of servicemen in his family, Norton grew up surrounded by veterans. This alongside the benefits of the GI Bill, which covered his education at SCSU, and a monthly stipend made military service worthwhile.

However, when asked what he would say to young people today who are considering joining the military, his thoughts are more complicated. "I am not sure. I am not one who encourages military service

generally and I am not as comfortable with the exalting of the military as most others appear to be. That might seem contradictory considering what I have said thus far, but for me to be as sincere as I think this question requires me to be, I would need to say those things straight away."

He continues to elaborate that it's important for people to weigh the benefits, the risks and the costs, and "investigate the vast opportunities the military offers, the incredible educational opportunities, and travel prospects". He emphasizes considering how someone thinks they could improve the military as well as what opportunities the military provides.

While Veterans Day encourages reflection on the sacrifices made by service members, Norton shares that growing up, Veterans Day wasn't a major event in his life.

"I have never met a family in my life with the concentration of military veterans that matched the men at my Thanksgiving table and yet I never heard a word about it from any of them... It was something they all did, but there was no "pride" about it."

However, his perspective shifted after a powerful experience at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

"The Vietnam veterans were treated pretty lousy and our entire national psyche regarding service people and Veterans has completely changed since. I think as a country we had a collective guilt trip about how those poor kids were treated on their return and we decided that we were going to treat our veterans better. Now we make a bigger deal of these things."

Norton has presented at Amity Middle School in Bethany on Veterans Day for many years, largely about his father's service during World War II, which he believes is more interesting than his own. However, Veterans Day was established to recognize the role of all veterans, no matter what their service entailed.

In this spirit we thank Norton, alongside the other veterans in our community, for their service.

He closes with this: "I have an Honorable Discharge, which means I served honorably. That's enough for me."



Photo contributed by Thomas Norton

Veteran and history teacher Tom Norton

National Spanish Honor Society Hosts “Una Fiesta”

by Grace Millard '27

Spanish Heritage month in the United States is an annual celebration from September 15th until October 15th, and it is organized to celebrate Spanish and Latino Americans across the nation. This is a group who has contributed tremendously to the richness, diversity, and prosperity of our country.

Whether it be through art, music, science, math, or anything in between; it is important to celebrate all of the diverse cultures in America.

The Spanish Honor Society celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month through their annual Fiesta de Hispánica on October 25th, 2024. It combined cultural practices of many Spanish-speaking countries to create a melting pot of cultures and fun.

Karishma Balamurugan '27 said, “The fiesta was a great activity to get together with friends and it allowed me to experience the different activities and get embedded in the culture.”



Photo contributed by Feng Xia
Students at the National Spanish Honor Society’s Fiesta

At one station there was intricate paper cutting, a Mexican art called papel picado. Participants created everything from delicate lace patterns, to skulls and other shapes!

At another station there was tissue paper folding of Marigolds; traditional orange flowers believed to guide the dead back home on Día de los Muertos.

All the while, Spanish music played over the speakers and guests were free to indulge in an international buffet. Most of the food was catered and donated by Palma, a local Latin restaurant. This generous gift was donated to make the experience as authentic as possible for students.

The highlight for many, however, was the salsa dancing class taught by special-guest instructors. Students partnered up and learned how to step and twirl to music from the lively help of teachers and dancers alike. It was a beautiful way for students to enjoy the cultures of many Spanish-speaking countries.

Ziyan Zhang '27 says, “I really enjoyed the event as I was able to have a lot of fun with my friends!”

The event brought students across grades and Spanish levels together for a one-night sensation.

Overall, the event was a huge success. It educated many in a way that spread a contagious kind of fun. It also helped the Spanish Honor Society to fund-raise for future student directed events, so that they may continue to

share Spanish-speaking culture to our community.

Thanksgiving Celebrations Around the World

by Catherine Kohncke '28

In the United States, people celebrate Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday in November every year. Customary traditions include getting together with family and eating a big meal. This day was made to commemorate the feast with the Native Americans and English pilgrims. But how do



Photo contributed by. allthatsinteresting.com

A typical Thanksgiving (Chuseok) in Korea

people in other countries around the world celebrate Thanksgiving?

To start off, a lot of countries celebrate a similar holiday of giving thanks for what they have. However, their ‘Thanksgivings’ are not based off of the same event that ours is. In Canada, Thanksgiving is celebrated a little more than a month earlier, but many of the traditions are the same. Interestingly, Canada started celebrating this day around 40 years earlier than the United States.

In Asia, some countries celebrate a day of Thanksgiving for the harvest, or for the people that came before them.

Jaycee Lee '28 said, “In Korea, they

celebrate a Thanksgiving called Chuseok, and it spans over three days in September. It consists of making foods, inviting family over to show gratitude to their ancestors from past generations. It is celebrated by conducting a memorial service. The main food is SongPyeon, with side dishes of sweet honey rice cakes and pear slices.”

Many other Asian countries celebrate with feasts of their native foods and other customs.

In Europe there are also many countries that celebrate their own version of Thanksgiving. In Germany people celebrate Erntedankfest, the UK celebrates Harvest Festival, and the Netherlands have a Thanksgiving day to commemorate the arrival of pilgrims in America.

In South America, some people celebrate Thanksgiving, but for many countries it is not a very widely celebrated day.

Clara Ortenzi '26, a student from Brazil, says, “Thanksgiving or Ação de graças in Portuguese, is a special day to gather family and friends for a big lunch banquet. Although still celebrated, thanksgiving is not a very popular holiday in Brazil.

Those who celebrate it, often do it in honor of relatives or family members with American roots. Ação de graças is celebrated on November 28th, students don’t get any day off from school due to the holiday’s lack of popularity across the nation.

However, simple reunions may still occur. In my family, we never did full size banquets, because no one in our family was from the United States, but we still gathered the family, and ate delicious food together.”

As we enjoy Thanksgiving this year, many people around the world are giving thanks just like us. This can help us realize that there is so much to be thankful for,

Is Daylight Savings Time Still Relevant?

by Sarinah Zamir '27

On November 3rd, people across the country set their clocks to “fall back” an hour. This allows everyone to get an extra hour of sleep in exchange for one less hour of daylight in the afternoon. But as it continues to mess with our sleep cycles, many of us have been asking recently, is it even necessary? Where did this tradition even come from?

Daylight savings goes all the way back to Benjamin Franklin’s time. In 1784, he suggested that people change their sleep schedules to save money on candles and lamp oil.

After this, different light savings plans were proposed to help save energy costs during World War I and to allow for more daylight in the summer. Finally, in 1966, Congress passed the Uniform Time Act, which established the current system of Daylight Savings Time (DST).

As we know, switching to daylight savings is a federal mandate, but states can opt out by passing a state law. Hawaii and Arizona do not observe DST, and most U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico and Guam do not. This raises the question that many find themselves asking when the sun goes down an hour earlier or later than they want. Should we abolish the time change?

According to the National Conference of State legislatures, states have considered over 700 bills and resolutions in recent years to establish year-round daylight savings time. Connecticut has raised two bills on DST in the past few years which would have us joining Arizona and Hawaii, but neither bill made it to a vote.

Amity students and staff have opinions on the matter, many of which contradict each other. After conducting a survey of about 30 people asking the question “should we

abolish daylight savings,” about 57% of people said yes, while 43% said no. Some people offered differing perspectives, commenting on the distinction between setting the clocks forward and back which is drastically different.

Sophomore Jaden Skopp wants to keep the time change, saying “the switch up is nice because I like the extra hour of sleep and it is lighter out in the morning when I am getting ready for school.”

On the contrary, Isabella Smernoff '27 thinks that the time change should be abolished. “It negatively impacts the school atmosphere in a way that when it gets dark earlier, it makes students more sad and tired,” she commented.

Amity teachers also notice changes in their students when the switch happens. However, like students, most believe that the spring time change is what tends to have the biggest impact while the fall time change often causes no changes.

Spanish teacher Helly Potter notes, “It takes a while for the students to adjust to getting up earlier, as it is a big change in their schedules.”

Chemistry teacher John Laliberte agrees with the sentiment that the time change definitely has a bigger effect in the spring. He said, “The effect is that the entire school has jet lag” and also noting that students tend to complain about it.

While the time change aims to make better use of daylight, its effect on health, energy consumption, and daily routines are mixed.

As debates proceed, people will continue to question whether the benefits of the time change outweigh the drawbacks.

Daylight savings time will likely be around a while longer, whether we like it or not. Time will tell!



A representation of the time change

Photo contributed by desertcurrent.com

The Role of Expenditures on the Campaign Trail for the 2024 Presidential Election

by Aitan Herman '28

dential election. Between all the candidates, \$10.5B was spent during this campaign. Each candidate invested a different amount of money and time into each state.

Vice President Kamala Harris appealed to five major swing states: Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and Arizona. In Pennsylvania, Harris spent \$637M. This was a key state for her because it had 19 electoral votes to potentially win. Pennsylvania has typically been a swing state since the beginning of U.S. presidential election history.

Michigan is traditionally a democratic state but it has become a swing state in recent elections. This is because of a shifting demographic in the state.

It went towards President-elect Donald Trump in the recent election. Though it swung towards Trump, Harris had spent \$446M on campaigning in the state.

Wisconsin, which is normally a blue state, polled towards Trump leading up to November. It was considered a swing state, so both candidates spent a significant amount of money on their campaigns there. Harris spent a total of \$361M in Wisconsin.

Even Ohio, which Vice President Harris had invested a lot of money into, swung towards Donald Trump by over 10% of votes. However, since 1960, the candidate who wins

Advertising played a key role in the results of the 2024 presi-

the presidential vote always wins the electorate in Ohio. (Except once in 2020 when President Joe Biden won.) Harris spent \$308M on her campaign here. Arizona, a traditionally Republican state, was won by

up investing a total of \$308M.

Trump focused on five major swing states throughout his campaign: Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio and Georgia. He did not raise as much money as Harris so his total expenditures were lower. However, Trump's team still spent a lot of money collectively in these five states.

Donald Trump won Michigan because it has a highly Arab population compared to some other states. A larger percentage than normal did not go out and vote due to the Israel-Hamas War.

The Arab population traditionally votes Democratic. President-elect Donald Trump invested 302 million dollars into the state and ended up winning the 16 electoral votes.

Trump won North Carolina which was not surprising, as he was polling ahead. He did spend a lot of money on campaigning there. The last time North Carolina went to a Democratic candidate in the presidential race was in 2008 for President Barack Obama. Even though this was the case, Donald Trump put \$201M into the state.

Ohio is generally a republican state and has been for a while. Trump still needed to invest money into it because it carried a significant amount of electoral votes. He put in \$364M into the state.

Donald Trump spent a significant amount of money on his Georgia campaign which is surprising because Georgia is usually a Republican state. He spent \$169M in Georgia.



Photo courtesy from whyy.org

President-elect Trump and Vice President Harris

President Biden in 2020 by 0.4% of votes. The Democrats thought they could win this again due to that fact, so they invested a lot of money into the state as well. Harris ended



We're serious about math

BEING FUN!

For K - 12th Grades

mathnasium.com/milford

Schedule a

FREE
Assessment

203-783-1490

201 Cherry Street
Milford, CT



Music in Motion: An “Electric” Night to Remember

by Grace Millard '27

It's a night full of flashing lights, brilliant colors, and vibrant music. Music in Motion is always a great night

student Sarah Megyola '26 put it best, saying, “Music in motion is an electric night full of energy and it always feels over too soon.” After all, it is a one-night-only spectacle!

Each ensemble

Amity’s performing arts programs. Attendance at the event was fantastic, with much of the ARHS community coming together to celebrate their loved ones!

The audience enjoyed the show not only because of the stellar performances, but also the dazzling special effects, and hilarious MC commentary of Ethan Enos, the performance’s host.

Beyond the bright lights and musical majesty, the performance was much more than just a show for some students. Music, in fact, can be a language for many, helping them communicate in a universal way.

Chloe Chang '27 said, “Music in Motion showcased a wonderful side of the Amity Music department that I am so grateful to be a part of. I was able spend time having fun with friends, but also enjoying being in a nurturing and creative environment that allowed me to express myself!”

It was an incredible production as always for both audience and ensemble members!



Photo contributed by Claire Hubbard '26

for anyone in attendance. This year, on October 24, hundreds of students came together to display the full extent of Amity’s performing arts’ talent!

This show has been in the works for months for every ensemble. Even so, the performance is always both frenetic and fleeting. Choir

performed a different number of pieces; the Amity Choir performed three, the Amity Band performed three, the Amity Jazz Band performed three, and soloist Michael Baker '27 performed one. This diverse array of performances helped create a unique experience that highlighted all parts of

Native American History Month Mini Crossword

by Nicholas Lu '26

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9							
10							
11							
12			13				
14			15				
16			17				
18				19			

ACROSS

- 1. Six Nations (post 1722), major Native American confederacy
- 9. Legendary Shawnee chief and warrior, fought to stop early American expansion
- 10. Continuous KOs
- 11. Members of one of the “Five Civilized Tribes”
- 12. Department usually believed to exclusively service “Karens”
- 13. _____ Johnson, American chef and Internet personality from Austin, Texas
- 14. “Electrical Engineering,” for

short

- 15. “Gal” in Esperanto
- 16. Continent home to Inca civilization, for short
- 17. “The Noun,” translated literally in Arabic
- 18. Original home state of the Cheyenne tribe, for short
- 19. Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, for short

DOWN

- 1. “_____ not checkers” (saying)
- 2. To thread again
- 3. Spanish for “ochre”

- 4. Major Indigenous ethnic group in Peru, their language is the second official Language
- 5. Tribe living along the Columbia River Plateau, namesake of their reservation
- 6. German based designer label (includes “line” in answer)
- 7. (2 word combination) “id est” colloquially and “kwanor” (no meaning for most, last name for some)
- 8. Great Plains Tribe, frequently referred to as the Snake Indians

Artist of the Month Isabella Schultz Brings “Unique Vision”

by Karishma Balamurugan '27

The highlight artist this month is sophomore Isabella Schultz, who brings a unique vision and dedication to her craft, creating stunning oil paintings. With a deep passion for blending colors and creating art that resonates with her, Schultz has pursued this passion seriously over the past year, though she began exploring art two to three years ago.

Schultz’s journey into the art world was inspired by her grandmother, a talented artist herself. After moving away from her, Schultz found art as a way to reconnect with her grandmother, who remains at the heart of Schultz’s creative process and passion. While her style draws inspiration from Greek statues and classical artists like Van Gogh, she also incorporates a modern twist to create her own unique look.

Schultz believes that art is deeply personal and interpretive, describing it as “a language of sorts” that invites countless interpretations.

“People interpret English differently,” she explains, “and it’s the same with art.” This belief is evident in her work, with each piece telling its own story and inviting viewers to find their own meanings.

Like many artists, she sometimes faces art blocks and demotivation, but she offers a straightforward approach: “Piece it—don’t

make it complicated. You go shape by shape, color by color. Have fun, don’t make it a chore.”

This philosophy comes from her experience as a self-taught artist and her journey has allowed her to explore and learn at her own pace.

She encourages aspiring artists to take their time and find joy in each stroke, reminding them that talent is cultivated, not an inherent gift. She emphasizes that simply because one is not satisfied with one’s first piece doesn’t mean one will feel the same about one’s hundredth.

When her creativity wanes, Schultz finds inspiration in creating her own characters and stories—a practice rooted in her passion for writing. Developing characters with distinct personalities, appearances, and stories helps spark her imagination and translate it into her artwork.

Furthermore, she encourages fellow artists to try new things, break out of routines, and remember: “There are people who love and appreciate your work, and if you don’t see those people, you need to show more people your art to find your people out there.”

For Schultz, art is not only a means of expression but also a way to connect and inspire. She passionately reminds others not to demotivate themselves: “The world is absent of your art because you demotivate yourself to believe



Photo contributed by Isabella Schultz '27

it doesn’t deserve your art—but it does.”

Schultz believes everyone has something unique to offer, and her work is a testament to that. We’re excited to see where Isabella Schultz’s art journey will take her next.

Hispanic Heritage Month Crossword

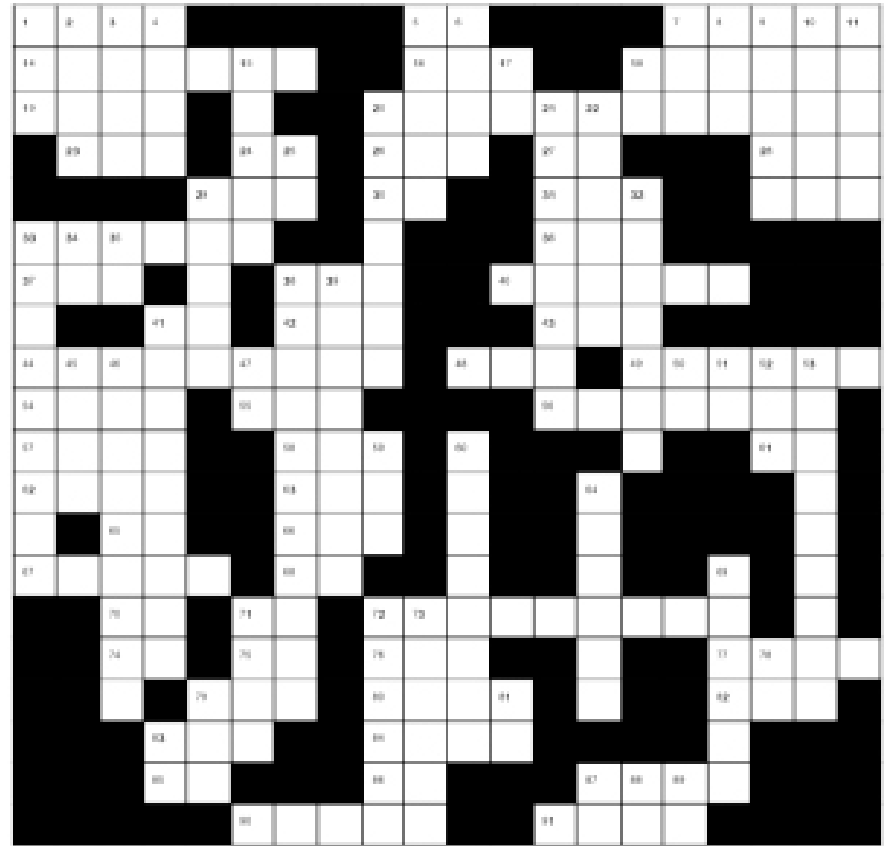
DOWN

1. Drinking vessel
2. Middle English word for well-experienced in warfare
3. Damage via fire
4. "Water" in Spanish
5. Country with the world's driest desert
6. Miami-____ County
7. Federal Housing Administration, for short
8. Very good or cool
9. Ivy League Schools, for short
10. Rare plural form of white-tailed antelope
11. Bright blue, like the sky
15. "Right now" in Spanish
17. YouTube, for short
18. "This" in French
20. Hispanic country with no McDonald's
21. Spanish-speaking
22. Spain, as they say in Spain
25. Direct Message
29. Tribe within Kazakh ethnicity
32. Word formed from another word rearranged,
33. Hispanic country home to four UNESCO World Heritage sites
34. Inside, for short
35. To be (somewhere)
38. Like a "sweet sixteen"
39. Where to find sopa de caracol
41. Trip to Caracas, _____
45. Rocket-assisted takeoff, for short
46. Country where the Maya once lived
47. "Thank you" shorthand
50. "a" and "el" conjunction in French
51. Formal "you" in Spanish, for short
52. Sharp bite or pinch
53. "Rich Coast" in Spanish
59. Data Access Arrangement acronym
60. Hispanic country known for their quality Arabica coffee
64. Large Hispanic country that celebrates independence on September 16, 69. Fernando, who loved "Mas Volumen"
71. Organic support beam
72. World's most popular sport, Hispanics may say
73. Ornament in Spanish
78. Information Technology, for short
79. To leave or go down, 81. "Lane" for short
83. Important constant for circles
87. Rheumatoid arthritis acronym

88. "To go" in Spanish
89. California, for short

ACROSS

1. Havana is the capital of
5. Compact Disc
7. Khalo, best known for her self-portraits
14. Least populous Hispanic country in South America
16. "There is" in Spanish, for horses in English
18. Cesar, who said the quarrel was with people, not grapes
19. Care to visit Machu Picchu?
20. Old-fashioned goodbye (3 words)
23. Code of life
24. Short for overdose
26. Informal way to say old
27. 3rd person singular of "to be"
28. Make a mistake
29. Upper body limb
30. "The" (masculine) in French
31. Place for a massage
33. Great American-Canadian waterfall
36. "Bread" in Spanish
37. Interval or integer, for short
38. Quail Hill Vineyard acronym
39. Hispanic country known for its canal
41. To compete for something
42. Unit of Inquiry acronym
43. To pester
44. Reigning World Cup champions
48. Muhammad ____
49. Vulgarity
54. A female fish (herring or salmon)
55. Common conjunction, indicates addition
56. Bravo, who drew the map with Uruguay on top
57. Automotive Trade Association Executives-short
58. What is rechewed by cows
61. Postscript



62. Expensive designer dolls
63. One of Taylor Swift's many
65. European Union
66. Triple A
67. Having upper body limbs or guns
68. Short for "Nice Shot"
70. ____ Capone
71. Homophone of bee
72. Strong belief in family ties among Hispanics
74. City of Hollywood
75. Conjunction to link alternatives
76. Universal Data Bank acronym
77. Nast parasite or clock interval
79. Genetic code, 80. Hard work
82. Seventh Greek letter
83. Tasty baked dish
84. Unappetizing outer shell of grain
85. Internet Protocol, for short
86. Above
87. Puerto ____
90. Picasso, famous Spanish artist known for his "blue period" among other things

New Haven Filmmaker Speaks of His Creative Journey

by Luke Lamour '27

Gorman Bechard, a local filmmaker from New Haven, Connecticut, recounted his filmmaking journey on November 4 as a part of the high school's Guest Presentation Series.

As a college student initially studying journalism, Bechard found himself hiccoughing in the filmmaking industry after taking film classes in New York, citing his "desire to tell stories" as a major motivating factor as he explored filmmaking and literature. Throughout the 1990s, he released two of his most acclaimed works, the horror films *Psychos In Love* and *Disconnected*, both of which were released during the rise of VHS technology.

In addition to movies, Bechard also wrote multiple novels during this time period, many of which contained spiritual themes, including *Daughter of God* and *The 2nd Greatest Story Ever Told with Daughter of God*. The former eventually received its own film adaptation.

In the 2000s, Bechard changed creative direction as he experimented with radically new titles, themes and mediums. With the surge in new technology, a wider range of media was created by Bechard. His preferred style centers around an emphasis on documentaries on topics he finds interesting. From famous musicians such as Jimmy Panton to the tale of how Italian immigrants defined New Haven pizza in *Pizza: A Love Story*, no film under Bechard's name is the same.

The next work on his agenda to release is *Factory*, a documentary surrounding the history of the New Haven Clock Factory on Hamilton Street. The factory is one of the most fascinating buildings in the city, being the location of many of the largest college parties hosted by Yale students as well as, most notably to Bechard, the largest art gallery in the state. The clock factory's significance in the world of

relaying creative freedom is quite important to Bechard. He claims that the factory "should be preserved as a home to dreamers". Bechard displayed the trailer to *Factory*, clarifying that it will be released soon once an ending is completed.

After showing the trailer of *Factory* and discussing his experiences in the filmmaking industry, Bechard took questions where the main focus was centered on how to ignite a similar passion for literature and film. He hoped to leave students with the message that the industry helps to promote overall freedom when you are engrossed.

As a way of gaining the passion, Bechard told students to keep writing, in school and for pleasure, saying, "I found that one of the best ways you get yourself used to writing is that you do it every day."



Photo contributed by Trident staff
Gorman Bechard talks with students in the library

A Final Lap to the Season: The Girls Swim and Dive Team Crushes the SCCs

by Soma Kim '25

The Amity Girls Swim and Dive (AGSD) team has always been a prominent force in school and athletics. This year is no exception. As the fall season comes to a close, the Lady Spartans showcase their developed skills through their victory at the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC).

Each swimmer was strategically assigned to specific events, where the AGSD team swam with confidence and determination. From the 200

Yard Medley Relay to the 400 Yard Freestyle Relay, they displayed their individual strengths.

The AGSD achieved a combined score of 1425, a whopping 241 points greater than the Cheshire High School team who placed second. Captain Marea Li '25 and Amanda Ford '25 are two of many Lady Spartans who stood out at the SCCs: Li placed first in the 200 Yard Individual Medley and the 100 Yard Breaststroke, scoring 2:08.12 and 1:06.49 respectively, and Ford placed first in 100 Yard Butterfly, scoring 59.24.

A long-serving Lady Spartan, Ford reflects on the win, describing, "It was truly amazing. We had won [the SCCs] twice before, but winning my senior year was a great feeling. I genuinely could not have asked for a better team to accomplish this with."

She shares mixed emotions about moving on: "I am extremely sad to walk away from this team and all the amazing friendships I've made, but I'm excited to watch this year's freshman class grow over the next few years."

Ford concluded by stating, "In the swim community, we have a saying when you have your last meet—that you are officially a 'swammer.' I've dreaded this day for the past few years, but we could not have asked for a better way to end the season!"

Phoebe Hamblett '25, another significant contributor to the team's victory, also expressed her elation. "I just transferred for my senior year and these girls are truly something special. They made me a part of the team immediately and I'm so happy to say that we won SCCs. It was a magical moment and I'll never stop being proud of them all."

Swimming in the 200 Yard Medley Relay, 200 Yard Freestyle, 100 Yard Backstroke, and 400 Yard Freestyle Relay, Hamblett demonstrates that hard work and dedication can go a long way.

Coach Todd Rainey said this season was a memorable one for the team. "Our girls had one of our best seasons ever," he said. "Captains Taylor Leapley and Marea Li set the tone for everyone, leading to a group of hard workers and fierce competitors who had fun at all practices and meets."

The team's efforts are undeniable. From themed clothes in school to amazing performances during meets, they give their all to make a name for themselves and deserve congratulations for their accomplishments.



Photo contributed by @amitygirlsswimdive on Instagram

The Girls Swim and Dive Team with their coach Todd Rainey

Pre-season Conditioning Prepares the Boys Basketball Team for Success

by Claire Theiss '26

With the basketball season quickly approaching, the Spartans are hard at work preparing during pre-season this year. Multiple times a week, they can be found lifting weights and conditioning.

Last year, the team had a win-loss record of 9-11, which they aim to improve upon in this upcoming season. The team hopes to do so by having pre-season practices.

Alex Cuzio '25 believes that the practices will "help the guys get into game shape, so that [they] are able

to keep up early in the season."

Cuzio goes on to say "Our goal is to take advantage of a strong returning varsity core and make a deep run in the playoffs."

Last season, the basketball team saw some success in the post-season, making it to the state tournament. There, they beat Griswold High School, ranked 10th at the time, while Amity was ranked 23rd.

Cuzio is confident that the team can make it far in the playoffs this upcoming season due to how strong the team appears to be during pre-season conditioning this year.

Good luck to the Spartans basketball team this season!



Photo contributed by Alex Cuzio '25

The Boys Basketball from the 2023-2024 season

Luke Cushing Journeys to a Cross Country Title

by Akshay Bulsara '26

Junior Luke Cushing excels in his academics and athletic achievements. Cushing recently competed at the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC) Cross Country Championships in October, finishing with an astonishing time of 15:35.8, a personal best.

This feat led Cushing to be crowned 2024 SCC Cross Country Champion, beating second place by over 20 seconds. The event occurred at East Shore Park in New Haven.

However, this SCC win did not come easy to Cushing. His past season 5k record time was 16:03.0. When comparing this score to his most recent record, his progress is commendable.

When asked how he prepared for this year's Cross Country season, Cushing replied, "I trained really hard this summer. From the middle of June to the beginning of the school year, I was running and continued that training into the school year."

He believes that his hard work and commitment to the sport is what led him to substantially lower his time and excel this season.

Cushing's response to a question regarding the fruits of his efforts was noteworthy. Cushing responded saying, "I feel really glad that my hard work paid off but I hope to continue to show how hard I have worked by competing in more competitive meets."

Cushing will have the chance to achieve his ambitious goals and demonstrate his hard work in the upcoming 2024 New England XC race and the 2024 Nike Cross Regionals later in November.

Ultimately, Cushing's diligence and preparation in both the season and the off-season led him to his great victories, and he is hopeful to continue showing why he was honored with the title of the 2024 SCC Cross Country Champion and SCC Athlete of the Month in his future meets.



Photo contributed by Ron Knapp

Luke Cushing '26 running at the 2024 Connecticut Boys Cross Country State Open meet at East Shore Park in New Haven in October.

Determination and Friendship Drive the Intramural Girls Flag Football Season

by Manaal Akbar '25

ing determination and friendship both on and off the field. So far, the team faced Southington on Saturday, November 16 in a highly anticipated Powder Puff game. Despite their hard work, Amity fell short with a 7-28 loss.

The players' performance, however, reflected weeks of dedication to practice. Sessions were intense yet rewarding, as the team focused on mastering offensive and defensive drills, running plays, and organizing formations. The practices, led by captains who ran through structured warmups and drills, became the basis of their preparation.

Coach and history teacher Rick Bourdeau praised the team's effort, sharing, "I've told the girls we have a lot of potential... some practices are better than others."

Bordeau highlighted the importance of bonding among teammates: "Watching the girls have fun and get to know each other has been my favorite part of the season," he said.

"There are a lot of times people don't know each other, and this activity always brings the seniors together."

Despite the setback against Southington, players remain optimistic. When asked how she felt after the game, Nidhi Kompalli '25 reflected, "We tried really hard. Our practices definitely paid off because we knew what we were doing coming into this. Even though we lost, we still put up a fight."

Practices have been intensive, creating an environment where players could improve their skills and build trust with one another. The sessions typically begin with captains leading stretches and

The Girls Flag Football team has been hard at work this season, showcasing

warmups, ensuring everyone is physically and mentally ready to focus.

From there, players split into offensive and defensive groups to focus on their specific responsibilities.

Katalyna Brown '25, who is a right tackle,

charisma, and I'm excited for the games ahead. My favorite part of the season has been watching all of us grow from knowing little about football to becoming a well-functioning team".

This season has carried on a tradition spanning two decades, with the highlight being the an-



Photo contributed by Kristin Feuerstein '25

The players line up in preparation for their recent game against Southington.

kicker, and offense captain, said, "So far, the season has been rewarding. We've worked hard as a team, building chemistry and improving our skills along the way.

Our team has developed great energy and

nual game against Southington on the Monday before Thanksgiving.

This year, Amity will host the game on Monday, November 25th at the turf field, just before Thanksgiving.

This game serves as a combination of the team's hard work and a chance to rally school spirit. They hope to garner support and show off all their work at the home game on the 25th.

UMattr Volleyball Spikes Interest



The Umtrr Club held a 3 on 3 Volleyball tournament after school on Wednesday, November 20.

Adviser Karen Waterman said, "The club has been holding this tournament for several years, and each year I'm thrilled to see the collegial competition for a great cause. The goal of the Umtrr Club is to bring awareness to teen suicide and mental health issue through the lens of connection, education, and fun. I appreciate the PE department's involvement and the Umtrr leadership team for making this event special and successful."



Make your financial future a priority



John Huber,
Financial Advisor

26 Cherry St Milford, CT 06460
p: 203.878.8194, x4805

Visit pciawealth.com/disclosure/
for disclosure info

Happy Thanksgiving,
Amity!

Students Share Their Motivations to Vote and Thoughts on Youth Voter Turnout

by Janet Fan '26

hardly at all. Many youth fall into the latter group, as voters ages 18-29 are historically underrepresented in elections.

According to the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts (CIRCLE), only 42% of eligible youth voted this past election, a 10% decrease from 2020. This article takes a quick look at how a few Amity seniors (out of roughly ~50 eligible students in the graduating class) decided whether to vote this election cycle.

Overwhelmingly, students cited their teachers' influence on how prepared they felt to vote. "My biggest motivation to vote came from my teachers. They stress the importance of voting and that everyone's voice matters," said Taylor Leapley '25. "I did my best to stay informed before voting. I felt that taking Critical Issues was definitely helpful and informative."

Dariush Raissi '25 said, "I felt well informed to vote thanks to Mr. Borelli's Gov class. We spent a whole year talking about what it means to vote and its significance. I also followed the candidates close enough to understand their policies and who's aligned more closely to mine."

Katie Coughlin '25 added, "I felt very informed to vote! I did my own personal research to find the candidate who aligned with the values I viewed were important!"

Other than teachers, the urging of other adults in students' lives also encouraged them to turn up at the polls. "I voted because my dad wanted me to," said Daniel Tereb '25.

Other students spoke about intrinsic motivations to vote. Raissi said, "My biggest motivation to vote was that voting is the way people express beliefs through their support for a candidate. Electing a candidate to run our country is a big deal, and it is in our power of voting to do so."

Leapley added, "I also feel that [voting] is one of my responsibilities as an American citizen."

While many students interviewed felt educated about how to vote, many also identified barriers that young people face when making this decision. "It's hard to feel completely prepared [to vote]," admitted Leapley, "The amount of information can be overwhelming, and sometimes it's tough to know what sources are trustworthy, especially with social media thrown

into the mix."

Other students believed that the motivation to vote was just not high enough to justify the time and effort of casting a ballot.

Anthony Feng '25 said, "I didn't have the motivation to vote because of the waiting time when going to vote," adding that "I think young voter turnout has been low because of the complications that youth have to go through to vote, such as going to specific locations to vote, having to deal with waiting, as well as doing exit polls afterwards."

Raissi had a different explanation, saying, "I think young turnout has been low because youth do not feel motivated, thinking it does not matter in their state or county."

Increasing Gen-Z voter turnout is essential to ensuring that young people, and the issues they care about, are seen as important by politicians.



- Your LOCAL running store
- Carrying a full line of running shoes, clothing & accessories
- Trained staff that cares about your running!
- EVERYBODY NEEDS RUNNING SHOES!

www.woodbridgerunningcompany.com

7 Landin Street
Woodbridge, CT 06525
203-387-8704

HOURS: Mon-Sat 10am-6pm
Sun 12pm-4pm

Beyond Dirty Floors and Empty Dispensers The Life of a Custodian at Amity

by Victoria Pelton '27

Amity Regional High School is filled with valued staff who help to keep this school running, safe, and clean. Among them are the custodians who work day and night to keep classrooms, offices, and recreational centers neat and organized for the students and staff members who occupy them.

Sal D'Angelo, a night custodian, works the shift from 2:00-10:30 pm. On a typical day, he gets to work with two other co-workers, who clean different parts of the school according to a set rotation of designated wings to tend to. After school ends, they can be found mopping floors in the hallways, changing soap dispensers in the bathrooms, and sweeping garbage from the cafeteria floor.

Aside from his regular rounds in classrooms, Sal also cleans stadiums, the Brady Center, and the gymnasium after school events such as sports games and theater performances. He also helps set up Homecoming, as well as clean up after it ends.

"It's a lot to do," he says, "but I appreciate the steady work. I have no complaints."

Working the day shift is Jimmy Ryan, who has been a custodian here since 2016. When he's on the clock, he and his team are "on call," taking care of things when someone "spills something, gets sick, or when the toilet gets clogged."

After lunchtime, he takes out the cafeteria trash bags, wipes down tables, and helps clean the floor. Before he goes home, Jimmy typically mops the cooking room floors as the night custodians file in.

"It's not a bad job," Ryan remarks, "it's not too hard. You get the holidays off, it's just nice."

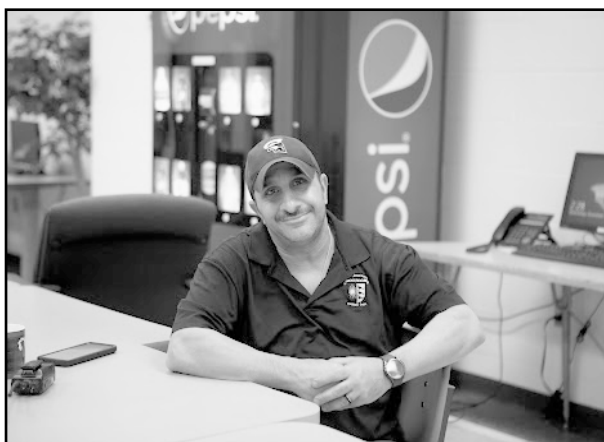


Photo contributed by Claire Hubbard '27

Sal D'Angelo, a night custodian

Aside from the individuality of being a custodian, there are many jobs these staff members share.

Over the summer, they are responsible for stripping and waxing all the flooring in the school as well as removing and replacing the furniture to deep clean the carpeting in areas like the library. They also have the responsibility of keeping things clean during summer programs as often as classes would during the

school year.

During school delays or snow days, custodians also help shovel and salt the roads and sidewalks to make it safe for buses to drive and students to walk.

It is important to recognize the contributions of custodians and show appreciation for their work. Not only does the cleanliness of a school keep things looking neat, but it also helps with staff morale.

Math teacher Michael Gelada comments "It's nice walking into a building that's well kept with empty garbage cans, clean floors, whiteboards, and desks."

Keeping the school organized helps those who work and are enrolled here to keep a happy disposition.

Chemistry teacher Laura Roessler enthusiastically says, "I think the custodians are fabulous.

They're friendly, they're kind, they're helpful."

She even goes as far as to say, "I would be president of their fanclub! They're the unsung heroes of Amity."

The custodians have a lot of work to do, as made clear by the many tasks they are responsible for. Not many know what they do. Custodians are valued members of the staff, and their work should be treated with respect

Word Mash

by Olivia Cummings '26

Two clues are provided that lead to two specific words or phrases which can be combined phonically. The clues are in order of which phrase goes first.

Example

Clues: Small furry mammal + capital of the Netherlands
Answer: Hamsterdam

Scottish body of water containing a monster + flavored milk powder

Cancerous mineral in old flooring + tortilla chip brand

50s sitcom + ship whose sinking led to the U.S. entering World War I

Lisa Simpson's brother + failed U.S. document before the constitution

A human corpse used for science + designer brand

Thank a custodian when you see them in the building!

Answer key will be provided along with more Word Mash in the December issue.