

THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXV-No. 2

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

December 17, 2021

Amity to Install Vape Detectors in Restrooms

by Nicole Grosso '22 and Aadya Wijesekera '23

Following increased complaints over the past couple of years in relation to vaping in the bathrooms, the Amity administration has purchased vape detectors to install in each of the 8 boys and girls restrooms around the school as well as each locker room.

Principal Anna Mahon said, "We have continuously worked to address issues around vaping and inappropriate bathroom behavior. The detectors that will be installed are another step in that effort, and will add to the tools we already have in place."

Mahon related the current situation to that of years prior when smoking in bathrooms was very prevalent until flash detectors were installed.

Following extensive research, Shaun Derosa, Director of Technology, purchased 10 HALO Smart Sensors for \$12,000 apiece. This particular device connects to the school network and can detect various chemicals as they enter

the air. When new chemicals are detected, the sensor sends a notification through the network to the phone of an administrator indicating the room in which the sensor has been triggered and what was detected. The sensor can pick up and differentiate between vape, THC, and perfumes and other aerosols.

The sensor is specifically designed for schools and is thus equipped with other safety and health features that can be turned on or off at the administrators' discretion. Health features include an air quality index and carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, humidity and temperature detection capabilities, among others. Safety features are slightly more complex and include features such as aggression detection and a "help" protocol.

The aggression detector is set off by repeated noise occurring at a certain decibel, typically indicating a fight or argument. Similarly, the "help" feature works such that when one of the pre-programmed keywords is spoken at a certain decibel, an administrator is noti-

fied. Keywords include "help" and "911" and are preprogrammed in the system when it is bought and cannot be altered by the system administrator.

For both aggression detection and the "help" protocol, reaching the decibel level that gains the attention of the sensor requires shouting. The sensor does not have the capability to record what is being said, rather, it alerts the administrator that either protocol has been set off.

Currently, much of the installation process is still in the planning stages, including the timeline as well as what features will be used (including aggression detection and the "help" protocol). Unequivocally, all students will be preliminarily notified of the installation of these detectors.

With this new development, Mahon reminds everyone, "The most important part of this entire process is building positive relationships with students and working together to create a school climate and culture that is healthy for everyone."

Spirit Week Launches into Thanksgiving Break

by Marin Korenaga '23

Spirit Week kicked off the week before Thanksgiving break, aiming to provide students and teachers a warm sense of community and Amity spirit. Throughout the week of November 15th and 19th, students wore different outfits to match with the corresponding themes that the Spirit Committee picked out. These included

Pajama Day, Twin Day, Beach Day, Class Color Challenge Day, and Amity Spirit Day.

Many submitted their outfits to their class Instagrams to win prizes and gift cards for the best-dressed students. Sena Ho '23 remarks, "I loved how my friend group was competing to get our photos on the Amity Instagram account. I just felt like it brought up the Amity spirit for Homecoming, and it just made me

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New Beginnings Hosts First Care Package Drive

by Anchal Bahel '23 and Bridget Lowder '24

With the holidays approaching, many in our local community are in need of basic necessities. New Beginnings, a club here at Amity, hosted a care package drive to support the New Reach Shelter in New Haven.

The purpose of the New Reach Shelter is to support women and children in need. Their mission statement states, "We inspire lasting independence for all people affected by homelessness and poverty through a continuum of housing and support, using the most innovative, progressive, equitable and inclusive methods." The New Beginnings Club at Amity is one of many groups striving to accomplish that mission.

The club collected care packages from November 15 to De-

cember 6. Care packages contained a variety of items such as masks, small bottles of hand sanitizer, first aid supplies, and a personalized note. Reflecting on the care package drive, the President of the New Beginnings Club, Aarushi Trivedi '24 states that, "The care package drive was a huge success with over 45 packages being donated to the New Reach Shelter. I am very happy that we were able to make a difference in the community and help out those in need." Further, Vice President of the club, Anushka Acharya '23, states that, "It is so important to help and donate to people less fortunate, especially during this wintertime. I'm so glad to see how many people donated."

While the care package drive ended on December 6, Amity's New Beginnings

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Seniors pose in all blue for Thursday's Class Color Challenge

Photo by Alexandra Louros '22

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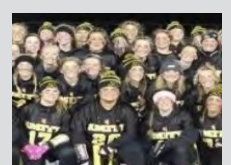
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Spirit Week Launches into Thanksgiving Break

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really really excited.” Another student, Hannah Guo ‘25, adds, “I loved spirit week. A lot of students put in the dedication to what they were wearing and made the school unified.”

The student government class councils also decorated the hallways on Thursday afternoon with different decades -- from the 70s to the 2000s -- welcoming the whole school on Friday morning, the day of the pep rally.

The Student Government’s Fall Spirit Committee held weekly meetings months before November to come up with plans and ideas for the spirit-filled week.

Daniela Abreu ‘22, one of the Spirit Committee Chairs, joyishly remarks, “I thought that spirit week went smoothly, especially because we had a notable increase in participants this year, and every

grade was able to show up and look their best!”

Spirit Week also sparked many heartwarming reviews from students and staff. “Spirit week was enjoyable, and I think that the prompts we picked worked out well,” says Sabah Salahuddin ‘25, a Student Government rep.

Being back entirely in-person contributed to a successful and well-thought-out Spirit Week, where students and teachers could collaborate to build back a part of the sense of community in Amity that was lost in the pandemic.

Robert Rosner, a physical education teacher, says: “Spirit week was a perfect way to have a sense of community because that’s important right now, especially in these circumstances we are living in.”

Overall, Spirit Week brought a some sense of normalcy into this school year.



Molly Blair ‘22 poses in a beach-themed outfit for Wednesday’s Beach Day

Photo by Alexandra Louros ‘22

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS,
AMITY!
*Enjoy the
break!*

New Beginnings Hosts First Care Package Drive

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Club hosts a variety of events and fundraisers to support the New Reach Shelter during the school year. They meet in room 121 every other

Tuesday after school to organize creative ways to support the shelter.

With the success of this drive New Beginnings is planning to host a “Household Item Drive” this coming March.



Care packages ready to be sent to the New Reach Center

Photo by Aarushi Trivedi ‘24

Homecoming: A Night to Remember

by Alice Xu ‘24

After more than a year and a half of Covid related changes and difficulties, the Amity High School student body was able to come together for its 2021-2022 school year Homecoming. The dance was held on November 20, the Saturday before Thanksgiving break and a day after the last home football game, and about 800 students were in attendance from all four grades.

Homecoming was held in the main gymnasium with food generously donated by Spice N’Flava, Archie Moore’s, Chip’s, Mr. Kold Kuts, and Pancho’s Pizza, and pizza was also purchased from four local restaurants in the area. Students were required to provide documentation of vaccination or a negative Covid test from no earlier than the Wednesday before the dance in order to attend. Other than this and the requirement to wear masks at the dance, students were able to enjoy themselves just as they have in homecoming dances in the past.

Homecoming committee chair Ava Gross ‘22 is thrilled with the

success of homecoming this year, despite the struggles presented, and said, “I think homecoming went really well. The DJ did a great job with the music selection.”

Her sentiment is shared by others, as well, who likewise enjoyed the event, especially after a canceled homecoming last school year. Ellen Ko ‘24 voiced her own thoughts about being a sophomore and said, “This year, we’re having our first real year of high school and being able to go to homecoming was a super fun experience. I think that the night in general also shows how resilient the Amity community is because as a school, we were able to come out much stronger and more unified.”

When asked what he thought of his first homecoming, freshman Quinn Cunneen ‘25 had similarly positive feedback and replied, “Homecoming was a blast. It was great to have everyone together, and I look forward to next year.”

Though Covid is still present and continues to be treated with caution, Homecoming allowed the school community to come together and momentarily forget their troubles.



Homecoming Entrance Decor

Photo by Audrey Marin ‘22

The Importance of Remembering Pearl Harbor

by Jonny Speranzini '22

December 7, 1941, is a painfully important day in American history. The day where thousands of Americans were killed. The day that Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was attacked. The day that the U.S. entered World War II.

Every year since then, on the anniversary of the event, Americans mourn those lost and remember the sacrifices they made. On August 23, 1994, December 7 became a national holiday: Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

Now, on the 80th anniversary, the question still remains, however, of how important it actually is that we remember this day. I believe that Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day must be observed because of those who made the ultimate

sacrifice that day and each day onward during the World War. We have to honor their sacrifices for our country because they helped shape it into what it is at present. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day serves as a reminder of those we lost and of what happened throughout

we were able to push back and eventually win the war.

This is something that, I believe, should be celebrated though it is already almost forgotten, remembered by some only because of the label on a calendar.

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is a significant part of American history. 2,403 American soldiers and civilians were killed, and December 7 serves as a reminder of their sacrifices and of the United States and the Allied victory in



the war.

In addition to being a reminder of the terrible event, the day also serves as one of national pride. Although the attack on December 7 caused much death and destruction,

World War II.

The day should not be forgotten; it should be remembered as a day of national patriotism to honor those who went to war for America.

A Cause for Joy: The Intricacies of Each Holiday

by Isabella Florez '23

Though it is now common for us to acknowledge the different winter holidays from various cultures, we often do so superficially without recognizing the true meaning of holidays or their intersections and nuances. For me, the holiday season is doubly as joyful as I have a complicated cultural background.

Hanukkah is supposed to be the main event in my house, as we are Jewish, but is often overshadowed by the colossal affair that is Christmas. Although Christmas originated as a religious holiday, most of us now celebrate it as a cultural event instead of a religious observance. Christmas is the one time of year where my family appreciates my father's Catholic upbringing and tags along with the rest of my family's celebrations.

As much as I enjoy both holidays, being multicultural becomes confusing in December when I have to explain what I celebrate and why. It also forces me to think about my own cultural identity when I have to decide for myself how much I am allowed to celebrate and enjoy Christmas as a Jew. I wonder how others celebrate the holidays, and how their own identities, religious beliefs, and cultures influence their celebrations and feelings of belonging.

Although Amity acknowledges that there are differences in our cultures and holidays, we fall short in honoring them. To truly honor the diversity of our cultures, we have to understand how little we know about each individual holiday as well as how those holidays interact within each family. We all have different collections of traditions and celebrations, none of which are easy to define or comprehend. Some of the most popular ones include Christmas, the Winter Solstice, Three Kings Day, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah. However, Christmas is the holiday most prevalent and what we center the rest of the winter holidays around. After all, we have our break to accommodate Christmas.

Christmas traditionally celebrates the birth of Jesus. As we all know, because of its commercialization, it is celebrated with

the decoration of an evergreen tree, family gatherings, and gifts. Almost everyone understands the cultural, if not religious, aspect of Christmas because of how Christianity is centered in our American society.

Along with Christmas, Hanukkah is one of the most recognized celebrations in our community. It is a Jewish holiday that lasts eight days to remember the miracle of a small amount of oil necessary for the rededication of a temple (lasting eight nights). The celebration includes a menorah with a candle for each night the oil lasted, gifts, and food fried in oil such as latkes and doughnuts. Its dates follow the Jewish calendar.

One holiday that crosses cultural borders is the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year that marks the end of fall and the beginning of winter. Many of the celebrations include the symbolism of fire, light, and rebirth, as well as rituals to honor nature. Some cultures that have a holiday commemorating the Solstice are the Yule in Germanic cultures, Inti Raymi in the Inca Empire, Dong Zhi in China, and Shap-e Yalda in Iran.

Three Kings Day, also called Epiphany or Dia del Reyes, is a holiday primarily celebrated in Latin American countries as a Catholic holiday. It is on January 6th and celebrates the day when the three wise men gave Jesus Christ gifts. It marks the end to Catholic religious festivities with gifts and special foods such as bunuelos and natilla in Colombia and Rosca de Reyes in Puerto Rico.

Kwanzaa is a relatively new holiday created and celebrated by African Americans as a welcome to the first harvests. It was formed by Dr. Maulana Karenga with seven principles—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—each of which is honored with a candle. It lasts from December 26th to January 1st.

I welcome the chance to know how others celebrate or don't celebrate. While a communal affair, the holidays are deeply personal too, and another chance to celebrate our diversity through acknowledging the myriad ways we ring in the season.

the TRIDENT

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CORRECTIONS

In the November 2021 issue of *The Trident*, the article titled "Let's Bring Everyone Together to Celebrate Our Cosmpoloitan School!" and the November Crossword puzzle incorrectly reported the year of Emily Gu. It should be '24. *The Trident* apologizes to Ms. Gu for this error.

For any corrections or tips, please email amitytridentnewspaper@gmail.com
To sign up to write or take photographs for *The Trident*, contact the Editors-in-Chief, Mrs. Clark, or email amitytridentnewspaper@gmail.com

WRITE FOR THE TRIDENT

Great opportunity to get involved!

See your name in print!
Communication is through email, so you don't have to worry about missing extracurriculurs or sports!



2021 and the New Year: Thoughts and Lessons I Have Learned

by Hannah Guo '25

I don't know about you, but 2022 seems to be arriving in the blink of an eye. I think it's time to do some reflecting on this past year and the upcoming one (By that, I mean that my regrets from this year will haunt me and I will be overthinking about the upcoming year). In all seriousness, though, taking your reflection one step at a time is a great mindset to implement.

2021 was a difficult year, and everyone had to reacclimate to numerous aspects of their lives. Between the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, regaining social skills, and trying to restore life to normalcy, this year has been stressful for everyone. My favorite saying that applies to this year is that growth isn't linear, which I think is great to keep in mind when working towards something.

The main goal for me this year was keeping anxious thoughts in check and pursuing new interests,

which essentially led me to eagerly write this article. It also motivated me to join the Amity Girls Swimming and Diving team, which would be

and can't wait to do it again next year.

Another lifeline for me this year was the relationships I was able to build. I

great people, and I can count on them forevermore. Taylor Swift, you're included in this.

My coaches and teachers also come to mind when

that I could no longer depend on and feel relief heading into the new year. If something isn't right, don't continue to sustain it. I learned that lesson the hard way, accidentally killing all three of my air plants. In my defense, they were supposed to be easy and fun to take care of...Getting rid of the old and welcoming the new is a cliché thing I hear every new year, but honestly, it can be difficult to let go of things.

In 2022, I'm planning to keep cherishing whatever I still feel connected to and letting go of the things that I'm not content with. Memories are a huge part of our lives, though. I'm also planning to hang onto those. Isn't it just so beautiful to think that almost everyone around the world has differing and unique memories associated with 2021?

I sincerely hope everything that happened during this year stays in our minds so that we can learn from those experiences and make 2022 even better. Here's to not buying a fourth air plant, and a great upcoming year!



unfathomable to eighth grade me. I can't even explain the trepidation I felt for those first few practices, where I knew nothing.

In the end, I finished my season with the most phenomenal girls and coaches,

am grateful for those in my life who stick around, as well as the new people who come along. We as a community rely on the bonds we've built and the people we trust—This is a shoutout to my friends and family. They're all such

I think of my brilliant support system. If someone is there to help you, let them! I love everyone I have in my life, and I'm definitely thinking of them going into 2022. Contrarily, I've also let go of a couple of people this year

Holding Out for a Hero

by Zola Kneeland '22

The lights dim in the theater, a little girl sits, feet twitching with excitement. She clutches her favorite book, no, not a storybook, a comic book. The screen gives its first flash of light, and there she is: her favorite superheroine.

Moments like these are far too rare for the youth of America. Often there is no fully developed female superhero to save the day, and when there is, there is typically sexist backlash against her existence. The world needs more female superheroes, and better teams to write them. Furthermore, while style is an important part of being a superhero, it is impossible to escape the sexualization of women in these action films.

Unfortunately, it seems that fashion takes precedence over function in many writers' eyes. Female superheroes tend to be portrayed in a way in which they have incredible strength, but vulnerable skin everywhere. The film *Black Widow* recently debuted in July of 2021.

Despite portraying fantastic performances

from the likes of Scarlett Johanson and Florence Pugh, Marvel can't seem to make a film without sexualizing the women with skin-tight bodysuits and wide shots of their derrieres, both brushed off as nothing, as the audience is either desensitized or aroused – an all too common and unfortunate fate for characters with such potential for depth.

The New York Times says it best: "With many of these new Marvel productions, however, it seems that's the best we could hope for: stories that finally feature the underrepresented heroes we want to see, but that often still serve as placeholders..." There has not yet been a welcomed and different superhero movie about a woman, not to mention a severe lack of women of color.

There seems to be resistance to letting characters like Captain Marvel and even Wonder Woman be strong, without being criticized or sexualized. In 2019, *Captain Marvel* was a success at the box office, but fans were critical of her confidence and power. The ratio of men to women on the creative teams of superhero films is a clear contributor to this factor. In fact, this movie was co-directed by

Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, with a mainly male team under them.

The opposition says that women have enough representation, and it is equal to what the guys get, considering the demographic of viewers. Amanda Shendruk, writer for *The Pudding* blog says, "They are often hyper-sexualized, unnecessarily brutalized, stereotyped, and used as tokens...Only 26.7 percent of all DC and Marvel characters are female...12 percent of mainstream superhero comics have female protagonists." (*ThePudding.com*) To refute this, according to *Statista.com*, women make up not too far under half of Marvel fans, at 39%. There are women and young girls who need heroes that show strength and assertiveness, as they are watching, reading, and waiting to feel seen.

To sum it all up, there is a stark inequality in the ways women superheroes are represented in comparison to male superheroes. It is abundantly clear that the sexualization failed focusing, and neglect that comes with choosing the teams to portray the lives of strong women has a lasting impact on the female experience.



Secret Snowman Comes to Science Research Program

by Scott Lowder '22

With winter break approaching, classes and teachers in the Amity community get very creative with celebrating the holiday cheer before the new year. In the Science Research Program (SRP), a class typically focused on preparing for science fairs, the class carries a short-lived, but fun tradition during the holiday season. With the tradition being introduced by the teacher Catherine Piscitelli, the custom is similar to Secret Santa, which is a Western Christmas tradition in which members of a group are randomly assigned names of other members.

Then, when everyone has an assigned name, each member secretly determines the likes and dislikes of the name they drew so that they can purchase a gift for that person for the big day.

In the SRP program, the tradition is instead called Secret Snowman and follows a similar structure to Secret Santa. Instead of drawing names from a hat, SRP classes use Elfster, which is a website that digitally draws names for a group and emails each recipient a randomly assigned name from that group. Additionally, due to the students only being teenagers, the tradition typically has a gift cap of \$15 to reduce the amount of spending and unintentional stress. However, with only a max of \$15,



Photo from *The Spruce*
Gifts under a Christmas Tree

gift givers need to get creative with their spending to achieve a fun and thoughtful gift for the recipient.

For most, the Secret Snowman tradition is an excuse to give others an excess of candy and other sweets. Yet, for some, the gift-giving experience can be very serious in attempting to specialize a gift for that special individual. Regardless of how you give, the event is wildly entertaining on reveal day because not only do you receive a present, but you also get to witness the thrill of guess-

ing who gave it to you. Pranav Sundararajan '22, a senior who has participated in the tradition for many years says "the Secret Snowman tradition is a great way for the SRP community to have fun with peers. Personally, I think it perfectly evokes the spirit of the season to celebrate giving through small gifts."

Being an event associated with giving joy to others in the SRP program, Brodey Lu '22, another senior and veteran gift giver elaborates saying "the small tradition is nothing serious and is all in good fun. Additionally, it is just a good way to wrap up the year before winter break."

Are you possibly interested in the SRP tradition? Maybe try setting up a Secret Snowman of your own with a teacher and classmates, or with your friend circle to have your own gift-giving fun before the new year!

How to Plan a Cookie Swap: A Holiday Favorite

by Bridget Lowder '24 and Andie Napolitano '24

'Tis the season for baking! If there's a dessert that speaks most to the holiday season, it's cookies. As we are approaching the holidays, many people are gathering to celebrate with family and friends. Nothing brings us together quite like baked goods, and a cookie swap gathering is a great way to enjoy delicious cookies while also spending quality time with loved ones.

The tradition of baking and sharing Christmas cookies actually stretches back for centuries with its roots firmly planted in Europe. The concept of swapping cookies was first introduced to America by Dutch immigrants in the late 1600s and the first recorded cookie swap occurred at a Dutch gathering in New York City (then New Amsterdam) in 1703. For over three centuries, the cookie swap has remained an integral part of American holiday celebrations.

When attending a cookie swap, each participant is expected to bake dozens of their favorite cookies to share.

Grace Cavallaro '24 has participated in some cookie swaps in the past and says, "My favorite cookie is a German chocolate cookie. I love the way the coconut works with the pecans and dark chocolate to make a really strong, toasty flavor."

Each guest should bring a certain type of cookie and make sure to let the host know in advance what they are planning to make, so that there are no duplicates. Participants should let others know if they have any allergies so that those attending can make sure to bake allergen-free cookies or bring an alternative option.

Typically, each person should make enough cookies so that everyone can bring home an assortment of each kind. Each guest should provide the recipe for their cookies in advance, so that the host can print out copies for each person. Once it is time to trade cookies, hosts can keep the exchange organized by having guests line up

and walk around the table one-by-one to start filling their boxes with cookies.

Now comes the best part, eating the cookies! The recipes that each participant shared should be combined into a book for all to take home. Attendees can now enjoy each other's holiday favorites, and have new recipes to try out and share with their families.

Now that you know how to plan a successful cookie exchange, make sure to organize one this year! It is sure to be a fun experience for all those involved that will become a tradition for many years to come.



Photos contributed by Bridget Lowder

College and Career Center Assists Students Programs Help Prepare for Future Careers and College Enrollment

by Chloe Hawkins '22

Every school year students have the opportunity to visit the College and Career Center at Amity Regional High School which is run by Lynn Cocco, College and Career Counselor, and Paula Vallie, the Administrative Assistant. They help students find volunteer opportunities for community service hours, set up and host college visits, find a career path and a college that's right for them, internships and much more.

Cocco said, "I have been assisting seniors with college applications since school began this year. Yes, we are all stressed to some extent. The key is learning to manage one's stress. Once applications are completed, we move on to the next activity and the next. I hope seniors find time to just ENJOY their senior year!"

The fall is very hectic for seniors because of early action and early decision deadlines for college applications. The College and Career Center helps with that.

"Currently, college reps from over 120 colleges and universities are visiting Amity HS. These representatives visit daily

in our Career Center throughout the months of September, October and November," said Vallie.

"The reps meet face to face with our interested juniors and seniors to educate students and high school counselors about what their institution offers, as well as the college admissions process in general."

Vallie believes attending college visits is a great opportunity for students to ask questions and make a connection with college representatives so they can put a name to a face when reading an application. According to Vallie, most of the colleges that visit Amity have two to five students attending the presentation, so it's definitely utilized.

Senor Emily Hoddinott said, "The college and career center has been a big help with college application workshops and providing meetings with admissions counselors from colleges."

Seniors are not the only ones needing college assistance. There is an event that will be held for juniors which occurs yearly. The Spring College Fair which is set up in the gymnasium will happen from 6:30 to 8:00 pm on March 31st.

"The college fair attracts over 150

colleges from around the country. This is a great event for Juniors to meet with these representatives and collect information, pamphlets, etc. from their top choices," said Vallie.

Every year seniors are required to complete an internship which is also called Senior Service Learning Program.

"Mrs. Cocco and I also work closely with the BOW Community to build a strong relationship between the students and the community," added Vallie. "This relationship supports our Senior Service Learning Program, aka the 'Internship Program'."

"The most popular job sites (historically) have been schools, medical offices (especially physical therapy offices), laboratories, and various businesses," said Cocco.

The college and career center has created connections and proximity with Amity alumni and businesses locally which will help students find places to complete their internships.

Allie Hurlburt '22 said, "I am so excited for senior internship, I have an idea where I want to do it but it's not finalized...I'm thinking about doing it at my dentist's office because he knows me and it goes with my

career choice."

Many times throughout the year students receive emails from Vallie or Cocco regarding community service opportunities. Recently they reached out regarding teaching senior citizens how to use technology, a cancer fundraiser at Smilow Hospital, and volunteering at 21st century at Peck Place Elementary School. "We are finding that community service opportunities are limited at this, but we are constantly communicating with our community in hopes this will increase opportunities," said Vallie

The college and career department has a big impact on students and their success, they are always willing to help. They also help students find a career path; they recently started posting a career of the week on the College and Career Center portion of the Amity website. Along with a description of the career, websites are listed for students to do some more research and for colleges that offer programs relating to that career are also available on that page.

The College and Career Center has many more college visits coming up as well as the spring college fair and the sophomore career fair that students should attend.

Stop by the College and Career Center!

AMITY STAFF AND STUDENT FAVORITE FAMILY TRADITIONS

At Amity Regional High School, a diverse community of both staff and students exists. Thus, the winter break looks a bit different for everyone. To get a sense of how staff and students spend this time off, we asked members of the Amity community what family traditions they take part in over winter break or meaningful activities they like to engage in.

Jack Fortin '22: “Over winter break, after Christmas, my whole family goes up to our condo in Stowe, Vermont. We have such a fun time skiing..”



Sofia Silva '24: “We go to one of our grandparents’ houses all together where we start discussing our goals that we have each year. We congratulate each other on our accomplishments.”



Olivia Frankiewicz '22: “My favorite holiday family tradition is when my extended family of like thirty people come over and we wait for the first star to show up in the sky to exchange gifts with one another. Additionally, we also sing a bunch of traditional Polish carols.”

Elise Sheehee '23: “My whole family does a Secret Santa with each other for Christmas. It’s fun to give and receive a gift.”

Soumya Wijesekera '25: “During the winter break, my family goes to one of my cousin’s houses for Christmas. We have a lot of fun trading presents, baking cookies, and watching movies.”

Allen Liu '23: “Over the winter break, my family celebrates Christmas. Our family tradition is that we always go for a ski trip and have a big Christmas dinner with all of our loved ones. It’s a great time to enjoy the company with each other and spend some quality family time over the break!”

Mrs. DeMeo: “I celebrate Christmas and New Year’s. On New Year’s Eve, we get together with our close friends and do some sort of “theme” party, have a ton of food and play games all night. We’ve done things like “Decades” (everyone had to dress up like some sort of decade) and Pajamas. We’ve been doing it for many years and our kids all get along, so it’s very chill. Usually over break, we also do a Gingerbread House competition with those same family friends. We get random teams, have a theme, and have 15 minutes to get decorating supplies (within a budget) at a store and then decorate houses. We put them up for a vote on social media.”



Aviva Wyner '22: “On Hanukkah, all of my family comes over for a party and we have latkes. We always do yankee swap and give presents and we light the hanukkah candles!”

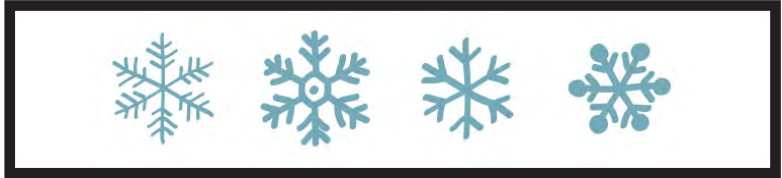


STUDENTS SHARE THEIR TRADITIONS FOR WINTER BREAK

Sandra Correya '22: "Over winter break, I do celebrate Christmas. I have time to spend with my family and catch up on my assignments and study. It's finding a balance between getting work done and relaxing."

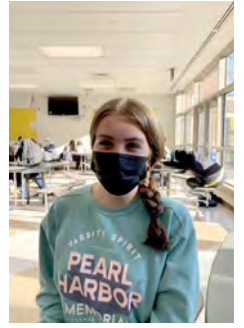
Sophie Glassman '25: "I celebrate Christmas and New Year's and my favorite family tradition is going to Vermont for New Year's."

Abby Ball '22: "I celebrate Christmas and New Years over the winter break. My favorite family traditions are driving to my grandparent's house and opening our gifts with them around the fire and also staying up until 3:30 am every time on New Years Eve!"



Jeffery Tafuto '22: "Every Christmas Eve, I go to my grandparents house and my whole extended family is there and it's nice to catch up with everyone."

Molly Blair '22: "It's a tradition in my family to make our homemade meatballs to bring to Christmas dinner."



Jenna Chizmadia '23: "I celebrate Christmas and my favorite tradition is decorating the Christmas tree with my family. It's such a fun time."

Gillian Fuchs '22: "Every year my sister, my dad, and I make this huge list of Christmas cookies and we save them all up to give to people at the end of the holiday season, but start making them early on. Therefore, pretty much every weekend we work on a different cookie. Also, we always have a large Christmas village in the dining room, which is a tradition that my Grandma started.."



Anushka Acharya '23: "Around the holiday season, we go over to our family friends' house. We enjoy doing a Christmas gift exchange, eating good food, and overall just being together."

Sage Paglia '22: "I celebrate Christmas with my family and New Year's with my friends during the break. My favorite family tradition is cutting down a tree and decorating it."



Mrs. Osoweicki
"Over winter break, I will be celebrating Christmas and also the New Year. My favorite holiday will always be Christmas Eve. Just some background on my family history: I am 50% Italian (Sicilian and Calabrese) and when my great-grandparents came over from Italy, they settled in Brooklyn, NY. Ever since I had my first Christmas (many decades ago), I have celebrated the Feast of the Seven Fishes. Usually, my family cooks amazing dishes such as; Baccala, Fried Calamari, Scungilli salad, Lobster fra diavolo and so many others. This year will be my first year hosting the holiday and I can't wait! We also open gifts with my side of the family on Christmas Eve as well."



Bridget Lillis '22: "I enjoy the opportunity to create new memories with my family through activities like cooking and spending quality time with each other during the holiday season."

Books to Get You in the Festive Holiday Spirit

by Selin Ho '23

As the holiday season rolls around, many are wondering how they should get prepared to get in the Christmas spirit. One way is by diving into some new books! Below is a list of 10 festive holiday books that will get you in the mood for Christmas and ready for the break.

“Royal Holiday” by Jasmine Guillory

This book, similar to a Christmas Netflix movie, follows the characters of the royal family as they find romance in the Christmas season. The book is written by Jasmine Guillory, author of the bestseller *The Proposal*. The main character, Vivian, explores the secrets of the Royal castle as she is given a job to style members of the Royal Family. Through adventure and holiday fun, this book explores the true meaning of Christmas: Family and Love. For anyone looking for a fun holiday read, this book is perfect for you!

“Mr. Dickens and His Carol” by Samantha Silva

Based on the life of Charles Dickens, this book takes a fun holiday spin on the spirit of winter and can be read alongside *A Christmas Carol*. Both entertaining and awfully humorous, this historical fiction novel brings the audience into the life of Charles Dickens and the behind-the-scenes action when writing his famous book. He faces both complications and challenges as a writer, however, this book brings his experience to full fruition with the reunion of family and the publishing of his famous novel. Anyone interested in the writing process behind the “cult classic” Christmas book will find this novel an interesting read!

“Little Women” by Louisa May Alcott

Though this book may seem challenging to read, it explores the stories of four daughters during the time of the American Civil War in the holiday season. A famous tale of coming-of-age, romance, and tragedy, the family experiences hardship yet comes together to celebrate the changing of the seasons in a time of ad-

versity in the nation. Both a holiday novel and world-renowned drama, *Little Women* will keep you on your toes this holiday season as the New Years’ roll around!

“The Toymakers” by Robert Dinsdale

Set in 1917 London during World War I, this book delves into the history behind the magic in children’s eyes as they wake up Christ-

that may harm their safety and honor. Written from a voice of beautiful talent, check out *The Bear and the Nightingale* for a delightful and mysterious surprise of winter fun!

“One Day in December” by Josie Silver

If you are interested in holiday drama, this is the right book for you! Josie Silver writes about missed opportunities in life while connecting it back to the holiday spirit between two unlikely strangers. The author’s compelling narrative and alternating perspectives allow the reader to imagine the story from both characters; They experience the hardships alongside Laurie and Jack in a story of romance during one of the most heartwarming times of the year. Not only will this book bring you out of a reading slump, but it will fill you with joy and winter happiness!

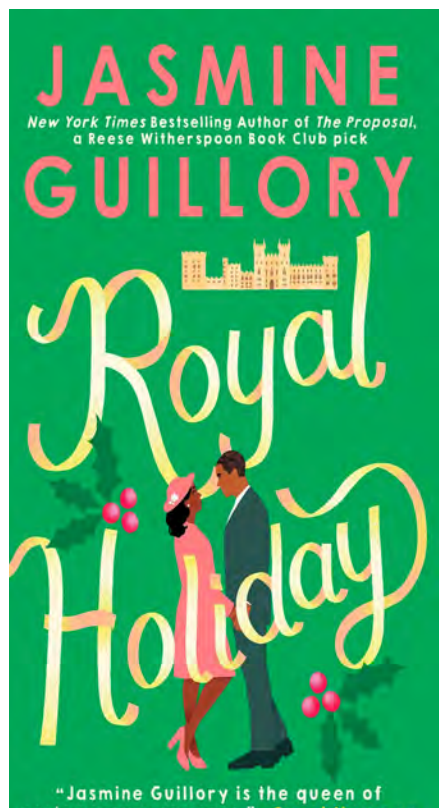


Image from goodreads.com
Cover of *Royal Holiday*.

mas morning waiting for their beloved Santa to arrive. The Emporium opens with the first fall of winter as children gather to see the white snowflakes fall from the sky. In a place where dreams come true, the toy emporium gives the children of London happiness and joy from the turn of the holiday season. Be sure to check out *The Toymakers*!

“The Bear and the Nightingale” by Katherine Arden

The amazing and magical debut novel from Katherine Arden introduces a story of winter in the depths of Russia for Vasilisa and her family. As she spends the cold winter nights gathering around the campfire, the tale teaches the reader about the importance of perseverance and courage in the face of uncertainty in times of adversity. From the evil spirits and demons who wander the region, Vasilisa is forced to protect herself and her family from threats



Image from google.com
Cover of *The Polar Express*.

“The Polar Express” by Chris Van Allsburg

Though it may be a children’s book, people cannot get enough of the classic book that is *The Polar Express*! Many critics revere the book for its detailed illustrations and relaxing storyline as the children explore the world that is Christmas. Currently a “Top 100 Picture Book” winner, *The Polar Express* is a book that lives within millions of children and adults every year, reminding them of the Christmas spirit and happiness that comes with every winter season. If you want an extra piece of childhood nostalgia this Christmas, be sure to read this book and let the illustrations and story amaze you!

“Home Sweet Home Alone”: A Remake of the Classic

by Aachal Gupta '25

On its 31st anniversary, Disney decided to release its recreation of the classic Christmas comedy *Home Alone*. Knowing the importance it plays as one of the best Christmas movies, the remake had large shoes to fill. *Home Sweet Home Alone* is an entertaining Christmas movie to watch, but it keeps the viewer want-

was underwhelming, to say the least.

The relationship between Max and his mom differed heavily from Kevin and his mom. Max’s mom has little screen time and the ending leaves the viewer wanting more.

Even with its flaws, it is a relatively fun Christmas movie and may be worth the watch. It is about one hour and 30 minutes long and is exclusively available on Disney Plus. It provides



Image from IMDB.com
Poster for *Home Sweet Home Alone*.

ing more.

The movie follows a similar plot as *Home Alone*. In the remake, a kid named Max is left alone while a couple tries to break into his house to steal back a family heirloom. Max, a troublesome yet creative child, sets many traps all around the house in anticipation of the break-in.

The movie was filled with many funny pranks and hidden easter eggs. A viewer watching this already having watched the classic, and hoping for an interesting sequel, might be a little disappointed. The nostalgia and charm of the original is virtually nonexistent in this new film.

One can clearly see where they tried to recreate that feeling, but it

laughs, witty dialogue, and family bonding. Archie Yates, the actor who played Max, played the part very well. I’m not sure if anyone could live up to Macaulay Culkin and his iconic role as Kevin. Archie did have a British accent, which seemed extraneous and odd, but somehow slightly elevated the movie nonetheless.

Standing alone, the movie could be considered pretty good. When they tried to advertise it as a sequel to *Home Alone*, a classic, it created unreasonable expectations for the movie upon which it failed to deliver. It should definitely be given a chance, however; *Home Sweet Home Alone*, in a vacuum, is a fun movie for the holidays.

Amity Creative Theater Presents: “Puffs”

by Nina Carmeli '23

Amity Creative Theater is proud to present this year's play, Puffs. The comedic production is a satirical spoof of the original Harry Potter series, but written from the perspective of the Hufflepuff House.

This retelling of the infamous Harry Potter series tells the story of Wayne Hopkins, a regular boy who finds out he's a wizard and goes to school in England, where he makes two best friends and experiences what the magical world has to offer.

Amity Creative Theater (ACT) has faced numerous challenges in the past few years in performing its plays and musicals with COVID restrictions. Last year, ACT produced and virtually performed the play, “It's a Wonderful Life.”

They also performed the annual musical “Anastasia” outside under a tent and kept half capacity to abide by coronavirus guidelines. Finally, in a year like no other, ACT was able to host their theater production indoors and invited students to watch at no cost. This produced higher attendance and a more normal experience for performers and viewers alike.

Audrey Cummings '23 came to see the production on Saturday and said, “The show was spectacular. I was glad to be able to see the perfor-

mance in person this year. The actors and crew did an excellent job putting the play together and had the entire crowd immersed.”

Likewise, Robert Farbman '22 remarked, “The play was hilarious, and all of the cast members did a fantastic job putting on an incredibly entertaining show.”

Robert Kennedy, director and producer of Puffs, spoke briefly about his excitement for the show before it began.



Photo from Robert Kennedy

The cast and crew pose together on set.



Photo from Robert Kennedy

The main cast performs on stage.

“Last year, we performed a show on this stage for an empty crowd. We are so excited to see your faces in the audience. This is a really funny show, we're looking forward to this, enjoy!”

The cast performed the play for AMSO and AMSB students on Thursday, December 9th, and offered admission to the public to see the performance on December 9th, 10th, and 11th.

Amity students look forward to ACT's next production, “Mamma Mia!”, arriving this spring.

Annual Winter Concert Returns

Students “Really Excited” to Perform Once Again

by Sena Ho '23

Amity Regional High School is soon hosting its annual Winter Concert on December 21 in the Brady Center. All students and community members are invited to attend the wonderfully festive occasion. A variety of different holiday-themed songs are in the works from the school's music department that are just itching to be performed before a live audience again.

Orchestra, choir, Rhythmix, and band are more than ready to take the stage. Nearly two years have passed since large-scale performances like these were open to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Katie Sim '23, an honors choir student, spoke of her excitement for the upcoming event.

“I'm really excited for the Winter Concert this year because this is my second year in honors choir here at Amity, but last year we weren't able to have indoor concerts, so this is actually my first time performing in the Brady Center in front of an audience,” Sim announced with a twinkle in her eye.

The choir will be performing “Found Tonight,” a medley between two songs from the Broadway musicals Hamilton and Dear Evan Hansen; “Peace Peace,” which is a combination of “Silent Night” and similar holiday song also called “Peace Peace”; “Winter Wonderland”; and finally, “Christmas Canon.”

Marin Korenaga '23, a dedicated pianist and violinist both in and out of school, shared her thoughts. “I'm really excited because I love the chamber orchestra and being alongside wonderful musicians everyday, and working with Mrs. Serio is always a delight.”

Korenaga is a part of Amity's chamber orchestra, one of the three

subgroups alongside the symphony and concert orchestra.

They also released a sneak peek of their set list for the night that includes songs such as “Carnival of the Animals,” “Star of Bethlehem,” “L'estro Armonico,” and “Hoe Down.” They have been practicing for roughly three months in anticipation for the performance.

These students are looking forward to seeing familiar faces in the crowd. The concert will begin at 6:30 P.M that Tuesday evening and is estimated to last a little more than an hour long.

“We are going to make amazing music together,” Korenaga concluded in anticipation for the event.

“I'm really excited because I love the chamber orchestra and being alongside wonderful musicians everyday, and working with Mrs. Serio is always a delight.”

Marin Korenaga '23

Write for *The Trident*! Contact one of the editors if interested.

Spartans Victorious in Annual PowderPuff Game

by Ryan Lima '22

For the first time in two years, the Amity Girls Powderpuff team held their annual flag football game against North Haven High School.

The last time these two teams faced off was on November 25th, 2019, when Amity secured a double-digit victory, 24-14. That win would be the Spartans' first in eight years for the annual matchup.



Photo contributed by Cassidy Smith '23

The Powderpuff team faces off against North Haven.

However, the meeting between both teams was canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This put a temporary strain on the tradition, but players were optimistic that it would return for the following year. This hope would reign true, as it was soon confirmed that the teams would be returning to the turf to battle it out once more.

Amity's Powderpuff team began to hold practices in preparation for the big game. Held on most days of the week, they often involved splitting the players into offense and defense. From there, both sides would hold drills pertaining to their particular side of the ball.

Nayana Wright '22, a member of the Powderpuff team, spoke on the significance of preparing for the game.

"It was really important to us that we secured the win to make up for last year and to continue our winning streak," she said.

For Elizabeth Bowler '22, a captain on the team, the opportunity

to play was something that was long desired.

"I've always wanted to play football," she said. "I always joined the boys at recess and played catch with my father, so when I got this opportunity to do it, of course I snatched it up."

After weeks of practice, gameday finally arrived on November 22nd, with the Spartans playing on their brand new field at the William Johnson Stadium. Amity students, staff, and parents packed the



Photo contributed by Elizabeth Bowler '22

The team takes a post-game picture on the field.

bleachers to cheer on the team. Under the bright lights, the girls did not disappoint.

The Spartans would go on to dominate North Haven, charging forward to a final score of 36-18. Wright reflected upon her gameday experience in the blowout victory.

"Gameday was incredible," she said, "I could not even put into words. It was nerve-wracking but the most fun I have ever had."

Bowler also described her excitement in securing the win. "I've never felt as happy as I did that night, with all my friends and peers cheering for the team," she said. "Everything went right that night, and on top of all that, we won. It was one strong statement."

The team was coached by several members on the Amity faculty, including Rick Bourdeau, who spoke on the unification factor this tradition has on the team.

"It really stunk that the Class of 2021 did not get a chance to have a full flag football experience because of COVID," he said. "It tends to be a lot of fun for the girls – win or lose – and always helps bring the senior class together."

This win is the second in a row for Amity in this annual meeting against North Haven High School. The Spartans undoubtedly worked hard in the victory and are looking forward to clinching a three-peat next year in their matchup.

The Future of Boys Basketball Looks Bright

by Advait Nair '25

As the new season of winter basketball begins at Am-

ity, a long history of sports talent comes into view. Amity's vast amount of talent shown over the years has led the school to secure many accolades all across Connecticut.

Multiple acclaimed basketball players have left the school with their legacy intact and to be remembered by future generations, as can be seen through the championship banners hanging in the school gym and the names displayed on the 1,000-Point Club.

This all begs the question: what does the new generation of Amity basketball look like? Additionally, what does the 2021 basketball season hold, and which young players might begin to make a name for themselves?

Among these new players on the team is Lance Mahon '25. Mahon is a freshman standing at 6'1", which could be very advantageous in a future high school basketball career. Mahon plays center and power forward, two positions that benefit his tall frame.

According to Mahon, his father first introduced him to the game in second grade. He has played ever since.

Mahon hopes to show the school and teams he faces his skills and show his commitment to the team this year, while also

demonstrating how he can be a valuable asset to the team.

"I just hope the coach sees me, and I'm going to do my best," he stated.

Alex Cuzio '25 is another freshman on the team. At a height of 5'8", Cuzio is a dual-guard, preferring the position of shooting guard. Cuzio's basketball career began in the third grade.

"My dad put me in basketball," he explained. "Once it started getting more serious, I fell in love with it."

After playing for a while, Cuzio grew serious about perfecting his game. This led him to base his game off of NBA legend Jason Kidd, a consistent shooter with great court IQ and defensive capabilities.

Cuzio strives to improve his game and hopes to make Amity's JV team this year and show the coaches his excitement for the upcoming season.

There are many freshman players who are looking to make an impact this year. These talented and driven individuals exemplify what the future can hold for Amity's basketball team -- not just this year, but years to come.

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Student Athlete Profile: Nell Grant '23

by Grace Cavallaro '24

Fall sports are long over, and the baton has been passed to the winter sports, including indoor track. The Amity Girls Indoor Track team consists of runners, sprinters, jumpers, and throwers.

No one group runs the show per se, but the distance squad is working especially hard as the girls take to the freezing outdoors to get in their daily runs.

One runner in particular, Nell Grant '23, is a

school, practice, and homework. Grant describes practices as difficult but still fun.

"On easy days, I just run with my friends and talk," she said. "But it's important to run hard on workout days. Run at your own pace so that you're dying just as much as everyone else is!"

It can be difficult to stay motivated for these often strenuous and lengthy practices. With that in mind, Grant said that she sources her motivation from the team's companionship.

make some new friends at the meets, too!"

Grant's goal for the outdoor track season is to break a 5:27 mile, her previous record.

Although this junior has had some success in cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track, she views indoor track as a foundation to train for outdoor track.

"Basically, I just want to get a foundation of speed so that I can get better times during the outdoor season," she said. "It's the season that colleges look at, so it's the one I really care



Photo contributed by Grace Cavallaro '24

Grant trains outside, accompanied by Coach Haley.

talented runner and has tasted quite a bit of success in all kinds of races throughout the past two years or so. This past cross country season, she was the only runner from Amity's Girls Cross Country team to make it to the state open meet.

Grant is looking forward to some competitive races this upcoming indoor track season, as well as looking ahead to the outdoor track season. The first meet is scheduled for December 20th, and Grant is planning to run the 3200.

In general, the daily life of a student athlete is packed, between

"The coach motivates me to get better each year, and the team is super supportive of all of our individual achievements," she said.

"Everyone is there for each other through good days and bad, so it's a very motivational and happy environment. I wouldn't want to do any other sport!" she added.

Grant is also motivated by her various goals for the season.

"I want to break my own personal records because it makes me feel accomplished," she said. "I really want to improve upon my own records with a better mile time, and maybe

about the most."

Every day, the distance team meets right after school to get started on practices. Grant said that the team typically runs between three and seven miles each practice, which can vary based on the workout planned for the day.

The girls have a blast running together and pushing each other to be their best. After their runs, the girls often continue their workouts in the weight room. This makes for an exhausting practice; however, the girls all enjoy the time they spend together, and their hard work will pay off when they begin to race.

UMtrr Volleyball Tournament: A Rousing Success

by CJ Brinton '24

The Amity UMtrr Club loves hosting events that bring the school together and support causes related to the club's mission.

On November 23rd, Umtrr hosted a 3x3 volleyball tournament with a total of 32 participating teams, totaling 96 players overall. The winning team consisted of three sophomores: Ellie Lupoli, Karena Norko-Allain, and Lea Barber.

The club's Vice President, Sophia Page '23, spoke on the morals of UM-

She remarked that the club spent weeks preparing for the event and that everything went perfectly.

Page remarked on the atmosphere during the tournament.

"The energy in the gym was electric," she said. "Everyone was having such a fun time."

Participant Devin Maroney '24 also felt this way. Though eliminated in the second round, Maroney and her teammates Raima Kumar '24 and Dana Pletter '24 had a great time.

"We knew we were going against our friends and it was fun because we were



Photo contributed by Sophia Page '23

Ellie Lupoli, Karena Norko-Allain, and Lea Barber smile after their win.

tr. "UMtrr is a club that promotes positivity and praises mental health," she emphasized.

She also mentioned that the club provides outlets and support for anyone struggling mentally.

"It's simple," she said. "Everyone matters."

The tournament was held to benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and was able to raise \$290 in donations. Page also served as announcer and partial referee.

just playing for a good cause," Maroney said. She admits that her team probably was not the most skilled.

Maroney also said, "No one was really watching so you did not have to worry about making a fool of yourself."

"It was also really fun to observe other people that were trying really hard."

UMtrr will hold a triples basketball tournament sometime this winter. Stay tuned for more information about this game.



Photo by Alexandra Louros '22
Cassidy Smith '23 showing off her P.J. pants and Chuck Tailers for pajama day.



Photo by Alexandra Louros '22
Left to right: Seniors Roberto D'Onofrio, Robert Farbman, Bridget Lillis, Jayne Whitman, Johnathan Fortin, Peter Berganross and Sage Paglia celebrate their color blue on Spirit Week's color day.

We've Got Spirit



Photos by Sean Doron '22



Above: Seniors Andrew Gilbride and Robert Farbman pose together with their match for twin day.
Top the right: Seniors Samantha Cantalupo and Daniela Abreu show off their matching outfits for twin day.
Right: Senior Eveleen Jiang shows off her beach attire during Spirit Week at Amity.



Photo by Cassidy Smith '23



Photo by Alexandra Louros '22

Above: Ms. Kruzer and Mr. Pickering kill two birds with one stone doning both their Amity gear and twinning at the same time during Spirit Week.

Yes We Do!