

THE AMITY TRIDENT

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Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

December 22, 2016

Pastor Eastwood Discusses Malawi's Hunger Plight

By Harris Andersen '18

Amity Regional High School hosted its first "Day of Gratitude," the culmination of this year's OBOA month of hunger awareness and gratitude, on Wednesday, November 23. It was a huge success, and the students walked out with a greater knowledge of the hardships of day-to-day life in a third-world country like Malawi.

One of the speakers, John Eastwood, was a major contributor to imparting the wisdom necessary to help struggling countries in sharing his story. He is the lead pastor of Calvary Chapel in Southport, Connecticut, and the executive director of hunger centers in Malawi. Making frequent trips to the southern region of Malawi, one of the ten poorest countries in the world, Pastor Eastwood works to feed starving kids and set up refugee camps. He has partnered with local leaders to gain access to food, clean water, and other necessities not commonly found in the area.

One of his projects came about because of the 2003 HIV/AIDS outbreak in a rural vil-

lage in Malawi. The sudden outbreak of this disease caused many children to be orphaned, and human trafficking occurred because people offered better lives to the kids. Pastor Eastwood went to work and found large sponsors from the United States to provide financial or material assistance. He quickly opened a feeding center that gave food to children, and after 2 months he had expanded to feeding 200 kids a day.

After moving to another small village and opening another small feeding center, Pastor Eastwood worked to build a well in the village for freshwater. He has built more than twenty wells in Malawi during his years of service.

When Micha Aviad ('18) asked Pastor Eastwood what made him choose Malawi as his country of focus, he responded that it was not intentional and by pure coincidence. An opportunity was given to him, and he went to the rural village and upon seeing the devastating conditions, decided something had to be done.

Amity thanks Pastor Eastwood for his time talking to us and sharing his stories.

Amity Hoco 2k16: A Huge Success

By Kate Yuan '19

Amity hosted the annual Homecoming Dance on November 18th. To say the dance was a success would be a complete understatement. This year, Amity sold about 550 tickets, surpassing last year by about 10%, and setting a record for recent years.

As the Amity Student Government's only fundraiser for the year, this dance affects every club or organization at the school because student government often decides where funds are allocated.

This Homecoming Dance stood out from the past dances because there was more student body involvement in the planning. A highly vocalized issue in the past, for example, has been the song choice. To remedy this problem, a form was sent out to get song recommendations. This was an extremely effective strategy seen through the positive reactions from the students.

Junior Ananya Kachru said, "The music was good, food was good, and people seemed to have a good time overall. It was a step up from last year and I look forward to seeing

it improve even more in the future!"

The food was definitely a highlight of the night. There was disappointment last year over how quickly the food ran out, but this year, the food was plentiful, and the quality was top-notch. Receiving catering from Chipotle, Domino's, Panera, and more, the amount and variety of food was a pleasant surprise for everyone.

Homecoming would not be homecoming without the royal court.

Freshmen king and queen were Marty Gnidula and Emily Kline; sophomore king and queen were Jared Sullivan and Lilly Morrissey, and junior king and queen were Marco Delsanto and Abby Buckley.

Senior king and queen, for the fourth consecutive year, were Matthew Bonvicini and Maggie Reames.

Sophomore queen Lilly Morrissey said, "It's definitely something I will always remember and look back on fondly. The

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Harris Andersen and Mayah Sachs; Photo by Hannah Epstein

Fire Damages Local Jewish Community Center

By Tyler Jennes '17

A fire broke out in the Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven around 3:45 pm on Monday, December 5th. Firefighters from Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge were called in to contain the flames, which resulted in the hospitalization of two firefighters due to carbon monoxide poisoning. They are expected to

make a full recovery.

All of the 300 people inside the building at the time were evacuated, some of whom were dressed in only bathing suits due to the urgency of the situation. Eyewitnesses stated that the incident was first spotted in a locker room sauna located in the men's spa area. As of yet, the exact cause of the fire is unknown, and the Fire Marshals of both



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Security Protocol Activated After Former Student Enters Building

By Chris Fraser '17 and Kevin Zhao '18

A former student was found on the Amity Regional High School campus near the girls' locker room at approximately 9:00 am on November 30th. This is the third such incident this year.

This person supposedly entered through a side door by the girls locker room and, according to associate principal Monica Kreuzer, was later discovered by Betsi Grace, one of the PE teachers.

This female accessed the side entrance by standing outside the door and waiting for a current student to use the exit.

According to Kreuzer, Amity Regional High School's safety protocol, in part, states that all emergencies, including "unwanted visitors," should be "Respond[ed] to ... promptly

and properly." As such, the former student was immediately escorted to the main office, where she was "detained" and escorted out of the building by the Woodbridge police after questioning.

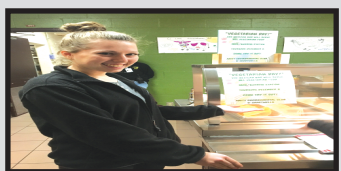
Kreuzer stated that she does not believe any of these students have malicious intent, but instead are simply unaware of "how things are supposed to work around here" and that they can no longer "come in just like they go to school here."

Amity has a state mandated All Hazard Security and Safety plan, where given any hazardous event, such as a fire or an intruder, there is a school-wide protocol accompanied with flip-charts in every classroom with instructions in the event of an emergency. This way, if a situation did arise, teachers would be prepared to lead "all lives and property" to safety.

In addition, Kreuzer detailed an RFID-based security system wherein all teachers, administrators and other verified personnel like janitors and security, would receive Identification cards with which to swipe into the building. A similar system is already in place in the main and back entrances to the high school campus, but the administration wishes to extend this precaution to other entrances including "the knuckle" (or outside the math wing stairs) and the side entrances near culinary and the locker room.

The administration also wishes to remind both faculty and students of current security measures already in place, including taking note of those loitering outside of entrances, immediately reporting suspicious activity, and never propping doors open. This way, we can truly keep the Amity community safe.

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Executive Director of Goods for Good Comes to Amity

by Howard Ding ‘18

C. J. Wise, executive director of “Goods for Good”, came to Amity on Wednesday, November 23rd to speak about the work that she and Goods for Good has done and is doing to help people in third world countries. According to the organization’s website, the mission of the nonprofit is to “promote the successful development of orphans and vulnerable children by collaborating with Community Based Organizations to fill the resource gap.”

One Book One Amity held a penny wars in the weeks leading up to raise money for

“Goods for Good”, a non-profit organization helping communities in Malawi establish themselves economically to help the many orphans in need. When she was young, Wise started off by giving \$20 to a stranger in need when she was young. This small act of kindness really struck a chord and desire to help more people when she became older.

At “Goods for Good”, Wise and other members noticed the disproportionate amount of orphans on the street throughout Malawi. As there are 1.3 million orphans in Malawi and 16.3 million people in Malawi, almost 8% of the population are orphans. Trying to help,

they decided on using social enterprises to help combat the problem. Social enterprises use business strategies to improve human and environmental well-being.

Wise says, “We work with the communities that are really the most precious resources that these kids have.” Goods for Good attempts to build businesses in the communities and create solid foundations, allowing for businesses to prosper with little to no help from outside sources. Goods for Good stresses the importance of building a strong community centered on a social enterprise that can help the many orphans in need.

OBOA presents...the Oxfam Hunger Banquet!

by Jasmine Moon ‘17

Before the annual pep rally on Wednesday, November 23, the students participated in an interactive activity to demonstrate the difficulty of food inequality in the world: the Oxfam Hunger Banquet.

Senior Abby Fritz says, “The Oxfam Hunger Banquet was a great opportunity for students to know what other children around the world are dealing with.”

Prior to entering the cafeteria, students were randomly given one of three tickets. For this interactive activity, the tickets told the students whether they were going to be a part of the lower class, the middle class, or the upper class.

The upper class sat on lunch tables covered with white table cloths. Those students enjoyed bread and were served eggs and juice.

The students of the middle class sat on regular cafeteria tables. They enjoyed a plate of rice and beans, as well as some water.

Lastly, the students of the lower class had to sit on the floor and only got a small bowl of plain, white rice and a plastic cup of water.

From this activity, students got a better understanding of the inequality of food around the world.

Sophomore Jay Moon says, “The activity truly taught me to always be thankful for every meal. Although I was part of the lower class, the

activity was a great representation!”

Senior Katie Handler adds, “The activity truly showed us how much we take for granted and makes us realize that there are many people in the world who have to live with very little.”

After the event, many students agreed that the banquet was a fun and didactic experience.

Fritz exclaims, “The Oxfam Banquet went really well. I think that some students didn’t really understand the whole purpose of it, but students who actually paid attention and knew what was going on really enjoyed it. I also think that the Oxfam Banquet should continue in years to come.

Fire Damages Jewish Community Center

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Woodbridge and the state of Connecticut are investigating the matter.

The day after the incident, the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven, Judy Alperin Diamondstein, sent out an update to the community.

In it, Diamondstein thanked the community for their dedication and support, and stated that the staff was able to successfully evacuate the building in an efficient and calm manner.

She also confirmed that the fire and the water used to extinguish it caused significant damage to the lower levels of the building.

She went on to share information about how to contact the organization, and to where activities will be relocated.

Diamondstein stated that the JCC will “continue to be that special place and will get back on [their] feet as soon as possible.”

For further updates, you can visit the organization’s website at the following address: www.jccnh.org.

Hoco 2K16: A Huge Success cont.

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support I felt when our names were called is something I will never forget.”

For the freshmen, Amity definitely showed them a fun night. Emily Kline, freshman queen, said, “When I won homecoming queen for my class, I was so excited! I heard people were voting for me and Marty, but I didn’t think we’d actually win!”

Often times, there is a stigma surrounding Homecoming. Because it is a school affiliated dance, people often do not want to go, thinking it will be “lame.” However, that seems to be rapidly changing, with proof in the turnout this year.

Each year, Amity Student Government takes advice to make improvements for upcoming

years so that the dance can one day be even greater and bigger.

For seniors especially, this was an extremely special night as their last homecoming dance. The chairs of the Homecoming committee Amy Chen and Hugh Potter, along with the rest of the committee, did an exceptional job this year, making this a night to remember.

Chen said, “It just felt amazing to see everything come together in the end after all the planning and preparation we did. A huge thank you to everyone who helped out with this awesomely successful fundraiser!”

This year’s dance definitely set the bar at a new high, and we are all excited to see what next year brings.

Amity’s Annual Spirit Week Returns

by Ali Hagani ‘18

This year Amity kicked off Thanksgiving with its annual spirit week! Taking place during the short week before break, each day had a separate theme.

Monday, November 21st was Tie-dye Day, Tuesday, November 22nd was Twin Day, and Wednesday, November 23rd was the iconic Spirit Day, where each grade wore their purchased class shirts. Throughout the week, teachers gave out raffle tickets to those who took part in the spirit. A winner from each grade was chosen at the end of the school day. Prizes consisted of parking passes, prom tickets, and Amity apparel.

Following Amity tradition, members of each grade’s class

council also decorated a given region of the school with its own approved theme. The freshmen decorated the department head offices in the front of the school with a winter wonderland theme. The sophomores decked out the media center hallway with the four seasons while the juniors decorated the main hallway with a Mardi Gras theme. And, of course, the seniors decorated the trophy hallway near the gym with the traditional blackout full of Amity spirit.

Overall, Amity’s annual spirit week was a great success.

“This year in particular was very gratifying,” said Harris Andersen (‘18), a member of student council. “There was so much excitement and commitment to dressing up. It was a great kick start to the long weekend.”

Exploring the Amity Community through Amity Talks and Listens

by Kevin Yanigasawa ‘18

Rcently in the Amity community, students and teachers have been able to share their passion, interests, and stories through Amity Talks and Listens. These are short presentations about any topic that wants to be shared with the community.

This event started because of senior Neha Pashankar after she went to a program at Yale last summer where she and others engaged in mock TEDx presentations. Pashankar did a five minute presentation about her science research project talking about neurocognitive function of bipolar patients. She received many compliments and questions about her research, saying after, “I did not realize how much I engaged the audience!”

There was another present-

er during that same day who talked about bringing TEDx to his own school, which inspired Pashankar to approach Principal Anna Mahon about doing the same thing. The goal of these events is “to showcase the Amity community and the hidden identities of the staff, students, and wider community.”

There have already been two successful events, with the third one on Tuesday, December 13th. Speakers included photography teacher Lisa Toto who described her talk as “the universe is testing you” and discussed being brave. Blake Arnel, an Amity senior, shared a story about overcoming personal difficulties, and Himay Dharani, another senior, discussed politics, specifically, the importance of listening and understanding people and staying open-minded in a highly polarized society.

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Trump Transition Begins

by Ryan Anastasio '20

Just over a month after the election, Donald Trump’s transition to president is under way as he has already begun appointing various cabinet secretaries and senior staffers. The Trump transition team has been working since the primaries, but is now actually transitioning since he has been elected.

Initially, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was chair of the transition, but Vice President-elect Mike Pence has taken over his duties due to Governor Christie’s involvement in the Bridgagate scandal. The process began just days after the election when President-elect Trump visited President Obama at the White House. Both men said the meeting was very productive, talking for about 90 minutes.

President-elect Trump first announced his Chief of Staff – Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Reince Priebus. Priebus is a great choice for Chief of Staff, as he will unify the Republican Party after one of the craziest elections ever. In addition, Priebus is from Wisconsin and has a very close relationship with Speaker of the House Paul Ryan. He may be able to bridge the divide between Trump and Ryan who criticized each other during the campaign.

Next, Trump announced Steve Bannon as Chief Strategist and Counselor to the President. Bannon was formerly the executive chair of a conservative news website, Breitbart. As a result, Trump has been heavily criticized for appointing Bannon to this position, because some articles posted on Breitbart have “white supremacist” views.

For National Security Advisor, Trump selected retired Lieutenant General Michael Flynn who formerly served as the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

In other non-cabinet ap-

pointments, Donald Trump has picked Connecticut resident and former CEO of the WWE franchise Linda McMahon as Administrator of the Small Business Association and South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley as Ambassador to the United Nations.

Along with Trump’s senior staffers, he has also named various cabinet secretaries. These include Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions as Attorney General, Investment Banker Steven Mnuchin as Secretary of the Treasury, retired General James “Mad dog” Mattis as Secretary of Defense, billionaire businessman Wilbur Ross as Secretary of Commerce, CEO of CKE restaurants Andrew Puzder as Secretary of Labor, Representative Tom Price of Georgia as Secretary of Health and Human Services, former Republican Presidential candidate Dr. Ben Carson as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, former Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao as Secretary of Transportation, billionaire education activist Betsy Devos as Secretary of Education, and retired General John Kelly as Secretary of Homeland Security.

You have seen the names and heard a little background on Trump’s picks, but are they good and how has the public reacted to some of these picks?

General Mattis is one of Trump’s best picks in the cabinet. He was a four star general in the US Marine Corps and he will be in charge of most of the pentagon. Mattis’s experience as a general makes him a key asset for Trump.

Senator Jeff Sessions will lead the Justice as Attorney General. He has experience as a US Attorney in Alabama. During his career, Sessions has exemplified fidelity to the Constitution, the rule of law, and protecting freedom and liberty.

Congressman Tom Price who will lead the Department of Health and Human Services has a very diverse background.

Price chairs the House Budget Committee and is a trained orthopedic surgeon. He believes in health care reform, and was one of the first Republicans to come up with a plan to replace Obamacare, which Trump may keep parts of it.

Ben Carson as the Secretary of House and Urban Development (HUD) surprised many people because he has no experience in the duties of the HUD secretary, some of which include administering public housing and distributing rental-assistance programs. I believe that Dr. Carson would be qualified to be Head of the Health and Human Services, but not the HUD.

Betsy Devos, the nominee for Education Secretary, has been slammed by the media and the public because she has never attended or sent any of her children to a public school.

Though Devos may be an education activist, neither she nor her family have experienced public education which most Americans rely on firsthand. Trump has vowed to eliminate controversial Common Core and the entire Department of Education. Thus, Devos may be the last Education Secretary.

While these positions are official, most will need to be confirmed by the Senate in a hearing. Secretary of State is said to be the most prominent cabinet member. Trump has selected ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson as his.

While Tillerson has no experience in government, Exxonmobil operates in over 50 countries. Tillerson has close relationships with foreign leaders, including Russian President Vladimir Putin. These close ties with Russia and other countries may give Mr. Till a tough time in his confirmation.

While there are still some cabinet positions that need to be filled, most of Mr. Trump’s cabinet is filled, and he is almost ready to be President on January 20th.

Penny Wars Captivates Amity

by Ben Sauberman '18

I tend to be very skeptical of school-wide fundraisers. It seems as if every single lunch wave, there is a new club trying to convince me to donate “just a dollar or two.” While the cause may be noble, after over two years of the same routine, I have become somewhat desensitized to the constant pleas of club volunteers sitting in the hallway outside of the cafeteria. Every once in a while, a club might catch my eye and inspire me to noncommittally ask a few questions about its charity. But never has a fundraiser impressed me as much as this year’s Penny War to benefit Malawi.

Upon the announcement of the penny war, I immediately recalled a similar styled event in middle school that yielded a whopping \$20. Needless to say, I was quite cynical of the prospect of a successful penny war. I was confused by the rules, unmotivated by the prize of a donation to our class treasury, and generally unmoved by the whole concept. After the first couple of days, I noticed that a fierce competition seemed to be emerging between the four classes and the staff. Still skeptical, I regarded this inten-

sity as a mere fluke and continued to ignore the contest.

When I found out that the junior class--my year--was in the lead, my whole attitude towards the fundraiser changed. It was the first time I felt like my class was unified and really working hard towards something as a class. Mrs. Chevan, my English teacher and one of the Penny War’s organizers, would reveal the daily results during every class. My classmates and I would cheer or groan depending on how we ranked that particular day. Some classmates would begin to scheme on how to regain the lead, discussing strategy on which containers to donate to.

The Penny Wars achieved what I considered to be impossible: engaging the entire student body. It was a few weeks after the fundraiser had closed and the winner had been revealed that I finally realized what had enabled the event to captivate the entire high school.

Over the summer, we all had read The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind and developed unique feelings about the dire circumstances of Malawi. Reading the very personal story of William Kamkwamba brought us closer to the cause. It was the same reason students worked so hard

in Spartan Seminar to perfect their “plastic bag soccer balls” and listened so intently to the speakers during the special programming on November 23. The fact that the entire school was knowledgeable about the cause of the charity compelled the majority of the school to involve themselves. Combining a competition with a cause that the entire school was concerned with was what allowed this penny war to raise thousands of dollars.

THE TRIDENT

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CORRECTIONS

In the November Issue of the *Trident* in the article entitled “A Memorable Season for Girls Soccer” the girls soccer coach was identified as Ryan Quigley. His name is actually Owen Quigley.

For any future corrections or tips, please email amitytridentnewspaper@gmail.com



Nothing but Thankful

by Sarah Saxe '17

The Wednesday before Thanksgiving was always a treasured time that easily landed a spot on my coveted list of favorite schooldays to look forward to. It was a break from routine and a time of nostalgia filled with completing “math” and “history” worksheets that were really just glorified coloring pages. These revisits to my childhood never failed to push me into the holiday spirit and led me to learn the script of the beloved Charlie Brown Thanksgiving special verbatim.

But, this year was different.

This Wednesday was not a mindless day of fun that flurried by. Rather, it felt purposeful and I left school not joyous, but thoughtful. Thanks to Mrs. Mahon, Mrs. Chevan, Ms. McConnell, and the rest of the school’s efforts, this Make-It-Happen day was, in my opinion, an extreme success. The students were not only connected through having read a common story, but through our efforts for a common goal. The day’s speeches, given by a pastor who has helped fight hunger in Africa and a Goods for Good representative, helped give our goal additional context and purpose. I think that the most meaningful activity of the day, however, was the Oxfam Banquet.

As I waited outside the cafeteria to receive my entrance slip that would assign me to a high, middle, or low class meal, I watched the volunteers shuffle through pieces of small gold, pink, and blue papers. The blue papers overwhelmed the pile, but a decent number of pink ones were shuffled throughout. The gold slips appeared rare, however. I had heard that the lucky few granted this gold slip would be served all of their food while they remained seated with tablecloths and enjoyed bread for appetizers. As I grew closer to the front of the line, however, I realized the purpose of this day and suddenly hoped to be put in the low-class category in order to experience what it would be like to live and eat while in poverty. As luck would have it though, I ended up in the middle-class category.

I was truthfully disappointed. I wanted to experience either the luxuries of first-class or the struggles of the lowest class. Instead, I would be experiencing exactly what I do every day. I did reside in middle-class America, after all, so this would be nothing new.

But when I walked over and got a small helping of only beans and rice I was confused. I thought that I had accidentally ended up in the low-class line because this was not the type of meal that I was used to. But, when I glanced over at the upper-class section and saw their meal of eggs,

bread, and juice, I realized my mistake. I suddenly understood how skewed my perception of world hunger was and how ignorant I was about my own fortune.

Prior to the banquet, I defined a low-class meal as the rice and beans combo, a middle-class meal as a well-balanced diet that I enjoy daily, and a high-class meal as caviar in the sky. I never realized that what I have, from a global viewpoint, isn’t considered average, but rather, very fortunate.

Even my behavior and thought process I held while waiting in line trying to choose and determine which socioeconomic status I wanted to enjoy for the meal was incredibly ignorant. In life, this isn’t something that people can choose. The random distribution was unfair, but I only had to deal with it for half an hour. It was representative of reality, in which some are lucky and others aren’t to be born into certain scenarios. No one has the option to choose.

So, when I went to my aunt’s house on Thanksgiving and saw a beautiful spread of turkey, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green beans, and pies in every flavor, I no longer saw it as an average celebratory meal. Just because it wasn’t a ten-course meal served in Buckingham Palace didn’t mean that it wasn’t an extraordinary lay-out that I should be nothing but thankful for.

So who *really* won the game?

by Conrad Li '17

The annual Powderpuff game was quite the thrill. From the very beginning, it was clear that it was going to be an uphill battle: North Haven had a strong team and the frigid temperature, hovering around 33 degrees, only made it more challenging. The wind was merciless as flurries of snow, signs of another early winter, blew across the football field.

Despite these conditions, the Amity Spartans were ready to put on a show. Over forty seniors had spent the last month practicing plays and studying tapes of former Powderpuff alumni, a little cold wasn’t going to stop them—or the fans. Seated throughout the bleachers, Amity parents and students could be seen cheering the girls on. Even alumni on their Thanksgiving break showed up to display their support.

To the right, Amity Army was loud as ever—chanting and rooting the team on after each play.

Across the field on the visitor’s side, North Haven parents, siblings, and students were cheering for their respective team.

For the first three quarters, Amity Powderpuff came close to scoring on numerous occasions but were unable to com-

plete. Finally, in the last few minutes of the fourth, Sarah Nevolis managed to break the North Haven defensive line, earning Amity its first touchdown. The crowd went wild once as she bolted down the field and again as Jessica Hauser kicked a successful field goal. With just a minute ten on the clock, it was unlikely that Amity would score again. Nevertheless, Nevolis’ touchdown and Hauser’s field goal offered a glimpse of hope, reinvigorating Amity’s spirit and bringing fans to their feet.

Ultimately, the Amity Spartans lost to North Haven 7-12, but that didn’t matter.

As I was sitting on the bleachers and watching the game with my friends, I couldn’t help but smile. Some would say my face was frozen stiff from the cold, but that wasn’t it.

There was something about the sense of community in seeing all the parents and friends who showed up, despite the wintry weather, to support the girls. Fellow Spartans took a night off from studying and made signs for their Powderpuff friends.

The game was about showcasing all the time, dedication, and hard work the girls had put in over the last month.

So although the Spartans may have lost the game, they certainly won my heart and the hearts of everyone from Amity.

Homecoming: Boom or Bust?

by Lillian Zhang '17

With over 500 tickets sold, this year’s homecoming was the most successful and popular dance in the last few years. The new rise in popularity of the Student Government run event came as a surprise to me after having attended my first homecoming dance in freshman year. At that time, it was a constant struggle for Student Government to encourage the Amity student body to pay \$12 and spend a few hours dancing in the school gymnasium. The average attendance hovered around 210 students, a mere eighth of Amity student body.

Flash forward to 2016! There were more than double the amount of sales in comparison to previous years and most of the success can be attributed to minor changes made by the homecoming committee. In the past, homecoming was organized under a specific theme. The last time there was a theme was in 2014: “Electric.” But shockingly enough, the committee decided to drop that last year, which proved to be a step in the right direction. Rather than focusing on a theme, there was more emphasis on students’ preferences in music and food for a more inclusive experience. A non-themed Homecoming Dance also removed the unnecessary expenses for theme specific decorations that would get thrown in the trash afterwards.

The increase in attendance may also be attributed

to advertising. In November, you probably saw posts about homecoming popping up on Facebook or the skits featuring Amity students and colorful balloons on the morning broadcast. It was a happy medium where I wasn’t bombarded with social media posts like last year with hashtags “#MemoryMonday” to share past experiences or “#ThrillThursday” to share what students looked forward to.

In combination with all the handmade color posters that hung around the school and cafeteria, many people were enticed to purchase tickets. Meanwhile, the table set up outside of the cafeteria during lunch waves allowed students to participate in the dance, even if they were not intending on going. They could elect and vote for the Homecoming Court, or a royal couple from each grade.

When I walked up to the front doors on homecoming night, I was delighted to see so many students. I didn’t mind waiting a few moments in the chilly November air outside since the lines extended out the doors, because everyone was excited for the night to begin. After checking in, a mass of students shyly remained in the main hallway, while the DJ was warming up the dance floor with his music. The photo booth was a success, as many attendees posed and smiled for the camera against the dark backdrops. Photos were only \$1 a print, which was an impressive deal for nicely printed copies.

Over the course of

the night, the excitement drained. Yes, the event was organized well and brought a lot of attention, but at an unannounced point, food was distributed and ran out quickly. It was a disappointment that there was not enough to accommodate the crowds the committee had anticipated.

However, the fault cannot be entirely placed on the committee. I witnessed some students hoard food and others take more than their fair share. Why take one Chipotle wrap when you can take three?

In addition, the music was not the best. Song after song, the genre was consistently rap until the end of the dance, at which point most of the attendees had fled. I had requested a few throwback songs through the music poll that was shared by the homecoming committee, but my suggestions were nowhere to be heard.

Was it the best Homecoming I’ve ever attended? I wouldn’t say so, but those who enjoyed the food and music would surely disagree. Despite my opinion, there is no doubt it was one of the best organized homecoming dances. Many students left the night with filled bellies, photos with friends, and wonderful memories.

If you’ve never attended homecoming, I encourage you to do so next year! Each year, it gets better and you may be surprised by the improvements and leave with memories of a splendid time with your friends.

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Vegetarian Day is the Start of Something New

by **Amanda Hendrick ‘18**

On Thursday, December 8th, Amity students participated in the Environmental Club’s very first Vegetarian Day, where the Mexican bar in the cafeteria offered meat free taco options during all lunch waves.



Vegetarian Day Set-Up at the Mexican Bar
Photo by **Amanda Hendrick ‘18**

The intent of Vegetarian Day, says Environmental Club co-president Katie Handler ‘17, was “to get people more aware of, one, food can taste good without meat, and the benefits of being vegetarian.”

Food offered were soft or hard tacos with toppings of tomatoes, different vegetables, and beans. Flyers were also available that included facts about the cow industry and the cruel process of how the beef producers get their meat and its impact on livestock. Both the information and food offered provided students with a new abilities to see the impacts and possible benefits of a meat-free diet.

Supporting the ideas of this club, becoming vegetarian can benefit both your body and the environment. A vegetarian diet helps decrease obesity levels, reduce the risk of heart disease and type-2 diabetes, and lower blood pressure levels. For those worried

about a deficit of certain vitamins by not consuming meat, according to the Vegetarian Pro Con Organization, vegetarian diets also provide all essential amino acids, vitamins, fats, and minerals, along with more nutrient like calcium, vitamin C, and fiber.

Environmental Club member and vegetarian advocate Nevla Selmon ‘18, says, “If you eat just one meal a

a vegetarian meal that was offered in the cafeteria, stated that “I’ve been thinking about becoming vegetarian, and this convinced me that it’s a lot easier than I thought.”

Overall, the Environmental Club achieved their goal of giving students the chance to experience what a vegetarian diet can consist of, and are possibly looking towards repeating this new addition to the school menu in the future.

In response to the question of a possible start of a tradition of vegetarian days, Environmental Club co-president Hannah Rapaport ‘18 says, “We are



Jill Wisniewski ‘18 enjoys the vegetarian spread. Photo by **Sophie Baum ‘18**

day that’s vegetarian, you can save a cow, you can save a chicken, you can save an animal... all the little things add up.” Livestock that is primarily used in the market hurt the environment through soil compaction and erosion, potentially harming native plants and animals.

Although this option does not mean students are expected to go full vegetarian or are pressured to try this new diet, Vegetarian Day was an interesting and new option for Amity students by expanding their horizons in knowledge of healthy alternatives both in the cafeteria and at home.

Jill Wisniewski ‘18, who bought

waiting to see what the reaction to this is, and if it goes well, then we’ll just keep building it up.”

Overall, the new introduction of a food menu that both benefits the students’ health and provides students with a way to make better choices at school was a success, and something that is hoped to continue in the future.

Eating Vegetarian

by **Anna Zaharewicz ‘17**

Amity senior Jamie Unger has been a vegetarian for most of her life. At a young age, she realized that the smell and sight of meat didn’t appeal to her. Her family fully supports this choice and makes sure they find selections for everyone to eat.

“Since I’ve been able to ask for what I want on my plate, I’ve never asked for meat,” said Unger.

When changing to a vegetarian diet, most people are usually concerned with the food options. Cutting out all meats makes it difficult to eat out at restaurants. However, there are still many options.

Unger starts her day by eating strawberry waffles. On other days, you can find her eating bagels with cream cheese and jelly. Sometimes she will also bring a smoothie to school. Her favorite flavor is strawberry and banana from Naked Juice. Unger can also be seen drinking coconut water, believing it to be very cleansing and good for keeping her hair and skin healthy.

“For anyone interested in becoming a vegetarian,” she said, “I would say to start by researching healthy recipes that you’ve never had before or alternatives to recipes you love.”

Unger’s decision was an easy one to make and hasn’t been difficult for her to maintain. When eating out at restaurants, she looks for the labels which indicate vegetarian friendly meals. If there are no indications she will simply ask her waiter for help. She said that restaurants are more than willing to take meat out of any recipe she asks for.

Another concern with the

trangelo was very picky and would only eat chicken with ranch dressing.

“I didn’t like to eat any other meat,” she said. “Once I got tired of chicken I decided to give up meat altogether.”

On school days, she will usually buy a wrap from the cafeteria which she fills with lettuce, spinach, carrots, and oil and vinegar. When she decides to bring a lunch, she packs a salad with carrots, peppers, and tomatoes. Her favorite snacks include hummus, carrots, pretzels, fruits, and muffins.

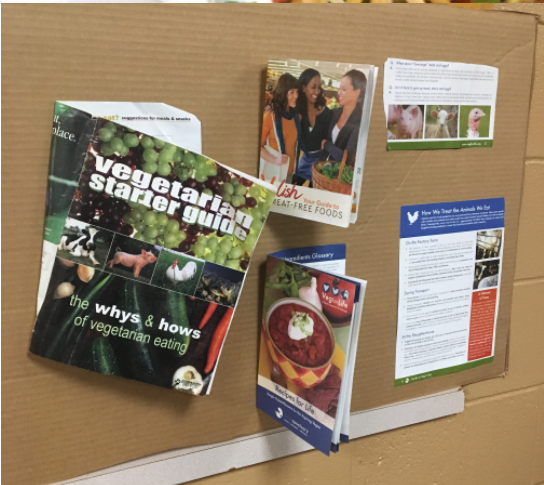
Mastrangelo loves finding new restaurants to visit. One of her favorites is Flatbread in Canton, Connecticut. Here she orders a white pizza with broccoli. Another one of her favorites is Juice Box in New Haven. She explained that she is obsessed with their acai bowls which are basically very thick smoothies that can be topped with fruits, nuts, granola, seeds, and honey. Acai berries are also made into frozen packs and powder that are sold at Whole Foods Market which makes them easy to prepare at home.

Some of Unger’s “go to” dinners include stuffed mushrooms which are baked with many types of cheeses, herbs, and breads, and mushroom sacchetti, a pasta dish. Unger also loves spinach and uses it to top off pizza, pasta, or bread. For recipes, she will use it to make spinach cheese balls that are baked in the oven and served with a side of pasta sauce.

As for Mastrangelo, her favorite dinners include tomato mozzarella salad, pasta with pesto sauce, and pasta Fagioli. In the winter, she loves to have broccoli cheddar and vegetarian squash soup. She will order these at Panera



Above: Vegetarian Tacos
Taken by **Lillian Zhang ‘17**



Left: Vegetarian guide pamphlets. Photo by **Sophie Baum ‘18**

along with her re-designed Caesar salad with no chicken and balsamic

dressing.

Once Unger made a decision to cut out all types of meat, she has not regretted this once. Although it has created some complications, she has been able to overcome them. Unger doesn’t believe that she is missing out on anything and is happy and healthy as a vegetarian.

How to Prevent the Flu This Winter

by **Amanda Hendrick ‘18**

In the beginning of the school year, especially with the priorities of homework, tests, athletics, and studying, the last thing students need to worry about is the chance of catching the flu.

According to the organization Healthy Schools, Healthy People, almost 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold. The possibility of having to skip school and miss out on assignments and tests is already stressful enough. Especially with the flu season at large and the ease of spreading germs, it’s important to make sure that your body is healthy and able to work hard and efficiently.

Here are some simple and quick tips to make sure that the flu season won’t impact your schoolwork this year.

The biggest way to ensure that you stay healthy even in the face of spreading illnesses is to eat healthy by consuming foods rich in vitamins and minerals. Your body needs foods with plenty of vitamin E in order to boost your immune system, so quick snacks at lunch or for breakfast such as almonds, or-

ange juice, or broccoli can all lead to sickness prevention. Do not eat foods high in fat, salt, or sugar, especially concentrated sugar, such as soda or candy, because these foods only make you more susceptible to the flu. Instead, aim for vegetables, greens, and proteins such as eggs, yogurt, and fish.

You should make sure to load up on water as well! According to Fitday, drinking water eliminates toxins that could potentially lower your immune system, so by drinking around two liters of water your immune system would already be receiving amazing health benefits.

The most important way to keep yourself healthy and happy this winter is to always wash your hands! This procedure has become such a natural part of people’s days that some do not realize how important it is to fully clean and sanitize your hands before eating and especially when handling public items such as doorknobs, stair railings, or objects that many people use daily.

A study of school kids in Detroit showed that those who consistently washed their hands had 24% fewer sick days than those who didn’t, proving the effectiveness of proper hygiene.

Even though we cannot see them, germs are everywhere, and it is important to be mindful of those around you to prevent the spread of bacteria and illnesses to other people!

Especially in a high school as big as ours, there are so many different objects just waiting to spread germs and other harmful bacteria to our skin and bodies, which is why not touching your face or mouth during school is so important. By doing so, you can prevent the spread of germs to your mouth, eyes, and nose.

The most overlooked key to staying healthy is getting a lot of rest. However, according to the Center for Advancing Health, only 8% of high school students get enough sleep on an average school night. Especially among high school students, getting enough sleep, especially while balancing homework and athletics, is hard, but students should at least be getting seven hours of sleep in order to perform better in school and help prevent sickness.

Although it can be tough to make sure you are staying germ free, taking steps to do so at school will make you happier, healthier, and more prepared to show that Amity pride and cheer!

HOLIDAY TRADI

‘Tis the season! Amity fosters so many unique cultures and traditions, and although some holidays are new to us, we all have our own cherished traditions. The *Trident* sat down with several Amity students and staff to talk about their own cherished holiday traditions and how they plan to spend a healthy holiday season.

MEET THE INTERVIEWEES



Centerspread Sources:

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All About the Winter Holidays

Christmas

Every year, Christmas day lies on December 25, an annual commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Since it was officially recognized as a federal holiday in 1870, Christmas has been celebrated worldwide by billions of people. Traditions vary per household and culture.

Diwali

Diwali, also known as the “Festival of Lights,” is a major Hindu holiday that occurs every fall and celebrates the success of good over evil. Millions of people celebrate this five-day holiday, which culminates on the third night for festivities. Hindu people prepare for this night by cleaning and decorating their homes and offices. Typical Diwali traditions

include dressing in new clothes, praying to the Hindu goddess of fertility and prosperity, a feast, and fireworks.

Hanukkah

Also known as the “Festival of Lights,” Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that celebrates the rededication of the Second Temple, and the Jews’ resistance against the Greek-Syrian Empire during the Maccabean Revolt. During the rededication, the Jews were surprised by the miracle that the little bit of oil they had lasted a shocking eight nights, which serves as the inspiration of the holiday’s eight nights of celebration. Common Hanukkah traditions include lighting the menorah, saying prayers, singing songs, playing dreidel, giving presents, and eating traditional foods,

such as latkes.

Kwanzaa

Starting on December 26th, Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration that honors African heritage for African-Americans. Each day of Kwanzaa celebrates one of the seven principles, or *Nguzo Saba*: unity, self-determination, responsibility, cooperative economics (building, owning, and profiting from stores together), purpose, creativity, and faith. Other traditions of Kwanzaa include lighting the candles of the kinara, a seven-branched candelabra, playing and listening to festive music, drinking from a unity cup, and receiving gifts. Kwanzaa was developed by Dr. Maulana Karenga, and professor at California State University, Long Beach, in 1966.



Top Row (left to right): Menorah on the final night of Hanukkah (Photo by Sophie Baum), a tradition of Diwali (<http://www.diwalifestival.org/>)

Bottom Row (left to right): a Christmas tree with stockings (Photo by Lucy Richter), 7-candle kinara of Kwanzaa (<http://www.officialkwanzaaweb-site.org/index.shtml>)



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TRADITIONS AT AMITY

Some may be more celebrated than others, all holidays are extremely important within our community. We have many holiday traditions. On behalf of the entire *Trident* staff, we would like to wish everyone a happy and successful holiday season. See you in 2017!

Top Row (left to right): Patrick Cumpstone, Ananya Kachru, Anna Mahon
Bottom Row (left to right): Ryan Rattley, Ruth Berganross, Earl Potter, Ulada Dubovik

Anna Mahon, Principal

What holiday do you celebrate?	professionally and personally, and I am thrilled my kids get to grow up here.
I celebrate Christmas.	
What are some of your traditions?	Do you think Amity should implement more activities related to the holidays?
The best part of the holidays is how excited my kids get. Another great part is spending time with family (although it can get a little stressful with all of the planning).	I think it is important for us to celebrate our community throughout the year. I do think there is a different feel in the air during the holiday season, but I believe in creating an atmosphere and culture of unity and equity. I would be hesitant to highlight one particular holiday season over another. I am, however, in support of people discussing and sharing their traditions in an open and honest manner.
What does this holiday mean to you?	
For me, the holiday season is a time to truly reflect on all of my blessings. I love being a part of this community, both	

Earl Potter, Custodial Staff

What holiday do you celebrate?	For me, Christmas is a time of giving and family, and to bring people together in peace.
I celebrate Christmas.	
What are some of your traditions?	Do you think Amity should implement more activities related to the holidays?
Some of my holiday traditions include being with family and friends and to remember those loved ones who are no longer with us to join in the celebration.	I do think that Amity should implement holiday traditions more. Christmas and Hanukkah and other religious practices should be celebrated as separate holidays, but at the same time to promote understanding and fairness.
What does this holiday mean to you?	

Ulada Dubovik ‘18

What holiday do you celebrate?	very festive gathering, with a huge meal, lots of presents, dancing, and such.
The major winter holiday for my family and me is New Year’s.	
What are some of your traditions?	Do you think Amity should implement more activities related to the holidays?
It is a Russian tradition to welcome the New Year with your whole family together and some close friends. It’s a	It’d be very cool if we could spend the day before break just doing something related to the holidays, or just winter spirit

Ruth Berganross ‘20

What holiday do you celebrate?	not an exception.	learn about a religion but not necessarily [something that would cause] judgements.
I celebrate Hannukah	Do you think Amity should implement more activities related to the holidays?	What is your favorite holiday tradition?
What does that holiday mean to you, and why do you celebrate it?	Yeah, I think it would be fun if Amity had more activities holiday related but I don’t want them to give a certain message about people of that religion. So fun [activities] to	My favorite holiday traditions are saying the prayers and lighting the candles. Also telling the stories is really fun.
I celebrate it because it has a great story, and I celebrate all the Jewish holidays. So this is		

Ryan Rattley ‘17

What holiday do you celebrate?	light the black one first, and then you alternately light the red and the green ones. We read [kind of like] the word of the day; there’s “Kujichagulia,” and [and other words] like that. We talk about what it means, and there’s also a “Unity Gourd,” which is a gourd that we all sip from, and that symbolizes unity	It’s about African-American unity. So, it was meant to be in America as a proud holiday for African-Americans to celebrate us being us, you know.
We celebrate Kwanzaa.	What are some of your traditions?	What is your favorite holiday tradition?
So, it’s very similar to Hanukkah. They have a Menorah; we have a kinara, and it has seven candles. Three of them are red, three of them are green, and then there’s one black one in the center. You	What does this holiday mean to you?	[The holiday is meant to be] a productive and educational experience, and sometimes, we’ll even get books!

Ananya Kachru ‘18

What holiday do you celebrate?	I think there’s a lot of history and Hindu religion behind it. It’s basically when one of our Gods returned and triumphed over this evil villain, so for me it is a reminder that good will always triumph over evil. And since it’s at the start of fall, it’s such a nice time to be with family, especially since you are missing summer. And I celebrate it because of my family, but I think I will when I’m older too because it’s a great holiday and I’ve celebrated it my whole life.	implement more activities related to the holidays?
I celebrate Diwali. It’s the festival of lights. It is pretty much like the equivalent of Christmas or Chanukah for other religions, and we much the triumph of good over evil. It generally occurs in the early fall, in the last week of October, first week of November-around that time, I think.	What does this holiday mean to you?	I would like to see that being implemented because I remember in elementary school we used to learn about all of these different holidays. If anyone wanted to share about their holiday and their traditions, they were welcome to do so. And I just think it’s really important, especially in our changing political environment, for people to understand different cultures and be more diverse.
	Do you think Amity should	

Patrick Cumpstone, History Department

What holiday do you celebrate?	mean to you?	I think that Amity should have activities oriented around the holiday season. In third grade, I remember not only decorating Christmas tree cookies, but also playing dreidel, and making a paper Mishumaa Saba (the seven Kwanzaa candles). While at a basic level, I garnered an appreciation for the values and celebrations of others and understood that not everyone was leaving school to celebrate the same holiday as I was.
I celebrate Christmas.	To me, the meaning of Christmas has developed over time. As a young child, it meant receiving gifts and seeing family. Now that I’m older, it has more of a religious meaning -- a meaning to celebrate and to give back. One thing that has been consistent regardless of age, however, is family.	
What are some of your traditions?	Do you think Amity should implement more activities related to the holidays?	
My favorite holiday traditions are completely transforming my house into a winter wonderland, baking cookies, watching Christmas movies, and listening to Christmas music.		
What does this holiday		

Staff Feature: Mrs. Altimari’s Love for the Spanish Language

by Aviva Green ‘17



Photo by Aviva Green ‘17.

Mrs. Altimari is a Spanish teacher here at Amity. I got to know her this year in her Spanish V class. She is a warm and bubbly person and an amazing teacher. I interviewed her and I think her answers to my questions offer a glimpse at her life we wouldn’t normally see. As a child, Mrs. Altimari was always playing “school” with her stuffed animals, which showed the first signs of an interest in teaching. She “loved going to school every day, so it seemed like a natural fit.” Spanish was always her favorite subject in school and she was surrounded by many languages as a child as her “mom was trilingual and her

dad spoke three languages as well.” Learning about other cultures, she was fascinated by her love for travel, but she always wanted to improve and learn more Spanish. In college she double majored in Psychology and Spanish and volunteered in various schools. When Mrs. Altimari taught English in Spain, she “fell in love with it.” When asked about her role at Amity she says, “My primary role is to teach my students Spanish, but I also hope that they learn some important life lessons as well. I also serve as a mentor to the students. In this role, I am always there to listen to them and/or to provide guidance with anything that they need.” She wants to “foster critical thinking” through her assignments and activities. Critical thinking, she believes, “is a skill that students will need no matter what they choose to do in life.” Mrs. Altimari couldn’t pick just one when asked about her favorite part about teaching at Amity. “I love so many things about Amity. I love my students, old and current. I love coming to work every day to see them and to teach them Spanish. I also love my department. Everyone is very supportive and helpful. We work well together,” she says. Her deep involvement in the Amity community is evident and her

passion is working with her students. “I love what I do each day. It is rewarding to see them progress, and I love sharing my love of the language with them,” she says. Outside of Amity, Mrs. Altimari is very athletic. Before even coming to school she gets up at 4:30 every morning to work out and “hike and mountain bike on the weekends when the weather is nice.” She also loves to travel with her husband and participate in a multitude of other interests including cooking, reading, hot yoga and running. She also “take[s] ballet and pointe classes each week with Mrs. Goncalves.” The most interesting and exciting experience for Mrs. Altimari was living in Sevilla, Spain. “Being able to firsthand experience another culture is an unbelievable opportunity. Not only did I improve my Spanish, but I also met so many amazing people, and I broadened my horizons by trying new things and experiencing others’ traditions,” she says. Mrs. Altimari leaves us with a personal note and bit of advice. “My mom passed away ten years ago. I have learned that life is so short and so precious. I never take anyone or anything for granted. I am a happy person, I count my blessings, and I’m grateful for each day; each day is truly a gift.”

Artist of the Month: Alex Tzepos

by Ari Kaufman-Frankel

The December Artist of the Month is Alex Tzepos of the Class of 2017, nominated



Field of Cattle in Portugal, Photo by Alex Tzepos

by photography teacher Lisa Toto due to his expertise in the field of photography. Tzepos, honored to be this issue’s Artist of the Month, says Ms. Toto, who has driven him to further explore his artistic capabilities when it comes to photography, inspires him. This is exemplified by his current independent study in photography, which he is doing not only because of his love of photography, but also because he has taken every photo class the school offers. He plans to publish a coffee table photo book featuring over 80 photos. Tzepos’s photography career started in 2012 when

annually enters his photos into local competitions. Tzepos claims the highlight of his photography career was when he snuck into an abandoned train yard and “took creepy pictures” of trains. These photos and many more are featured on his website <http://alextzepos.wix.com/photography>. Tzepos states that photography will always be a hobby for him and that he “will never stop taking pictures!” Hopefully, with his story of how he found his passion, he can inspire and motivate the younger generations to take pictures and use photography to discover who they truly are.

Let it Snow...at Amity!

by Jasmine Moon ‘17

Winter is not just a freezing season when the nights are already pitch black by 5PM. Winter is a great time to enjoy a variety of activities. Sports like snowboarding, skiing, and ice skating are only a couple of the many athletic activities that many people participate in. Others enjoy simple recreational activities like making a snowman or having a snowball fight. Sports are a big part of the winter season. People can go skiing, snowboarding, tubing or even ice fishing at Mohawk Mountain in Cornwall, CT. Many people can also enjoy ice skating either at the Ingalls Rink in New Haven or the Sports Center of Connecticut in Shelton. Many students at Amity love to play winter sports. Once the first snowfall hits, many people go outside to build snowmen or have a grand snowball fight! Sophomore Jay Moon says, “Just like in my elementary school years, I still like going out in the snow and having a snowball fight. Then, I drink hot chocolate to warm



Photo by Jasmine Moon ‘17.

myself up.” Both activities let high school students to tap back into their favorite childhood activities. Furthermore, as Moon said, it is great to make some delicious hot chocolate or bake warm cookies after playing out in the snow. Senior Olivia Kyasky loves to bake bread. Making these baked goods can also give the inside of your house a sweet aroma! Some people like to travel away from the cold snow. Senior Andrew Zhang shares that he will be going to California for a week. Traveling in the winter lets us get a proper

respite from not only the freezing cold temperatures in Connecticut, but also the stresses of academics. One of the biggest appeals of the winter is the myriad of holidays! Christmas is not just a day of presents and great food, but it is also a day to celebrate with your family and friends! Senior Stephanie Durkee explained that she is usually the first one awake on Christmas morning. First, she opens the stockings in her rooms, and then she escapes downstairs in order to look at the presents. When the rest of her family wakes up, everyone takes turns opening their presents. After Stephanie’s family has breakfast all together, her whole family has a holiday party! On the other hand, the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah is celebrated by a lot of families at Amity. This year, Hanukkah starts Saturday, December 24th and ends on Sunday, January 1st. In fact, January 1st is not only the eighth day of Hanukkah but also the start of a new year; it’s New Year’s Day. I hope everyone has a warm, safe, but fun winter season. Happy Holidays!

Amity Welcomes Mrs. Rizzotti

by Katie Handler ‘17



Photo by Katie Handler ‘17

This school year, Amity welcomed a new choir teacher to the faculty: Mrs. Marcia Rizzotti, who is currently working hard to put on the annual winter concert. Mrs. Rizzotti is an Amity alumni; she was a choir student under the previous choral director, Chris Hickerson. “I thought it would be an awesome opportunity, if I got the job, to work in my former choir director’s position and carry on the traditions,” Rizzotti explained. The Amity Chorus is known for having two quality groups: concert choir and chamber singers, which both

perform at multiple concerts throughout the year. Mrs. Rizzotti was excited to put on her first concert as choir director at Amity last Thursday, December 15th at 7:00 pm. Before applying for the position at Amity, Rizzotti directed the choir at Jonathan Law in Milford for five years. She explains that working at Amity is a lot of fun. “I get to work with a lot of talented students who want to be here and are motivated to work. The music that we are able to make here is high quality and I am really looking forward to developing it further over the course of the next couple of years, or hopefully a long time,” she said. Students are equally as enthusiastic about the new choir teacher as she is about the new school. While Mr. Hickerson’s time at Amity will always be cherished, Mrs. Rizzotti brings new ideas to the table. Junior Sophia Pan, a member of chambes, explains, “After every song, she tells us that the silence after each song is just as important as the song itself. Mrs. Rizzotti works differently than Mr. Hickerson, but still aspires to keep the essence he had in his teaching. I’m sure her efforts will pay off!”



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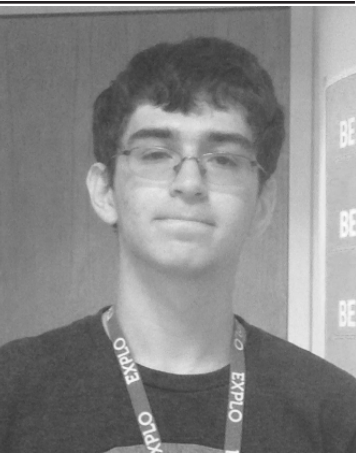
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Tyler’s Holiday Movie Guide

by Tyler Jennes ‘17



Well, it’s that time of year again!

Yes, the holiday season has provided us once more with the opportunity to watch seasonal films from the past and present. With the blasphemous disaster that is *Bad Santa 2* now in theaters, it seems only fitting that we should look at some other holiday films to get into the festive mood. I’ve compiled a list below (in no particular order) of 10 movies that I would recommend people check out.

A quick note – *A Christmas Story*, *Die Hard*, *It’s a Wonderful Life*, and other such staples will not be on this list. That’s not at all to say that they aren’t fantastic films, which they are, but they’re simply films that everyone has either already seen or is already planning on watching. With that in mind, on to the list:

National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation (1989)

This is my absolute favorite movie to watch over the holidays, and I’ve made it a habit to see it every single December. I can remember many arguments I’ve had with people where I’ve defended this film as being the best in the *Vacation* series (the first one’s also fantastic). Chevy Chase has never been as maniacally hilarious as in this Christmas farce. From the excessive amounts of decorations to a spoiled turkey, different aspects of this movie make it one of the most reliably hysterical that I know of. It has always evoked a sea of laughter every time I’ve seen it.

The Hebrew Hammer (2003)

That’s right; I’m putting in a Hanukkah movie. We’re getting all non-denominational up in this list. This is a film shot in the style of a 70’s exploitation flick, but with Adam Goldberg (guy who gets stabbed in *Saving Private Ryan*) as the Shaft-type character. It’s awesome. For ev-

ery kid who’s gone to Hebrew School, it’s painfully relatable at times. And of course, it’s become something of a cult classic—and for good reason, as it’s an endlessly smart and funny film that I highly recommend.

Trading Places (1983)

Ah, the days where Dan Aykroyd and Eddie Murphy were superstars. Not only is this a delightful holiday comedy, but it also teaches you a surprising amount about the commodities brokerage business. Both Murphy and Aykroyd are at the top of their game here, and director John Landis was on a roll at that point, with films like *Animal House* and *Blues Brothers* under his belt. And of course, leading lady Jamie Lee Curtis is as spectacular as always. Check it out.

Miracle on 34th Street (1947)

There’s nothing else to call it but a classic. It’s an inspiring, heartwarming and an all-around well-crafted film. It’s a holiday must-watch for too many reasons to list here. To me, Edmund Gwenn will always be the best Santa Claus on film (sorry Tim Allen). It’s a film that can make even the toughest of people truly believe in magic. And of course, I do not recommend the 1994 remake, which was one of the most mediocre films I’ve seen.

Love Actually (2003)

I can’t go this far without mentioning *Love Actually*. In loving memory of Alan Rickman, who passed this January, I implore you to watch this modern classic. In the first of many films where Liam Neeson plays a widower, this holiday anthology focuses on a massive ensemble of actors, many of whom went on to become big names, like Andrew Lincoln with *The Walking Dead* and Martin Freeman with *Sherlock*. Go hold a sign outside someone’s house and convince them to watch with you.

The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992)

This is my favorite depiction of Charles Dickens’ iconic tale, with Bill Murray’s Scrooged clocking in at a close second. Michael Caine is a fantastic Scrooge, one that the likes of Alastair Sim and George C. Scott would be proud of. Dedicated to Jim Henson, who died before production began, this film is to me the height of Muppeteering that wouldn’t be reached again until the 2011 reboot. Speaking of 2011...

Arthur Christmas (2011)

I never would have imagined that this film would be any good when it first came out. So after years of denying its existence, I gave it a watch only to find that I’d been missing out on a legitimately great film. As the most recent film on this list, it had a lot to live up to. From a fantastic voice cast to a clever plot full of heart, this film is way better than it had any right to be, which to me is what makes for a good recommendation.

Bad Santa (2003)

Don’t watch the sequel. Just don’t. It does nothing but taint the legacy of this great film. Come to think of it, three films on this list are from 2003. Good year, I guess. Anyways, Billy Bob Thornton is delightfully loathsome in this film, which was actually re-written by the Coen brothers (*Fargo*, *The Big Lebowski*). Many of the characters in this film are indeed terrible people, but at the core of the film, it’s surprisingly not rotten. It’s a surprisingly heartfelt film, contrasting with the rough exterior.

Kirk Cameron’s Saving Christmas (2014)

This film is awful. It may very well be the worst movie I’ve ever seen in my lifetime. You know the phrase ‘so bad it’s good’? Well this movie is so stupefyingly awful that it wraps around to become good, then back to bad, then good, and then bad once more. It’s a polyp on the stomach lining of cinema. And that’s why you need to watch it. Ironically, this horrendous piece of propaganda trash becomes a religious experience to watch, simply out of disbelief of how a team could have made this reverse-Citizen Kane. Watch with friends late at night for full effect.

Any movie made by Shane Black.

So I cheated a bit. Sue me. Filmmaker Shane Black has written some of the best action movies of the last few decades, with *Lethal Weapon*, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, *Iron Man 3*, and this year’s *The Nice Guys* on his commendable filmography. It’s almost a cliché at this point that every film he makes has Christmas in it at some point. But regardless of which of his films you choose to watch, it’ll be a fantastically-written and worthwhile experience. If I were forced to pick just one, I’d probably go with *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, but they’re all great.

Students Visit MoMA and Yale Art Gallery

by Sana Pashankar ‘19

This month, students taking various art courses were able to take their creative skills outside the walls of Amity Regional High School and use them to observe real-life art.

On November 11th, AP Art

that couldn’t be done through textbooks.

Emily Bacal, a junior who attended both field trips, believes, “They are so integral to our curriculum. Learning about art in the classroom through art textbooks is one thing, but experiencing art in person, getting to breathe it in and have it physically in front of



History and Honors Art students traveled to the local Yale Art Gallery to learn about certain periods of art (Pacific art, for example) that applied to their current curriculum. They also dined at New Haven restaurants, such as the York Street Noodle House. In addition, on November 18th, AP Art History students had the opportunity to travel to New York City to see the The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

There, they were able to freely roam around the largest art museum in the United States while utilizing their classroom knowledge to interpret the timeless art in the museum. According to the students, the field trips served as a valuable opportunity to understand and experience art in a way

you? That brings an incomparable amount of relevant. We are so fortunate to live near Yale Art galleries and New York City that to not take advantage of these incredible resources would be a crime.”

Sam Farbman, a sophomore, who also attended both field trips, seems to agree. He stated that “I thought they were really good because it’s important to experience the culture and have the ability to see actual art. We see a lot of it in textbooks, but we also need to be able to interact with it.”

Overall, the art field trips this month seemed to be an extremely valuable experience that students believe should be repeated in the future in order to allow them to connect with art in a real-life setting.

Cabaret for Catalde

by Josh Crow ‘17

The holiday season is fast approaching once again, bringing with it the spirit of gift giving and good cheer. Some people have looked to receive relatively insignificant gifts and trinkets, attempting to manifest their love and care into some meaningless items.

However, some Amity students took it upon themselves to offer more than just simple platitudes. These charismatic individuals chose to hold a cabaret, the proceeds of which went to help Amity teacher Robert Catalde, whose house was catastrophically destroyed in a fire, causing him and his family to be displaced for the time being. Looking to do something truly heartfelt for the holidays, a cadre of Amity’s more musically-inclined students was determined to do what was possible, no matter how small it would turn out to be.

After a great deal of planning, the students settled on the date of November 10th to host

the event. While they were fully committed to this cause, the heads of the event expected there to be no more than 10 people to attend.

However, at the night of the event, at least three times that number showed up in support of the Amity teacher. Organizer Josiah Oakley was impressed by the larger turnout, commenting, “It really exceeded my expectations. There was a higher turnout than expected and most everyone sounded great.”

Such acts of kindness and generosity are so rare, and for the event coordinators, as well as the everyday people who showed up in support, to take time out of their days was refreshing.

Mr. Catalde was “very, very moved” by the “lovely gesture” of these students, whom he says he cannot thank enough. This boost of confidence has not only invigorated the organizers, who plan to hold events similar to this in the future, but has also deeply touched Mr. Catalde, who says he will do “[his] best as a teacher to pay it back four times over.”

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December Spartan Athlete Spotlight: John Ahern

by Anthony Tom ‘19

John Ahern (‘17) is the captain of the Amity Boys Basketball Team. In addition to taking on a leadership role for basketball, John Ahern was selected to be the boy’s golf captain this spring. The *Trident’s* Anthony Tom spoke with Ahern in order to gain a better understanding of how Ahern will lead these teams.

Q: How long have you been playing basketball?
A: I’ve been playing for seven years.

Q: Have you played competitively the entire time?
A: I did rec leagues since I was six until I was nine where I did one year of travel where I stopped until middle school.

Q: Have you always wanted to be captain?
A: Yeah, it’s always something I’ve strived for. It’s not something I think about when playing, but it’s

there.
Q: What got you inter-
dad enjoy it.



John Ahern dribbling the ball; Photo courtesy of Orange Live

ested in basketball?
A: I don’t know, I’ve always been interested in sports and so was my dad. I guess just watching basket- ball on TV and watching my

A: Our biggest strength will be our ability to run the floor which is to get the rebound, pass it, and run to the other side of the floor. Basically, it allows us to take lots

Q: Are you looking forward to the season?
A: Yeah, I’m hoping we have a good year. There are a lot of good play- ers on the team. I’m looking for a good year.

Q: How far are you looking to go?
A: I think we can make good runs in the SCC and State tour- nament. I’d like to win both, but we’ve to take it one game at a time.

Q: What is your team’s greatest strength?
A: Our biggest strength will be our ability to run the floor which is to get the rebound, pass it, and run to the other side of the floor. Basically, it allows us to take lots

of baskets.
Q: Anything you want to work on in particular this season?
A: Well, we have to work on everything this season, but the main focus will be playing as a team and getting everyone to work together, since they all have talent.
Q: Anything you are go- ing to try and do to get your team to bond more?
A: On the court I would like everyone to talk, which will help everyone work to- gether as a unit. And off the court, [it’d be great if every- one hung out] together and [was] friendly.

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Amity Golf Changes Home Turf

by Anthony Taddei '17

As the golf team at Amity Regional High School starts to prepare for their spring season, they won't be teeing off at their regular course at the Woodbridge Country Club. Instead, they will be playing at The Traditions at Oak Lane.

Several months ago, when the Woodbridge Country Club, founded in 1938, made plans to close, the Amity Golf Team began to look for a new home course.

The team had played at Woodbridge, the nickname for the Woodbridge Country Club golf courts, for as long as the coach, George Taylor, could remember. Taylor thought that the country club struck the perfect balance between challenge and enjoyment.

"Woodbridge treated our team as if we were family, and the time we spent there I wouldn't trade for anything,"

he said. "Sometimes things such as this happen for a reason, and for all we know this could end up being better than Woodbridge."

The course never charged Amity to play there nor treated them any differently than the other members. This year is going to be a change for the seniors who have played at Woodbridge their entire high school career.



Woodbridge Country Club golf courts; Photo from Woodbridge Country Club website

The many longtime members who played at the Woodbridge Country Club will have to write a new chapter in their golfing career somewhere other than Woodbridge. And for the Amity Boy's and Girl's Golf Teams, they will be making new memories at The Traditions at Oak Lane.

One of this year's captains, John Ahern, is looking forward to the change.

"I honestly loved Woodbridge, but I'm going to have to look at the new benefits of playing at Oak Lane," he said. "It's going to be different, but I'm welcome to change and seeing how this goes."

As Taylor said in reference to Woodbridge, "We had such an advantage at our home

course because all of our players played there over the summer which was huge for our team's success. How much more could I ask for?"

Many other players are staying optimistic. Charlie Csejka, a senior on the team, said he sees this change as a "new challenge."

"I think it's a great opportunity for the team to separate from what we have been used to and try something new," Ahern said. "Sometimes people become too comfortable with something and changing something could actually [be advantageous] in the long run."

A Lift Taken to the Next Level

by Evan Arovas '20

To many, the weight room might be seen as a boring gym. But a regular attendee might contend that it is a microcosm of the sports world. At Amity, the weight room's double doors are a portal to a facility where Amity athletes work toward success. To reach their potential, everyone has his or her own routine that benefits muscle groups specific to the sport they play.

Linebacker, running back, and captain, Ryan Sabo ('18), explained his detailed lifting routine with the football team four times a week. Sabo remarked that lifting "has helped [him] so much, whether it's preventing injuries or out muscling the guy in front." One of the regulars in the gym, Sabo has found athletic success largely due to his rigorous weightlifting routine.

On the mound, baseball pitcher Benjamin Lodewick ('18) also lifts to get to the next level. Lodewick explained that his workout con-

sists of "Mostly legs and core as those are the muscles used in pitching." In fact, Lodewick can hit eighty miles per hour on the radar gun with his fastball. Above all, he emphasized that "Since freshman year, [he has] gained around 15 miles per hour on [his] fastball." As such, it seems routine weightlifting

helps gains power when hitting." Besides hitting home runs into the stands, weightlifting has given the catcher the leg and arm strength to make runners think twice before stealing a base against Amity.

Home to the determined, hardworking athletes of Amity, the gym is instrumental in enabling student athletes to achieve a higher tier of competition. While people may only peek through the narrow windows on the doors to the gym and see a mob of red-faced athletes, the importance of this small room cannot be encapsulated in a single glance. Students might hear the grunting, shouting, and cheering over the blaring radio and regard it as simple jocularly.

But the sense of community and brotherhood cannot possibly be comprehended by observation. Only a veteran weightlifter can understand the wide-eyed hopefulness of a skinny freshman looking to put on muscle, the satisfaction of finally maxing out a machine or set of weights, or the feeling of setting their ego aside to ask a teammate for help with an exercise.

is one of the roots of success to Amity student athletes.

Pat Winkel ('18), a catcher for the baseball team, truly knows what it means to pay his dues in the weight room. He makes sure to split up his weightlifting routine. Like Sabo, Winkel works out four days a week, working certain body parts and muscle groups each of the days. Winkel included that "lifting



Entrance to Amity's Fitness Center (Weight Room)

Amity Boys Hockey Tryouts

by Jacob Gross '18

Across Amity's athletic activities, tryouts have been completed, teams filled, and rosters updated. The boys' hockey team, in particular, has had an exciting start to their season. Their annual tryouts were held over three days in early December in West Haven at Amity's home rink.

There, about thirty-five prospective players spent a total of six hours looking to make the team. Each day, the tryout session was divided into two parts. During the first hour, there was a focus on skating exercises and individual technique. Halfway through each day, the players would take a well deserved break as the Zamboni reworked the ice. The second hour involved more competitive drills, testing team-oriented coordination, as well as informal scrimmages to see how the players fared in a real game environment.

After these three tough

days of tryouts, the team was set; out of the 35 that attempted to make it, 27 were successful. Not all of these players play every game, though - the rulebook states that only 21 can be dressed for a game at a time, and only six are actually on the rink. A few days after tryouts, Amity had its first competitive experience of the 2016 season in the form of a scrimmage against Hamden. Despite both Hamden's Division 1 status (compared to Amity's Division 2 placement) and that Amity was missing four important team members, they managed to play a close game, ending in a narrow defeat of 6-4.

The Amity Boys Hockey Team last won a title in 2010, so there has been a lackluster performance in recent years. Jake Silliman ('18), a defender, believes that this year, there is "definitely a possibility" of ending the drought. "The team this year is a lot stronger," says Silliman, "and we have a solid chance at going far."

Indoor Track Team Prepares for Strong Season

by Jordan Conn '18

The Amity Boys Indoor Track Team, after a successful '15 - '16, is preparing for another triumphant season, led by upperclassmen Kyle Beaudette ('17), Nick Yoo ('17), Ernie Yelenik ('17), Zach Bailey ('17), and Andrew Burford ('18).

They have their minds set on once again becoming SCC champions. Beaudette says, "This is also a team with a ton of potential and if a few guys tear it up, we could be positioned to make a run for an even higher title."

Last season, the Spartans were SCC East Sectional Champions and SCC Champions. They also notched a school record in the 4x800 and faced several competitors at the state and New England level.

The boys have been doing time trials since the first week of December to determine the level of each of the athletes. But even before the season had started, Beau-

dette said, "For our distance runners, most of our scorers have just come off of cross country season, so we're going to get a few workouts in and be ready to go."

Despite the name Indoor Track, the distance team practices outdoors in the middle of the winter. "The first few miles are pretty rough. [Our bodies] feel like they are about to fall off. However, if you come prepared, you



Kyle Beaudette in action; Photo courtesy of Orange Live

warm up just fine," said Beaudette. He also mentioned that he remembered "doing mile repeats on the track in -10 degrees, with a blizzard blowing in our face the entire time. I could not see more than a few feet in front of me."

The majority of the meets take place at the Floyd Little Athletic Center, located at Hillhouse High School in New Haven. The track is only 200 meters long, which is half of the length of the outdoor tracks.

The team hopes to exceed their expectations and have an even more successful season than last year's.



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