

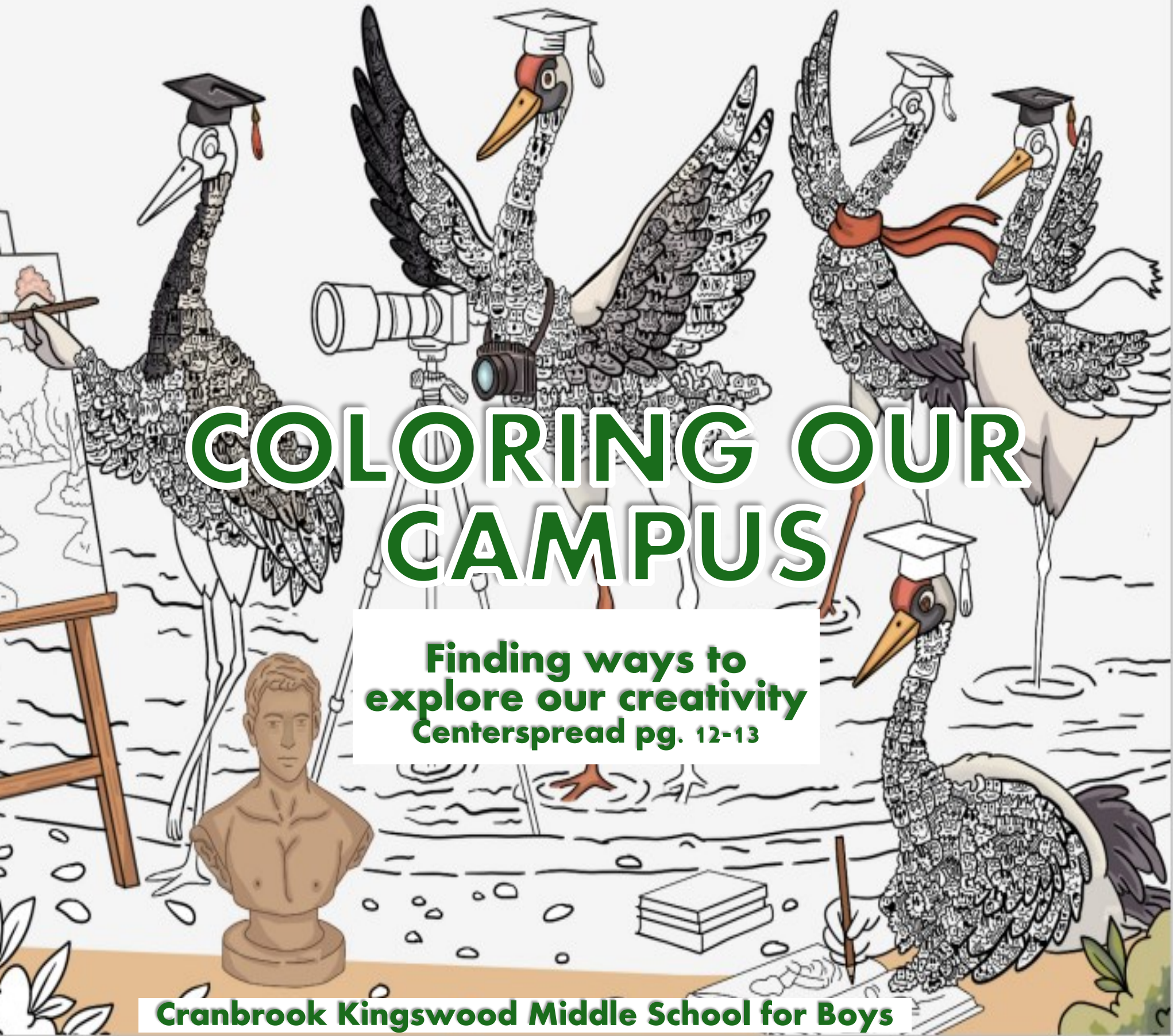
the crane

MSB

Sem. 1 25-26 Vol. 7

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- ◆ Page 18: Cranes Need Constant Creativity
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COLORING OUR CAMPUS

**Finding ways to
explore our creativity**
Centerspread pg. 12-13

Cranbrook Kingswood Middle School for Boys

The Crane, the student newspaper at Cranbrook Kingswood Middle School for Boys, is published once a semester. It is an opportunity for all students to serve the total school community and provide individual staff members with independent reporting, writing, technical and leadership opportunities as well as receive individual feedback for growth. Writing is based on a wide variety of research and adheres to the writing process. Staff members may explore and develop visual skills through photography, multimedia, social media, art and layout opportunities.

The primary audience for The Crane is the Cranbrook Kingswood community. The staff recognizes that the paper is read by the faculty, administrators, families and the community as a whole. Accordingly, The Crane will report about our campus. The entire production experience demands dedication, responsibility, cooperation, collaboration, leadership, and an open-mind to creativity, critical thinking, feedback and growth. The summative of our formative learning is our product each semester. We believe these skills are part of the foundation for learning. Furthermore, we believe in the foundation of aiming high as we serve others by sharing their and our stories.



The Crane is a forum for the exchange of comment, open to students and others interested in the Cranbrook Kingswood community. Recognizing this, the Crane will print as many letters to the editor expressing different viewpoints as space allows. Letters to the editor must be signed and may not exceed 300 words. Letters must deal with issues and may not be personal vendettas. Letters to the editor will be edited for mechanics, to fit space requirements, and in rare cases, to prevent libel, defamation, etc. The Crane reserves the right not to print a letter.

The Crane is a member of the Michigan Interscholastic Scholastic Press Association and the National Scholastic Press Association. The publication, as a whole, as well as individual staff members contribute their work to contests within these organizations in order to receive professional feedback for further learning and growth.

LETTERS FROM & TO OUR EDITOR-IN-CHIEFS

From the Editors:

BY: Ethan Anversa and Abhi Batra

Celebrating the Art All Around Us

Welcome to our very first issue! When we were thinking about what theme we wanted to focus on for this issue, we knew it had to be a topic that made use excited and something that matters a lot to us. The answer seemed so simple: art. Why we love it, why we need it, and why it matters more than people sometimes realize.

When people hear the word art, they often think of drawing or painting. But art is so much more than that. There's visual, performing, literary, musical, media, and applied arts. Art is music, musical theater, choir, culinary, plays, photography, podcasting, print making, writing, design, dance, digital, fashion, architecture, animation, video games, and even journalism. It's creativity is any form.

This school year there are new opportunities to explore art at CKSMB, including a new journalism elective, a new drawing class, and an after-school art club. With our new choir teacher, students have participated in performing arts festivals and already earned top honors. Our music students also performed a winter holiday concert for the entire school to enjoy and we got to see the musical performed by those in drama class and drama club. There are artistic opportunities in robotics and in projects assigned in our academic classes.

These moments remind us that art isn't just a pastime. It's something that brings us together. In this issue we learned about how art impacts the brain, creativity helps us think, connect, and grow as well as how art builds focus, confidence, and empathy. Cranbrook itself was built on art, and as Kevin Atkinson shares with us in this issue, art is truly all around us if we take the time to notice it. This issue also highlights how creativity forms connections. How we come together as one community, like the cranes on our cover.

Speaking of the cover, our artist Nolan Little '31 created a page for you to color. So, enjoy this issue, celebrate the art around you, and don't forget to color the front page. Let's see what art you can do.

Let's go Cranes. Your editors: Ethan and Abhi

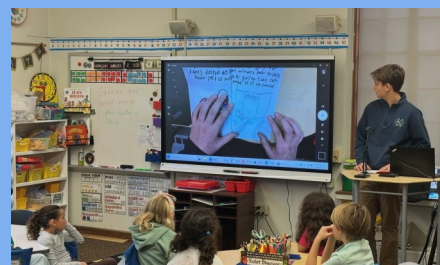
To the Editors:



Dear Editor,
My name is Gabriel O'Laughlin, and I am in 6th grade. I wanted to say that I am grateful for the soups at lunch. If you don't like lunch, then you can always get soup. Also, the lunch staff must put in a lot of effort to make soup along with everything else every day. (The Tomato Soup with the Grilled Cheese are my favorite). It's great that soups are everyday now unlike last year. Soups make lunch complete and fun. The soups also taste great!
Thanks to the lunch staff for making soup for us every day! We all appreciate you and love your soup!

Thanks, Gabriel O'Laughlin '32

Dear Editor,
I want to thank sixth-grade team leader Jennifer Dawson and the sixth-grade team who organized our service field trip on Tuesday, October 2025. Raking leaves at Chene Park really felt like we were helping the community by clearing the park so kids can play there. I really appreciated how all the sixth graders were cooperating and building strong relationships together. Everyone loved the food at the Mexican restaurant called Los Galanes. The tacos and quesadillas were delicious, and it was fun trying the Mexican soda. Our tour at the DIA was very cool. In addition to seeing various interesting sculptures and paintings, seeing the Ofradas really made the Day of the Dead celebration come to life. The planning for this field trip was very thoughtful and must have been time consuming. Thank you to everyone who planned this field trip. I hope we can have more field trips like this in the future.
Sincerely, Shaan Chaudhary '32



Presenting Their Spanish Stories

By: Griffin Muenk

While studying daily routines, students in Adrienne Novales' Spanish class were challenged to create picture books written all in Spanish. Novales explained that the stories needed to center around a character or two and be interesting for their audience. After revising their stories and illustrating them, they learned that they were invited to read them to the second graders.

"My story was about a character named Mr. Star who goes through his daily routine," Ronak Desai '30 said. "I liked reading to the Brooksidiers because they were excited and asked great questions."



On the Cover

Our legacy was built by the creativity of the Booth family and to this day there are so many ways to be creative on our campus. Take some time to color in these Cranes drawn by Nolan Little '31

Semester Flash-back

News 4
Look behind the numbers at these news briefs.

Feature 7
Choir students hit high note at Festival

Feature 9
Inaugural All school pep session celebrates on the Oval

Feature 13
See what the research says about social media and mental health

Feature 16
Ice Baths are great way to recover

Feature 17
One Last Thing with MSG's New Head Tony Shawe

Opinion 18-19
Dean Russell' 30 shares how moths are man's next best friend

Photos by Staff



The Crane contents

Centerspread: 14-15:
Cranes Get Creative. Take our quiz and see if you know the art at MSB .

Sports 22
Mondays were made for Community time. New Field Day Teams expand opportunities for friendly competitions.

Photo Essay 24:
A "High-Five" to all the memories made First Semester.

Photo by Staff

Entertainment 20-21

Check out our entertainment pages where we review music, restaurants and the incredible exhibits at the Art Museum.

Campus Exhibits

Our new drawing and Painting elective got to go on a field trip and see the Haas Brothers: Uncanny Valley and the Mythic Chaos: 50 Years of Destroy All Monsters. Turn to page 21 to see some photos.

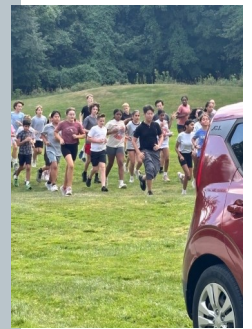
Photo by Art Museum

Aiming High and Going Forth To Serve

For the annual MSB School service project 175 Birthday boxes we delivered to the Dre Project in Pontiac and Open Hands Pantry in Royal Oak. A birthday box is a birthday party in a box. There's cake mix, frosting, plates, candles, balloons and anything needed for a fun party. A Coke or Sprite can replace the need for eggs and oil. Way to go Cranes.

Sports 23

Check out features about our teams and our athletes.



Photos by Staff



Photo by Staff

ABOVE: Cross country team gets a new Head Coach and a new course that highlights our beautiful campus. Tennis team practices after school. Read about the number one player in the state and how MSB alumni tennis players won the state title.

Feature photo on top of page: During lunch students meet to discuss stocks. The Stock Club is open to sixth, seventh and eighth graders. It's lead by students and advised by Mike Toth. They've invited guest speakers and have created a newsletter and a website.

Crane Earns National Honors

By: Ibrahim Al-Obaidy and Andrew Jones

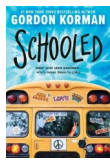


By The Numbers

By: Hank Gordon and Luka Roskos

Nine new tables were installed in the Commons. According to MSB Head Lesley Rodriguez, MSB got new tables so students could have a better study area and more room to work. The tables came from Brookside because they got new tables.

218 pages. That's the amount of pages the Book Club read while reading their first book *Schooled* by Jamie Summer. According to Book Club advisor Jennifer Dawson, everyone seemed to like the club's first book.



Feb. 20th in the DeSalle Auditorium, Cranbrook Art Museum will be the inaugural TEDxCranbrookSchools, an evening dedicated to "Ideas Worth Spreading." According to Troy Dostert (TED-Ed Cranbrook faculty adviser) this event is a unique platform for our community to engage with world-class thought leaders and to support the voices of our own students. Featured Keynote Speakers are Chuck Garcia, a professor at Columbia University, and Steven Wang a CK Alumnus of 2020 and 24-year-old CEO of trading platform Dub, which raised \$30 million in Series A funding in early 2025, bringing its total funding to \$47 million. Due to venue capacity, attendance is strictly limited to 100 guests. Spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

950 pounds of plastic have been collected during the first semester. For one month, The Class of 2031 had a contest to see how much plastic they could bring in. According to Mike Toth, they collectively saved over 100 pounds.



Photo by: staff

Feb. 7th at Okland University the Math Counts team participated in the competition. According to coach Gordon Powell the team earned 11th place.

Photo by: Powell

Three days, nineteen components and one laser are all the eighth graders had to use as they learned to solder. With the aide of Mike Toth and science teacher Ryan Slade, students worked on kits which they needed to solder together in order to light up a target.

Photo by: staff

She had been here before. After months of anticipation and two and half days of workshops, she found herself sitting in the same spot once again. "It's good to be a finalist, she thought. That's a real honor."

It was November 15, 2025, and Christina Hammitt, *The Crane's* Advisor, found herself in Nashville, Tennessee at the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA)'s Awards Ceremony. Name after name flashed across the screen. She watched the slides scroll by, each one another amazing accomplishment. Then, finally, there it was. Her students. Their front cover, and it said: Pacemaker. The 2024–25 Cranbrook Middle School for Boys newspaper, *The Crane*, had been named one of the nation's best. Five MSB students also received awards, which is an incredible accomplishment.

"I'm not sure if I screamed out 'yes' or dropped my phone first," said Hammitt. "I knew the slide would disappear fast, so I had to capture it. Walking back with the plaque, I felt overwhelmed, honored, and humbled. I knew how hard these kids had worked, and I knew what this recognition meant to them."

Honoring the nation's best middle schools and high schools, the NSPA named 19 scholastic student newspapers, news magazines, and specialty magazines published during the 2024–2025 school year as winners in its prestigious Pacemaker competition.

The Pacemaker Award is the Association's preeminent award," according to Executive Director Laura Widmer. It is an incredible honor that *The Crane* was honored as the recipient of the Pacemaker Award. *The Crane* was one of only a few Middle Schools honored—and 1 of 2 in Michigan. There are several categories: newspapers, magazines, online sites, and more. In the end, 41 finalists made it, representing 12 states as well as the United Kingdom. California set the pace with 12 finalists, followed by Texas with eight. There were three middle school finalists.

The Pacemaker, founded in 1921, has a rich tradition. According to Associate Director and Coordinator of the Pacemaker competition, Gary Lundgren, "In addition to demonstrating excellence in key areas including coverage, writing, editing, design and photography, the winning newspapers took risks and served as a strong voice for its student audience." There-

fore, being named a finalist and then a winner is a remarkable achievement for any middle school publication.

As the awards were being presented, Hammitt could not have been more excited-or nervous, but the time came. "As other categories and winners were being announced I was texting those back at home," Hammitt said. "I couldn't wait to get home. After getting the Best of Show certificate, I looked down at our pile of awards and wondered how I was going to get them home in my small suitcase."

Nicholas Nadjarian, author of "Teens' Sweet Tooth Can Be Dangerous", won first place in the feature story category. "Last year I placed 4th. It was very gratifying to have my article this year be selected for 1st place recognition. More than the joy that comes with the award I felt great satisfaction I was able to prove to everyone, and especially to myself, that all my hard work throughout the year had paid off."

Amruth Prasad, author of "Newspaper Staff Thrilled with Four Outstanding Awards" was awarded Honorable Mention in the NSPA Pacemaker. Prasad said, "Initially when I saw that I was recognized with an Honorable Mention, I was shocked and ecstatic. Throughout my middle school newspaper journey not once did I receive recognition close to this, so being recognized nationally in one of my last middle school newspaper articles just makes me extremely happy."

Sitting in the grand hall looking at the awards her students had earned, Hammitt reflected, "Many ask me why I spend the hours promoting scholastic journalism and while some would believe it's for accolades like these, but it's really about seeing the smiles on my student's faces when they see their work being read when it's in print. It's also seeing that smile widen when they see that their work matters, because it does. What they write about, and what they learn about is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do. Journalism is an art form that celebrates what Cranbrook is all about. These students earned their place among the best journalists in the nation. I want people to know just how incredible that is. No one can take that away. That validation is the true honor."



Photo by: staff

And the National award goes to...

These are the national awards won by *The Crane* staff and individual writers during the Fall and Spring Conventions.

Pacemaker
The Crane

Best of Show
Second Place: The Crane
Fourth Place: Yearbook

Newspaper/News magazine Design
First Place
Emerson Whittaker

News story
Third Place
Noah Nguyen '31
Honorable Mention
Amruth Prasad '29

Feature Story
Fourth Place
Joshua Zou '30

2025 Diversity Award Runner-up
Christina Hammitt

2025 MIPA Golden Pen
Christina Hammitt

MLB Threw Seventh Grade Interim a Curve Ball

By: Shaan Chaudhary

When planning the third annual seventh grade interim trip, the seventh-grade team faced a new challenge. After attending Cleveland Guardians games on the previous two interim trips, the Cleveland Guardians baseball team were scheduled to play in away game. Ironically, they were going to be in Detroit when the Class of 3031 were going to be in Cleveland.

"I wish Major League Baseball had consulted us when they made their schedule," Seventh Grade team leader Nathan Costa said after learning that one of the favorite parts of the trip wouldn't be able to happen during September 17–19. Costa shared that one of the reasons the Seventh-Grade team originally chose to go to Cleveland three years ago is because while many Cranbrook students may have visited Chicago or New York, few in any have ventured four hours east to explore a city that mimics Detroit. For this reason, when the baseball game wasn't going to be an option, Costa and his team knew they needed to find a similar experience that would continue to tie Cleveland with the trip's purpose. With a little research, they found MAGNET, a manu-

facturing and design center in Cleveland. At MAGNET, students built miniature race cars while learning about the manufacturing process.

Costa said the activities required students to consider all aspects of engineering and design.

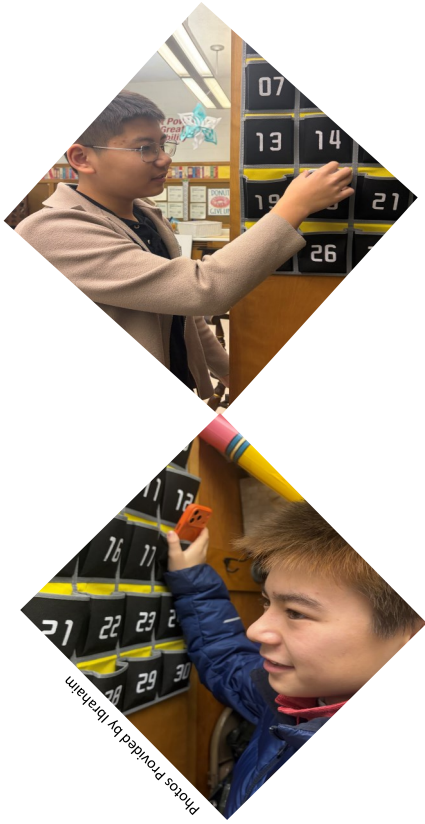
"They teach what goes into the manufacturing process," Costa said. "Students had to think about costs, weight, style, and the overall aerodynamics. They all influence how we how the car is raced."

Seventh grader Oliver Mamou said students were given supplies and a specific budget for the project. "It was great. We each got to make our own cars. I never really realized how many different decisions there are when it comes to construction," he said. "The staff there were very nice and helpful along the way. We also got to play on their playground. It was so much fun. While going to the game would have been nice. This was a great experience and doing this project involving cars made up for missing the game. We can go to a game in Detroit but we can't do something like this."



Photo by: Tkac

Building cars at the MAGNET Center



The days of phones buzzing, notifications popping up, and students sneaking quick checks between classes have been silenced.

“What I think is good is students are more engaged in classes and with each other,” seventh grade Global Studies teacher Adam Seeberg said. “Now they’re not focused on checking their phone for notifications or to see if someone’s texted them or if their mom has called them. They just can’t worry about it because it’s all put away.”

For a semester, Cranbrook’s policy of every morning having students put their cell phones in cubbies located in their advisory rooms is not just a new morning routine but it is part of a bigger trend across the country.

According to federal data from the National Center for Education Statistics, about 77 percent of public schools don’t let students use their phones during class.

“I came from a high school where everyone was on their phones 24/7,” Seeberg said. “That not only made the students suffer academically, but also socially. They were just worried about what was happening on their phones.”

Dean of Students Jeremy Lublin said there’s a lot of research showing why this policy works so making the decision to implement the new routine was not a difficult one to make. According to The National Center for Education Statistics, more than half of school leaders say phones have hurt students’ grades, attention spans, and mental health.

“Lots of studies are out there that show when students don’t have access to devices, their minds are more on task,” Lublin said. “Even just knowing there’s a phone in your pocket or locker can be distracting.”

Like Lublin said, the research backs this up. A Rutgers University study found that when students used phones, tablets, or other devices for non-school stuff during class, their exam scores dropped by about 5 percent or half a letter grade compared to when devices were banned.

Lublin said this shows how splitting attention

between phones and learning can hurt grades in the long run.

Before the new policy, students were supposed to keep phones in their lockers, but many still found ways to use them.

“Unfortunately, they would often go to their lockers between classes to text friends or parents,” Lublin said. “Parents would show up unexpectedly, and it created chaos in the main office. We realized that 99.9 percent of students don’t need their phones during the school day.”

Instead of banning phones completely, finding a place to put the phones was the challenge. After looking at several alternatives, calculator caddies that hang were the best choice.

“It was the most economic choice,” Lublin said. “It was one of the cheaper things we could get, and it allows students easy access at the end of the day.”

“Another big reason for this policy is to help kids learn how to interact with each other,” Seeberg said. “Middle school is when you’re supposed to be learning how to make friends. Having your phone take you away from that is really bad.”

Seeberg added that while learning to manage phone use on your own is important, middle school students aren’t all quite ready for that responsibility yet.

“At this age, it’s hard to develop that skill on your own,” he said. “That’s why it’s good the school does it for you.”

With a semester done, Lublin said that he’s seen student interact more and be more focused on one another as well as their course work.

“I wasn’t really sure what to expect,” he said. “I thought kids might forget or ask teachers a lot, but that really hasn’t happened.”

Looking at the past semester, Seeberg said that he’s also seen a difference in the students and advises them to “Make sure to spend time on your life outside of your phone. If you get too wrapped up in it, you’re going to have a hard time outside of it. You might be surprised at how much more there is when you’re not on your screen.”

New Phone Policy Calls For Connection

By: Parker Ellis

Baskets Celebrate Birthdays

By: Knox Edginton

Move over, boring birthday wishes. At Cranbrook’s Boys Middle School, students are celebrating their big day with baskets packed full of treats.

“I wanted to bring a little extra Concession fun to birthdays,” said Concession Committee Chair Vilma Edginton, who came up with the idea of offering Birthday Baskets for students. The idea, she explained, was inspired by her own school days. “It’s a win-win-win for Concessions, the birthday student, and the entire MBS community.”

The Birthday Baskets cost \$50 and are packed with 60 snacks for the birthday student’s advisory class to share. Popular treats include Oreos, chips, popcorn, Rice Krispies, fruit snacks, and Gatorade. While the baskets are optional for families, they have quickly become a favorite, especially for the birthday students.

Nicole Sadeghi, the mother of eighth grader Cameron, said the baskets offer a rare chance to celebrate birthdays during the school day.

“It was the only opportunity to celebrate birthdays at school,” Sadeghi said. “Seeing my child’s reaction made the process simple, positive, and genuinely celebratory.”

Sadeghi also appreciated how easy the process was. She said the baskets were streamlined and consistent, making it simple to treat the advisory without extra planning or stress. Launching the program came with some uncertainty.

“I wasn’t sure if parents would be interested in purchasing the baskets for their child, and I wasn’t sure about the pricing,” Edginton admitted. Three months later, those concerns have disappeared. As of December 2025, about 22 Birthday Baskets have been delivered, and the program will continue next year due to its success. Beyond the snacks, the baskets help build community and make students feel recognized.

Even students whose birthdays fall during the summer get to celebrate during the school year. Eighth grader Simon Craft ’30 experienced a Birthday Basket in December.

“My mom told me about it ahead of time, so I wasn’t surprised about the basket itself, but the experience was so great, that was definitely a surprise,” Craft said. “I didn’t realize how special it was going to be. It wasn’t about being recognized. It was seeing my friends and how happy everyone was for me. I liked seeing the joy on everyone’s faces. It was an awesome birthday gift. The best.” Sadeghi added that Cameron was surprised on a different day since his birthday fell on a day off from school.

“He loved the treats and was excited to share them with his classmates. One of his favorite Cranbrook experiences,” she said.

What is Inside each Basket?

- 12 Gatorade bottles or juice boxes
- 12 bags of popcorn or chips
- 12 Welch’s fruit snacks or Gushers
- 12 Madeleine cookies or Rice Krispies treats
- 12 Oreos
- Special requests

PHOTO ESSAY

Interim Trips Span Three Different States

Fishing, Ropes Course, Campfire Cooking, White Water Rafting, Boat trips, Museums and more



In September and October the eighth, seventh, and sixth grade classes went on the traditional MSB interim trips. The purpose of these opportunities are to build community, make friends and learn together while stepping outside comfort zones.

Photos Provided by Teams

Saturdays were Made for Robotics

By: Brendan Ellis

Their robotics game is more than just the robot.

"It's really important to understand the dynamics of teamwork," robotics director Katie Biss said. "Helping each other is going to get you a higher score than what either one of you could get individually."

For the 2025-2026 Vex IQ robotics season, collaboration is key as teams compete in the game called Mix and Match.

Bis explained that each year the games are designed by a committee that is part of the REC foundation. The objective of this year's game is to create stacks out of pins and beams using the robot.

To play the game, teams create different strategies; however, the teams get the responsibility to problem solve.

"The way I'm advising is to start with a basic strategy and then build upon it," Robotics coach Elmer Santos said. "There are only a limited number of red and blue objects, so it needs a lot of coordination to make sure those are scored the most efficiently."

To do so, Bis and Santos agree that this is when the teams need to use their communication. "The best strategy is to make sure to get multicolored stacks they are put in the matching goals and then later in the season the strategies usually get more complicated," he said.

As the season has been underway, Bis shared that she is so proud of the teams.

During an event which they hosted forty-four local teams. "Our CK middle school teams held four out of the top five spots in skills and six out of the top ten in qualification rankings. In addition, CK earned the top two judged awards of the day!!"

"At the Grand Ledge Tournament Our (3) CK teams did remarkably well competing against some very strong Haslett and East Lansing Teams. Teams 36S, 36M and 37W were all ranked in the top 8 in skills and the top 10 at the end of qualification rankings with Team 36M (Willow Brown, Claire Wang, Nylah McMann, Yu Shi, Ying Shi) ranking 2nd overall in skills! Two of our middle school teams paired up to earn 2nd Place in Teamwork with one winning an additional award in Design and the other in Innovate! Team 37W (George Phelps, Alex Cohen, Zade Almaskati, Roshan Gangadharan, Richard Wang, and Tien Phan) and Team 36S (Jennica Jeyasingh, Kam Brown, and Symphonie Zhou) won the 2nd Place Teamwork Award!!! **Congratulations** to Team 37W (George Phelps, Alex Cohen, Zade Almaskati, Roshan Gangadharan, Richard Wang, and Tien Phan) for winning the **Innovate Award!!!** I'm proud of them all," she said. "Way to go Teams!!!"



Clockwise: Students stand proudly with their award, Rowan Kitchen '31, practices the game, Ethan Anversa '30 practices at the upper, Coach Bis stands with more winners, practices afterschool and on Saturdays, tournaments provide chance to practice strategies and win awards. Photos provided by team.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Supporting Upper school Teams

Dear Editor,

In October, I had the opportunity to go to the tennis state championship for division 3 to cheer on my brother Dylan Popat '28. Sitting there I realized events like this help our Cranbrook community come together.

From cheering to the playing, it was clear that the coaching and the training really paid off. Without the coaches' help none of this was possible. When I went, I especially loved how all players, and the managers, cheered for their team. The matches were very fun to watch, the view was nice, and everyone had a fun time. After the match finished people went to cheer them on and made sure, they were good.

Thank you to the coaches who make these experiences possible for both the players and their families. I hope we can keep this motivation going and maybe they can win another state title next year.

Sincerely, Nikhil Popat '32

Projects Help Us Learn

Dear Editor,

I want to thank my Math 6 teacher Catherine Chequer for giving us opportunities to apply the content she's teaching us. The math poster board project she assigned us when we were learning about graphs is an example. With Michael Toth, our technology teacher, we worked on learning how important graphs can be useful and we learned how useful it is to use them. We learned about Histograms, Frequency tables, and titles.

Projects like this are fun and educational because kids, like me, get a way better understanding of graphs and it teaches us in a very fun way.

It is like taking an art class but it's math! I can't wait to do more projects like this.

Also, when we do the work in class it helps me pay more attention in class and makes it very educational and fun. Mrs. Chequer does that. I appreciate her letting us learn this way.

Sincerely, Charlie Thav '32

Call for Submissions

The Crane serves as an open forum for the Cranbrook Kingswood community, and we invite both students and staff to contribute to the conversation by submitting letters to the editor.

We strive to publish a wide range of viewpoints, provided that submissions are signed, limited to 300 words, and focused on relevant issues rather than personal vendettas.

Please note that *The Crane* reserves the right to decline any letter and may edit submissions for clarity, length, and legal considerations such as libel or defamation. To share your voice, please send your signed letters directly to our advisor, Miss Christina Hammitt, at chammitt@cranbrook.edu



Photos by staff

By: Parker Ellis

Disney Villains Become Our Heroes

Right before the curtain was about to be pulled and the crowd was listening intently for the start with the sound of squeaks of shoes coming from backstage, all of the feelings from the months of rehearsals got one last encore.

"Opening night is always such a rollercoaster of emotions," Cranbrook Middle school drama director Ryan Ernst said. "There's nervousness, excitement and also a sense of relief when the show starts."

When looking for a show Ernst explained that he thinks about those emotions as well as many other components.

"I wanted a show to be something that everyone could get into, even if they aren't a fan of musicals," he said. "I wanted to show that new, fun, real musicals can be done in middle school without it being the same old shows."

For this reason he chose Disney's *Descendants Jr.*

According to Music theater International (MTI) Broadway Junior program, some of the key features of this show are that it is "tailored for actors ages 8-16. It's condensed into roughly 60 minutes and it's based on the popular Disney Channel Movies."

Adding to the list, Ernst said that "the biggest challenge was definitely the 'size' of the show. There are a lot of elements of tech, acting, singing, choreography, ensemble work, etc. that have to come together to make it a successful show," he said.

When the show ended and the curtain closed the impact went farther than the cast.

"I just want the audience to enjoy the performance and put a smile on someone's face," Jackson Wolfe '30 who played King Beast said. "When the show was over, it felt like the ending of a book you love, sad but also happy."

Personal Narrative

By: Nolan Bradley

After months of two-hour long rehearsals, opening night finally arrived.

Descendants Junior, a one-act hour long musical based on the popular Disney Channel Original movie, was our fall musical. The story centers on the iconic Disney villains and their children. With a lot of sixth graders and new students I knew this show was going to be different.

Plus, this was fourth show and I was super excited. Cast as Ben, the son of Belle and Beast, I got to focus on portraying someone who had a huge inner conflict. Since he bears the weight of becoming the new King of Auradon, he is in the middle of the story's conflicts. Also, I had a good amount of singing, stage time, and dancing. Some would be nervous about this, but I loved every minute. It challenged me and inspired me.

After weeks of rehearsals, it was time for the curtain to open. Standing there, I felt the magic I always do on stage.

Performing brings out this other side of me which I don't get to show very much. I'm so thankful for this art form and I'm so glad I get to be a part of these productions. I am thankful that the school takes time out of their day to see the cast perform what they have been working so hard on.

This was my last middle school musical and I knew that the memories would last forever.

Voices Shine at Choir Festivals



Photo by CK Social Media

By:
Ethan Anversa

Recently, one of the Middle School for Boys' very own 7th grade students placed first in a competitive choir competition.

Rowan Kitchen participated in the MSVMA ensemble and vocals tournament. Rowan's teacher, cate Gasco registered Rowan for the tournament after he brought up his interest in competing during practice. For his mom, she was delighted that Rowan could have such a great opportunity.

MSB Alumni Travis Effinger '27 and Yousef Zimly '29 also participated and earned accolades at the event. Those in the Madrigals earned a perfect score. "When I entered high school I decided I would take every opportunity thrown my way, so when Ms. Gasco asked if we'd like to participate in this festival I was quick to accept."

Selecting the "right" songs took some time for both artists. Kitchen shared that the songs he picked for the festival, *Fire Down Below* and *All Through the Night*, "they sounded easy to memorize and fun to sing."

Zimly explained that "since the repertoire criteria was two contrasting song choices, I performed *Adieu* a French uplifting song and *Poor Wayfaring Stranger*

a morose American folk song. They vary both in language and genre."

Before the Festival, both agreed that there were some nerves. "To be frank I was really stressed for the festival and when I got up on the stand to sing, I was shaking," Zimly said. Rowan added that since he didn't know what to expect, he was also really nervous.

"When I found out I got a Division I rating, I was surprised because the person who rated me was on Broadway and I expected him to be strict, but he gave me the best possible grade and I was very surprised and happy," Kitchen said. "Also I got a medal for getting a Division I rating and some great feedback I from the judge. Reflecting on why he joined the tournament Zimly said, "Singing is my passion and expressing it warms my heart. This festival is a learning opportunity helping me grow as a vocalist."

After Zimly got his final ranking, his mom said, "I was so proud of him. He conducted himself so well and received the beautiful feedback from the judge with style and grace. We are so blessed to have these opportunities."

FEATURE

Community Time Strengthens All

By: Ethan Gao

Once a week the usual rush of classes has been replaced with something different: a full hour dedicated entirely to Community Time. This new block isn't just about taking a break from academics it's a purposeful pause that fosters connection, builds school culture, and gives students tools to navigate relationships and emotions.

"One of the biggest successes has been watching students show up not only physically, but emotionally as they lean into mixed-grade activities, taking risks, and engaging in honest conversations," said Brandon Alford, reflecting on the early results of the initiative.

What is Community Time?

"Community Time is our dedicated weekly space to focus on school culture, connection, and SEL," Alford explained. To make this hour possible, MSB adjusted the Monday schedule to 40-minute classes, creating a block where all students can come together intentionally. During Community Time, students participate in a wide variety of activities designed to teach collaboration, communication, and mindfulness.

Setting the Tone for the Week

"We added Community Time on Mon-

days to give students a structured and meaningful way to start the week grounded in belonging," Alford said. The placement at the start of the week was intentional, helping students reduce anxiety and anchor their week in connection rather than rushing straight into academics.

Impact on Community

The shift to dedicated Community Time has strengthened relationships across grades. "Students are develop[ing] deeper connections across grades," Alford said.

"Advisory groups are bonding earlier in the year, and students are gaining a stronger understanding of expectations and what it means to belong to the MSB community." Teachers and students have felt the impact. Jacob Yang '30 said "During the I've been able to talk to students I usually don't talk to, and it makes me feel proud to be part of the school community."

The Vision Realized

"It's been incredibly rewarding to

see the vision come to life and to watch the school embrace this structure as a meaningful part of our week," Alford said.

From students showing up emotionally, to teachers observing skill application in everyday interactions, the benefits of Community Time are tangible.

Looking Ahead

Just as first semester was planned with activities to bring the community together, Alford said that second semester will do the same. In fact, students will learn of their Field Day teams and will be able to work in small and larger groups building connections and getting ready for the annual Field Day.

Community Time is proving to be more than just an hour. It's an opportunity that strengthens the MSB community from the inside out.

The Second Annual All School Thanksgiving Meal provided the entire school the opportunity to be together and celebrate all we are grateful for and enjoy some yummy food.



Sept. 8–12: Kickoff in the gym with cornhole and hula-hoop games

Sept. 22–26: Mixed-grade Word Scramble collaboration challenges tied to grade-level trips

Oct. 13–17 community snack.

Oct. 20–25 (Whole-gym minefield activity with mixed-grade groups

Nov. 10–14 (Teamwork & Spirit): Fall sports awards and celebrations of student athletes.

Nov. All School Thanksgiving Meal
Dec. All School Service Project



Photos by Staff

First Semester of Teaching a success

By: Brendan Ellis

We got a chance to sit down with first year full time Adam Seeborg who has been teaching seventh grade Global Studies.

Describe your first semester teaching full-time. What has it been like so far?

My first semester teaching full-time has been a transformative time in my life. My confidence has grown in not just my ability to teach, but also as a person. Running a classroom takes a lot of work and requires a lot of responsibility; some of the most responsibility I have ever had. This has caused me to grow and mature as a person.

Explain a challenge you faced and how you handled it.

This semester has provided me with my first experience with a full-time job. That being said, I have had to learn how to juggle all aspects of my life in order to make enough time for work and lesson planning. This means learning how to sacrifice doing some of the things I enjoy. Because of this, I have been much more productive with my free time as it is much more precious now.

Describe a moment this that made you feel proud of your students or your teaching.

The Malala Identities posters are some of the proudest I have been of my students this semester. Seeing the level of polish and professional presentation on those posters made me proud that my students were capable of creating something so well-made. I also enjoy attending sports games, like soccer and basketball. Watching the seventh graders beat my alma mater BCS at both soccer and basketball was conflicting. It was sad to see my old school lose, but I felt very proud that my students came out on top.

Explain something you've learned about teaching or yourself during your first semester.

It took some serious getting used to such a younger crowd and time to adjust and change some teaching methods, but I have been enjoying the change in pace so far!

Celebrating Thirty-Two years of Service

By: Ramzi Simon

Drew Miller, Director of Enrollment share his decision to retire

Explain what inspired you to retire from the admissions office of Cranbrook.

Great question. I have been at Cranbrook for 32 years, which is a long time, and before that, I worked in two other schools for 11 years. So, I thought, it is getting to the time where it is time for my wife and I to stop working and enjoy ourselves a little bit while we still can."

Looking back on your career, describe one moment you will remember and why?

First of all, having my kids go to school here and so seeing them come and enjoy the place so much and eventually graduate has been a great. I'm Old enough that some of the students I admitted when I first got here are now coming back with their children to enroll, and so that's sort of been a real treat for me as well.

Explain what Cranbrook means to you.

Cranbrook is a school I've always been proud to represent, because it's a school with a lot of integrity. It doesn't try to pretend that it's something that is not. It's a real commitment to students and their families trying to make sure they have the best experience

What plans do you have for after retirement?

My wife and I are going to move to North Carolina, and we are building a home there, along the coast, right on the North Carolina, South Carolina border, in a town right on the ocean. We are looking forward to relaxing. We don't know anybody in North Carolina, so it's a big adventure for us. It's exciting and scary at the same time. Whenever people are making changes like this I'm always sympathetic and now I'm sort of making that kind of big change in my life now too.



Exploring Campus Through Time

**By:
Griffin Muenk**

As you walk down the 8th grade hallway, a timeline of Cranbrook's past hangs outside 7th grade teacher Rebeca Hattner's classroom.

"Every hallway, piece of furniture, fountain, and building has a story to tell," Hattner said. She explained that the timeline also connects Cranbrook's history to world events and provides a visual overview for students who aren't in her class. "It's not finished yet obviously," she said. "Posters about the more well-known historical figures/people of Cranbrook are yet to be added."

Hattner said the community-focused timeline was designed to help students connect with Cranbrook's history, and placing it in the seventh- and eighth-grade hallway lets nearly everyone see it. "Boys researched places on campus and created the timeline entries," Hattner said of the students enrolled in the *Exploring Cranbrook* elective. "The timeline came together through our guided walks, hands-on activities, and guest speakers."

This is the first year Hattner and her students have created a community-focused timeline. Because the course is a deep dive into the history of the school and its buildings, Hattner explained that the students get to use their classroom experiences as the information they gather to create creative projects such as sketches, models, and presentations and then they get to add this content to the timeline.

And just as the timeline evolves so does the course itself. Even after teaching the class for three years, Hattner said she still learns new things and passes that along in the class. This is why putting together the timeline has been so much fun, she said. It shows the progress of the process.

As the timeline takes form, Thomas Manos '30 said that he was most impressed during their field to the Greenwood Cemetery in Birmingham.

"I found out that most of the Booths were buried there. This was surprising because I drive past it every day," he said. In addition, he said he also enjoyed seeing the Saarinen House in person.

"It was amazing to see it up close, not just in pictures," he said. "Now I don't have to walk past a building on campus and not know what it is or what it's meant for. This is a privilege all Cranbrook students should experience."

Adding this content to their community timeline, Manos and Maxwell Kushner '31 hope that others can learn more about Cranbrook and its history.

"My favorite place was the Saarinen House," Kushner said. "The tours helped me understand where things are and helped me build a map of Cranbrook, which will come in handy."

Beyond knowledge of buildings and history, the course builds skills like observation, collaboration, communication, and creative thinking. "It's nice to know why buildings were built, where statues came from, and who was involved in this school's history," Manos added.

As their timeline grows as the semester progresses, Hattner hopes that all "students develop a deeper sense of connection and stewardship toward the place where they learn and grow every day. The timeline remains a work in progress, growing and evolving just like the students' understanding of Cranbrook. Each new entry reflects their research, creativity, and curiosity, making it more than just a display.

"It's a living record of the school's history. As students add more discoveries throughout the year, the timeline continues to connect the past, present, and future of Cranbrook for everyone who walks down the hallway."

Flying Toward His Dream in the Sky

By: Ethan Anversa

While many middle school students are just beginning to explore their interests, Lewis Wolfe has already found thousands of feet above the ground.

"I remember feeling almost like my worries flew away while I was flying and how much different the lands look from above," he said after taking his first discovery flight (a trial flight).

This seventh grader was introduced to aviation after a growing interest in flight led him to Apogee Aircraft Services. Getting started more than just learning to fly a plane. He first had to overcome his massive fear of flight. Lewis explained that he wasn't going to let anything stop him so to overcome his phobia, he took an online course called, "Fear of Flying." Watching their son not let anything stand in his way, Lewis' parents said that they would do anything to support his goals. They shared that after doing his homework, he'll put in "countless hours" in reviewing online lessons or watching flight tips. When he can, Lewis said he likes to take many trips to the airport just watch and study other pilots take off and land their aircraft. In his spare time, Lewis can also be found reading books on aviation, non-fiction or fiction. With everything he has learned, Lewis said that "more than anything, we respect the pilots & follow their guidance. It is a wonderful, supportive culture." For Lewis, his first major challenge was during his first VATSIM

flight (an extensive real life simulation flight).

He described it as, "This was particularly challenging for me because I was not used to communicating with real people whilst flying in my simulator, however, the flight managers were very polite and helpful." After practicing his simulation flying, Lewis eventually took to the skies. His first ever flight reminded him why he put so much work into aviation, and why he loved it so much. "It's a masterpiece."

Though he is one of the youngest students in Apogee, Lewis' coach describes his talent as rare, also saying that he has 'the ability to connect with the aircraft.' Lewis is also thinking ahead, when asked on his love of aviation he said, "flying is important to me because whilst it is great fun, it is also a career path you can take in life which I feel is amazing."

For Lewis, working in aviation professionally has always been a dream, "My hope is eventually, after getting all my ratings, to work for Delta Airlines," said Lewis.



Taking to the skies, seventh grader Lewis Wolfe is taking lessons and learning about aviation. Photo provided by the family.

A Little Puppy Love is Good for Our Health

By:
Zayd Al-Khafaji



Photo by staff
During the Fall MSB and MSG picnic, Luca interacted with students, staff and families.

It was love at first bark. “We weren’t necessarily looking for a new puppy,” Head of MSB Lesly Rodriguez said of Luca, a 6-month-old golden doodle who greeted everyone during the first month of school.

“No one wanted Luca and normally when someone doesn’t want a puppy there’s usually a behavioral issue, but people didn’t want Luca because he wasn’t Instagram perfect.”

“Students loved it when they came to see Lalo after Covid, and I have been bringing dogs to school ever since.” Even though another family wasn’t interested in having a new puppy around, the 120 sixth, seventh and eighth grade students were.

“Luca is very playful, kind, and a really fun dog to be around,” Marco Noujaim ’31 said.

“He is very playful,” Leo Hinde ’31 added. “Seeing him every day brings a smile to my face.”

Rodriguez said that like babies, puppies need a lot of attention, and they do funny things too. “The funniest thing I’ve seen Luca do in school is roll on his belly and fight me for pets,” Marco Qu ’31 said.

Enzo Schwartzberg ’31 added. “It’s nice to know he is around. He’s great emotional support. When you’re having a bad day or just feeling down, he’s there to pick you up,” he said.

Dogs in Area Schools Provide Support

According to the Alliance of Therapy Dogs one of the most significant impacts dogs can make in the classroom is students’ socio-emotional development. “Students can bond readily with therapy dogs feel more connected and confident,” they said. “Studies show that this helps reduce negative behavior in children. Spending time with dogs also helps improve children’s mental well-being.” The National Library of Medicine dogs adds that there is an increase in the ‘happy’ hormone (oxytocin) and a decrease in the stress hormone (cortisol) after interacting with a therapy dog. Understanding the research, Seaholm High School in Birmingham Public Schools (BPS) began a dedicated therapy dog program, in 2021. Dogs like “Maple” work within the school. On their web site they state that, “the purpose of the dogs are to

provide emotional support, reducing stress and anxiety for students and staff.

Our therapy dog program, initiated two years ago with the generous sponsorship of the Rotary Club, has now expanded to include 13 therapy dogs and includes community sponsorship. Ten therapy dogs actively engage with our students in schools. These remarkable dogs provide invaluable support to our students by promoting emotional well-being and enhancing the school experience.

The presence of these therapy dogs also encourages improved social interactions and offers a source of comfort and companionship during challenging times. Their positive impact is felt throughout our school community.”



Pep Session Celebrates One CK

By: Nikhil Popat

It worked out the way he thought it would.

“Honestly, I had no fear. I was so excited by it,” Middle School Athletic Director Craig McMichael said of the inaugural all-campus pep assembly. “I was excited by the opportunity that provided all of us that I didn’t have any fear.”

Starting a new tradition, McMichael and the administrations from all the Cranbrook divisions planned a special afternoon. From the upper school athletic departments to both middle schools and Brookside, McMichael explained that everyone really worked together.

“It was that excitement that really led more of it all than any sort of fear,” he said as they planned for all of the divisions to meet at the Oval and celebrate the end of spirit week.

“The hardest thing to plan, honestly, was just getting everybody to the Oval,” McMichael said. “The boys and the girls’ middle schools had to walk over, and then we had to help organize transportation for Brookside. So, it was just working out the logistics.”

Once at the Oval, students watched the soccer team scrimmage, the eighth graders led mass crowd cheers like the wave, and then everyone made a human tunnel for the upper school varsity to run through. Middle School for Boys was the MC throughout and even the Cranbrook Crane came to visit and take photos.

“Even with a few glitches with the mic, it all came together perfectly,” Hughes said. “It was a beautiful sunny day and everyone looked like they were having fun. It was a great first community wide pep session.”



“Honestly, I had no fear. I was so excited by it,”

Middle School Athletic Director Craig McMichael said of the inaugural all-campus pep assembly.

Experts Provide Authentic Connections

By: Griffin Muenk

Who says lunch is just for eating? Now in its second year, seventh graders are taking part in the Stock Market Club where they learn how to invest money and understand the stock market.

“The club is maturing,” said Mike Toth, Middle School Technology Integration Specialist. “Up until now we just talked about stocks why should we buy this stock what do you know and I have tried to add education pieces into it. I think at this point we are changing now to more how do you research these stocks.”

Yogesh Somani ’31, said the club is growing in popularity. “First of all it is all about this money, money, money, he said. “Everybody wants to find out how to make money. Money cannot buy

your health or well-being but it can buy things that make life fun.”

The club meets on some days in the common room during lunch. Students have conversation style talks about how the stock market works and how to invest wisely.

“Our discussions are a little bit more in depth,” Toth explained. “Instead of just buying Nintendo because I like Nintendo they have more reasons to buy a stock or not to buy a stock. They understand how the stock market works.” Students also get hands on experience using a stock market simulator called MarketWatch.

“Recently, special guests Leon Labrecque and Antoine Dubeauclard visited during study hall to share their own

experiences and talk about the history of investing.

“That is one of the reasons I like that this financial expert is coming in. He is going to basically continue that conversation for me and we can talk about what he talks about instead of just me leading it,” Toth said. “I am not an expert I have read about it but he is definitely an expert and he will continue that when we really get into the stock discussions.”

With expert talks practical simulations and in-depth conversations, Toth believes that the Stock Market Club is giving seventh graders a fun and realistic way to learn about money investing and financial decision making.

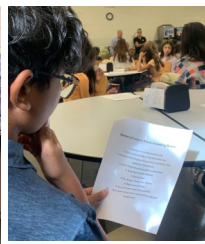
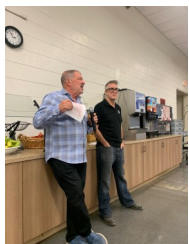


Did You Know?

A nationwide study by Learning Point Associates found that students in grades 6–8 who participated in stock market simulations scored significantly higher on mathematics tests than their peers.

Learning about the stock market reinforces the ability to wait for long-term rewards. According to research from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 12-year-olds are ready to use strategies to resist the temptation to spend immediate cash in favor of future gains.

Leon Labrecque and Antoine Dubeauclard spoke to the MSB and MSG students in the MSB lunchroom about investing in stocks. This is the first of several guest speaker opportunities, Mike Toth provided.



Photos by staff

Joining in on the fun



Right before Winter Break, our Grandparents and Special Friends had the opportunity to spend some time in our building and around our campus. The most important part was they got to spend time with their student. Sixth graders spent the afternoon in the Cranbrook Art Museum, Seventh grade went to the Cranbrook Institute of Science and our Eighth graders stayed at the Middle School for Boys and listened to a lecture from curator Kevin Adkisson and then got a tour of the building. It was a special afternoon that

Rethinking Homework

Finding new Ways of Learning

Teachers explore different methods to set students up for success

By: Joshua Zou

In Texas, teacher Brandy Young did the unthinkable. Standing in front of her second-grade student's families, she made an announcement. There would be no homework at all during the year. Instead, she told the families that they needed to spend the time having dinner together or spending time with one another.

No homework? For as long as anyone can remember The National Parent Teacher Association and the National Education Association has supported a "ten minute rule."

Even when we started MSB in sixth grade we were told of this rule that recommends a daily maximum of ten minutes of homework per grade or for some schools per class. So, for

Young's second graders that would be twenty minutes of work and for sixth graders 60, and so on.

"A healthy amount of homework helps students build structure, discipline, and confidence," Middle School for Boys counselor Brandon Alford said. Duke University psychology professor Harris Cooper agreed with Alford and found a positive correlation between homework and student achievement, meaning students who did homework performed

better in school. Cathy Vatterott, an education professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, supports the "10-minute rule" as a maximum, but she thinks there is not sufficient proof that homework is helpful for students in elementary or middle school. In a Time magazine article entitled *Is Homework Good for Kids*, she said because two things happen together, does not mean that one causes the other. So does homework cause achievement, or do high achievers do more home-

work?

According to an excerpt from *The Homework Myth* by Alfie Kohn, the purpose of homework has changed.

"After spending all day in school, our children are forced to begin a second shift, with more academic assignments to be completed at home.," Kohn said. "Homework is all pain and no gain," she said. "There is absolutely no evidence of any academic benefit from assigning homework to children under the age of about fourteen."

In a four-week in study with seventy-eight Chinese families, Cornell University found that "Parental involvement in homework is a crucial aspect of family education, but it often triggers emotional strain and conflicts. Basically, homework was ruining relationships between parents and their students.

"Students who are constantly overwhelmed by homework can start to feel like their self-worth depends on productivity," said Alford, "When homework is balanced, students tend to perform better not only academically, but also as healthy humans."

While Duke University psychology professor Harris Cooper showed that homework "can cause physical and emotional fatigue, fuel negative attitudes about learning and limit leisure time for children."

A 2026 report from *Brighterly* and in Stanford University study they found that 56% of students cite homework as their primary source of stress. This leads to sleep deprivation, headaches, and "burnout" before students even reach college.

So what is the solution? Cathy Vatterott, an education professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis and the author of *Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs*, thinks "there should be more emphasis on improving the quality of homework tasks. What are some options other than traditional

homework?

In the article *Homework Alternatives That Engage and Motivate Learners* one suggestion is choice boards. "Choice boards or learning menus provide different activities aligned with classroom goals. Students can choose which task(s) to complete based on their interests or learning preferences."

Research by Li and Tu pushed for Project Based Learning or PBL as another way to see what students know as they need to apply their skills versus answering questions on a worksheet.

They said that this "significantly enhances students' creative thinking skills, engagement, and collaboration. In mathematics education, PBL creates a more positive learning environment and improves student outcomes."

A 2026 analysis in *Helpful Professor* suggests that "Preparation Homework" (reading a text or watching a brief video before the lesson) is a better alternative because it puts the responsibility on the student. This is often called a flip classroom.

Probably the best solution to helping students practice what they learn was published in *Education Research Starters* which said that "block scheduling allows for extended practice within the school day. Because there are fewer "passing periods" and transitions, students actually gain more "deep work" time."

A 2024 study from *UConn Today* found that students in block schedules report lower stress levels because they are only preparing for 3 or 4 subjects a day rather than 7 or 8. This "reduced daily load" naturally decreases the homework volume.

So instead of fighting with family members to get our homework done or staying up late there are other ways to practice what was taught. Maybe these innovative ideas can turn homework into a head start instead of a headache.

"A healthy amount of homework helps students build structure, discipline and confidence."
Counselor
Brandon
Alford

Assigning Homework Differently

Research shows that as students change, the ways to have them practice skills needs to change too Here are some ideas.

Choice Boards:

Students can choose which task(s) to complete based on their interests or learning preferences."

Flip Classroom:

Instead of listening to lectures on class, students watch videos and read before hand and then have class discussions applying the knowledge.

Student Choice:

Providing students opportunities to select what they want to read and when they feel ready for assessment.

Block Scheduling

Allows for more practice within the school day. With less transitions, students actually gain more "deep work" time

They Made Their Goal

By: Owen Thompson

Horizons Upward Bound Celebrates Legacy

There she was, standing in the middle of the Legacy Lounge. November 15, 2025. After months and months of preparation, the party was happening. What the people didn't know was what had yet to come.

"It was like New Years!" Director of Horizons Upward Bound (HUB) Lisa Smoots said. "The lounge was amazing! All the alumni coming together reunited. Everybody is happy and celebrating." Then, Smoots shared the BIG NEWS! "We hit our million-dollar mark."

For the last year and a half, the team had worked toward this goal. "The inspiration behind setting the one-million-dollar goal came from a deep commitment to honor sixty years of HUB's impact while preparing boldly for the next sixty!" exclaimed Director of Development Dillon Brown, who led the project. "Emotionally, we hoped this goal would remind our community of the power of collective investment and the legacy they are part of. Practically, we wanted to increase opportunities for future scholars by building long-term sustainability and strengthening the foundation that carries students to college and beyond."

Reflecting on the moment in the Legacy Lounge, Brown said that "Witnessing that surge of energy in the room was powerful. It felt like decades of hope, resilience, and transformation coming together in one moment. Seeing alumni, families, and donors celebrate HUB with so much pride reaffirmed that this program has a community that will always stand behind it. That overwhelming response showed that the future of HUB is strong. The connection people feel to this program is real and lasting, and their collective energy makes it clear that HUB is positioned to grow, thrive, and continue shaping lives for years to come."

Looking ahead, Brown shared the impact the milestone will have on students. "Once the goal is fully realized, it will fund initiatives designed to elevate every aspect of the student

experience. This includes stronger academic programming, expanded mental health and wellness support, more robust college access services, and increased opportunities for cultural, career, and leadership development. This campaign will open doors for future HUB students by giving them more guidance, more exposure, and more tools to step confidently into their futures. It ensures HUB continues to set a new standard of excellence and support for the next generation of scholars."

Cranbrook's President Aimee Claire Roche said that the significance of the evening was seen as "The Legacy Lounge was the culminating event in a series of events that celebrated 60 years of Horizons Upward Bound at Cranbrook. The Legacy Lounge event welcomed back to campus HUB alumni from each of those decades, which was an amazing opportunity to learn about how the program has evolved over time, and to reconnect alumni with the Cranbrook campus of today and with the program as it has taken shape today."

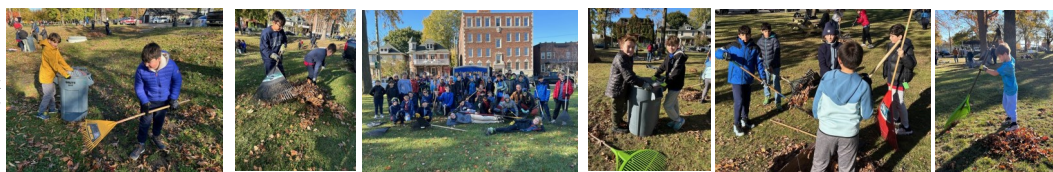
Because HUB relies not only on federal grants but also on community-driven philanthropy. Roche explained, "It is important that HUB is not solely reliant on outside or federal funding, over which we have little control, and thus, community-driven philanthropy is a key part of keeping our HUB program strong and impactful. Adding a million dollars to Cranbrook's endowment for HUB means that, once those funds mature, there will be more resources for HUB students to benefit from.

These new resources can be used to add new programs or to provide special experiences for HUB students."

Smoots emphasized the role of the community in keeping HUB strong. "The day-to-day continuity of Horizons-Upward Bound is influenced in significant ways by our generous community. So many people provide support: HUB alumni, Cranbrook alumni, current community members, local leaders. Without this support, our students' experience would not be as rich as it is today."

Without this support, our students' experience would not be as rich as it is today

HUB Director Lisa Smoots



Sixth graders rake leaves at Clark Park. Photos by Sixth grade team

Service Projects Maintain MSB Traditions

By: Charlie Thav

At first glance it seemed like another day at Clark Park in Southwest Detroit. But upon looking closer, the 6th grade boys of Cranbrook Middle School created a unique sight in this ordinary scene. As they raked leaves and filled garbage bags it was clear that a community service day had arrived. 6th grader Owen Thompson said "I felt good knowing I did something good for someone."

Thompson captured the spirit of all the 6th graders involved, who were eager to pitch in for a day of community awareness and fun. Sixth grade Team Leader Jennifer Dawson said that "it's so important for students to think about other

people besides themselves. It is also important for students to realize there are many people only a few miles away from us that do not have the luxuries that we have here at CK." "

Sixth grade science teacher Karen Campbell added that this is her most meaningful service project. "I value the fact that students are doing service, rather than donating money or items"

For the Clark Park clean up service project, the 6th grade teachers formed groups by dividing students up by their advisory groups. Leadership and teamwork were both on display as "It's feels great to see our students' helping others in communities around

them," Dawson said.

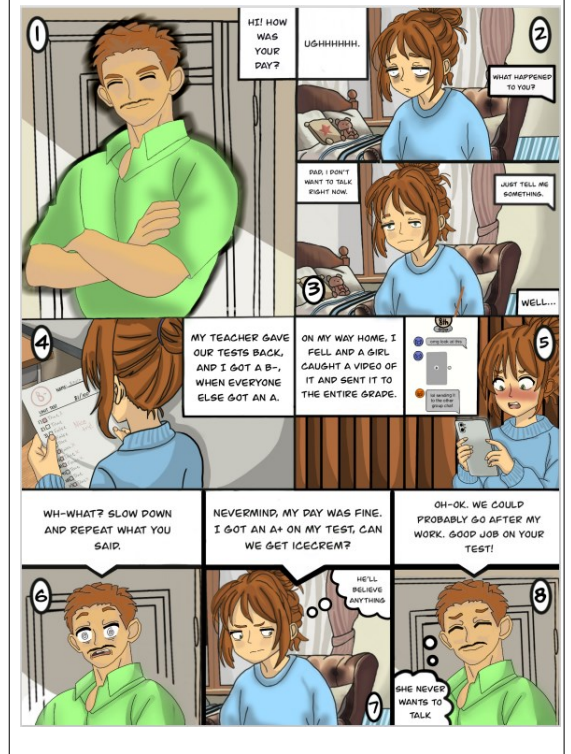
While raking leaves is an important way to help out in the community, another huge service project was the birthday boxes, and this time, the whole school took part in it.

All the different grades from 6th to 8th took on different roles to make this work, putting in lots of effort to buy frosting, cake mix, trays, and soda to help kids who may never have had a birthday cake or even celebrated their birthday. Donations were also collected, and all the donations went to a charity to help kids.

Dawson said this was a huge role in making the project a success.

COMIC

By: Nolan Little



AD

Cranbrook Kingswood Summer Camps

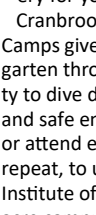
Each summer, Cranbrook Schools Summer Camps host over 1,800 campers hailing from 20 states and nine countries to experience summer camp on Cranbrook's historic 319-acre campus. Learn about our traditional, multi-activity day camps as well as our specialty camps in art, robotics, sports, STEM, theatre, and writing. Afford your child a Cranbrook summer experience this summer!

Photo by Summer Program



Camp at Cranbrook offers a wide range of options designed to suit any need or interest. The chance to work in an actual artist's studio, study fossils that are more than a hundred million years old, swim in a natatorium designed by an internationally renowned architect, or create your own art museum and select the art that goes in it, whatever your camper's age or aspiration the Cranbrook Camp experience is never mundane. Open a world of creativity, exploration, and discovery for your child!

Photo by Summer Program



Cranbrook Institute of Science's Explore Camps give inquisitive campers from kindergarten through eighth grade the opportunity to dive deeper into science in a unique and safe environment! Join us for one week, or attend every week, since they do not repeat, to uncover the treasures of the Institute of Science and Cranbrook's 319-acre campus! Take a journey of discovery around the Institute of Science and the greater Cranbrook campus. Along the way, explore geology, paleontology, chemistry, biology, engineering, and astronomy. Come join the fun <https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/learn/kids-teens/create-camps>

Photo by Summer Program

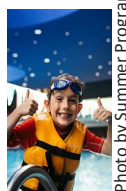


Photo by Summer Program



Strokes of Genius

What Art Does to the Brain

By: Nolan Little

Dylan Bodies' heart stopped when he collapsed at a bar. Doctors urgently tried to find a cause. Coming out of a four-day coma Dylan did not respond to the medication, but instead something far less scientific.

Dylan's husband played his favorite band, Coldplay, for him. Miraculously, Dylan's fingers began to move to the rhythm of the song. Although fully comatose, the music reached him.

What happened in that room raised a question modern scientists are still grappling with: How could the brain, fully unresponsive, still recognize and respond to music and art?

Dylan's situation shows that music can slip through the cracks and activate the brain even when it appears lost.

This is only one of many occurrences where art and music have done the impossible. If the brain can be reached by art, if music can restore speech, if images can regain attention, then creativity is not just an asset humanity has picked up over modern evolution it's neurologically important for our bodies.

Art and music can provide positive changes to the brain. It can even alter it. A common trait of people involved in the arts is raised creativity levels. According to Storychanges.com, a site that shares stories like Dylan's, "high-emotion music can increase the amount of creativity one possesses. The effects of music and art aren't limited to people who specialize in it. Just listening to music can increase the production of ideas and the amount of divergent thinking, all key components in the overall creativity within a person."

MSB art teacher Bailey Smith, adds that, "Students who do art are a little better at problem solving. They can think creatively and think of options that maybe they wouldn't have if they didn't have experience in art."

Some may be born with artistic talent but creativity isn't something born into or God given. By just being around art and music, people increase their skills.

Art and music also have significant calming effects on the brain and can regulate emotions and mental health. Neuroscientists have found that listening to slow tempo or personally meaningful music lowers activity in the amygdala, the brain's fear and stress center. It can also control emotions and decision making. "People can get relief that will improve their mood or their well-being when they're playing music," MSB Orchestra director Nick Artushin. Band Director Kristen Hurd added that, "Music is a cloud of happiness for students." Both Artushin and Hurd describe they've experienced several students throughout both their careers who have struggled in other aspects in school. but have found success in the music rooms. It almost seemed as if when they came to the music room, their brains rewired and they thrived in a musical setting.

Visual art produces similar outcomes. Research conducted by University College London shows that viewing artwork that resonates emotionally reduces blood flow from regions that are associated with anxiety, and can increase connectivity in places linked to introspection and emotional balances.

"Having some background in art makes you more aware of everyday beauty and you also notice the little things a lot more often," Smith said. These effects are especially significant for individuals experiencing trauma. Art therapy has become a common treatment for mental health. It has been shown to reduce symptoms within people who experience trauma.

Art and music don't drown out emotion. They allow the person and the brain to go through it safely, offering structure to feelings that are otherwise

overwhelming.

In a world where 1 in 5 individuals suffer from anxiety, art and music grow increasingly vital within our modern society. In the end, scientists don't diminish the mystery of art and music, they deepen it. The fact that research has only scratched the surface of the capabilities of art and music allows once impossible problems a potential solution.

Brain scans and statistics show how melodies soften parts of the brain or how color quiets the stress response, but they cannot fully capture how a song can make grief bearable or why a painting can make someone feel truly seen. However, the evidence makes it undeniable that art and music aren't just hobbies that people indulge in because they're interested.

The arts are finely woven into the brain, shaping how people cope with emotions, how memory functions, and can regulate emotions and mental health like nothing else.

As anxiety, trauma and isolation become defining features of modern life, cutting out art and music from lives is not just a "stupid idea," it's neurologically damaging to our brains. Art and music have become a lifeline for those trapped in the darkest corners of life.

Long after the data is recorded and the studies are published, what remains is a quiet truth that science continues to confirm: The human brain is not made just to think, but to feel, listen, and express. Art and music are among the few forces powerful enough to teach it how.



The Creativity of Cranes

Art Makes Us Better People

Our campus was built from those
inspired by art.

Now, it's our turn.



**Design and
Drawings
By:
Nolan Little**

Adkisson Shares about Art all over MSB

Campus curator Kevin Adkisson shows where creativity lives in our building

Explain why it feels like it is everywhere at Cranbrook, especially at the Middle School for Boys?

Art is not something that was added later at Cranbrook. It has been part of the school since the very beginning. The buildings themselves were designed as works of art, and the Middle School for Boys is a perfect example. Even though the building did not officially become part of Cranbrook until the 1980s, it was designed by architects who were deeply connected to Cranbrook's artistic vision. The result is a school where students are surrounded by art every day, often without even realizing it.

**By:
Abhi
Batra**

How is the MSB building itself a piece of art?

The oldest part of the building, the section facing Vaughn Road with the domed ceiling and chandelier, was designed by architect J Robert F Swanson. Swanson was a student and close friend of Harry Booth, and he studied under Eliel Saarinen at the University of Michigan. In the 1920s, Swanson and Booth traveled across Europe sketching buildings, which was considered an important part of learning architecture. When Swanson designed the Vaughn School, he used the same artistic ideas and style he learned from Saarinen, which is why the building looks and feels like the rest of Cranbrook.

What artworks can students find inside and outside the Middle School for Boys?

There are many important artworks throughout the building. The bull sculpture at the top of the steps was created by J Robert F Swanson for his own architecture office, and a matching version still exists at his former office on Long Lake Road. Inside the building is a sculpture of Beethoven by Carl Milles, one of Cranbrook's most famous artists. There is also the Pony Express bronze, created by a former Kingswood teacher who studied under Milles. These artworks connect the Middle School for Boys directly to the larger history of Cranbrook art.

Are there any hidden or lesser known art related details about the MSB?

Yes. Just across Vaughn Road is a yellow farmhouse where architect Eero Saarinen once lived. From a bay window in the oldest part of the MSB, students can look directly toward Saarinen's former living room. Saarinen designed only five houses in his entire career, and this one was built for his mother, Loja Saarinen. Small details like this show how closely connected the school is to major figures in art and architecture.

How does the MSB building show its art history over time?

If you look closely, you can see where walls were added, windows were covered, and doors were cut into brick. These changes are like scars that tell the story of how the building grew and changed. The cafeteria used to also be the gym, which was common in older schools. Even the school offices show history. The stairway near the office used to be the main entrance when students walked from the surrounding neighborhood. Today, that entrance is closed, showing how the school's relationship with the community has changed.

Why does all of this matter for students today?

Being surrounded by art every day teaches students to notice details, ask questions, and understand history in a deeper way. The Middle School for Boys is not just a place where learning happens. It is part of the lesson itself. The art, architecture, and design remind students that creativity, history, and education are connected, and that art does not only belong in museums. At Cranbrook, art is part of everyday life.

How well do you know MSB Art?

Take this quiz to check your knowledge

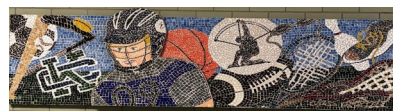


1. What is the name of the French artist who bases his artwork on video games and uses square tile mosaics like the 7th grade made and placed around the building.

- A. Matisse B. Invader
C. Smith D. Van Gogh

2. Name this statue created by Carl Millis and is outside the Dining Hall

- A. Head of Ellis
B. The Bull
C. Head of Beethoven
D. Green Statue



3. Which class created the mosaic in the Vaughn Lobby?

- A. 2001 B. 2005
C. 2011 D. 2020



4. Name these pieces of art that are next to the Robotics' room.

- A. Pony Express Rider
B. The Thinker
C. Man on Wall
D. Mr. Roboto

5. Which of the following are art offerings at MSB?

- A. Music B. Journalism C. Dance D. Photography E. all of the above

6. How can making and participating in art at MSB impact the brain?

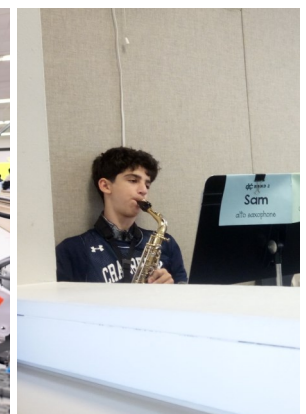
- A. Shuts the brain down B. Reduces stress
C. Adds fog to the brain D. Makes people tired

1. B 2. C 3. C 4. A 5. E 6. B

Answers

Finding Their Art Behind the Lens

In their English and journalism classes, students learned to tell visual stories through the art of photography. After learning a few photo basics, they practiced implementing some photo composition elements like leading lines, framing, repetition. They were told to go find the story and tell it. Telling stories is more than words on a page. It's an art form that can be to enhance a space or tell someone's story. Below a street vendor in Shenzhen, China. After taking the photo on his manual camera Yanbo had it developed and gave it to him and then he gave Yanbo a free meal. Sixth grader Kohei Horiba works on their robot, a student in robotics and Sam Nyman '30 plays saxophone player in our band.



Photos by Yanbo Huang, Ethan Anversa and Brandon Ellis

Feel the Need for Speed

By: Zayd Al-Khafaji

It is the greatest sport out there. The excitement when the race starts to the end is always there. This is why I started the F1 club.

Don't know what f1 is? Think of it as the "Olympics" of Motor sports. The fastest drivers and the fastest engineers team up to build and race the fastest cars. This is the highest level of international car racing in the world. And we get to talk about it.

The club has three main purposes. The first is to learn more about f1. Even if you aren't super passionate about others, like me, are. See, I love f1 because cars are absolutely amazing pieces of machinery and the way that all parts work in unison to make a beautiful speed demon or even luxury comfort car is absolutely amazing. Also, I love f1 because all the drivers have diverse backgrounds and different upbringings. F1 is an amazing sport because it shows how cars can do all the things that are entertaining. It's awesome when your favorite driver wins. For example when Lando Norris won the world championship for the 2025 season, that's all I was talking about for weeks.

Another purpose is to just relax. Eventhough the races are intense, I find a sense of solace in them and can destress. People should join my club if they are looking for a good happy time to just get away and chill.

Finally, people should join my club, because it's a great way to meet new people and make some new friends. We do fun activities like watching videos of specific topic and sometimes we get to have a watch party for a race practice. If you love f1, want to learn about f1, or want to have some fun and meet people come join the f1 club. It's a lot of fun.



Photos provided by Amos

Un-bee-lievable: Beekeeping Club Makes a Buzz at the Upper School

By: Max Shapiro

What began as an AP Biology exam turned into a full-fledged beekeeping club with over eighty thousand bees.

"I've always been interested in beekeeping and to be honest I've never done this before," ninth Grade Biology and AP Biology Teacher Nicholas Amos said. "So I had the idea, and I talked with administration, the head of the upper school and a few other people of how I could get it started."

What was first starting as a project for AP Biology, because they took their AP exam, became a longer something bigger than he had imagined.

"They built the hives, and then after that, we started introducing the Queen and all the worker bees. To be honest, it got so much positive traction that instead of just keeping it to classes, to me, it made more sense to kind of expand it to a club."

Now, the entire Cranbrook Kingswood community is seeing what all the buzz is about. Amos explained that the new beekeeping club gives all students a hands-on way to manage real honeybee hives. Also, it's a great opportunity to help the environment and teach kids about how pollinators like bees are super important to our planet.

"I've had teachers reach out from Brookside." He said. "We brought Miss Ansac's hiking club to work

with the bees with us and then they actually went into the hives, wearing the suits and everything."

When looking at the bees, Amos said there is so much to see.

"When you think about a beehive, you can actually incorporate almost every single part to biology, whether it is looking at pheromones and how they communicate with each other, looking at macromolecules and how they put together different sugars, or the bees taking sugar from nectar and then dehydrating it to make honey," he said.

Spending about two hours a week, Amos and his club members are taking care of over eighty thousand bees.

"The summertime is super busy because we're trying to get the honey, and that was something we were able to do. We got thirty-five pounds of honey this year, so than we're able to take what we needed. This year we ended up getting over 50 jars, and we gave it to everybody

that helped, and then we also gave it to people who helped approve this as well, with the intention of next year starting to sell this honey."

Summarizing the outreach and his club's objectives, Amos said, "It's more so just learning because the more that you learn, the more you realize" he said. "The students loved building everything. Everyday we have more and more interest. It has been so awesome."

It has been so awesome.

Booth's Bees Advisor Nicholas Amos

On the Second Parent Visiting Day students and families spent time in the classroom. Some helped make sleds while others learned from the lesson. Photos by staff



Parent Visiting Day is Filled with Activities

By: Gabriel O'Laughlin

Twice a school year, Parents get to come to school.

The first Parent Visting Day was on Friday, October 17. During PATH students and their parents played games organized by the PATH teachers.

"My favorite game was the one where you had to guess the song. Even though I wasn't so good at it," Owen Thomson '32. For those of you who don't know the 'Guess the song' it is a game where your advisory parents run to a hula hoop when a song plays. They raise a shirt then guess the song playing."

Another guess the song game was "Heat the Beat" game. A Whitney Houston song is played and then the person has to hit the beat before the song does.

Another game was the Rock, Paper, Scissors game.

After the games, the winning advisory won free concessions. For the sixth grade, Brewster Moore's advisory won.

"This is the first time we ever did prizes, and we will do different games in February," PATH teacher Bailey Smith said.

In January, the second Parent Visiting Day was held on the Friday, January 30th. During this visit, families got to go to

their student's PATH class in addition to all of their other classes. In some of the advisories, teachers had a variety of activities. In Sixth grade, they had relay races. In Eighth grade families got to "Save Gus" which is an interactive critically thinking game that connected with our recent astronaut visit. Seventh grade got their families helping them with their sleds.

It's always fun when our families can come and have some fun.



Photo by Staff

Building the Perfect Birthday



One hundred and sixty birthdays will be a little sweeter this year after the MSB community collaborated on the December Service Project. For the past month, MSB 6th, 7th, and 8th graders collected cake mix, frosting and soda as part of a school wide service project to create birthday boxes.

These boxes are a way to ensure that children who might not otherwise have the chance to celebrate can still enjoy a

cake on their special day. Jen Dawson, who led the project, said, "It's a really cool moment when you can get all of the stakeholders in our community to come together and do something."

Every click, every scroll, every like, every share. Little does 12-year-old Avi Chandra '31 know, every choice he makes online is being documented. Each one quietly shaping who he's becoming. Before he even gets out of bed, his phone has already mapped up his interests, moods, and habits. Deciding what posts, videos, and ads will show up next. "I use TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, basically every social media app. I don't use it for long, but I like to scroll in my down time. One time, I think I watched one reel about making mac & cheese and then I suddenly started getting more reels about cooking and food, and I wasn't sure about how it started, now my feed suggested more and more videos about things I wasn't interested in. This experience really showed me on how my social media can influence my life," Chandra said, explaining his social media usage and how his algorithm changes. For Chandra, social media isn't just a way to pass the time. It's a quiet force influencing his day, his choices, and even how he sees himself. A study from Common Sense Media found that almost three-quarters of boys ages 11 to 17 regularly see social media posts that promote harmful ideas about masculinity. Even harmless searches like looking up videos about money, working out, or "how to act like a man" can trick the algorithm into showing more extreme content, leading students down a risky path. "If you watch a video, for example, about a car crash, the app will recommend more and more videos like that, and it can lead to a negative spiral," said Cranbrook Middle School Technology Integration Specialist Mike Toth. "So many people spend hours scrolling without realizing it. These apps are designed to get you hooked, and from there, they can affect your brain and your mood." These messages can hurt self-esteem and make boys feel like they have to hide their emotions. "I think it's really hard to be a teenage boy today," said Jim Steyer, CEO and founder of Common Sense Media, a platform created to help families and educators understand how technology affects young people. Steyer explained that the clicks, scrolls, likes, and shares themselves and what they feel they're supposed to be. A 2022 survey by the Mayo Clinic of more than 1,300 teens ages 13 to 17 found that 35 percent use at least one social media platform several times a day or more. The five most-used platforms were YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. While social media can be a positive space where teens connect with others who share their interests and take a break from daily stress, it also has links to both healthy and unhealthy effects on mental health. The impact is different for every teenager, depending on how they use it and what they see online. "As we view social media and all the content people are posting it's important to remember that we are getting their 'highlight reels.' Sometimes we get this distorted view of what everybody's life is like," Human Development teacher Ryan Ernst said. "With emphasis on Photoshop, filters, individuals can select only the best moments to share online, while hiding the negative parts of their lives. This goes hand in hand with the fact that people don't have to be themselves online. " Many news outlets and data centers, including Brown University's health department, report that this content from the algorithms on social media can lead to harmful thoughts, poor body image, misinformation, and negative views. "Social media follows you from school to soccer practice from your friend's house to your house, from the kitchen to the bedroom to the bathroom. This phenomenon can exist and persist in most physical spaces, as well as in a person's mental space. That makes it uniquely powerful in terms of potential mental health effects," Brown's Director of Hassenfeld Child Health Innovation Institute Dr. Michael Silverstein said. While on their devices, Steyer added that individuals don't necessarily need to be looking for this content, "Maybe they're going to look at their favorite sports team but because of the algorithms they can go down the rabbit hole of masculinity lessons." According to a study by Common Sense Media, 91 percent of boys said they have seen messages online about changing their bodies. Steyer said that probably the most positive feedback from the survey is that almost 80% of kids said they trust their parents to talk to over any other source. "I want to be stronger, taller, and have bigger hands for basketball and other sports. These things are what I think might influence me with social media since it feels almost like this is required to be good at sports. I don't let social media impact my goals for school and academics though," Avi said, talking about how social media impacts his mentality about his physical features. To ease concerns about the effects of social media, MSB and MSG nurse Amy Barnosky said that, like anything else, when it is "used excessively," it can lead to poor health and lower performance both in and out of school. She also emphasized the importance of talking to a trusted adult if something troubling appears on a feed. "Balance is key, just like almost everything else in life," Barnosky said. "Pediatricians are a great resource for families looking for guidance on social media use and healthy plans."

Social Media Takeover

We're Consuming Too Much

By: William Huang

Playing Football with the Big Kids

By: Lucas Ilitch

It was the chance of a lifetime. Looking back it was clear that everyone made great memories, ones that they wouldn't forget.

"It was fun and encouraging as a teacher/coach to see the different students from different schoolhouses on campus come together as one," Christopher Paris MSB intermural sports coach said of the day when students from Brookside came and played football with the MSB students who were playing intramural football afterschool.

"We are always looking for ways to connect different parts of campus. Earlier this year we've had Brookside play with the fifth and sixth grade volleyball intermural team, so we thought why not try it with our flag football intramural team."

According to Craig McMichael athletic director of MS athletics, opportunities like these support our One CK mission.

Brookside coach and Fifth grade teacher Danny Mogil said that "experiences like these are valuable athletically because it gives players a chance to play up. If a student athlete only plays with their school, the first time they play with students older than them is likely in high school. By coming to the middle school, they have a chance to play older, and likely more experienced competition."



Haunted House Project Supports CK Mission

By: Noah Zhai

A thick fog fills the dark room as she steps forward. Greeted by scarecrows and a headless horseman, she follows the path. Cobwebs brush her face while eerie cackling echoes. Wait, was that *her* voice? There's a big lion around the corner then sand, ghosts, a rocking chair and then Frankenstein's monster laying on a table. Through a doorway, she peers through a window and sees and skeleton lying in a bed then over a ramp she sees two skeletons with glasses as the relentless beat of *The Tell-Tale Heart* pounds in her ears, followed by the slow swing of the pit and pendulum. Just as she thinks it's over, a raven's cry of "Nevermore" sends her into a room over many colors. "They did it," eighth grade English teacher Christina Hammitt said. "They really did it."

For the past two years Hammitt's eighth grade students created a haunted house in conjunction with their short story unit. "While it was enjoyed by all, the one consistent comment was that it was fun but hardly anyone could remember the stories," Hammitt said. Usually, the unit consists of short stories like *Tell Tale Heart*, *Cask of Amontillado*, and the poem the *Raven* she said. This year, she added stories by Ray Bradbury, Washington Irving, and Mary Shelly. "The project's purpose was to create something beyond a traditional assessment; something which allowed students to apply literary concepts in a hands-on, memorable way," said Hammitt. "Having to comprehend the stories and then analyze them and then synthesize them into something new provided an opportunity for creative thinking as well as collaboration and creativity. Plus, there was the challenge element." After explaining the project, and the feedback from the past two years eighth grader Faris Rida said, "Miss Hammitt challenged us to make sure that people going through would know the story we were telling. We set out to do that."

After reading and discussing nine different short stories, students selected one they wanted to recreate for their section of the haunted house. With seven tents, two stories shared space. "I was a part of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* group," Jibrán Shahzad '30 said. "I picked the group because it had a small amount of people in it, and the story was very interesting to me." Once they had their story, their group and their space, students had three weeks to plan how they were going to communicate and recreate the narrative into part of the entire haunted house. "Throughout the project, students demonstrated knowledge of plot, setting, characterization, conflict, and mood. All the same elements we analyze in the stories, but instead of circling answers on a

multiple choice they got to show what they learned," Hammitt said. "In addition, by working in groups they learned so many other skills as well. Because it requires collaboration at every part of the process, students had to communicate ideas, negotiate creative differences, assign roles, and problem-solve together. Because the haunted house is a shared goal, students who might not normally work together are pushed to interact, listen, and compromise." Shahzad said, "Overall, this project helped me meet new people and make new friends. The haunted house project was my favorite project in middle school. Getting to collaborate with peers to turn tarps into a spooky experience was awesome." "Learning how to better communicate was one of the best skills I learned from this experience," Tae Effinger said. "[He] chose *Pit and Pendulum* because of all the different elements in the story. There was so much we could do."

It has been so awesome.

Booth's Bees Advisor Nicholas Amos

"For the haunted house project, I choose the story *Click-Clack Rattle Back* because I thought the concept of a monster that only has a description of "something you don't expect" to be flexible when designing a haunted house," Chen Zhao '30 said. "The peculiar monster allowed a lot of different designs and budget friendly as the monster can just be anything. The story was compelling as well, the story hints and foreshadows

what the monster really is, and the story does a great job at executing the big plot twist at the end. I believe that choosing *Click-Clack Rattle-Back* was a great choice and if I was given the opportunity to repick the stories, I would probably choose it again." Another benefit to this project, Kimberly Zaidan, a parent said is how it "embraces the Cranbrook Community's core value of leading with curiosity and wonder." In an email written to Director of School Dr. Jeff Suzik, Zaiden write that over the years at Cranbrook, she has "observed that the inculturation of what I view as the Cranbrook approach to learning is reinforced by participating in these traditions. The traditions offer opportunities for students to take risks, invoking their academic abilities alongside their creative spirit."

In response, Suzik shared that Zaiden spoke "volumes about what can happen at a school like ours when innovation, creativity, and student-centeredness intersect with our traditions and strong track record of excellence. Special kudos to Chris Hammitt and the 8th grade team for shepherding this particular, very special activity year after year. I cannot thank you all enough. This is our Schools at their finest."

Illustration by Nolan Little



Keeping Cool

By: Noah Zhai
Ramzi Simon

While most people try to avoid the cold, some Cranbrook students are submerging themselves into it.

"I think what surprised me most was the amount of people, outside of the athletic side of Cranbrook, who want to experience our ice baths," Physical Education and Fit for Life instructor Chris Hughes said of the ice baths available.

While offering ice baths is not new at the Middle School for Boys, the growing increased student is. Hughes believes this is because "doing something that's hard, that you know is hard, builds more character than anything else. It proves a mental toughness."

For those not familiar with this experience, Hughes explained that ice baths are tubs of cold water, usually below 55 degrees, that individuals sit in for a few minutes. The practice started in Europe decades ago, where athletes used them to reduce muscle soreness and improve recovery after intense training. Over time, schools in the United States began using ice baths with student-athletes, combining physical recovery with building mental toughness.

"You can stay in for more than three minutes," he

said. Students work up to that goal at their own pace. "Oh man, that first ice bath there's some fear there's some excitement," Hughes said. "I'd say only 50 percent make it the full three minutes. There's sometimes some cursing which we allow during the ice bath to let out the emotions."

Students react in different ways. Some only put their legs in the water, while others go all the way to their shoulders or even dunk their heads.

"Most students usually get excited again about it," Hughes said. "After that they get pretty good." According to a Washington Post article "*Are cold plunges good for you?*" ice baths can help reduce muscle soreness and calm inflammation after hard exercise. Still, Hughes and other coaches see the value in using ice baths to challenge students mentally while helping with recovery.

"If you can jump into a 40-degree ice bath and sit there for two to three minutes mentally it just puts you on a different plane knowing that you can do things that most ordinary people wouldn't even consider doing," Dean of Schools and football and track coach Jeremy Lublin said. "It really is just something mentally and physically that makes a big difference

for athletes of all types," Both Lublin and Hughes believe that ice baths are also used to help students recover from injuries.

"When they have aches and pains the ice baths really do help and they help instantaneously as well," Lublin said. "What they do for the students is increase blood flow to your muscles," Hughes explained. "They help with soreness or if you're hurt. We're trying to increase the blood flow to that area to stimulate recovery and growth."

Research supports these benefits. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, cold water immersion can reduce muscle soreness and inflammation after intense exercise. Studies published in the Journal of Sports Sciences also show that ice baths can improve recovery time when used safely, especially for young athletes.

From recovery to confidence, having them helps students build strength both physically and mentally, one cold morning at a time. "I'm super proud of the boys for trusting me to try them" Hughes said. "Doing something that's hard, that you know is hard, builds more character than anything else."

Thing with Tony Shawe

By: Joseph Michaels

Describe what your background was before you came to Cranbrook.

I was working at a school in Colorado, and then moved back to the east coast of the United States, which is where I am from. I'm from Baltimore originally, and I worked at another school for a couple of years, and then I spent ten years at an all girls school just outside Washington, DC. Then my family and I decided to apply for international teaching positions. So we spent four years in Santiago, Chile, at a school, and then we spent five years in Paris, France, at a school.

Explain why you decided to come to Cranbrook instead of other schools.

I had loved my ten years at the all girls school outside of Washington, DC, and so when I saw this job hosted as the Middle School for Girls. I was, of course, very attracted to it. Then when I learned more about Cranbrook and the campus and Southeast Michigan, it was all very, very exciting. My family has never lived in the Midwest before, and we've never been to Detroit, and the idea of exploring a new area with such an amazing school, with an amazing campus and a strong community, was a lot to be excited about.

Describe favorite activity outside of school.

My favorite activity outside of school is probably eating chicken wings and listening to music. I have had a goal one summer that every single day I was going to go, I was going to eat a dozen chicken wings at different places, and I was almost successful. I can't say it's the healthiest thing, but it is my favorite thing to do outside of school, along with listening to music.

Name a skill or hobby you really enjoy but not many people know about it.

Playing Scrabble with my wife. I think every day for the past 20 years, we've had a game of Scrabble sitting there on the coffee table, which we tend to play every night for about 30 minutes, and then certainly over the weekend.

Name your favorite book or movie, and explain why it is your favorite.

My favorite book is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, because I used to teach that book when I taught eighth grade English. It was an amazingly powerful story about belonging and race and compassion and courage. What I really loved about it was listening to the eighth graders speak so insightfully about that work, and it really stuck with me.

Who or what inspired you to become a Head of the Middle School for Girls?

I was really excited about the opportunity to move here because I think it is so unique to have Brookside and the upper schools be coed while the middle schools are separated by grade level. That structure really stood out to me since it makes sense developmentally and creates a special environment for those middle years. Being part of that experience with the girls felt inspiring and meaningful. When I visited, I met incredibly welcoming, smart, and kind people who made me feel right at home. Whenever you consider a new job, it is not only about the work itself but also about the people you will work alongside. I could truly picture myself here, building connections

Explain what is the most memorable moment of your career as the Head of MSG (describe a specific moment that reminded you why you love your job)

I have memories from every day, and they range from big events to simple moments. The eighth grade interim trip, especially white-water rafting and spending time with the sixth through eighth graders, was so much fun. That whole trip, with biking and rock climbing, was amazing and really meaningful because it took us out of the usual school setting. But I also love the smaller, everyday moments, like playing cornhole at recess with a group of sixth graders or sitting at lunch with students as they tell me about a concert or sleepover. Even in just the first semester, I have gathered so many memories that I will look back on fondly. Grandparents Day, Parent Visiting Day, Snow Days, and even pictures that people share with me have all added to the wonderful experiences I have had here.

Elaborate on an important life lesson that you feel is important to share with others.

It all comes down to the power of positivity. People can spend a lot of energy being pessimistic, complaining, and focusing on what is not right in school or in the world. I believe that energy is better spent celebrating the things that are going well. The advice I always come back to is a quote from Martha Washington I used to have hanging in my classroom. She said that most of your happiness or misery depends more on your attitude than on your circumstances. I have always remembered that because it reminds me that, while we cannot control everything, we do have some control over how we see the world. Training yourself to look for joy and to celebrate even the small good things can make a big difference in how you experience life.

Explain why you wanted to become a head of a middle school.

I think I have found that I really love working in middle schools. The size of a middle school feels just right because it allows me to do the administrative work with teachers, which I genuinely enjoy, while also spending meaningful time with students. I love collaborating with teachers to make positive changes and strengthen programs, but I also value being present with the kids, which is the reason most of us go into this profession in the first place. I am not ready to give that part up. Being an administrator in a middle school gives me the perfect balance of working with adults to create change and building strong connections with the students in my school.



Photo provided by Shawe.



Early Birds or Nights Owls

By: Max Shapiro

As an early bird, I wake up in the morning ready to get headstart on my day. Unlike Night owls who believe staying up late is productive, we early birds know that starting with the sun is better. According to a study on sleep patterns and mood, people who prefer mornings tend to feel happier overall than night owls. According to the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, President John F. Kennedy was known for starting his

Early Birds

workdays early, and many modern business leaders, such as Apple's Tim Cook. This alignment between their natural peak hours and society's schedule makes it easier for morning people to stay focused, meet deadlines, and ultimately get more done than night owls. These lifestyle advantages really reinforce the benefits of a morning based routine. The major benefits are having extra time in the morning to prepare for the day and getting your mind ready. So whether you're the early bird getting the worm or just an early riser to start the day, early birds fly higher than night owls.

By Joesph Michaels

Many people assume that success belongs to early risers, yet night owls often reach their strongest ideas long after sunset. Night owls don't count sheep. We count stars. Night owls aren't just staying up late; they work when their minds are most alert and creative. As Dr. Daniel F. Kripke, a sleep researcher at UCLA, explains that evening hours provide a natural window for alert thinking, creativity, and focus that cannot always be replicated in the early morning. According to a 2024 brain study summarized by the Economic Times, "People

Night Owls

with evening energy peaks often demonstrate stronger reasoning and memory when they follow their natural rhythm." Dr. Matthew Walker, a neuroscientist at Stanford stated in Stanford Medicine, "The quiet of the night reduces distractions and allows the brain to enter deep concentration more easily." With fewer calls, fewer messages, and fewer interruptions, night owls can sustain focus for longer periods of time. Writers, programmers, and researchers often report their most productive work happens after traditional working hours. UCLA's Dr. Kripke added, "The late rising mind can achieve high levels of creativity and problem solving when allowed to follow its natural rhythm." Let's give a hoot hoot to all the night owls out there.

Here at Cranbrook we get to express ourselves in many creative ways: visually, dance, musicaly, journalistically to name a few. So, what differentiates a Cranbrook student from other individuals? Our answer is our appreciation for Art. The MSB Crane staff truly appreciates how fortunate we are to be exposed to traditional forms of art daily, and we offer that we continue to take advantage of these opportunities. Having the opportunity to try an instrument, or act in a play or draw and paint during art class are all opportunities which make learning fun, create some of our most memorable experiences and are good for our mental health. Being able to go see our friends and classmates perform in the musical or before their band and orchestra concert was a great addition to the year. In addition to our PA and PATH courses, we'd love to have more chances to be creative. There can be ways in our academic work to express our creativity.

We get plenty of opportunities to show that we know the content. Now, we'd like to add the chance to be creative in doing so. How do we do this? According to Christine Strang a professor of neuroscience at the University of Alabama Birmingham and the former president of the American Art Therapy Association, "Creativity in and of itself is important for remaining healthy, remaining connected to yourself and connected to the world." Adding to Strang's thoughts Girija Kaimal, a professor at Drexel University and a researcher in art therapy says that "when you make art, you're making a series of decisions: what kind of drawing utensil to use, what color, how to translate what you're seeing onto the paper and ultimately, interpreting the images and figuring out what it means."

Taking advantage of art in and outside the classroom will lead us to not only be more creative but also critical thinkers. There's also evidence that making art and being creative can lower stress and anxiety. When we are creating a one pager, writing our own poetry, building a sled or a boat, or making mugs in math, we get the chance to not only explore the content but also to apply it in an imaginative and creative way. By continuing to challenge ourselves to be creative, we are leaning into the possibility of failure. Isn't it through failure or through trial and error that we learn the most? These opportunities are what Cranbrook has always been known for and celebrated. It is up to us to carry on this legacy and continue to take advantage of the times to be creative. Let's continue to color our world with constant creativity. It's good for our health. And it's who we are.

Cranes Need Constant Creativity

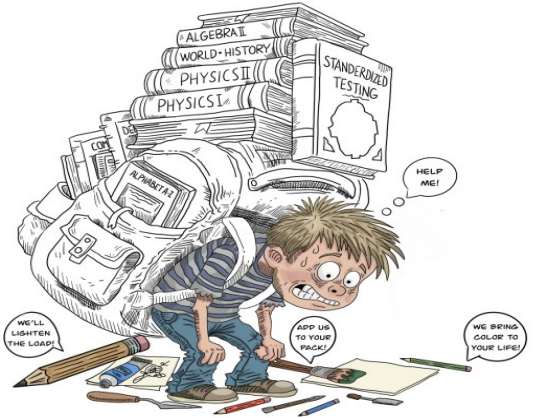
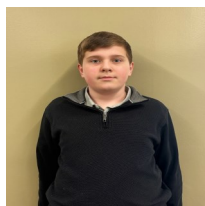


Illustration by Nolan Little

Your Turn

Think of art (like music, drawing, dancing or even watching movies), how do you use it to help yourself feel better when you're stressed?



Gabe Garcia '32

Art helps me feel better when I'm stressed because it gives me something to do with my hands and it lets me be creative. Sometimes when I'm feeling stressed, I like to watch videos to decompress myself



Zayd Al-khafaji '31

When I'm stressed, my go to art form is watch something on tv, whether it be a movie or a show to calm myself, and decompress.



Luke Hoogerwerf '30

Listening to music before a game gets my mind right. This art form helps me focus and think about what I have to do, especially when I'm stressed, it's a good way to calm down and decompress



Jeremy Lublin Staff

Music is my art form. I play music I sing and play guitar. It helps me get my energy out and get the creative juices flowing and feels like a good use of time

The Great Debate

Make Brinner for Dinner

By: Nolan Little

The cruelty of the dinner plate is over. For centuries, we have been held captive by a culinary calendar saying that our evening meals must be filled with a multi-component spread.

But Brinner, a simple but revolutionary act of eating breakfast for dinner, can change the game. The choice brings the quick comfort of an omelet or the rise of a waffle to align perfectly with the recommendation to have Brinner or eat breakfast for dinner.

This makes sense because our body's metabolism slows down throughout the day. Eating a heavy meal in the evening can interfere with digestion and sleep. Instead, Brinner aligns better with our body's natural systems and leads to better health outcomes over time. "It makes sense that breakfast should be larger," registered dietitian Natalie Wartha said in an article published by Henry Ford Health. "When your body is waking up it needs energy to fuel your day. Eating smaller dinners can help with weight management and may benefit overall health." Many have already taken a bite out of the Brinner discussion. According to Jobera 2025 Eating Out Statistics nearly 47% of Americans had dinner at a restaurant or takeout at least once a week. "One of the most practical reasons people eat out is convenience," My English Path said. "In today's fast-paced world, many individuals have busy work schedules, school commitments, or family responsibilities that leave them with little time or energy to cook." Having Brinner provides a solution to these problems. Its ingredients are usually inexpensive, readily available, and easily prepared, saving time and your credit card. It's a toast to convenience, without burning the budget.

And Brinner doesn't just benefit one's finances or physical health, but it can impact mental health too. This simple meal is full of nostalgia, taking one back to morning memories filled with family. This proves that sometimes therapy is best served sunny side up. Psychologists say small moments of nostalgia can provide positive boosts to the mind and body, and few foods carry the same levels of nostalgia as breakfast. World Famous American Chef Anthony Bourdain agrees. "Breakfast has an incredible emotional charge and is a feeling of fellowship," he said showing that Brinner isn't just a menu shift, it's psychologically proven to improve lives.

Overall, Brinner is food freedom. It allows the choice to break a rigid tradition, and scramble the rules, not just the eggs. By eating breakfast at night, we can improve our bodies, our budgets, and our emotions all at once. Hidden within brinner's simplicity lies its genius: Health restored, time reclaimed, nostalgia reawakened.

Brinner proves that sometimes the biggest changes can begin with the pop of a toaster.

VS

Keep Breakfast in the AM

By: Max Shapiro

Didn't we already eat it this morning. Do we eat lunch twice? So, why eat breakfast twice?

There are many medical issues that support we should not have breakfast for dinner. Some of these issues are, disrupting the regular day to day cycle for your digestive system, and the impact on sleep/mood.

According to Diabetes Care at diabetes journals "Breakfast skipping adversely affects clock and clock-controlled gene expression." When having breakfast for dinners, both adults and kids can hit mental blocks when doing everyday tasks after dinner, for example, you come home after a long day at school and after you have brinner (breakfast dinner) your studying and you hit a stamina block. These happen because the sugar in the brinner foods such as pancakes and syrup makes higher blood sugar.

Eating foods like eggs or bacon at night/evening time mess with someone's cholesterol. Not only does it mess up one's cholesterol it also weakens bones in peoples body.

According to the Barcelona Institute for Global Health "eating a late first or last meal is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease." This is important because brinner provides higher levels of sugar while the body expects a lower less sugar infused dinner.

Eating brinner gives you fat that your body stores overnight, this fat can't be worked off like regular breakfast where there is the whole day to work it off. This results in more weight loss than a normal breakfast would give.

At night, your insulin expects low sugar meals, with a high sugar meal like brinner insulin (essentially a sugar manager) cant process all the sugar. With all the sugar building up it causes a higher risk for diabetes or long term health problems.

Breakfast for dinner spikes stamina, increases risk for diabetes, raises chances for a stroke, and helps fat buildup.

Overall, its much better to eat breakfast in the mornings and not at night. While eating breakfast for dinner may be a fun alternative its better in terms of your health to eat a regular and balanced dinner.

Your body's schedule has to stay the same, changing it leads to many consequences. So, keep say good morning to breakfast and not good night.

The Mystery of Moths Explained

By: Dean Russell

After reading articles and myths about Mothman, a local legend from West Virginia similar to Bigfoot, it fascinated me. I decided I'd like to raise some as pets, just to see how cute they were in person. So I bought some caterpillars and the right food and with more determination than I had with most things I started.

Silk moths are cute little creatures that look more like tiny fuzzy plush toys than insects. Although getting to the moth stage took a while, the caterpillars were still really cute. I spent weeks feeding them twice a day before they, one by one, spun their silk-covered cocoons. Then, I patiently waited for them to hatch.

Why do we think so negatively about our flying friends, and why do we treat them as poorly as we do?

COLUMN

As I dug deeper into the processes used to make silk, I got more and more concerned about how these cute little animals are treated. To produce silk, worms are grown on mulberry leaves. After they cocoon, they are typically killed by being boiled alive or baked. About 1 TRILLION silk worms die due to silk production, to put that in perspective, that's 125 TIMES the amount of our HUMAN POPULATION. Just to make one yard of silk, over 2000 moths are boiled in their cocoons.

As I write this my moths have hatched and I'm amazed by how they each have their own individual personalities. Momo, the first to hatch, is always buzzing his wings. Mothra sits still most of the time just watching the others. Mochi is my little escape artist. He's always on the move and I often find him on the floor next to my desk. Unfortunately, as adults they do not have a functioning mouth or the ability to eat.

With a lifespan of only seven days they will likely only live on in my memory by the time this is published. I hope bringing attention to this will help others see these cute little guys as I do.

You can help them by choosing Peace Silk or Ahimsa silk, this is more expensive because there is extra effort required to carefully remove the silk from the cocoon without harming the moth. There are also alternatives like bamboo, cupro, or rayon. I hope you should come to treat moths like friends, the way I do.

2025 -2026

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The Heartbeat of Bollywood Lives

ARTIST REVIEW

By: Abhi Batra

In the Indian film industry, known as Bollywood, the actors in the movie who appear to be singing, are not, they are lip syncing. The people who really sing the songs are known as playback singers. One of the most famous playback singers in India is Arjit Singh, and he now has the most follows on Spotify with 172 million followers.



Arjit originally started singing at the age of three, but he did not start playback singing by himself until 2011 when he was 24 years old.

His first song was Phir Mohabbat from the movie, Murder 2. However, his big break did not come until 2013, where he sang, "Tum Hi Ho," in the movie Aashiqui 2.

This song topped worldwide charts, was on the top ten of Planet Bollywood for eight weeks, and it was on the first spot of MTV India's top 20. Arjit has sung over 700 songs.

Some of his other songs include, "Channa Mereya," "Tera Yaar Hoon Main," and "Raabta."

Over his long and illustrious career, he has won the, Padma Shri, two National Film Awards, Seven Filmfare Awards, five IIFA Awards, two Guild Awards, five GiMA Awards, 27 Mirchi Music Awards, 26 RMIM Puraskaar, four Screen Awards, Seven Zee Cine Awards, and one Times of India Film Awards.

This is 122 total awards. Arjit Singh has just recently decided to retire from playback singing. After a remarkably successful career.

Arjit said, "I am calling it off. It has been a wonderful journey."

Noble Fish Delivers

By: Luke Freund and Nikki Popat

It's not just good. It's so good. In fact, Noble Fish will change your life. First, let's look at the menu.

There are so many options. Some of our favorites include the sushi rolls, a custom roll it has yellowtail, avocado, and spicy mayo. Also, nigiri and sashimi, the salmon and tuna nigiri and sashimi top our top five.

What makes Noble Fish different than any other place is that you customize any sushi roll you want by looking at on their ordering tablets at the ordering table. Prices for Noble Fish vary by item. For example, nigiri generally ranges from \$2.00 (Mackerel) to \$3.50 (Sea Urchin), rolls like the Spicy Salmon starting around \$10.50, and higher-end items like Fatty Tuna (Toro) costing more. According to Uber Eats, their three most likes items are California Roll (\$7.15), Spicy Tuna Crunch (\$8.45) and the Michigan Roll (eight pieces for \$13.00). Getting ready to host a party like the Super Bowl or birthday? They have over six different types party trays ranging from their most popular one the Sushi Party Tray Medium Nigiri Combo (\$80) to a combination platter with over 88 pieces (\$130.)

Wanting something a bit smaller? There are nine different sets and bowls. The Supreme Nigiri Set has almost a dozen different items

Restaurant Review

(\$35.10). From the kitchen there is Miso soup (\$2.60) and Sushi rice (\$2.60) Looking for something different? They also have vegetarian options like ramen and even though neither of us have tried it but we have heard many good things about it. added a café to it. It is called white wolf. It serves pastries and coffee. According to their website, for over 40 years Noble Fish has been a part of the Clawson, MI community.

"Opening its doors in 1984 and adding a kitchen in 1991, the tiny Japanese market and sushi bar has continued to serve their community unique Japanese products and cuisine," they said.

The atmosphere is nice. They have a market inside to buy yummy snacks. They also have indoor seating and outdoors. The atmosphere at Noble Fish is a very chill low-key vibe. Especially because it shares a building with white wolf, a coffee shop, and a small Chinese market. Those all make it very easy to enjoy.

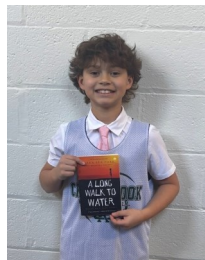
The servers are nice when they do get a chance to talk to you because they are usually cooking or taking more orders. There are also couple of high-tops stationed around the room and a few not as high tables. You can also eat at the café.

It's like a joined restaurant. This is why noble fish is the best sushi restaurant. Noble Fish is open from 8am to 8pm seven days a week. Maybe not on holiday so make to check before you go.

We recommend going there for around noon for lunch or 5:30pm for dinner because it gets pretty packed. Take our recommendation. You won't be sorry.

What has been the best book you've been assigned?

1



Austin Williams '32

A Long Walk to Water
By: Linda Sue Park

My favorite book because it shows how we are spoiled with everything we have. It taught a good lesson about not being greedy and how we all need to be thankful for what we have and to appreciate it.

2

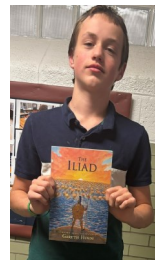


Matthew Medvedev '32

Boys Without Names
By: Kashmira Sheth

My favorite book I've read was *Boys Without Names* because I liked how the main character stood up for everyone. I like the plot and how it kept me engaged the whole time. I also really liked the character development.

3

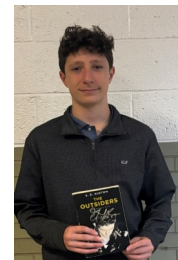


Rowan Kitchen '31

The Iliad
By: Homer

Even though it informational and taught me about Roman and Latin history, it was fun to read. Being a graphic novel the content was more concise. The visuals were colorful and added to the story.

4



Knox Edginton '30

The Outsiders
By: S.E. Hinton

This coming-of-age novel helped me appreciate everything I have and all of the opportunities provided to me. The way the characters were described and their friendships made the story relatable and realistic. Plus, it was fun having Outsider Day.

Spot the Six. Find the Differences



ANSWERS: 1. CK not on table, 2. bottle on table, 3. CK not on shirt, 4. water bottle, 5. jacket, 6. Missing table leg

By: Zayd Al-Khafaji

In Ryan Slade's Science 8 class, students were tasked with observing chemical and physical changes. Observing chemical changes involves identifying the formation of new substances, typically indicated by gas production (bubbles), unexpected color changes, temperature changes, or odor production. Physical changes, such as melting or cutting, only alter the state or appearance of matter without changing its identity .

Take a look and see if you can find the differences between these two photos.:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Don't Let These Cookies Crumble

By: Max Duncan and Burhan Vochra

Panera 2109 S. Telegraph Road, B'Hills, MI

The Chocolate Chipper cookie from Panera was soft all the way through. It was an average sized cookie. The cookies chocolate chips were not melted but there was a good amount of them though. The cookie was good but didn't feel as homemade as others I have had. I would recommend this cookie to anyone who likes it soft. \$2.79



The Rind Restaurant 3125 12 Mile Road, Berkley, MI

The cookie from Rind was crunchy all the way through. It was big but very thin. There was a lot of chocolate chips compared to the amount of dough. The cookie felt homemade which is good. I would recommend this cookie to anyone who likes a crunchy cookie with lots of chocolate chips. \$4.



Insomnia Cookies 1218 Warton Blvd. R'Hills, MI

What started out as an idea in a college dorm is now taking college campuses and area communities by storm. With classic flavors like chocolate chip and snickerdoodle they also are known for being a student's best study partner. These cookies are delivered warm and come in classic size \$3.50 to a little larger called the Deluxe \$5.55. Prices do vary from location.



Crumbl 4036 Telegraph B'Hills, MI

Known for its rotating menu of gourmet cookies, they feature six different flavors each week. Top flavors include milk chocolate chip, sea salt toffee, and peanut butter cookies. Prices range from \$4.50—\$4.99



Serving Up Something Special

By: Yogesh Somani

Tired of the same old dinner routine like pizza, Chipotle, Subway, or McDonald's? I was too. I wanted something different. A family friend recommended Royal Indian Cuisine in Troy, Michigan, so I had to give it a try.

From the moment I walked in, I was greeted with the warm aroma of spices, a cozy atmosphere, and friendly staff. It felt calm and relaxing, but it also made me even hungrier.

I started with the Gobi Manchurian, which I strongly recommend. Priced between \$10.95 - \$11.95, it is crispy cauliflower tossed in a spicy Indochinese sauce full of garlic, onions, and bold flavor. Each bite had the perfect crunch. I had never tried Indochinese food before, and this was a great place to start. The menu also features other popular dishes like Chili Paneer (\$11.95) and Vegetable Hakka Noodles (\$11.95), which I tried on later visits and absolutely loved.

On another visit, I decided to explore the North Indian side of the menu. I ordered the Paneer Butter Masala (11.95), which turned out to be my favorite dish. It is made with soft cubes of paneer, which is similar to Indian tofu, cooked in a creamy tomato based gravy. The flavors were rich, savory, and comforting. It paired perfectly with warm Garlic Naan, about (\$3.95) per piece, and fragrant Basmati Rice. The naan was soft, buttery, and delicious, creating my all time favorite combo.

Some of the most popular dishes on the menu include Butter Chicken, Palak Paneer, Malai Kofta, and Chicken Tikka Masala, with most entrees ranging from \$14 to \$18. Friday, Saturday and Sunday they have a lunch buffet. They offer lunch every day from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and dinner from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, with later hours until 10:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Royal Indian Cuisine

Address:
3877 Rochester Road
Troy, MI

Hours:
Monday-Sunday—
11AM—
2:30PM
5-10PM

The restaurant is air conditioned, non smoking, and offers takeout during working hours. Reservations are accepted for groups under 60 people, and the hall can be reserved for parties of up to 90, with at least 20 people recommended for events. The lunch buffet is available on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays and features North and South Indian food along with Indian and Chinese dishes. Meals are reasonably priced, usually ranging from \$6 to \$16, and customers can pay using bankcards, checks, or cash. They are available on Door dash. Whether you are vegetarian or not, or new to Indian food or a regular fan, Royal Indian Cuisine has something for everyone. They have a catering menu. The portion sizes are generous, the prices are reasonable, and the staff is always helpful. I have already been there more than once, and I will definitely be returning again.

Uncanny Valley and Monsters in Art Museum

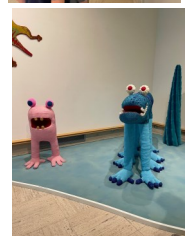
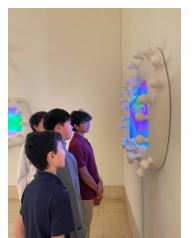
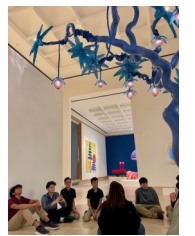
Students in Bailey Smith's Painting and Drawing elective got the opportunity to go to Cranbrook's Art Museum to see exhibits that will inspire their upcoming projects.

The Haas Brothers: Uncanny Valley has been on exhibit since November 2 and will close February 22. According to the Cranbrook Art Museum's website "The exhibition includes examples from the major bodies of work that the artists have been engaged with over the last 15 years."

The other exhibit they got to see is Mythic Chaos: 50 years of Destroy and the Monsters. Smith said she selected this because the students will be creating their own monsters.

This exhibit started November 2 and will run until March 1.

The Museum is closed Mondays and Tuesdays, Wednesdays 11am-5pm, Thursdays 11am-8pm and Friday – Sunday 11am –5pm.



Photos by Smith

"As our runners get stronger and more confident. Having competed on one of the best, most authentic XC courses in the county, our athletes know how to handle real terrain. - Head Coach Bernice Chene

New Course Offers Opportunities

By: Luke Freund, Luca Roskos, Jacob Yang



Field Day Becomes More Student-Centered

At the beginning of Second Semester, it was announced that there would be change with Field Day. Instead of having teams compete on the last day of the school year, students and staff would bring back a MSB tradition. Five of our reporters held a press conference with Field Day Coordinator Christopher Hughes and asked him questions about these changes.*

Explain what inspired the Field Game teams games for Field Day and why?

Field Day teams were inspired by the three intramural teams that Cranbrook created back in the 1930s. They had different things going on. They realized that their varsity sports program, while being full and really strong, still left a population of students who weren't being active or competitive. They wanted to give everyone a chance. So this idea dates back to the 1930s.

Explain the process of choosing teams.

So I took all the lists from Field Days past, mainly just last year, and used those. I changed some names around, added the sixth grade, looked everything over, talked to some teachers, talked to administration, and made it a little bit different. I moved some people around, randomly picked people, and then made sure that brothers and siblings were on the same team. After that, I randomly selected where each team name went.

Explain your long term goals.

I'm hoping for years to come. Hopefully as long as we can.

Each team has a specific color. Elaborate on why the teams have these.

They have those specific colors because they were the same colors used for the teams back in the 1930s. That way, we didn't have to go with the traditional green, blue, gray, or white that we usually use here at Cranbrook. We decided to go with colors that are completely different from what we normally do.

How were these changes made?

This Field Day came from a group of us. We've been thinking about how we want to change it and make it feel newer and more student-driven. It's been a group of leaders here, teachers and others, just collaborating.

If we have more questions later, can we ask you them? Of course.

Reporters:

**Shayaan Ahmad, Nikki Popat,
Charlie Thav, Luke Freund,
Ali Ghazi**



Challenged by the new course, the coed cross country team works together throughout the season as Head Coach Chene watches. Photo by team

It's a crisp morning. Runners line up at the starting line, their breaths fogging the air as they eye the path ahead. It's not the first few hundred yards that worry them, but what lies over the bridge and around the turn. This is not the course they've grown accustomed to. Ahead are hills, forested trails, and winding loops picked with purpose.

A Course Built for Challenge

"Our course was mostly flat," head coach Bernice Chene said of the combined middle school cross country course which after more than a decade of flat routes has been completely redesigned. "We had a couple hills that were not really that big other than Snake Rock, and that was really the toughest part of our course. The new course has a long, steep woodchip hill, followed by a run through a forested area. Then we go uphill again to enter a wooded trail. We complete this loop twice, whereas before we ran a flatter route only once, and it had a much smaller hill," Jack Rainwater '31, the 2025 cross country coach's award winner, said that he likes the new course because it features some tough hills and lots of turns. "This can give us an advantage when we host other teams. Other teams are not accustomed to the tough hills and can easily get lost, which can make them nervous."

Why Change the Course?

The redesign wasn't just about making the course harder. Safety and alignment with Upper School courses were key factors. "The idea for a new course began when construction started near the Japanese Garden, an area that had always been part of our route. Running close to that site would have created a safety concern, so we made the decision to design a safer and more practical layout for our athletes," Chene explained.

Upper School cross country Coach Greg Miller added, "It is important for everyone to recognize that Cranbrook Schools is, in fact, one school comprised of four divisions. As such, it is imperative for the parts to support the whole. Coach Chene and Athletic Director McMichael expressed an interest in rethinking the MS cross-country course. This created an opportunity for trying to align the MS and US cross-country courses."

Collaboration Behind the Scenes

Designing the new course required time and teamwork. Beginning before the season started Chene shared that, "it took a lot of people. We all had to put our ideas together and come up with a plan for how to make the new route better and more challenging. Coach Miller thought it would be a great idea to connect our route with theirs so that the transition from Middle School to Upper School would be smooth and familiar for the athletes and Coach Hammitt and I agreed."

Miller described the process like this. "Just like writing any report, one must identify the main points and goals of the desired outcome. In this case, Coach Chene and I met and discussed our ideas first, agreeing on the starting line and finish line locations as well as other course features we wanted to include. Dr. Maylath, one of my assistant coaches, was also an important voice in the conversation. In a way, achieving the end result was similar to drawing a picture: sketch, erase, and repeat until the picture is what you want. The sketching in this case was running and rerunning (Coach Chene and Dr. Maylath) and bicycling the course (me). Over about one week, we eventually had two courses that met our objectives."

Assistant MS Cross Country Coach Christina Hammitt shared when, "Coach explained we got to change the course, I was excited for the opportunity," she said. "We had the chance to create something new and exciting for our athletes. Something that would not only challenge them but we could create a course that would utilize our beautiful campus."

"Some challenges included deciding where the start and finish lines would go. Running two loops originally didn't

seem like the best option, and some of us wanted to extend the route up by the Shoe Fountain area like we did before," Chene added. "Even once we thought we had the route finalized, the course ended up being too long and then too short before we got it just right."

Adjusting to the New Terrain

Chene said that one area about the new course that will definitely stand out is the hills. "They're tougher than what we've had in the past, but they'll become easier over time," she said. "As our runners get stronger and more confident. Having competed on one of the best, most authentic XC courses in the county, our athletes know how to handle real terrain." Accompanying the hills was the mental aspect of the race.

"When I first set eyes on the new course, I did not feel very confident; there were so many hills. It was intimidating looking at it," Noah Devlin '32 admitted. Because they were used to the same routine for two years, the older runners faced a small adjustment, but for everyone the biggest challenges were the hills and having to run the same loop twice, at least at first.

"I liked the new course because it was a change in scenery, even though it was harder than the last one," Max Duncan '30 said. "I thought it was funny that the other teams would come and practice on our new course because of how hard it is."

Over the season, athletes adapted and even thrived. "As the season progressed, practices got harder and harder and paid off more and more," Devlin said. "Some days, I could feel myself improving. By the end of the season, I couldn't even recognize myself."

Building Pride and Perspective

Adding to Devlin's observation, Miller emphasized the benefits of the course are beyond a physical challenge. "The course is good for kids because it is a course that Cranbrook Schools students can take pride in for both its beauty and physical challenges. The intermingling of woods, hills, the lake, bogs, and streams, on which world-class architecture is beautifully placed, is unlike any other in Michigan, perhaps anywhere. If the course has a flaw, it is that in a traditional sense, it is not a great spectator course. Spectators must move to see the runners. But then, given the nature of cross-country, perhaps this is not a bad thing [because] everyone participates!" Devlin reflected, "After the season I realized how fortunate we are to have such a beautiful campus. Running through it almost every day was, by the end of the season, a true gift. I was honored to have the ability to run through such a beautiful campus."

Chene added she saw the athlete's mindset changing. "Overcoming the challenges of building a new course felt very satisfying. There were moments when the process wasn't easy, but each obstacle helped shape a course that would better prepare and challenge our runners. We saw this as the season progressed."

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, Chene said that there may be a few modifications but all in all the new course brought many benefits. "It was exciting to see how the new, more challenging course played to our runners' strengths," Chene said. "The tougher terrain demanded grit, and our athletes rose to the occasion. It felt great to watch them embrace the challenge and prove what they're capable of."

"It was fun seeing their times go down on our course," Hammitt said. "Then, when they went to other courses that were flat and they saw their times at the end of the race and they were elated. All of the work leading up to those moments was worth it. Knowing that these experiences not only improved their times but gave them experience for next year and then increased their confidence was the best course we could have created."

MSB Grads Shine in State Tennis Title

By: Nikki Popat

When Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood Cranes stepped onto the courts at the Lower Peninsula Division 3 Finals at Midland Tennis Center, they weren't just representing their high school. For many players, they were carrying the foundation built years earlier at MSB.

"Most of the players came from the MSB program," Head Varsity tennis coach Steve Herdoiza said. "It's really fun to see the growth they've made as players and young men. They have really matured and to see how much their games have evolved and how much better they all understand the game and the strategies and complexities of the game is rewarding as a coach."

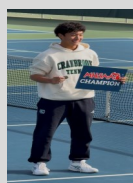
Entering the weekend ranked No. 1, Cranbrook reclaimed the Division 3 state championship by the slimmest of margins, edging Detroit Country Day 34–33.

"There was a lot of parity this year in our division. But we had the deepest team, and ultimately, I think that depth is what got us over the hump to the victory," Herdoiza said. The victory marked the Cranes' second title in three seasons after a heartbreaking third-place finish last year behind co-champions Country Day and Ann Arbor Greenhills. "We were gutted," Kenneth Hu, a three-time state champion, said of the previous year. "That heartbreak carried into this year and contributed to our success." In addition, Hu credited their experience in middle school too.

"It was my privilege to win this title as an MSB alum. MSB built the foundation. Middle school taught us how to handle pressure," he said "MSB built the foundation for handling pressure, respecting the game, and playing for something bigger than yourself. We stayed together and supported each other. That helped us lock in," Junior Andy Yu said as he recalled key moments during the state tournament when perseverance made the difference, including early-morning matches in cold conditions and a rain delay that tested the team's focus.

"Representing MSB felt like coming full circle," Dylan Popat '28 said. "Winning felt like giving something back to the school that shaped me. Knowing that my old teachers, coaches, and classmates

were following along meant everything. It reminded me how much MSB shaped who I am, and winning felt like giving something back to the school that the players, coaches, and the staff, especially Mr. Lublin that supported me long before high school. MSB built the foundation for everything I'm doing now. Competitive practices, the fundamentals drilled into me, and even the tough losses taught me how to handle pressure, respect the game, and play for something bigger than myself. Those lessons showed up in every single point of this state run."



MSB alumni Andy Yu and Kenny pose after the team's win. Photos by team

"The moment it became clear we had won the state championship, everything slowed down. It felt like disbelief and pure adrenaline hit me at the same time, the kind of feeling you only get when months of grinding finally pay off. Seeing my teammates sprint toward each other, hearing the crowd explode, and realizing *we actually did it* was unreal. It was pride, relief, joy, and shock all in one moment I'll never forget," Dylan said.

Herdoiza said those values showed in how the team competed. "The depth and unselfishness of this team made them special," he said. "They supported each other whether they were in the lineup or not."

Getting the chance to witness his oldest son and the team win a State Championship, Anup Popat, Dylan's father said that "It solidified what we teach our children. Hard work, discipline, consistency, and focus lead to positive outcomes. As soon as Dylan and Andy Yu won Championship point, Coach Steve ran onto the court and embraced both of them. It was an emotional moment to witness our son win a State Championship!"

As the final point sealed the championship, the Cranes' celebration reflected more than just a win.

Herdoiza explained that it highlighted how early preparation, strong values, a team-first mentality and a strong foundation rooted from the MSB carried them to the top of Division 3.

"They really worked as hard as they could," Herdoiza said. "And today, they saw the results."

Returning to the Field

By: Ibrahim Al-Obaidy

I still remember my last first day playing soccer for Cranbrook.

I had quit travel soccer, a decision that had a bigger impact on me than I expected. Having played soccer since I was four years old, and stepping away from a sport that had been such a big part of my life felt strange and unfinished. My friends Jibrán Shahzad and Joshua Zou, who both play soccer for school, encouraged me to join the team.

After thinking about it for a while, I gave it a try. I did not know what to expect, but I knew I missed the game.

Two weeks into the season, we played our first game, and it happened to be on my birthday. Unfortunately, we lost, and the same thing happened in the next few games.

Even though the losses were frustrating, Coach Arquette, never gave up on us. His practices pushed us to improve, and slowly, I started to feel myself getting better on the field.

One of our toughest games was against South Hills. They were bigger, stronger, and clearly experienced. Still, when the referee blew the opening whistle, we were ready. I remember dribbling past defenders and passing the ball to my teammate Max Shapiro. He took the shot, and somehow their goalie saved it.

"Cranbrook reminded me of why I loved the sport in the first place."

I remember thinking there was no way that would happen again, and it did not. Max scored soon after. South Hills ended up scoring two goals and winning the game, but it was our closest match yet. Even though we were still winless, we knew we were improving.

The next few games were just as close. Our second to last game against Detroit Country Day was especially frustrating. We easily could have won, but four questionable penalty calls went against us, and we lost 4 to 2. Going into our final game against Covington, we knew this was our last chance. The game started evenly. Then, we scored.

Later, we scored again. As the clock wound down, Covington had no real chance of coming back. Then we heard it. Tweet, tweet, tweeeet. The final whistle blew. Our first win on our last game was a moment I will never forget.

Because of my experience playing soccer at Cranbrook, I decided to return to soccer. I never would have considered it without this season.

Cranbrook reminded me of why I loved the sport in the first place. It pushed me to keep playing. Moving forward, I will be back on the field, something that all started right here.

Profile

Yang Rules the Court as MI's Number One

By: Chen Zhao

From the stands, she watched as her youngest son step onto the court, racket in hand, focused and calm. Years of early mornings, long drives, and countless matches led to this moment.

When the rankings were announced and she saw his name, she knew his hard work finally paid off. "When Jacob reached no 1 in his age group in MI, I felt so proud," Tina Yang, mother of eighth grader Jacob Yang said. "That means a lot to us, especially after all the effort he put in."

Quickly Jacob established himself as one of Michigan's top junior tennis players. In addition, in being currently ranked #1 in the state, he is 4th in the Great Lakes Region, and 77th nationally among the Class of 2030. Steadily over the past three years he has climbed the rankings, improving from 351st nationally in 2023 to his current position. According to his current coach Steve Herdoiza, Jacob's UTR (Universal Tennis ranking) rating of 8.0+ reflects strong performances against rated opponents, including several victories over highly ranked players. With an overall competitive record of 51 wins and 26 losses, Jacob consistently defeats mid- and lower-tier rated players while challenging top competitors.

These accomplishments highlight his ongoing commitment, rapid improvement, and competitive presence at both the state and national level. Jacob's mother, who continues to arrange tournaments and travel with him, remains extremely proud of how far he has come and the dedication he has shown throughout his journey. Now, the road to number one wasn't an easy one she remembered. In fact, Jacob '30 did not always know that tennis would be his sport.

When he was younger, he tried many different sports, but most of them

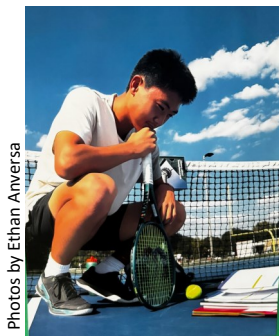
came with a high risk of injury. Concerned about his safety, his mother suggested tennis, a sport where he was less likely to get hurt. Jacob quickly discovered that he enjoyed it and decided to focus on the game.

Three years ago, after realizing tennis would be his main sport, Jacob and his family began searching for a coach. They found the perfect match in Steve Herdoiza, who had previously been Jacob's summer camp coach and is also Cranbrook Kingswood's Boys' Varsity tennis coach. "I really liked it," Jacob humbly added. After finding out tennis would be his sport, they decided to find him a coach, and the perfect candidate was Herdoiza who used to be Jacob's summer camp coach as well as being the Boys' Varsity.

After being contacted, Coach Herdoiza agreed to train Jacob and began working with him when Jacob was still using a green-dot tennis ball, a level meant for beginners. Under Coach Herdoiza's guidance, Jacob developed quickly, learning not only the technical skills of tennis but also discipline and confidence.

"Jacob is very talented in tennis, Herdoiza said. "[He's] a very unique tennis player who grew in tennis really quickly," From the time they started training together and Jacob at a very beginner level, Coach Herdoiza saw him grow not just as a tennis player, but also as a person. Looking ahead, Jacob hopes to play on the upper school tennis team and continue competing in higher-level tournaments.

"I hope to keep improving and start playing higher-level tournaments in the future," Jacob said. "Hopefully, tennis will help me get into a good college. If I can maintain a high GPA, get a good SAT score, and play decent tennis, I might be able to go to a good college. My goal is to potentially play college tennis in the future."



Photos by Ethan Anversa

Yang balances his high academics with his high achievements on the tennis court

Photos by Staff



TOP: Practicing their photojournalism composition elements, students took photos of their classmates playing in the leaves, Max Shapiro '30 dressed as Athletic Director for Halloween, Enjoying her retirement MSG physical education teacher Ann Mell came in and celebrated our All School Thanksgiving dinner with the boys, at the all school pep session the Crane posed for photos, Excited to get their 8th grade sweat-shirts, members of the Class of 2030 show their excitement.



Photo by Ethan Guo

LEFT to RIGHT: Oliver Obeid '31 practices after school. The tennis team went only lost one meet this season. Getting to use the microscopes for the first time, Emery Herbert '32 and Hugo Eichel '32 look at cells. As Junior Cristiano DiSalvo '30 reads his lines from *12 Angry Men*. Eighth graders acted out parts of the play as they read it in class.

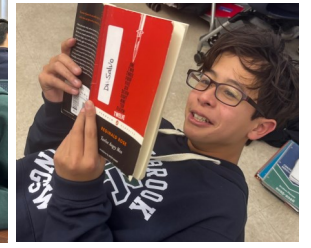


photo by Yixiao Huang



One Last Look at Our First Semester

From September to January, we learned and laughed together.

Design by Staff
Photos by Staff and Students



Photo by Kean Edington



ABOVE CLOCKWISE: Sixth graders in Joe Cornell came dressed for Halloween and ready to dance. On Fridays the Class of 2032 met in the dining room to learn how to dance. Ready as the show's anchor, Marco Qu '31 smiles as the cameras set up in CK-TV. For their Humans of MSB projects, students created environment photos to tell a story. Sanjan Mahesh '30 demonstrates how homework stresses him out.



LEFT CLOCKWISE: Coach Chene works with the 8th grade football team on one of their plays. Latin teacher Nathan Costa takes a moment to reflect during a class discussion. The Class of 32 went to Cranbrook's Art Museum to learn about silk screening.



LEFT CLOCKWISE: Marwan Boutros '31 rehearses his trombone during music class, MSB Head Lesley Rodriguez pours Sam Nyman '30 a drink during the annual Thanksgiving dinner, Santi Calvo-Tovar '31, Brendan Ellis '31 and Liam Gerlants-Mavashev '31 proudly sit in their sled, Josiah Majors-Irwin participates in his Global Studies presentation with relics from Medieval Africa.

