

The ugar Crier

4650 CLIPPERT, DEARBORN HEIGHTS, MI 48125

VOLUME 50 ISSUE 3

A monthly tradition since 1974

November 2025

Powderpuff

Read this article on pages 8 & 9



In honor of Andy Kvamme

Remembrance on page 3

Photos by: K. Le.

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The Cougar Crier

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The Cougar Crier is a student produced newspaper of Annapolis High School, 4650 Clippert, Dearborn Heights, Michigan.

The articles published in the The Cougar Crier are the views and opinions of the student journalists in 3rd hour Newspaper class. The Cougar Crier staff covers news and topics related to the school community and students of Annapolis High School.

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The Cougar Crier is a proud member of:



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In loving memory of... **Andy Kvamme**



On Nov 13th, 2025, Annapolis High School faced the unexpected loss of long-time teacher, coach and mentor Andy Kvamme. Loved by many, this loss has been felt throughout the community.

As an Annapolis alumni graduating in 1976, Kvamme served the school and District 7 community for over 25 years, becoming a trusted and respected figure among students, colleagues and families. His colleagues and students note his kindness and positive spirit.

As a Graphic Communications teacher, he was known for offering lessons that extended far beyond the classroom, helping students build confidence, technical skills and a sense of creativity. Current and former students note his kindness, expertise and upbeat teaching style. He was known to always put a smile on people's faces and offer a helping hand when needed.

In addition to teaching, Kvamme coached bowling and golf, where he influenced countless athletes with his leadership and genuine support. His kindness, patience and passion for student success was unmatched. His love for golf and bowling shined through in his coaching, making the team feel like a family and the season a time to look forward to.

Kvamme is remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, educator and friend. His commitment to his family and community showed his kind character and love for others. Kvamme's impact on the school community will continue to be cherished for years to come.



Andy Kvamme (left) and his wife Dianne Kvamme (right) enjoying an Annapolis sporting event.

To the world you may just be a teacher, but to your students, you were the world.



All photos courtesy of: Annapolis High School

Food laws shut down Cougar Den

Lexi Harleton '26 | Co Associate Editor-in-Chief



The menu from the Cougar Den along with snacks and drinks offered in the store. Photo by: L. Harleton.

Our school store, the Cougar Den, shut down in October due to conflicts with the Smart Snacks in Schools rule. The Cougar Den, run by the school's National Honors Society (NHS), sells a variety of items including chips, candy bars and drinks. These sales brought in a large revenue for the organization.

The Smart Snacks in Schools rule puts restrictions in place regarding nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools, other than food sold under the lunch and breakfast programs. Failing to follow the standards puts the school in jeopardy of losing funding for the National School Lunch Program, which provides the district with free or reduced-price lunch and breakfast for all students regardless of income. While the organization cannot sell food during school hours, NHS Advisor Sinead Victory is working to keep the store open before and after the school day.

"My goal is that we will turn this into a positive and keep the Cougar Den open before and after school. That way, you know, my kids are still getting that work experience. We're still providing snacks for people and making some money but doing it in a way that follows all the rules," Victory said.

The Cougar Den brought a large revenue for the NHS. The organization must pay dues to continue being a part of the NHS national program. The national affiliation fee for a school chapter is roughly \$385 annually, this does not

include medals for graduating seniors or pins at inductions. With a large cut in their revenue the organization may have to cut back on their donations to projects.

Aside from revenue, the major concern for Victory is her students losing the work experience that comes from volunteering in the Cougar Den. Handling money, social interactions and problem solving are some of the many hands-on experiences the students gain. NHS Vice President Eli Gaona has logged many hours in the Cougar Den, believing it is a valuable experience for him and his peers.

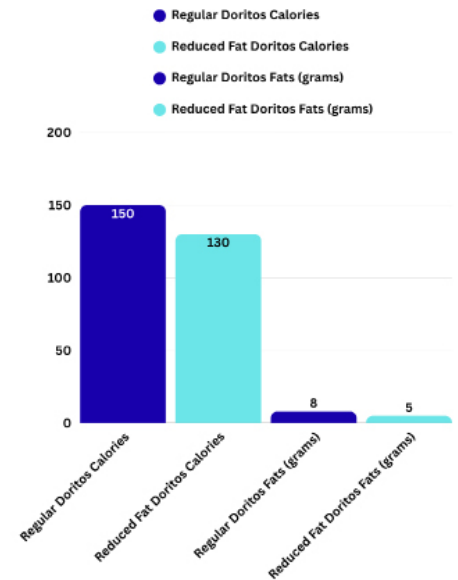
"I feel like some students aren't gonna be able to have the same experience I had. The Cougar Den helps students who work [it] have an easier time talking to people and which also correlates to getting a job and talking to customers, so they're losing out on a cool new experience if they never tried it before," Gaona said.

Principal Aaron Mollett sees the concerns from both students and the state. With a multitude of changes coming to not only the high school but district wide, students may feel overwhelmed with the new implements.

"I like the Cougar Den, because I like the business behind that, and, you know, the kids doing that. I feel like students with the Yondr pouches, SmartPass, and you know, this going away. It's a lot of things changing, but a lot of it's not us," Mollett said.



A comparison of the nutrition facts between regular cool ranch Doritos versus reduced fat cool ranch Doritos. Graphics by: L. Harleton.



Emphasizing the importance of the free lunch program, Mollett understands the significance of variety and options. The NHS, lunch staff and high school administration are looking for compromise to provide students with a multitude of options.

"I see it both ways, honestly, because I think that it's good to give kids options but I fight bail either way. Kids, any ninth or 12th grader, can bug their parents for money because they want to go to the Cougar Den, and they can always say the lines are too long, or I don't like the food, or whatever else. Some kids are spending five or six dollars a day at the Cougar Den when they could be getting something for free at lunch," Mollett said.



An average school lunch including one entree, a fruit or vegetable and a carton of milk. Photo by: L. Harleton.

Box Elder bugs hit Annapolis

Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design Editor

Annapolis High School is facing an unexpected crisis: a significant bug problem. The bug increase has become a schoolwide challenge, requiring effort from students, staff, and administrators to implement effective solutions and restore the learning environment. More specifically, the bugs are more commonly known as Box Elder bugs and they are most active during summer and fall which explains why they are lively now. In Annapolis, the upstairs classrooms have been more frequently affected by this issue.

Business teacher Allison Meyer has experienced several issues with bugs in her classroom. The wave of bugs has interrupted Meyer's teaching time, forcing her to pause instruction and instead take preventive measures to ensure her students' comfort within her classroom.

"It's disrupted when students are alarmed that the bugs come really close to them and they get scared, so I don't want them to freak out, so then I offer to vacuum the bug so that they feel comfortable again in class... I try to do like a full sweep at once, then go back to doing what we're doing," Meyers said.

Although the bugs are not harmful, they are disrupting the learning environment and causing staff to have unwanted guests in their classrooms, leaving students feeling uneasy in their classes. While teachers like Meyer are taking precautions, Meyer believes the school administration is also working to eliminate the root cause of the problem.

"They were trying to get the company to talk about cutting the trees back so they weren't so close to the building and couldn't crawl right on the building, they were raking the leaves and all the seeds from down there that they like to eat...and then Jake [the maintenance worker] caulked the gap, the huge gap that I saw [between the window]. They're doing what they can, they even have another step if it doesn't work. They were talking about doing like pest control outside," Meyer said.

While the administration works to address the cause, students continue adapting to the situation. Junior Nariah Leggs, believes that the constant presence of bugs is more than just an interruption; it is causing genuine discomfort and anxiety within the student body.

"I'm not scared of bugs, I think they're okay, but it's a little unnerving seeing them crawl out of the water fountain filter, which is really weird...if you go into the bathroom, there's like a whole bunch of speckles of bugs crawling on the ledge, I had one girl, I saw her, like it was crawling on her, so I feel for those students who have that," Leggs said.

While Leggs remains calm about the situation and shows empathy for those who are bothered, senior Aniya Woods admits that the ongoing infestation makes her feel uneasy and even scared to be in the library.

"I think the bugs are very disgusting and scary, and they don't belong in the school, like, inside the school should be my safe place, you know...I'm always scared that a bug is gonna land in my hair, and im not gonna notice till later on...It's actually disgusting and I'm scared to be in the library," Woods said.

The ongoing bug problem has left students not only uncomfortable but also doubtful of the school's effort. Leggs believes the administration has yet to take the necessary preventive steps to ensure a cleaner and safer school environment.

"I don't necessarily think [the school is taking preventive measures to ensure our safety], I know they got a pesticide treatment back in like, I believe September or July, but I feel like that only treated the outside areas... I think there should be like a pesticide treatment inside the school, which I am pretty sure they haven't done yet, especially during the summer...If it's bad here, I have no idea how bad it is at the elementary schools and middle schools, but it's like pretty bad here, it's pretty trashy," Leggs said.

The infestation at Annapolis High School has challenged both staff and students, disrupting learning and raising concerns about safety and cleanliness. While the administration takes steps to resolve the issue, the frustration among staff and students highlights the need for long-lasting solutions. With the continuous effort, AHS will soon return to a clean, safe, and focused learning environment.



Allison Meyer taking prevention measures by vacuuming up bugs in her classroom.
Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



The tree that has branches cut by maintenance to prevent bugs from entering the school. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Bugs found lingering in the girls bathroom.
Photo by: A. Meyer.

Artist spotlight: junior Isabella Sims

Montserrat Barba '27 | Broadcast Editor

Junior Isabella Sims is a wildly creative individual with a passion to create. She takes inspiration from various art styles and methods of illustration to incorporate into her work. Drawing is not a new love, she has had an interest in it for years.

"I've been drawing since, probably like, fourth grade. You get better every year you go, you know? I actually have a collection in a folder that are dated back," Sims said.

Since the addition of new AHS art teacher Kelly Potter, Sims has been creating more in-depth and meaningful artwork. She has expressed how having a great art teacher has opened the doors to a world of creation.

"With the sketchbook assignments in Ms. Potter's class, I really challenge myself with making more complex art work," Sims said.

Sims has taken art classes throughout her entire high school career, and the class she is currently taking this semester is Art 2. At this moment Sims is working on a Tim

Burton styled Victorian structure, inspired by the creepy and unsettling vibe of Burton's art. Students are given a choice between a Victorian style home or a character portrait in a Tim Burton style.

Beyond just creating art as a hobby, Sims has further plans to pursue. She imagines her future in a creative environment and inspiring environment with artistic skills and the opportunity to share her work with others who will appreciate it.

"My dream job, if everything works out, is to be a tattoo artist," Sims said.

To reach her goal of becoming a tattoo artist she plans on receiving education by attending an art school, preferably on the east coast.

"I've always liked the east coast, like you know those TikTok videos where they're sitting right out their window in a New York apartment, and they just sit there and sketch the people walking by? I think that'd be a lot easier in a big city. There'd be a lot more inspiration there," Sims said.

"Either write something that is worth reading, or do something that is worth writing."



Congratulations to Amanda Steger and The Cougar Crier staff for 51 years of journalism excellence in District 7.

Write on, Cougars!

JOHN ZADIKIAN

MULTIMEDIA



Art project of Nirvana's album cover "In Utero," drawn by Sims during her freshman year. Photo by: I. Sims.



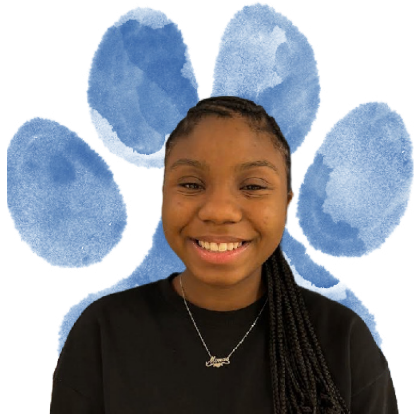
Isabella Sims sketch of her Tim Burton Victorian style home. Photo by: I. Sims.

Sketch book pages for Potter's art class, with drawings including texture and different expressions. Photos by: I. Sims.

Cougar Bites

As Thanksgiving approaches, students look forward to a break from school and time with their friends and family. This month, we asked students: what's your favorite Thanksgiving tradition?

Isabella Poulos '27 | Feature Editor



Monae Jones

Class of 2026

“All my family comes to the house and like it is all together and eat food.”



Layan Hamdan

Class of 2028

“I like spending time with my family and having dinner with them.”



Joshua Flores

Class of 2026

“Thanksgiving, so we eat in the morning and then we just bake the rest of the day.”



Hachem Dabaja

Class of 2028

“When my siblings come to my house and we cook and have dinner together.”



Caitlyn Kennedy

Class of 2027

“Watching football on the TV with my family.”



Nevaeh Jones

Class of 2029

“To be with my family and just play games.”



Izayah Mooney

Class of 2027

“I like to cook some food and watch the football game.”



Anthony Harris

Class of 2029

“Being with my family and eating lots of food.”

POWDERPUFF

Kimmy Le '27 | Lifestyle Editor & Co-Design Editor & Kalyssa Gunter '26 | Archive Manager

On Friday, Nov. 14, the Class of 2026 hosted their second Powderpuff game at Chircop Field. This year, the senior and sophomore team secured their victory over the junior and freshman team with a score of (8-0), which marks their second winning streak since last year.

Powderpuff is a flag football game played by all classes to give girls the opportunity to play football as the boys cheer on the sideline, which reverses the traditional gender roles seen during football season. This offers an interesting perspective on sports, as both teams get to experience roles that are usually dominated by the opposite gender, while students and parents get to come out to show their support.

During the game, both teams played competitively against each other. However, neither team received a touchdown until the senior and sophomore scored by the end of third quarter. As the game continued, the senior and sophomore team stayed in the lead as they gained an advantage from the opposing junior and freshman team after they mistakenly ran to the wrong side to score a touchdown, which led them to score 2 additional points. Although the competition was intense, both teams managed to show good sportsmanship by maintaining cordial behavior while playing overall.

Both football teams were led by players from Annapolis's varsity football team, with Cameron Lauer, Caire'dell Wilson and Jammie Moultrie coaching the senior and sophomore team, and Ian Steffes, Khoder Chamas and Ian Dawson coaching the junior and freshman team. Using their knowledge in football, these student coaches were able to help prepare the girls for their game and ensure that the event ran successfully.

On the sidelines, the boy's cheer team consisted of only four cheerleaders. Despite their low number of participation, the team was supported by Annapolis's varsity cheer team and with their help, they were able to learn eleven cheers to perform during the game.



Senior and sophomore team after winning the Powderpuff game. Photo by K.Le



Photos by: K. Le

CHEER Highlight



Photos by: K. Le



MADISON GEORGE
Class of 2027

"It was very fun participating and I would so do it again next year! It is competitive and fun and also a challenge and hard work pays off. My favorite part while playing in the Powderpuff is all the laughs and hard work people put in."

George, far left, posing with teammates after the game. Photo by K. Le



BRAHIM HAMMOUD
Class of 2026

"It's new, it's a feeling of pride I would say. My favorite memory would be when the cheer coach brought the cheer tutus and one of the basketball players tried to take a picture of us, so we all ran after him to delete it. It doesn't compare, for me it was harder than other sports because there are a lot of choreographies and routines to remember, which makes one single mistake noticeable unlike other sports."

Hammoud, middle, waving cheer poms during the game. Photo by K. Le



LAINY LAUER
Class of 2029

"It's an amazing change, being able to play on the field is more intense although cheering is also intense. Playing on the field just shows me how much more of a connection I have with the game. I used to think football was just throwing a ball and running but now I see it is way more than that. I now see the athleticism and energy that goes into it."

Lauer, left, posing with teammate during the game. Photo by K. Le



Graphics by: Canva

EXPERIENCES from Powderpuff participants

Favorite fall jams

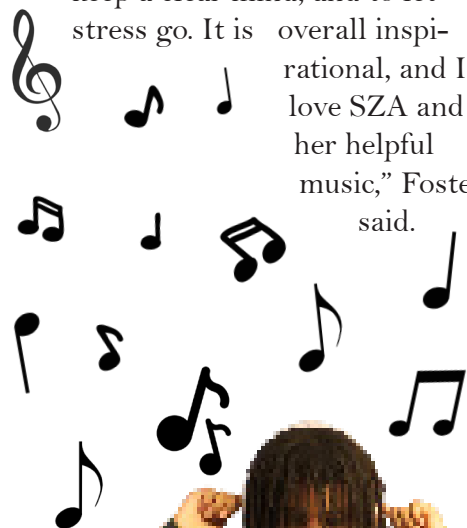
Lexi Cadzow '26 | Photo Editor

Graphics by: Canva.

Gabrielle Foster

Good Days - SZA

“My favorite lyrics from the song Good Days are ‘Good day in my mind, safe to take a step out, Get some air now, let your edge out.’ I love these lyrics from the song because they remind me to keep a clear mind, and to let stress go. It is overall inspirational, and I love SZA and her helpful music,” Foster said.



Foster posing with SZA “CTRL” album shirt.



Photos by: L. Cadzow.

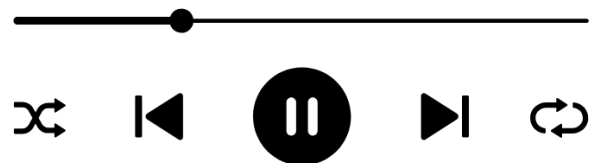
Ian Dawson

Back to the Old House - The Smiths

“One of my favorite lyrics would be ‘I would love to go back to the old house but I never will.’ Reason being it relates to wanting to go back to something or someone but knowing it would be a bad choice with the negativity and bad memories that comes with it. I think that you can love, want, and yearn for someone or something from a distance without going back,” Dawson said.



Dawson tuning out the noise.



Olivia Garcia

Cherry Flavoured - The Neighborhood

“My favorite verse would be ‘Cherry flavoured conversations with you Got me hanging on Down to earth from all the waiting Take me somewhere beyond.’ I interpret “cherry-flavoured” conversations to have meaningful and deep but light-hearted conversations with someone that you love and care about; those are the best kinds of conversations to have. There are many different meanings to the song, but I view it in a more light-hearted way because that speaks to me more,” Garcia said.



Garcia showcasing her favorite lyrics.



PUMPKIN PIE

SHOWDOWN

The Cougar Crier staff rate different pumpkin pies.

Ava Vasquez '26 | News Editor

MARIE CALLENDER'S PIE



5 out of 5
Cougar paws



“Very crispy, it had more cinnamon than the other two, and it had the most sweetness,” Broadcast Producer Rodolfo Gaona said.

“It tasted like taking a bite out of Hobby Lobby, like too much nutmeg” Lifestyle Editor Kimmy Le said.

2 out of 5
Cougar paws



MRS. SMITH'S PIE

“The way it tasted was so immaculate, it really had that pumpkin taste and put me in that fall mood,” Social Media Manager Evalynn Blevins said.



5 out of 5
Cougar paws



KROGER'S BRAND



Ava Vasquez cutting pumpkin pie for the Cougar Crier staff to taste test.

Cougar Den: gone too soon

Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design editor

In late October, the Cougar Den, run by National Honor Society (NHS), was ultimately shut down and closed indefinitely. This abrupt closure caused confusion and students such as myself to go hungry throughout the school day.

In 2014, the Michigan Government implemented the “No Smart Snacks In Schools” act, which discouraged schools from selling junk food during lunch. Recently, this act was enforced, which led to the Cougar Den’s closure during the lunch times. The law limits what the NHS can sell. While the law aims to promote healthy eating, it is also closing doors on a place that meant more than just snacks to students and NHS members.

Students used the Cougar Den as a way to escape the lunchroom and all of the whole-grain food they offer. Furthermore, the lunch lines have recently stopped selling snacks, which prevents students from receiving an alternative lunch. As someone who used to visit the

Cougar Den regularly, it is truly upsetting to see a place that used to bring students together fade away. The Cougar Den had a variety of snacks, able to fit students’ cravings and cater to students’ happiness. Any time I craved a snack, the Cougar Den was always there to provide treats and fit my every need.

Members of the National Honor Society are required to have two hours of community service by working at the Cougar Den. Now that the Den is only open before and after school, the service hours that used to be easy access have now become a struggle to achieve the required hours. As a member who does dual enrollment for the first two hours of school and has an after-school job, this frustrates me because I am no longer able to work the Cougar Den and gain my required hours. When completing service hours, National Honor Society members will no longer have access to these easy hours. If two

out of the ten hours are not completed from the Cougar den, members could face serious consequences and could be removed from the club. Working in the Cougar Den brought me closer to other members of NHS and helped me branch out to make new connections. The club had introduced me to some of my closest friends, and spending time with them in the den was always a highlight of my day. Now that the Cougar Den is closed during lunch, it is harder to connect with other members and build the same sense of community that once made NHS feel so special.

The Cougar Den’s closure might seem like a small change, but to students like myself, it represents the loss of a community space that encouraged involvement and connection. While promoting healthy choices is important, schools should also consider the impact of these decisions on students. Finding a way to reopen the Cougar Den with healthier options could give the

students the best of both worlds, a place where students and National Honor Society members, like myself, can gather without breaking the Smart Snacks law.



Evalynn Blevins thinking of the snacks she could get from the Cougar Den. Photo by: L. Harleton & A. Alkaqany. Graphics by: Canva.

Alternative sweeteners, real consequences

Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design editor



The lunch line offers a variety of sugar-free beverages. Photo by: E. Blevins.

Everywhere you look, places like vending machines, cafeterias, and even school stores have sugar-free drinks taking over their storage. Diet sodas and sugar-free beverages are marked as the healthier

alternative, but I feel as if sugar-free drinks are just a different kind of unhealthy. Companies advertise that they are a healthier option, but it does not excuse the fact that they are substituted with other harmful

components.

The audacity that these companies to blind their customers with “artificial sweeteners” is truly infuriating. The companies confuse their customers and prey on their ignorance, knowing that they are looking for a quick alternative to stay away from the fattening side effects of sugary drinks. When I am searching for a quick drink, I typically avoid the sugar-free drinks because they overall do not taste as good as their better alternative. I would rather have a beverage that satisfies my cravings than one that’s

marketed as “healthy” but offers no real reward.

Most sugar-free drinks use artificial sweeteners like aspartame and acesulfame potassium. These chemicals are created to mimic the taste of sugar, and while they cut calories, they do not come without consequences. When these chemicals are substituted and are put into drinks like “Coke Zero,” they can lead to potential health concerns like type two diabetes and metabolic syndrome. It is concerning that these ingredients are being served to students like me as the so-called “health-

ier” option. As a student, seeing zero-sugar drinks in the lunch line aggravates me. I am mature enough to decide what I can drink, and it saddens me that the government makes these decisions to restrict sugary drinks even though both types of drinks have harmful consequences.

Personally, I prefer the sugary drinks because they have a more potent taste and satisfy my needs. I am never going to pick the sugar-free option over the sugary one, and I am left unsatisfied after every forced sip of sugar-free pop at school.

Put an end to Edmentum

Rodolfo Gaona '26 | Broadcast Editor

Students of Annapolis High School are forced to complete 40 unbearable minutes of the Edmentum math exact path every week. Edmentum is an online learning platform that was incorporated into Annapolis's curriculum last school year. I believe that Edmentum is pointless and takes away time from seniors and staff who need class time and Multi-Purpose Period (MP2).

Students must complete the set amount of time each week or they will face an absurd grade deduction in their MP2 class. However, the amount of time required to be completed has remained inconsistent as the week of Oct. 27, only 20 minutes were required. The platform features a teaching system that allows students to type nonsense answers, ignore video lessons, and Google their way through diagnostic tests. To make matters worse, teachers are required to give students time out of their own class in order for students to begrudgingly complete Edmentum.

Select core and elective teachers are required to give up 20 minutes of their personal class time so that students can complete half of their assigned Edmentum time. This takes away the opportunity from students who want to actually learn in their core class but have that time taken away due to the math learning path. For example, my Government class was reaching the deadline of a President project, leaving us with three days to complete the assignment. Two days before the deadline, our teacher was forced to have us do Edmentum, taking time away

from my project and potentially damaging my grade. This inconvenience could have been avoided if the planning for Edmentum was made more manageable for students and staff to balance with other regular classes.

Another example of the absurdity of Edmentum is how elective classes also must provide class time for students to complete their minutes. We were assigned to do 20 minutes of Edmentum in my second hour Jazz Band elective class. It is so perplexing that we would have to do math in a music based learning class. While our teacher Jaime Nassar is qualified to help with math problems, it is utterly inconvenient for Nassar and other elective teachers as well to assist students with a subject that is outside of their main teaching basis.

As a senior, my time in MP2 could be spent more usefully by applying for colleges, writing scholarship essays, and booking college tours. Instead, seniors along with every class have to spend their MP2 doing math they were previously already taught, in a system that rewards slacking. This massive waste of time is not beneficial, nor productive and leads students to have negative morale instead of constructive learning.

As I finish out my senior year, I will begrudgingly do my math Edmentum minutes every week. Hopefully, the administration will plot a better system over time. Students and staff alike will see the positive or negative benefits over the course of their years at Annapolis.

A Turkey Touchdown

Cameron Lauer '26 | Sports Editor

Watching football on Thanksgiving is something I look forward to every year; it is a tradition across the country that brings families closer together on the special holiday. Football offers an exciting form of entertainment, whether you attend the game in person or watch it from home.

From the effect of seeing impressive plays, the energy from the crowd and celebrations after a touchdown, to parents screaming in joy or disbelief makes it all the more special. The festive decorations and football advertisements on television are just a bonus addition to the joyous holiday that everyone eagerly anticipates. Before the big meal, gathering together and enjoying a sport can create fun memories and laughs for families to cherish forever.

Whether or not a family is a fan of football, it still brings an element of excitement. My family always watches the big games on Thanksgiving. I love being around my family, watching my favorite sport and indulging in a big plate of delicious food. But just by watching the game, it is another activity that allows for a calm, fun environment for conversing and enjoying time together with loved ones. Along with the big game, it also calls for our very own flag football game to commence. Activities that are amusing and have a festive theme around them add a unique bonding experience between families. The team that started the tradition of football on Thanksgiving was the Detroit Lions, back in 1934.

This may be why the big games are very exciting to Michigan football fans, taking pride in their home National Football League (NFL) team and tradition. Since there are usually only one or two games on the television throughout the day, it makes it so much more exciting when big plays happen because everyone is typically watching the same game. Overall, football is the perfect addition to an already wonderful holiday. I look forward to spending this Thanksgiving watching football, and spending time with my family.



Seniors of the Cougar Crier completing Edmentum despite a deadline due the next day. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Ella Herbon's swim season started in August and finished up in November. Herbon and the team have put months of hard work in, which shows through Herbon's meet results. To Herbon, swim did not come easy. Since sixth grade, Herbon has been working towards becoming the record holder she is now. Her progress in the last few years is apparent, growing not only individually, but also with her team. Competing in the 100 breaststroke is Herbon's main strength, beating the school's previous record. She is excited to continue swimming throughout her high school career and hopefully beyond.

Ella Herbon swims to *States*

Breyonna Wallace '26 | Opinion Editor

Q: What lessons has swim taught you that you use outside of the pool?

A: "I think a big life lesson [swim] has taught me is that everybody has different abilities and that the more you do the sport you love, the more friendships you build and the more friendships you carry on throughout your life," Herbon said.

Q: Do you have other advice you would give people in swim?

A: "A lot of people don't look at it because it's definitely not one of the more popular sports, but I would say it's learning how to swim is probably one of the biggest things you should learn in your life, be-

cause you never know like where you're going to find yourself, and swimming as a sport is just fun..." Herbon said.

Q: How has being part of the team influenced you?

A: "... You have to kind of develop different personalities with different people, and the more you swim with some people, the more you can support them while they're swimming, and while you're on the team, you can develop a friendship you wouldn't have gotten just from walking in the halls with these people, and you can really help support them in a different way," Herbon said.

Herbon showing good sportsmanship with the opposing team. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Herbon performing butterfly during her meet. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Herbon putting her name and record on to the personal record board. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.

Basketball bouncing back

Ali Alwan '26 | Ad Manager



Coach Jay coaching the varsity basketball team. Photo by: E.Blevins.

The Annapolis High School basketball team went through a significant struggle during the 2024-2025 season. Players were quitting, coaches gave up, and the losses kept on stacking. The final record of last year's season was 1-22. However, with the arrival of new head JV Coach Nathan Koska and the recent promotion of Head Coach Jay Lampkin to the varsity squad, the team hopes to prevail for the better.

Coach Koska went to Annapolis, and grew up in the area. Koska played basketball throughout high school and still has a strong passion for the sport. He has had coaching experience at the middle school level and has been an active member of the local D7 Dads' Club.

"We want to change the culture, clean sweep the culture that's been around, make these kids better on and off court," Koska said. "There is

no I in team."

Koska believes that on the court, teamwork is what really can control a team. Whether it is making call outs, helping each other with homework, or giving each other rides to practice, teamwork is what makes a strong-minded squad.

Varsity Head Coach Jay Lampkin also brings his leadership to the varsity basketball team. Lampkin has been coaching for 26 years. Within those years, he has been the junior varsity coach at Annapolis for the past three years.

"If you create the culture, the change will occur," Lampkin said.

Lampkin talks about how Annapolis has been for some years as a varsity team. Players not being focused on grades or having conflicting interests outside of the court, all of which have an impact on the team. Ultimately, Lampkin wants to compete for the league's championship and become the most improved team within the conference during the upcoming 2025-2026 season.

While the coaches are gearing

up for the season, the players are also thrilled for this upcoming season. When asked about the new varsity basketball coach, senior Gael Martinez said, "I'm excited. He's a coach that really brings the most competitive side out of us."

Martinez has already been coached under Lampkin. Seeing him rise to the varsity coach position motivates Martinez and the rest of the older players. Alongside Martinez, junior Izayah Mooney is also excited for the upcoming season.

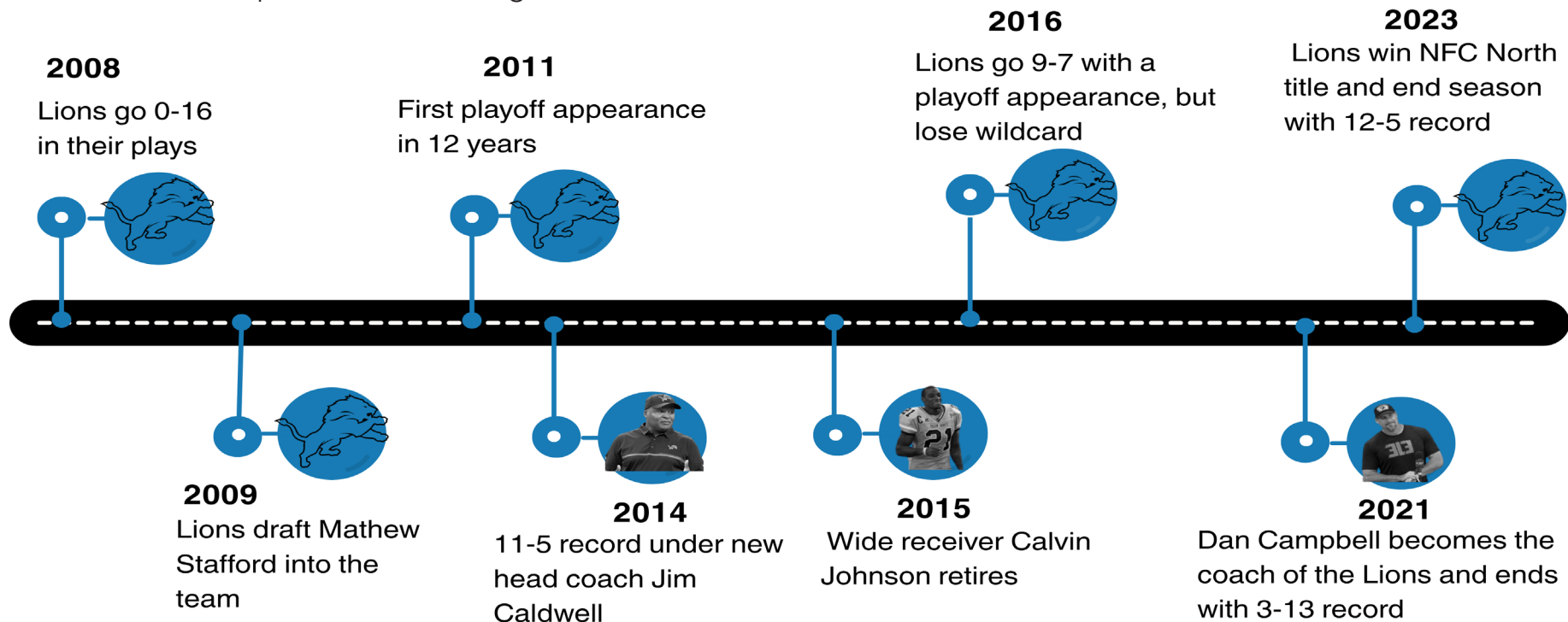
"We're going to prove ourselves this year to everyone. We are ready to take on anyone," Mooney said.

"To be better as a team, it starts with the coach. Our new coach is bringing us more discipline to make sure we play better as a team," Mooney said.

With the combined dedication and hard work from Koska or Lampkin, the Annapolis High School basketball team is ready to flip the page into the next chapter of the program.

The Lions road to success

Osama Alaumari '28 | Circulation Manager



Graphics by Canva



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