



# Cougar Daily's "The Potty Mouth" 11/20-12/3

## The Bathroom Sensation That's Sweeping the Nation

Hello Cougars! Depending on when you're reading this, it's either before Thanksgiving break, or after! I hope you enjoyed your time off if it's after, and keep in mind the first semester is almost done! Start preparing for your finals ahead of time, since they are quickly approaching!

### Reexamining the Origins and Myths of Thanksgiving

The Thanksgiving narrative most Americans grow up with—a harmonious feast in 1621 between Pilgrims and Native Americans—paints a simplified and often misleading picture of the holiday's origins. A closer look at history reveals a more complex and somber reality, marked by cooperation and conflict, cultural exchanges, and eventual violence.

The 1621 gathering was less of a Thanksgiving as we understand it today and more of a diplomatic meeting. The English settlers of Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoag people, led by Chief Massasoit, had signed a mutual aid treaty earlier that year. Both groups, reeling from population losses—up to 90% of Native Americans had died from European-borne diseases—sought survival through this fragile alliance. The three-day harvest celebration, attended by about 90 Wampanoag men and the settlers, symbolized cautious collaboration rather than lasting harmony. It was likely a mixture of diplomacy and necessity, with no evidence suggesting it became an annual tradition immediately afterward (*Smithsonian; Reader's Digest*).

The popular story of a peaceful celebration omits darker truths. The Wampanoag were not formally invited to the feast, and some accounts suggest they arrived to investigate gunfire mistaken for a threat. The image of enduring friendship also contrasts with the violence that

followed in later years, including the Pequot Massacre of 1637, after which colonists declared a "day of thanksgiving" to celebrate the killings. Such celebrations often commemorated colonial victories over Indigenous peoples rather than shared gratitude (*Reader's Digest; DoSomething.org*).

Moreover, the portrayal of Pilgrims introducing "civilization" to Native Americans overlooks the advanced societies Indigenous peoples had established long before European arrival. The Wampanoag and other tribes had complex agricultural, cultural, and spiritual systems, including their own harvest festivals, which settlers adapted into their traditions (*Smithsonian; Reader's Digest*).

Thanksgiving became a federal holiday in 1863, proclaimed by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War to foster unity; however, the sanitized story that emerged obscured the violence of colonization, perpetuating myths that justify westward expansion and ignore Native perspectives. For many Indigenous people, Thanksgiving is observed as a National Day of Mourning to honor their ancestors and highlight ongoing struggles (*Smithsonian; Reader's Digest*).

Recognizing the full history of Thanksgiving invites reflection on its meaning today. Celebrating gratitude while acknowledging Indigenous resilience and contributions offers a more inclusive approach. Learning from Native voices, supporting Indigenous communities, and reevaluating traditions are steps toward honoring the holiday's complex legacy.

### Upcoming Events

| Wednesday<br>11/20                            | Thursday<br>11/21 | Friday<br>11/22  | Saturday<br>11/23                  | Monday<br>12/2 | Tuesday<br>12/3                               |
|---|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Winter Sports Parent Meeting @ Main Gym (6pm) |                   | Southern Colorado Honors Orchestra Varsity Bowling State @ TBD (TBD) | Southern Colorado Honors Orchestra |                | Band and Orchestra Concert @ Auditorium (7pm) |



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