

The Marion Varsity Girls Bowling Team starts fresh. **4**

Taylor Lamm, '14



Beginning again: going out for a sport senior year. **5**

Bailee Seger, '14



### Terrorizing tradition

A new holiday tradition has swept across the nation and into the homes of innocent children everywhere. "Elf on the Shelf" is a recently popular Christmas trend. Read about what these creepy elves are for and learn about a plan to get rid of these tiny terrors. **3**

### New wrestler joins the team

Many think of wrestling as simply a male sport, but this year we have a girl on the team. Elissa Johnson, junior, has become a great new asset to the squad, and she loves it. She is totally comfortable with the entire situation, and has her own goals and hardships that she would like to overcome and accomplish this year. She believes she is just another member of the team. **13**

### Suicide prevention

As more and more teenagers turn to suicide, more and more families lose someone whom they love so much. When someone commits suicide, they are hurting way more than just themselves. Be aware of the hardships of suicide and help to prevent these tragedies. **2**

### DIY: Tree ornament

Find out how to make your own snow globe Christmas ornament. It is relatively easy to make, and it displays a cute, tiny decoration of choice. Few materials needed. **6**

### Hockey on the road

Being in high school, it is easy to understand the amount of time needed to complete school work. Now imagine that, except add in a traveling sports team, in which traveling each weekend to another state is not abnormal. This is the life that freshman hockey player, Erik Kasner, lives. **4**

## The long wait and the joyous return

Jasmine Petty, senior, anxiously awaits the return of her military boyfriend for the holidays.

By: Kayla Comried, @KComried

The excitement and joy of the Christmas season is a feeling unquarable by any other. Spirit fills the air as our country becomes a place for giving and love. Families once again reunite to spend time together and make memories that will forever be cherished, and couples hope to form unbreakable bonds as they feel the sparkle in the air.

These December days filled with holiday happiness are meant to be spent with those closest to the heart, but what if those loved ones can't always be home for the holidays? What if the people who should always be there, can't be because they are fighting for everyone else around?

This is the risk that military personnel are forced to take when they are away. They might not always make it home to be with their loved ones and feel that magic, and they might not make it home, to experience those moments with family, that will eventually become cherished memories.

Jasmine Petty, senior, has been in a relationship with a member of the National Guard for two and a half years. He is currently stationed in Virginia doing basic training, and he gets to come home for the holidays. "He was gone for Thanksgiving, but he will be home for Christmas," explained Petty.

She is extremely happy and excited for his return home, but having a boyfriend in the military is not only hard around the holidays. "One time



Jasmine Petty, senior, and her boyfriend, 2012 Marion graduate Alex Hunter, enjoy spending time together while in South Carolina at his base.

we didn't get to talk on the phone for three months, only letter," she said.

To everyone else this may seem like it would be a completely negative experience, but Petty has taken some good out of it. "I think it has made our relationship stronger, because we've had the chance to miss each other." While looking at the positive side, it is still important to see what people like this go through, as their loved ones are gone for months at a time.

Now, she waits with anticipation to see him again, and for them to feel

that Christmas magic together. He luckily gets to travel back home for the holiday, but many in the military aren't so fortunate. Many will be away from their kids, parents, siblings, boyfriends, girlfriends, spouses, and others that they care greatly about. So don't take for granted the people who we are all so blessed to have around for the holidays, because many people in places thousands of miles away are giving up their holiday so we here can have a great one.

## The man inside the famous red Santa suit

By: Savannah Guyer @SavannahMGuyer

Santa Claus is known worldwide as the holly, jolly man who spreads happiness to children everywhere, and many equally jolly volunteers are needed to fill those big black boots come Christmastime. Two of these North Pole-inspired volunteers, John and Kelli Kelchen, are the joy-bringers of their small town.

Before stepping into the giant pants of Santa, John was in the military for 22 years, seven in the army and 15 in the Air Force flying a C-17, "It went by fast," John commented. He now flies as

a pilot for Rockwell Collins. Kelli, when she's not Mrs. Claus, is also the Easter Bunny in the spring.

The couple are the second generation of Claus', taking over John's parent's duties and keeping the Christmas cheer alive in young children in Robins, "My dad, for many years, was Santa for several events. Then he started visiting the neighborhood. Eventually word got around, and the city asked him to be Santa for the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Three years ago he decided to hang up his Santa hat. Then the city asked us if we would like to follow in his footsteps, and that's how it got started," John said.

After they have lit the community tree, everyone returns to the fire station and the kids line up with hot chocolate and candy canes for their special moment with the Santa couple. "We try to get parents to tell us their names, this year they even wore name tags. It makes them feel special when we remember. We try to make it as personal as possible," Kelli stated.

Although there is one drawback to being Santa, the beard and mustache which get quite annoying sometimes, Mr. and Mrs. Claus really enjoy their roles. "It's the best thing to see their genuine, innocent Christmas spirit," Kelli said. "It's not about the toys for them, they're just excited to see us. Some kids even come in their best clothes, it means a lot to them," John commented.

To Kelli and John, nothing means more than seeing the children's adoring smiles, "We'll keep doing it as long as they have it. Or until we grow out of our clothes," Kelli said with a laugh. With the Kelchen's help, Christmas traditions and spirits will be withheld in kids for many years to come.



John and Kelli Kelchen make their way through the cheerful town of Robins disguised as the Claus', a yearly tradition for them.

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# The tribulations of being a survivor

Find out how suicide affects the survivor, those surrounding the victim, of suicide.

By: Uriah Lekin @uriah\_thechamp

It's a problem many people, especially teenagers face to today, Suicide. According to the Jason Foundation website, more teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease combined. Also, according to the Jason Foundation, more than 5,400 students between the grades 7 and 12 attempt suicide each day. The talk about people taking their life could go on for hours and organizations and hotlines can be made but what about the victims. The act of suicide has a ripple effect on those who love the one who killed themselves.

For someone who takes their life away their pain and suffering ends but it's moved from one heart to another, the friends and family. It's not a fun feeling being the victim of a sad act such as this. The feeling is paralyzing, the victim is three times more prone to commit suicide, according to a Karl Ross-ton, a suicide prevention coordinator. The answer is all but hidden and it's so hidden that some don't even know if there is one. The answer is hard to grasp but easy

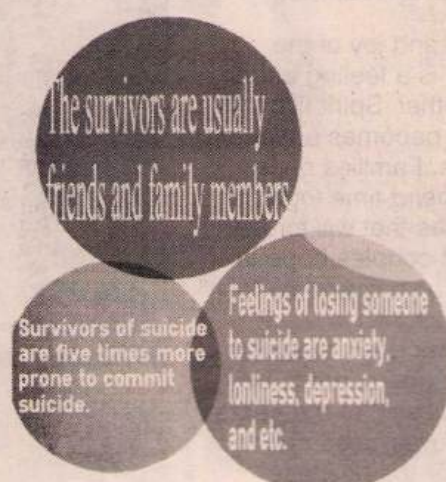
to achieve. When the feeling sets in once someone finds out about a loved one dying, their happiness is stolen so quickly it felt like it wasn't even there. The struggle begins then the road they were pushed onto would soon test their hearts, minds, and souls. It will probably be one of the darkest hours they will ever face.

They are called survivors of suicide and they must somehow navigate a lifetime journey of grief, guilt and confusion. They comprise a significant and growing segment of the population. According to the American Association of Suicidology, for every suicide there are about six direct victims. "If I only had..." The number one saying by people who have had a friend or family member commit suicide. Its thought that will plague that person's mind until they pass. Getting through this is a major ordeal for the victim. The journey to learning to cope with this tragic event is hard and it sure is not easy.

This journey isn't a "Gotta buck up and deal

with it" kind of thing. Its a journey to fixing yourself. It takes time, lots of it and it also takes some self reflecting a job some may not like doing. This event challenges the victims in many different ways and when they see the light and conquer their grief and despair they become a stronger person than before. These victims have help, like support groups or even the suicide prevention hotline, but just know whoever is going through this, they are not alone.

## The facts on survivors of suicide



This shows what some of the effects that suicide can have on the survivors.

# Victoria's secret revealed

So I was walking through the mall the other day and I noticed a group of middle-school aged boys strolling past the Victoria's Secret in their snapbacks and hip-hop related t-shirts. I saw one of the boys try to push the other jokingly into the entrance of the girl's clothing store and it caused flashbacks of the same thing happening to my friends and I when we were younger too. We would also joke around with each other and playfully shove one another into Victoria's Secret.

Then I came to the realization that kids are just fascinated with this store and I really wondered why. Sure there are always huge pictures of half-naked women on the front of the store, but other than that, it's not that interesting. I remember being in middle school and just being obsessed about the mystery surrounding Victoria's Secret. I was constantly worrying about what the secret was. What was Victoria hiding from me and all the other boys in the universe?

Now that I'm older, I also realized that I wasn't alone and still to this day, I am not alone. This isn't a story where it ends with me finding the "secret" and fulfilling my quest. I still don't know the big deal about Victoria's Secret and why people act so weird about it. From what I understand, a lot of girls buy sweatshirts, sweatpants, and yoga pants and stuff like that from there. Sure, the store is funny because it's a big seller of bras and underwear. I still laugh inside at the thought of writing the word, "bra". But for real though, why are we intrigued by this type of humor?

Stepping inside a Victoria's Secret is a huge step in becoming a man for most males. It's a very awkward feeling when all these women and girls are staring at you because you are the only guy in the store. Whether you went in there with "your bros", friends who are girls, or even your mom, it is still an eye-opening experience.

As I sat down and thought about how to end this chapter of the saga known as my column, I came to a realization that I did figure out Victoria's infamous secret. Are you ready for it? It's about to get real. The secret is, that there is no secret. It is just another store. Sure, it's a store with very distracting advertisements and a hypnotizing feel. But other than that, it's just a clothing store. Girls are just weird about it and it confused the male race. Come to think of it, that was probably Victoria's goal all along....



By: Gage Miskimen @gagemisky

# The truth about bad driving

By: Becca Hall @backkahhh12

As with any new task, skill, or hobby, driving is not something that a person just knows how to do. When a 16th birthday is celebrated, the ability to drive isn't something that is just wrapped up and given with a card and there is no magical genie or fairy to cast that kind of knowledge on every teen with a simple wave of a wand. Driving is a skill that has to be taught and learned over time. Sure, one person might have a quicker reaction time or another may know directions really well but people certainly don't just come out of the womb knowing how to parallel park. Since

typically many start driving at 16, high schools are inevitably full of new drivers.

When someone is new at something, they could be categorized as "bad", and even though new drivers have to go through drivers ed classes and testing, many are still learning the ropes of driving within the next few years. A large majority of drivers in high school have only been driving for about two years, so they are still categorized as new drivers. Many are very hypocritical when comparing their driving to their friends driving, and many often call each other bad drivers. The reality is that most high school drivers could be considered bad drivers. This doesn't mean that they are unsafe

or incapable of driving, it just means that when faced with quick decisions, they might make silly mistakes. Calling a friend or classmate a bad driver won't make you any better at driving. The fact of the matter is that most high school students have their embarrassing mistakes that could potentially be harmful, but if they are capable of handling the situation in an appropriate manner, then there is no reason that they should be criticized for their driving. After all, everyone makes mistakes when learning something new, especially something as complicated as operating a huge vehicle. So before judging the driving of classmates, everyone should look at their own driving and realize that mistakes are just part of learning.

# Editorial Policy

The Vox is a public forum student-run newspaper dedicated to informing and entertaining the students of Marion High School since 1934. It's published six times a year by Tri-Co Printing Company and is distributed during the final block of the school day by the journalism staff.

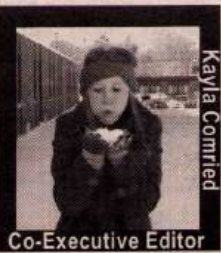
The staff will report as accurately, fairly, and objectively as possible. All activities will be covered by the staff to the best of their abilities, without showing favoritism to any group.

Letters to the editor will be printed from anyone in the community. However, The Vox retains the right to edit articles without changing the writer's intent. There is a limit of two hundred words per article and all letters must be signed in order for them to be published. The decision to include them rests solely on the staff and advisor. Turn letters in to room 22 or to any staff member.

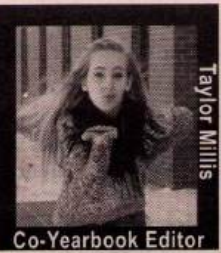
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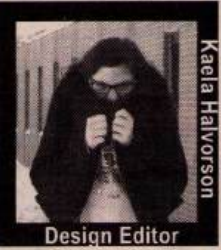
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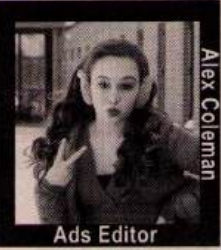
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# The terrifyingly tiny new tradition

These tiny elves of terror are supposed to be a cute new trend in holiday traditions, but some see them as a way to traumatize children and as just plain creepy.

By: Gage Miskimen @gagemisky

There is a new popular holiday tradition that's swept America by storm. It is called "Elf on the Shelf." Some people may not have heard of it, but it's this little elf doll that parents keep in their house as a game for the kids. The parents set it up somewhere in "cute" little poses and it's like a spy for Santa to keep their kids in line. Cute right? Wrong! When the person who came up with this idea sat down and presented it to whoever it was that they presented it to, didn't somebody ask, "Hey guys, isn't this a little creepy? Doesn't this elf kind of give a off a 'Chucky' vibe?" But apparently everybody else in this creative circle of terrible holiday traditions disagreed with the skeptic and carried on with the tiny, terrorizing elves anyways.

If an individual isn't even a little bit uncomfortable yet, picture this. A child is so excited for Christmas to arrive. He wakes up on a beautiful, wintry, December morning and goes to the bathroom. As he sits on the toilet, he rubs his eyes since he is still adjusting to the bright light in the room and on

top of that, he is still very sleepy. His vision is finally starting to clear as he looks over towards the bathroom counter and BAM! Creepy



These elves are taking over family's homes nationwide.

elf is sitting right there, staring deep into his eyes and even further into his soul. For a young child, this could be a very traumatizing experience. If this is not carefully considered, a kid could spend his later years in therapy and reading a bunch of unnecessary "self-help"

books to improve his confidence or anxiety or whatever. What's wrong with other traditions? Why are the dolls necessary? There are so many peaceful and fun holiday traditions like looking at lights and making cookies, that there is no need for the dolls. There should honestly just be a gigantic event where everybody gets together and burns all their creepy elves. A big bonfire of burning elves would be such a popular event to attend too. It would be fun for the whole family. Little kids

could be tossing their elf into the blazing fire while joy fills their little faces. Parents would also be grinning and feeling the holiday cheer as the elves char to a crisp. It would be a great opportunity to rid of the evil elves and bond together as a family. Everybody wins.

# Christmas chaos

Over Thanksgiving break, I was at my Grandma's with my entire family celebrating the holiday. Usually, I tend to hang around my younger cousins, which I don't mind because they're pretty entertaining people. This year however, when I sat down at the kids table,



Haley Shaffer  
By: @shafferdaffer

it could have been mistaken for World War III. Apparently my eight year old cousin Gabrielle asked for this pair of fabulous boots that she had to have, and coincidentally, my five year old cousin, McKenzie, asked for them too. Of course, that just didn't sit right with Gabrielle. They could not have the same shoes, that'd be super embarrassing, right? Right. And so began their scream-fest of yelling back and fourth, while simultaneously giving valid reasons why one deserved the boots more than other. McKenzie was winning the battle I'm pretty sure. I could tell she was thinking really hard on her comebacks, and was in full game mode. I thought she was finally victorious when she yelled out, "I already sent my Christmas list to Santa so I can't take it back now!" There it was, McKenzie had won. Gabrielle couldn't fight that, I mean McKenzie was right, you can't take back your letters to Santa; once their sent, their gone, right? Wrong. I should have known better than to think that Gabrielle would give up that easily. After thinking for a solid five seconds, she screamed, "Santa's not even real!" And just like that, McKenzie's face turned from a red beat face full of anger to sad and confused. Then looked up at me, resembling a puppy from one of the SPCA commercials, and while she fought back the tears, she said, "Is that true Haley?" I didn't want to be the one to crush her dreams of the great Santa Claus, but I froze. I didn't know what to do and before I even had time to think, Gabrielle came in like a wrecking ball on McKenzie's heart and said "Everyone knows he's not, duh McKenzie!" She was now fully sobbing and proceeded to sprint out of the room, arms flailing, and running right into the arms of the real Santa, her parents. I couldn't help but think of when I found out Santa wasn't real. My sister, who arguably has the biggest mouth ever created, told me when I was just six years old. I was crushed. My whole world was turned upside down. It was a shocking revelation realizing that the two people who raised you to be honest and to never lie, had been lying to me about one of my biggest heroes in life. But this heartbreak didn't compare to feeling that I began to feel moments later when I came to the realization that it was all a lie. Not just Santa, but the Tooth Fairy, the Easter Bunny, even the friggin' Leprechauns. None of them are actually real. With all of this coming back into my head, I looked at Gabrielle as if she were a terrorist in the world of Christmas happiness. I left the kids table only to find McKenzie balling into her mother's arm, and I have since then come to the decision that next Thanksgiving, I'm sitting at the adult's table.

# The true price to pay with beauty

By: Becca Hall @Backkahh12

A large percentage of women's daily morning routine is getting up and putting makeup on. Many settle for drugstore brands because they have a lower price. Most think that a brand name makeup is the same as drugstore makeup, just in a fancier bottle and a lot pricer. While sometimes that may be the case, there often is a very good reason to step away from the cheap choice.

Toxins can be found in many things that are used by humans on a day to day basis, but why would anyone want to put that sort of toxin directly on their skin where it can be easily absorbed into the bloodstream? Most make-up users have no clue what is in the stuff they put on their face everyday. It is often assumed that the make-up has to be safe in order to be sold, but according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration "cosmetic products and ingredients are not subject to FDA premarket approval authority, with the exception of color additives." This means that there are no required tests needed to be done before the make-up that will be applied to the faces of countless Americans is put on the shelves to be sold. According to the CNCA Health Articles, ninety percent of the ingredients regularly used in U.S. cosmetics have never been evaluated for safety. While many make-up consumers trust that what they are using is safe and

healthy, the make-up companies themselves could be just as unaware about the potentially harmful ingredients.

So, how does one know if the various make-up they use is safe? It all comes down to research. Before buying make-up, one should scan the ingredient list for various toxins. According to Rodale News, makeup should never have any sort of perfumes or fragrances in it because it can often cause skin irritation.

Also, be cautious of Parabens, preservative chemicals that have been linked to breast cancer. According to the David Suzuki Foundation, an organization based on sustainability and health, these chemicals can be found in 70-90% of makeup. If it contains any ingredient with the word "paraben" in it, steer clear.

Another ingredient that raises red flags is an anti-microbial chemical linked to thyroid damage called Triclosan. This is commonly found in antimicrobial soaps and lipsticks. Some studies show that Triclosan could be partially blamed for the rise in hard to kill superbugs like MRSA.

Knowing and recognizing these and many other harmful ingredients and additives in cosmetics and personal care products is the first step towards having healthy, beneficial makeup. So turn those makeup bottles over and take a look at what toxins are being brushed and smeared onto the faces of countless Americans.

# United States is becoming too easily offended

By: Taylor Millis @tinytmills

The United States of America. Is it the land of the free and home of the brave, or the land of the easily offended and home of the hypersensitive? Or in other words are Americans too easily offended by the things they hear others say?

In today's society people are becoming more and more sensitive to what others say. It is taboo to say anything that may offend someone else. This is evident with how many things society has deemed politically incorrect. Society seems to be stuck on politeness and niceties, but is it really that bad to offend people?

Offending people gives someone the chance to think about what they personally believe and what their morals are. If everyone constantly censors what they say just so no one gets upset, then society would be made up of people who don't have their own opinions. There would be no diversity. Without people getting offended and defensive, politics would be a thing of the past and society would become bland. Offending someone shouldn't be considered a bad thing.

This is not to say that people should go around saying whatever they want to who ever they want. There are lines that, yes, should not be crossed.

But, if we deem everything that is controversial politically incorrect, then we no longer have anything intelligent to discuss. If we all agreed and censored what we say then we would be reduced to discuss simple things like the weather.

Society is based on opinions. Democracy is based on opinions. If no one ever disagreed or was offended, then the United States wouldn't have broken off from Great Britain and there would not be a United States of America and forget about the freedoms that go along with it.

Every person is entitled to an opinion and they are entitled to voice that opinion, because without them, the United States of America would not be the land of the free and the home of the brave.



## Kasner gets the goals

Erik Kasner, freshman, shows extreme dedication to hockey, allowing him to travel the world and reach his goals.

By: Ashley Lappe  
@Ashley\_Lappe33

Looking out on the ice, thinking about what today will bring him. A fight, scoring a goal, or getting an assist, all on his mind as he skates onto the ice to practice



Erik Kasner,  
freshman

before the big game. He dreams of one day walking onto the ice rink wearing a Notre Dame jersey with his name on it. And with his dedication he is headed in the right

direction.

Erik Kasner, freshman, has spent his whole life preparing himself for the journey ahead of him. He began skating when he was only three years old and started playing hockey when he was in fourth grade. He now plays for two hockey teams: Reebok Nationals and Revolution Tier One. "I hope to play in the USHL [United States Hockey League] in the next two years and play college hockey from there or play in the CHL [Central Hockey League]," said Kasner.

Erik Kasner has a great talent that allows him to travel often. Each weekend Kasner travels to Des Moines and Minneapolis, Minnesota to play hockey. He even has plans to play in Prague, Czech Republic during the 2014 summer break.

Traveling during the school year can be difficult, he has to keep up with his homework and

study while playing in long tournaments. "It's tough it just takes more work and responsibility on my part to get all my work done. But missing days every week is hard for foreign languages and not having class time," Kasner said.

As a freshman, he has had to get used to the new setting of being in high school. He receives a lot more homework that he has to adjust to. All of the traveling he does for hockey can put a strain on school, but he continues to work hard so he can keep doing what he loves to do.

Even with all the traveling plus school, Kasner still keeps time to play other sports such as football and baseball to keep him in shape, "you have to be more in shape than you do for football and especially baseball," said Kasner. He conditions all year long to be the best at what he does. He pushes himself to become the best athlete he can be by practicing and conditioning all year long to one day reach his goal and to continue playing the sport he loves.

He enjoys the sport so much because "it's harder than other sports," Kasner said. Hockey challenges him and he likes that, but his favorite memories are with his teammates, "my favorite memories are probably all of the weekends spending time with teammates away from the rink as well as on it," he said. He makes close new friendships from playing hockey and those friendships will stay with him in the years to come.

With his hard work and dedication, Kasner's dreams can become reality.



Erik Kasner (wearing black), freshman, during and intense hockey game with Revolution Tier One at the exhibition games at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.

## A fresh start for bowling

By: Courtney Stull @itscourtney16

As she walks in she sees her team crowded around a table waiting for practice to begin. She sets her things down walks up to her team. The team might be small but she knows they all have experience with bowling. This year she knows there will be many memories to make with them. Knowing that there is a lot of potential for all of them.

Taylor Lamm, senior, explains how the bowling team here at MHS is starting over. "This year the team is fairly new and younger, but since everyone has past

experience with bowling, I think we'll do pretty well this year," Lamm explains. This year there is enough girls to make one team, which is only 6 bowlers. "There's six girls out for bowling this year, and that amount is mandatory for one single team, so everyone is on varsity, and there's no junior varsity," Lamm explains. Only having six girls total makes it so all the girls have to bond to create a strong team.

Something about bowling that's unique is that you don't need to win all meets in order to go to state, or qualify for state. "The only day that matters in order to qualify for state is one whole day of bowling at the state qualifying tournament. Meets are basically practice for state, and that's it since none of the scores help to actually get qualified into state," Lamm said. When trying to qualify for state, the team goes against all the schools in the division. "On the day of qualification we go against every different school in our division, and the top teams will go to state and top individuals will also go. This year we might be a new team but we do have a big chance of making it to state," Lamm said.

Bottom line is that Lamm and her team have high goals this year. Lamm sees much potential in all of the girls on her team, and hopes they continue in bowling. She has set high goals for herself this bowling season, and more bowling seasons to come, in college at Mount Mercy University.



Taylor Lamm, senior, bowls during practice. She has signed to play for Mt. Mercy next year while in college.

## Blazek brings her best vocals

By: Haley Shaffer @Shafferdaffer  
and Kayla Comried @KComried

She puts on her shorts and t-shirt, and heads to the high school. She is ready for another hard, yet rewarding practice.

Heather Blazek, sophomore, is a part of Marion's show choir program. "I like show choir because it's really fun and it's like hard work, but it's totally worth it," Blazek commented. She has been in show choir since 7th grade and really enjoys it. "I like dancing and music," Blazek said.

Although show choir is a passion of hers, it doesn't always come easy. "The hardest part is probably dancing. Just knowing the dance and singing and dancing at the same time," Blazek explained.



Heather Blazek,  
sophomore

Not only does Blazek enjoy show

choir, but it has also opened up new friendships for her. "I've made new friends in show choir. People are really accepting," Blazek said. Having good relationships with people makes all the time she spends in show choir even more worthwhile. "Yeah, it's time consuming because you have to practice on your own and we have practice," Blazek explained.

However, all that time and hard work pays off when she finally hits the stage to perform. "I do like performing, it's kind of like a rush. It's good, but it makes me nervous," Blazek commented. Competitions not only encompass jitters, but also memories. "My favorite memory is the competition last year when we beat a 4A school, which was a big thing for us," Blazek recalled.

She stands on the riser, ready to learn new moves, and belt beautiful harmonies. She knows practice today will be difficult, but she also knows that after all the hard work, she will be a better performer. She is ready to take show choir by storm.

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# Serbousek shreds

By: Gage Miskimen @gagemisky

While a lot of winter sports are going on during this time of year, some students also take up a winter hobby to enjoy some of the free time that they may have.

Jack Serbousek, junior, enjoys snowboarding during his winter months. He's been snowboarding for a while now and he didn't originally start out snowboarding. "I started skiing when I was ten. Then I decided to start snowboarding a few years later because it looked like fun," Serbousek said. For him, snowboarding was a way to elevate his skills on the slopes and more of a challenge than skiing. "The first time I tried was on a skiing trip to Colorado. I picked it up pretty easily and I've just progressed as years went on."

With winter sports like skiing and snowboarding, there are always falls and mishaps. Serbousek remembers one of his misadventures. "One time in Colorado, I was snowboarding and I was on a tree run and for those of you don't know, a tree run has really narrow paths through thick forests. I was going really fast and I smacked right into a tree. It hurt," Serbousek said with a laugh. Some may think of snowboarding as a dangerous sport and it can be, but Serbousek thinks of it as pure fun. "It's just fun to do. I wanted to try something new and snowboarding was a good choice. Trying new tricks and the excitement just feels good. You can't explain it." He also knows the potential danger snowboarding can bring. "I've fallen before and I think injuries within my school sports were caused and helped by snowboarding, but I pushed through," Serbousek said.

When it comes to advice for anybody who wants

to try the sport of snowboarding or even skiing, Serbousek has some advice. "Don't be scared to fall. Just let it happen," he stated simply. He also tried to snowboard as much as he possibly can whether it's in Colorado, Thomas Park, or even his friend's backyard. "I don't get to snowboard very often because of wrestling, but when I get the chance to go, I go. My family usually takes a trip to Colorado or Utah over winter break."

Snowboarding is an activity that Serbousek and a lot of others enjoy. It can be exciting and it's fairly popular among teens and young adults. Serbousek finds a lot of fun in hitting the slopes and plans on finding as much time as he can to fly down the hills, shoot through the tree runs, and take time to practice new tricks to improve himself as a snowboarder because for Serbousek, it's all about the pure excitement and adrenaline of succeeding.

Jack Serbousek, junior.



Jack Serbousek, junior, sits on a ski lift in Vail, CO, while traveling with his family. (Picture from Jack Serbousek)

# Seeger begins again

By: DeLaney Fisher  
@DeLaney\_Fisher

Moving towns can be a difficult experience for anyone, but especially for a high schooler who is changing schools. It can be hard to leave your friends, make new ones, get involved and adjust to life in a different setting.

For Bailee Seeger however, this wasn't really an issue. Seeger moved to Marion High School from Linn Mar High School just in time for school to start. "I moved because it is a smaller school, there are more opportunities for college classes in my schedule, plus I have more friends that go here than go to Linn Mar," Seeger explained.

freshman year." Seeger commented. She decided she wanted to be equally involved here at Marion, and to do that she decided to go out for basketball. "I knew when I transferred that I wouldn't be able to play on the Varsity team, and I understood that it wouldn't be fair for people just to change schools in order to play Varsity, but it still stinks that I can't get there," Seeger said.

This year is Seeger's first year playing basketball in high school. She last played in middle school as she was involved on a club team. Seeger did not have room in her schedule for basketball because of her love for another activity, "I did cheerleading my freshman, sophomore, and junior year," Seeger commented.

"It is important to be involved because you gain relationships through it, and it keeps people out of trouble. Plus it looks on college applications," Seeger said with a laugh.

Any change in high school can be detrimental, especially switching schools. Luckily for Seeger she has found a way to get through it.

At Linn Mar Seeger was very involved. "Diving is my favorite sport, and I have been on the Linn Mar team since



Bailee Seeger, senior

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# DIY: homemade Christmas snow globe ornaments

These unique snow globes are a great way to hop into the holidays. There are only five steps, and all it's all made for under \$15.

By: Taylor Lamm @Lammers11



## Supplies Needed:

- A bag of any type of fake snow, super glue or a hot glue gun, your choice of small decoration to put inside, tweezers, and a clear ornament either plastic or glass. All supplies can be found at the local Michael's.

## Step One:

- Put glue on bottom of decoration. Use the tweezers to place the decoration at the bottom of the ornament. Make sure to center the decoration in the middle of the bottom of the glass/plastic ornament.



## Step Two:

- While waiting for the glue to dry, an old ornament case can also be used to hold them upright. Take the ribbon of your choice and cut a longer strip of it. Take the ribbon and tie it through the hoop on the lid of the ornament.

## Step Three:

- After gluing the decoration to the bottom of the ornament, take the fake snow and carefully pour it into the ornament until the bottom is covered to your liking. Snow on the sides is okay it helps give the effect that it is snowing.



## Step Four:

- After placing the snow in the ornament pop the top back on. Now you have your own Christmas snowglobe ornament all ready to be placed on the tree or wrapped for a crafty Christmas gift. This DIY costs around \$15.

## "The Desolation of Smaug" review

Uriah Lakin @Uriah\_theChamp

Dragon fire and cliffhanger's, The two major things that succumbed the minds of viewers last Thursday at Midnight during the special showings of the second of a three part trilogy The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug. This movie receives a solid A+.

A little background on the movie: it is based many decades before the War of the Ring and Frodo's quest to destroy the One Ring. The Dwarves of Erebor were driven from their homeland by the young, fire breathing dragon Smaug, who had his eye on the one thing the Dwarves dug greedily for, their gold. After destroying the town of Dale, the dragon swept through the great city under the mountain, claiming it for his own. Sixty years have past, and the dragon has lain quiet, deep within the dwelling of the mountain. Gandalf the Grey, a wizard, has rallied the last dwarves and heir to

throne of Erebor, Thorin Oakenshield, to reclaim their homeland. After taking Bilbo Baggins, the main character along for the journey, they are faced with many challenges such as the Pale Orc coming for revenge upon Thorin.

The Desolation of Smaug begins with the company running from the Pale Orc, and quickly towards the woodland realm of Mirkwood.

Peter Jackson, the cast, and crew out did themselves with this spectacular masterpiece. With stunning effects, great scenes, and well rounded cliffhangers, this movie was a great one. The movie received its grade of an A+ because of how Peter Jackson managed to slightly turn away from the book in some scenes, while still staying true to the book and connecting the three other movies he made in this past decade. One major piece that was not in the book was the Necromancer, a so called man who hides in the fowl depths of Dol Guldur, an ancient fortress in southern Mirkwood. Peter did not only connect dots, he also brought in new characters that would not complete the film if not there. Tauriel, a warrior elf, and companion of Legolas. Tauriel will find herself in many troubling situations. With the Elves and Dwarves grudge against one another Tauriel seeks to bring peace

between the friendship but not without being under the watchful eye of Thranduil, the king of Mirkwood and father of Legolas. Another character true to the book is Bard the Bowman, the man who has a ancestry quarter with the dragon. To our main character, Bilbo. He finds himself changing throughout the movie, after finding and stealing the one ring from Gollum, in the Misty Mountains. The ring is continuously changing him and Bilbo begins to notice as time goes on. The final confrontation with the Dragon leads to a failure, forcing Smaug to direct his anger and awoken vengeance on the peaceful crippled town called Lake Town.

Peter leaves many cliffhangers, like Tauriel stuck in Lake Town during Smaug's decent, Gandalf captured by the great enemy known to man as the Necromancer (SPOILER but really is the face the of Sauron), a large orc army moving towards the mountain of Erebor, and Bard the Bowman locked away in a Lake Town dungeon. Smaug the great and tremendous will either live or die in the next movie. The last installment of the Hobbit trilogy, There and Back Again, coming out December 17th, 2014, will be awaited for impatiently by fans; and the Desolation of Smaug is still lighting up theaters.

## Comparing all the Christmas favorites

Haley Shaffer @ShafferDaffer

As Christmas and the holidays approach, the radio stations begin blaring Christmas music and TV channels, like *abcfamily* start airing Holiday movies. Many movies and even songs have become iconic throughout the years. Movies like *Miracle on 34th Street* to *Elf*, and songs from *Silent Night* to *All I Want For Christmas You* are now considered classics to most. With so many in existence, it's hard to pick favorites, but here's the most popular based on the Internet and student votes.

### Top 10 Best Christmas Movies and Songs

#### Movies

According to totalfilms.com

10. Bad Santa
9. Scrooged
8. Miracle on 34th Street
7. Home Alone
6. The Muppets Christmas Carol
5. The Nightmare Before Christmas
4. Gremlins
3. Elf
2. Die Hard
1. It's a Wonderful Life

- Top 3 Student Voted
3. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation
  2. The Polar Express
  1. Elf

#### Songs

According to metro.co.uk

10. I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday by Wizzard
9. Jingle Bell Rock by Bobby Helms
8. Driving Home For Christmas by Chris Rea
7. Merry Xmas Everybody by Slade
6. The Christmas Song by Nat King Cole
5. Winter Wonderland by Doris Day
4. Santa Baby by Eartha Kitt
3. Last Christmas by Wham!
2. All I Want For Christmas Is You by Mariah Carey
1. Fairytale of New York by The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl

#### Top 3 Student Voted

3. Jingle Bell Rock
2. Last Christmas
1. All I Want For Christmas Is You

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# Divergent: redefining Sci-fi

Teens everywhere are raving about the new series by Victoria Roth.

By: Savannah Guyer @SavannahMGuyer

Imagine a future where there are factions instead of countries. Where one day during a person's adolescent years can change the rest of their life and family, or keep it exactly the same.

Welcome to the world of Beatrice Prior, where all these things are true. Part of one of the five factions, all Beatrice knows is what Abnegation, her faction, entails of. The dull clothes and lamer hairstyles all make up the selfless nature the Abnegation proves to be. The rest of the "nations" have their own moral of which they hold



Chris Keller, sophomore, enjoys Veronica Roth's science thriller "Divergent".

themselves to. Amity, the peaceful. Candor, truthful. Dauntless, brave. Erudite, intelligent.

Without hardly any insight into any other faction besides the one they were born into, once a year every sixteen year old is ordered to take a test to see what other faction they would be able to survive in. The next day they are forced to make a choice; stay with what they know or leave behind everything that made them who they are. When Beatrice takes her aptitude test, she is given three results instead of one, making her a Divergent. This rare conclusion puts Beatrice in extreme danger, for if found out all of her choices of a good future can be wiped away.

Anyone who reads this book will be blown away by the adventure, fantasy, and romance that makes up the 487 page thriller. With all the plot twists and traumatic flips that carry on throughout the book, there is a lot for readers to grab a hold of and be lead through the story with.

"Divergent" has acquired a lot of attention from many people of all kinds, a surprise for a first time author. Veronica Roth, the master mind behind the plot and story line, has been overwhelmed by the response to her first published book. There are two sequels to the initial book, "Insurgent" and "Allegiant", that have gained just as much attention and love as "Divergent." If Roth continues this writing streak, the series might be as popular as "Twilight" or the other similar series, "The Hunger Games" This scientific thriller is sure to capture anyone's attention from the very start. "Divergent" by Veronica Roth is a tale that should be known by everyone, and not soon forgotten.

# Elephant in the room

By: DeLaney Fisher @DeLaney\_Fisher

The White Elephant gift game is similar to Secret Santa, but instead of getting the person what they wished for, the White Elephant gets them something they would not like to get. Most of the time, White Elephant games are played just for the laughs and memories created by the silly, and sometimes weird gifts, everyone receives. Plus, minimal money is spent.



"I got a box of cereal one year for Christmas from my uncle. It was a box of Life."

-Madie Reynolds, freshman



"I got sardines for Christmas during a holiday game with my family."

- Caleb Stekl, sophomore



"One time my mom got scissors from her husband, the heavy duty kind."

- Kirsten Way, sophomore



"Last year in band someone gave their secret Santa a box of condoms! This year Mr. Allard made the point to keep the presents "G" rated please."

- Mahlia Brown, sophomore

# How much to spend on others

By: Kylie McAllister @smileeyyykylie

Some spend a lot while others barely spend a dime.



"I spend more on family because they're closer to me than friends. For friends it's more of a gift card type of thing."

-Devin Royer, junior



"I spend more on him because he is the most important person in my life and my best friend."

-Liz Fontenot, sophomore



"I figure out what gifts I want to get her. The gift is based more on what she wants, not the price."

-Tyler VanWey, sophomore



"[I give more to] family because my friends don't deserve me to buy them things."

-Kyle VanMeter, junior

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# Christmas Origins

By: Andie Scott @KewtheRavager &  
DeLaney Fisher @DeLaney\_Fisher

Star

According to history.com, many things have been put on the very top of a Christmas tree, but possibly the most traditional star. People started to put a star on the top of the tree the star that the three Wise men followed to find Jesus in the manger.

## Hanging Stockings

Hanging stockings is a Christmas tradition many people have, but may not know how it came about. According to history.com, a legend tells of three sisters who wanted to marry but couldn't due to their lack of wealth. In order to stop their father from selling them, St. Nick placed gold coins in a pair of stockings hanging by the fire to dry.

## Candy Cane

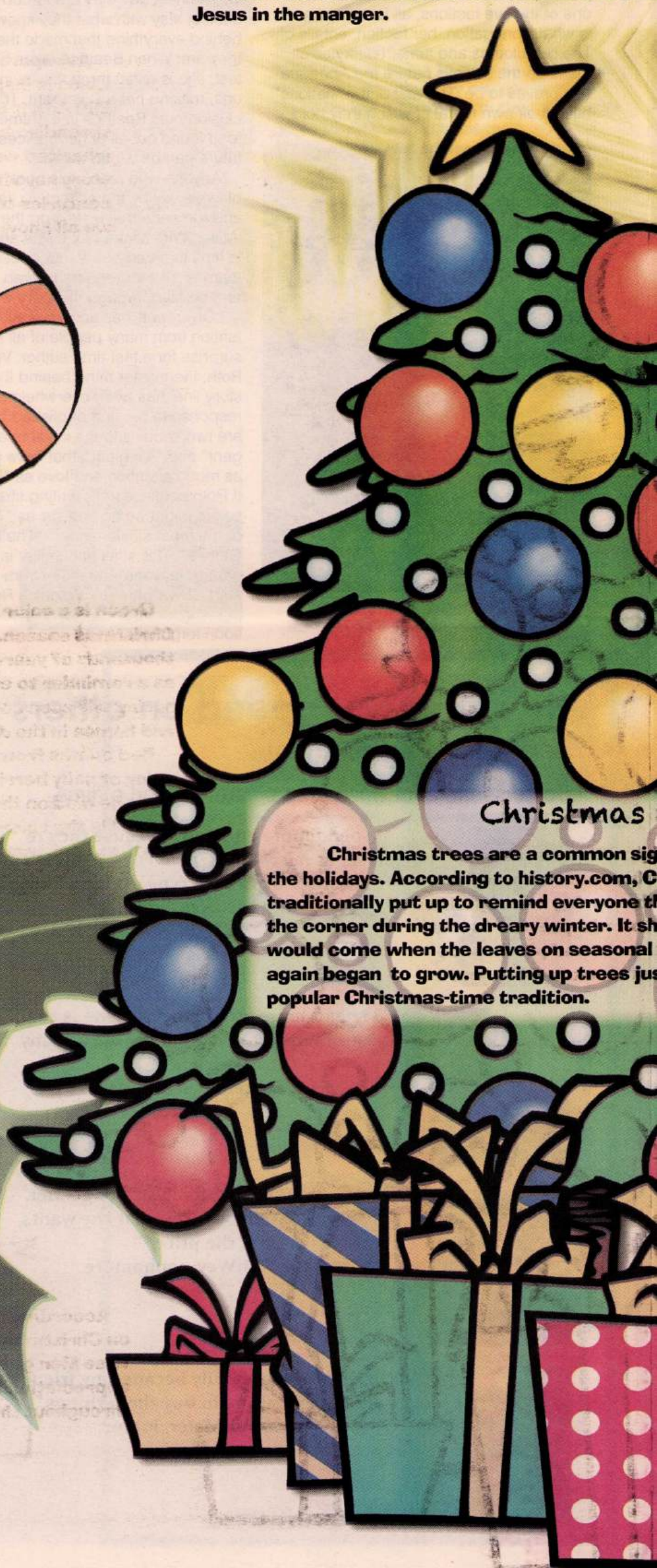
Whychristmas.com tells that the history of candy canes at Christmas time can be traced back to an old choir director, who was worried about the children's actions during a Christmas nativity service. To ensure they were still and quiet, he gave them shepherd's-hook-shaped candies, today known as candy canes.

## Christmas

Christmas trees are a common sight during the holidays. According to history.com, Christmas trees were traditionally put up to remind everyone to stay in the corner during the dreary winter. It was believed that the tree would come when the leaves on seasonal plants again began to grow. Putting up trees is just one of the most popular Christmas-time traditions.

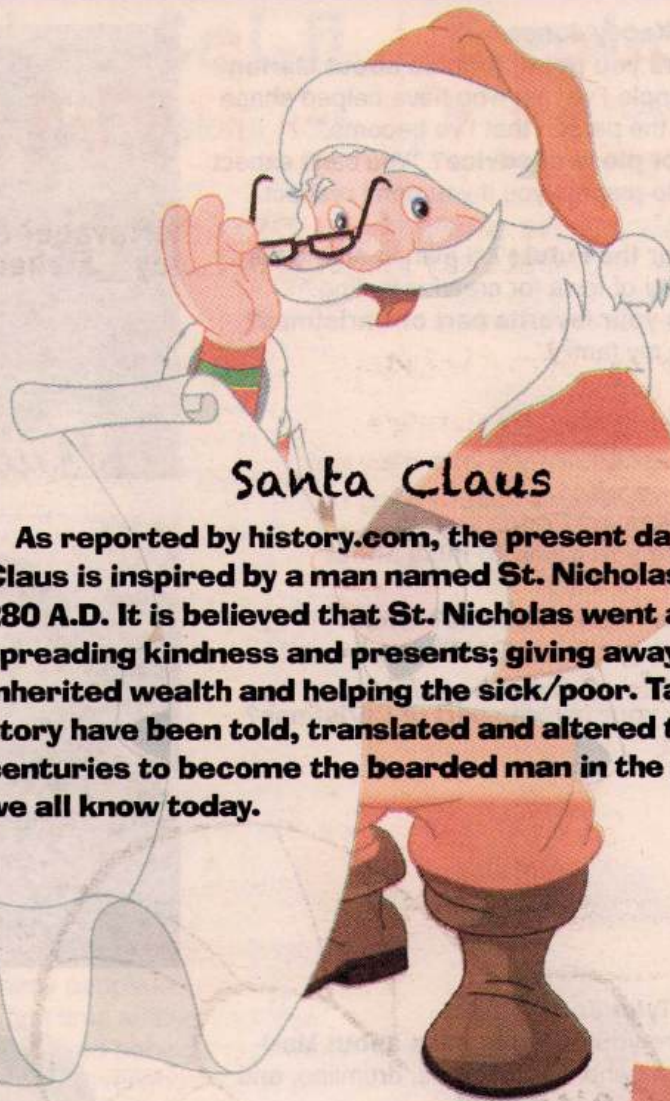
## Mistletoe

In an old fable, as stated by whychristmas.com, a man named Baldur woke up one morning with the belief that each and every plant/animal hated him. In order to give Baldur peace of mind, his wife and his mother went around begging for the kindness of all the plants and animals, each giving it. Finally Baldur was happy and went out in the open with his family, only to be shot and killed with an arrow made from the wood of a mistletoe plant. From then on everyone hung mistletoe in doorways so that it would never again be forgotten.



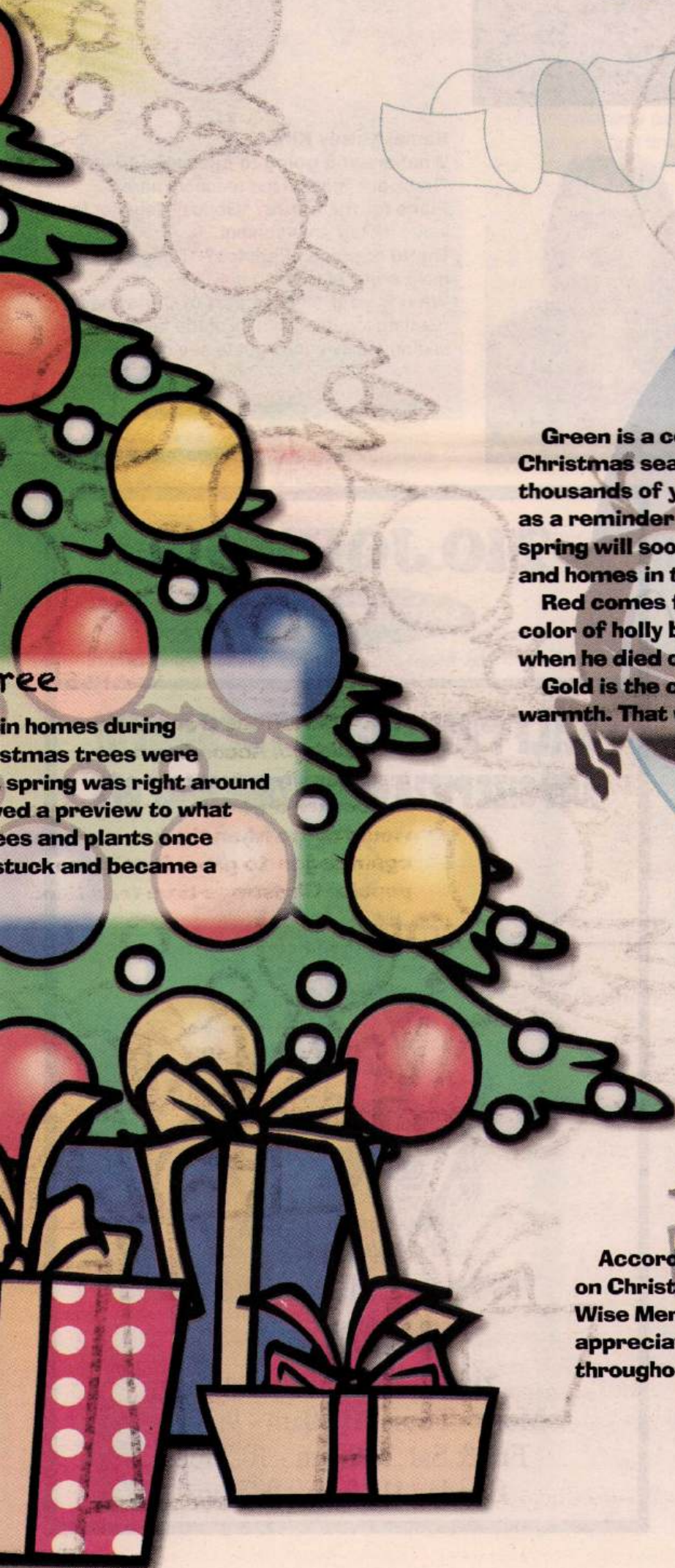


used to decorate the common is the tra- of a tree to signify seph, Mary, and baby



## Santa Claus

As reported by history.com, the present day Santa Claus is inspired by a man named St. Nicholas from 280 A.D. It is believed that St. Nicholas went around spreading kindness and presents; giving away all of his inherited wealth and helping the sick/poor. Tales of his story have been told, translated and altered through centuries to become the bearded man in the red suit we all know today.



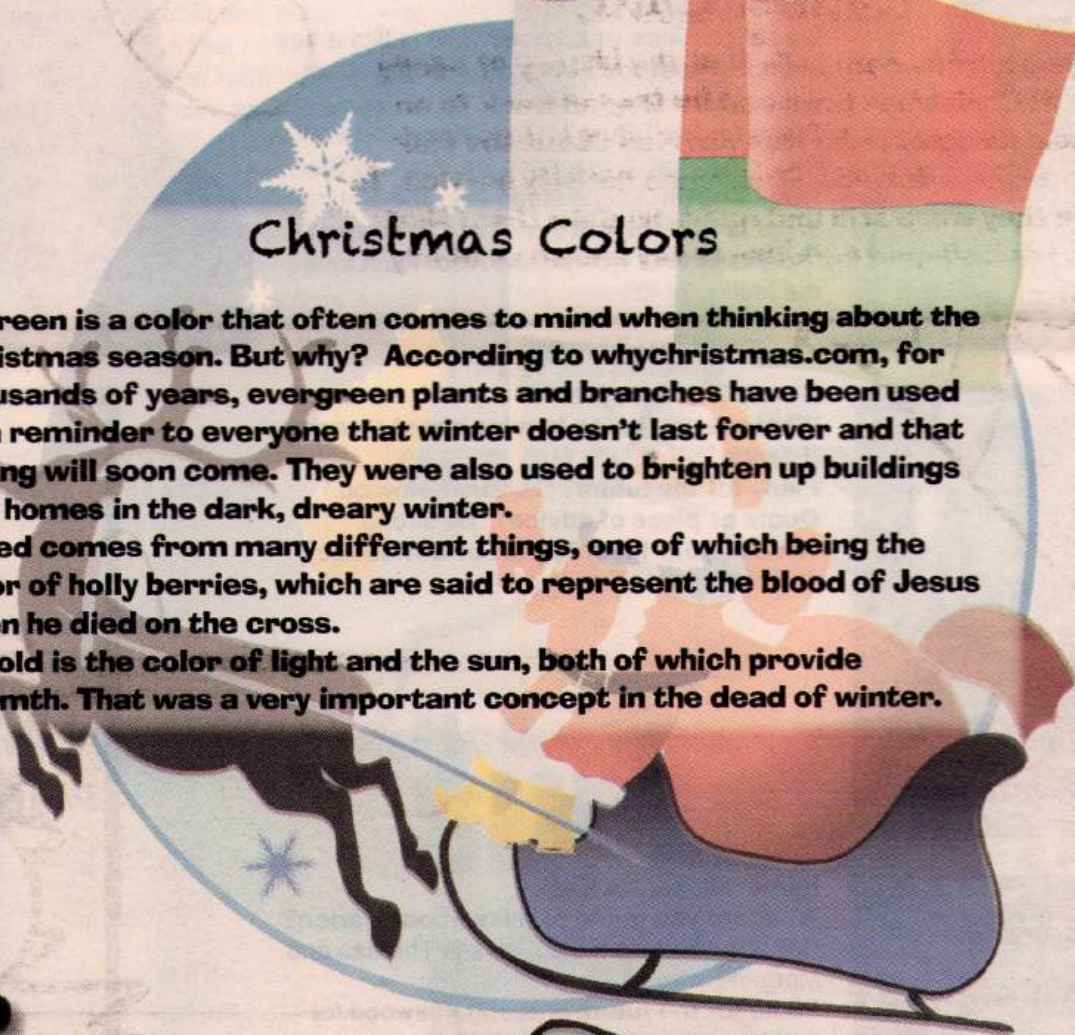
ree in homes during stmas trees were spring was right around ed a preview to what es and plants once stuck and became a

## Christmas Colors

Green is a color that often comes to mind when thinking about the Christmas season. But why? According to whychristmas.com, for thousands of years, evergreen plants and branches have been used as a reminder to everyone that winter doesn't last forever and that spring will soon come. They were also used to brighten up buildings and homes in the dark, dreary winter.

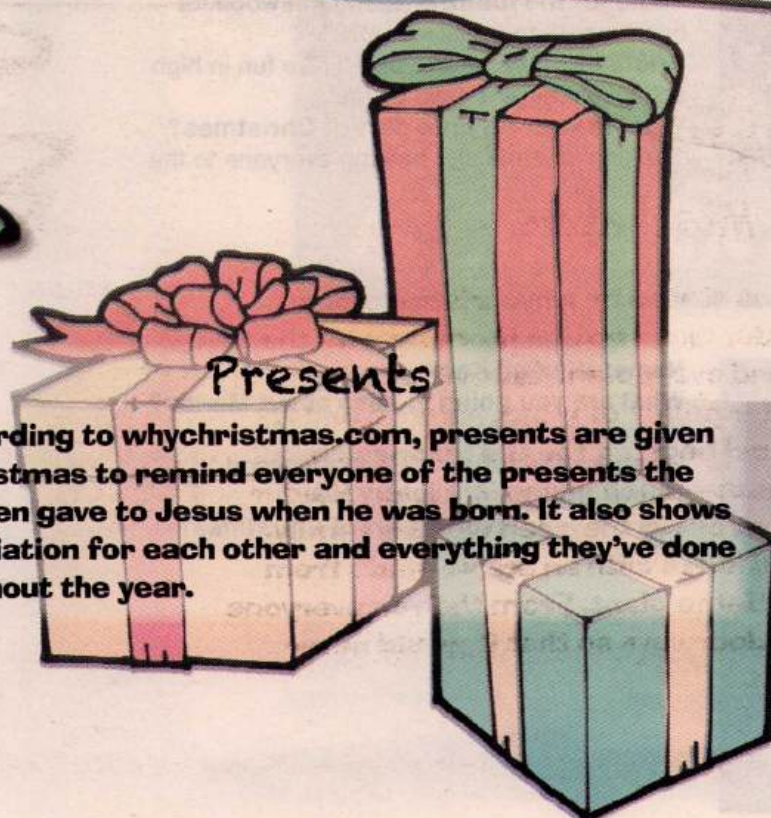
Red comes from many different things, one of which being the color of holly berries, which are said to represent the blood of Jesus when he died on the cross.

Gold is the color of light and the sun, both of which provide warmth. That was a very important concept in the dead of winter.



## Presents

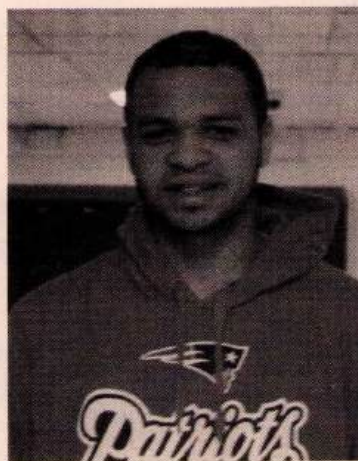
According to whychristmas.com, presents are given on Christmas to remind everyone of the presents the Wise Men gave to Jesus when he was born. It also shows appreciation for each other and everything they've done throughout the year.



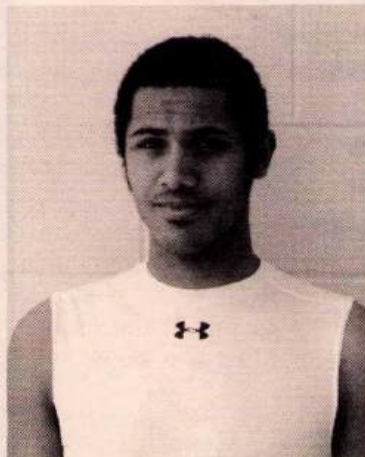




**Name:** Kacey Jones  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "The people I've met who have helped shape me into the person that I've become."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "You can't expect people to respect you if you don't respect yourself."  
**Plans for the Future?** "I plan to attend the University of Iowa for creative writing."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Seeing my family."



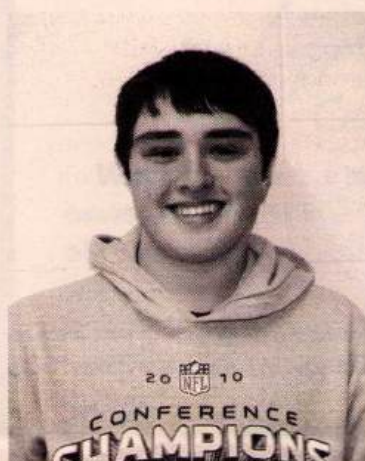
**Name:** Jordan Keeton  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "Every part of football and Andrew and all of my friends."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to Iowa State and major in engineering."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Don't get hung up on the little things, life goes on. 'GMOE'"  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Every part! Cookies, movies, hot chocolate, snowboarding, no school."



**Name:** Keavon Jones  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Nothing."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Work."  
**Plans for the Future?** "Mind your own business."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Eating."



**Name:** Casey Kindl  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "My friends who stuck by me, and dances!"  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to Ohio State, and go wherever the wind takes me."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Never regret something that once made you smile."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Elf on a Shelf, putting up the X-mas tree, and buying gifts."



**Name:** Tyler Jordan  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "The band, the teachers, drumline, and Triston Lochner."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to Kirkwood and ISU to become a teacher then move to California and run a taco stand over the summer."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Spending time with family. Also, I just love the feeling of the season."



**Name:** Kelsey Kirk  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "Track and most of the teachers here."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to college for four years for law enforcement."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Things always have a way of working out."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Getting together with all of the family and seeing family I don't get to see often."



**Name:** Tristin Joyce  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "Friends."  
**Plans for the future?** "Military/Kirkwood."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Be strong."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Presents, snowboarding."



**Name:** Mickenzie Kack  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "My volleyball team also, Alyssa Thomas and Morgan Swanger"  
**Plans for the future?** "Attend Kirkwood for two years then transfer to UNI"  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Have fun in high school because it goes by fast."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Waking up early and beating everyone to the stockings."



**Name:** Mitchell Kack  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?**  
 "Being with friends."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to Kirkwood."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** N/A  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?**  
 "Presents."

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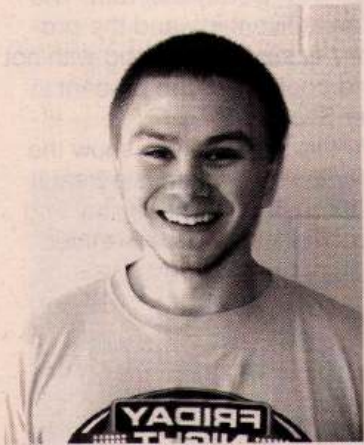




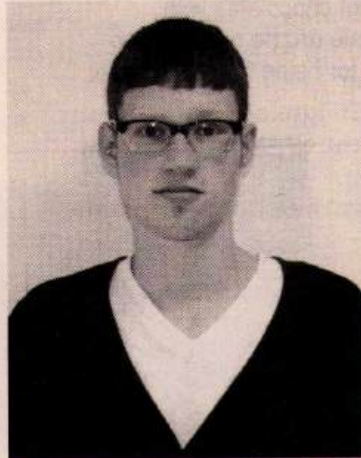
**Name:** Madison Kisling  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Ms. Ramaekers."  
**Plans for the future?** "Attend UNI, then U of I for dental school."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "It's not wht you know, it's who you know."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Spending time with my family and friends in Michigan."



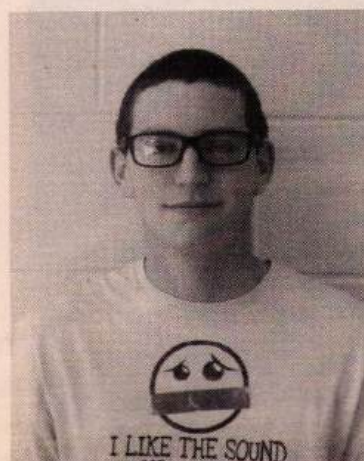
**Name:** Alexander Kruser  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Everything."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go into the union to become an electrician."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "The worst people can say is no, try everything you can."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Snowmobling."



**Name:** Jacob Klostermann  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "I'm going to miss cuddle time with my friends that I've had since FMI."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to college and be an underwriter like my mommy."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Have fun with your life."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Getting up and having a good ol' time with the family."



**Name:** Quentin Lamb  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "The T-saxes, marching band, and the teachers."  
**Plans for the future?** "To get my psychology degree and either teach or be a psychiatrist."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Be who you are. Those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Family time, being together, and snow."



**Name:** Caleb Koeppen  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Teachers who are way too excited about their job."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go with the flow."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Never play leap frog with a unicorn."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Snowboarding with friends."



**Name:** Taylor Lamm  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "My journo family, Semler and Jackie."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to Mount Mercy University to bowl and major in Education with emphasis in English and double minor in Journalism and Creative Writing."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "God won't give you more than you can handle."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Spending time with my family."



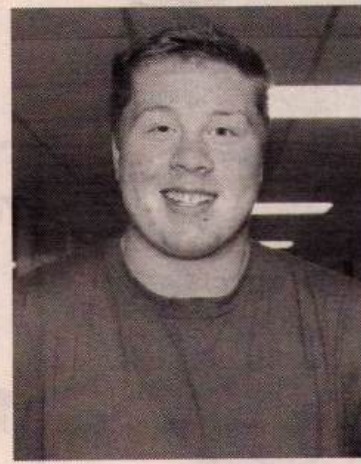
**Name:** Kacie Kohl  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "My friends and the teachers."  
**Plans for the future?** "Video game designer."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "I'm not crazy, I prefer mentally hilarious."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Snow."



**Name:** Lucas Leitch  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Friends."  
**Plans for the future?** "K-wood."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Do you."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Being with family."



**Name:** Evan Kramer  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Playing defense under Coach VonBehren."  
**Plans for the future?** "Attend Boyce College, receive my master of Divinity, then become either a pastor or missionary."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain -Philippians 1:21, and repent of your sins and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "I enjoy spending time with my family."



**Name:** Uriah Lakin  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "Andrew West, Romello, Jessica, a few teachers, and my journo babes."  
**Plans for the future?** "Become an international reporter or a U.S. Foreign Service Officer."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Be someone's shot of whiskey. Not everyone's cup of tea."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Family and friends."



**Name:** Benjamin Kroemer  
**What are you going to miss about Marion?** "My girlfriend, friends, football, and soccer."  
**Plans for the future?** "Go to college and see what happens."  
**Quote or piece of advice?** "Use common sense, but if you don't have any, then find some."  
**What is your favorite part of Christmas?** "Food."



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By: Taylor Lamm @Lammers11



Starbucks: ★★★★★

Coffee Smiths: ★★★★★

Wit's End Coffeehouse: ★★★★★

All of the places serve their hot chocolates with whipped cream and a chocolate drizzle on top. Starbucks won the highest rating for being the most sweet.

Starbucks: ★★★★★

Coffee Smiths: ★★★★★

Wit's End Coffeehouse: ★★★★★

The apple ciders at both Starbucks and Wit's End Coffeehouse come with whipped cream and a caramel drizzle, making them both a four star rating.



Starbucks: ★★★★★

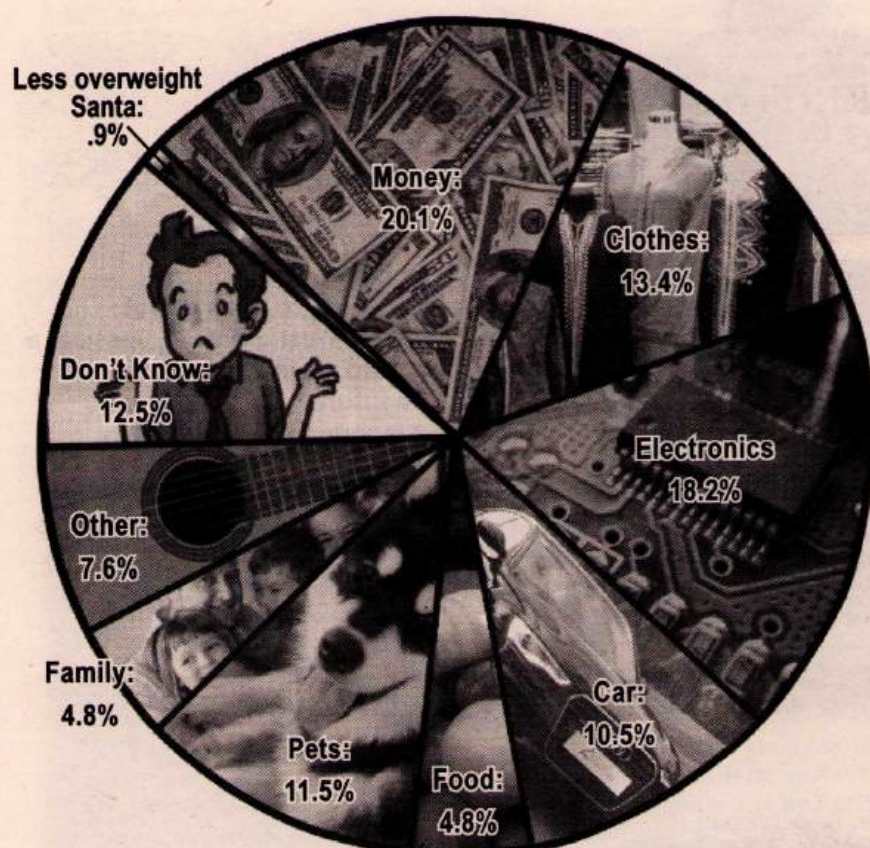
Coffee Smiths: ★★★★★

Wit's End Coffeehouse: ★★★★★

All of the peppermint mochas come with whipped cream and a chocolate drizzle, but the Starbucks peppermint mocha has a stronger peppermint and chocolate flavor.

## Christmas presents: what people are hoping to receive

By: Andie Scott @KewtheRavager



Over 100 students were polled, asked one simple question: "What do you want for Christmas?" X-box Ones and PS4 made up most of the Electronics slice (18.2%), far ahead of clothes and shoes (particularly Uggs) the following slice (13.4%). But, the biggest slice is dedicated to good-old-fashioned cash (20.1%). Seems Marion has the right idea - why risk returns when someone can give the gift that can buy anything. As Christmas nears closer an closer keep in mind that although gifts are great, they definitely aren't everything. Christmas is meant to be spent with friends and loved ones, to grow closer together in this season of giving.

## Lighting up the holiday

By: Uriah @Uriah\_theChamp

It's that time of the year. The lights are being pulled out of the garage, the blow up snowmen are being dragged from the dreadful smelly boxes, and the priceless Nativity dolls are being unpacked by the mothers and young children curious to know about the traditions of Christmas.

The Cedar Memorial funeral and burial home is also unpacking their decorations in preparation of their spectacular light show that comes around every Christmas season.

Julie Freese, worker at the funeral home, has been front and center of helping prepare the beautiful event. "The funeral home has been doing this light show since 1942," she stated. "Five years ago we had all lights and displays up and a snowstorm hit, we

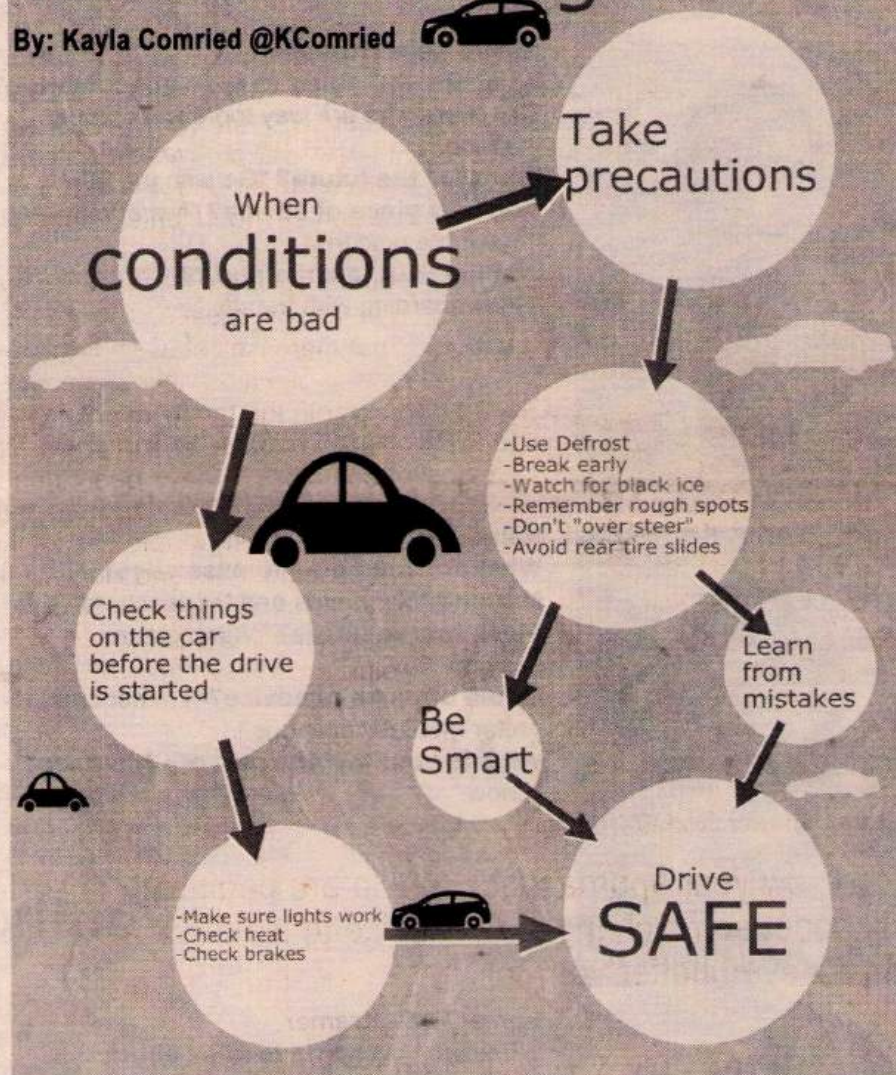
paid a lot, a lot of money because of that," Freese said. "Now we decorate our mausoleum with tons of decorations. We invite a school choir or performing art students to sing. This year Washington Madrigals choir and the Taft middle school choir will come and perform songs and we donate money to the schools for their performance," Freese said.

The light show will be happening Sunday December 15th and go through till Wednesday the 18th. The gates open at five thirty and the programs start at six. Santa along with hot cocoa and cookies will be present in the Flower Shop.

"We do this light show to show the community that this place is a beautiful place for their relatives to stay and also a beautiful park," Freese stated.

## Winter Driving

By: Kayla Comried @KComried



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# Gillaspie takes it all in stride

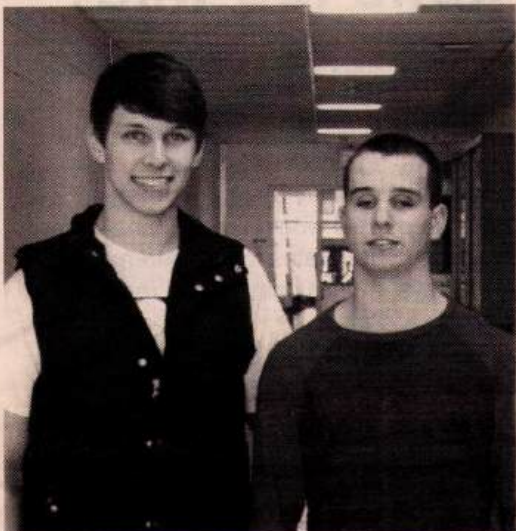
An insight into the life of two brothers with an unbreakable bond

By: Savannah Guyer  
@SavannahMGuyer

Everything people do on a daily basis relies on the five senses. What happens however, when someone doesn't have one of these senses? What is their world like?

Alex Gillaspie, freshman, is one of the few that will ever experience this common fear; not being able to see. Blind since birth because of a genetically transmitted disorder, Alex is very open and honest about sharing what it is like to lean on friends, family, and strangers daily, including his brother Hunter Gillaspie, senior.

A lot of speculation is centered around what he can see, and Alex is unable to put it into words, "It's really hard to explain what I see because not even I know. Many people ask if I see black, but I don't know what black is or any other colors are." Hunter added,



Hunter (left) and Alex (right) Gillaspie stand together, an invisible bond linking them as brothers.

"Doctors think he sees gray."

Hunter and Alex are just like any other siblings; the fact that Alex is blind doesn't phase either one of them because it's all they've known. Other people who are not used to being around someone who cannot see are often a totally different story, "Sometimes people try to over help me. They see that I'm blind and forget the rest of me is fine. It's awkward," Alex said.

Although Alex will need help sometimes, he has overcome many fears and now takes the city bus by himself, "It's a little overwhelming at times, you gotta be on this bus at this time and wait an hour for that bus," Alex commented. When he is in need of assistance, it's challenging to request help, "Getting the courage to ask is hard. One time I was at Lindale Mall and I had to ask a random stranger, 'Hey, will you take me to Panda Express? This isn't awkward at all, just take my arm and guide me.' The best thing is that most people are willing to help," Alex added.

Hunter is another source of comfort to Alex, "When we're out in public he'll guide me around so I don't kill myself or something," Hunter is very used to helping out Alex, "Nothing's really different for me because it's everything I've known. I just have to make sure that there isn't stuff on the floor and things like that," Hunter said. A sound factor in the family dynamic is Alex and Hunter's relationship, "We've always been close, always been friends rather than brothers," Hunter commented.

While most people can't even fathom not seeing, Alex and Hunter take what has been given to them in stride, and they can't imagine their life being any different than what it is.

# Johnson for the big pin

By: Kaela Halvorson @kaelahalvorson

She looks in at a room that is usually every wrestler's worst nightmare. When stepping in, it feels like it's 2,000 degrees. The running, making moves, and smelling the sweat in the air all help to contribute to the pride of being the only girl working her butt off in the sauna. The only girl in the wrestling room.



Ellissa Johnson, Junior

Ellissa Johnson, junior, is the only girl on our wrestling team. Johnson said, "[I've been wrestling] ever since 1st grade," therefore she is pretty comfortable with the whole situation.

"Yeah, it's pretty fun," Johnson commented on being in a room with all guys and sweating just like the rest of them. She wrestles for herself and also because it's something most girls don't do or find enjoyable. She loves it and enjoys every second she gets to spend wrestling for Marion. Johnson is always working hard and pushing the guys to get better.

Getting ready for the season Johnson said, "[I have to cut] 17 pounds this year, not as much as I have had to cut, but still a lot." After cutting weight for so many years, she is used to the feeling of having to cut weight. Practicing everyday and sweating that much helps a lot. Practices have been rough for Johnson, but somedays rather easy for her. It just depends on the day and the heat of the room.

Doing the moves on a guy isn't always the easiest, but Johnson continues to do it and said, "[My favorite move] is probably the double leg takedown."

Wrestling is generally thought of a male sport, some thinking, girl's shouldn't be able to do it, but Johnson just keeps fighting to make the opinion change. Just like any male wrestler, she works her butt off in order to do the sport she loves. Johnson will always have passion for the sport, and no one can stop it. Her mentality is get the next pin, and she works in practice with that same thought in her head.

As of being "that one girl" Johnson said, "[I'm treated] like everyone else on the team, they just think it's different." Johnson is prepared to take on the season that lies ahead of her even though some may forfeit. Johnson said, "It's a benefit for me." Just another win for her name, so why would she not want that? Johnson has been working hard so she has no fears about the season and wrestling in general. Johnson is excited for the season and ready to go out and fight for Marion.

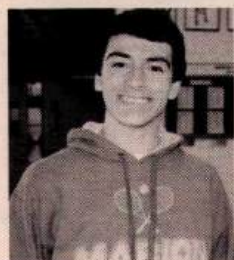
# New Year's resolutions

By: Haley Shaffer @shafferdaffer

As the new year approaches, people are beginning to think about some changes they'd like to make to make 2014 an even better year for them.



"My New Year's Resolution is to be as nice as I have been in the past and I want to lose a little weight."  
-Mr. Dave Messerli, social studies teacher



"My New Year's Resolution is to change my weight, good or bad."  
-Jeremy Ellerby, senior



"My New Year's Resolution is to be more giving to others."  
-Abby Phillips, junior

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# Cheesy Christmas garb

Spreading Christmas cheer, one cheesy sweater at a time.

By Alex Coleman @AlexColeman831

Putting up lights, hanging ornaments, digging out Christmas decor, there's no denying it: Christmas is in the air. For some, this holly jolly holiday means family get togethers, wrapping presents, and maybe a carol or two. For others, the Christmas season is the time to spread the joy that can only be spread during the frigid month of December.

No matter where people turn, there's a large assortment of Christmas garments. From ugly sweaters to Santa hats, Christmas is a very easy holiday to get into and dress up for. "I have a few Christmas sweaters, and the stereotypical Santa hat I pull out around Christmas," said Isiah Michaca, a junior. Isiah doesn't go crazy in showing his spirit, but he does make an effort. "I don't show much spirit, so there are a lot of people who show more, but I show a lot at home because my brothers really enjoy it," said Michaca. It doesn't matter how old someone is, Christmas spirit is something that should be spread around all through the month of December. "It may be a little goofy, but I love seeing the spirit. I'm sure Santa appreciates it also," Isiah said.

Whether it's putting up a few lights, or setting up a Christmas tree, the holiday only comes once a year, and the more people throw themselves into the spirit of the season, the more they enjoy themselves. Shelby Brewer, sophomore, agrees with that statement.

"I think the spirit should be shown all through the month of December," said Brewer. "It's important because this is the time to forget about all of your worry and just be happy." Shelby thinks that you don't necessarily need to dress in Christmas attire to spread the holly jolly cheer. "Talk about Christmas on social media, post pictures of your Christmas trees, or simply just wish someone a Merry Christmas," said Brewer, "everyone would be more happy and more cheerful."

For students at MHS, including Isiah and Shelby,



Isiah Michaca, junior, and Shelby Brewer, sophomore sport their Christmas garb.

Christmas is a big deal. If people aren't spreading the cheer, then what really is the point? This beloved holiday is all about rejoicing with family and being merry, so we as a people need to get the point across. Christmas is a happy holiday, a spirited one, so go out and brighten everyone's day by offering them a "Merry Christmas", in the long run, we'll be glad we did.

## End cyberbullying

By Ashley Lappe @Ashley\_Lappe33



Avery Draves, junior



Alexis VanMeter, sophomore

Hurtful words, names, and fists in the face. All of these are examples of bullying. But there's another type of bullying that hurts just as much, if not more, and that is cyberbullying. This type of bullying follows people home. Cyberbullying was not common until people became surrounded by the Internet. Now thousands of teenagers are being bullied everywhere they go, especially with Twitter. According to dosomething.org, over 80 percent of teens use cell phones regularly and with over 550,000,000 Twitter users that are mostly teenagers, bullies often times have an easy access into a teenager's life.

Avery Draves, junior, and Alexis VanMeter, freshman, were among the many Marion students who were spoken about on the "Sluts of MHS" Twitter page. This account rocked the halls of Marion high school with gossip. People were wondering if the rumors were real.

"It made me mad because it wasn't true and I wanted to know who did it," said VanMeter. To others this wasn't a big deal, "I thought it was funny," Draves said.

Whether it hurt them or not, comments like these do affect them, "it makes them lose confidence and it lowers their self esteem," VanMeter said. People are pushed over the edge because of cyberbullying. They feel like they can't escape, so they turn towards self harm. According to cyberbullyhotline.com 20% of kids and teens that are cyberbullied think about committing suicide and one in ten actually attempt it. "There are a couple people here that are sick of getting bullied who might start thinking of suicide and that scares me," said Draves. Many people are bullied over and over again on-line. VanMeter has experienced cyberbullying before this situation, and so have others, yet many people do not take a stand. "I never know what to say," said Draves.

The person who posted these comments had little consequence for his actions, but the people he hurt think he should get more. "[He should get] suspended with harassment charges because he hurt a lot of people," Draves said. Unfortunately the person in charge graduated last year and no longer attends Marion high school.

Ever since the Internet became popular, states have been making it illegal to bully on-line. According to ncsf.org only 31 states have made cyberbullying illegal, four states are pending laws against it, and in 15 states on-line bullying is still legal. Every year more and more states are making it illegal, but during the process of passing laws people continue to be hurt on-line.

VanMeter and Draves have both experienced cyberbullying so they know how hurtful it can be.

## Extreme decorations: gone too wild?

By Courtney Stull @itscourtney16

Cold wintry air blasts in his face, and the fire place beckons. However, he continues to decorate. For Riley Peters, this is the annual scenario. Every winter, there is a rush to put all the decorations up, and for Riley, those decorations are anything but ordinary.

The stereotypical decorations during the winter season are usually a tree (whether it be real or fake) with tinsel and ornaments, and twinkly lights on gutters, however, this isn't the case for Peters. "My family and I definitely do more, because, besides for the average decorations, we also have a pine tree that gets wrapped with lights, wooden cutouts of Santa and Mrs. Claus, penguins with lights shining on them, and a plastic life size Santa with a light inside," Peters explained. He also added, "sometimes I put out a projector that projects a candy cane onto the garage door, but that's not up every winter."

Some teens wouldn't even do all the decorating, but Peters puts even more into the season than his own lights and cutouts. "I'm in Boy Scouts and for the last couple years I've gone to the Marion Square with my troop, and set up Santa's house," Peters explained. Other than volunteering to decorate, Peters finds other ways to help out during the holidays. "I also ring bells for the Salvation Army, and I've been doing that since I was 13, it's so cold every year, but I still enjoy it!" Besides decorating and volunteering for the holidays, Peters also plans on getting a little crafty.

"My grandpa made our wooden cutouts this year, and I think that they're really popular since they aren't something you just go to buy at the store, they're original," Peters said.

Peters also explains he'd like to carry on the legacy of the wooden cutouts from his grandpa. "I haven't started helping my grandfather yet, but this

year I was planning on helping him make new ones for my parents and I," Peters said.

Although his family knows of his appreciation for decorating, most people don't know. "Decorating is definitely a hidden hobby for me, just because people wouldn't really know me as the guy who decorates to the extremes for winter holidays, but it's something I really enjoy doing anyway," Peters explained, "my more obvious hobbies are drumming in drumline and singing in choir and show choir, New Creation."

Even though the winter season is the most obvious season to do extreme decorating, Peters decorates for other holidays too.

"Christmas is the main holiday, for my family to decorate for, but I definitely decorate for other holidays. The decorating [for others] is just inside my house," Peters explained.

As far as losing interest in decorating, it hasn't occurred yet with Peters. "Sometimes I do get sick of decorating because the weather is just so cold, but I still do it and like it because I think it shows I'm festive. There's never been a year where I skipped out on decorating, but since I started decorating when I was two or three, I couldn't do as much then as I can now," Riley said.



Riley Peters, junior

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## Deer hunting: a family event

Kallie Jo Kriegel tells funny stories of deer hunting with her father

By Taylor Lamm @Lammers11

She wakes up before the sun has risen and puts on her gear. Walking out the door, she can feel the cool breeze hitting her face giving her the shiver of excitement that she might get the big kill today. It's the beginning of a good hunt.

Kallie Kriegel, junior, has been hunting since she was nine years old with her family. By watching her family hunt as she grew up it became something she is very interested in. Kriegel has been hunting for many years and at many different places, but she has narrowed it down to the ones she enjoys the most. "I hunt on the countryside of Marion and in Coggon, Iowa," she says. These are the places where her family have taken her, to hunt at, since she was a young girl.



Kallie Jo Kriegel, junior, shows off the deer she shot after going hunting. (Photo from Mark Kriegel)

Family is a big aspect in why Kriegel enjoys hunting so much. Her favorite part about hunting is, "being with my family, and being able to brag about it in the end," Kriegel states. Some of her best memories about hunting include a family member that made sure to make her enjoy it just as much as they do. "My dad and I in fifth grade went turkey hunting and he farted, the turkey then flew over our tent and it landed right there in front of us. I was like 'woah' and he told me 'that's how we call them' and I believed him for the longest time," she says. Memories like this keep her going even if she doesn't end up getting a kill that day.

When the topic of hunting is brought up Kriegel has varied opinions on if someone should start hunting or not. "It's not a thing that a person can randomly learn, you

kinda have to grow up with it. Some people might not handle killing an animal," she says. Kriegel knows by killing the animal they will take full benefit of the meat that is supplied. For her killing the animal is supporting her family with food. But for new hunters she only has one piece of advice, "be safe and know the rules."

For her, getting up early in the morning to sit outside and wait for that perfect moment and that perfect shot means everything. What makes it special is that she gets to spend it with her family.

## Bringing in new year

By: Bonnie Burnell @bonniebinng

New Year's Eve is the time of the year when people say farewell to the old and hello to the new. People have different ways of celebrating this joyous holiday. Some celebrate by throwing a party and hanging out with friends.

Chase Bruns, junior, has been throwing New Years Eve parties with his close friends since sixth grade. Even though people usually plan out their parties, Chase and his friends don't. When it comes to his parties, they usually do whatever fun things come to mind, including staying up all night, watching the sun rise, and just doing other random stuff.

These parties have brought many funny moments for Chase and his friends, "I remember when it was New Years Eve. At my party, Austin Loney and Isiah were sleeping in my room and Mitchell threw firecrackers down my laundry shoot, which went into my room to wake them up," commented Bruns. Another great moment that they all had was going to Guppy's on the go. They all put on Taylor's old clothes and went to get food; they were talking to the cashier and they skipped all the way home. For Chase, his New Years Eve parties have made memories that will last forever. Austin Brown, junior, has been in attendance at one of Chase's parties. He, as long as the other attendees, remember great things from these parties. "[I remember] getting kicked out of Gordmans while we were dressed up in a big panda suit," commented Brown. Austin goes to the parties to remember the little moments for the rest of his life.

Taylor Bruns, sophomore, is Chase's little sister. She has the privilege to attend these crazy parties. She said, "I've been around all of Chases friends, so I can count them as friends of mine. Plus I see things that I really don't want to see," commented Taylor.

As the number of days until the New Year dwindles, Chase and his friends get ready for another party. They look back on memories they have already made, and hope they can make new ones just as good. This party not only carries on the tradition of past parties, but also stands as a reminder of the moments they will continue to have in the upcoming year.



Chase Bruns, junior

## Birthday on Christmas

By: Becca Hall @backkahhh12

As people wake up on the highly anticipated morning of December 25th, the first thing in most people's minds is Christmas, but for some there are additional things to celebrate. While millions celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, TJ Jordan, junior, and his family celebrate a few more birthdays. Not only does his birthday fall on Christmas, but so does his mom's.

Many may think that it would be cool to have a Christmas birthday, but Jordan has mixed feelings about it. "Having a birthday on Christmas kind of sucks because everything is closed, so you can't really do anything, and it's cold," explains Jordan "I think the worst part is not being able to hang out with friends on my birthday." Even though it has its major downsides, he still thinks that there are some upsides to the crazy date, "The best part is that with it being Christmas, it's a bigger deal so I get to see even more family."

Jordan and his family still celebrate with common Christmas traditions. "We set up a Christmas tree, it's really big and a pain to put up," explains Jordan. They also have a couple of different ways to

celebrate, "My uncle on my dad's side always cooks, but he always cooks nontraditional foods like tacos or pizza." By celebrating with a mix of traditional and nontraditional activities it makes the day unique and special to Jordan.

With so many holidays to celebrate in one day, Jordan's family has to do things a little different. "We celebrate it all on the same day by doing Christmas first, then doing our birthdays later in the day." Jordan and his family have December 25th planned out in order to properly celebrate both birthdays and Christmas together. "On Christmas Day I usually open presents at my dad's or my mom's, but then after breakfast we go to some grandparent's house, and do another Christmas, and we have a cake for my mom and me, then we open birthday presents." Even though the day is usually hectic and cold, Jordan still finds ways to enjoy celebrating three holidays in one.

Jordan hopes to be able to have a big day of celebrations for both Christmas and his birthday with as much joy and as little snow as possible.



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### Where's the student?



Riley Peters, '15



Emily Crosser, '14

## Fun Facts

A jiffy is an actual unit of time, it is equal to one hundredth of a second.

Plants that are not cared for will cry for help. A thirsty plant will make a high-pitched sound that is too high for us to hear.

When dreaming, only faces previously seen in life appear.

Right-handed people live, on average, nine years longer than left-handed people.

The chances of dying on the way to get a lottery ticket is higher than the chance of winning the lottery.

1 in 28 American school-aged children have a parent in state or federal prison.

The plural, gender-neutral term for nieces and nephews is 'niblings'.

Fun facts obtained from: [sotruefacts.com](http://sotruefacts.com)



By: Andie Scott @KewtheRavager

## Trivia questions

- What was the only part of the current United States invaded by the Japanese during WWII?
- What kind of thin, wispy, feathery looking clouds, located four to twelve miles up, are usually the first sign that a weather front is approaching?
- Animal names: What do you call a male cat? What do you call a female, mature horse? What do you call a young swan?
- What are the names of the four Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles?
- Looking through his telescope in 1610, Galileo was the first person to see the moons of what planet?
- What is the soft white Greek cheese usually made from goat's milk?
- What are the proper names for the two major branches of biology?

Go to [dailypowwow.com](http://dailypowwow.com) for trivia answers!

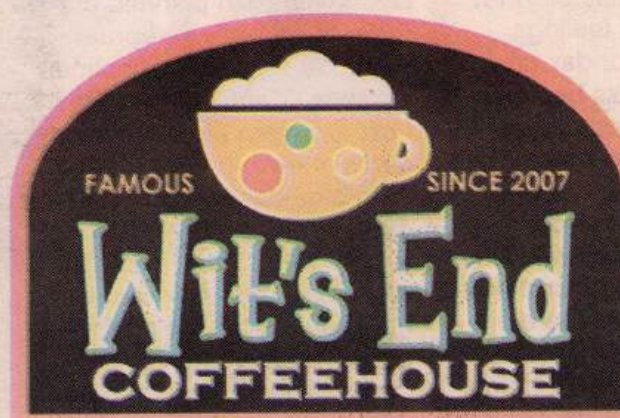
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