

Skylines

Nativity BVM High School

Volume 9

December 2010

Merry Christmas Happy New Year

Upcoming Events

January 3--School re-opens

January 12- Semester exams-
periods **2, 4, 5**
dismissal @ 12:50 PM

January 13- Semester exams-
periods **1, 8, 6**
dismissal @ 12:50 PM

January 14--semester exams-
periods **3, 7-** dismissal @
12:50 PM. 2nd Quarter
Ends

January 17- School closed

January 18--3rd Quarter Begins

January 19--Liturgy AM
Assembly- Bishop Barres

January 21--Progress reports issued

January 24--March for Life-
Washington, D.C.

January 31--Catholic Schools Week

Origin of the Christmas Tree

Amanda Bernadyn



Every year families pick an evergreen tree, or get out the artificial tree, and set it up inside their homes for the holiday season. Traditionally, it is fully decorated with lights, ornaments, and an angel or star on top of the tree. On Christmas morning, there are piles of shiny gifts under its bottom branches. While taking part in this great tradition, did you ever wonder about how the Christmas tree tradition started?

The specific origin of the Christmas tree is unclear. Although, it is said that it first relates to the Germans who would decorate fir trees, inside and out, with apples, roses, and colored papers. The tradition spread to England and America through German immigrants in Pennsylvania in the 1800s. The actual decorating of trees with ornaments dates back to Victorian times. The first manufactured Christmas tree was sold at Woolworth's department store. Martin Luther also contributed to the Christmas tree tradition, by its counterpart to the Catholic Nativity scene. He established the tree as a symbol of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Today, Christmas trees have become one of the foremost symbols of the holiday season, and are a tradition that will continue on.

Mexican Traditions for Christmas

Juan Canto

It is a celebration of the Nativity. This means the birthday of Our Lord Jesus. In order to prepare for the day of symbolic commemoration, we have the "Posadas". These celebrations are a "Novena" or nine days before--December 24 which is the "Noche Buena" or "Holy Night".

These Posadas are an enactment of looking for lodging for St. Joseph and the Virgin Mary, In Spanish we called them "Los Peregrinos, San José y la Virgen María". Each family in a neighborhood will schedule a night for the Posada to be held at their home, starting on the 16th of December and finishing on the 24th on Noche Buena.

Although the Piñata was originally from Italy, it has become a Mexican tradition for celebrations where there are children involved. The piñatas are made out of cardboard and paper mache techniques and decorated with crepe paper.



The presents are not received on Christmas, for Christmas is a celebration of Life of Our Savior. We have dinner and spend time

with our families.

The children's celebration of receiving presents is not until January 6th, "el día de Reyes", the day of the Kings, or the Wise Men Day. It is the Magi who brought the presents to the Baby Jesus, thus, they bring the toys to the boys and girls who have been good. The children place their shoes by the window, so the Magi place a present in the shoe. If the present is bigger than the shoe, it will be placed next to it. Many children get a new pair of shoes for a present.

In Meridea, we also have the largest tree in Mexico and Latin America, 40 thousand lights and 240 areas offering shows. At the top, almost touching the sky, is the star that crowns the 160-foot tree height.

Russian Christmas Tradition

Nadia Schuster

Russian Orthodox Christmas takes place on the seventh of January every year and the celebration lasts for six days. In the Orthodox tradition on Christmas eve, nothing is to be eaten or drunk all day until the first star appears in the sky symbolizing the start that led people to the newborn Jesus. Once that first star shows, that is when the festivities begin!

In Russia the religious festival of Christmas is being replaced by the **Festival of Winter** but there are some traditions that are still kept up in some parts of the country. Using the Julian calendar, Christmas

Eve comes on January 6th. On Christmas Day, hymns and carols are sung. People gather in churches which have been decorated with the usual Christmas trees or Yelka, flowers and colored lights.



Babushka is a traditional important Christmas figure to the Russian people. She distributes presents to children; taking the place of our figure we call Santa. Her name means grandmother and the legend is told that she declined to go with the wisemen to see Jesus because of the cold weather. However, she regretted not going and set off to try and catch up, filling her basket with presents. She never found Jesus, and that is why she visits each house, leaving toys for good children.

Christmas is celebrated differently in many countries, but we are all celebrating the same way in remembering the Birth of Jesus, appreciating family and collecting presents before eating great food! Coming together at Christmas time and acknowledging the birth of Jesus, is the way most people celebrate. So let's take the time to all have a Merry Christmas!



Classic Christmas Movies

Amanda Bernadyn

Christmas Time!! It is truly said to be the greatest time of the year. What better way to enjoy the season than to enjoy a classic Christmas movie. Christmas movies bring joy to its viewers, and helps create a sense of believing in something. Here is a list of just a few of the best classic Christmas movies that you should add to your list of things to watch this season.

A Christmas Story

A 1983 Christmas Classic, about a boy on a mission to get a Red Ryder BB gun with hilarious moments on the way including; frozen tongues, and sexy leg lamps. This movie has actually become such an important part of Christmas that is played in a marathon of 24 hours all of Christmas Day.

It's a Wonderful Life

An unusual beginning for a Christmas movie, the story starts out in depression and almost suicide. As the story unfolds it creates a wonderful meaning

about life. It reflects the true meaning of Christmas; friends, family, and the joy of the gift of life, making this 1946 movie a Christmas Classic.

Elf

"Buddy the Elf, what's your favorite color?" Will Ferrell is hilarious in this 2003 movie hit, making the story entertaining for all ages. It is a story of a boy, who grows up as an elf in the North Pole, and then finds out he is not really an elf. Buddy heads to New York City to find his dad. In the end Buddy the Elf finds his place in life and even saves Christmas.

The Santa Clause

This 1994 original picture is about a man who accidentally kills Kris Kringle, and has to take his job and become the official new Santa Clause. First unwilling, he ends up loving being Santa.

Gingerbread Houses

Amanda Bernadyn

Gingerbread is a popular Christmas treat known around the world. It is often used to make gingerbread houses, or gingerbread men. These themes are covered with icing and candies by people every year as a fun way to decorate for the holidays.

Gingerbread first appeared in central Europe in the middle ages, made from sugars and spices that had been brought back from the Middle East by soldiers returning from the Crusades. It was not until the 19th century that the treat became associated with Christmas.

Gingerbread houses first started in Nuremberg, Germany. They were inspired by the witch's edible house in the fairy tale of "Hansel and Gretel." This story is about two children who walked through a dangerous forest and come upon a house made of gingerbread. As settlers from various parts of Europe arrived in the United States, they helped to spread the tradition of making houses of gingerbread to celebrate Christmas. Since this time the gingerbread houses have become more intricate in design and decorations.

The Skyline is looking for new writers for the newspaper for the second semester. All you have to do is write an article to get it published. See Mrs. Bednar to sign up today.

Today gingerbread cookies and houses are as popular as ever, and have become an unshakable, fun Christmas tradition in America.



This is an example of a gingerbread house made from scratch.

For recipes and instructions on how to make your very own gingerbread house this year go to: http://simplyrecipes.com/recipes/how_to_make_a_gingerbread_house/.

The Nutcracker

Lochlan McDonnell

Recently the LA Dance Theatre performed its annual rendition of "The Nutcracker." The Nutcracker is a two-act [ballet](#), originally choreographed by [Marius Petipa](#) and [Lev Ivanov](#) with a score by [Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky](#). Since the mid 20th century, the Nutcracker has been enormously popular. The play is most commonly performed during the Christmas season.

Several Nativity students participated in the show including **Devin Heckman**, **Kayla Stickell**, **Brianna Kuperavage**, **Ryan Palamar**, **Rachel Eckert**, and **Katie Flanagan**. All of the Nativity students who participated did great including senior Kayla Stickell. When asked about her final performance she said, "It was most memorable definitely my performance." I to personally good friend, Heckman, steal performed very ever Nutcracker appearance. When asked about his performance Devin said, "It wasn't about the money; I just wanted to show people what I could do on the stage." Other students attended, including **Michael Fetterolf**, who said, "Simply, Devin tore up the dance floor." **Evan Kuperavage** said, "The show was captivating. Though it was my first time attending the Nutcracker, I now have a great appreciation for the performing arts."



Congratulations to all the Nativity students who participated in the show, and represented their school well in the process.

Jolly Old St. Nick

Shawn Meier

Some know him as Santa Clause, others know him as jolly old Saint Nick, and even as Father Christmas. Research indicates that these are all the same people. Research also indicates that this is how Santa Clause first started giving gifts.



There was once a poor man who had three daughters. He was so poor that he had not enough money to pay for any of his daughters' dowry (A dowry is an amount of money that the bride's parent would have to pay the groom on the wedding day.) When

Nicholas, a bishop at the time, heard of this, he had to help. One night he put a bag of gold in through the man's window so that the first daughter could be married. He repeated this a second time for the second daughter. The father by this time was determined to figure out who was doing this for him, so he waited up to catch him on the third night. When he did catch him he easily recognized him as the bishop. The father thanked him but Nicholas said, "Don't thank me but thank God." The bishop asked him not to tell anyone, but the word got out so that whenever someone got a secret gift they figured it was him.

No matter what name you refer to him as or where you live, or whether or not you have a chimney, Santa's expected arrival is causing breathless anticipation for many across the world.

New Year, New You

Paige Nebistinsky

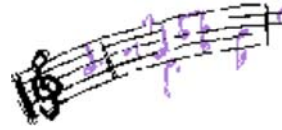
Grab your paper and pen, sit down, and make a list. A list that shows what you want to do to make a change in your life, whether it be good or bad, make sure you're doing what you want to do that will make you happy.

In order to accomplish what you want in the New Year, you need to make sure that you are realistic and can set achievable goals. Describe your resolution in detail and if you can, break down large goals into smaller ones. Try to find alternatives to behavior that you want to change about yourself and most importantly aim to do things that are important to you, not what you think or what other people expect of you.

The celebration of the New Year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, Babylonians celebrated the beginning of a new year



on what is now March 23. Late March actually is a logical choice for the beginning of a new year. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical or agricultural significance. This is a new year for you to reinvent yourself to the person that you want to be. Don't sit there and complain, make a change, and ring in the New Year with the you that you want to be!



Name that Carol

Amanda Nastasi

Below are listed some famous carols. Have fun and see how many you know!

1. "All is calm, all is bright. Round yon virgin, mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild. Sleep in heavenly peace."...
2. "Tiny tots with their eyes all a glow will find it hard to sleep tonight. They know that Santa's on his way."...
3. "It's the best time of the year, say hello to friends you know. And have a cup of cheer"...
4. " It is the night of our dear savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining..."
5. " What a bright time, it's the right time, to rock the night away..."
6. "You better watch out. You better not cry. You better not pout I'm telling you why..."
7. " Oh the weather outside is frightful, but the fire is so delightful and since we've no place to go..."
8. " Decorations of red on the green Christmas tree, it won't be the same if you're not here with me..."
9. "Underneath the Christmas tree just want you for my own, more than you could ever know..."
10. "They know that Santa's on his way He's loaded lots of toys and goodies on his sleigh..."

See page 5 for the answers.

Movie Review *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

Amanda Nastasi

The seventh and final installment of the Harry Potter series is slowly coming to a close with part one of *The Deathly Hallows*. The movie was first debuted in mid-November and was a box office sensation. People were in sleeping bags for hours upon hours waiting anxiously for this motion picture; some even dressed up as characters from the movie.

Judging from the numerous reviews from the movie from many different critics, it is almost unanimous that the movie had outdone all of the previous films in



the series. From the acting, to the special effects, it truly was outstanding. Not only that, but the movie even stuck to the main plot of the book and many were sad when it had to end halfway.

Personally, my review of the movie is quite similar to everybody else. I didn't want to leave the theatre when it was

over and I cannot wait until the final part two of the movie to be in theatres. It will be a bittersweet feeling though, I will be happy to see the amazing movie, yet sad that it will be the final time we will ever see another Harry Potter film.

So in closing, I highly recommend this movie, even if you haven't seen the others. It is a quality film that everyone can find something to enjoy about it.

Fast Track to Fitness

Paige Nebistinsky

The holiday season will be over before you know it and you know what that means? You feel like all you did over break was relax with your family and eat! Well the solution to this problem is easier to fix than you think. Maybe you'll wake up with aches and pains, not be as active, or just feel that you have lost your ability to function properly just for a few days off.

So here are some tips on how to fix that.

The first thing that you need to do is just start off easy to get back into the swing of feeling energetic by moving around the house doing little things or simply going for a walk. After you start to feel better about yourself, just add food in your life that will not only taste good, but will give you the filled up feeling as well. Fruit and vegetables are the best thing for you, but if you do not like that then try eating any type of foods that have whole grain in them but most importantly avoid foods that have a lot of salt and sugar. Even if you just try any one of these ideas in this article, you will surely be on your way to hitting the fast track to fitness and feeling better in no time after the holidays!



The History of Santa Clause

Devin Heckman

Have you ever wondered how and why Santa Clause, or St. Nick to some, came about? St. Nicholas isn't just a character taught to little children across the world who brings all of the good children presents. Santa Clause originated from the Dutch, and was portrayed as a heavy set man who wears a

red jacket, red pants, black boots, a long red hat, and has a fluffy white beard.

Many old time folk stories say that Santa lives in the far north in a land of perpetual snow. St. Nicholas doesn't live alone though. Old tales say that he lives with his wife, Mrs. Clause, and has a giant workshop that is used primarily by his little helpers, known as elves. Santa's elves are depicted the same way in every Christmas story. They are about 3ft tall and have very long ears. Santa's elves primarily help Santa build toys and help Santa organize his naughty and nice list just before Christmas comes around.

Santa is said to have nine reindeer that guide his sleigh as he flies over the city's and town's to deliver all of his presents for the children to open on Christmas morning. In old time tales, Santa would go into people's houses to drop off his gift. This tradition was modified and now says that Santa Clause stops his reindeer and sleigh on top of houses and comes down the chimney so that he was unseen and unheard by the children while they were sleeping. Children would leave out cookies and milk for Santa to eat and drink as he put the presents under the Christmas tree.

Another popular Christmas story originated from the tale of Santa Clause: Rudolph the red nosed reindeer. Rudolph the red nosed reindeer was a lonely reindeer that had a very peculiar bright red nose. On the night of Christmas Eve, St. Nicholas and his reindeer were unable to see in what was a very brutal blizzard. So Santa Clause asked Rudolph to guide his sleigh so he could lead the other reindeer. This story of Rudolph has become very popular due to written books and movies on this fairy tale.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without St. Nicholas. Thanks to all of the past time stories and traditions, children are more excited and happy when Christmas time comes around. The tradition of Santa Clause gives children a very happy and imaginative Christmas.

DID YOU KNOW???

Christmas trees originally featured actual lighted candles. Containers of water were kept near the tree because of this fire hazard.

Answers to Name that Carol

1. Silent Night
2. The Christmas Song
3. Holly Jolly Christmas
4. O Holy Night
5. Jingle Bell Rock
6. Santa Clause is Coming to Town
7. Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow
8. Blue Christmas
9. All I want for Christmas is You
10. Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire

Catholic Schools Week

Lochlan McDonnell

Next month, starting January 30th, Catholic Schools Week will be celebrated throughout the United States.

The first Catholic Schools Week was celebrated in 1974. This event, lasting one week, is sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. During this time, Catholic education is honored and shows the positive effect Catholic Schools have on its individuals, along with the rest of the community. The

theme in 2011 is "A+ for America Catholic Schools". Catholic Schools usually plan service projects to engage the student body in this special week. These projects sometimes center around the Christmas season, which usually provide help to those who need it. Our school has participated in several drives including a coat drive and "toys for tots". Lent is another time for planning similar service and acts of charity. These Corporal Works of Mercy are common in the Nativity community around this time of year.

Though we have already participated in some of these charitable acts, we must continue to do so to prepare for the celebration of our catholic education during Catholic Schools Week.

Christmas Savvy Satori

Amanda Bernadyn
& Nadia Schuster



We decided to survey the cafeteria this month on the topic of Christmas. The following are the calculated results.

77% prefer helping decorate your family Christmas tree

42 % prefer buying your friends Christmas presents

17 % prefer making a Christmas List

12 % prefer getting up early on Christmas Day

8 % prefer getting dressed up for Christmas ~
"Always fresh" – Shea McCormick

45 % prefer going to Christmas Parties

21 % prefer going to the Christmas Formal

19 % prefer watching a **Christmas Story** on Christmas Day – "It's overplayed." – Vincent Baiocco

-This or that

The Grinch or Elf - **Grinch**

Presents or money – **Presents**

~"Money-depends on the amount"- Rebecca Rebeck

Candy Canes or gingerbread men – **Candy Canes**

The Year without a Santa Claus or Rudolph - **Rudolf**

Christmas or Thanksgiving - **Christmas**

Snow on Christmas or Sun on Christmas – **Snow on Christmas**

Staying at home on Christmas or traveling – **Staying at home on Christmas**

2010 – 2011 College Bowl Games

Devin Heckman

Christmas vacation is around the corner which means only one thing, its bowl season. College football is very entertaining and fun to watch with your friends, even if your team may not be playing. There are plenty of great games, which means there will be plenty of upsets and "down to the wire" affairs.

This year is full of great match ups. Both Penn State and Notre Dame have made a bowl game this year and are looking to end their season in a positive fashion. Notre Dame has had a tough season losing multiple key players to injuries. Penn State, on the other hand, is a very young team looking to mature in a big game with an eye for the future. The Florida Gators will be a tough test for Joe Paterno as they try and repeat as Outback Bowl Champions two years in a row.

Previews and Predictions

Penn State v. Florida - The Nittnany Lions are facing the Florida Gators in the Outback Bowl. Joe Paterno will be facing the Florida Gators under head coach Urban Meyer who will be serving in his final game as head coach of the Florida Gators. I predict Penn State to win by 10 points in this competition.

Penn State 31, Florida 21.

Notre Dame v. Miami – The Fighting Irish will be up against the Miami Hurricanes in the Hyundai Sun Bowl. Notre Dame is having a very rough year after losing several key players due to injury. Quarterback Tommy Rees has filled in nicely for the injured Dayne Crist. The U, aka Miami University, has had a rough season as well. They benched starting quarterback Jacory Harris and later fired their head coach. This will be a tough test for the Irish but I believe they will win this one by a field goal. **Notre Dame 16, Miami 13.**

The first manufactured Christmas tree ornaments were sold in 1800 by the former Woolworth department store.