



# Falcon Flyer

Winter Issue 2023

Published by the students of Stetson Middle School

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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## Lighting up the year!

An interview with an expert holiday decorator

*By Erin Alloway (Sixth Grade), with plenty of help from Gavin Snyder and photos by Danielle Grisillo (Eighth Grade).*

There is a bright light near your house at night. Shimmering rainbow hues are caught on your window, and loud noises come from outside. You peek outside and wonder what it could be. Alien visitors? A riot? Did your parents finally get you that party limo you asked for when you were six years old?

Actually, it's the whole neighborhood, and people you don't even know, eating and laughing and looking at... lights? Confused but delighted by the bubbling cheer you hear, you investigate with your family, and end up having an amazing night!



This is the reality for residents and visitors of 895 West Concord Road in West Chester, which becomes a center for fun around Halloween and Christmas each year when one special house is adorned with many, many, MANY lights and inflatables. So I decided to interview a resident and leading decorator on the house, Gavin Snyder, a former Stetson student, about how he builds the Christmas displays, to hopefully inform you on the hottest new holiday spot. Here are his replies:

**Q: What inspired you and your family to put up the decorations every year? How did it start?**

A: From a young age, I've always enjoyed decorating for the holidays. Each year my collection of decorations seemed to grow, and then I decided to create the West Chester Christmas Light Display in 2017. I knew that if I wanted to expand my display, I had to do it for a good cause, and the SPCA was the cause I chose to support!

**Q: Tell me about how the displays have evolved. What decorations have you added and subtracted from the collection, and why?**

A: Originally my displays were always the type families would drive by, look at, and say "that house looks so good," from inside of their car. In 2019, two years after creating the WC Christmas Light Display, I decided to change this tradition and create the walk-through pathway, which has stuck for many years now. The walkthrough is my favorite because it provides a very interactive experience for guests. Throughout the years there have been many decorations that have made their way into the display. Some return year after year while others have sat in the basement for many years, because I have a plan for them that hasn't come up in the display yet.



**Q: What does the process look like? Does it take a lot of planning to figure out what goes where?**

A: The "process" has become very large through the years as the display continues to grow. With Christmas now being a walk-through pathway I map out the whole display on a large piece of paper, the front yard to the back yard, and work around the dashed lines that indicate the lights. I fill in the white spaces as much as I want to/ can while keeping in mind my electrical sources and capabilities, often realizing I've got too much with not enough power. Not only is there a paper plan, but also a calendar I've created with important dates and marks of things I must have accomplished in order to have the display ready by Thanksgiving night. Additionally, I coordinate with guests and vendors to set up special event nights. My favorite part is marketing the display. Our fan base on social media is nearly 5K followers and we have about 1K on Instagram. I really enjoy taking pictures and putting catchy words to them to entice guests.

**Q: Where do you store all the lights and inflatables? Does it get hard to fit everything in?**

A: Storage has become a very big issue for my family and me, especially this last year. Most of our decorations are stored in our basement and storage shed. In 2021, we added an extra storage shed, which gets converted into the “letters to Santa” shed during the holidays. Needless to say, I have quickly outgrown the shed and am looking at purchasing a storage unit for next year. So it gets very hard to fit all the decorations in our home!



**Q: Could you tell me about your upcoming Christmas events?**

A: I have lots of events planned for this Christmas season! We have Santa and Mrs. Claus planned for Saturday, November 25th and Saturday, December 9th, Plus Dia Doce Cupcakes truck and East Coast Mini donuts! Dia Doce will be at the display 11/25, 12/3, and 12/8. East Coast Mini

Donuts will be with us 11/24, 12/9, and 12/15. We are still working on an SPCA meet n' greet date. Getting local businesses involved in our display is a large goal of mine every year.

**Q: What is the most rewarding part of decorating your home?**

A: That is a tricky question because there are so many rewarding parts of decorating my home. A few of my favorites include interacting with and getting to know our community, being able to help so many animals in need, but perhaps my favorite part is bringing Christmas Magic to children! One of my fondest childhood memories is riding around in the car and looking at Christmas lights, always wanting to get a closer look. So the fact that I was able to create a walk-through Christmas display for so many kids in my community to enjoy really resonates within me.

**Q: What advice would you give to novice decorators?**

A: The answer is simple; if you have a dream or vision, create it! There's nothing more rewarding than creating your own masterpiece, fitting all the pieces into the puzzle, and then “sitting back” and enjoying what you've created. Use your creativity to create something you're proud of! My personal piece of advice is less is better. I often apply this to my planning. Yes, my yard looks very full from the front perspective, but there's lots of spaces that I've left open instead of junking it up!

*In conclusion, the holiday events at the Christmas walkthrough display are, in my and Gavin's opinions, worth visiting! You can find the West Chester Christmas Display at 895, West Concord Road in West Chester. Now, with that said, I hope you have learned from this interview, and happy decorating!*





## Check out these other light shows near you!

Kozair's Christmas Village: A tradition to visit in my family! Find them at 782 Christmas Village Rd, Bernville PA. Open from Thanksgiving to January 1st, all nights and all holidays!

Overly's Country Christmas: Find them at 116 Blue Ribbon Lane in Greensburg PA. Open all Thursdays in November (Except Thanksgiving) and all Sundays in November, as well as all Sundays and Thursdays in December except for Christmas eve and the 31st, as well as the 18th, 19th, 20th, 26th, and 27th.

Kennywood Lights: Found at 4800 Kennywood Blvd, West Mifflin PA, this attraction stands out for being located in a

literal theme park! Visit on November 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, and on December 1, 2, 3, 10, 17, 26, 27, 28, 31, every Friday and Saturday, and the 1st of January!

Winter Flower Show, Phipps Conservatory: Found in Oaklands, Pittsburgh at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Garden. Visit all days until January 7th at different hours. Find their website if you want more specifics!

Holiday Light Show at Shady Brook Farm: Enjoy a dazzling display of holiday classics and beloved characters via car or wagon ride! If you take the car, be sure to tune in to 90.7 NFM for music that synchronizes with the lights! The light show opens on November 18th and runs from Sunday to Saturday all the way until January 8th!

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## Winter is Here to Spread Holiday Cheer!

*Original Poem by Maddie Crawford, Sixth Grade*



Winter is here time to spread some holiday cheer!

Icicles cover the windows.

No School!

Traditions are passed down from many years.

Eggnog filled to the brim of each and every cup!

Reindeers prance on the fresh snow.

# Math teaching is a family business for Mrs. Hilton

By Samantha McNichol and Kiki Simunov, Eighth Grade

Stetson has a new math teacher! Mrs. Hilton teaches Pre-Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2 for Eighth Grade. We interviewed her to find out some fun facts about her! If you ever want to visit her, her room number is C101.

## General Questions

**Q: How are you liking Stetson?**

A: I'm loving it! It's a lot different from high school, which is where I came from. I'm getting used to 8th grade, but I really enjoy it, and I'm still adjusting!

**Q: What's your favorite level of math to teach?**

A: Algebra 2 and Precalculus, because of the more difficult topics.

**Q: How long and where did you teach before coming here?**

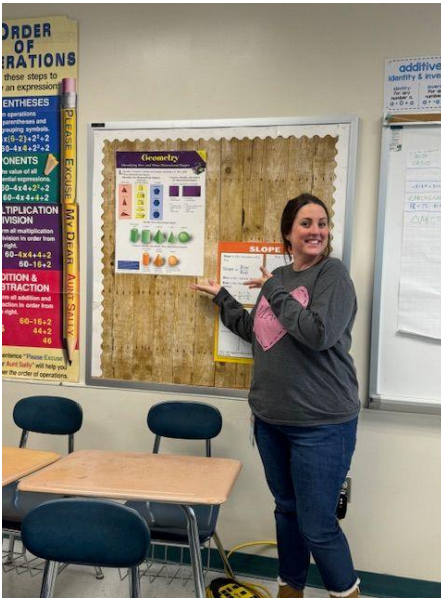
A: I taught at Avon Grove Charter High for eight years.

**Q: What got you interested in math?**

A: My mom's a math teacher and so was my grandfather, so I always liked math. It was in my Algebra 2 year that I really decided that I would be a math teacher, because of my teacher.

**Q: What advice would you give to students?**

A: Don't let hurtful words affect your mood in school, be true to yourself, and study for your tests so you'll be prepared.



## would You Rather?

**See ten minutes into the future, or ten years?**

Ten years.

**Fight ten zombie sized chickens, or fifty chicken sized zombies?**

The zombie sized chickens, at least they don't want to eat your brains.

**Be always underdressed, or always overdressed?**

Always underdressed.

**Be ten inches tall, or ten feet tall?**

Ten feet tall. It would be cool to see everything that high up.

## Fun Questions

**Q: What's your go-to Starbucks order?**

A: Iced white mocha with sweet cream cold foam.

**Q: What's your favorite candy?**

A: Sour Patch Kids.

**Q: What's your favorite Taylor Swift song?**

A: Karma.



# Mrs. Hale has taken teaching to China and back

*By Elven Deng and Harrison Ko, Sixth Grade*

Mrs. Hale, a geography teacher for 6th and 7th grade, sat down with the Falcon Flyer reporters for an interview about her work in China and Pennsylvania.

## **#1: How long have you been teaching?**

Answer: "About 12 years."

## **#2: Why did you choose to teach world cultures and geography?**

Answer: "I took a world cultures and history class, and my history teacher really inspired me and took time to get to know me!"

## **#3: You told us that you taught in China. Why did you move from America to China?**

Answer: "Dr. Chien, who was a WCU professor, told me about a teaching course in China. She always told me I would go to China . . . and I did!"

## **#4: What is or was your favorite food in China?**

Answer: "Dumplings and potstickers."

## **#5: How much Chinese do you know?**

Answer: "A little bit, but enough to talk in a conversation for a bit."

## **#6: Were you in cultural shock when you traveled to China?**

Answer: "Yes, absolutely. It was so crowded and it was so different."

## **#7: Do you still travel places to teach?**

Answer: "I don't anymore, sadly."

## **#8: Do you still plan on travel-teaching like before?**

Answer: "No, not anymore."

## **#9: Why did you change teaching subjects from what you taught in China?**

Answer: "There was only the option of teaching English in China, so when I came back, I changed subjects to Social Studies."

## **#10: Did you play any instruments in China?**

Answer: "I did not, but there was music everywhere."

## **#11: What is your favorite color?**

Answer: "It used to be yellow, but I guess it is green now."

## **#12: How many pets do you have, and what kind?**

Answer: "I don't have any pets. Used to have a dog but he passed away."



**#13: What out-of-school activities do you do?**

Answer: "I like to read, walk, and I joined St. Max Parish."

**#14: Do you have any inspirations?**

Answer: "I guess Dr. Chien was a great inspiration to me and helped me chase my dreams."

**#15: What motivations do you have?**

Answer: "My students motivate me. They make me want to be a better teacher."

**#16: Did you have a job before becoming a teacher?**

Answer: "I worked at a hair salon."

**#17: What college did you go to?**

Answer: "I went to college at West Chester University."

**#18: Why did you choose to be a teacher?**

Answer: "I was inspired by my history teacher."

**#19: What places do you typically go to with your kids?**

Answer: "I often take my three kids to West Goshen Community park."

**#20: Are you friends with the other social studies teachers?**

Answer: "Yes! I work with them all the time."



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## Stetson Clubs expand their reach

*Written by Jett Flynn, Eighth Grade*

Multiple clubs are offered at Stetson, most of which you probably know of but I hope this article will introduce you to a few new clubs and maybe even convince you to join one. Some clubs meet on Thursday Falcon Period Club Days and others meet after school.

### STEM Clubs

- **Tv Club** Tv Club is a student led club that creates fun short videos that air after News in the morning during homerooms. These videos can include challenges pitching the Green Team and Gold Team against each other in fun mini games and trivia contests. They also feature word on the street interviews and announcements from staff. It is a great club for any interested in video production or being the host and using your voice to lead a production team.





- **MathCounts Club** The MathCounts Club is a group of mathletes at Stetson. They get together to practice math, work on their math skills and go on a competition field trip during the school year to see how they stack up against other schools. It is a great club for any math enthusiasts or anyone who wants to get better at math.
- **Science Olympiad** The Science Olympiad program is a in depth competition-based club promoting all fields of science. Club members work in small groups to build, fly, or solve scientific problems. When students are prepared for competition, they take a coach bus to a university where they compete against schools from all over the region or state. This is a great club for scientific minds or anyone interested in learning more about science or STEAM in general.

## Creative Clubs

- **Art Club** The Art Club is a great club for creative and artistic students to join alike. It promotes extra art projects if the art you do in school is not enough. The Art Club features lots of different types of art from 2d newspaper clippings turned into beautiful 3d snowflakes to painted murals on a whole wall. It's a great club to join if you love art and want to enjoy your passion around other artsy minds.
- **Public Speaking Club** The Public Speaking Club is open to any student in the school who wants to gain confidence or learn more about public speaking. It meets on every club day and helps to practice your verbal communication skills in a safe welcoming environment. This is a good club for any student interested in learning more about public speaking or speaking in general.
- **Falcon Flyer** The Falcon Flyer Club at Stetson is a newspaper club and is actually where this article is written today. This club meets after school on Wednesdays and puts out 3-4 issues per year. It is a great club for any students who loves writing of any kind or anyone interested in page design or photography; it can all be experienced in the Falcon Flyer.



## Student-Led Clubs

- **Best Buddies** The Best Buddies Club at Stetson is a student-led friend-finding club. Students find fun in playing lots of games and participating in activities big and small with all the students of Stetson no matter the grade. It's a great club to join if you enjoy making new friends or are a social person.
- **World Language Club** The World Language Club at Stetson is a learning club for all languages offered at Stetson. It is perfect for anyone who wants to get more interested in the language they are learning or interested in. It is open to all students whether they take a language or not, and whether they are proficient in their language or not. It is a great club for any Stetson student who wants more out of their language or wants to pursue another language.





## **Are Pajama Pants Okay To Wear To School? We Think So.**

By Julia Lockledge, Seventh Grade, and Lily Pestritto, Sixth Grade



**Dear Administration,**

The students of Stetson Middle School would like to propose a plan. In the months from January-February we request that the students of Stetson be permitted to wear pajama pants on Fridays. As students at Stetson Middle School, we enjoy wearing PJs to school and would greatly benefit from them. Let us tell you why.

Studies conducted by Cornell Health show that students can focus and pay attention more when comfortable and relaxed. Paying attention is a crucial part of being a successful student. In addition, seasonal depression is a real challenge and being a middle school student in the 21st century we need to take that as a serious matter. “Mental Health America” speaks out that the most symptoms of depression begin in the fall and end in early spring. Having something to look forward to every week can be a huge help for teens who might need a little pick me up.

We also propose to make this sort of a spirit day plan. Stetson does not have many spirit days so this could be a fun and easy way to add some into the school year. The Falcon Flyer also took a survey to back up our proposal. We got 335 responses, and 91% of students said they would love to see more pajama days in the school year. Additionally, 85% said they find them beneficial. We hope you will consider our proposal and take it seriously because we know you want the best for your students.

Sincerely,  
The Falcon Flyer Editorial Staff



# Taylor Swift & MORE – Music trends in 2023

By Piper Goodwin and Olivia Huang, Eighth Grade

This year has been hectic with new artists or experienced artists who have been releasing their songs and ending up in the media. Taylor Swift is just one of many who have become more world renowned and have us moving from one trend to another, going to different songs each week. What's heartbreaking is how bigger artists can comfortably make money while others tend to struggle a bit to keep their music career going when they are not that known to people. Aside from bigger or popular artists and their songs, there are some smaller artists who are also trying to get to a higher level and become more known to the public. There are also many wonderful songs being made that are underrated. It might seem crazy how many artists around the globe are trying so hard to be heard and stand out from others since our society is very judgemental. These are some different topics of a variety of songs from music in 2023. It may not be up to date as songs are being released by the minute, but it's a start to get you thinking about the millions of songs out in the world.

<p><b><u>Viral Songs:</u></b></p> <p><i>Exes</i> by: Tate McRae</p> <p>Bluey intro song by: Joff Bush</p> <p><i>One Of The Girls</i> by: The weeknd, Jennie, and Lily Rose Depp</p> <p><i>Standing Next To You</i> by: Jungkook</p> <p><i>My Love Mine All Mine</i> by: Mitski</p>	<p><b><u>New Songs:</u></b></p> <p><i>Vampire</i> by: Olivia Rodrigo</p> <p><i>Is It New Year's Yet</i> by: Sabrina Carpenter</p> <p><i>Strangers</i> by: Kenya Grace</p> <p><i>Greedy</i> by: Tate McRae</p> <p><i>Is It Over Now</i> by: Taylor Swift</p>	<p><b><u>Older Songs:</u></b></p> <p><i>Flowers</i> by: Miley Cyrus</p> <p><i>Boy's a Liar Pt. 2</i> by: Ice Spice and PinkPantheress</p> <p><i>Dance the Night</i> by: Dua Lipa</p> <p><i>Cupid</i> by: Fifty-Fifty</p> <p><i>Rainy Days</i> by: Taehyung</p>	<p><b><u>Christmas Edition:</u></b></p> <p><i>All I Want For Christmas is You</i> by: Mariah Carey</p> <p><i>Last Christmas</i> by: Ariana Grande</p> <p><i>Santa Tell Me</i> by: Ariana Grande</p> <p><i>Christmas EveL</i> by: Stray kids</p> <p><i>Snowman</i> by: Sia</p>
<p><b><u>Review - Bluey Intro Song:</u></b></p> <p>This song is the intro to a very well known kids tv show, "Bluey." This song is a staple in the bluey soundtrack and plays in all of the episodes. They had recently made an extended version with all of Bluey's friends. Overall, we rate it a <u>9/10</u>.</p>	<p><b><u>Review - Vampire:</u></b></p> <p><i>Vampire</i> by Olivia Rodrigo is her latest comeback and many loved it. It gained popularity very fast and her release party from the music video was very popular. We rate it <u>7/10</u>. This is because it had its spotlight for a hot second, but it is not my go-to style.</p>	<p><b><u>Review - Dance the Night</u></b></p> <p><i>Dance the Night</i> is from the summer of 2023 from the movie, "Barbie." Dua Lipa wrote this song for the movie and became very popular when it was first released. We rated it a <u>7.5/10</u> because we think it had its moment, but now we are moving on.</p>	<p><b><u>Review - Last Christmas:</u></b></p> <p>I recommend this song to listen to as winter rolls by and Christmas is here. This is a classic song for the holiday season, but really good no matter how old it is. I personally think this is a <u>10/10</u> song because of how superb the song is.</p>

# Curl up with a classic holiday movie this Winter Break

By Asa Keslo, Seventh Grade

Grab a few friends or family members and a big bowl of popcorn over Winter Break. Then hit play on one of these classic holiday movies! From the animated Grinch and Charlie Brown to everyone's favorite angry Elf, these are sure to be a hit.

1. Elf
2. Charlie Brown Christmas
3. How The Grinch Stole Christmas
4. Frosty The Snowman
5. Rudolph The Red Nosed
6. The Nightmare Before Christmas
7. Home Alone
8. The Polar Express
9. The Santa Clause
10. Christmas Chronicles



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## Spirit At The Shore trees light up the beach



By Maddy Crawford, Sixth Grade

Many evergreen trees best known as “Christmas Trees” are sold all over America during the holiday season, many parks and public places get Christmas trees as well, like the Ocean City New Jersey Shore beach! This year there are over three different trees spread around the island. I got to go to two including one on the 11th Street boardwalk, and the other on 55th Street beach! Both of which have shells and markers for people to decorate and put around the tree. One tree is dedicated to all past and present people who served in the U.S. Military forces.



# Wicked: A Musical Review

By Avery Debessay and Grace Hierdahl, Sixth Grade

A musical masterpiece, *Wicked* is a very popular Broadway show. It has recently been touring around the United States. Avery saw the show on Broadway in the summer, and Grace just saw it in Philadelphia in late November. We are going to give you a review!

*Wicked* is a story about the “Wicked Witch of the West” from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. The story takes place before the events in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* to showcase Elphaba, the so-called wicked witch. She started off as a baby girl who walked into the world green from head to toe. She was constantly made fun of, which increased her distaste for people. As she got older, she attended Shiz University to study magic. She stumbled upon Galinda (soon to become Glinda the Good Witch), the most popular girl in school. Elphaba and Galinda develop a hatred for each other, but make up soon enough. Time moves on, and Elphaba is asked to see the Wizard of Oz because of her exceptional abilities with magic. Elphaba and Galinda gallop through the Emerald City so that Elphaba can meet the Wizard, whom she’d idolized for so long. We won’t give anything away, but watch the amazing musical and find out what’s to come!



In our personal opinions, *Wicked* is a great example of what Broadway can do, and we love this musical! Some things that we really loved about this musical are the cast, the music, and the costumes. The cast, though they weren’t the originals, had amazing dancing, singing, and acting skills! They were extremely impressive, and we really enjoyed their performances.

We also loved the music! The musical performances that the *Wicked* crew showcased were beyond amazing. They had strong vocals and they really told a story with the songs. The musical soundtrack is something that you’ll want to listen to on repeat as soon as you leave the theater!

Something that really stood out to us were the amazing costumes! From Glinda’s lavish dress in the beginning and end to the extravagant green outfits that the citizens of Oz wore, the costumes were carefully made and were a shining star throughout the show! Though Elphaba’s outfit might *seem* a bit basic at first, it truly showcases her character as an outsider. In the audience, you could see the rich, vibrant greens in the costumes worn by the people in Oz from miles away. They were very hard to miss, and some even wore huge heads that whirled around the stage. The costumes were definitely a highlight of the amazing performance that is *Wicked*.

We hope that you consider seeing it and enjoy it as much as we do. *Wicked* may intrigue people who are interested in magic, fantasy, and learning about backstories. We strongly suggest you consider watching this musical, but don’t take it from us; watch it for yourself!



## Holiday Happenings

### Never say, "I'm Bored!"

# 10 things to keep you busy this holiday



By Maddie Crawford, Sixth Grade

1. **Make Hot Cocoa:** A nice warm cup of hot cocoa always succeeds at warming someone up after being outside in the frigid cold!
2. **Go Sledding!** Experience the thrill of rushing down a hill, with the snow falling on your face, as you plummet to the bottom.
3. **Watch A Classic Movie:** There is truly nothing better than cozying up to watch a holiday classic like: Elf (directed by Jon Favreau and written by David Berenbaum.) A Charlie Brown Christmas (Produced by Lee Mendelson and directed by Bill Melendez) and many more listed in Asa Kelso's article about other Christmas classics!
4. **Bake:** You can't go wrong with some baked goods around the holidays!
5. **Make A Snowman:** "Do you wanna build a snowman?" Of course! This is a popular holiday activity, so get on your hat & gloves and rush out there as soon as you see the first sign of flurries.



6. **Listen To Holiday Music:** Go to a music festival, production, parade, or you could even listen on your phone\devices.

7. **Read a holiday book:** The Stetson Library has many holiday books and stories for check out, or look at your local library for other books!

8. **Sleep:** Why not?

9. **Decorate your house:** Put up candles, a tree or even make your own decorations!

10. **Go Caroling:** You could go to a popular corner in your neighborhood or any public place to spread beautiful

holiday melodies!

11. **Make Gingerbread House:** Gingerbread house's date back to the 16th century, carry on the famous tradition by baking your own or buying a kit from your local grocery store.

# Give small gifts with a big heart

by Mira Luedtke, Lucy Stief, Liv Ward, and Addie Hurford, Eighth Grade

Stockings are one of the ways to spread the joy and fun of Christmas morning. They can be sentimental, fun, or SILLY! :)))))) . They are a fun addition to the presents you get during the festivities of Christmas. Small gifts can also be funny gag gifts for relatives and friends at any holiday gathering. We are here to give you ideas for the different gifts to put in the stockings and little presents for Hanukkah.



- The Laneige lip sleeping mask is great for anyone. Hydrates and smells + tastes amazing for lips!

- Face masks are refreshing and can be a fun way to do skin care! There are plenty of kinds that you can get, moisturizing, cleansing, or cooling.



- Fuzzy socks are comfortable and fashionable socks to wear. They are affordable and can come in many different styles, sizes and colors.

- Skin care products like a moisturizer, cleanser, toner, serum, or exfoliant are great ideas for people who are obsessed with self care! Here are some examples of great companies: Glow Recipe, Drunk Elephant and Bubble.



- Press on nails are fun, affordable, and stylish ways to do your nails without the hassle of going to a salon. Any person who loves to get their nails done will love this.



- Candy is amazing for all!!! The best way to make this as enjoyable as possible is to ask what the person's favorite candy is first and if they have any allergies.

- Soap is also so much fun because you can pick a scent for the person based on their liking. There's bar soap, foam soap, body soap, cleaning soap, and all the other kinds of soap that exist. Just pick which soap you think suits the person you're gifting best!!!





- **Gift Cards** are super easy for everyone! They are great for people you don't know well, and people you know great! You can get different types of gift cards for whatever your friends or family may like. Including restaurants, stores, and gaming related gift cards.

- **Fishing lures** 🐟- These are a great, useful gift for whoever fishes that you know. Fishing lures vary in prices and styles so you can get one that is generic or you can get one you think fits your person's personality.



- **Sports cards** are great for anyone! Young, old or anyone in between! You can collect and even sell them if you get rare cards.

- **Hot wheels**- This toy is better for the younger children, male or female. There are different tracks you can buy and it's fun to collect them. They're small, fun, and just a silly gift to give to younger kids or adults who like to collect things.



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## Deck the Halls with Boughs of ... CREEPY ❄️👻

*An Original Holiday Horror Story By Maddy Crawford, Sixth Grade*

Once upon a holiday season there was a girl named Holly who loved to sing carols and dance around the town square. One day as she was walking in the park she stopped to listen to some carolers singing, their faces almost numb and motionless with fear. When she got home all she could hear was carolers, but she was home alone. For the rest of the day she couldn't shake the feeling of being watched, nor could she shake the holiday songs blasting in her head. That night nothing had changed. She locked her door tight and turned off the lights. She awoke to all her holiday lights on and her record playing "Jingle Bells."



"BANG!" went to her door. She got an eerie feeling. When she looked through the peephole she saw nothing but a paper. She opened the door to see only a paper with a song written. When she went to run she felt as if she was being pulled by an unknown force. The farther she was dragged the louder the songs got.

The very next day another member joined the choir with the fearful numbed face of Holly Vixen.



# Winter Holidays delight around the world

*There are so many holidays celebrated across so many cultures in different countries. This article only features a few of them, so keep in mind, there is a whole plethora of diverse cultures and holidays celebrated that are not included. This article includes the following holidays: Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Saint Nicholas Day, and Yule.*



## Christmas

Christmas originated as a Christian holiday, but is now celebrated in many households regardless of religion. This holiday on December 25th originally celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. Some common traditions include decorating your home and a Christmas tree, cooking a meal and having a feast, and spending time with friends and family.



## Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a holiday mainly celebrated in the Jewish religion. People celebrate by lighting a candle holder, a menorah, for eight nights. This holiday, which occurs in December but the exact dates change every year, is commemorating the recovery of Jerusalem, and subsequent rededication of the Second Temple at the beginning of the Maccabean Revolt.



## Saint Nicholas Day

Saint Nicholas Day, celebrated on December 6th, is a mostly Christian holiday, but lots of other religions can celebrate it as well. It is celebrated for the most part in Europe, as their version of Christmas. Children are given treats like cookies, candies and/or gifts under pillows or in shoes. People eat a feast containing breads, cookies, and meat. In France, pork with mustard and apples is



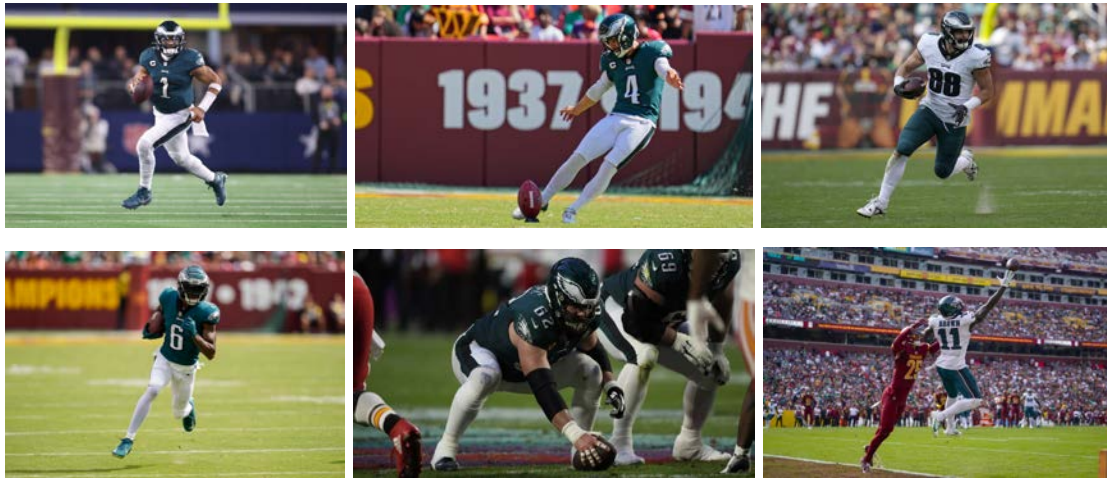


	<p>served. Germans enjoy pfannkuchen, or German pancakes. Saint Nicholas Day is derived from a bishop in the fourth century called Saint Nicholas of Myra. Saint Nicholas was famous for being a kind and giving person, caring for the young, ill, and elderly when in need.</p>	
Kwanzaa	<p>Kwanzaa is more of a cultural holiday opposed to religious holiday. It is mainly celebrated by African faiths and peoples and takes place from Dec. 26-Jan. 1. Seven candles are placed in a candle holder called a kinara. Three red on the left, three green on the right, and one black in the center. Kinara is Swahili for "candle holder." The colored candles have different meanings: Black represents the people, red represents struggle, and green symbolizes the future. The holiday means to reaffirm and restore African heritage and culture, introduce and reinforce the Nguzo Saba (or the Seven Principles), and to serve as a nationally celebrated communal and non-heroic holiday.</p>	
Yule	<p>Yule is a Pagan holiday observed primarily by many Northern European and Germanic peoples, as well as other spiritually based groups. Traditions during this holiday include caroling, burning a yule log, celebrating Kris Kringle (the Germanic pagan god), toasting to good health, and gift giving. Yule is centered around the winter solstice and the idea of the day becoming longer, as the Earth becomes fertile again, so in turn much life would be reborn.</p>	

# Philly's Birds reach NFC playoffs



There are over 52 players on the Eagles roster. Out of all these players, here are the top six.



- ★ Jalen Hurts is the quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles. He became quarterback for the Eagles in August of 2021. He led the Eagles in the Super Bowl in 2022, playing the Kansas City Chiefs. This year he has a total of 3335 yards in running and 18 touchdowns.
- ★ Jake Elliot is the placekicker for the Eagles. He joined the Eagles in 2017. One of his best plays was while playing the Buffalo Bills. He made a 59 yard field goal bringing the game into overtime. This season he made a total of 24 field goals.
- ★ Dallas Goddert is the tight end for the Eagles. He joined the Eagles in 2018. He ran the ball for over 470 yards this year. However, for the last couple games Dallas Goddert had not been present in the games due to a forearm injury. He has an overall of two touchdowns this season. Dallas Goddert came back to play during their game vs the Cowboys.

- ★ Jason Kelce is the center for the Eagles. He joined the Eagles in 2011. His number is 62. He has a brother on the Chiefs and they are both great players. He himself is one of the greatest centers and overall as a player.
- ★ A.J Brown is a wide receiver for the Eagles. He has a total of 1314 yards. He scored a total of 7 touchdowns this season. He joined the Eagles in 2022. He is jersey number 11. He is a great player!
- ★ DeVonta Smith is number 6. He had 957 yards and 6 touchdowns. He helped win a lot of games and the Eagles would never be as great without him. He joined in 2021. He is also a wide receiver like A.J Browns and the two work together to win games.

### **Games:**

Eagles 38 vs 31 Commanders

Eagles 28 vs 23 Cowboys

Eagles 21 vs 17 Chiefs

Eagles 37 vs 34 Bills

Eagles 19 vs 42 49ers

Eagles 13 vs 33 Cowboys

Eagles 17 vs 20 Seahawks



*Photos and information from <https://www.philadelphiaeagles.com>*

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### Five Falcon Facts!

1. 25-30 million Christmas Pine trees are sold per year in the US!
2. Hanukkah Means “Dedication” in Hebrew!
3. Elephants are the only mammal that cannot jump!
4. 13 stripes are on the American flag - seven red and six white
5. Ever heard an eagle scream on TV? Producers actually use a hawk to sound more intimidating.

### Double Bonus!!!

1. 22 million tons of salt are used to spread over roads in the US every winter.
2. The first snow\flurries at Stetson this year were on Tuesday November 28th at around 8:50 am.

*Facts compiled by Maddy Crawford, Sixth Grade*

## Falcon Flyer Staff 2023-24



### Sixth Grade

Erin Alloway  
Dylan  
Chaffier

Madelyn Crawford  
Avery Debessay  
Elven Deng  
Mason Esterly  
Grace Hierdahl  
Harrison Ko  
Susanna Lange  
Olivia Manieri  
Lily Pestritto

### Seventh Grade

Cooper Boreman  
Gabrielle Campbell  
Julia Lockledge  
Alkistis Pistou  
Logan Woods

### Eighth Grade

Ilarlar Deng  
Jettison Flynn  
Piper Goodwin  
Danielle Grisillo  
Olivia Huang

Mira Luedtke  
Katerina Marcantonis  
Samantha McNichol  
Maggie Perritt  
Matilda Senn  
Kiki Simunov  
Lucy Stief  
Olivia Ward  
Maiya Wilhelmson

**Advisor** Mrs. Claffey,  
cclaffey@wcasd.net

*Falcon Flyer meets on Wednesdays in Room B106, 3-4 p.m. New members are welcome. See Mrs. Claffey for more information.*

