

The Norse Code

NAHS Coffeehouse

By: Fatema Mun and Claudia Frankfurth



On Friday, December 14th, the National Art Honors Society held its annual Coffeehouse, an event showcasing talented artists and musicians for the entire town.

We interviewed Mrs. Duli and found out the history of the Coffeehouse. This event used to be very different, not at all like it is today. East High School was the first school in the district to begin the Coffeehouse tradition. Although small, the coffeehouse has been around since the early 2000s. Often, The Go Around, a popular band that started right here in our school, would play at the Coffeehouse. The band would bring in a lot of people around town, making the Coffeehouse a success every year. In previous years, the Coffeehouse showcased mostly photography, and live music played in the background. The henna stand and the photo-booth are a recent addition to the event.



This year at the Coffeehouse, people from all over town came to marvel at the talented artist's works. The lights shone brightly over the beautiful artwork, setting the scene for the classy event. Musical acts included a special performance from Mr. Salcido and Colin Barch. Artwork from every class, from photography to studio art to graphic design, was showcased. Each artwork, through its different mediums and styles, displayed the diversity of East High School and the talent of each student in the art program. The NAHS made \$900 this year, making it a very successful event. Of course, the Coffeehouse could not have been a success without the amazing art teachers, Mrs. Duli, Ms. Bellucci, and Mr. Niedziejko!



If you missed the Coffeehouse this year, be sure to come next year! The Coffeehouse is always a great time to spend time with your friends, showcase your artwork, listen to music from your fellow classmates, and participate in fun activities.

Why Do We Have Christmas Trees?

By: Alison Alexis

It seems that almost immediately after Thanksgiving, people bring up their Christmas tree and decorate it with various ornaments. This tradition is one which people repeat year after year without question. But why do we use an Evergreen tree and why do we cover it in ornaments?

The evergreen tree is a universal symbol of Christmas. One of the reasons it is so recognizable may simply be because it is green. Plants that remain green all through winter were believed to keep away evil spirits, witches, and illness. Many people believed that the sun was a god and that the winter was a period of time in which the sun god was sick and weak. They would celebrate the winter solstice because it meant the sun god would start to get stronger and healthier. They would decorate Evergreen trees because it reminded them of the plants that would grow when the sun god was stronger and when summer would return.

Many ancient civilizations also celebrated the winter solstice, such as the Egyptians and Romans. The Egyptians would decorate their homes with green palm rushes to celebrate that their sun god, Ra, was recovering from the illness. The palm rushes also symbolize the triumph of life over death. The Romans had a feast on the winter solstice called Saturnalia to honor their god of agriculture, Saturn. They would decorate their homes and temples with Evergreen to celebrate that their farms and orchards would become fruitful again.

Germany is to thank for the modern Christmas tree tradition. In the 16th century, devout Christians would either bring trees into their homes or would decorate pyramids of wood with candles and Evergreen. It is said that Martin Luther, a Protestant reformer, was walking home one night when he noticed the stars twinkling against the Evergreen trees. While reenacting the scene for his family, he added lighted candles to the branches of his tree. It is widely believed that Luther was among one of the first people to try this. When Germans settled in America, they continued their tradition into the 19th century; however, many Americans saw this as odd. German settlers had community

trees on display as early as the mid-18th century, but they were still viewed as Pagan symbols into the 19th century.

There is some reasoning as to why Americans adopted many Christmas traditions so late. Christmas was an extremely sacred holiday to the New England Puritans, so influential people such as William Bradford and Oliver Cromwell forbid “heathen traditions” such as Christmas carols and the decoration of trees. The General Court of Massachusetts enacted a law in 1659 that stated any observance on Christmas besides a church service was a penal offense. This stigma lasted until the 19th century when German and Irish immigrants were the majority compared to the Puritans.

In 1846, a queen popular with her subjects, Queen Victoria, her German Prince, and her children were sketched in the London News standing around a Christmas tree. Because she was so popular, many of the things she did were fashionable to Britain but also American society. By the 1890s, ornaments were arriving from Germany and the modern Christmas tree gained popularity with many Americans. In the early 20th century many Americans used homemade ornaments, while German-Americans continued to use nuts and berries to decorate. Whether it was Queen Victoria’s popularity or the immigration of Germans to America, it is still indisputable that the Christmas tree is, and will continue to be one of the most recognizable symbols of Christmas. Whatever it may symbolize in history, or to you, the Christmas tree is a tree of joy and merry holiday spirit.



Kwanzaa: The Basics

By: Lane Aubert

Kwanzaa is a week-long African American holiday. It occurs annually, beginning on December 26th and ending on January 1st. Kwanzaa was created by Maulana Karenga in 1966, during the Civil Rights Movement. It was made to celebrate African American families and their heritage, bring African Americans together, and give thanks for Earth’s bounty and the good in life. It is not a religious holiday and can be celebrated in addition to religious holidays like Christmas and Hanukkah.

The name Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase ‘Matunda Ya Kwanza’, meaning first fruits of the harvest. Many celebrations and symbols of Kwanzaa are based upon African harvest traditions. There are seven principles of African heritage that families discuss on each day of the holiday. These principles are Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kumba (creativity), and Imani (faith). Each of these principles has a deeper meaning and connection to a sense of community, family, and culture. As well as having seven principles, there are also seven symbols of Kwanzaa. One symbol is Mazao, or crops, which is symbolic of African harvest traditions and the rewards of productive labor. The mat, or Mkeka, symbolizes tradition and history, and is the foundation that is built upon. Similarly to Hanukkah, the Kinara is a candle holder that is lit one candle a day for

each day of the celebration. There seven candles called Mishumaa Saba, that represent the seven principles. A few of the other symbols include Muhindi (corn), Kikombe cha Umoja (the unity cup), and Zawadi (gifts).

When Kwanzaa began in 1966, it was only celebrated by a few hundred people. In the decades following, the holiday became more popular in South America, the Caribbean, and around the world. In 2000, it was estimated that eighteen to twenty million people celebrated Kwanzaa across the globe.

Hannukah

By: Gabrielle Becker

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday celebrated during the end of the year. The true history of the holiday is that in about 200 BC a King had his son take over the kingdom of Judea, while the father was accepting of the Jewish religion, the son was not. He outlawed the practice of Judaism and forced them to worship Greek gods and goddesses, and later in 168 BC, he had his soldiers invade Jerusalem to massacre its people. They eventually desecrated the Second Temple by erecting an altar to Zeus and sacrificing pigs in it. In about 166 BC, a large rebellion commenced, led by Jewish priest Mattathias. One of his sons eventually helped the Jewish people drive out the people in power. After taking back the city the cleansed the Second Temple, rebuilt the alters, and lit the menorah. The candelabrum only had enough oil for one night, but it stayed lit for eight days, just enough time for them to find more oil. It was a miracle. Now, Jewish families gather together for the celebration of Hanukkah. One more candle is lit every night while a prayer is said. While Hanukkah is not the equivalent of the Christian holiday of Christmas, small gifts are still given. These nights are the nights that we celebrate a miracle.



Christmas: A Commercial Holiday

By: Claire Chen

Signs of Christmas can be seen everywhere throughout the month of December, from dazzling light displays carefully assembled on buildings to stores teeming with colorful displays of red and green. Although a Christian holiday, Christmas has become one of the biggest holidays in the United States, also celebrated diversely by atheists, Asian-American Buddhists, and Hindus. According to the Pew Research Center, about 81% of non-Christians celebrate Christmas. With so many Americans celebrating this holiday, how does it impact the economy?

The retail industry benefits the most from Christmas. Statistics from Statista say that in 2017 alone the United States' retail industry made 568.5 billion dollars, about 10% of the industry's yearly earnings. 10% of the retail industry's earnings is a significant amount, so Christmas is a really important holiday, commercially, to the retail industry of the United States. As the holiday season approaches, major retail companies like Macy's see an extreme increase in sales. According to The New York Times, "... The company's [sales have] been steadily climbing in recent months, rising more than 50% in early November" (Corkery). While retail is positively affected, the transportation aspect of the economy also receives a large boost around the holiday season.

Airlines are known for charging exorbitant fees during the holiday season. From December 21-24 every year millions of people crowd at airports to travel, causing tickets to reach up to three times their normal price. Benzinger, a stock website, tracks how much airline stock goes up during the Christmas season. "The top holiday performer in the past eight years has been Delta, which averaged an impressive 20.8% two-month gain [during the holidays]" (Duggan). This spike in stock value during the holidays is a prime example of how Christmas is such an essential holiday in the commercial world.

Christmas, though a religious holiday, is also seen as a commercial one in the United States. The large economic impact that Christmas has can be seen through the retail industry, airline profits, and many more industries throughout the country.

Give the Gift Of Giving

By: Lane Aubert

Now that it's officially the holiday season, you may be wondering what gifts you will give and receive this year. You may want to consider helping those in need that do not have the ability to exchange gifts this year. A wonderful way of doing this is by donating and supporting your local charities and nonprofits. Even a small donation can aid in making someone's day just a little bit brighter. The organizations below are just a few places you can donate to this holiday season.

West Chester Food Cupboard

The West Chester Food Cupboard is a nonprofit organization that supplies both fresh and non-perishable food to those in need. The organization relies on donations of both food and funds to continue to run and help the people living in West Chester. It is run entirely by volunteers at 431 S Bolmar St, West Chester. You can donate online here: <https://westchesterfoodcupboard.org/donate-2/> or drop off food at their address at the following times: Monday between 9:00 am and 12 noon, Tuesday between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm, Wednesday between 9:00 am and 6:30 pm, Thursday between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm, Friday between 9:00 am and 11:00 am, and Saturday between 9:00 am and noon.



Safe Harbor of Chester County

Safe Harbor is a homeless shelter in Chester County, as well as a provider of a community lunch. Seven days a week, they provide hot meals for anyone with a low income in West Chester. Their goal is to provide housing, food, and support for anyone who needs it, as well as to help their residents regain their self-esteem. You can donate here: <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/safe-harbor> or find a list of items needed at the shelter here: <https://safeharborofgwc.org/wish-list/>

Mitzvah Circle

This nonprofit aims to support those who are homeless, are seriously ill, in poverty, or are dealing with a crisis. They only have five employees and rely on volunteers for the majority of their work. They supply diapers, clothing, toiletries, and other necessary products to families and individuals in need. You can donate here: <https://mitzvahcircle.org/donate.php> or find out about volunteering through their website.

Delaware Valley Children's Charity

The original purpose of this charity was to provide gifts for children during the holiday season. Although it's too late to sponsor a child this winter, you still have the opportunity to donate funds to the Delaware Valley Children's Charity so they can provide clothing, toys, and more to children in our area. You can donate here: <http://dvconline.org/offer-help.php>

There are plenty of local charities you can support to help someone in the community this holiday season, but there are plenty of people living outside of our area that could use help too! Be sure to do some of your own research and find a place you believe will best handle your donation!

Holiday Recipes To Try:

By: Alison Alexis

The holiday season isn't complete without a large gathering of friend's and family for a large meal shared together. Better to begin planning for the meal earlier rather than later!

Are you having a large party this holiday season? If so, you are probably in charge of serving your guests food and drinks. Try this punch recipe (from my great-great-aunt Lavada) to change up from your usual drink selection. (This recipe serves about 50 people. Adjust accordingly.)

Ingredients

- 1 quart strong tea
- 1 pint lemon juice
- 48 oz can of pineapple juice
- 1 pint cranberry juice
- 48 oz can of orange juice
- Sugar
- Ginger ale
- 1 gallon of water

Directions

- Pour all ingredients into a large serving bowl
- Taste for sweetness, add sugar if needed
- Add 1 gallon of water
- Add ginger ale until desired fizziness (add just before serving)
- Enjoy!



The Christmas Parade

By: Aravind Alwar

The holiday season has officially begun! On November 30, 2018, to celebrate the end of November and to welcome December, the Annual Christmas Parade took place in West Chester. The annual parade was on Friday, beginning at 7:15 P.M. It was a fun 3 hours watching so many floats. Even students from other schools as well as ours were on the floats. The Marching Band performed and there were many exciting events at the parade. In addition, before the Parade began, the 10th Annual ACAC Jingle Elf Run and Walk took place. The ACAC Jingle Elf Run and Walk is a running event that has been around since 2008. Along with the parade and the run, the Holiday Village was open with plenty of enriching activities, including complimentary treats, hot cocoa, face paint, holiday music, a photobooth, and more! At the end of the night, the floats came by and left, leaving everyone in desire to come again next year to experience this amazing night again. What a fun filled night with Christmas Spirit!



2018 Marching Band Season Ends

By: Kayla Wadyko

For one magical night each year, downtown West Chester is transformed into a Christmas wonderland. Friday night, November 29th, the streets were bursting with lively floats, flashy dancers, and the marvelous sounds of marching bands from near and far. Each jolly group and piece of the festivities leaves a trail of red and green magic that sparkles behind them as they march down the center of a path, surrounding tens of thousands of holiday joy-filled spirits.

The crowd leans in, eagerly waiting to hear their all-time favorite classic, Santa Claus is Coming to Town. Donned with red and white Santa hats and rainbow lights carefully strung around their drums and horns, our very own West Chester East Marching Band appears in the center of this enchanted Christmas world. Our band was just one small rooty toot toot and rummy tum among the hundreds of performing groups, but I could truly see and feel our impact on the crowd as we passed by. There was a visible lift in the crowd's mood of glittery glee and excitement, one person at a time. Marching through the cold, clear night I proudly held our banner, smiling and high-fiving spectators along the way. My casual smile grew even bigger when I noticed that West Chester was beaming right back at me

In our own way, we represented the West Chester East Student body and invited everyone there to set aside their worries and to simply celebrate the joyous holiday season along with us. Just as with being a part of any outside activity or club, through my involvement in marching band, I've learned that the power to make every day special lies within you. You just have to bring it out! It's that simple. You can make that fairy tale a reality with lasting memories of good people and good times. The Viking band did just that, as we wrapped up our 2018 football and band competition season in a merry enriching way - with a big, fat red bow.



Glitter: The Worst Thing in The World

By: Colin Barch

With Christmas right around the corner, presents will fill houses all around the world. Where there are presents, there is glitter. Glitter is the worst substance to ever exist on the planet. If you are tying the bow on a present and your hand gently caresses the glitter, you are in for the never-ending cycle of glitter clean-up. In 1934, during WWII, Henry Ruschmann invented glitter at his house in New Jersey. Henry needed a way to dispose of the scraps in the landfills he worked in, and resulting from that came the monster we call glitter. Glitter was actually made out of trash. If that doesn't convince you of glitter's dreadful connotation, then what will? Even back then everyone thought glitter was dangerous, and our allied forces even considered using glitter bombs during battle (talk about deadly). The glitter is enjoyable for five minutes maximum, then it disperses into the air and ruins everything. Our school's pep rally remains with us to date, due to the roaming glitter seen at every turn. Ruschmann can not have all the credit for creating this creature though, we can date glitter all the way back to the cavemen. Cavemen used their version of glitter to spruce up their wall paintings and make them more visually pleasing. Yes glitter is great to look at, said no one ever. There is even a company called ShipYourEnemiesGlitter, founded by Matthew Carpenter, that, like the name conveys, ships an envelope of glitter to whoever has gotten on your malicious side. This genius company had to be shut down solely because there were too many orders coming in. So next time you even think about giving a present to someone that includes even a speck of glitter, reflect on your terrible life choices.

George H.W Bush: Soldier, President, and Hero

By: Fatema Mun

On November, 30th, 2018, the 41st president of the United States, George H.W Bush, passed away. He was 94 years old. George Bush Sr held many titles: a war hero, a UN ambassador, Vice President, and, of course, President of the United States.

On the onset of World War II, Bush Sr joined the Naval Reserve to fight in the war. At the time, he was the youngest commissioned pilot in the country. He fought bravely in the war and received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his efforts.

His political career began with his attempts of winning a seat in the US Senate; however, he lost the general election. In 1966, he won a seat in the House of Representatives. President Richard Nixon appointed George H.W Bush as a UN Ambassador from 1971-1973.

Bush held many offices afterwards, including the director of the CIA. His accomplishments lead him to become Vice President under Ronald Reagan. As Vice President, he helped shape Reagan's presidential policies and handled foreign diplomatic missions with the President, setting a precedent for future vice presidents. All of his accomplishments set the groundwork for his presidential campaign.

George H.W Bush was president from 1989-1993, and in that time achieved many goals. As he entered his presidency, the Cold War was ending and the Soviet Union was falling apart. He greatly improved US-Soviet relationships by meeting with the leader and signing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. He ordered the invasion of Panama and succeeded in overthrowing the corrupt dictatorship there. Threats from Saddam Hussain emerged as he began an invasion to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, but per orders from Bush, Iraq was defeated and Kuwait was liberated with the help of US troops.

With an economic recession and a rise of taxes, Americans decided against re-electing Bush in favor of Bill Clinton. However, Bush lived on through his legacies. After Clinton's term, George H.W Bush's son, George W. Bush, became president. His other son, Jeb Bush, was a governor of Florida for many years.

George H.W Bush was the longest living president in American history, and with his great contributions to our country, he will live on in history and in memory. He is survived not only by his children, but by the lives he has touched from his time serving the country.