

The Warrensburg High School

SPIRIT

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■ @TheWHSspirit

WHS Gives By Yusr Ghozzi

WHS students embraced the spirit of giving this holiday season by making contributions to benefit the community. School clubs and local charities have called upon students to donate their time and collect urgently needed items for the less fortunate. The student body did not disappoint.

NHS members wrote letters to Santa Claus to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, a nonprofit organization that grants wishes to children diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses. A dollar is donated for every letter submitted. After a two-hour letter-writing session and letters written during lunch by the student body, NHS contributed a total of 1,355 letters.

NHS and FCCLA brightened the Christmases of children in the community through Johnson County Angel Tree. NHS sponsored 6 children and FCCLA sponsored a two year old boy. "The experience

was great. It was really fun wrapping presents and it was nice helping children in need," said **Emily Wright, '14**.

All Ag. classes wrote letters to soldiers stationed overseas to thank them for their service during the holidays. FFA collected canned food donated by the Ag. classes.

7 Charities
7 Angel Tree Angels
1,355 Santa Letters
Many needed blankets
& canned foods

DECA held a blanket drive in conjunction with United Way, a nonprofit organization that works with local United Way offices to better communities. DECA collected 27 blankets. DECA, FBLA, FCCLA and senior STUCO members will be working together to put on a holiday celebration for members of Recovery Lighthouse, a support system for individuals and families struggling with substance abuse. The clubs will be wrapping presents for children, setting up the event, contributing food and refreshments, and dressing up as elves to brighten the kids' Christmas.



Left: Don Miller, '14, delivers gifts recently wrapped by FBLA.
Center : Makayla Hill, '14, Emily Wright, '14, and Shane Ewing, '14, wrap presents for Angel Tree.
Center bottom: Savannah Heath, '15, Justin Dean, '14, and Ashley McClain, '14, write letters to Santa to donate to Make-A-Wish.
Above: Vanessa Gary, '15, carries blankets to be donated to United Way by DECA.

Artist of the Issue By Loan Tran



Jordyn Robinson

As a child, there was one line that the art teacher would always tell you: “Stay inside the lines.” However, **Jordyn Robinson**, ‘15, takes matters into her own hands and instead of following the rules, she takes art to a new level.

Robinson knew since she was young that her artistic talent would be a value to her everyday life. “I think when I first realized my love for art was in the 3rd grade while making clay pots,” she says. “I always enjoyed creating things as a kid.”

Although she has a busy schedule with balancing work and school, her favorite thing to do in her free time is draw. Currently, she is enrolled in Art II and Honors Portfolio Drawing at WHS.

While imagining ideas for her next project, Robinson lives by the concept of symbolism. “I like creating pictures with a story. If it doesn’t mean anything to me, then I don’t put in the effort,” said Robinson. This helped her gravitate towards her stippled piece of a Hollywood dancer.

Robinson plans on using her design techniques to become a wedding planner. “I love organizing things and taking lead,” said Robinson. Outside of school, she participates in the WHS Art Club and tennis.

When Did Santa Die?

By Sam Brooks

Up on the rooftop reindeer pause, out jumps good old...

No one, because Santa doesn’t exist.

For every young Santa believer, there is a day where they find out the harsh truth; Santa isn’t real. The stories may differ, and one may be more traumatizing than the next, but everyone has to face reality sometime.

Nathaniel Alvarado, ‘15, was hit with the news while he was at Walmart.

“I went to layaway and I was like, this isn’t Santa’s workshop, this is layaway,” Alvarado said. “I never wanted to go to Walmart again.”

Sam Minney, ‘16, had to see it to believe it.

“I woke up and saw my mom putting presents under the tree and I was just like, there’s no Santa,” Minney said.

The horror of a child realizing his big jolly idol that camped out at the North Pole was totally fake was too much for some people.

“I found out Santa wasn’t real, and my life just went downhill after that,” **Cody Donald**, ‘14, said.

Gunner Joyner, ‘17, was about five when his brother told him that there was no one

bringing his presents down the chimney on Christmas Eve. Although he was a little mad, it turned out to be for the best.

“Once you find out, you tell other people, and you’re a loser if you didn’t know,” Joyner said.

Alvarado decided to be defiant, and that he didn’t need Santa anyway.

“I was mad, so I was like, whatever. I’ll just get my own presents,” Alvarado said.

Marqui Jackson, ‘16, wasn’t defiant, but was fine with the whole idea of Santa not being real.

“It’s stupid,” Jackson said. “A fat guy going into people’s houses and giving them free presents. It’s almost rude, someone just coming into my house.”

For all of those people with memories of anxiously awaiting presents from Santa, there is also the memory of learning none of it was true. With the grand holiday known as Christmas comes the fat man with a long white beard, and whether or not that is important depends on the student. Many students probably share a similar thought.

“I really don’t care as long as I get presents,” as Sam Minney said, in the true Christmas spirit.

Why Snow is Overrated

By Alex Burson

I do not like snow. I’m going to get that out of the way immediately. It’s cold, wet, slippery, and causes problems for everyone. Snow is overrated.

Every year, without fail, it snows at least a couple inches in Warrensburg. And it also seems that no matter how much it does snow, it causes problems. Cars won’t start, heaters break, and icicles fall off of roofs and kill squirrels. People even drive off the road and smash their cars into each other even though it snowed only half an inch.

Despite all this, though, people still look forward to snow. Yes, it is pretty for all of about five minutes. Then you have to leave your warm abode and face the bitter cold. Without cold, no snow. Once it’s thirty three degrees outside everyone stops embracing the snow and begins to hate winter.

And what happens to snow once it’s been around for a while? It turns brown. Or gray. Or if you are

really unlucky, it will turn yellow. Hopefully it was your dog, but probably not. It was most likely the creepy guy down the street. Don’t tell me that you want the neighborhood creep on your front lawn and please don’t tell me that colored snow is “pretty”.

How do you think rain feels about this? No one seems to love rain, but once it gets below the freezing point everyone is in a hysterical frenzy. You still get wet when there is snow. Especially if you walk through a pile of slush in the parking lot. The only difference being that rain doesn’t give you frostbite.

Sure, snow is enjoyable for maybe a couple of hours. Sledding, snowball fights, and making snowmen are all fun activities that many people take part in. But once you get snowed-in in the middle of nowhere for several days at a time and have no vehicles capable of getting out, then maybe you will hate snow as much as I do.

The Best Holiday Movies



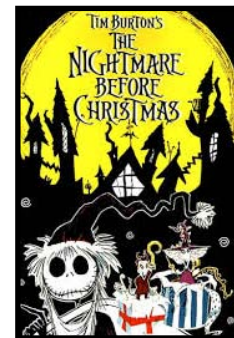
It’s A Wonderful Life

“This Christmas classic teaches the all-important lesson of not taking things for granted. Jimmy Stewart’s performance nearly brought me to tears.” –**Mr. Albert**



A Christmas Story

“A really funny, feel-good movie that takes me back to simpler times, to my youth.” –**Mr. Howell**



The Nightmare Before Christmas

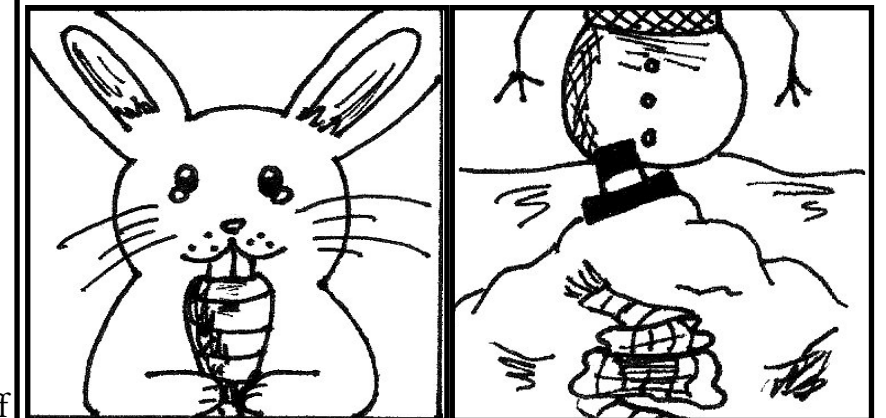
“*The Nightmare Before Christmas* kicked off a new wave of animation techniques. While doing so, it perfectly captures the creepy, yet wonderful world of Tim Burton.” –**Nick Rizzolo**, ‘14



National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation

“The Griswolds are cinema’s most relatable family. Their Christmas plight is the greatest reflection upon my own, making this comedy a must see.” –**Spencer Tauchen**, ‘14

A Taste of Christmas



Loan Tran

Playlist/Hatelist

Playlist

“Carol of the Bells”- *Classic*: My uncle sang, “Christmas is here, give me a beer, wake me next year.”
 “Last Christmas”- *Wham!*: How do you give away someone’s heart?
 “Little Drummer Boy”- *Classic*: Jamming out for Little Baby Jesus. Hit me with a beat, LDB!
 “Feliz Navidad”- *Jose Feliciano*: I once knew a dude named Felix Navidad. This song reminds me of him.
 “Twelve Days of Christmas”- *Classic*: On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love ga... Oh wait, nobody loves me.
 “Jingle Bell Rock”- *Bobby Helms*: Mean Girls does this song justice.
 “All I Want for Christmas is You”- *Mariah Carey*: ... and you, and you, and you, and you.
 “Baby it’s Cold Outside”- *Frank Loesser*: Say! What’s in this drink?

Hatelist

“I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas”- *Jon Rox*: I also want an end to the following songs.
 “All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth”- *Donald Yetter Gardner*: They’ll grow in when they want.
 “Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer”- *Randy Brooks*: Just... No.
 “Christmas Don’t Be Late”- *Alvin and the Chipmunks*: Can it go another octave higher?
 “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”- *Robert L. May*: had a very shiny NO
 “Jingle Bells”- *Classic*: I’m tired of hearing this at middle school concerts.
 “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree”- *Johnny Marks*: I WALTZ around the Christmas tree.
 “Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town”- *John Frederick Coats*: No, he’s not.

Heard in the Halls

#whsheardinthehalls

- Diapers. You can build a hut out of those bad boys!
- I would let my pig eat bacon.
- There’s a whole farm of pandas! He’s not alone any-more!
- Try to stand between me and the last pizza in the world. I dare you.
- You gotta keep the fat kid alive, so if you’re running from something, you trip him!
- Five ants are the devil.
- If you say swag again, I’ll swag you.
- You gotta drive your Pirouette into the hole, man!
- What became the destiny of Destiny’s Child?
- The macaroni is ruined!
- I’m in love with his constantly rosy cheeks.
- I’m a ninja with a blender.
- I fed you three apples, why don’t you love me?
- How do I use this Internet thingy?
- Do you think this is a fool’s paradise?



What’s your unique holiday tradition?

Man on the Street



“We play poker the night before Christmas until 2 in the morning and then get up at 8 to open our presents.”
 Aylana Devon '16



“My family has a Christmas blanket that we eat breakfast on the 1st of December, and then we pass it around to all the family members so Santa can take a nap on it the 24th.”
 Amanda Taylor '15

Monday: White Out Day



Nathan Kreher '15
 Nicole Schneider '15

Wednesday: Cross-dress Day



Annie Hanson '14
 Mackenzie Corbett '14

Tae Michie '14

Friday: Ugly Sweater Day



Carson Beard '17, Karlie Marnholtz '17
 Hannah Griffith '17, Lindsey Landwehr '17

Tuesday: Santa Hat Day



Kayla Yates '15

Thursday: PJ Day



Ben Richner '15
 Adam Richner '15



“We usually celebrate Christmas Eve with mass, have dinner and exchange some gifts. On the 25th we go to my grandmother’s house and have more presents. We enjoy a Brazilian sweet called rabanada.”
 Clara Castro '17



“My family gets along.”
 Tristan Wendel '14

Coollest Kid in School By Bobbi Gums

What is being cool? Being cool means a feeling of comfort with yourself, being honest, and just being a good person. Perhaps no high schooler has these qualities like **Dawson Jones, '14**.

Dawson's friends describe him as someone who is adorably dorky, caring, generous, and humble. "He's really sweet," said **Savannah Heath, '15**. "He always makes people feel good about themselves."

Dawson Jones came to Warrensburg his sophomore year of high school, and since then has been involved in jazz band, marching band, and winter drum line. Though it may seem as if his activities may limit him to only interacting with a certain clique, Dawson has been seen talking to all sorts of people.

"Dawson gives compliments to everyone he sees," said **Jaxon Janvrin, '14**. Numerous people reported that Dawson has a way of picking peo-

ple up when they're down whether he knows them well or not. Teachers and students alike have both been touched by Dawson's signature way of brightening someone's day.

One reason for Dawson's cool factor is his ability to be 100% genuine 100% of the time. "He's true to who he is. He interacts with everyone the same way in and out of the classroom," said math teacher Dan Richner.

When Dawson was told that he was selected to be the Spirit's Spotlight Student he just laughed and asked, "Why me?" He was completely humble about the situation and could not believe that he was chosen. "I'm honored and confused," said Dawson.

If you aren't friends with Dawson Jones, it's because you have probably never talked to him. He really is the coolest kid in school.



Holiday Peanut Butter Balls



Ingredients: 3 lbs. powdered sugar, 1 lb. margarine or butter, 4 cups peanut butter, 3 packages chocolate chips, 1/3 cake paraffin wax

- 1.) Heat the chocolate chips and paraffin wax in a double boiler until they melt
- 2.) Combine the powdered sugar, margarine, and peanut butter in a large bowl and mix them. Chill for 1/2 hour
- 3.) Roll the dough into balls and chill them
- 4.) Dip the balls into the melted chocolate, and cool them on wax paper
- 5.) Store the peanut butter balls in the refrigerator, and try not to eat them all in one sitting!

Holiday Sweaters: Trendy or Tacky? By Paige Purvis

The carolers are singing, the sweaters are jingling, and chestnuts are roasting on an open fire. Wait, the sweaters are jingling? Yes, those "tacky" sweaters, the ones with the thousands of little bells and miles of felt snowmen are once again back to bring holiday cheer.

Tacky Christmas sweaters were created in the 80's when loud patterned sweaters were made popular by hipster pioneers like Bill Cosby. While no one knows why these "tacky" sweaters are so popular, holiday sweater parties have become an annual affair for some people. These vintage finds have now moved to the mainstream markets where they are mass produced and sold for as much as \$600 at stores like Nordstrom, sucking the creativity out of the traditional creation of the one-of-a-kind garish sweaters. Have these tacky sweaters become trendy?

"We all think we are hipsters now," said **Colin Fredrick, '16**.

These kitschy sweaters have skyrocketed in popularity since the early 2000's, riding a wave of Cosby nostalgia.

Regardless of why these sweaters are popular, this trend has swept throughout all generations. "It is funny and makes people smile," said Mr. Howell. "It lightens the mood."

So what makes a good Christmas sweater?

"A lot of bells and shiny things," suggests **Kayci Jo Wright, '15**, "and it has to have a Christmas tree and a snowman, too."

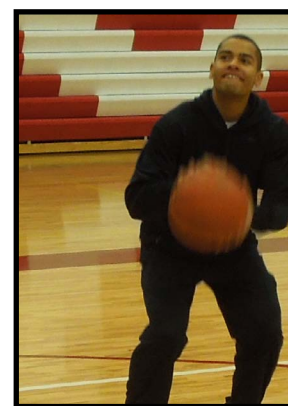
If you can't find a sweater to wear, you can make your own using materials like tinsel and holiday bows. This is a surefire way to guarantee your sweater is one of a kind, in all of its personally garish beauty.

Will these sweaters be around for generations to come, or will they fade into oblivion making us question what we were thinking in 2013? I definitely don't want to be passing on my ugly Christmas sweaters to my great-grandchildren as they frolic in future January snows. These Christmas sweaters are fine in the correct context. Holiday parties? Yes. February? No. There is a time and place for everything and the time and place for tacky sweaters has been reserved for the month of December and holiday parties.

These Christmas sweaters can be a fun way to get into the holiday spirit while keeping you warm in the chilly weather and announcing your arrival anywhere you travel.



Athlete of the Issue: Dakota Jones



Dakota Jones lives for basketball. He dreams of full-court presses, practices dribbling, and shoots his patented jumper for hours everyday.

The ability of this combination guard and four year varsity player for the Warrensburg High School Basketball team does not come without effort. Before his final year with the Warrensburg Tigers, he prepared over the summer by playing on a summer league that traveled across the country. He also worked out on his own up until the first practice. Each day Jones' workouts included 30 minutes of lifting, 45 minutes of dribbling drills, and an hour and a half of shooting and working on his best shot, the pull-up jumper.

The beginning of this basketball season has Jones' feeling confident. "Compared to last season, the team has more pieces that fit together," Jones said. "That makes practicing much smoother and we seem to bond better and play more consistent as a team."

Jones' dedication paid off during the first home game of the season when he scored his 1000th point, making him a member of an elite group along with only 6 other Warrensburg High School players since 1985.

Jones plans to take his skills to the collegiate level next year. His deciding factor: how comfortable he feels with the team and coaches.

Jones, however, is not all work and no play. Outside of class he enjoys sleeping and watching horror movies. Athletics, however, are always at the back of his mind. He loves shopping for shoes and adding to his current collection of over 45 pairs.

Student Assists Victims of Kidnapping By Maggie Kohl



On the evening of December 5th, WHS student **Bene Clear**, '14, had no idea that a crime had just occurred outside of her window.

"I was just relaxing after a college visit from earlier that day."

Miles away, a woman and her child were exiting Wal-Mart, expecting nothing out of the ordinary, when suddenly they were approached by two men carrying a handgun and a knife.

The woman was forced to drive to an ATM and withdraw money from the US Bank, all while she and her son were constantly threatened.

They then drove to a field north of Warrensburg, where the woman and her son were again threatened. Without reason, the suspects then took the car and left the woman and her son lying in the open field.

After the suspects left, the victims ran to the nearest residence, which happened to be the home of WHS senior Bene Clear.

"I heard the doorbell ring several times around 8:15 Thursday night, which was unusual," Clear recalls. "Immediately, my family knew some-

thing was up."

At the door were the faces of the two freezing victims that were faced with death moments before.

"We let them in, gave them blankets, and called the sheriff. We saw no other option but to help them."

The Clear family was alarmed at the sight of the distraught woman and her 7-year-old son and their unbelievable story.

"She saw the lights on in our house and hoped we could help her out of this nightmare."

Luckily for her, the Clears provided exactly what she needed after the chaos.

"As we waited for the sheriff, we talked to her to calm her down and gave her son a snack. I was glad she came to our house because who knows what could have happened to them if it were another house."

The two suspects, Kevin A. Ratte and Alan E. Briscoe, are facing the holiday season in jail, with bail totaling over \$1 million.

Meanwhile, the victims will spend this Christmas trying to return to normal. Bene Clear is just grateful that she and her family were able to help.

"I just hope the woman and her child are recovering fine and having a great Christmas."

Winter Sports are Coming to Town By McKayla Wells

Going into the Christmas Break every team at WHS has a reason to be optimistic.

The **Boys Basketball** team has started with many changes being made from the previous season. Last year the boys had a record of 11-14. This year the team has not only changed up their offense from a motion to more of a dribble drive, but are working on their defensive skills as well. As senior **Dakota Jones** says, "We are taking a new approach on this, not only with our playing, but being positive as a team."

The **Girls Basketball** team is off to a strong start as well. They started off the season going 2-1 in the Marshall Tournament, after going 0-3 in the same tournament last year. The team is altering their game by switching their defense from zone to man to man. "We are making changes," **Mackinsey Cunconan** said. "The scoring is more spread out, and we pass better as a team."

The **Girls Swim** team looks to be making a splash again this year. Last year, the team won conference for the first time in three years. **Assistant Coach Kelly Hobbs** said, "This is a building year, and we have high hopes in seeing how the season goes."

"We are definitely a young team this year, with only 4 returning seniors and 3 new seniors," **Lauren Landwehr** said. "It will be tough recovering from the strong graduated senior class last year, but we can do it!"

Last year, the Warrensburg **Wrestling** team did the "best they have ever done" in the eyes of **Coach Steve Marr**. Warrensburg placed 4th as a team at State and had 6 team members place individually. They also won Conference for the 7th straight year. The team is younger now, which is not holding them back, and they are not changing anything. "The team is dedicated, works hard, and never gives up," said Marr. Their record so far this season is 5-2. When nothing is wrong, why change it; consistency wins.