

December 2025

WY-NEWS

The student newspaper of Roosevelt High School, Wyandotte, MI



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DECEMBER *issue*

Photos: Emmalee Eskin, Miliany Zapata

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From the Editor...

New skills and the *spirit* of giving

Eleanor Grant, Editor-in-Chief

As December begins, the newsroom has shifted into the busiest stretch of the year. Between holiday events, school activities, and the rush to finish the semester strong, it feels like everything is happening at once.

In the midst of everything going on, I am counting down the days until winter break. I can't wait to have some relaxing free time to focus on the things I enjoy.

In November, we had the chance to step outside our usual routine and strengthen our skills through two Adobe sessions. First, we got to watch different sessions within the Adobe MAX conference, where we learned new Illustrator tools and how to pair them with InDesign, which we used to make fun and creative layouts for the Christmas section of this issue.

Later, we practiced new techniques in Photoshop, from text design to making photos look cleaner and more polished. Learning something fresh in the middle of a busy month provided a chance for some creativity and fun that will help develop our pages and expand the possibilities of layout.

At the end of our Photoshop session, each staff member created their own idea for a holiday section cover. Seeing how different and creative everyone's concepts were made me really appreciate the range of talent on our team. We ended up merging two of those ideas into the Christmas cover for this issue, incorporating several new elements we learned over the past few weeks.

Of course, November also brought one of my favorite traditions:

Newsgiving. Every year, just before Thanksgiving break, we get to enjoy food and games in the newsroom, and just appreciate the group we get to work with. This year, we also took a staff photo for the Christmas cover during the celebration. In the newsroom, we really feel like a family, so getting to take our own "family photos" was so much fun.

Normally, we release a November issue followed by a December one, but with this year's timeline, we decided to put together a larger early-December edition instead. It gave us the chance to include all the holiday events, winter sports previews, and school events in one place. We also took this as a chance to highlight ways to give to others this holiday season.

Each staff member pitched a Christmas or holiday-themed page that they wrote the article for, got pictures, made graphics, and did the final layout. They also got a shorter news article or a winter sports intro to write. For my holiday page, I chose to write about different ways to give back, which is something I am very passionate about.

Giving back has always been a meaningful part of this time of year for me. Each year, I shop for Toys for Tots, donate to canned food drives, and help with Adopt a Family. It's something small I can do, but it reminds me how important it is to support others when we're able. And as I've gotten older, I've realized that those moments of generosity matter just as much as the celebrations.

As we move toward the end of the semester, our staff is continuing to



Photo: Emmalee Eskin

learn, improve, and find its rhythm. Every deadline brings new challenges, but also new accomplishments, whether it's refining an article, designing the cover, or trying a technique we just learned.

This time of year always encourages me to slow down and appreciate what's happening around me. Between newspaper work, school, and winter sports, I've learned how important it is to make time for things that matter. Whether it's a holiday tradition, a sport, a club, or time with friends, I hope readers find something this season that helps them breathe and enjoy the moment.

As you flip through this issue, I hope it brings a sense of warmth, community, and celebration. And I hope you can see the effort and teamwork the Wy-News staff has put into closing out the year.

Happy holidays from the Wy-News staff, and we hope you enjoy this issue.

The Wy-News 2025-2026 Staff

The Wy-News is Roosevelt High School's student produced newspaper. Editorials and bylines columns reflect the opinions of individual columnists and not the Wy-News staff, it's advisor, the RHS administration, or student body.

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More than suicide awareness

You Matter campaign drives community action with new additions

Emmalee Eskin, Managing Editor

Suicide is the third leading cause of death of teenagers ages 15-19, according to the CDC. The You Matter campaign and hockey game started in 2019 to bring awareness to suicide. This year, seniors and project managers Emily Blackwell and Annie Zieger are incorporating more than just suicide awareness into their project.

"We're trying to help raise awareness in the community," Blackwell said. "Right now we're just trying to help be there for each other, and spread kind spirits around and just help our community to be better."

Blackwell and Zieger wanted to make a bigger difference in the Wyandotte community, so they are focusing the You Matter campaign on bringing awareness to various issues that students or other community members may be struggling with.

"Before, the project was only focused on suicide prevention, but this year we wanted to expand it more to incorporate Operation Believe," Blackwell said. "As a whole, you matter as a person. If you need food, if you need clothes, you matter."

Operation Believe is run by social worker Maria Sutka. Through this, Sutka collects funds and donations, which it then uses to help people within the school. If a student needs

a prom ticket, a winter jacket, or essentially anything, Operation Believe is there to help.

One of the ways the You Matter campaign plans to help the community is by hosting a food drive at the hockey game.

"We have never done that (a food drive) before; we made it so we can get as much as possible by posting it everywhere," Blackwell said. "Having students bring a canned item instead of buying a ticket will help us get donations right away."

An incentive for people to donate to the food drive is making their donation their ticket to the game. Blackwell and Zieger were also in contact with the opposing school, Carlson, so they could participate in the food drive. 331 items of food were donated to the Downriver Community Food Pantry.

With the money that was donated through Miracle Minutes, shirts, Chuck-a-Puck, and raffle tickets, Blackwell and Zieger hope to put together a You Matter scholarship.

"It's meant to help anybody really who needs it," Blackwell said. "If you're somebody who lost someone due to suicide or mental health, if you are someone who needs the extra financial money."

This scholarship would be through

Sutka's Operation Believe. The scholarship is not official yet, but would be another way to give back to the students at Roosevelt. Another key aspect to the You Matter campaign is the community's involvement in the project.

"We have a big board for everyone, they can come to the game, they can wear You Matter apparel," Zieger said. "They can show up to the sporting events, bring food for the food drive, just knowing what's going on and then showing up to the events."

In order to keep everyone informed about everything happening with the You Matter campaign, Blackwell and Zieger made an Instagram account, @Wyandotteyoumatter.

"(We have been promoting the campaign) mostly on social media, but also by word of mouth," Zieger said. "We're handing out stickers and just trying to really tell everyone what you matter."

The You Matter campaign and hockey game started in 2019, and has been a DECA community awareness project and Wyandotte tradition ever since.

"It started with just a hockey

game and now it's more of a campaign each year," DECA advisor and marketing teacher Elissa Cumiskey said. "It's a little different depending on the people that coordinate it."

Every year, the You Matter project has the same message and overall theme: to remind everyone that you matter and are important. The project managers may decide to do different things each year or add new events, like this year, with the hope of adding a scholarship.

"You matter means a lot to me because the meaning of it is huge for everyone. Me personally, I've had somebody in my life, my dad, committed suicide, so it's really deep for me," Zieger said. "Overall, for everyone, it's such a big issue, and I just feel the only way it really gets better is just by trying to be there for everyone else. So it means a lot to me."

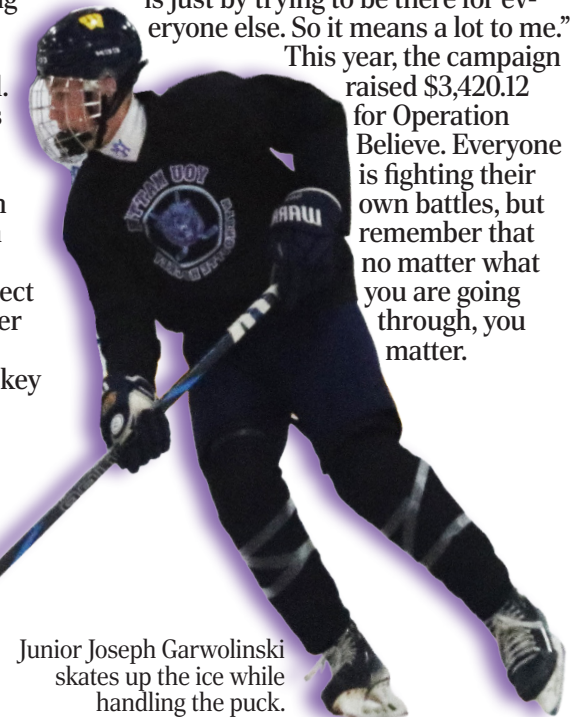
This year, the campaign raised \$3,420.12 for Operation Believe. Everyone is fighting their own battles, but remember that no matter what you are going through, you matter.



You Matter Project Manager senior Emily Blackwell and DECA President senior Kaley Groves work with The Post Manager Eileen Murray to count money from the hockey game's Miracle Minute.

Photo: Emmalee Eskin

\$3,420.12 raised



Junior Joseph Garwolinski skates up the ice while handling the puck.

Photo: Emmalee Eskin

Dunk on Darkness brings mental health to center court

Eleanor Grant, Editor-In-Chief

In the Varsity Boys Basketball team's third game, they played Southgate for Dunk on Darkness, which shows how sports can be used to promote serious issues.

"It's a basketball game to raise awareness for mental health issues that people are facing," junior Jack Halberstadt said. "We are basically saying it's ok to stand up or talk to someone about it...don't be afraid to talk about your feelings."

Planning for the event started two months in advance by DECA project coordinators senior Luke Hurliman and Halberstadt, Hurliman is also a member of the basketball team.

"The first steps in planning are really planning what we want to name the game and also what day the game is," Hurliman said.

To balance the work, they divide responsibilities while still working closely together.

"I do more of the ordering products and stuff," Hurliman said. "[Halberstadt] has been doing more of the things on paper, but we pretty much do everything together."

Their to-do list ranges from designing and ordering jerseys to securing sponsors and spreading the word about the event.

"There is a lot more than people think that goes into planning an event," Halberstadt said. "It's not just set a date and then go plan it. There's more to it."

Promotion is a major part of their work, including creating shirts, selling bracelets, and posting announcements.

"Social media is a big deal to get sponsors," Halberstadt said.

While the game brings the school together, the mission behind it is much bigger.

"The goal is to raise a lot of money for Operation Believe and get more people to talk about their feelings," Halberstadt said.

The issues of mental health are prevalent within the school, and many students feel that everyone deserves resources to help them.

"It's important to me, because I feel like a lot of people are too scared to talk about it when they're struggling," Hurliman said.

A Miracle Minute was held after first period to raise money for Operation Believe.

The Bears beat Southgate 50-43.



Dunk on Darkness Project Coordinators senior Luke Hurliman and junior Jack Halberstadt talk about their mission before the game.

Photo: Eleanor Grant

From Mint, to Memory

Pennies stop production after 223 years

Brooke Wicker, Reporter

The penny will no longer be minted and will be taken out of circulation according to the U.S Mint. Pennies will still remain as legal tender in U.S currency.

Although pennies have a one-cent value, the U.S Mint is estimating that the stop in production will save taxpayers over \$56 million each year.

The main circulation of pennies has come to an end, and the Treasury will continue to produce limited amounts of collector edition pennies.

While pennies still remain a legal tender, the Wall Street Journal reports that this change is leading

to companies rounding prices up or down to create even change. According to USA Today, the Treasury is working with point-of-sale companies to ensure rounding of prices is accurate and fair to consumers.

Companies, including McDonald's and Wendy's, are creating subtle price changes to their restaurants to help with the shortage of pennies they are experiencing. McDonald's is using rounding to the nearest five cents to adjust to stop the penny distribution. After a Business Insider interview with Wendy's, it has been revealed that they are allowing restaurants to round up or down to

the nearest bill if customers do not have exact change. The rounding will not go into effect on cashless transactions.

For some retailers, asking them to round up or down to the nearest nickel is causing issues.

According to CNN, some merchants can find themselves in legal trouble for rounding up or down due to state laws. Other retailers feel that asking for the extra change from consumers is unfair.

Kwik Trip, a Midwest family-owned convenience store, doesn't feel that it is fair to ask its customers for more money than they would

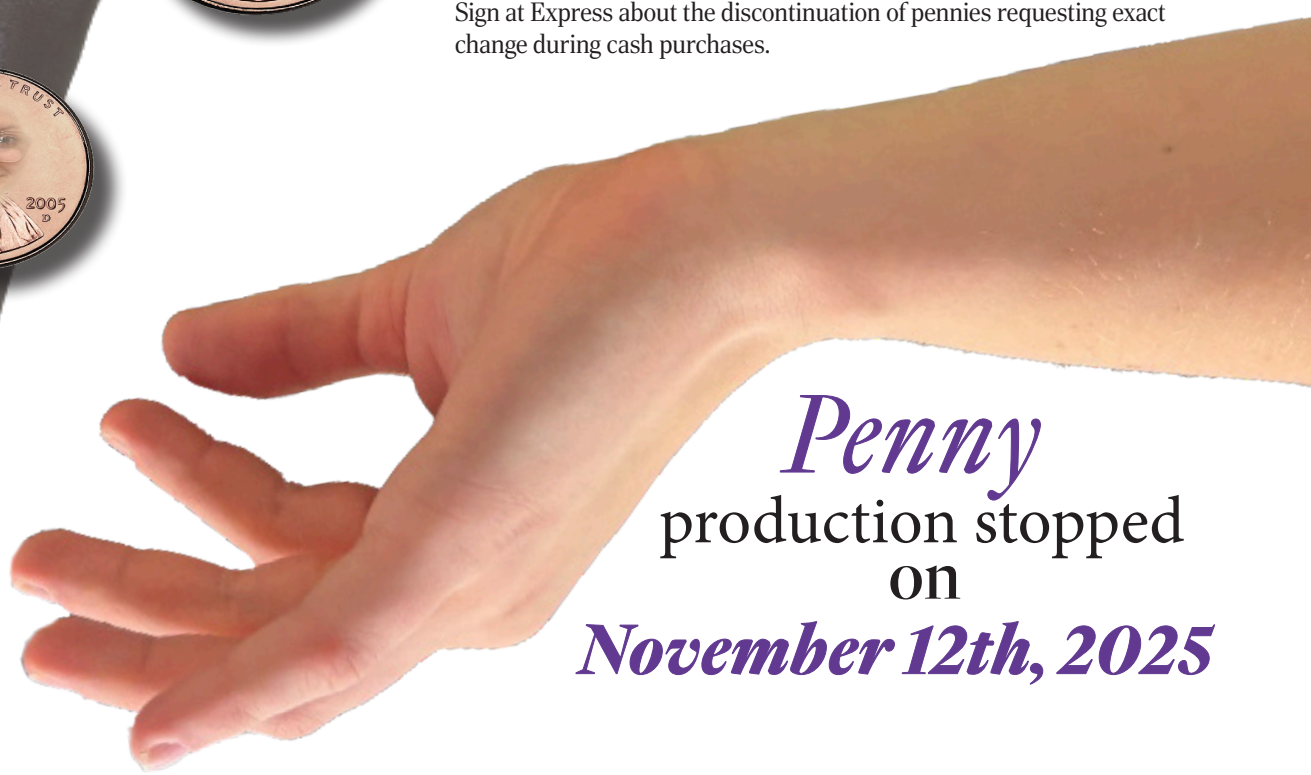
originally owe. However, Kwik Trip has over 20 million customers a year, with 17% paying in cash, which will cost the company a few million dollars a year from the loss of change from customers.

CNN also shares that if all businesses start rounding, it will cause a charge for consumers of over 6 million dollars a year. This comes to about five cents a household.

In many states, including Michigan, merchants are required to provide consumers with exact change, which will become a rising problem with the shortage of pennies that is beginning to occur.



Sign at Express about the discontinuation of pennies requesting exact change during cash purchases.



Penny
production stopped
on
November 12th, 2025

Stand Up, Speak out: DECA Against Bullying

DECA members bring encouragement, celebration with Anti-Bullying week

Marcus Pizzo, reporter

During anti-bullying awareness week from November 17th through the 21st, DECA has committed to bringing awareness and celebrating as well as promoting November 16th's Unity Day in an attempt to prevent bullying.

"The concept Stand Up, Speak Out, is obviously antibullying awareness to spread...We were informed that there was a lot of serious bullying going on at one of the elementaries in this district. So we felt like that really hit us at home," senior DECA project coordinator Ryder Chavez said.

The Unity project was run by both Chavez and senior project coordinator Cooper Schafer, although one of the hardest parts of the project was their inexperience headlining such a major project with such a short amount of time.

"This is only my second year at DECA...And this is my other partner's first ever year doing DECA," Chavez said.

Schafer and Chavez had only two weeks to put together multiple events to bring awareness to bullying, and spread the message through multiple schools, including the elementary schools and the Lincoln Center.

"We got the project in mid-October so half of our project was time wasted...So we had about two weeks to get all these events done," Chavez

said.

Chavez and Schafer worked with Peer To Peer to bring Unity Day to the Lincoln Center.

"We're like, what can we do about bullying? I know, Peer to Peer has a lot of stuff to do with bullying and change...And it's just a kindness factor, it just helps spread awareness of what's going on," Schafer said.

Unity Day wasn't the only time the duo spread the anti-bullying message, they also worked on a kindness chain to bring positivity into the school, as well as a unity heart to hang at Roosevelt.

"They (Students) do it (kindness chain) every year, you just write nice messages," Chavez said. "For all the kids to walk in and see, it was nice seeing them smile and being able to work together."

The work at the Lincoln Center was just the tip of the iceberg for what they accomplished. Both Chavez and Schafer took some of the work done at the Lincoln Center over to Washington Elementary school to help combat the bullying problem.

"We did about 400 boo to bullying suckers that were handcrafted by Peer to Peer members...That was a very easy way to spread awareness," Chavez said.

On Unity day itself, Chavez and Schafer set up a large heart and encouraged students and staff to put kind and helpful things on it to

encourage others.

"The whole concept of that (Unity Wall) was just entirely to fill up the huge black heart... The only thing you had to do was write a kind message on the heart." Chavez said. "It took about five seconds out of your day, and just let the whole school see your kind of kindness."

Overall, the Unity project was a successful way to encourage unity and kindness among students.

"It's really something that they just started this year...I let them pick and brainstorm something that was close to them and they chose to focus on inclusion," marketing teacher Elissa Cumiskey said.



Senior DECA members Ryder Chavez and Cooper Schafer host a table during lunches where students can sign their names onto hearts to show their support for the anti-bullying movement.

Photo: Marcus Pizzo

DECA's pop-up shop features new ideas and items for the holiday season

Riley Hodges, Reporter

The annual DECA Wyandotte Tees pop-up shop downtown at city hall is currently open through the 19th to sell merchandise for the holidays and allow students to experience working in a real store.

"A goal that we try to make every year is to at least make \$10,000,"

junior project coordinator Grace Papler said.

Papler and her partner Allisyn Adams, a junior, chose to make the pop-up shop their DECA project this year.

"We chose it because we thought that it would be a cool experience to

have and to be a part of the school," Papler said.

Both wanted to add some new and interesting things to the shop; but also thought it would just be nice to be more engaged within the school. Their plan was to sell a lot of clothes and other items to people who may not be able to make it into the school in an effort to raise \$10,000.

"We just always offer a new holiday design," Elissa Cumiskey said.

This year's design will be more focused towards the holidays. Additionally, like every year, the store features regular Wyandotte Tees merchandise with the classic bear logo on it; as well as past holiday designs too.

"I have some new items that are done with 3D printers this year like

bag charms and some earrings," Cumiskey said.

This year they showed new products, including the 3D printed items, such as earrings and other accessories. They also featured an all new blanket design this year. Although there were less new items than there have been in the past, the shop still offers a connection to the community by operating from 4pm-7pm.

"I chose it because I thought it would be a fun project. I saw the people last year and the year before and theirs were good," Adams said.

The pop-up shop is a great place for people to get involved with the community and also serves as a great place to do some shopping for the holidays.



Seniors Brooke Wicker and Emmalee Eskin check out a customer. All DECA members who have a written project are required to work a shift at the pop-up shop.

Photo: Riley Hodges

Branching out on electives

Satellite students join Botany class

Miliany Zapata, Reporter

This year satellite students were given the opportunity to study the world of plants by joining Botany students in class.

“This class is very beneficial for students who are interested in making this a career and interested in processing and care along with landscaping,” Botany instructor Michael Bak said.

This year teachers part of the TLC program decided that it would be a nice opportunity to let satellite students join Botany classes.

“Ms. Swift came to me this year asking if she would be able to have some of her students come down twice a week and we decided that it would be a good addition to their program,” Botany teacher Jennifer Ferris said.

Although this program just started, students have been able to learn color theory, the color wheel and base arrangements.

“This addition was meant to have students learn more of the social aspect of learning and there has been change, they work more so with Ms.

Resto in the greenhouse but it was an easy transition,” Ferris said.

This elective is extremely useful because it gives students real world experience on how to navigate plants if they are interested in this as a career or just as a hobby.

“Marketing is also a critical part of this class because we also have Teddy’s Flower Shop, along with our monthly flower arrangements that we have,” Bak said.

These students have made a difference in the classroom and have been able to interact with their peers.

“I feel like these kids are becoming more social, they help out a lot and they are really starting to get comfortable with us,” senior Aliana Givens said.

Along with interacting with peers, satellite students have also been able to learn more about the curriculum and the social aspect of being in different elective classes.

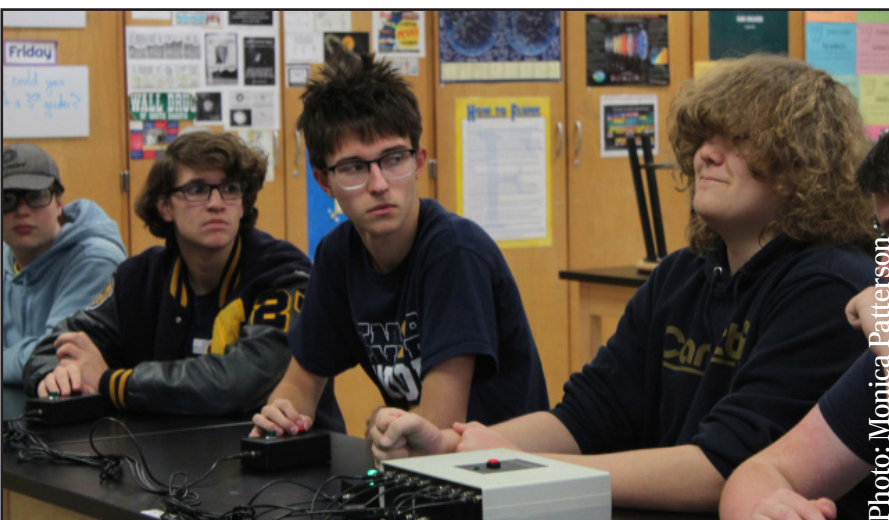
“I learn a lot about plants and colors, I’ve also made new friends and I really like my teacher,” freshman Nicholas Webber said.



Above: Satellite students Nick Webber and Danny McAllister listen to teacher Michael Bak’s botany lesson. Left: McAllister, Webber, and sophomore Noemy Angeles apply the instruction with real plants.

Roosevelt Quiz Bowl shares how competition shapes *confidence*

Right: Senior Luke Abshire and junior Nathaneal Grenz participate at a quiz bowl match. Below: Sophomore Mikah Smutny, junior Nathaneal Grenz, senior Bryan Davis, and junior Owen Cleveland practice quiz bowls questions after school.



Monica Patterson, Associate Editor

For the Quiz Bowl team, every meet brings a mix of strategy, teamwork, and the unpredictable rush of the buzzer. Competitors rely not only on what they know, but on the strengths of the people sitting beside them.

“We have this one player, Xavier, who’s really good at anything geography related,” senior Bryan Davis said. “I feel like as a whole, we tend to get a lot of the history-based questions right.”

Davis added that his biggest answer contributions come in the form of pop-culture and book related questions.

“I feel like I have a lot of pop-culture knowledge, those [questions] are always fun and interesting to answer,” Davis said. “Then there’s book related questions, those are ones that I feel not a lot of people get right.”

For some players, Quiz Bowl has become more than just an extracur-

ricular.

“I joined because it’s my senior year and I wanted to do more and become more active in school,” Davis said.

Others measure their growth through performance, such as junior captain Nathaneal Grenz, who frequently leads the team in scoring.

“I definitely carry the team. My average points are close to 150 to 190 each game,” Grenz said. “If we get 200 points a game, that means I’m doing really well.”

Thanks to Grenz, other team members feel confident relying on him to improve their team score.

“If I know a question, I’ll answer it,” junior Avery Ehnis said. “If I don’t know it, Nate probably does.”

On October 29th, the team gathered 330 points against Dearborn, which has been their best match as of December 8th.

The season lasts through winter until February.

Shining in the spotlight

Superintendent starts podcast to highlight district happenings

Samuel Martinez, Reporter

Superintendent of the Wyandotte School District, Dr. James Anderson, created a figurative “direct line” to the Superintendent’s Office in the form of a podcast, hoping to connect more with others.

“To be honest, I am not sure how many people will engage with the podcast,” Anderson said, “but you never know until you try.”

The purpose is giving people a platform to voice any concerns they may have about a certain topic or happening.

“In my role, I often hear people ask about everything from school funding and curriculum changes, to new initiatives and safety protocols,” Anderson said. “These are important questions that deserve more

than a quick announcement, or a flier in a backpack.”

Anderson is hoping that this podcast will strengthen his relationship with the community.

“I am always looking for new ways to connect with the community,” Anderson said. “Written communication is one thing, but having a way for people to listen [to people’s interests/concerns] might be helpful, too.”

After focusing on school staff, Anderson has changed gears regarding who he could possibly interact with on the podcast: specifically seniors.

“I do think there are community members who would like to hear what the seniors are up to and how life is in school today,” Anderson

said.

Along with voicing school district related concerns and connecting to the community more, it also gives students a platform to show off a team, activity or event that deserves more attention.

For senior Editor-in-Chief of the yearbook Emmalee Eskin, signing up for the podcast was a way to explain the process of making the yearbook and the amount of work it takes.

“I think a lot of people think that taking Yearbook is like a ‘blow off’ class,” Eskin said. “But it’s really not. We all care about what we do.”

Even though this podcast is new, there is potential for change across the district.



Dr. James Anderson’s podcast is available on Spotify for interested students, parents, and community members to listen to.

Senior Student directors lead the way in RTC’s two one-act fall performances

Ainslea Harper, Copy Editor

In place of the normal two-act straight play, the Roosevelt Theatre Company has decided to do two short, one-act plays instead.

“I would say a pro would have to be there’s not as many lines. You don’t have to worry about doing all of the show, it’s shortened, so it’s not like a huge burden when you’re trying to learn the lines or the stage corrections,” senior Eryn Mench said. “A con is probably just, it’s short. So, even if the lines are shortened, the whole play is shortened, you can still screw up the

Junior Robert Young and sophomore Carissa Kennedy portray the characters Lysander and Hermia in *A Midsummer’s Night Dream*.

lines, because the lines are kind of paraphrased a little bit.”

The first play that the company is performing is called *Dinner with the MacGuffins*, and senior Esteban Delgado is student directing. After that, the students perform *A Midsummer’s Night Dream*, which Mench student directs.

“I think the comedy aspect of anything is funny, but I’m for sure with this one ... [has] funny sound effects that for sure make that show a little bit funny when it’s supposed to be something serious as a government scandal, and ... the

inappropriate jokes that could go over someone’s head,” Delgado said. “In the comedy with

Midsummer, same thing. It’s a very funny show, and the actors have done a very good job, as well as myself, putting in the funny aspect of those shows.”

Both student directors agree that the casts have exceptional chemistry, which really helps on stage.

“I think, personally, everyone gets along really well. So if someone accidentally forgets their line, or they screw up what they’re supposed to do in the scene, it’s no big deal, and everyone works together to make sure that, like, ‘Hey, this is what you’re supposed to do.’ And we will go over it a few more times,” Mench said.

Delgado agrees that the chemistry between cast members improves their performance quality. On stage, the actors have to portray families and friends, and actually having that relationship outside of the show helps them perform

“I think the bonding and the chemistry that they have, because [the characters are] a family, and I think they do really well with that bonding aspect of playing into a big family,” Delgado said.

This year, the company has a lot of middle school students and freshmen trying out theatre for the first time.

“I think the most rewarding part [of being student director is] probably just being able to help all

the other cast members, because we have a lot of new people this year, some middle schoolers, some freshmen, and they had never done this before,” Mench said. “I know it’s scary, but I’m glad that I can sit there and be like that person that they can come to if they need help with something, if they need lines, anything like that. I’m just glad to be that person.”

Delgado has also seen significant growth in the skills and performance of the actors.

“Seeing the progress of everybody for sure, that’s a big, big reward to see how everyone has come so far since September when we started,” Delgado said. “So from September to November, even though it’s a small time, people grow, and they change a lot, and they do so well. It’s very rewarding to see them do well, and then having fun on stage, and them acting.”

The theatre department spends a lot of time learning lines, blocking, and characters. Delgado is committed to showing the school that the actors are hardworking and dedicated to the program.

“The theater department here, for sure, puts in a lot of work in these shows, and it’s very much appreciated when people do come see them, so that we’re not overlooked or that we’re not underestimated or anything,” Delgado said.



Photo: Ainslea Harper

Key Club collects hygiene products for peers in need

Dominic Gray, Design Editor

The yearly hygiene drive organized by Key Club to collect personal care items like shampoo, deodorant, wipes, and more for underprivileged community members ran through the month of November to provide an opportunity for students to help ensure that their peers have access to essential care.

“Some people still suffer from not having needs, some basic like de-

odorant, shampoo or other hygiene items,” senior Key Club member Ashley Flores said. “That’s what the drive is for, getting all these items together and having them accessible in Mrs. Sutka’s closet.”

As important as it is to give out these items to those who need them, this year has seen a considerable decrease in the amount of items being donated. This could be caused by the parallel timing to other drives being held around the school.

“It’s (participation) been a little slow, this is the time of year where a lot of people are asking for things.” History teacher and Key Club advisor Jason Krajewski said, “So we have a coat drive going on, a canned food drive, and a hygiene drive. So sometimes it’s tough, people are trying to save up for Christmas presents.”

The group extended the drive through December 5, since it wouldn’t have other drives asking for donations at the same time in an effort to increase the amount of support.

“For the future [to improve the amount of participation], maybe doing it at a different time of the year like in the spring, when there isn’t as many things going on as there is in the fall,” Krajewski said.

In order to increase the support for the drive, Key Club used options like social media promotion and a celebration for the class with the most supplies donated.

“We haven’t had that many people turning items so far, so we are really trying to push it on so-

cial media, just because our hygiene closet at our school is running low,” senior Key Club president Brooke Wicker. “So we want to make sure it gets restocked at the end of the school year and into the next.”

While the amount of donations may have been lower, Key Club worked to raise awareness and encourage participation during the drive. The event helped remind students the importance of providing consistent access to personal care items for everyone.



Key Club member senior Ashley Flores sorts the collected products in Key Club Advisor Jason Krajewski’s room.

Photo: Dominic Gray

Senior drafting student Alexa Manzano-Parada makes the structure for her landmark.



Photo: Lydia Blonski

Edible Landmarks

Drafting’s gingerbread creations

Lydia Blonski, Reporter

CTE teacher Natalie Rankine’s drafting class has been building and designing their annual gingerbread recreations of iconic landmarks that are both real and fictional

“Every year it just gets better and better, and they get more excited for it,” Rankine said.

There are eleven groups each constructing their own chosen structure. Some of the recreations include historical structures like the London Tower Bridge and the Colosseum, while others are taking a different approach.

“In past years, I made them do architecturally significant projects, but over the years, I’ve kind of laxed,” Rankine said.

These students are drawing inspiration from everywhere in fictional media. Structures that are being built are ranging from “Lord of the Rings” Tower of Soron, to the “Monster High’s” high school, the house from “Up,” and many examples of people building structures they grew up watching. For some, coming up with their project has been months, even a year into the making when they found out about this project.

“Last year I took regular architecture, then we found out that you can build gingerbread houses in this class,” senior Alexa Manzano-Parada said. “So that’s why we signed up.”

Rankine has encouraged this creativity and has allowed students to build what they want with little restraint, however there are aspects students have to take into account before continuing on with their builds.

“[They] estimate how many graham crackers [they] will need for the project, what color frosting, how many candy canes or licorice or whatever [they] need,” Rankine said. “That’s part of the process, too. If you run out of your supplies, you’re in big trouble.”

Once they’ve gotten their materials figured out, there is still more work to be done before moving onto the working with the edible materials. The students first start out by working on a base structure they build out of cardboard.

“So what we do is we typically start building the substructures the

week before Thanksgiving, because I don’t like to leave the food out in the classroom when we’re on Thanksgiving break,” Rankine said. “Then when we come back, we start applying the food and the frosting.”

Afterward, they start to build the gingerbread house. They use all sorts of materials to build the landmarks, favoring graham crackers over gingerbread.

“So the first year that I did it, I kind of thought I would bake the gingerbread, which is not feasible,” Rankine said. “We actually make them out of graham crackers. It’s evolved every year and gotten better and better.”

They do not just use candy provided in class, some students use their own time to make their building go above and beyond.

“They put lights in them, and they 3D print like stained glass for them,” Rankine said. “Like, they go home and they do stuff at home as well. It’s just pretty crazy.”

Once the gingerbread houses are done, they are presented to the school where peers vote on what their favorites are. The winning team gets the prestigious prize of bragging rights. For all the teams, they take home more than just that.

“I talked to somebody from last year, and she still has hers in her basement on a shelf,” Rankine said.

These gingerbread houses are not just temporary candy constructions that will last only for the season, rather they have the possibility of impacting someone’s future. Senior Bryan Davis plans on doing more with the project by adding it to his portfolio for his future.

“I’m actually going to college for architecture, and I think it was the class that made me find my love for it,” Davis said.

While candy and gingerbread castles cannot last forever, the impacts behind these temporary monuments can lead someone to a future career of building these structures for a living.

“It’s the one project that I get the most student engagement on,” Rankine said. “If I could, like, bottle it and keep it for every single project. I would be so happy.”

Looking to repeat district title

Brooke Wicker, Reporter

Bears wrestling has been preparing for the season, hoping for a strong season with many new underclassmen joining the roster.

"My biggest regret from last season was not trying that hard, so I didn't do as good as I wanted to at states," junior Landen Williams who wrestled in the 190 pound weight class last season said. "This year I want to change that."

Five wrestlers graduated last year and many chose not to return to the team, leaving unexpected challenges that the Bears are working through for this season.

"After a lot of people left last season, one of our team's goals is just to find identity and bring it to the team, because we have so many new people," junior Benjamin Demmer in the 215 pound weight class said.

Demmer hopes to bring in a changed perspective to not only help the team's goals this season, but personal achievements as well.

"This year I don't want to leave anything to tank, because it's going to be on me forever if I do," said Demmer. "I still regret not leaving it all



Photo: Monica Patterson

Senior Nolan Allman wrestles his first match of the season at Trenton. This is Allman's fourth year on the team and he hopes to be a leader for all of the underclassmen.

out there last season."

The team started practices on November 17th. During these practices, many underclassmen have attended, leaving the team in high hopes for a stronger season.

"We have a lot of underclassmen this season, so that means there is a lot of people at the same weights, which creates more competition to be able to wrestle at that weight," Demmer

said. "The underclassmen are getting to experience the buzz, and it's going to be a fun challenge to see the new people out there."

This year the Bears had a former teammate, Christian Byrne return this year taking on a new position as a coach.

"The new coach seems positive and ready to help achieve our goals this season," Williams said.

One team's motivation through aspirations of "comeback" season

Kiera Byrne, Reporter

The Bears Varsity Basketball players are approaching the new season with a twist.

"It was embarrassing, losing every single game last year," junior forward Zach

Hoffman said. "So this year we want it more."

The team was selected on November 21, and although there were no seniors that left the team last year, something is different: their mentality.

As the Bears take on this season, they challenge themselves to a different level in pursuit of putting last year's record behind them.

"We put together some wins during the summer, and we've been working harder than any other team out there, so I feel very confident that we can get some wins on the board," senior guard Sean Hickey said.

Hickey has been concentrating on keeping a positive attitude to help strengthen the team's bond, and help

their chemistry on the court.

"I love that it's a sport that you have to work together to win," Hickey said. "It's a special bond you build with everybody."

The Bears are focusing on improvement over the next 22 games, in hopes that success and in turn wins will come along as they improve.

"I want to show everyone that we did get a lot better and we're not the same team as last year," Hoffman said.

Beyond improving, the Bears main goal is to win districts as a team.

"Even with what happened last year, no one has quit, no one has given up," Hickey said. "We all believe in this, and a word to everyone who doubts us: 'The Bears are coming.'"

Strength built through mental, physical chemistry

Kiera Byrne, Reporter

Varsity Girls Basketball enters this season with confidence that their emotional bond will positively improve their physical game.

"Last year, we didn't know where we were going to stand in the league and we didn't have much experience together," senior forward Emma Jordan said. "This year, we know what we have and we have a good feeling about it."

The Bears graduated three players who played major roles, so in preparation for this season, they dedicated themselves to improve their abilities in every aspect of the sport.

"Our biggest strength is definitely our speed. Usually in basketball, you'd think about height, but we're fast and we can quickly get down the court," Jordan said. "Not only do we have speed, but we have Annie as our guard, who can read the floor better

than anyone."

Senior guard Annie Zieger has been focusing on nourishing the team's connection and making sure everyone does their part, but also has a good time.

"We're all really close and have fun, but we also put in the work," Zieger said. "We have a lot of hustle and determination, and I feel like that carries on beyond skill."

The Bears main goal is to dominate the league, but also improve on their mentality during challenging games.

"When we have our ups and our downs, being able to bounce back from our downs would be a really important goal for the team," Jordan said.

With a combination of passion for basketball and an appreciation for one another, the Bears are pushing for a strong season.

"I'm just excited and can't wait to see what we do," Jordan said.



Photos: Kiera Byrne

Above: At practice, senior Alicia Poyle and sophomore Isabella Barron do drills with the team. Left: Senior Annie Zieger practices guarding during practice. Zieger looks to lead the Bears in her fourth season on the team.



Photo: Kiera Byrne

Junior forward Zach Hoffman and the Bears look to rebound from a winless season last year.

District Champs look to repeat in 2026

Jolie Greener, Reporter

Competitive Cheer had their first competition of the season December 6th at Grosse Ile.

“Last year’s season went good, we won districts and we almost made it to states,” senior Kate Buckley said. “We were 0.9 points away from making it, so this year, hopefully we do better.”

Last year’s season gave the girls confidence, and their goal for this season is to make it to states.

They have added five freshmen to the team, and the seniors are guiding them as they work toward this goal.

“We were able to help a lot of the same freshmen (from sideline season) that joined the team, but I think the seniors are good help, and everyone’s willing to help the underclassmen if needed,” Buckley said.

The team is hoping the success of last season will drive through and carry into this season.

“We won a lot of competitions, and I don’t think there’s a competition we got lower than 5th at,” sophomore Isabella Moser said.

The team has been working on the skills they need for their season since sideline cheer started in the summer.

“We practice skills and stuff that

we want to compete in the competition season, and work on building our skills to make a better season,” Buckley said.

They have goals of hitting stunts together to stick them in the rounds and make them score higher than last year.

They believe their best round will be round one this season, according to Moser.

“We, for the first time, created all new material,” Coach Taylor Amos said. “A couple of the cheerleaders and the coaches we worked together to create round one, which we have never done before, and each week we were adding to it.”

They will be hosting the district this year, which will be a nice benefit for the team at the end of the season. But, their coaches believe they really just need to focus on themselves.

“[Our hardest competition] was honestly ourselves,” Amos said. “Last year, we were really chasing a new level of intensity that the program has never seen before, and we made history in so many different areas. I’m hoping the returning athletes can just continue to feel the success from last season and want to just improve this season.”



Photo: Jolie Greener

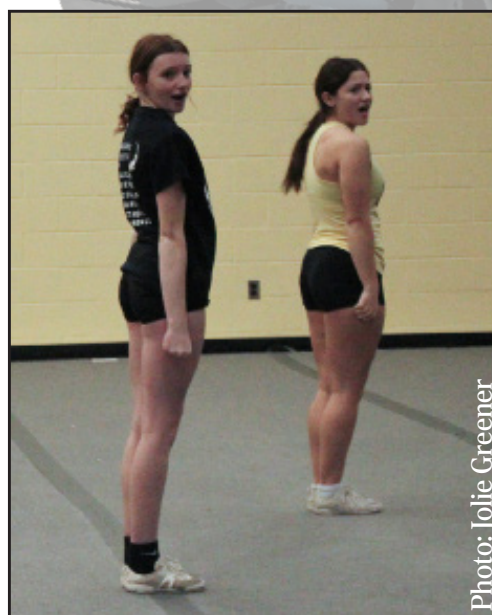


Photo: Jolie Greener

Above: Senior Brooklyn Thacker throws her tuck at practice during a round two run through. Left: Sophomore Serenity Knight and senior Cheyenne Adkins preform round one during practice.



Photo: Jolie Greener

Sophomore Brendan Miciura uses a paddleboard to improve his times during swim practice.

Single senior leads small swim and dive team

Jolie Greener, Reporter

In spite of a small team, the boys’ swim team has a strong bond and looks to celebrate their wins throughout the season.

“Growing our program is always something in the back of my mind...I’ve been working really hard with the Wyandotte Wildcats and kind of building the age group team that feeds into the middle school,” Coach Stephanie Arminiak said.

Coach Arminiak believes the hardest competition is Allen Park, Trenton, and Woodhaven.

“Their programs are bigger than ours, but traditionally they have strong training programs and have consistent coaching,” Arminiak said.

Open communication is important to the team, and Arminiak believes in not bringing outside distractions into swim practice.

“As a team, we don’t have any issues with behavior. Our athletes, I hammer academics

as far as they’re students before they are an athlete, so valuing and prioritizing their school work (is a strength),” Arminiak said.

In the pool, the team is led by three returning athletes: sophomore Brendan Miciura, junior Keegan Simmons, and senior diver Eli Shimko. Shimko is the only senior on this year’s swim and dive team.

“I think we’re kind of a young (small) team, and we don’t really have a ton of people other than me. Brendan Miciura is really good, his brother was also really good,” Shimko said.

Last year, Shimko placed 11th at states, and he and his team have high hopes for the post season this year. He plans to do this through working hard at practice.

“It’s my last year, so I really just want to do as best I can and place as well as I can at states,” Shimko said. “I’ve gone to states every year, and this year I want to get top five.”

Bears skate into season with new perspective

Brooke Wicker, Reporter

This year the Bears hockey team is heading into the season with a fresh mentality and strong underclassmen players working to turn the team's past performance around.

"For this season we are working to play hard every game," junior forward Elijah Harrell said. "We have a better team this year, and we just need to come and play."

The new team effort described by Harrell did not happen overnight for the Bears. Many of his players have been skating together for years prior.

"Not only has our work ethic been better in practice, but also all of the juniors have been skating together since freshman year, so we have been together for a while," Harrell said.

The team is working to create a new name for themselves this season after the tough games that occurred last year, and they are using practices more seriously to help make it happen.

"This year the team wants to win more games, and not just mess around the whole year," junior defense Cameron Roe said. "(We are working on winning by, staying focused during practices, and doing workouts after practice."

This year the team is working to rebuild the perception other teams have of them.

"I think everyone wants to work harder now, because we have a harder schedule than last year, and it's making it so we have to play hard to show every-

one that Wyandotte is not a team you can just come in and beat," Harrell said.

Harrell is working to keep up with the 48 goals he scored last season.

"I had a lot of goals last season, so I'm just working to keep up with that," Harrell said. "A lot of people know my name so I need to work hard and get more assists and move the puck more."

The Bears are working extremely hard to make it to regional finals and get a rematch against Trenton after a 7-1 loss during their first game on November 12th.

"I hope we can make it to states this year or next year," Roe said. "But this year we are really pushing to make it to regionals to get a rematch with Trenton."



Junior Ethan Ivity works to move the puck towards the goal during game against Trenton.

Photo: Brooke Wicker

Gearing up, getting ready for bowling season

Savjoah Paul-Laucer, Reporter

After three weeks of practice, the boys bowling team had their first match of the season on December 2nd against Southgate Anderson at Woodhaven Lanes.

"We're mainly trying to be more together as a team," sophomore Issac Shimko said. "A lot of my friends are in bowling, so I decided to join."

Shimko is a new addition to the team, alongside Landon Toth and Kaleb Scanton. This year's roster holds eight junior varsity players and ten players on varsity.

"My biggest obstacle is being more consistent," Shimko said. "I need to work on that in order to make it to districts."

While freshman Colton Paul is a new addition to the team, he

has prior experience that should help him start his high school season strong.

"I joined in middle school, in a league," Paul said. "I did it because bowling is fun, and I really liked it."

The Bears plan to move towards their goals using good sportsmanship and supporting each other in practices and in games.

"It's important to be a good team and have a good attitude," Paul said. "Helping each other and bringing each other up when you need it is how we do better."

Now that the season has officially begun, they have started off strong by winning their first game against Southgate Anderson with a score of 27-3.

Leading up to the lanes

Savjoah Paul-Laucer, Reporter

December 2nd marks the beginning of the bowling season. Last year girls' bowling ended on a high note, with junior Megan Murray going on to compete in MHSAA regionals to represent the Bears.

"[I'm looking forward to] all the memories that we're gonna have, because we have a lot of memories from last year," junior Samantha Plascencia said. "I wasn't where I wanted to be, but that's what I'm working on."

The girl's bowling team finished last season undefeated, ending with a 17-0 streak. Murray finished 4th in the region, and helped them score their league title.

"We're really good as a team. Varsity has been one of the top bowling teams," junior Claire Schippling said.

Murray is set to join the roster once again this year, alongside Schippling, Plascencia, and five other girls, making a total of eight players on the team.

"I guess our specific goal is to at least work together and eventually get to states this year," Plascencia said.

Of course, they are working hard to make it happen. Tryouts were November 10th, and Coach Marty Janeski helped the returning players work on their form.

"Honestly, [our goal is] just to have a good season, I'm looking forward to that," Schippling said.

The Bears had their first game December 2nd, marking the beginning of their path to States.



Junior Claire Schippling practices her form after Coach Marty Janeski gave tips on how to improve during tryouts.

Photo: Savjoah Paul-Laucer



Photo: Savjoah Paul-Laucer

Newcomers and returning players at this year's bowling tryouts on November 10th.

December 2025

Wy-News

Special Section



CHRISTMAS



WY-NEWS STAFF

Smells that remind RHS of Christmas



“The nice smell of tree when **it's in your face** trying to bring it in your house.”
-Freshman Brayden Miller

“A smell that reminds me of Christmas is like the smell of **pine/ christmas trees.**”
-Junior Ella Martinez

“When its **cold outside** and you smell a **breeze** of wind.”
-Freshman Royce Persons

“**Pillsbury** sugar cookies.”
-Sophomore Nevaeh Cuevas

“The smell of **mints**, the smell of **cookies**, and the smell of **pine** trees.”
-Freshman Xavier McCabe



Senior Maddox Richardson and junior Benjamin Keast smell common Christmas scents to prepare them for Christmas.

Photos: Monica Patterson



Opinion

Monica's Monocle

How Wyandotte's annual tree lighting helped me revisit my childhood Christmas memories

Monica Patterson, Associate Editor

On November 21st, Wyandotte's annual tree lighting took place. Even though I never went as a kid, I was still able to recognize the sentimental feeling in the air.

First and foremost, I discovered that this tree has a specific theme to it: nostalgia. I wasn't aware of this until they announced it as the tree was lit. It was covered in big, mercury lights with images of snowmen, mice, and other Christmas-related figures.

Eleanor Grant, my Editor-in-Chief, and I set out to take my photo for this column picture, although we found it quite difficult to find a spot due to the amount of children getting their picture taken. I couldn't be mad though. The whole event was basically for them, or so I thought. These kids all still believed in Santa, the North Pole, and everything that makes Christmas magical.

Perhaps I'm jealous of these random kids. Sometimes I find myself wishing I was still their age, being good for Santa and being especially nice to my older brother on Christmas Eve, or as my family calls it,

Wigilia. However, the more I thought about it, the more I missed how Christmas used to look, too. This simple thought is what made me dive deeper into my mind about how this whole event made me feel.

As the tree lit up completely, the crowd clapped all at once. For a second, everything fell into that quiet kind of wonder that only happens during December. I swear I could almost feel my younger self tugging at my sleeve, excited about things that used to feel larger than life, like the magic of Santa's sleigh bells or the way Christmas lights transform even the most boring neighborhoods into something enchanted. Standing there wrapped in the cold and surrounded by strangers, it struck me that the tree wasn't just decorated with ornaments: it was decorated with memories. Mine, and probably everyone else's too. I watched parents keep trying to pull kids back towards the tree for a picture, but the kids were too caught up in the twinkling lights and music.

When I was younger, moments like that felt endless. Now, they pass

too quickly. One minute I'm taking a picture for this school paper, and only seconds later I'm hit with the realization that somewhere along the way Christmas traded its loud magic for quiet nostalgia.

Still, even as a teenager who's supposed to be "too old" for this stuff, the glow of the tree pulled me in. I noticed details I never would have cared about as a kid, such as the way the bulbs reflected on the grass, the sound of the choir blending with the chatter of families, the smell of cold air drifting about. Everything mixed together into this perfect, oddly emotional scene. I didn't expect the tree lighting to make me feel anything, but it did.

That's the whole point of nostalgia: it reminds you of what mattered, even if you didn't realize it at the time. It reminds you that magic just doesn't disappear, it changes shape. It becomes less about believing in Santa and more about remembering the excitement of believing in something at all.

As the main event wrapped up and I walked away with my friends to get



Photo: Eleanor Grant

food, I took one last look at the tree. The nostalgic theme suddenly made sense. It wasn't meant to transport us to the North Pole, it was meant to bring us back to ourselves, back to the Christmases when everything felt brighter, louder, and impossibly colorful. Back to the years when December felt like a promise instead of just another month on the calendar. Back to when every house on the block was covered in lights, and when snow littered the streets in early December instead of early January.

On my way home, I realized that even though I can't recreate the Christmases I had as a kid, moments like this tree lighting let me revisit them, even for a few minutes, and maybe that's enough. Because in a world where everything moves too fast, finding pieces of your childhood shining on a giant tree in the middle of town is its own kind of holiday miracle.

So let's try and ditch these sad beige Christmasses and bring back the color and happiness Christmas used to be filled with.

The magic of Christmas past

Christmas nostalgia floods the minds of RHS students approaching holidays

Monica Patterson, Associate Editor

The scent of pine, the crack of wrapping paper, and the colorful glow of string lights all warp into our senses as we think of Christmas. For many at RHS, Christmas isn't just a holiday, it's a time machine back to childhood.

As time has passed, the first fall of snow has occurred later and later in the year. Students miss that feeling of waking up, opening the curtains, and being greeted with that white blanket covering the ground.

"When it snowed the other day, I thought of Christmas," junior Alexis Ruston said. "It wasn't like a regular day."

Beyond the sparkle of white outside, it's the cozy scents that truly bring the holiday spirit to life.

"My dad, he has put cinnamon sticks in our tree since I was a baby," senior Maddox Richardson said. "It

just smells really good and it smells like Christmas."

The major thing about what makes Christmas magical as a kid is the belief in Santa and other creatures throughout the month of December.

"I miss the magic behind Elf on the Shelf, like believing it was real," Ruston said. "The first thing I did in the morning was look for the Elf on the Shelf. It was a very fun thing to do."

The Elf may have watched from the shelves of many houses, but when it comes to the true figure of Christmas, Santa remains the ultimate holiday symbol.

"When I was a kid, I had that belief of Santa, and it was fun, but now I just get presents for the heck of it. There's no magic," Richardson said.

The wonder of Santa may have

faded over the years, but the excitement of Christmas morning remains a constant tradition bringing families who celebrate together.

"My mom would always make breakfast, she would always make biscuits and gravy and a bunch of sausage," freshman Izsabella Pauley said. "It would just be like a big breakfast after presents."

For Ruston, her eagerness shook her awake much before her parents would on most Christmas mornings, earning her bonding time with her brother.

"I woke up and my parents were still asleep, but my little brother and I were awake, so we played Minecraft in the morning," Ruston said. "We played this Mario map on Minecraft while we were waiting for them to wake up. And once they woke up, we ate breakfast, and then

we opened our stockings first, and then we opened our gifts."

For many families, the rest of Christmas day becomes its own tradition. Some immediately try out their new gifts, others visit family, and some even spend the day cuddled up with family enjoying the soft glow of a fireplace. Students say they don't necessarily remember what gifts they had, but the people they spent the day with.

"After presents we would just chill and eat breakfast together, me and my sister would travel wherever we needed to go to see our other family members," Richardson said.

Christmas continues to shape generations as different families develop different meaningful traditions. It's these small but lasting rituals that make the season still feel magical after the Santa years end.

Junior Vivian Nordstrom opens Christmas presents and unboxes her new pink My-Little-Pony.



Photo courtesy: Vivian Nordstrom



Photo courtesy: Autumn Henry



Photo courtesy: Rebecca Kubiak



Photo courtesy: Vivian Nordstrom

1. Whilst opening presents on Christmas Day, current senior Autumn Henry unboxes a new toy horse. 2. Current junior Rebecca Kubiak slides down a snowy hill whilst being pulled by her father on a sled. 3. Current junior Vivian Nordstrom enjoys a cookie on Christmas Eve with her family.

The Season

Community members bring **COMPASSION, JOY, CONNECTION** to those in need

Eleanor Grant, Editor-in-Chief

The holiday season is a time when giving back becomes just as important as giving gifts. Across the community, people seek ways to make a difference.

“The impact that helping people leaves makes me really happy,” freshman Peighton Daviskiba said.

From serving food to donating toys, students and community members are finding that even small acts of generosity can have a lasting impact on those in need.

According to the Volunteers of America Impact Report, the Adopt-a-Family program “helped over 2200 children and over 800 adults have a magical holiday season.”

This season of giving has reminded many people that the holidays are not just about celebration: they’re about connection, compassion, and community.

For many students, these experiences have opened their eyes to the different needs that exist within their own neighborhoods and inspired them to find new ways to help.

Giving Gifts

Community members have found ways to give back by donating toys to children in need.

“My parents own an office, and they have a Toys for Tots bin every year at their office,” junior Ashlynn Abshire said. “So I’ve always put, like, old games, toys, things in there. And I think it’s pretty cool that they get to have one and collect stuff on their own.”

For many, giving toys has become a yearly tradition that reminds them that the holidays are about more than just receiving.

“When I was younger, I used to go to latchkey at the Salvation Army, and they would have a Toys for Tots collection,” Abshire said. “I would donate anything I didn’t really use anymore, any dolls, stuff like that.”

The joy of knowing someone else will appreciate those gifts more makes the experience worthwhile.

“It makes me really, like, happy, because I know that somebody else is going to get so much more joy out of it,” Abshire said. “Maybe because I already have that sort of stuff. It’s like that first time getting a Barbie. It’s so exciting.”

Programs like Toys for Tots have made giving possible for decades. Founded in 1947 after Diane Hendricks hand-crafted dolls for children in need, the organization has since grown nationwide, helping families bring joy to their children each holiday season.

“I think it’s always good to have those programs available so people can always have an outlet and a way to get things too, because a lot of people are without stuff,” Abshire said.



Wyandote resident and Integrated Design Solutions Senior Associate Val Grant looks through the toy aisle at Walmart while shopping for Adopt-a-Family. Grant has participated in this program through her work for 25 years.

On a larger scale, businesses and workplaces are helping families directly through programs like Adopt-a-Family.

“[Integrated Design Solutions] has been a company for 25 years, and we have done [Adopt-a-Family] the entire time. It was just something that we always wanted to give back,” Integrated Design Solutions Senior Associate Val Grant said. “I think over the years, it’s been different organizations that we have gone through, but the last number of years. It’s been CARE House of Oakland County.”

Each year, their company is matched with local families in need through organizations like CARE House of Oakland County, which offers individualized assistance throughout the year.

“We have a wish list that gives ages and genders of each family member, and it also lists the different items that they’re looking for in their sizes,” Grant said. “It has a lot of clothing and needs like that. And then there’s always a few toys or suggestions of what the kids are interested in.”

For many donors, delivering the gifts creates lasting memories and powerful reminders of community connection.

“Years ago, we used to actually get to go and deliver the gifts to the families while the kids were at school,” Grant said. “We would go and take them to the parents, and that was a very rewarding and emotional kind of exchange.”

Beyond the holidays, these giving traditions continue to strengthen community bonds throughout the year.

“It’s really impactful as a company to be able to give back to your community. And we do this a number of different ways throughout the whole year, where we have different quarterly charities,” Grant said. “It gives people an opportunity to kind of share what’s important to them and then rally and get people behind that.”



Photos: Eleanor Grant

of Giving

Giving Time

Some believe that one of the most meaningful ways to give back isn't through gifts or donations, but through time and small acts of kindness.

"The goal was just to make someone smile," senior Gisele Morris said.

Members of Key Club recently worked on a project assembling flowers with notes of kindness attached, which were then placed on cars outside Wyandotte Hospital.

"Anybody who's going to the hospital, they could either be sick or going through something, or even just the workers, it was to put a smile on somebody's face," Morris said.

The flowers were about making people happy and instilling a memory. Each member of Key Club had their own job when creating these to leave an impact.

"I cleaned the flowers and cut them, so they were able to be put on the cards," Morris said.

The effort may have been small, but its impact was immediately noticed.

"I saw on Facebook one person from the hospital," Morris said. "It was someone who just had surgery, and it put a smile on their face. It made me so happy. I loved it."

For Morris, giving back has always been a personal value that defines what it means to be part of a community.

"I've always had a pretty strong mind about giving back," Morris said. "I've always been involved because community service means helping my community grow, and letting small acts lead to bigger changes."

Other students are giving their time in more traditional ways, like volunteering or fundraising for local charities.

"I just like helping people in need," freshman Aubree Strickland said.

As a Salvation Army bell ringer, Strickland spent time downtown collecting donations to support families during the holidays.

"I was Downtown and it was only two

hours each time," Strickland said.

For her, those hours were a simple but meaningful way to help others facing tough times.

"I think it's important because some people can't always afford stuff, some people can't afford everything that I can," Strickland said.

Some students have also brought joy directly to people in care facilities.

"So my grandma works at a senior home... and, last year, she was like they have a sign-up, and asked if I wanted to volunteer," Daviskiba said. "I plan to do it again this year."

For Daviskiba, volunteering offered a perspective on gratitude and the difference kindness can make.

"[I decided to volunteer] knowing how much is going around the world this time of year, and how many people can't afford gifts and stuff," Daviskiba said. "The impact that it makes on people makes me really happy."

Giving Food

At a time when many families struggle to afford groceries, local students are helping to make sure no one goes hungry.

"I learned how much it matters when you have this sort of privilege, when you have access to food, it matters that you use that to help others who maybe don't have the same access or the same privilege," Tri-M President senior Alessio Vitale said.

At local soup kitchens, volunteers see firsthand how powerful a warm meal can be.

"I took the prepared bowls and set them out on the tables so people could come up and take them," junior Jillian Kovesdi said.

The actual tasks are simple, but they help feed and unite dozens of families in need.

"A lot of people, especially around the holidays, don't have enough money for food," Kovesdi said.

"So it's a nice place for families to go to actually have a meal together."

Donations also help keep these kitchens running.

"They take donations. People either give them money to make soup and buy stuff for the soup, or they donate stuff themselves," Kovesdi said. "A lot of people want to help, but they can't physically help, so they donate."

Tri-M music honor society students have found their own ways to support the same cause from within the school.

"So Tri-M's goal is to give back to our community through whatever we



Photo: Eleanor Grant

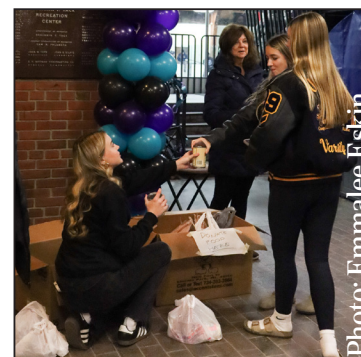


Photo: Emmalee Eskin

Above: Tri-M President senior Alessio Vitale looks through the donations that the food drive received. Left: Students donate cans to enter the You Matter hockey game.

can provide, and one way we do that is by giving back to local food drives," Vitale said.

There was a collection box in the music hallway during the month of November where students could drop off non-perishables.

"We have a large box in the music hall where we're collecting all sorts of things," Vitale said. "And then once we get it, we sort it into different groups of food. And then we all send it to our local church."

The drive's mission is about more than food: it's about care and compassion during difficult times.

"No one, especially in the wintertime, where it's cold and it's painful and it's snowing and the weather's horrible," Vitale said. "Nobody wants to add starving to that list of things."

Even though this food drive is over, there are many other local places where food can be donated all year round, like the Salvation Army or a church.

The holidays are a peak season for generosity, and many Americans donate more of their time and money during this time. But giving back doesn't have to be about doing something big.

"Everyone's got a can that's been sitting on the shelf for maybe a little too long, and you know, cans are not perishable, that's why we donate them," Vitale said. "So I would encourage you, if you're not going to eat it, give it away to someone who will eat it and to someone who will use it. And I think that applies to a lot of other things. If you're not going to use it, give it to someone who will use it."



Photo: Monica Patterson

Key Club member junior Jillian Kovesdi leaves flowers with positive notes on people's cars at Wyandotte Hospital. Kovesdi has also volunteered at a soup kitchen to give back during the holidays.

Stand For *Brighter* Holidays

Navigating struggles of **mental health** during winter season

Jolie Greener, Reporter

The holidays are usually known for their seasonal cheer and the happiness they bring to people around the world. Students anticipate gifts and excitement, but for some, the holidays bring sadness for a variety of reasons.

“64% of individuals living with mental illness reported that their conditions worsened around the holidays,” the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration said. “Whether due to separation from loved ones, or shorter days...this time of year can bring unique behavioral health challenges.”

With these exceedingly high statistics, it's quite normal for teenagers to find themselves struggling with depression, anxiety, and other issues around this time.

“I feel like sometimes I don't want to get up or go out,” freshman Ai'yanna Moreno said. “I have to force myself.”

Along with depression, many struggle with loss when remembering the holidays. According to a poll conducted by the American Psychological Association, nine out of 10 people, or 89%, stress about the pressure and familiarity of holidays that remind them of past Christmases.

“I'm forgetting my older sister. I haven't seen her in eight years, and it's scaring me,” freshman Logan Somers said in a Wy-News survey. “It started with how she sounds like, then what she looks like, and then I

lost memories of her.”

Somers isn't alone in these feelings. The American Psychological Association survey discovered that 38% of the over 2000 respondents were stressed about missing family or loved ones.

“My cat Snickers isn't here with us this Christmas. We got her before I was born, and she helped me through everything,” sophomore Nevaeh Cuevas said.

It can be very difficult to lose people that were once prominent during past Christmases, but understanding that some moments will be tough, and some moments will create opportunities for more memories, will help ease these feelings over time. Another familiar feeling that many children struggle with is separated parents, and bouncing between houses.

“I always sometimes feel a hole [around the holidays],” freshman Brayden Miller said. “I mean, my mom and dad aren't together, so it's hard swapping houses every year, but then during the holidays, I feel better because I get a second Christmas as well.”

Divorced parents are more common than many people realize, and can impact children's feelings around Christmas by causing them to reminisce about past holidays with their whole family. According to the Child Mind Institute, more than 50% of marriages end in divorce, and many forms of media show what looks to be “perfect” families around

the holidays, when most children don't experience that.

“I don't live with my parents...It's only been a little over a year since I've moved out, and I'm not fully adjusted just yet. My parents not caring or being around really hurts. I still have flashbacks from being a child on Christmas morning, laughing with my mom,” sophomore Lena Wood said.

Holiday loneliness is a universal experience, especially after abrupt changes to your living situations. According to a survey conducted by market research organization ValuePenguin, about 55% of Americans struggle with holiday loneliness, with more reports of their conditions worsening compared to the previous year. While these situations seem scary, there are ways to ease the anxiety, depression, or feelings of isolation around Christmas.

One solution is simply to talk about how you're feeling. By expressing emotions, it allows a person to find a new source of comfort, and opens a line of communication.

“The simple act of sharing what you are going through emotionally can help you to connect to others, helping to alleviate the sense of isolation,” TexasHealth.org said in an article called Mental Health and the Holidays.

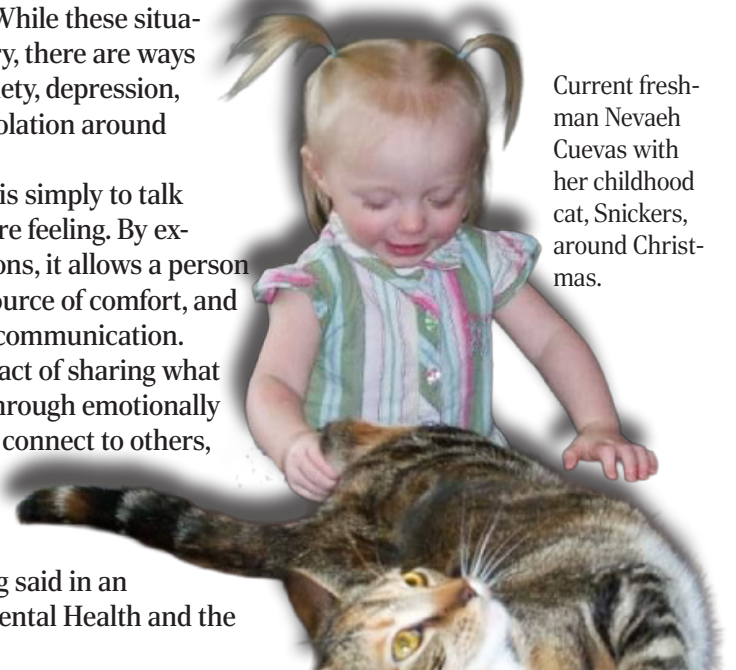
Along with loneliness, 38% of adults find themselves using harm-

ful coping mechanisms during the holidays due to stress, according to the American Psychological Association (APA). But, being honest with yourself and facing feelings head-on can help.

According to the TexasHealth article, self-awareness “can significantly alleviate the stress you might be putting on yourself during this time of year.”

While many find the holidays stressful, nearly seven in 10 adults in the APA survey agreed that the stress is worth the human connection that the holidays bring to many around the world.

“When it comes to Christmas, it makes me more happy to spend time with my family,” Moreno said.



Current freshman Nevaeh Cuevas with her childhood cat, Snickers, around Christmas.

Photo courtesy: Nevaeh Cuevas

Guidance Center opens behavioral health urgent care in Southgate

Jolie Greener, Reporter

Because of the rise in problems with children's mental health, the Guidance Center in Southgate has opened a non-emergency Behavioral Health Urgent Care available to anyone above the age of six.

“Whether you are experiencing mental health symptoms for the first time or managing a long-standing mental health condition, we are here to assist you,” the Guidance Center's website states.

This new Urgent Care offers ser-

vices in Crisis intervention, Screening for treatment services, Referrals to treatment providers, Coordination of next-day services, Connections to community resources, and Safety planning.

Wyandotte Superintendent Dr. James Anderson attended the grand opening of this new urgent care.

“The holidays can amplify stress and disrupt routines in children,” Anderson said. “The Urgent care provides immediate, walk-in access

to mental health support...This timely access to services like crisis intervention and safety planning offers a vital safety net for families during a demanding season.”

Children are the main priority, and the clinic is making many preparations for the upcoming winter season to help the growing numbers of children with anxiety and depression. The hours of operation are Mondays through Thursdays, from 4-11 pm and Fridays from 4-9pm.

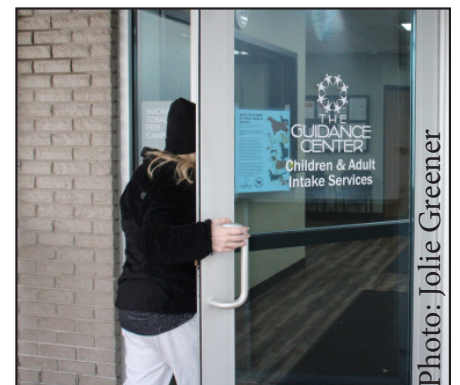


Photo: Jolie Greener

A Wyandotte parent walks into The Guidance Center in Southgate for one of their offered services.

The art of last minute gift giving

Easy ways to create meaningful quick presents

Brooke Wicker, Reporter

Last minute gifting is something known well by many. The holiday season can often creep up fast, leaving many with a tight budget and a small amount of time to shop for gifts. In response, many are taking on handmade gifts for creative alternatives. Many gift-givers are also creating their own last minute gift baskets.

For many students, shopping for holiday gifts is not at the top of their minds due to winter sports and clubs, homework, or even just procrastinating.

“I always procrastinate [gift giving], and I’ll say I’ll go next weekend, or the weekend after, and I usually know what I’m going to get people so it’s just finding it that becomes the problem waiting so long,” sophomore Jocelyn Gordillo said.

According to habitsandhome.com, staying on top of gift giving can be as simple as creating a three tiered list of importance of gift giving paired with what gift you got them and the price you spent.

In a world full of buying gifts making something homemade is a sentimental way to take on gift giving.

Whether it’s putting together a scrapbook, baking cookies, or creating a heartfelt card, these gifts carry a touch money can’t buy and can be made in a short amount of time.

“My favorite handmade gift I’ve made is a bouquet of flowers out of pipe cleaners, which were very cheap at the Dollar Tree,” Junior Jillian Kovesdi said. “I followed an easy tutorial on youtube to help me make them.”

“I do paintings for my mom, ceramics for my dad, and for my sister I make her a little trinket,” sophomore Nola Markley said.

If craft supplies are not available, regifting could be a thoughtful and sustainable option. Regifting is a quick and easy way to upcycle during the holiday season. Whether it’s regifting gifts that have been shared with you or picking lightly used items you don’t use anymore that could serve better in someone’s life.

“If it’s something I’m not going to use I’ll regift it, or if it’s something I’ve never worn or if it’s not my size, as long as it is something the other person would like,” MariaLuisa

Cornejo-Reyna said.

If regifting isn’t your thing, thrifting gifts is an affordable way to find unique presents.

“I just base the gifts on how close I am with them, that way it’s fair,” Markley said.

Markley uses an easy budget system to keep her thrifting affordable.

“A thrift store is the best place to get gifts,” Markley said, “I base what I thrift on people on their style and what they like. A lot of my friends like hoodies so that’s always a go-to gift I look for when I thrift.”

There are many thrift stores in the downriver area including STEP Thrift and Donation in Southgate, Value World in Southgate, and Goodwill in Woodhaven.

“I recommend the Salvation Army in Southgate to thrift at, they always have good stuff. Also Plato’s Closet is a good resale store,” Markley said.

If you are looking for another affordable gifting option, creating your own gift baskets is an easy way to stay on budget while making gifts personal.

Gordillo creates baskets for family members and friends based upon

their interests.

“I usually go to Sephora and Ulta to find things to put in the baskets, and I also go to Target,” Gordillo said.

Target has affordable basket options within the dollar section including candles, small room decor, makeup accessories, and rotating holiday decor. Target has premade gift sets ranging in price from \$10-\$50.

From thrifting to handmade keepsakes, last-minute gifting can be easy and affordable. For students balancing sports, clubs, work, and other activities these simple gifts can help make it possible to keep gift giving meaningful.



Junior Jillian Kovesdi shops for handmade crafts supplies for her family.

How to: *Sentimental Shadowbox*



Photos: Brooke Wicker

Senior Brooke Wicker gives the homemade shadowbox she created to her brother Elijah Wicker.

Supplies:

- 1 piece of cardstock
- Thrifty, bought, or crafted small trinkets
- Photos
- Stickers
- Shadowbox
- Super glue or tape runner

Instructions:

- Step one:** Gather trinkets that are sentimental to the recipient of the gift - these can be found at thrift stores, handmade small crafts, or bought from craft stores. Be sure to pick items that are meaningful to the person receiving the gift.
- Step two:** Next, you need to do is pick out the perfect photo for your shadowbox. Print a few options that way you are able to see what works best with the frame.
- Step three:** Open the shadowbox, and cut the cardstock to fit the backing of the frame.
- Step four:** Once cut, use super glue or a tape runner to secure the cardstock onto the backing of the frame.
- Step five:** Next, arrange the heartfelt trinkets, momentos, and stickers onto the cardstock backing.
- Step six:** Once arranged neatly, secure down all items with the adhesive of your choice.
- Step seven:** After everything has been successfully attached, return the back to the frame. Now, the gift is complete!
- Step seven:** Finish up by wrapping the shadowbox with wrapping paper and the ribbon of your choice, or even just consider adding ribbon so the gift can be enjoyed without the wrapping.



Holiday meals priced at *all-time high*

Marcus Pizzo, Reporter

It's the season of giving, not just for presents, but families are expected to prepare a spread of food that rivals the Thanksgiving feast from the last big holiday event. Unfortunately, the cost of the meals has risen over the past few years, and as of now, it is at an all-time high.

"Average grocery prices in September were about 2.7% more than they were a year prior," according to CNN. "And about 1.4% higher than they were in January."

Part of the uptake in meal prices is because of the meat-packing industry's recent investigation of fixed prices. Although, according to Forbes, President Donald Trump has blamed high beef prices on foreign competition after backlash involving plans to import low-tariff meat from countries including Argentina.

"Consumer demand has remained strong in the face of tighter supplies," according to usda.gov.

It's not just the main dish that's gone up in price; even prices for normal Christmas dinner

essentials like pop have shot up this year. Prices are only set to worsen, with the U.S Department of Agriculture predicting egg prices rising by 24.8%, pork prices by 1.4, and poultry by 1.9, all before the end of 2025. With fewer families being able to afford dinner, some have taken to helping out the less fortunate. In Detroit, an interactive map has been created to help find nearby food drives.

"I can't begin to thank the hundreds of Detroiters who have volunteered to support their neighbors in this time of need," Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan said on a video message.

Multiple other food drives have sprung up in popularity recently, including Most Holy Trinity Parish and Gleaners. These establishments have dedicated hundreds of pounds of food towards people in need, but that begs the question: why are the prices of basic groceries becoming so unmanageable?

"Trump's tariffs are also contributing to higher prices for imported staples like bananas and coffee," according to NPR.

For the consumer, there's no easy way to just make ham cost less; however, grocery stores are trying to help out by introducing special deals to make the holidays more affordable.

Costco has offered an entire month of Black Friday deals, offering a \$60 gift card for people who sign up for their executive membership.

President Trump has also made an attempt to help low-income families by promising everyone with low income an extra \$2,000.

"The president's talking about a \$2,000 rebate, and that would be for families making less than \$100,000," U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on Fox on Nov. 12th.

Trump said that unless the newer tariffs he's imposed are passed by the Supreme Court, the dividends would be unable to go to the people. With constant debate over prices, imports, and tariffs. It's become a challenge to enjoy the perfect Christmas dinner, and unfortunately, the gouging prices have no end in sight.



Above: Senior Bryan Davis has a Thanksgiving meal with his friends. Despite the prices, many people still hold gatherings during the holiday season as a way to exchange gifts and meals. Left: One way to save on costs is to home-bake and cook items instead of purchasing things premade.

Photos courtesy: Bryan Davis

RHS Students' Opinions on Holiday Food

According to a Wy-News survey

Favorites

"Mashed Potatoes"
-Freshman Evan Vargas



"Stuffing"
-Xavier Guzman-Rubio

"Mac and Cheese"
-Freshman Isabella Turner



"Ham"
-Senior Austin Nesbitt

"Green Bean Casserole"
-Junior Natalie Boone



least Favorites

"Cranberry Sauce"
-Freshman Abigail Vincent



"Turkey"
-Freshman Michael Bryant

"Lasagna"
-Freshman Jonah Tyrybon



"Green Beans"
-Junior Max Gray

"Scalloped Potatoes"
-Freshman Cole Ryan



Tinsel, Teaching, and eight trees later

Ainslea Harper, Copy Editor

Most people struggle to find space for one Christmas tree, but teachers David and Lela Blake have managed to create room in their house for eight special trees that get put up every year.

“We usually get a real 17 foot tree that we chop down. Then I have one in our front window, then we have another one in our family room, and then we have three or four like other little mini decorated trees, and then we now also have one outside that’s a part of our outside decorations,” L. Blake said.

Each tree that the family has in their house has its own special theme regarding what ornaments and decorations get put on it.

“One of the trees is our kids’ tree that has all the ornaments they’ve made or ornaments that they’ve received as gifts. Then, our little trees we actually bought at a fundraiser. It’s called Festival of Trees that raises money for the Children’s Hospital... And then our other tree has a lot of ornaments that we have from when we were very first together, before we had kids,” L. Blake said. “Our big, big tree kind of became this really cool part of what we do at Christmas that started long ago, when our kids were little, and so it’s been fun just kind of adding to that tree and making it kind of special.”

Additionally, a portion of the Blake’s Christmas tree tradition stems from buying handmade themed trees that help a charity.

“The shorter ones are all charity trees that people made, that have their own themes, that we bought for charity,” D. Blake said. “It’s like a hospital group, so all the proceeds go to that.”

The Blakes go to a former colleague’s Christmas tree farm every year and chop down a 17 foot live tree to bring home for the Christmas season. As anyone can imagine, getting a 17 foot tree home isn’t easy, and standing up a 17 foot tree in the house and decorating it is even harder.

“It’s all bundled up before you leave, and then they just tie it. And then my husband and my son and my daughter, to the best of their ability, carry it into the house and then get it upright. It’s quite a process. We usually video it because it kind

of goes kind of crazy every year,” L. Blake said.

The idea came about when the Blakes bought a house with an unusually high ceiling. Since their kids were young, the Blakes came up with a fun and festive plan to utilize the space and bring Christmas spirit to their house.

“When we got our new house, we got a 17 foot tall ceiling, so we made up a rule that the tree had to touch the ceiling, and then it went from there,” D. Blake said.

The family goes all out with Christmas decorations and leaves them up for quite a few months in order to enjoy them longer.

“The total full Christmas explosion is what I call it,” L. Blake said. “Our Christmas stuff stays up for months. Like we will put it up the weekend of Thanksgiving, and it will stay up. Last year, it was up till March. No joke.”

The family doesn’t just have fun with their Christmas trees; their entire house is filled with as many decorations as they can fit. The decorations bring a fun and cheerful vibe to the Blakes.

“We just like the Christmas lights. We decorate all the archways in our house with garland and lights and bows and the staircase, and...the light is cozy, and winter can be kind of dark and depressing, so we kind of like the lighting and just kind of like the cozy vibe of it,” L. Blake said.

Each parent’s love for Christmas and inspiration for the extensive amount of Christmas decorations comes from a different place.

“Well, it’s first a religious holiday, and then from there, once you have kids, the fun of Christmas with kids can’t be beat,” D. Blake said.

For L. Blake, the reason for decorating stems from her own childhood memories.

“I think it’s just my mom always decorated, and it was always a really big deal for us. And I love the glow of Christmas lights,” L. Blake said.

Even students can tell that the Blakes have a lot of Christmas cheer.

“Usually [D. Blake] has a bunch of shirts and stuff [that are] Christmasy and I’d say his optimism and his actions and the way he speaks about it (Christmas) [show his Christmas cheer],” senior Loreli Harris said.



1. A live 17 foot tree is put up and decorated every year at the Blake house. 2. The Blake family poses for a picture with the live tree that they picked out to bring home.

When is the right time to... Christmas edition



Put up a *Christmas Tree*

Thanksgiving

51.8% of students who filled out the Wy-News survey put up their tree around Thanksgiving

Listen to *Christmas Music*

Early November

34.9% of students who filled out the Wy-News survey start listening to Christmas music in early November



Start *Christmas shopping*

Anytime in November

55.4% of students who filled out the Wy-News survey start shopping in early-mid or late November



Graphic: Ainslea Harper

Click or celebrate: finding holiday spirit in the age of online shopping

Lydia Blonski, Reporter

Through recent years, online shopping has made a substantial impact on shopping in person. Nowadays, it's inescapable and convenient as compared to going into establishments like malls. The number of people buying products online grows with each year, as its sales continue to break records for the market.

According to Abbas Haleem, author for Digital Commerce 360, Ecommerce market has hit record highs last year as sales totaled 1.192 trillion, as compared to 5 years ago in 2019 when ecommerce market made 571.088 billion.

It's not hard to imagine why the market is booming; it's convenient to quickly purchase everyday items from websites like Amazon and SHEIN, rather than to spend a substantial amount of time going to a store to buy that same item. In addition to the speed, it also has more perks that make it more desirable than the other option.

"I know a lot of people know SHEIN, and I think SHEIN is okay because it's cheaper, and everything like that," junior Ashlynn Absire said. "It helps me a lot to buy things that I need quickly."

Even with these everyday products being so easy to shop for, so too are gifts for the holidays for loved ones. But even with the convenience of pressing a button on your phone, some people still prefer to shop in-store rather than online for their holiday purchases.

In 2025, Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand conducted a study that concluded 51% of consumers plan to purchase their gifts online, and 53% are going to shop in person. 25% of those surveyed commented that it was partially due to the seasonal atmosphere.

Even with the festive atmosphere, people still struggle with going to shop in person at malls.

"It's (online shopping) made things, to me, ruined how it was when I was a kid," French teacher Natalie Zasadny said. "I love to go and literally look at the things and check them out and see window displays. And now with the online shopping, there's not really a whole lot of opportunity to do that."

Moreover, with the internet being more widely available to kids of all ages, it is easier for them to become disillusioned with the holiday vibes

at malls like the Santa Clauses.

"It takes effort on the part of the parent to foster the belief," Santa character actor Mark Ball said. "There's a lot of information out there, and so they had access to the internet, they got more opportunities to hear that Santa Claus isn't real."

However, even if malls are not the go to place anymore to build up holiday cheer, it doesn't mean it has gone away for both younger and older generations for that matter. Hiring Santas is still incredibly popular, with there being multiple networks around the work of these professionals, as well as schools that teach them how to be the best Santas they can be.

"There's a school that's in October that lasts for three days, and for the most part, they teach you what not to do," Ball said.

A lot of the most fulfilling work for these Santa's falls outside of their work at malls. For Ball, it's his work with SXI children, kids with disabilities. Some of his most memorable and favorite work has come out of it.

"There was a kid who was as tall as I am that gave me a big old hug while I was dressed up as Santa Claus," Ball said.

For other professionals, there are other aspects about bringing the character to life, like Mrs. Claus character actress Kelly Lomas, as she brings cheer to people by transforming herself into the character.

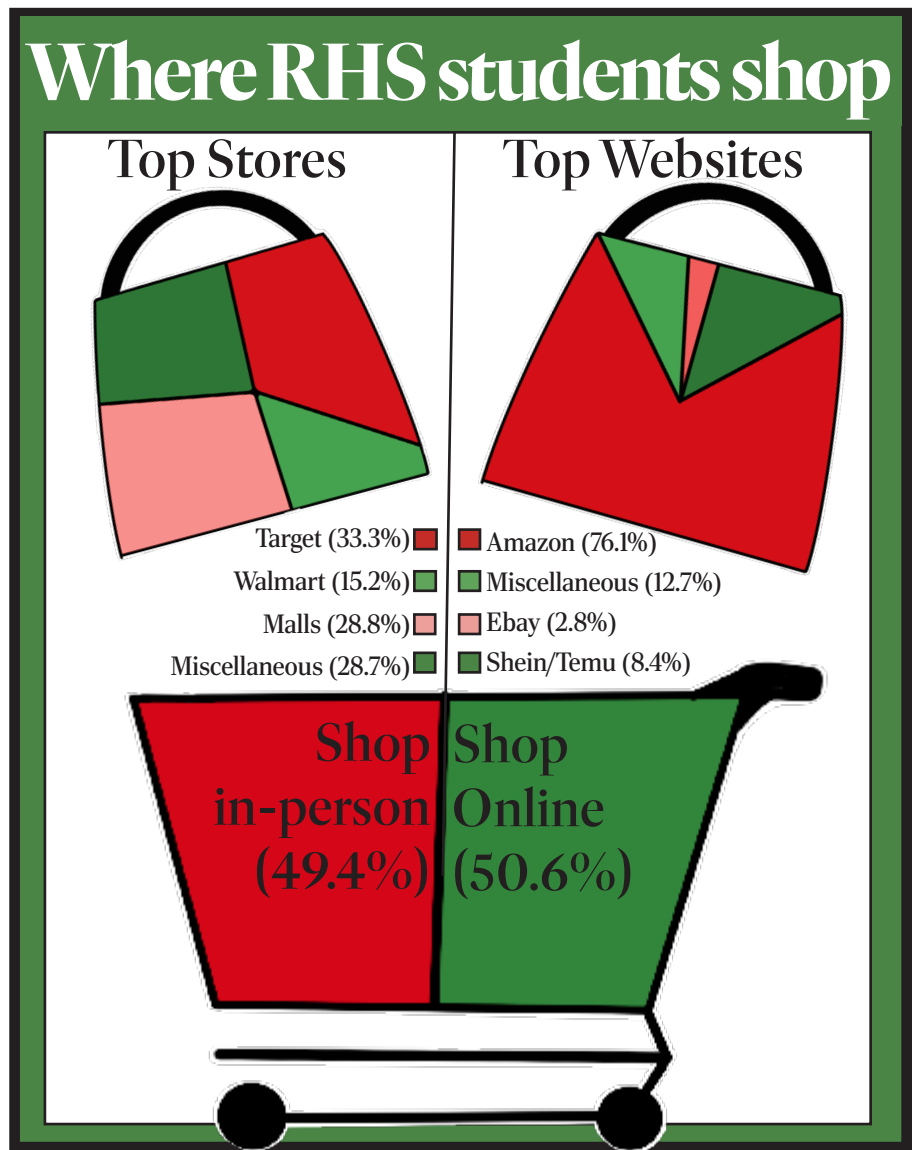
"When I do that for little kids, it's super innocent and sweet," Lomas said. "The magic is still very much alive in their eyes."

Even outside of gift shopping at malls, there is still a multitude of other opportunities for families to participate in to bond over the holiday season. For instance, going out to events in your area.

"We do a fake Christmas tree, so that's a tradition that we put that up together, like the first weekend of December," Zasadny said. "They (her children) do Santa shop and stuff at school. They love that."

Even if going in person to your favorite shopping places is out of your possibilities or just more inconvenient, there are still ways to indulge in the holiday spirit. It all depends on what you decide to do.

"I think it [holiday spirit] is what you make it," Lomas said, "I know that sounds cliché, but it's true."



(1) Senior Samantha Truesdell shops for gifts in person at the mall to make sure she is getting deals, while (2) Junior Addison Sauve shops online at Amazon while in the commons during lunch room because of how convenient it is..

150+ year old story still stands timelessly

A Christmas Carol and how its many variations still stay both popular and relevant

Riley Hodges, Reporter

The Muppets Christmas Carol is one of the best adaptations of the classic story *A Christmas Carol*, with its humorous moments and nostalgic components such as Muppets characters like Kermit who is widely known.

"*A Christmas Carol* has never been out of print and has been translated into several languages. It's a worldwide phenomenon that children and adults alike delight in every holiday season," novlr.com said.

In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote the book *A Christmas Carol* which would eventually become one of the most widely adapted Christmas stories ever. Even with its wide variations especially through film, its message still remains the same. The fact that the book is old yet so popular leaves many asking why?

The book tells a story of an older business man named Ebenezer Scrooge who is fairly wealthy living in an area with lots of poverty. Scrooge is highly selfish, keeping his profits to himself. On Christmas Eve, he is visited by his past, present and future which are all portrayed as ghosts. Scrooge is taken through each of these eras getting to see other perspectives of the holidays, and he learns that he is lucky to be more fortunate.

"I love Scrooge, that's a great movie! I like how it goes off of different perspectives," Senior Adriana Dionisi said.

Waking on Christmas morning, he shows a change of heart and decides to use his fortune for things other than himself, changing his ways

forever.

"It comes down to your mindset and when you have the will and the motivation to change, rebirth occurs," authenticacounseling.com said.

Tons of movies were made from the book. Some of the most popular are *A Christmas Carol* (1984), *A Christmas Carol* (1999), and *The Muppets Christmas Carol*. The Muppets and Mickey Mouse versions show a more comedic take towards the original story, while movies like *A Christmas Carol* (2019) and *Scrooge* (1951) have comedic aspects, they show a more gothic take on the story. Yet, each continues the same initial message:

"We wear the chains we forge. You have the power to change your future if you wish it," authenticacounseling.com said.

Christmas is a time where lots of joy is shown to be present, but not all people feel that way, especially when it comes to not being able to afford things like gifts and food.

These movie renditions just put visuals to Dickens' words. Each movie shows a rich but selfish man who learns it's not too late to change his ways.

"Scrooge became the miserly version of himself – who is lonely, greedy, selfish, and angry – to then become the jovial, kind, enthusiastic, empathetic, and joyful version of himself at the end," medi-

um.com said.

A Christmas Carol remains one of the most widely adapted forms of media. It is a movie famously watched around the holidays because of its timeless portrayals of change and redemption which are still extremely relevant topics in modern times.

Christmas is ultimately about giving and that is what Scrooge learns to do. *A Christmas Carol* continues to stay timeless because of adaptations like *Scrooged* where Bill Murray takes on a great rendition of the classic but in modern times and proves that Dickens' words still apply today.

"Indeed, the cold-hearted Scrooge could just as easily be a 21st century business tycoon as a 19th-century miser, and Bob Cratchit's working-class struggle continues to resonate," unc.edu said.



Photo: Riley Hodges

The Hodges family sits down to watch a movie around the holidays. *Home Alone* and the original *Christmas Story* are two of their favorite Christmas movies to watch as a family.

Original VS. Remake



19.75% of students voted that they prefer the second *Home Alone* over the original.



37.5% of students prefer the 1966 version of *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* over the remake



95% of students prefer *Elf* over *Elf: The Musical*



97.5% of students prefer the original *Christmas Story* over the musical



Illustrations: Riley Hodges

Opinion

Hear it from *Harper*

When packages disappear, so do opportunities

Ainslea Harper, Copy Editor

A couple weeks ago, my friend ordered a thirty-dollar perfume from Amazon. When it was delivered to her apartment, another tenant stole it right from the lobby.

We looked up the process for getting a refund for a stolen package. This process can include talking to customer service, filling out paperwork, calling your credit card company, and it's always recommended to fill out a police report for the stolen package.

My friend didn't do any of this. She took the loss on the \$30 and just ordered a new perfume. This process just seems long and annoying. So, really, what's the point of going through all of that for a thirty-dollar refund when you won't even remember the lost money in a couple of weeks?

But I was thinking more into it, and if the act of "porch pirating" becomes too common during this holiday season, this could really end up affecting families.

When the government paused SNAP benefits across the country from November 1st - November 12th, already struggling families were forced to face even worse conditions. Parents who might have been able to use extra money for their kids' presents are now going to have to use that money to supply food for their family. My mom also told me this year that because she needed to save some extra money for food and necessities, we were going to have a smaller Christmas than usual.

And here's how this ties into the porch pirating - what if there's a family who just used their last couple of dollars to order a gift for their kids, and then it gets stolen? Maybe I won't remember losing thirty dollars by the next time I get paid, but these families sure would.

According to a report by security.org, there were about 12 billion dollars in losses caused by porch piracy. And when you look up how to deter porch pirates, the main suggestions are to install security cameras, motion censored lights, or a security lockbox.

Realistically though, not everyone can afford this, and sometimes landlords don't allow it. A lot of the time, packages are going to be too big to fit into a mailbox or lockbox.

Because of this, most of us just keep doing what my friend did. If a package gets stolen, we re-order it, lose a little extra money, and hope for the best. But this attitude is what helps porch pirating continue to grow.

Porch pirating isn't just an inconvenience, but a growing inequality. If you can afford to buy that doorbell camera or just live in a nice area in general, your packages are pretty much guaranteed safety. If not, every time something gets delivered you have to hope it's still there when you get home, or lose out on either the money or the object.

As we get closer to Christmas, we keep getting more deliveries, and until there is a better system in place to deter porch pirates, the best thing we can do is look out for each other.

Offer to pick up a neighbor's package if they need it, or ask them to pick up yours. Don't be afraid to call out suspicious behavior.

Anything you can do to stop a porch pirate could really help. Not everyone can afford that kind of loss, especially right now.



Photo: Eleanor Grant

Holiday

Holiday deliveries and festivities

Dominic Gray, Design Editor

While Kevin McCallister relied on paint cans, marbles, and toys, today's homeowners turn to doorbell cameras and security systems. With package thefts and break-ins increasing around the holiday season, like *Home Alone*, homeowners should find a way to protect themselves and their property.

"There's nothing worse than coming back from a relaxing vacation to a stressful situation at home, so it is best to be prepared and protect your home before you travel," ADT said on their website.

In *Home Alone*, Kevin McCallister is accidentally left behind while his family goes on a Christmas vacation, forcing him to defend his house from two burglars using only items around the house and his creativity. The film's mix of humor and resourcefulness is still prevalent today: keeping homes safe during the holiday season.

"A survey by ApartmentGuide revealed

that over a quarter of Americans (26%) are concerned about a winter break-in," ACSSecurity.com said, "utilizing a home security and home automation system can offer the protection you deserve."

While *Home Alone* is set during the 90s around Christmas time, the importance of home protection has not changed, but it has evolved over the years with the introduction of more technological ways to protect your home.

"Take the time to double-check that doors and windows are locked before you leave, and ensure that all your tempting valuables are locked somewhere secure and out of sight," Securitymonster.com said. "If you have a safe or a particularly secure room in your home, move all your treasured items there, and take extra measures to ensure it's difficult to access."

Starting off with one of the simplest yet most important steps, homeowners should

Home Security

bring a rise in package theft and home security concerns.

always make sure every window and door is closed and locked. During the bustling holiday season, it's easy to overlook basic security. Just as McCallister double checked every entrance in his home, taking a few minutes to secure your house can make a major difference in protecting your belongings.

"With most systems going wireless, you can easily install motion and entry detectors around windows and doors and an audible alarm to alert you and your home security provider of a potential breach," home security company Schlage.com said.

Now, while a family like the McCallisters may have had deep enough pockets for a home security system in the 90s (because they were somehow able to hold large yearly Christmas trips), it has become cheaper and eas-

ier than ever before to get some form of security for your home yourself.

"It's a good idea to get high-tech with your front door, whether that's with a video doorbell or smart lights that alert you to motion. Before your trip, make sure these devices are running properly and the batteries are freshly charged," AAA.com said in a blog on their website.

With the rise of delivery came the rise of porch pirates and packages being stolen; now this may have been something that Kevin McCallister didn't have to deal with, because this was 35 years ago, of course, but it is a problem today.

"One in four Americans (or 64 million people) has had a package stolen at some point, and 9 million adults have had a package stolen in just the last three months," Security.org said.

One of the most popular options today that can protect your home and your packages is a doorbell camera. There is a wide variety of options to choose from, like Ring, Blink, and even Roku. Any of these can be set up at a front door to watch packages being delivered, drive away porch pirates, and even talk to someone at your door while you are not at home.

"If you have a surveillance set-up, make sure at least one camera captures your front entryway. Simply having a security camera above your doorbell or porch may steer thieves away," Alarm Detection Systems Inc. said on their website adsalarm.com.

Some companies, like Ring, also offer other security options, like security cameras that can be linked to the same mobile app as the doorbell. These cameras can detect motion,

record potential perpetrators, and could even help in the case of a crime actually happening, where it could provide evidence.

"Set up motion sensors to detect unexpected activity around your home. Whether it's someone approaching the front door, scaling the back fence, or sneaking through the living room, these sensors send instant alerts to your phone," Alert360.com said.

The holidays are a time for celebration, but there can be increased risks for theft and break-ins. By taking easy precautions and using modern security tools, people can protect themselves and their homes from thieves and porch pirates. Just like Kevin McCallister in Home Alone, it only takes some caution and preparation to keep your home safe this season.



Senior Dominic Gray screwing in a Ring doorbell camera next to his front door. Doorbell cameras are one of many easy ways to deter package thieves and protecting homes.

Christmas is *Christmas* everywhere

Tradition shifts in cultures around the world

Miliany Zapata, Reporter

Christmas is one of the most celebrated holidays in the world, but not everyone celebrates it the same way, and some even celebrate it on different days.

“My family makes duck every year for Christmas and sometimes we have lamb, but that is more of a Mexican tradition,” freshman Isabella Pauley said.

Traditionally, food is a big part of celebrations and is a way to bring people together. In America, many people eat Christmas dinner and typically have ham, mac and cheese and potatoes at their dinner table.

“My family gets tamales on the table and we all eat it as a family on Christmas,” Pauley said. “When we go to my grandparents’ house the

music is always very loud because Mexican parties are typically on the bigger side when it comes to the amount of people we have.”

Along with food, music is known to bring people together, like Christmas carols and door to door singing. In America, people use singing as a way to raise money for various charities.

The Salvation Army in America that goes around raising money for families all winter long.

“When I’m in Romania we usually go around singing to people like door to door. It’s so fun to do it with my family,” freshman Denis Fizesan said.

In other countries like Romania, Santa Claus is known as “Mos

Craciun” and they celebrate dances like “The Bears dance.” They prepare pork for their Christmas dinner on the 20th of December.

“We tend to eat a lot and eat sarmale, which is a Romanian dish that is made with cabbage and different types of ingredients and it is very good,” Fizesan said.

Christmas presents are very important in American culture because a lot of the time it is what is most expected. While, in Mexico many people prepare sweet treats like cookies and cakes.

“My family doesn’t really do too many gifts, we may give each other a few pieces of clothing, but nothing too extra,” Fizesan said.

Christmas in America can be a

fun time for those who celebrate but those who have different roots may not always agree due to the nostalgia of growing up.

“Christmas is nice and all but I really miss Romania and it is not the same here, we don’t celebrate it anymore here,” Fizesan said.

Nonetheless, only 71% of Americans celebrate this holiday for religious purposes, according to bureauworks.com.

This holiday did not originate in a specific country, but it was made to celebrate the birth of Jesus and has brought people together worldwide with festivities like Germany’s Christmas market, KFC Christmas in Japan, and The Giant Lantern Festival in the Philippines.



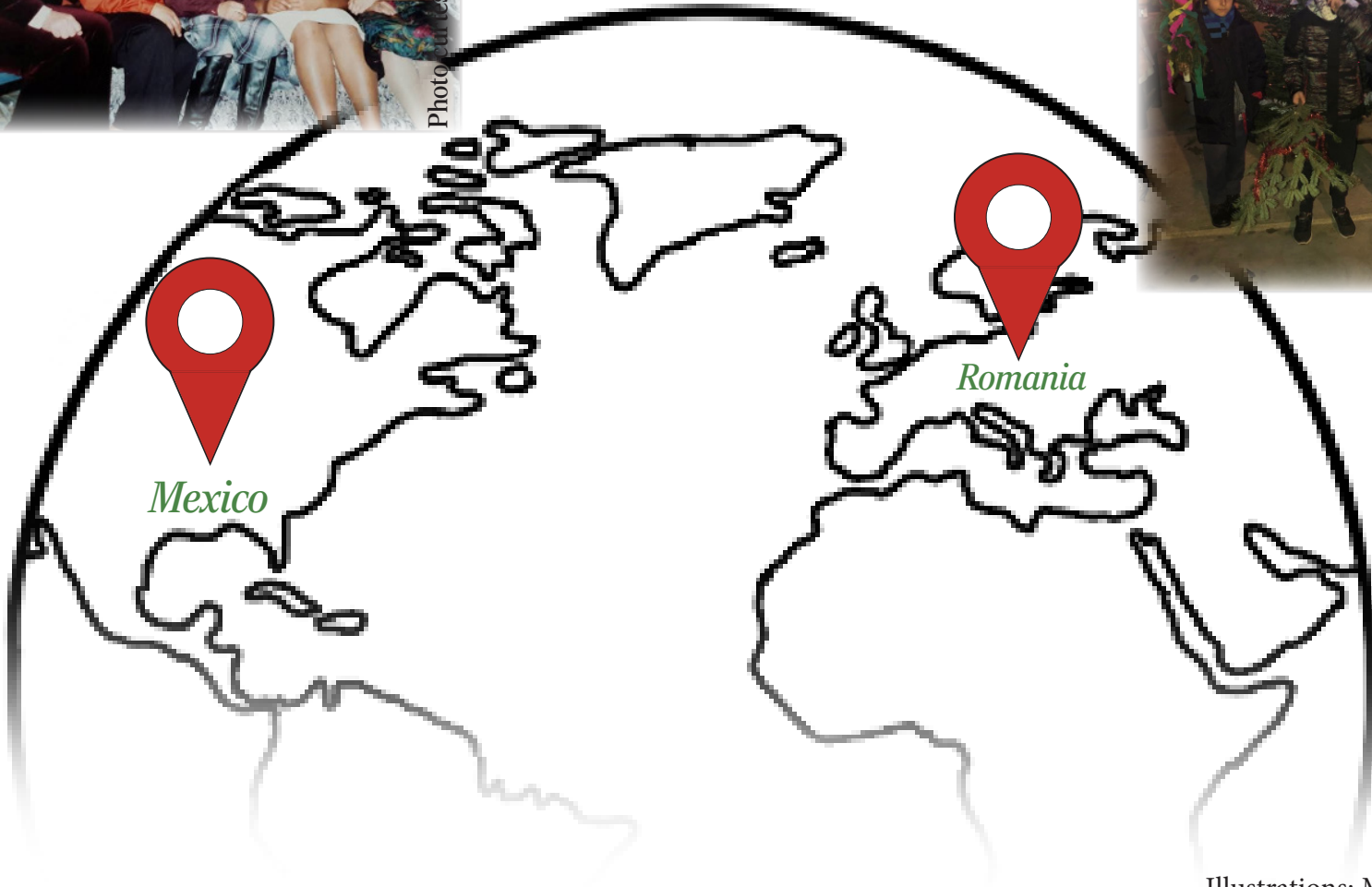
Freshman Isabella Pauley's family sits on the couch during Christmas at their grandmothers house to keep the tradition alive.

Photo courtesy: Isabella Pauley

Freshman Denis Fizesan poses in front of the tree in Romania where he and his family grew up.



Photo courtesy: Denis Fizesan



Illustrations: Miliany Zapata

Pine or Plastic?

Real and synthetic Christmas trees: which one is right for you?

Savjoah Paul-Laucer, Reporter

The American Christmas Tree Association stated that “[...]artificial trees have become the standard in American holiday decorating,” with more and more Americans putting up store-bought trees instead of shopping for an authentic one. But despite the idea that it’s the “better choice,” plastic trees have more of an equal ground with their farm-grown competitors than most people think.

Plastic trees have grown in popularity due to their convenience and accessibility; an estimated 83% of trees will be plastic this year, based on a survey conducted by the ACTA. Since they aren’t real, synthetic trees have a greater variety in color, sizing, and customization. Store-bought trees also have longer lifespans than their farm-grown counterparts, saving money long term.

“Many artificial Christmas trees now even come pre-lit, so customers do not have to deal with untangling lights and packing them back up at the end of the season,” reporter

Courtney Vinopal wrote in an article for PBS News.

However, despite their numerous advantages, synthetic trees tend to be more expensive than the real thing, ranging from \$85-200. They have a worse impact on the environment as well, due to emissions caused during production and shipping. While they are reusable, store-bought trees that are thrown away can stay for hundreds of years in a landfill before starting to decompose. So, while they are convenient, plastic trees do more harm than good for the planet.

“In the U.S., around 10 million artificial trees are purchased each season. Nearly 90% of them are shipped across the world from China, resulting in an increase of carbon emissions and resources. And because of the material they are made of, most artificial trees are not recyclable and end up in local landfills. Not to mention the smell of new plastic is just not as nostalgic as a crisp, fresh evergreen,” Nature.org’s Real vs. Fake—

Which Christmas Tree Is Better for the Environment? states.

Natural trees give an authentic, traditional feel to a home’s decorations, and often come at a lesser price than their plastic counterparts. The smell of pine and the fact that well-maintained lots and forests do good for the environment can help you breathe easy. Going to a christmas tree farm is a great bonding experience for couples, friends, and family alike, making the process of getting a tree memorable and exciting. Taking home a tree in a box simply doesn’t compare to the magic of browsing through a stand of trees.

Unfortunately, authentic trees only last up to four weeks after being cut, preventing any chances of storing them for next year’s holiday. They require a lot more attention as well, with the needles and leaves shedding more

the longer the tree stays up. There’s also a chance of insects or other bugs that were attached to the tree entering your house, and it’s easier for people with seasonal allergies to have a tree that doesn’t trigger them. Though they have their own merits, some trees weren’t meant to be.

In the end, there is no “wrong answer” for what kind of tree is better to buy. Whether a tree is from the store, a seed, or even a hand-me-down from childhood, the spirit of Christmas resides in every single one.



Photo: Fair use

A row of pine trees at a christmas tree farm near Redland, Oregon are ready to be chopped down, and decorated in people’s homes. According to the American Christmas Tree Association, Christmas tree farms sell the most during the weekend of Thanksgiving and/or the first week of December.



Photo: Savjoah Paul-Laucer

A Roosevelt parent decorates an artificial Christmas tree with lights built into the branches.

Light up your holiday

Kiera Byrne, Reporter

There's an unspoken energy that comes along with the Christmas season. It's a happier time of year in general, but why? Maybe it's the presents? The snow? Hot chocolate? It's actually quite simple; the decorations. According to The Mental Wellness Center, seeing the flavors of Christmas lights spread across every square mile you drive or even when you walk into your living room, stimulates the pleasure center in your brain, causing a person to release dopamine. Dopamine is referred to as the "feel-good" chemical, meaning it makes people happy. So being around all the beautiful displays and arrangements brightens up a day to day mood even if people don't notice it. So, here is a list of many ways to get that dopamine rush throughout this holiday season.

Indoor Display

On days when you might be limited by the freezing cold, but still want to go out, Brooks Books is a local place to go for holiday cheer and a cozy atmosphere right in Wyandotte. With a wide selection of books in any genre you can think of, a coffee spot where you can buy drinks and assortments, and cozy Christmas lights all around, this is the perfect destination for a relaxing day in. Drink your coffee or hot chocolate and bask in the ambiance of the draping lights and the tall Christmas tree of books.



Photo: Kiera Byrne

Meadow Brook tour

Location: 350 Estate Drive Rochester
Cost: \$8.50-21
Availability: November 28th-December 30th
Highlights: Tour through historic mansion decorated to the brim, featuring music, holiday treats, etc.

LEGOLAND "Holiday Bricktacular"

Location: Great Lakes Crossing, Auburn Hills
Cost: \$22
Availability: December 4th-January 4th
Highlights: Miniland Winter Wonderland, Meet & Greet with LEGO santa, giant LEGO DUPLO display, etc.

The Big Bright Light Show

If you're feeling jolly and open to anything, a walk through downtown Rochester is just for you. Everywhere you look, festive colors and patterns fill your sight. From November 25th - January 18th, every building for four blocks is draped head-to-toe in flashy Christmas lights. Not only is it a joyful sight, but it's also full of festive stores from fashionable boutiques to cozy restaurants. This downtown has it all, it's a perfect example of Christmas cheer. This community is struck with an unforgettable atmosphere.

Toledo Zoo Lights Before Christmas

Location: Toledo, OH
Cost: \$29 for adults (12 and up), \$26 for kids (2-11)
Availability: November 21st-December 31st
Highlights: Light decorations, ice slide, reindeer encounters, visits with Santa, etc.



Photo Courtesy: Janet Haddad

Greenfield Village Holiday Nights

Location: 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn
Cost: \$36-42 for public ticket, 10% off for senior (62+) and children (11-5), 4 and under is free
Availability: December 4-7, 12-14, 16-23 and 26-28 from 6:30-10:00 PM
Highlights: Ice skating, carolers and live music performances, holiday cooking demonstrations, etc.

Driving Through Wonderland

During winter, going out of the house feels less desirable than staying in the comfort of your home. But there's a solution for you: Hines drive. Wayne County light fest is a five-mile drive that takes you from your house to your car, but still has the same comfy qualities. Looking to the left and right, you'll see displays of diverse sparkling sights from a moving dinosaur all the way to Cinderella's castle. Listen to Christmas music while you drink hot chocolate, and enjoy a slow ride through this feel-good twinkling show of more than 100,000 lights. This event is open from November 21th to December 24th with entry tickets of \$5 per car.



Photo: Kiera Byrne

Magic of Lights

Location: Pine Knob Music Theatre, Clarkston
Cost: \$33-38 online and \$40 in person
Availability: November 21st-January 3rd from 5:30-10:00 PM
Highlights: The Reindeer Rest Stop, the Reindeer Road, 200-foot tunnel of lights, etc.

Nite Lites

Location: 12626 US-12, Brooklyn
Cost: \$35
Availability: November 21st-January 4th from 5:30-9 PM or 10 PM depending on date
Highlights: Train rides, light tunnels, well-known Christmas character displays, etc.

Comeback Soundtrack

The psychology of music nostalgia

Samuel Martinez, Reporter

As the holidays begin, a few more popular holiday figures besides Santa seemingly rise up from the woodwork into relevance due to the holiday season: music artists.

Many people have experiences walking into their local mall or supermarket to be immediately hit with background noise of Christmas music playing, sometimes even before the month of November.

According to Behind the Meme, the practice is even commonly made fun of by people on the internet, referencing figures like Mariah Carey and how they spring up out of nowhere during the holidays.

Even so, the practice is proven to encourage shoppers to embrace the holiday spirit and Christmas shop early.

But all of this begs the question: why does specifically Christmas music, of all things, have this big of a psychological impact on our lives

during the holiday season to affect our decision making like this?

At a young age, many people all simultaneously develop a very positive outlook on Christmas. Receiving the gifts they finally get to unwrap after a month of waiting with family, making a snowman on their front lawn are all positive memories of this sort link back to Christmas.

While these scenarios take place, even if people notice it or not, festive music is often in the background.

Nate Solan, an assistant professor of Musicology at the University of Southern California, states that even if it's not, Christmas music can be enjoyed by a broad range of individuals because of the subject matter being such a relatable topic, along with the uniqueness of instruments and vocals.

As a result, listening to the music that was played or about that time in an individual's life produces "feel-

good" chemicals like dopamine and oxytocin, bringing a state of nostalgia and a sense of coziness and comfort, especially during times of loneliness according to Jenna Mindel at Biola University.

Nostalgia goes as far as it affecting decision-making and thought processes. It causes many individuals to be open towards practices they otherwise would say no to, for example spending more money or time in a certain place than usual.

Along with nostalgia, a sense of connectedness in a right environment like with family, friends, or followers of a specific religion can occur. It's similar to a cycle of sorts, good feelings creating good memories which result in an even more positive outlook on the holiday season.

This explains the motive companies have when it comes to marketing during the holidays: it is cashing

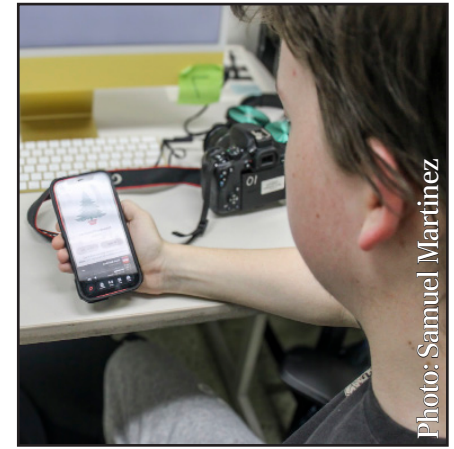


Photo: Samuel Martinez

RHS Junior Alex Malnofski embraces the holiday spirit.

in on a tradition and, therefore, a cultural phenomenon.

And, according to Alex Dyer's "The Importance of Christmas Music," it also explains why we, as people, have such a gravitation towards festive related music. It takes advantage of the natural desire we have as humans to experience a simpler time in our lives—a time not focused on how trivial life could be at times.

Without these artists, that simpler time could be a completely different experience looking back on the matter. In cases like the holiday season, festive songs are ultimately more than just background noise to people; it's an emotional anchor.

Sounds of the Season

Most Anticipated Festive Artists (According To RHS.)



2nd

"Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree"
Brenda Lee, 1958



1st

"All I Want For Christmas Is You"
Mariah Carey, 1994



3rd

"It's Beginning to Look a Lot like Christmas"
Michael Bublé, 2011

Trending Gifts to SLEIGH this season



Lego Flowers \$59.99

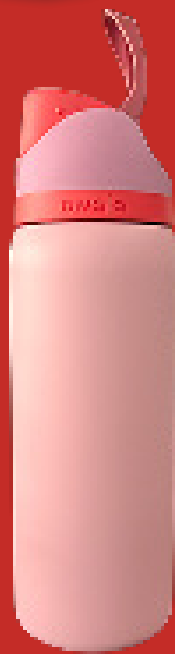
\$25

Weighted Stuffed Animal



Target Hair Care Kit

\$20



Eskin's

My take on gifts that provide comfort

Emmalee Eskin, Managing Editor

Already, I have seen so many Christmas gift ideas trending online. Most of these trending gifts have been in the category of comfort. These are gifts that physically provide comfort and those that mentally provide com-

fort. The biggest trend has been Labubu's. I know everyone has seen these online with people opening the blind boxes and reviewing the product.

But what most people don't realize is that many adults are obsessed with Labubu's

because they remind them of their childhood. Some of the most popular plushie toys from the 70s and 90s include Furby dolls, Monchhichi, and Rainbow Brite

Sprites.

These doll-like toys are very similar to Labubu's, so it makes sense why adults are crazy about these dolls; they remind them of their own childhood. Collecting these dolls provides them with comfort.

Now, I understand why adults want them, but not why teenagers and kids want them. There really isn't anything insanely special about these dolls, other than that they have a creepy face.

When it first became a trend, I will admit that I thought they looked funny, so I wanted one, but now that I am looking back at it, they are creepy, and why would I ever even want one? I think a lot of teenagers, including myself at one point, want to be on the trend.

Being on trend is the only reason I can think of that people would want these dolls; otherwise, they are just creepy and useless. I don't think many teenagers and children are asking for these dolls because they are nostalgic for their childhood.

We never had dolls like this

Labubu dolls have become quite the item on social media.

People are reselling them for hundreds of dollars and going crazy over getting their hands on them.

A normal price from the original seller is \$20-\$30.

Labubu's come in blind boxes, so you don't know which one you will get until you open it. Many people buy as many as possible to try and get the rare ones.

LABUBU

Escapes

Diving into the world of entertainment

as kids; we had things like Barbies and my little pony. Not scary fuzzy keychain dolls.

Some of the trending comfort items that I have caught onto, though, are weighted stuffed animals, specifically the ones from Target. These are my favorite things ever. They became viral on TikTok a few years ago, but their popularity has only grown.

I think one of the main reasons these became so popular is that weighted blankets were trending a few years ago. So, Target wanted to market that same idea of weighted blankets to children and teenagers.

It was definitely the right choice because I use my weighted stuffed animal every single day.

I think they provide so much comfort by just sitting on top of your body while lying down; it feels like a hug.

Another trending gift that I have caught onto is NeeDoh's. They are a brand of stress relief toys, but the more specific trending item is the Nice Cube.

The Nice Cube is a stress

ball that looks like an ice cube. This is different from their other stress balls because it has more resistance when trying to squish it.

I have found that fidget toys, like stress balls, are needed for me to help concentrate on my work. Anyone on the Newspaper staff can tell you that I subconsciously fidget with things around me; most of the time, it is clicking my pen.

Stress balls are the perfect way to help me concentrate while not disturbing others around me.

The last gift that has been trending for a while is hoodies from Comfrt. This is a clothing brand that became trending on TikTok for their weighted hoodie that is meant to ease anxiety and feel like you are getting a hug.

There is something that all of these gifts have in common: they provide comfort. Comfort, or things that reduce anxiety, has been very popular among teenagers and young adults in the past few years.

Many people don't even realize that the things that are trending are meant for



anxiety relief, but I think it is a good thing. There are so many things that cause anxiety, especially for teenagers. It makes sense that they want something that will provide them comfort.

So far, the trending items this year are in some way promoting mental health awareness. Everyone has anxiety, and there are so many 'hot' items that are meant to help calm anxieties.

For me, I know that on my Christmas list, a lot of the things that I am wishing for will provide me comfort. Things like hoodies, sweatpants, and even a Nice Cube are some of the things that I have on my list.

Deck the Halls the Halls with Devices

The Ultimate Tech Gift List



Apple Macbook Air

Insider Tip: If you're interested in purchasing a macbook, buy the older version. They are practically the same, but one is less expensive. Check multiple sites before you purchase, different stores will have sales or a cheaper price.

Beats Headphones



Insider Tip: Beats Headphones are a great alternative to the popular and expensive Apple AirPods max. They both offer noise cancellation and are comfortable to wear for long periods of time. Beats are a great option for half the price.



Kodak Digital Camera

Insider Tip: Small digital camera's that can fit right into a purse have become extremely popular on Tik Tok. There are so many cameras on the market, so it's important to research which one will be the best option for you. Most of the cameras have the same features, but a more expensive one might take better quality photos.

Photos: Emmalee Eskin, Fair Use

Owala

Every year there is a new trending water bottle. First it was the Hydro Flask, then the Stanley, and now the Owala. These water bottles have been around for a while, but they are still trending online. The brand is releasing new collabs and designs to keep their audience interested in their product. Some of the most popular designs and collabs are Wicked, The Disney Princess collection, and the Bow owala design.

NeeDoh

So many high school students have a full schedule with homework, sports, jobs, and social life. Having a full schedule means a lot of stress for students. One of the best ways to help deal with stress is to focus your attention on something else, NeeDoh toys are the perfect way to do this. They are soft and squishy stress balls that are the perfect tool to use to reduce stress on a day-to-day basis.

UGGS

Ugg shoes have been around and a top Christmas gift for years. The style of uggs that are trending changes each year. This year many teenagers want the Classic Ultra Mini boots, and the Tasman slippers. The platform styles of both of these have increasingly become popular as well.

Airpods

Apple products are always an anticipated product during the holiday season. It seems that every year there is a new 'hot' product that everyone must have. Airpods are one of the hottest items from apple: they are sleek, comfortable, and produce the best sound quality and noise cancellation. Airpods Max, which are a headphone style, have also become very popular and trending for the Holiday season.