

# Adopting family for holidays rewarding

By Hannah Fischer  
*Staff writer*

There's no better time to give to charity than the holiday season. Adopt a Family has become a widely participated event within the Loveland district. Adopt a Family is an official charity program that begins each year early September and runs until the end of Christmas. It was designed to provide low-income families the opportunity to get connected with local groups or individuals who sponsor them, providing gifts, food, or even happy memories.

**Mrs. Kelly Partridge** (science), the student council advisor, has sponsored many families over the past two years. "We've provided \$1500 to \$2000 total worth of Kroger gift cards so families can get food or gas," Mrs. Partridge said.

Mrs. Partridge is a firm believer in helping those who need it most. "Everyone deserves to have and enjoy a wonderful holiday. Student Council has the funds and wants to give back to our community. My favorite part

of this charity is knowing that a child will wake up on Christmas morning and have a present to open from Santa. I also like sponsoring a family so we alleviate any additional stress Christmas puts parents under," she said.

**Mrs. Beth Wexler** (Life Skills), the Tigers in Service Advisor, has participated in Adopt a Family for the past three years; allowing volunteers to serve others and give back to the community. "I love shopping with T.I.S members. We normally meet on a Saturday with our list and coupons. We try to fulfill the wish list along with a few extra surprises. It is fun to see the students try and find the 'perfect gift,'" Mrs. Wexler said.

**Mrs. Kellee Lawler** (English) participates in the charity on an individual level. She has adopted a family for the Christmas holiday for the past several years. "It is one of my personal beliefs that one who has the means must give to those who may not have the means to purchase gifts at Christmas time. I shop for these Christmas gifts and place them in big

plastic containers. I love to give and shop!" she said.

Mrs. Lawler's adopted family for this year includes two boys, ages seven and three. "I am always sure to get the children the items in their 'favorite toy' category. For this year the toys are: Legos and Elsa and Olaf toys. In addition, I purchase other gifts like snow boots, and as requested, "anything Batman" and anything Spy Gear," Mrs. Lawler said.

**Mrs. Kristin Scherman** (science) started participating six years ago. She strongly believes in spreading the holiday spirit by giving back and creating the 'right kind of holiday' spirit. "I struggle with what the holidays have become, less about family and faith and more about greed and commercialism. I like to get back to the root of the spirit of the holidays to remind myself what it really means. I want for very little so I like to help those not as fortunate as I. I also like to involve my students as a positive life lesson," she said.

Mrs. Scherman enjoys helping the local citizens in need and al-

lowing her students to step up. "I love watching Loveland families step up to help another in need. I also love the letter I often get from the family that I get to then share with the students. It's very rewarding. This experience is something that I look forward to every year," Mrs. Scherman said.

Charity is said to be a proper way to spread Christmas spirit. Not only does participating in Adopt a Family make a family's Christmas better, but it is also rewarding to those giving. In the words of Booker T. Washington, "Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others."



Seniors **Brittany** Miller and **Maeci** Ujvari posed with the presents they gathered last year. Groups such as Tigers in Service and Student Council work to provide holiday gifts for families each year.

# 'Christmas in Loveland' hosts 12 days celebration

By Terra Brulport  
*Staff writer*

If one has lived in Loveland for even a remote amount of time, one will have most likely heard of Christmas in Loveland. This will be the seventeenth year of this popular holiday tradition. According to [christmasinloveland.com](http://christmasinloveland.com), Christmas in Loveland was originally started in 1997.

Ever since then, this festive event has been going strong and has become a holiday tradition for many.

"My favorite part is the awkward interactions you have with other people's families," **Meg Policastro** (12) said.

"I think it is so cute how we decorate downtown," **Maggie Dowd** (10) said.

This year, Christmas in Love-

land is on December 13<sup>th</sup>, and lasts from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the evening in downtown Loveland. There are many activities for citizens of all ages. Some activities include riding in horse-drawn carriages, enjoying drinks and snacks, creating crafts, staying warm by bonfires, watching plays, and more. Additionally, many local businesses participate with the various activities.

For example, Pizazz will be offering face painting and crafts, The Loveland Stage Company will present "Home for the Holidays", and people can decorate ornaments at Whistle Stop Clay Works.

Also, this year, Loveland is having a "12 Days of Christmas" event that leads up to Christmas in Loveland. Some of the daily events include cookie decorat-

ing, lighting up downtown Loveland, candy making, and crafts. Furthermore, each day there is an Ugly Sweater contest where the winner wins a gift card to Tano Bistro. Citizens can find a list of activities on [christmasinloveland.com](http://christmasinloveland.com). With so much to do for everyone in the family, it is no wonder that this local event has been going strong since 1997.

# World celebrates holidays according to culture

By Riley Boucher  
*Staff writer*

Christmas is widely celebrated in the United States, but what about the other holidays celebrated in the U.S. and worldwide? Christmas is celebrated in late December, just like Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. Hanukkah is celebrated by people of Jewish faith. Kwanzaa is celebrated by people of African and African American descent.

According to [chabad.org](http://chabad.org), "Hanukkah is the eight-day festival

of light that begins on the eve of the 25<sup>th</sup> of the Jewish month of Kislev. It celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, of purity over adulteration, of spirituality over materiality." To commemorate the miracle of a one-day supply of oil burning for eight days, sages in Jerusalem created the festival. Each night, candles are lit on a menorah until the eighth night of the celebration.

"In my family we have a Hanukkah tree and we use a different menorah each night. My favorite part is lighting the candles

and seeing the light from the windows," **Lexi Czulewicz** (11) said.

There are various traditions associated with Hanukkah in Jewish households. One of them includes the eating of foods fried in oil, such as, latkes and sufganiot. Latkes are potato pancakes and sufganiot are similar to doughnuts. Many people also play with dreidels. Dreidels are small, four-sided spinning tops with a Hebrew letter on each side. Children often receive gifts of money during this holiday.

According to [\[zaawebsite.org\]\(http://zaawebsite.org\). "Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community, and culture."](http://officialkwan-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup>. It derives are from the first harvest celebrations of Africa. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the Swahili phrase "Matunda ya kwanza", which means "first fruits".

There are seven principles involved in this celebration. They are Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsi-

bility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith. These seven principles are represented by seven candles that are lit during the seven day celebration. According to [officialkwanzaawebsite.org](http://officialkwanzaawebsite.org), gifts are mainly given to children and must always include a book and a symbol of their heritage. Both gifts are meant to strengthen tradition and ancestral heritage. Kwanzaa concludes on January 1<sup>st</sup>. This final day is meant for self-evaluation and meditation.



## Staff Policy

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Editorials reflect the staff's opinion but do not reflect the opinions of LHS administration or Loveland City Schools.

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As an open forum for students, letters to the editor are welcome, but are subject to be edited for length, libel, and clarity. Letters to the editor may be dropped off in room 109.

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\* 17 more individual awards, 2012 Ohio Scholastic Media Awards

\* Second Place (Headline Writing), Columbia Scholastic Press Association's 2011 Gold Circle Awards

\* 12 more individual awards, 2011 Ohio Scholastic Media Awards



By Halle Russo

*Editor-in-chief*

Ice skating, holiday lights, and home made cookies are all things that come to mind as December rolls around. At this time of the year, the city undergoes a transformation of sorts, which proves to make it a much livelier place. This presents the perfect opportunity to take that special someone out on a date if you are the ambitious type. Of course, any of these ideas could also be perfect with a big group of friends.

#### 1. Fountain Square in Downtown Cincinnati

In the heart of the city you will find an area commonly known as fountain square. At Christmas time, Fountain Square is filled with lights, a Christmas tree, and a skating rink. When you find yourself at a loss for things to do this holiday season, give ice skating a try. A fun atmosphere filled with holiday cheer makes this the perfect activity for dates or even family outings. Plus, who doesn't love a few laughs as everyone struggles to gain balance on the ice. Admission to the U.S. Bank Ice Rink is \$4.00. Skates are also \$4.00 and are rented on a first come first serve basis. During the Holiday Season, the ice rink stays open until midnight on the weekend. Additionally, it is open on New Year's Eve for free ice skating, a countdown, and fireworks. Since ice skating can prove to be quite tiring, you may find yourself in need of a nice meal. Fountain Square is perfect for this as it is surrounded with multiple restaurants. You can find well-known favorites such as Chipotle, Panera, and Graeter's, or more formal restaurants such as Rock Bottom Brewery and Via Vite all within walking distance of the square.

#### 2. The Festival of Lights

Another location that provides the perfect location for a winter date is the PNC Festival of Lights at the Cincinnati Zoo. Here, you can take in the sight of over 2 million LED lights, take a train ride, snack on some s'mores from the S'mores-n-More stands, and watch a light show over Swan Lake. The Festival of Lights is open from 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. on Sunday through Thursday and from 5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. on Friday and Saturday, and continues through January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Since the zoo is fairly close to downtown Cincinnati, you could always make a whole evening out of it by finding a nice restaurant in the city before venturing over to the Festival of Lights. After all, who doesn't love a lights display that is sure to take your breath away?

#### 3. Other Activities

If you find yourself sitting at home without any desire to dress up and go on a date, there are still many ways to get into the holiday spirit. You could always spend the day baking and decorating Christmas cookies, building a gingerbread house, or watching holiday movies. In fact, ingredients for desserts such as a gingerbread house are inexpensive and can prove to bring out your inner chef. With a holiday movie playing in the background, you are sure to get into the spirit of the holiday season.

Instead of spending your nights at home this holiday season, go out and try something new to spice up the holidays. Any of these activities could make for some great memories with family or friends. After all, 'tis the season.



Jazmyn Browning

# Halle's Helpful Hints

## Winter Date Ideas

# CONTRA

## Regifting: Is it okay or not?

### No

### Yes

'Tis the season for gift giving and receiving. During the hectic hustle and bustle of Christmas it can be difficult to find sufficient time to search for the perfect gift. Therefore, it becomes easy to venture into the deep, dark pits of your home and salvage that hideous sweater your grandma gave you 10 years ago or those useless trinkets your aunt bestows for every birthday. However, regifting is a rude practice that must be avoided at all costs.

Although it may be convenient for the gift giver to recycle their belongings, there is strong evidence that this can offend the recipients. According to studies conducted at Stanford, Harvard, and the London Business School, gift recipients believed that the act of regifting was equivalent to throwing the present in the trash. This clearly demonstrates that regifting is often insulting because these presents seem like the giver is just trying to get unwanted junk off their hands. So why regift when it's viewed as abandoning your garbage on someone else?

Some may argue that it is simply the thought that counts, but that's exactly the problem: regifting is often thoughtless. "Whenever I know someone gave me their old stuff, it makes me annoyed because that pretty much translates to 'I don't care.'," **Shiza Syed** (11) explained. Ceri March, an etiquette columnist at for *O Magazine* states that regifting "doesn't honor the thought behind the gift." Thus, the claim that regifting is still considerate fails to address the preservation of generosity that is necessary when gifting.

The point of giving gifts is to demonstrate their appreciation for someone, so it is illogical to assume that you will be able to accomplish this by bequeathing your two-year-old fruitcake to friends and family. According to a MasterCard poll, people expressed that thoughtful gifts were the most significant to them. When you regift, you are giving away something of little importance to you. Therefore, showing your value and admiration for someone is unlikely when you lazily pawn off old, meaningless items.

This holiday season, be smart and don't regift. Instead, show how grateful you are for someone in your life by setting aside time and thought to produce a present that clearly illustrates these feelings. Whatever time crunch you may be in, do not resort to the inconsiderate act of regifting. Honestly, who wants your old personalized key chain?

Don't get your tinsel in a tangle, choose to regift this holiday season. Although there are many people opposed to the idea of regifting, it is becoming an acceptable and even traditional practice in society. It's the gift that keeps on giving.

First of all, there is a significant financial benefit. Holidays are already economically stressful times with the various expenses they can bring. It simply isn't possible to buy all of your friends and family individual and brand-new gifts. Instead of emptying out all of your pockets to buy presents, regift instead to save money. You could even use any of the saved money to donate to charity.

Regifting can also be seen as a form of recycling. It saves gifts from ending up in the dumpster. This presents an environmental benefit since fewer unwanted gifts fill up the 3,091 active landfills that exist in the U.S., which results in less waste and less pollution. America already contributes to 30 percent of the planet's total waste according to the Toxics Action Center; therefore, less waste would definitely help us more than hurt us.

Also, believe it or not, many people are actually okay with the regifting practice during the holidays. According to a survey conducted by the Huffington Post, 83 percent of Americans think it is absolutely acceptable to regift an item and 65 percent of the respondents have already regifted items on more than two occasions.

Regifting is not bad at all, it is the fact that a person feels the need to give you a gift that makes you feel appreciated and loved.

"I would definitely rather be given a regifted gift than nothing at all," **Taylor Keith** (12) said.

Think of regifting as an act of sharing. If you aren't going to use the gift in the first place, you might as well give it to someone who will. Someone else could possibly appreciate the six pairs of socks your grandma gave you. After all, they just might be in desperate need of six pairs of socks.

When regifting, the receiver doesn't even have to know his or her present is being regifted. As long as the present has not been opened or damaged in any way, he or she would never know unless they were told and would greatly appreciate that you would take the time to gift them something. Thus, regifting should not be regarded as a negative practice. It's the thought that counts the most and if the person really cares about you, they'll value any gift more than you think.



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## “Christmas creep” comes too soon

By Catie Shipp  
*Staff writer*

Santa Claus now comes to town in October as the push of the holiday season continues to occur at an earlier date each year. As the season becomes more commercialized through the work of radio stations and retailers across the country, this “Christmas Creep” phenomenon will only continue to grow worse.

I’m a huge fan of all things Christmas: the music, the lights, the shopping, the overall atmosphere, I love it all; however, starting up the holiday spirit as early as Halloween leaves the general public tired of the idea of Christmas before the actual holiday even arrives. Spending two whole months preparing for a single day can be exhausting and this push of the season by radio stations and stores can cause people to stress over the holidays rather than enjoy the happiness that they’re supposed to bring.

This “Christmas Creep” also has the ability to destroy the true meaning of the holidays through the commercialization of the season. The day after Halloween, the shift from orange and black to red and green appears overnight in states and businesses across the country as merchants and retailers hope to take advantage of the heavy Christmas-related shopping well before the major sales of Black Friday.

According to *USA Today*, retailers such as Amazon and Office Depot are rewriting the holiday shopping calendar by moving sales up by a month as a way to keep a leg up on the competition. Although these fast approaching deals can be an advantage to the shoppers who want to get their gift shopping done that early, many wish that they could enjoy some time between Halloween and Christmas before stressing over the money that has to be spent during the Christmas season.

The push by businesses across the country to shop for the holidays two months before these purchases need to be made also creates a sense that spending money on purchases is the most important part of the holiday season. In reality the most important part should be the special time shared with family and friends. The success of one’s holidays should be based on the time and memories created with those who they love, not the purchases made or the gifts received. Thus, businesses need to take a step back and allow the greatness of the holiday season to reveal itself before their holiday deals do.

The start of the holidays at such an early date has also threatened to ruin the love of Christmas music. Christmas music was designed to fill everyone with the holiday spirit during this special time, however, now that radio stations have begun to broadcast these songs at such an early date, many are tired of the songs and sounds of Christmas before the day even arrives. Prior to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, radio stations began adding a few Christmas songs to their playlists in the beginning of December to get their listeners excited for the holiday season, and then played only Christmas playlists on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. However, today, most radio stations switch to an all-Christmas playlist on Thanksgiving. There are even some, such as Star 93.3, who start as early as Halloween. This burns most out of the Christmas spirit before December has a chance to begin.

The holidays are meant to be a time of happiness, family, friends, and fun. However, society is slowly transforming the greatness of this season by promoting the holidays too early. In doing so the Christmas season has turned into a burden for many people. To ensure the complete magic of Christmas can be felt in its true season, all holiday-related activities need to be held off until Thanksgiving has passed in order to avoid the burn out of all the great aspects of the holiday season.

## Willie Talks Christmas:

*Editor-in-chief*

Sure, I could talk about the NBA or NHL over the upcoming break, but I rather talk about my favorite time of the year; Christmas. Favorite time of year, am I crazy? Most people would prefer summer, because it’s hard to get nice weather in Ohio.

It’s bizarre that Christmas drives people out of their house and out to visit, whether it’s family, a light display, or a theatrical production. Does it make all of us crazy for going getting out of the house on a nightly basis even though the weather outside is frightful? No, because Christmas is more than a day on a calendar where you get presents.

I’ve grown used to December being a mucky month with minimal amounts of snow (it’s usually all saved for January) and temperature in the mid-40s. As the month of December goes on, I find myself caring less and less about the weather. Bing Crosby and hot cocoa seem to warm up every room and every car I enter.

It doesn’t matter what religion any on is, this time of year is magical. It’s the only time of year where everyone seems to be smiling for no reason and they don’t seem insane. Everyone is happy, because the lights all around them illuminate their spirit.

Perhaps the best part of the season is the lights. Sure, there are massive light displays one might have to pay to enter, but I’m personally a bigger fan of the lights on houses. People put their time and energy into making their house contribute to the collective Christmas season. There is nothing more amazing to me on this planet than those late December nights when I take the back way home from work. Seeing all of the houses throughout Loveland decorated in bright lights, like one big collective Christmas tree.

## Exchange “Merry Christmas” for “Happy Holidays” this December

By Claire Ruben  
*Staff writer*

When it comes time to deck the halls and spread holiday cheer it is easy to get lost in the world of candy canes and Santa Claus and forget the true religious meaning of Christmas. Despite Christmas’ recognition as a federal holiday, not all Americans celebrate it. However, a recent Gallup poll calculated the percentage of Christmas-celebrators in America to be as high as 96 percent. Therefore, it makes sense that the government would recognize the holiday. There seems to be a simple, much needed peace about Christmas Day that both Christians and non-Christians alike can appreciate. But what do people of other religions do when the rest of the world completely freezes in Christmas celebration?

Jewish families account for the largest percentage of those not celebrating Christmas. “As stereotypical as it sounds, you have to go to movie on Christmas,” Jewish student, **Zak Kadish** (12) said. “And you have to get Chinese food.”

During the holiday season, Jewish people can get into the spirit of Christmas as well. Some even participate in Christmas traditions. “Last year I was on a cruise and went caroling,” **Lexi Czulewicz** (11) said.

“I like the lights,” **Nicole Goret** (10) said.

“I think it’s nice that strangers go out of their way to say Merry Christmas,” **Marissa Witt** (11) said. “Obviously they have no idea that I’m Jewish unless they look closely at my necklace, so it doesn’t really bother me.”

Others, however, dislike the integration of Christmas into American culture. “I hate it when people tell me to have a Merry Christmas,” **Megan Messer** (11) said. “And I hate that all they play on the radio is Christmas music.”

Only by looking through the eyes of someone who does not celebrate Christmas does it become evident that almost every facet of life is dominated by Christmas during the holiday season. Shopping malls are decked with Christmas trees and Santa displays, television networks play Christmas movies and specials, and lights and decorations line entire neighborhoods. While a majority of minority groups do not mind taking a backseat to Christmas over the month of December, some become frustrated with the overall assumption that everyone is a Christian. For the sake of these individuals, think about exchanging your “Merry Christmas” for a “Happy Holidays” this season.

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## GUEST COLUMN

### From Jazz to C-SPAN: Thoughts of Col. U.S.A (Ret.) Dave Volkman

By Mr. Dave Volkman  
*Guest columnist*

So some clown from the Roar staff nominated me to write a guest column, with ZERO direction. Having no real sense of what Loveland students might hunger to hear (if anything), I asked a few of my students for topics. Blame Willie Lutz for this piece, not me. If he’d had a topic in mind, this might be more meaningful. Class- topics, please? Bieber: pretty awesome in my book.

Who doesn’t love “Baby” or “As Long As You Love Me”? And the new ultra blond look is going to spread like wildfire. Pie: Love it, best dessert ever. Especially pecan. Lots of pecans, not much goo. Cell phones in class: please, stop the madness. Your addiction is frightening. Unless you’re on your Constitution app, in which case I wholeheartedly approve. Presidents to know: Truman, TR, Nixon, Polk. Best Jazz musician: too hard to pick one, but I do love me some trombonists like Troy



Andrews, Mark Mullins, Craig Klein, Greg Hicks. The NOLA jazz-funk scene is awesome. TV show “Everybody Hates Chris”: was that on C-SPAN? No? Sorry then, I missed it. Teacher Pet Peeves? Not giving your best- you’re better than that. Throwing trash on the floor- maybe I’ll stop by your house someday and throw my trash on your floor. Cell phones- unless you’re on your Constitution app, in which case I might hug you for appropriately using it in a meaningful way instead of a mean way. DC Trip: you should go. You might learn something important there about America and yourself. Weather: it happens. It might be cold tomorrow. Or rainy. Or not. It’s Ohio, after all. “Yuki Yuki Yuki”: The 10 hour seamless loop is the best-

must listen music that will change your life after about 3 hours of listening to it. School starting at 8: Sure, why not, but I doubt it would change anything. That’s not where the problem lies. Lee’s sandwich: A delicious culinary masterpiece of pastrami, mustard, jalapeno, and pepperjack cheese on whole grain that his mom lovingly prepares every day. Also, it is aerodynamically unstable, but can sting when it’s a direct hit. Rush: the most talented rock trio ever- phenomenal lyrics, rhythms, meter, range, creativity, musicianship and friendship. And perhaps the best band ever for a government class soundtrack. Martin Van Buren’s hair: the sideburns were amazing. His thinning dome provided a beautiful punctuation mark to their gloriousness. I wish that

style would return to fashion. Life lesson: Be. Why the USA is the best country in the world: Liberty and justice. Or at least the liberty to fight for justice, which is an often rare but always precious thing. Fashion tip: nice ties, and good shoes. Don’t skimp there. Why I fired Clayton Walker: Seriously Clayton, is there no way to play music on our school PA besides a phone held up to a speaker? And your music selection is pathetic. You’re fired, again. Voting: Important. Important. Important. If you don’t, please shut your pie hole until you start doing so. But please get informed first and don’t be a sock puppet. The ignorance quotient is sometimes breathtaking. A day in my life: Sorry, that’s classified and in an undisclosed location. And that’s all.



# Students reveal who they want to meet under the mistletoe

By Jared Frees  
Staff writer

The old story goes if two people are standing under the mistletoe they have to kiss. Some people are looking to find a certain someone there. This makes for an exciting holiday season.

Alyssa Gilliland (11) said, “I hope I see Kevin O’Hara (12) under the mistletoe this season.”

“Austin Bota (11) is who I want to see,” Keegan Redslob (12) said.

Zach Winoker (11) said, “I want to see Brenna Bily (9) under the mistletoe”



Grant Rudy (9) hopes he is the only one to see Emily Salatin (9) under the mistletoe for the holiday season. They have been dating for three months.



Ryan Jacob (12) holds Taylor Nuncio (9) on his back. Jacob enjoys long walks on the beach and watching sunsets with Nuncio.



Kasia Fisher (12) holds Conner Wagner (12) in her loving arms. Wagner is excited to see Fisher under the mistletoe this season.

# Kenwood mall Santa Claus answers questions

By Colton Lakes  
Staff writer

Santa Claus at Kenwood mall, also known as Mike Madden, loves his job as a mall Santa. Mike sits by the food court in the mall, allowing kids to take pictures with him as well as sit on his lap. Mike enjoys listening to what the little kids want for Christmas. I scheduled an interview to ask this Santa a few questions that I’m sure have been on everybody’s mind around this time of year.

- 1. Why do you pose as a mall Santa?  
I love children and I love making their dreams a reality.
- 2. Do you enjoy making kids smile?  
Yes, a child’s laughter always warms my heart.
- 3. What is your favorite part about posing as a mall Santa?  
I love listening to what kids want for Christmas.
- 4. Do you prefer Santa Claus or Saint Nic?  
Santa Claus is more popular with kids, so I like being referred to as Santa Claus.
- 5. Can I assume that Christmas is your favorite holiday?  
Yes, I love Christmas. I am Santa, so therefore, it has to be my favorite.
- 6. How’s the North Pole?  
Very cold. So very cold.
- 7. Do the elves ever get annoying?  
The elves do in fact get annoying, but not as annoying as good ol Mrs. Claus. She’s always nagging me.
- 8. How tough is it for you to deliver all the gifts on Christmas?  
It is very difficult, but somebody’s gotta do it.
- 9. How are the reindeer holding up?  
They’re very well but they are destroying some of the gifts because I sometimes forget to feed them. Whoops!
- 10. Is Buddy the Elf real and, if so, is he your favorite?  
Yes he is real and I don’t like picking favorites because I don’t like singling out anybody at the North Pole. He is a crucial part of the elf staff, though.
- 11. What is your favorite part of the whole gift making



Colton Lakes (11) interviewed Santa Claus at the Kenwood Mall Santa Claus loves his job. process? Delivering them. 12. What is your favorite part about delivering the gifts? The milk and cookies of course. Nothing is better than a midnight snack while delivering. 13. What is the most important part about Christmas? Realizing what the day is really about and just the art of giving to others. 14. I’ve heard that Dixon has quite the appetite and doesn’t always behave. Is that true? Yes, but he isn’t as bad as Comet. 15. Is your beard real? Of course. I believe that I have the best beard in the North Pole. Mike enjoys what he does as a mall Santa and loves making kids dreams a reality.



# Underneath the

By Emily Dougherty  
Staff writer

Santa Claus is a popular figure this time of year, but who is he really? The big jolly guy with a white beard in a red suit who lives at the North Pole with Mrs. Claus and lots of toy making elves, who slides down chimneys with sacks full of presents, who eats the cookies and drinks the milk left out for him, and who owns a sleigh pulled by reindeer that he rides through the night sky to deliver presents all around the world? Yeah, that’s him. However, there’s more to Santa than all the holiday hype suggests. His tale actually originates from a real person; Saint Nicholas, a saint of children and sailors who lived during the third and fourth centuries. Saint Nicholas was born to a wealthy family during the third century in the city of Patara, Lycia near Myra (now Demre) in modern day Turkey. As a young man, he was made Bishop of Myra for dedicating his life to serving God. He was said to have given away all of his inherited wealth to travel around the countryside helping those who were sick and poor. He was also known for his protection of sailors and ships, and was admired around the land for his kindness, piety, and generosity. His kindness was what earned him his title of “Saint”. Nicholas suffered for his faith when he was later exiled from Myra and imprisoned during the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian. He passed away on December 6<sup>th</sup>, which people now celebrate as Saint Nicholas Day, sometime in the mid fourth century. The exact year is debated but it is presumed to be either 345 or 352 AD. According to the website ‘WhyChristmas.com’, his bones were stolen from Turkey by Italian merchant sailors in 1087 and are now held in the church named after him in Italy’s port of Bari. Apparently the sailors of Bari still carry his statue from the cathedral out to sea on December 6<sup>th</sup>, so he can bless the waters and ensure safe voyages throughout the year. The St. Nicholas Center’s website says that a unique relic; a liquid substance called manna was buried with him. It was said to have healing powers, and because





# DIY crafts bring joy to this holiday season

By Paige Smith

*News and editorial editor*

With winter break quickly approaching, many people are beginning to feel the annual crafty itch. Holidays tend to bring out everyone’s crafty side, but sometimes it can be hard to find that perfect project. Here are a few ideas that can easily be used for a gift or kept to spice up your holiday.

### Snow globes

1. Supplies needed: sealable jar, water, glitter or fake snow, figurines, water, glycerin, water-proof glue
2. Glue the figurines to the lid of your jar.
3. Fill the jar with water and your fake snow or glitter substitute. Add a few drops of glycerin to make the snow fall more slowly.
4. Assemble your snow globe by screwing the lid on.
5. Shake and enjoy!

### Jingle bell box

Supplies needed: shadow box, holiday themed scrapbook paper, bells to match your scrapbook paper, letter stickers

1. Place stickers on the glass of the shadowbox spelling out “jingle all the way” (or any phrase you’d like to substitute).
2. Take off the back of the shadow box and fill it with the bells.
3. Before you replace the back, adhere the scrapbook paper to it, then replace the back.
4. Set it out for guests to admire!

### Snowman mugs

Supplies needed: white ceramic mug, oil-based markers (black and orange)

1. Wash the mug before you start to remove any dirt



*Photo courtesy Land of Encraftment*

**This box** was created for holiday decor. These boxes can also be gifted this holiday season

- or oil.
2. Use the black marker to draw the eyes, mouth and buttons
3. Draw the carrot nose with an orange marker
4. Let the mug dry for 24 hours.
5. Place the mug in an oven WITHOUT preheating. Then turn the oven to 450 degrees and set the timer to 30 minutes (this includes the time that it takes for the oven to reach 30 minutes).
6. After 30 minutes turn the oven off but leave the mug in it until it is COMPLETELY cool.
7. The design on the mug will hold up best with hand-washing.
8. Fill it and drink up!

## The big red suit: Saint Nicholas to Santa Claus



*Photo courtesy The Huffington Post*

**Santa started** as a real man in modern day Turkey. He is now a world wide figure.

that, people’s devotion to Saint Nicholas grew. The website ‘*NewAdvent.org*’ notes that although he was one of the most popular saints, there really isn’t anything historically certain about him other than the fact that he was the Bishop of Myra in the fourth century.

There are many legends that revolve around Saint Nicholas. ‘*WhyChristmas.com*’ also provides two famous legends about him. One explains how the stocking-hanging custom began; with a poor man and his three daughters. The man was so poor that he couldn’t afford a dowry and was unable to marry off his daughters. Nicholas secretly dropped a large sack of gold down their chimney one night, which fell into a stocking that had been hanging by the fire to dry. The eldest daughter was then able to be married. When this gesture was repeated with the second daughter, the father was determined to find out who’s doing it was, so he secretly hid by the fire every night until he caught Nicholas dropping another sack of gold. Not wanting to call attention to himself, Nicholas pleaded the man not to tell of his good deed. However, the news spread and whenever someone received a secret gift, they suspected it might be from him.

The other legend tells of how he helped a group of sailors who were caught in a bad storm off the coast of Turkey. The men were afraid that their ship would sink underneath the giant waves and prayed

for Saint Nicholas’s help. Suddenly, he appeared on the deck in front of them and ordered the ocean to be calm. The storm came to an end and the men were able to sail their ship safely into port.

So how did jolly old Saint Nick become the Santa Claus that people know and love today? *WhyChristmas.com* reports that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, the popularity of his stories and traditions lessened greatly, but there had to be someone who delivered the presents. In the United Kingdom, he was called Father Christmas, a character in old children’s stories, the Germans called him the Christkind, and in France he was known as Père Noël. People in the early United States came up with the name Kris Kringle, and later the Dutch settlers took their stories about Saint Nicholas with them and turned Kris Kringle into Sinterklaas, which people now say as Santa Claus. Today, the popular image of Santa is agreed upon by everyone.

In Finland, however, they believe that he lives in the north of their country in a place called Lapland instead of the North Pole. Saint Nicholas Day is still celebrated in many countries, especially the ones in Europe. Children in Holland and some other countries believe that if they put carrots and hay in their shoes for Sinterklaas’ horse, he will leave sweets for them. They also leave their shoes out in the hopes that he will fill them with small presents. Some countries still get their presents on this day instead of on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Some students shared what they were taught about Santa growing up and how it influenced their beliefs about him now.

**Maddy Ribeiro** (11) said, “My parents didn’t make a big deal about Santa; they always said that Christmas was about Jesus’ birthday. So that made me believe less of Santa more each year.”

The magic of Santa Claus was cruelly ruined for **Abbie Puchta** (9) at an early age. “When I was in Kindergarten, we had a long-term sub. One day during December, she sat the entire class down on the carpet and told us all that our parents had lied to us and there was no such thing as Santa. It was pretty traumatizing; I don’t think I’ve ever gotten over it,” Puchta said.

Even for those who don’t believe in the fictional gift bringer, there’s no denying that the holidays wouldn’t be the same without him or his historical counterpart.



# Christmas ranch lights up holiday season

By Catie Shipp  
*Staff Writer*

The holidays are here which means it’s time for lights, music, and time spent with family and friends. The Christmas Ranch is a seasonal attraction located in Morrow, Ohio that was designed to provide families with an opportunity to enjoy these holiday traditions while also serving as a way to give back to those in need. Here one can find one million dancing Christmas lights, synchronized to a variety of holiday music, surrounding a Christmas village where one can take a train or wagon ride through the lights, visit holiday gift shops, enjoy the seasonal treats of the bakery, or visit “Santa’s workshop” for a photo opportunity with Santa himself. Mike and Deb Fuchs, the founders of this attraction, had

the goal to create an environment where visitors could go to fulfill the holiday spirit. According to those who have visited the Christmas Ranch, the founders have done just that.

“The Christmas Ranch is a fun place to go around Christmas, and the lights are really cool,” **Sayre Stejbach** (11) said.

Mike and Deb Fuchs’ story began with their yearly tradition of decorating their home for the Christmas season. Their home in Terwilligers Knoll soon became known for its bright and abundant Christmas decorations that lit up the house each holiday season. Their Christmas spirit became so popular that a visit to their home became a seasonal attraction for many residents of the area. Each year, their home continued to gather more attention until it eventually landed a feature on a special

episode of HGTV. After this, the home was nationally known for its holiday decorations and hundreds of families were stopping by to see these decorations for themselves. The Fuchs were not expecting so much attention to come out of their decorations, however, when they saw the happiness that they were able to spread, they began to think of a way to build an even bigger and better place to spread the holiday cheer. After some searching, the family decided upon a place in Morrow that contained the space and ability to not create just a home with holiday decorations, but an entire Christmas village.

“Our goal has always been to create an environment where the kids really believed they went to the North Pole,” Mike Fuchs, founder of the Christmas Ranch, said.

Along with spreading the holiday cheer, The Christmas Ranch is devoted to make an impact through their partnership with a variety of different charities. Their main focus centers on helping kids in need during the holiday season by giving a portion of their proceeds to organizations such as Shriners Hospital for Children, St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, and The Neediest Kids of All Foundation. As a result, this attraction has been featured nationwide on Good Morning America, the New York Times, USA Today, and ABC News. With this national attention and the help of its sponsors such



Photo Courtesy of Catie Shipp  
**The Christmas** ranch features twinkling lights synchronized with holiday music. The ranch is open from Thanksgiving until New Years.

as WKRC, The Cincinnati Enquirer, and Smile Family Dental Associations, the Christmas Ranch and all of its festivities are able to give back and provide a fun holiday experience for families each year. To learn more about this holiday attraction, visit their website at [www.thechristmasranch.com](http://www.thechristmasranch.com).

## Students, teachers share christmas catastrophes

By Kaylee Harter  
*Staff Writer*

The holiday season has been called “merry, “holly jolly,” and “the most wonderful time of the year.” In response to such expressions, **Kris Caudell** (11) said, “No. I don’t like the holidays. I think they’re trite.” Trite or not, the holidays have a history of great expectations and often greater disappointments. According to historyorb.com, Christopher Columbus experienced one of the first blue Christmases in 1492, when the Santa Maria ran aground and became hopelessly stuck on Isla Espanola. Furthermore, Jerry Seinfeld delivered terrible news to Seinfeld fans everywhere when he announced his final season of Seinfeld on December 25, 1997.

Debatably the most prevalent of all holiday disappointments, is the realization that Santa Clause, is in fact, not coming to town. “I found a ripstick in my parents’ closet. Then I got a ripstick from Santa. I cried,” said **DJ Worley** (12).

**Mrs. Kelly Partridge** (science), was a convicted finder, unwrapper and rewrapper of presents as a child who fell into one of her mother’s traps. “One year, when I found and unwrapped my presents the week before Christmas, they were terrible. I hated all of them.” Partridge said. Partridge recalled that she was “really depressed” the following days. Unable to enjoy the season, she “wasn’t looking forward to Christmas at all.” On Christmas morning, after reluctantly opening her presents, Partridge found that they were not at all the “ugly” presents she expected at all. “My mom had tricked me by putting my name on gifts she knew I wouldn’t like. She told me that if I ever did that again, she would make me give all of my gifts away.”

Family dinners are notorious for

uncomfortable conversations and some of the greatest mishaps. “We were eating a family dinner and we had candles lit. My uncle reached across the table to get some food and his sweater caught on fire,” said **Heidi Zimmer** (12).

“I choked on the wishbone once,” said **Liam Vogt** (12).

“My cats climbed up in the tree a lot and tipped it over,” **Karl Mueller** (11) said.

**Kailyn Despotakis** (12) described a similar incident in which her dog knocked over the Christmas tree and broke all of the ornaments. “My mom cried,” said Despotakis. Incidents such as these raise the question, are the animals of Loveland out to ruin Christmas?

It appears that wild animals, as well pets, are in on the conspiracy. “We get a fresh tree every year and one year there was a bird living it for a week. We had no idea until it came out and flew around the house,” said **Claire Taggart** (11).

“My cat was diagnosed with diabetes,” said **Matt Allen** (12), of his own holiday troubles.

“I was at my grandma’s house eating dinner and I stepped in something. I didn’t really think anything of it, I just wiped it off my foot. But then I stepped in it again and again and thought, ‘What the heck is this?’ It was a dead rabbit’s head under my grandma’s table. Her dogs had caught it and brought it inside and I stepped in it like eight times,” said **Katy Heath** (11).

**Rachel Crum** (10) said, “We were at a Christmas party and I was walking over to the Christmas tree when two wiener dogs came up and attacked my ankles. I still have scars.” Crum is still afraid of wiener dogs to this day.

Whether your holiday season is with merry or the blue, you can start the New Year with a story or two!

## A few of our favorite things

By Ryan Mangan  
*Staff Writer*

As the holiday season falls upon us, you can start to feel the buzz of Christmas approaching, but what is it exactly that creates the joyous atmosphere of December?

Some say it’s the food: “I love caramel corn, and Christmas cookies, my mom makes the best cookies for Christmas” **Maddie Porczak** (11) said.

“I always get an advent calendar, but I usually end up eating all the chocolate before Christmas even starts.” **Katie Parks** (11) said.

As great as food is during the holidays, it is definitely not the only thing that makes the holidays great.

“Christmas music is my favorite part of the holidays; I also enjoy wearing fuzzy socks.” **Alyssa Gilliland** (11) said.

Some students also like to buy items to commemorate each Christmas. “I get a new

ornament every year pertaining to something I did the year before.” **Katie Mulhollen** (12) said.

Christmas brings about great festivals and other events as well. “I go to the Festival of Lights at the zoo almost every year; it’s my favorite.” **Johny Vogt** (10) said.

“I’ve never been, but I’ve always wanted to go ice skating at fountain square” **Matt Truesdell** (11) said.

The weather is another element that contributes to the festivity of the holidays. “Every year when it snows over break we build a SpongeBob snowman.” **Maddie Porczak** (11) said.

“It’s a tradition of mine and Maddie’s now.” **Katie Parks** (11) said.

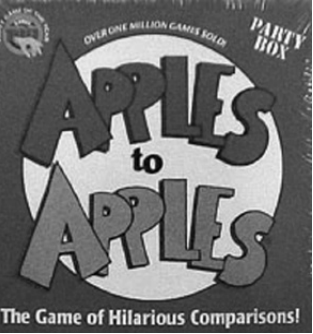
It is evident that there are various aspects that make the holidays feel great. There’s definitely something for everyone that will be sure to make them feel the joy of December.



Photo courtesy of Maddie Porczak  
**Maddie Porczak** builds a spongebob snow man every year. The snowman brought out the joy of the holiday season

## Holiday games bring families together

By Kevin Sieg  
*Staff Writer*



The holiday season is a time when families come together all around the world. At many family get-togethers, families enjoy playing games.

Traditional board games are a huge hit around the holidays. Monopoly and The Game of Life are two big ones. Risk and Trivial Pursuit are also popular choices.

Card games are also a huge hit for families. Euchre is one of the most popular card games. Kempo, Cribbage, and Bridge are some of the other card games that are often played.

“I love to play euchre with my family because of how fun it is and it brings the family together,” **Michael Newbold** (11) said.

“Playing cribbage is fun for me because it is one of the only games I can play with my Grandpa,” **Logan Walton** (11) said.

Some other popular games include Apples to Apples, Jenga, Pictionary, and Scene-It.

“Jenga is one of the greatest games out there, especially when you are playing with your family. It gives you such an adrenaline rush, you never know if your stack is going to fall or not!” **Jeff Prifti** (12) said.

Other families and students have different approaches to games with each other during the holiday season. For some, games can become competitive and heated.

“My family plays tackle football when we get together for the holidays. This is a way for all of us to release some of the pent-up anger we have towards each other,” **Zach Winoker** (11) said.

The holiday season presents a grand opportunity to create unforgettable memories with the ones that are loved most.



# Entertainment

THURSDAY DECEMBER, 18, 2014

Page Editor: Catie Shipp & Jared Frees

## “12 Days of Christmas”

A poem by Colton Lakes

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me  
Twelve Bosses' bossing,  
Eleven Burgers' saving,  
Ten Kloeszs' leading,  
Nine Crandfords' dancing,  
Eight Conatsers' lifting,  
Seven Flutzels' swimming,  
Six Wanstraths' laughing,  
FIVE STATE RINGS,  
Four Spanish rooms,  
Three appetizing lunches,  
Two assistant principals,  
And Mrs. Partridge in a pear tree.



## O'Reviews:

### Kevin O'Hara's State of the “Entertainment” Union

Holiday Movie Review: *Into the Woods*

Each and every person has something they wish for. These wishes can range from receiving a good grade on a final exam to getting a text from that special someone. Whatever they may be, these hopes and dreams are the things that make people who they are and shape who they will become. Yet, what if someone offered to grant you your wish? What would you do in order to attain such a promise? After all, a person such as this would hold endless possibilities in the palm of their hand.

In the new movie *Into the Woods*, based on the Broadway show, these very questions are closely examined. Centered on a baker and his infertile wife, the movie-musical *Into the Woods* follows a copious amount of Grimm's fairy-tale characters as they go on quests in order to fulfill their deepest desires. Set in an imaginative world, *Woods* begins when the baker's neighbor, an ugly witch says that she will grant the baker and his wife the gift of a child as long as they collect four items: A cow as white as milk, a cape as red as blood, hair as yellow as corn, and a slipper that is as pure as gold. Accepting the challenge, the baker begins his search in the woods and ends up finding an entirely new adventure.

Including favored characters such as Cinderella, Rapunzel, Prince Charming, Little Red Riding Hood, the Big Bad Wolf,

and many more, *Into the Woods* turns some of the world's oldest fables on their heads and makes everyone question whether Happily Ever After is all its cracked up to be.

According to Rotten Tomatoes, *Into the Woods* is a movie that 98% of audiences are excited to see this holiday season. With a cast including Meryl Streep as the Witch, Anna Kendrick as Cinderella, Emily Blunt as the Baker's Wife, and the masterful Johnny Depp as the cunning Wolf, who could blame them?

Including an epic score by Stephen Sondheim, beautiful costumes designed by Colleen Atwood, and directed by the talented Rob Marshall of *Chicago* fame, *Into the Woods* is a must see once it hits theaters on December 25. Most importantly, actress Meryl Streep is very proud of the movie and its faithfulness to the original show.

“I am really proud of it,” Streep said in an interview with *ABC News*. “It's a truthful thing and I feel like we served this great artist, Stephen Sondheim.”

Needless to say, *Into the Woods* is sure to be a timeless classic filled with relatable plot lines, exciting twists, and characters that the whole family will love. So grab your boots, put on your coat, and prepare for an adventure of epic proportions as you go into the woods. Oh, and one more thing before you go: Be careful what you wish for.

## Ice sculptures create winter scenes

By Megan Phelan

Staff writer

When the winter season strikes, sculptors take to the ice. However, they aren't building your typical ice sculptures. Sculptors work long and hard to build their giant masterpieces.

If Drew Lowry (12) was an ice sculptor, he would build “a sculpture of an ice sculpture sculpting an ice sculpture and the cycle would go on forever.”

“I would sculpt the sad frog meme, an animated picture of a sad frog,” said Niki Fiorenza (10).

Each winter, the Hotel de Glace is built in Quebec. There are also many contests that are held around the world for ice sculpting. The top three competitions are the Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival and the World Ice Art Championships.

The Hotel de Glace has been built every year since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 in Quebec. The entire Hotel is built every December and opened in early January. The layout consists of 1 floor and 44 rooms. This year's hotel will include a sugar shack, gift shop, Celsius pavilion, Celsius café, check-in, locker-room, arctic spa, grand slide, 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary gallery, partner's hall, ice bar, chapel, grand hall and suites. The theme has to do with “myths and legends from around the world.” The hotel lasts for 3 months before it begins to melt. Last year,

about one million people visited the hotel and 43,000 spent the night.

The Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival has been occurring since 1963, with a couple years missed due to the Cultural Revolution, in Harbin, China. The festival begins on January 5<sup>th</sup> and lasts for a month. Last year, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated. This festival is huge in China. Many buildings are created that look similar to ones seen in their cities. These are then lit up with a variety of colored lights. Festival-goers are able to explore these buildings.

Japan hosts the Sapporo Snow festival each winter. The festival began in 1950, when 6 students built snow sculptures in Odori Park. Visitors are not able to walk into the sculptures, but can gaze at the intricately designed buildings. Common themes among sculptures include animals such as dragons or deer, buildings representing those from their cities and, animated characters. Similar to Harbin's festival, these sculptures are lit with colored lights.

The World Ice Art Championships takes place in Fairbanks, Alaska on a 20-acre site and is put on by Ice Alaska. It is attended by over 100 sculptors from 30 different countries. Previous winners have built an octopus, a fiddler and a tiger.

The winter season brings more than just missed school and flavored drinks. It brings a new and exciting medium with which artists can work.



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THURSDAY, December 18, 2014

Page Editor: Rachel Froberg



Bunny, owned by **Paige DeWitt** (12), poses with her Santa hat.



A young Poopshmies and **Hanna Olberding** (11) sit in front of the tree before opening presents. "Christmas is my favorite time of year because my siblings come home and we get to obsess over Poopshmies together" Olberding said.

**Jessie Blumberg** (12) and her golden retriever, Casey, pose for a selfie after getting dressed up to do some holiday shopping.



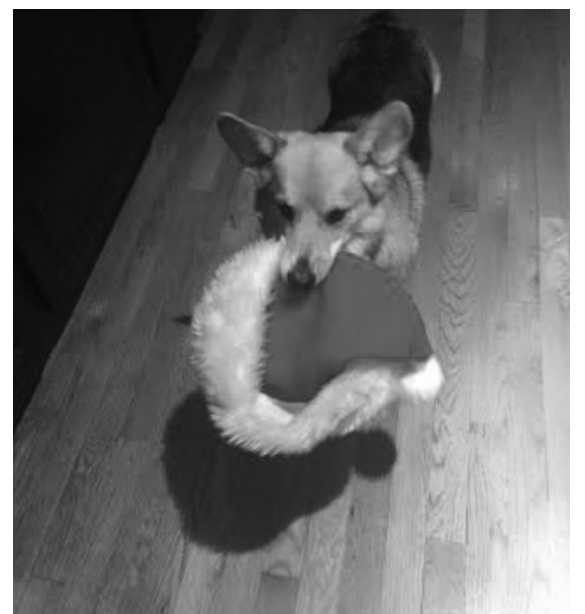
"Mia Strudel the golden-doodle" gets photographed by owner **Lena Koenig** (12).



Jasper admires the floor in front of the Christmas tree, while posing for a picture taken by his owner **Kailyn Despotakis** (12). "Jasper loves Christmas and snuggling up with some hot chocolate and watching Polar Express," Despotakis said.



Laney the chihuahua has owner **Sarah Marlatt** (12) take a photo of her all dressed up in a santa costume.



**Alyssa Giliand's** (11) dog, Woody, grabs her a Santa hat to help his family get into the holiday spirit.



**Becca Trate's** (12) dog Dakota lounges after a long day of setting up the Christmas tree. "Dakota and I love to do holiday photo shoots together," Trate said.



Sampson (left) and Zeus (right), owned by **Savannah Bailey** (12), learned to sit just in time for the holidays.



A young **Ben Devol** (12) and his pup Morgan stand by the snowman that they built. Ben is only four years old in this picture.



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