



Traditions for the New Year

Priscilla Araujo & Natalie Saldana
—Assistant Layout Editor —&— Copy editor—

With New Year's Eve approaching, it's time to get those 12 grapes, that broom and that new suitcase out. It's time to begin thinking of all the eccentric and complex customs. Before the clock strikes twelve, many people attempt to accomplish as many of these tasks as possible. Some are established traditions worldwide, while others can be created by a particular individual to fit their own needs.

According to NPR.org, the twelve-grape tradition helps bring good luck for the rest of the year. You do this by eating one grape for each of the last twelve seconds of the year. Sophomore Katheryne Marquez states, "I eat twelve grapes before twelve o'clock, and my family also puts lentils in their wallet and pockets to get money the next year."

Snopes.com states that lentils represent coins, and by eating or having

them around, you will prosper financially in the new year. However, there are other traditions for this New Year's festivity. Sophomore Isaac Libramonte said, "My family throws money in the air to [become] prosperous, and we jump in the air to get taller."

A common tradition people believe in is cleaning the home to ward off bad spirits. Freshman Alex Almazan commented, "My family cleans our house from top to bottom." Other people also connect their New Year's Eve traditions with their religion. Freshman Amabel Culajay said, "I recite a religious saying or prayer."

Walking around your block with a suitcase assures fun and exciting new adventures for the following year. Junior Alexandra Garcia says, "I run around my whole neighborhood with my mother's small suitcase since she says it will make us go on way better



uvamagazine.org

vacations."

New Year's resolutions are a great opportunity for everyone to dump their old habits and begin again. An anonymous senior commented that his New Year's resolutions are "having a healthy diet and not procrastinating

for the new year to come, especially with college apps."

New Year's is a great time to get your list of resolutions done, rid yourself of bad luck in the coming year and wish for good health.

No-Shave November

Maria Heredia & Jesse Torres
—Editor-in-chief —&— Op-ed editor—

As soon as November 1 appeared on our calendar, a hashtag suddenly appeared all over Twitter and Facebook: No Shave November. Right away, people such as @dRok_ tweeted "#NoShaveNovember is now here. Good bye, razor blades!" In case the hashtag wasn't so obvious, let's explain to you females (or non-hairy males) why "No-Shave November" exists and why men are so excited to dump their razors.

No-Shave.org explains, "No-Shave November is a unique way to raise cancer awareness." Cancer is a very damaging disease; one of its first target is our warm nest on top. Cancer patients are left with a shiny, bald head and so growing out your own hair is a way of showing solidarity with those fighting the disease and those who have over-

come it. It's not just an excuse to grow out your beard or forget to shave your legs; you're actually raising awareness *and* saving money. Unfortunately, most people who participated in No-Shave didn't know what it was for.

Really, who can blame people for not knowing? All over Twitter and Instagram people post #noshave, but there's no mention of *why* they do it. Besides boasting their beard is growing wild or their leg hair is keeping them warm.

But now you know what it's *really* for. So next year, when November 1st appears on the calendar and you throw out your razors, make sure you remember who you're doing this for: all the people who have had to face cancer. Donate the money you save; there's an *actual* valid reason No-Shave November exists.

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Spanish Department Shifts

Maryam Sultan
—Staff writer—

This year, there was a shift in the Spanish department because two things happened: Ms. Jordan took a part-time job as a transition specialist and Ms. Bravo came back.

Ms. Bravo, as some may know, left HMSA in 2012; this year, she returned. Her reason relates to Ms. Jordan taking a new part-time position as a transition specialist.

Let's start off by explaining what Ms. Jordan's position is. According to her, "it was determined by the administration that there was a need for more support for freshmen and sophomore students still adjusting to high school."

Ms. Jordan decided that she wanted to take on the position because she was "interested in working one-on-one with students," and because "[she's] a parent, a saw [herself] doing the job." She helps them "improve [their] study skills" with time management plans and "[prepares them] for the college search" in junior and senior year.

Before Ms. Jordan took this position she taught Spanish I, II, and III, but as she transitioned to the counseling office, Ms. Bravo was re-hired to take her place as a Spanish I and Spanish III

See Spanish Dept. on page 6



Jose M. (12) decided not to shave his facial hair after November.
Photo taken by Emmanuel Akinnitire.



Erick B. (12) decided to return to his "original" look after November.
Photo taken by Emmanuel Akinnitire.



Tatiana Medrano
—Staff writer—



mstuparyk.pbworks.com

The Environmental Club is widely known for collecting and recycling bottles, cans and paper. However, the club does much more: it encourages students to take simple steps to protect the environment and helps them take initiative in school and the community.

Senior Neemat Abdusemed, president of the club, said, “I joined the club because I was tired of looking at the trash around the school and hated seeing things go to waste. I thought that Environmental Club would be the perfect place to collectively make my surroundings greener and cleaner.”

There are many gains to joining the club. One of the immediate benefits is the hours earned for volunteer work

and attending after school meetings. The club teaches students to become more eco-friendly and proactive in their communities. Environmental Club allows students to meet people of all grades, introducing them to those they may not have talked to before. Neemat proudly stated, “[The members of the club] have the same care for the environment as you do. They want to do good in the community just like you.”

In order to join the Environmental Club, you have to meet eligibility requirements and have a GPA of 2.0 or higher without any Fs. Meetings, every Thursday after school, are mandatory.

The Perks of Black Friday

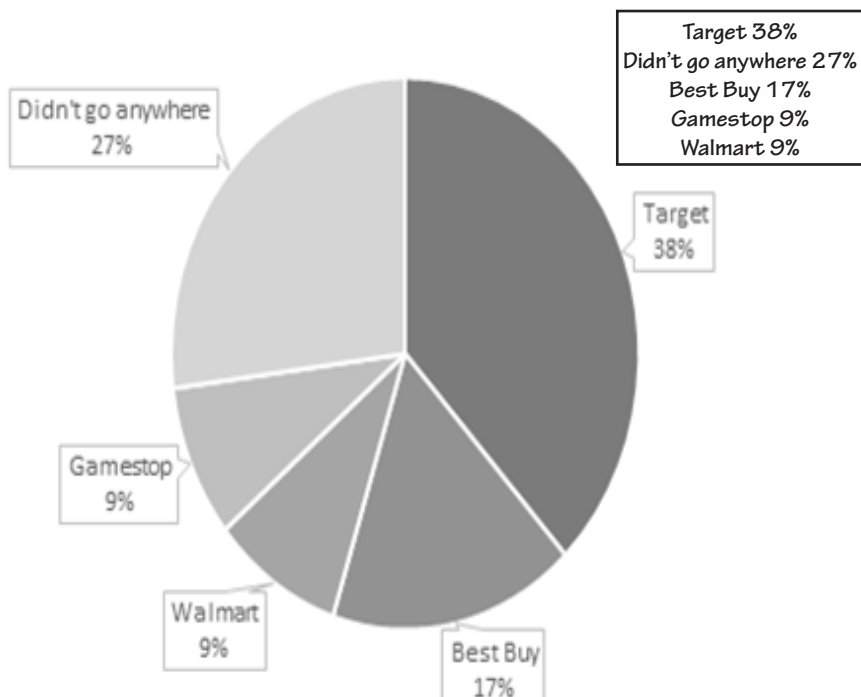
Aldo Montes
—Staff writer—

Ironically, the best sales of the year come after Thanksgiving: Black Friday is one of the busiest days of the year for both consumers and retail workers because of the low prices. However, people prefer Cyber Monday to Black Friday because shopping is easier and is less likely to be dangerous. Senior Nishrat Khan assures, “you don’t have to deal with the long lines, and you get all day to shop.” Others prefer Black Friday because it provides a broader range of deals. Senior Jesse Torres claims, “more stores participate in the event, so there’s a lot more variety.” There remains a large population of students who don’t participate in either

sales events. While Black Friday and Cyber Monday both have their perks, they both interfere with the purpose of Thanksgiving. The word “sale” sparks excitement and lines are formed, tents are raised, and a new Thanksgiving tradition is born, substituting the traditional family dinner.

As people camp outside stores up to three days before sales, malls affirm they are busy making sales, but the most popular stores are Target and Walmart. We conducted a survey and it proved the most common stores are definitely not department stores. At least, not among HMSA students.

Most Popular Places During Black Friday



*Graph based on 78 students

Do-It-Yourself Santa

Nishrat Khan & Kristine Locsin
—Business manager —&— Layout editor—

Reuse and create your gifts this holiday season. Do-it-yourself (DIY) projects have been a popular trend; they have appeared in many social media sites such as YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr, and blogs. Create your gifts, save money and show your creativity and commitment for the people you care most. It might not be the most elaborate, but surely, whoever accepts the gift will feel the appreciation that you put time and effort into creating their gift.

Over the winter break, try making and decorating scrapbooks, picture frames, mugs, jewelry, pins, cards, clear phone cases, notebooks and even wallets. Short on money? Always look for coupons—Michaels (Arts & Crafts store) constantly has coupons online

for 50 percent off regular items. Daiso* (Japanese store) is filled with inexpensive decorating items: origami paper, scrapbooks, blank mugs, clear phone cases, paint markers and ribbons. Don’t know where to start? Start looking for inspirations online, you’ll be amazed with what you can do with Sharpies, tape, cardboard and thumb-tacks.

Before leaving school, take some old Aviator newspapers (or maybe even this one) to wrap gifts and use colorful twines to finish them off. Remember, decorative duct tape and washi tape (Japanese tape) are your best tools. Below are some DIY examples that can be easily created:



crashw4.org



www.LivingWellSpendingLess.com

Parents or teachers: Customized mugs

Supplies:

- Mugs (\$1.00 at Dollar Tree)
- Oil Based Paint Pens (\$1.50 at Daiso)
- Oven

Baking directions:

1. Turn on your oven to 350.
2. Set your mugs inside and let them bake for 20-30 minutes.
3. Once 30 minutes is up, turn off the oven and let the mugs cool down inside.

Side Note: It is best to handwash the mugs, but if you used oil based paint pens, then it is dishwasher safe.

Source: gluedtomycraftsblog.com



hgtvhome.sndimg.com



craftspot.com



ajugglingmom.com

*Daiso in Gardena: Gardena Gateway Center, 1360 W Artesia Blvd, Gardena, CA 90248



Movies Strike Back: Dinosaurs, Jedis, Superheroes

Leanne Estrada
—A&E editor—

Over the last decade, the film industry has suffered in Box Office sales. Many big-budget movies have bombed the ticket sales and caused disastrous money losses. For example, Hollywood is discredited for expensive movies that didn't deliver results: "Obscene amounts of money are spent making and promoting movies every day and, as you well know, some of those movies don't make that money back" (Movie Fone). *Green Lantern*, *John Carter* and *The Lone Ranger* are some of big-budget movies that failed to return the money invested.

However, 2015 may be the year that turns the tide for the Box Office. Some of the greatest Hollywood franchises will make a historical collision. The film industry expects to enjoy an extravagant economic surplus; movie fans hope for a mesmerizing time at the movies.

Long awaited films, such as *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens*,

Avengers: Age of Ultron, *Jurassic World*, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, are expected to break Box Office records. Signs of hope have flourished with *Star Wars Episode VII* as the most previewed movie of the Internet Age. The 88-second *Star Wars* trailer has more than 60 million views since its November 28 release; *Jurassic World* thus far garnered more than 55 million views since the trailer dropped on November 25; *Age of Ultron*, with the controversial trailer leak, made more than 50 million views.

It is still too soon for Hollywood to celebrate and boast its economic success; the real success of a film comes from the criticism and acceptance of die-hard fans of the franchises. Will Jedis beat dinosaurs and superheroes at the Box Office? Who knows. The answer relies on ticket sales and mainly the people who want an enjoyable time at the movies.

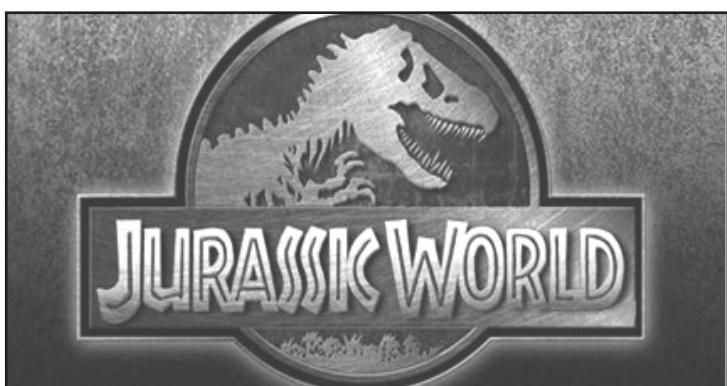


Avengers: Age of Ultron.
Release Date: May 1, 2015

<http://www.comingsoon.net>



Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens.
Release Date: December 18, 2015



Jurassic World.
Release Date: June 12, 2015



Cali Christmas

Brandon Azuoma & Michael Salazar
—Assistant Sports editor –&– Staff writer—

Many of hip-hop's biggest stars came together for one night to perform for Cali Christmas in Los Angeles. This year's lineup included J. Cole, T.I., Trey Songz and more.

Cali Christmas is held every year in December by the radio station Power 106 LA, who introduces the line-up early in November, in preparation for the spectacular event. Cali Christmas is always known as a hotspot for hip-hop artists and people who enjoy hip-hop, rap and R&B.

The special guest for the night was Big Sean. Big Sean performed his hit songs; "Clique," "Beware," "My Last" and "Paradise." Chris Brown and Trey Songz were also there, fresh off their joint tour. They performed together on stage and sang songs from their albums, making all the girls go crazy.

The concert also included Tinashe, who sang her two hit songs "2 On" and "Pretend." After her performance, Tinashe left but later returned to sing "Body Language" with Kid Ink. The concert continued with a performance by Kalin and Myles who performed their hit single "Love Robbery." Once the opening acts were over, G-Eazy took the stage and sang songs from



www.rap-up.com

his latest album *These Things Happen*. T.I. was also there performing "No Mediocre" and many other of his new songs. Lil Jon performed his hit songs "Shots" and "Turn Down for What," which made the crowd go wild.

The night ended with a performance by J. Cole, one of the main headliners for Cali Christmas. Before the night ended, J. Cole gave the audience a preview of his upcoming album *2014 Forest Hills Drive*. J. Cole finished the night by singing his hit songs; "She Knowz," "Crooked Smile," "Power Trip" and "Work Out."

Christmas Movies: Not All Merry

Adriana Sandoval
—staff writer—

It's the most melancholic time of the year. POWs, extramarital affairs, murderous decorations, scornful elders, colossal penguins, toy burglars, men with outlandish hands, attempted suicides, perpetual singing, Tom Cruise—it wouldn't be a Christmas movie without the melancholy.

During the holiday season, if you'd much rather watch Christmas flicks than spend time with your family, channel surf. If you don't have cable, don't worry; Channel 5 indulges in the schmaltz fest every year.

The classical Christmas movies with child protagonists: *Home Alone* and *A Christmas Story*. There are the Santa related films: *Miracle on 34th Street*, *The Santa Claus* and *Elf*. The infinite Christmas Carol renditions, such as *Scrooge* and *Scrooged*. The Christmas musicals: *Holiday Inn*, *Meet Me in St. Louis* and *White Christmas*. Then, the partially horrific Christmas films,

including *Edward Scissorhands*, *Batman Returns* and *Black Christmas*. There are the Christmas movies with angels, specifically *It's a Wonderful Life* and *The Bishop's Wife*. And also the dramatic Christmas movies: *L.A. Confidential*, *The Lion in Winter* and *Eyes Wide Shut*. There are the action Christmas movies, including *Die Hard* and *Lethal Weapon*. Then, there are the humorous (ranging from bawdy to poignant) Christmas movies: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, *Stalag 17*, *Trading Places* and *Kiss Kiss, Bang, Bang*. Finally, don't forget the Christmas movies overshadowed by the director's, actors' or actresses' stronger works. These movies include *Christmas in Connecticut* (starring Barbara Stanwyck), *The Hudsucker Proxy* (directed by the Coens and starring Tim Robbins and Paul Newman) and *We're No Angels* (directed by Michael Curtiz and starring Bogie).

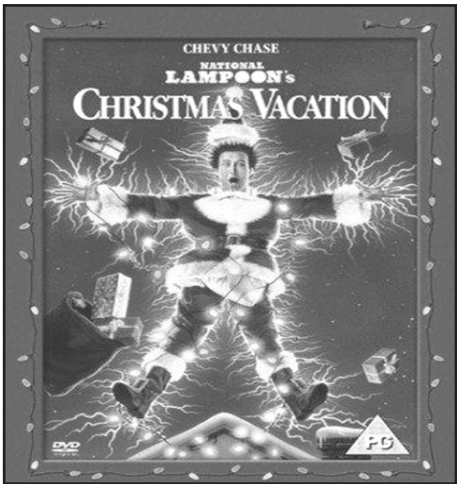
See X-Mas Movies on page 4

X-Mas Movies continued from page 3

There are exceptions. *The Wizard of Oz* isn't a Christmas movie, but it's aired every holiday season. Also, *Citizen Kane* isn't a Christmas movie, but there's a "merry Christmas" at the beginning of the film. Despite the cacophonous carolers and the excruciating "It's a Christ-

mas miracle," Christmas movies are guilty pleasures. Relish the performances, whether from Jack Lemmon, Kevin Spacey, Judy Garland or Bing Crosby. Savor the wit, whether from Wilder, Lubitsch or the Coens.

Student Favorites:	Teacher Favorites:
Jennice Gomez (Senior): <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i>	Ms. Hall: <i>A Muppet's Christmas Carol</i>
Mayra Gomez (Senior): <i>The Polar Express</i>	Mr. Jahnke: <i>National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation</i>
Nicole Truong (Senior): <i>The Little Princess</i>	Mr. Highducheck: <i>Bad Santa</i>



Images taken from www.imdb.com

An excerpt from....

The New York Times

James Franco and Seth Rogen Talk About 'The Interview'

By DAVE ITZKOFF DEC. 16, 2014

"The Interview" was intended as a fun, goofball comedy. How do you feel about the global consequences it's had?

SETH ROGEN No one has officially told me our movie, 100 percent, has proven to be the cause of any of this stuff. We're not the first people to shed light on how crazy North Korea is, the myths that exist there and the oddities of the regime. "The Daily Show," on a nightly basis, makes jokes about real-life events. "South Park" does it on a weekly basis.

Even before "The Interview" was denounced by North Korea, was it controversial that you made Kim Jong-un its villain?

ROGEN There was a lot of discussion. But it's not an edgy position to take. It's not like, "Well, politically, you've got to look at both sides." He is bad. It's controversial to him. But to everyone else, it's fine. To their credit, [Sony] let us do it.

Were you frightened by the initial ambiguous threats that North Korea made?

JAMES FRANCO They went after Obama as much as us. Because [they think] Obama actually produced the movie.

ROGEN They don't have freedom of speech there, so they don't get that people make stuff.

Source: Itzkoff, Dave. "James Franco and Seth Rogen Talk About 'The Interview'." The New York Times. The New York Times, 20 Dec. 2014. Web. 16 Dec. 2014.



The Interview

Giselle Vazquez
—staff writer—



www.huffingtonpost.com

On December 25th, Seth Rogen and James Franco will release their controversial movie, *The Interview*. According to IMDB, the two characters plan to visit North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for their talk show, when the CIA contacts them and asks for a favor—kill Kim Jong Un.

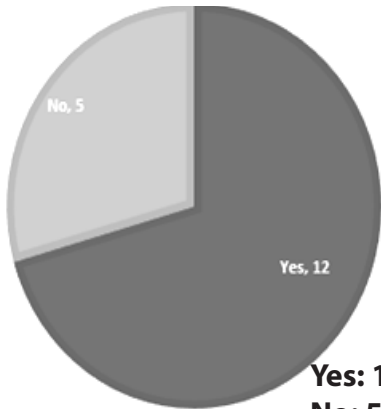
There was a lot of controversy about this film; many believed that Rogen and Franco secretly filmed the North Korean leader for this movie. The rumor was viciously crushed when the cast list was re-

leased and Randall Park was listed as Kim Jong Un.

But Kim Jong Un does not seem to be too gracious about this film. According to ScreenRant, North Korea's executive director of The Center North Korea-US Peace, Kim Myong-chol, believes that the plot to kill their leader suggests the U.S.'s plan to take him out.

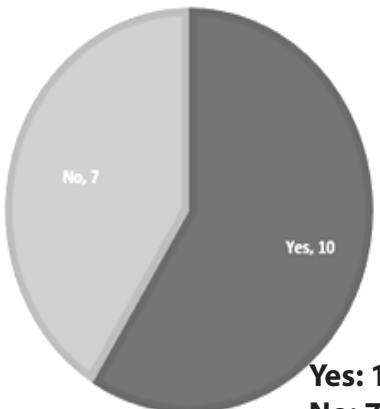
Rogen isn't known for hiding his political views, but surely he is not plotting to assassinate North Korea's leader.

Will you be watching this movie?



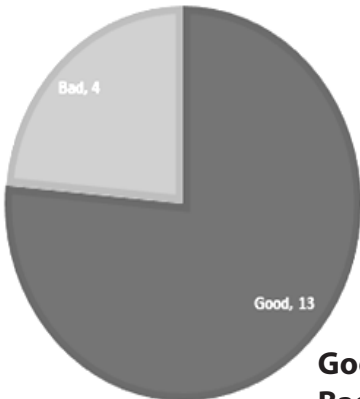
Yes: 12
No: 5

Are you excited to see this movie?



Yes: 10
No: 7

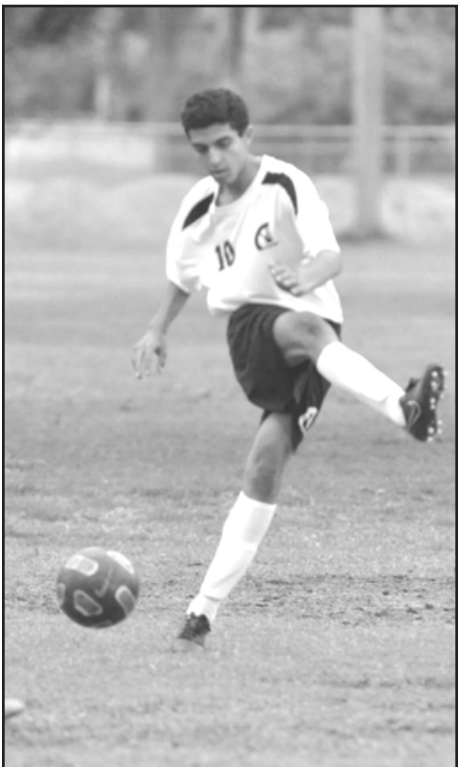
Do you expect this movie to be good or bad?



Good: 13
Bad: 4

Kicking Off the Season

Isaac Gorgy
—Co-Sports editor—



Kirolus E. (10) takes a shot against Vistamar, December 11th.
Photo taken by Mrs. Suzanne Launius

The HMSA boys soccer team started the season with a disappointing loss to CAMS, but followed their season-opener with a dominant 7-1 victory over Pacific Lutheran.

Despite the 1-2 record, the Aviators are still expecting a winning season. Junior Fabian Leiva commented, “I’m not too affected by the record be-

cause we have the potential to turn it around.”

Last year, the boys soccer team missed the CIF playoffs and finished with a disappointing losing record. This year the team has high expectations. The Aviators are determined to continue improving and make the playoffs. More players tried out this season and all are committed to the team. Team coach, Mr. Launius, stated, “Although we are a young team, there is a lot of talent on it.”

Fabian Leiva added, “I feel confident that this year’s lineup is solid. I expect to have more wins than losses.”

Mr. Launius along with team captain Christian Escobar have contributed to the team’s preparation in the offseason. The team is constantly practicing during the week by scrimmaging, running and learning how to play together as a team. Sophomore and new member of the team, Kirolus Eskander, added, “I do everything I can to get in better shape.”

Mr. Launius mentioned, “Although it takes up a lot of time after school and I have less time to spend with my son, I do enjoy coaching because I love the game of soccer, especially when we win.”

The team is excited to continue the season with one goal in mind: to make the playoffs. The Aviators’ next game is on December 16th against Lennox.

Goal Girl Goal

Francisco Contreras & Isaac Gorgy
—Staff writer &— Sports editor—

The girls soccer team started their season against Da Vinci December 2nd losing 7-0. This loss, however, did not discourage the players. The Aviators have been preparing extensively this offseason and have high expectations.

The team practices five days a week and individually prepare with their own workout program at home. Each member is committed to the team and is ready to kick off the season. Sophomore Carolina Calderon provided some insight: “I’m preparing by meeting up to play and practice with friends and teammates during weekends or breaks to help each other out with our weaknesses.”

The team is also looking to build off of last season’s success, a season in which they won all but two games and made the CIF playoffs.

Team Coach, Mr. Kircher, has high expectations for this season: “I expect

the ladies to attend all practices and games and give their best effort at all times.” He holds each individual accountable for preparation as well as in school work.

Mr. Kircher added, “We have a new group of players this year and are looking to maintain our high level of play.” The girls soccer team lost several key players from last year’s squad, including Leilani Meza and Giselle Becerra, the latter being last season’s leading goal scorer, as well as other contributors from last season.

Despite losing the first four games of the season, the team is still determined to have a winning season and make it deep into the playoffs.

The Aviators are confident that their excellent preparation and leadership will help them move past their loss in the season opener and duplicate last season’s success.



“The picture was taken before our first game. Even though we lost, I honestly think we did great and really pushed through while playing in the RAIN.”
Caption and photo by Mifrah Khan.

No Returns Allowed

Richard Estrella & Miguel Sanchez
—Staff writers—



James Rodriguez signs for Real Madrid inking a six-year contract in £63m transfer from Monaco.
Source: telegraph.co.uk

The summer openings, in which football clubs transferred players to improve their teams, may have closed about a month ago, and now it’s time to address if all those millions of dollars paid were worth it. Let’s get started.

The Whites (Real Madrid) have sold their Ángel to the Red Devils and CR7 may return to Old Trafford. James Rodriguez became the first Colombian to play for Real Madrid; Alexis Sanchez

is Arsenal’s exotic export direct from Chile and it looks like the Colombian star Radamel Falcao is trading in wine for a good old cup of tea as he is off to Manchester United in England.

The Argentine, Ángel Di Maria, has been sold off to the Red Devils (Manchester United) for a whopping record breaking £59.7million according to the British magazine, *The Mirror*. This deal, of course, came with some people saying that they overpaid for Di Maria. If this is the case, well, the Red Devils better have deep pockets because the Argentine was nominated for the Balon D’or, an award given to the best player in the world. If Di Maria were to win this award, the Red Devils would need to cough up £4 million extra, according to *The Mirror*. However, the extra cash would be worth it; Di Maria’s performance with Manchester United has been exceptional, with magnificent strikes, passes, and assistances galore. Even though Di Maria doesn’t score all too often, when he does, it’s magnificent.

Real Madrid fanatics can rest assured that their superstar, Cristiano Ronaldo, is there to stay at Real Madrid. Well, at least if no one pays the astronomical €1 billion release clause, according

to *Skysports.com*. Sadly Manchester United fans will weep that the machine they created will never step foot at Old Trafford wearing the red jersey again, but there may be a light that can escape this black hole. According to *SkySports.com*, Ronaldo is unhappy at Madrid. Many have speculated that this is due to the transfer of Ángel Di Maria to Manchester United, but Ronaldo’s manager states that the release clause will be almost impossible for any club to pay. When confronted with the issue, Ronaldo’s response is always “You never know,” however, after the revealing of the release clause, he should start saying “If they can pay the release clause, you never know”. Sadly, there will still be tears at Old Trafford, but glorious happiness at the Bernabeu thanks to that €1 billion release clause.

James Rodriguez was transferred this summer to Real Madrid for the astonishing sum of \$99 million, according to British magazine, *The Telegraph*. He will play in the Bernabeu Stadium, Real Madrid’s home playground, for six years, after spending a season at Monaco and FC Porto. He joined Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale, and Karim Benzema forming one of the best offensive fronts in Real Madrid

history. James scored 6 goals for his home country during this World Cup, which is what awarded him the Golden Boot Award.

Alexis Sanchez was signed off by Barcelona this summer to go for Arsenal. After playing a great offensive role for his team in the World Cup, he will now play for the Big Ben’s team starting this season. According to *SkySports.com*, Sanchez was signed a long-term deal for nearly \$55 million, which so far is proving to be worth it.

Radamel Falcao, the Colombian striker who was Atlético’s star player and was sadly absent during this World Cup, was transferred to Manchester United this season. However, his career has been plagued with injuries of all sorts; and if he doesn’t pick up the pace soon his deal with the Red Devils might be over for good. So far, he has been in a probation stage with Manchester, and if he manages to impress the coaching staff enough, he will be staying with a full-term contract. When he played in Atletico, he was a game changer. The Colombian striker who rampaged through La Liga with Atlético is now injury-prone.

Thanks a Million

Francisco Contreras
—staff writer—

Baseball’s off-season has begun and teams are already making huge headlines.

Teams like the Toronto Blue Jays, the Boston Red Sox and the Oakland A’s have all made moves early on in the off-season in hopes that their acquisitions will help them contend for a championship next season.

The Blue Jays made waves across the league when they decided to sign free agent catcher, Russell Martin, to a five-year, \$82 million contract—a move they followed up a week later with a trade that landed them third baseman, Josh Donaldson, from the A’s for a package of minor league players. More lauded, however, have been the

moves made by the Boston Red Sox: they signed the best two hitters on the market, ex-Dodger Hanley Ramirez and ex-Giant Pablo Sandoval.

More moves from these teams will come, especially with so many high-profile free agents still available. Starting pitchers Jon Lester and Max Scherzer, the “Crown Jewels” of this free agents class, are still available. They expect to get contracts larger than \$100 million. According to CBS sports, perpetual free-spenders in the New York Yankees, Los Angeles Dodgers, and San Francisco Giants, as well as the Boston Red Sox, are all on the hunt for these players, .

The biggest headline of the off-sea-

son thus far, however, is without question the contract given to the Miami Marlins’ Giancarlo Stanton. According to the *New York Times*, Stanton and the Marlins recently agreed to terms in a 13-year, \$325 million contract. Set to begin in 2016, this contract will keep Stanton in a Marlins uniform until 2028, barring any trade, though Stanton does have a full no-trade clause. This contract will also make Stanton the richest man in the history of the sport, in terms of total contract value. Stanton eclipses Alex Rodriguez’s 10-year, \$275 million contract given by the Yankees in 2007 with this new deal.



Giancarlo Stanton, at his press conference after signing his massive contract.
Source: Miami Herald

Will the Lakers Return to Championship Form?

Brandon Azuoma & Dion Bui
—Assistant Sports editor –&– Staff writer—



Kobe Bryant takes two free throws against the Timberwolves to surpass Michael Jordan on the all time scoring list.
Source: Lakersnation.com

Let’s face it: the Lakers are doing absolutely awful this season. The question is, when will the Lakers return to the legendary championship caliber they’re famously known for?

Even the Clippers, who have been performing terribly for the past three decades, are doing better than the Lakers. Not only are the Lakers the worst team in Los Angeles, but they are also the worst team in California and the

third worst team in the entire Western Conference. With an aging Kobe Bryant, an injured first round draft pick (Julius Randle), and a terrible supporting cast, the thought of the Lakers returning to championship form anytime soon is highly unlikely.

The Lakers have managed to go 1-9 through their first 10 games while having the worst defense in the league. Kobe is trying to carry the team, but is

shooting a terrible field goal percentage of only 39% according to NBA.com. Is there light at the end of this tunnel they call a season? If there is, it’s nowhere in sight.

The Lakers’ only way to return to their championship form is through the rebuilding process. They have to wait for Kobe to retire, so that they can get the money they’re wasting on his 2-year contract, and use the money

to attract free agents during the off-season. Also, they have to use their upcoming draft picks wisely, so that they can have good rookies to invest in for the long run. Hopefully, they can draft the next Kobe Bryant, but for now, it seems like the Clippers are the new team in town.

Spanish Dept. continued from page 1

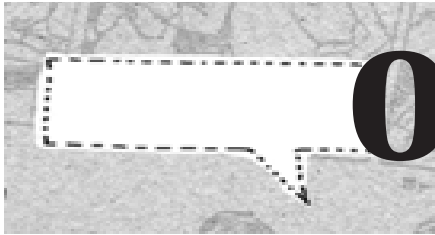
teacher. Ms. Jordan still teaches one period of Spanish II, while Ms. Mendoza teaches another Spanish II period.

As opposed to her current Spanish classes, Ms. Bravo used to teach Spanish III and Spanish for Native Speakers I. She says although teaching Spanish I and III “is different because of the ability of students,” she feels not much has changed because she’s familiar with the staff and environment. She’s glad to be back, and says she “likes the culture of the school. The students are respectful and appreciative. [It’s something] you

can’t replicate in other schools. It’s like a family.”



transitionculture.org



JESSE WHAT I DID THERE?

Tis the \$season for Me

Jesse Torres
—Op-Ed editor—

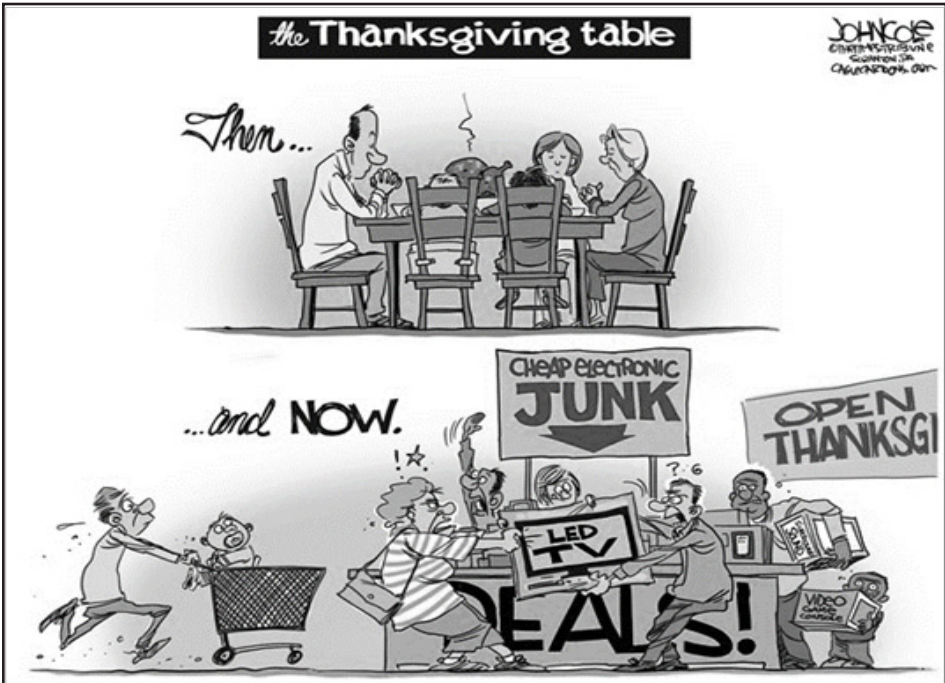
Oh, the holidays. A season to be thankful for all that has happened throughout the year and spend time with your wonderful family. At least that's what it used to be. Now there's something even more important: the sales!

Leave it to us Americans to turn the celebrations of the year's blessings and the birth of Christ into a holiday for the consumers. No longer are the holidays about spending time with your loved ones but rather buying things you love. The day right after we are supposed to be grateful and humble, we go out and satisfy our cravings for material things. However, instead of missing out on family time, Seniors Valeria Tomaylla and Julieta Gomez feel "we should actually spend time with our families, having an actual meal, and focus on actual social issues instead of the reduced

price of the XBOX One."

Every year, Americans get more rowdy and less dedicated to their families. I was worried there was going to be an increase in civilized savages ditching their families to go unnecessary gadget shopping, but I've been met with both good and bad news. According to Business Insider.com, this year's Black Friday sales actually plummeted and were worse than expected. Perhaps consumers were still paying off the useless junk they bought last year. Or it could be they are simply broke. B.I. reports that "health insurance premiums have increased between 39 percent and 56 percent since early 2013, meaning additional costs of \$230 per month for the average family." Remember when a lot of you thought the Affordable Care Act actually meant affordable?

It's better that Americans are actual-



Cartoon by John Cole: media.cagle.com

ly budgeting their money for a change. No longer will we be spending Thanksgiving night out at malls in the freezing cold just to save fifty dollars on a brandless LED T.V. Here's something we should try for a change: stay home

and eat mac and cheese! After all, it's free. Your stomach will be satisfied for once and you'll save—get this—100 percent off.

Source. Business Insider: www.businessinsider.com

Turkey or Not?

Elvia Ochoa & Kimberly Rivera
—Staff writers—



The winter holidays are approaching, and Thanksgiving was up first. When you heard people talking about Thanksgiving, the first thing that came to mind was turkey. Why was this? Turkey has been a

part of tradition for hundreds of years. According to www.history.com, the English settlers and Native Americans had their first Thanksgiving feast November 1621. They had an abundance of turkeys, so they

included them in their Thanksgiving feast. Should we continue this tradition?

Sticking to traditional was the best way to go for a million reasons. According to skinnybovineskitchen.blogspot.com, turkey is delicious served by itself, cheaper than extra lean beef, good source of lean protein and doesn't leave a greasy aftertaste.

Also consider the nutritional values of each protein. According to diffen.com, turkey is healthier than most meats; it has fewer calories, less fat, and less cholesterol. And who doesn't need to stay healthy during the holiday season? With all the food everyone is going to eat, a little healthy food won't hurt. Besides, chicken is eaten year round, while turkey is used only during Thanksgiving. Eating turkey this Thanksgiving was the best option to change up the daily routine of chicken, while also staying healthy.

While chicken and other meats are delicious, turkey is too. It makes a better pairing with mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce than chicken. Chicken is easy to prepare, turkey is worthwhile. All that is needed is a few careful preparations.

There are tons of ways to prepare turkey while satisfying everyone's craving. Ac-

cording to ovens.reviewed.com, turkey can be "braised, deep-fried, grilled, smoked, spatchcocked, stewed or immersed in a water bath." Dryness is a problem when it comes to cooking turkey. Braising and immersing in a water bath ensures the juiciest bird imaginable. If you want a juicy, but unique-looking bird in half the time, then stewing will be best. Spatchcocking is a great way to cook your turkey evenly and make carving easier. You can open up more room in your kitchen by cooking the turkey outside. Deep-frying, grilling and smoking give the bird a twist in flavor that you can't get with an oven. If you didn't already try these innovative ways of cooking turkey, try them next year and you'll be happy you did.

Sticking to the original is the best way to go when it comes to holiday food. If you want continue avoiding feeling "stuffed" (no pun intended) and still have room for dessert, turkey is the way to go! Next up is Christmas and New Year's so grab your forks, plates, napkins, and everything in between... and dig in!

"Merry Christmas" vs. "Happy Holidays"?

Ame Negrete
—Staff writer—

Although "Merry Christmas" dominates America's modern language, is it the most appropriate thing to say?

According to the Huffington Post, "Merry Christmas" trumps other holiday sayings." But it should not be the default phrase during the holiday season. It is definitely not 100 percent appropriate.

Christmas is a Christian holiday, but many other religions don't believe in

celebrating the holiday. Some people of these religions might even be offended if someone wished them a Merry Christmas.

While 42 percent of Americans prefer "Merry Christmas" (Pewresearch), it's important to keep in mind that Christianity is the largest practiced faith in the United States (IUP), but definitely not the *only* faith. Whether an individual prefers one or the other,



he must respect the views of other people. Many don't remember or realize that Christmas is a religious holiday (for it has lost most its meaning) and don't see the effect a simple "Merry

Christmas" can have on people of different religions.

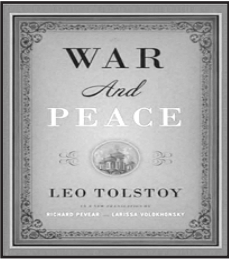
BOOK REVIEWS



Page Turners

War and Peace

Brian Moncada
—Book Review editor—



So, we all know the current AR system will not last. Eventually, someone will realize the system can be abused. I mean, all you have to do is read *War and Peace* and you'll have 28 free dress passes. Everyone, let us abuse the system and pillage what we can.

Russia. The Motherland. Birthplace of the Highducheck. And the Mini-check. But thats not all, it is also the land of war and peace. The book is actually a compilation of four volumes, each following the story of the rich Count Bezukhov, the Rostovs, and Kuragins. The entire compilation is actually broken up into many individual stories. Now, when you look at it this way, the 1,700 page (depending on version) behemoth seems manageable. And it is, you won't realize the book is flying by.

My major qualm as a book-lover is books don't last. I have devoted countless hours to a myriad of books, and this one stuck with me. It took me a

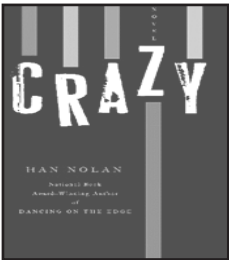
week to read it. I put the book down and walked away accomplished. It is simply stunning. After taking AP English, many of my favorite books seem shoddily written. This book was translated from Russian, and still flows better. Tolstoy knew what he was doing. It is one novel that is truly beautiful.

I'm not going into detail: there is simply too much to cover. All I will say is the novel follows the events of various important people in Russia during the Napoleonic wars. Detail is key in this novel. If you manage to put this book down, you join an exclusive group of people. This is a book few people have read and ever will read. And after all, what's the worst that can happen?

One hundred and seventeen points. Twenty-eight days of free dress. Ladies and gentlemen, let us exploit the system and become worldly in the meantime. Did I mention this book was awesome during 10th grade when learning about Napoleon and Russia in APWH? Great outside source to use in your essays. Oh and it goes great in 11th grade too. I mean, you can talk to the Czar of 603 about the good old days when the Russian Empire owned Europe.

Crazy - Han Nolan

Jacquelyn Flores
—Staff writer—



Imagine living in a world where you're fifteen, your mom died years before, you talk to imaginary people in your head, you're the school's anonymous advice giver and you have to take care of your mentally ill father. Welcome to Jason Papadopoulos' life.

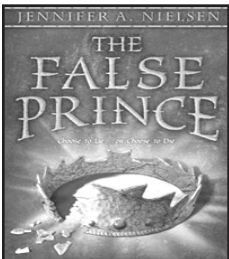
At a young age, Jason's mother passed away and he was left to take care of his father who, after Jason's mother's death, went mentally insane. He began to think the Furies--Greek goddesses of vengeance--were coming to get him, but of course, they weren't. To make this story all the more excit-

ing, Jason talks to his "Laugh Track"--the set of imaginary people in his head. These "people" range from a motherly-figure to a fat man in a beard. Between looking after his father, finding a way to keep a roof over their heads, trying to make it seem like nothing is wrong, and continuing to give students school advice, Jason is forced to take counseling classes at school where he meets a group of kids who seem to be struggling with their own problems.

I won't give the rest away, but we'll just say that this new group of "friends" may or may not be on Jason's side. Find out what happens in Jason's crazy life--see what I did there?--in this novel by Han Nolan. Its book level is a 4.2 with a whopping 12 points. I'd say it's a great read for the upcoming holiday.

The False Prince

Mina Beshay
—Staff writer—



When I first saw this book, the only thing that caught my eye about it was the shiny crown and the word prince on the cover. This in no way prepared me for how engaging and captivating *The False Prince* is. It offers a great plot line with many twists, turns, and surprises throughout the whole novel that keeps readers constantly alert as the main character's mysterious life unfolds.

It starts off with a peculiar thief named Sage who lives in an unpleasant orphanage. One day, Sage is purchased

to be a servant by a noble named Connor; three other boys were also bought who have a striking resemblance to Sage. Connor later reveals his plan: train the boys to take the place of the kingdom's lost prince. The author then details the adventures of the four boys as they train to be royals in two very short weeks.

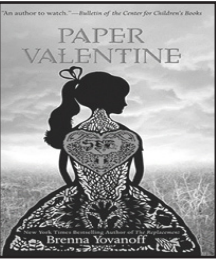
This book is the first in the *Ascendance Trilogy* by Jennifer A. Nielsen. It is a very fast read because of how captivating and action-packed each page is. The novel has a reading level of 5.1 and is worth 12 AR points. However, the book is its own reward because of the amount of enjoyment it provides to the reader.



Page Burners

Paper Valentine

Monique Ejenuko
—Staff writer—



"Finally! I am going to read an amazing thriller with blood chilling murder!" I said to myself as I punched the air in victory. Needless to say, the only thing this story managed to 'murder' was my expectations. The real criminal activity here is how this awesome cover and enthralling synopsis managed to trick me into purchasing the book. That is practically theft.

The plot revolves around Hannah Wagnor, who lost her best friend Lillian six months prior. Now, Lillian's ghost won't leave her alone: someone in Hannah's unsuspecting, suburban community is killing girls. Set in the suburbs and not some cliché haunted mansion. Amazing right? I'm "afraid" not. A major problem I have with the plot is Yovanoff's indecisive writing style. It was like she started out with a murder mystery, watched a random ghost film, and decided to add ghosts. That paranormal aspect diluted the murder plot and all that was left was a sorry hybrid of ideas.

The only thing I was "dying" to know is why the killer left paper valentines next to his victims. Ultimately,

this was the only reason I didn't break the book it in half. When the reason was revealed along with the motive, I sat the book down and left the room. The reason and motive were equivalent to why people slug others for a laptop during Black Friday--childish.

The characters "killed" it for me as well. Hannah Wagnor is a spineless, bland protagonist. I could remember the year the book was published, but not her name. She lived in the shadow of her friend, Lillian, even after her friend's death. Hannah's attempts to grow from that were pathetic and half-hearted as she continually surrounded herself with shallow, insufferable excuses for friends. Especially Lillian, who definitely was not Casper the Friendly Ghost. Rather, she was the annoying ghost, who constantly yapped in Hannah's ear to pull a Nancy Drew and solve the murders. A lousy friend in life and in death. Her love interest, Finney Boone, is a failed attempt at a silent, misunderstood antihero. The idea that silent people always have some intriguing past/secret/story is a little used up don't you think Yovanoff?

I will say that the book has a lovely cover that obviously wasn't a "dead" giveaway to what a tasteless book it would be. Even Scooby-doo could produce better murder/ghost mysteries.

All book covers taken from BarnesandNobles.com



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