



THAT’S A WRAP!

Spartans enthusiastically say goodbye to 2023 and hello to fresh start

GOOD NEWS

- ★ Dinahia Brown was accepted to Nunez Community College.
- ★ Melayeh McGary was accepted into Northshore Community College.
- ★ Tamia Agnew was accepted into Xavier and was awarded a Merit Scholarship for \$14,000.
- ★ Danylah Matthews was accepted into Jackson State University.
- ★ Reginald Smith was accepted into University of Northern Colorado and was awarded the Trustee Scholarship of \$32,000.
- ★ Lauryn Smith has been accepted to attend Tulane's Pre College Programs for Summer Enrichment.
- ★ Rhett Adam, Mason Fuqua, Charles Justus, and Jake Nguyen have earned their spot as Platinum members in the 28+ club by scoring 28 or over on the ACT. Banners have been hung in their honor on the front gates of our school.
- ★ Salmen High’s Class of 2024 has grown their ACT index score by 14 points so far, and we are only halfway through the year!

expect more so the work gets a little more challenging. The feeling of everything being new has now worn off and teachers are pushing their students beyond their limits because they know you are capable of achieving greatness. Graduating high school has always seemed so far away, but we are here now. You are so close to being free and starting

your life. Although you may feel burnt out, do not give up. As a senior, you have spent 12 years or more of your life in school, so throwing in the towel now is not an option! Growing up can sound scary, but take back that control and make your future what you want it to be. Let’s finish the year off strong Spartans! You

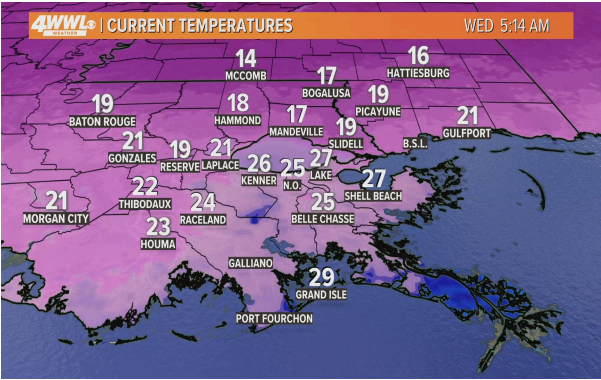
can visit your Spartan Counseling Corner in Google Classroom for tutoring opportunities if needed, and talk to your teachers to make sure you are on track to walk across the stage. There are plenty of resources available at your fingertips to help you attain your goals. Finding the right ones for you can feel overbearing, but don’t wait for things to happen, go out and get them accomplished.



Weather

BY NATHAN MEUNIER

Happy New Year and welcome back to the news, Spartans! As per usual, I'm here with your monthly forecast for January. Throughout the month, temperatures have spanned from as high as 75° and as low as 18° (that's a difference of 57 degrees for those who were curious). We even saw a good bit of ice during the week of the 14th-19th, which gave us a surprise 5-day weekend! Unfortunately, there was no snow, but I hope you all were nice and warm at home. Towards the end of the month it will get considerably warmer, with temps only going as high as the upper 60s and as low as the upper 30s and lower 40s.



Throughout January, we can expect about 3-8 days of rain with a total of around 3-4 inches of rain all month. Other than the extreme cold, there aren't many things happening in January that are weather related, so wear some warm clothes and maybe grab an umbrella before you go somewhere.

To close off this month's weather forecast, let's get some fun facts about the weather! Did you know you can tell the temperature by



counting a cricket's chirps? The Atacama Desert in northern Chile and southern Peru is the driest spot on Earth and averages only 0.019 inches (0.5 millimeters) of rainfall annually (that's almost 27 times shorter than your fingernail!). And for our final fun fact, the

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ★ **January 15:**
Martin Luther King Holiday - Schools Closed
- ★ **February 3:**
Sneaker Ball
7:00 pm-10:00 pm
Tickets are \$20 on My Payments Plus
Concessions will be sold
- ★ **February 7:**
2nd Quarter Honor Roll Breakfast
8:00 am
- ★ **February 12-16:**
Mardi Gras Break - Schools Closed
- ★ **February 29-March 1:**
Salmen High Spring Play
7:00 pm-10:00 pm in the cafeteria

Keep Pushing, Spartans! - A Note of Encouragement

BY MARIAH WALDEN

The second semester of high school is difficult in many different ways for seniors. College applications, scholarships, harsh deadlines, credits, final test scores, clubs, sports, can all become very overwhelming towards the end of senior year. It is very important for every student to take their second semester just as seriously as the first because your life is about to begin. However, there is a large lack of motivation when students get closer to graduation. Reporter Aria Thomas states that during the second semester of high school, teachers



smell we associate with rain is actually the moistening of the ground, also known as “petrichor”. To conclude, stay safe everyone and have a great month, I'll see you all in February!

Sports
BY KALEILAH DAVIS

Welcome Back, Spartans! Can you believe we haven’t done a sports article since last year?! LOL. Anyway, I hope everyone has had an awesome winter break and is ready to get this year going. And now, here are some updates and reminders.

The boys and girls basketball teams are still in season. Boys are 10-10 and girls are 9-10. The Salmen girls basketball team finished in second place to Smith County High (Tennessee) during the Salmen Holiday Shootout on Dec. 30. Y'all come out and support them at their next games! We also have other sports that are coming up, such as boys baseball and girls softball, which are right around the corner. Although it is too late to try out for these two sports, you can still show up and show out for any games they have and support them in their season. We also have (one of the best sports, if I do say so myself) Track & Field! It isn’t too late to join, so if you are considering track, just reach out to either Coach Bourliea or Coach Johnson. Make sure you have a signed physical. If you already did the free physical last year, or if you already did a sport earlier in the year, you should be good to go! Yet another upcoming sport is Tennis, coached by Ms. Fritscher. Whatever sport you choose, make sure you give it your all. Let’s go Spartans!



Program Spotlight - JROTC
BY MARIAH WALDEN

Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps(JROTC) is an amazing opportunity for many students to be successful outside of high school. It offers students career options, allows them to serve their community, and promotes principles like honor and respect for others. Just this year, JROTC has hosted a canned food drive in which the proceeds were donated to a local church, won first place at a drill meet, participated in a city wide cleanup, performed Color Guard for the St. Tammany Parish School Board, and so much more. They also placed wreaths on the graves of WWII Veterans at the local cemetery. It is offered as a class, and can take the place of a physical education (P.E.) credit. They practice every weekday from 2:40-4:30, and perform in parades, pep rallies, sports games, and other school events throughout the year. Leadership is a key aspect of JROTC and students have many opportunities to move up in rank, such as Promotion Board, Superior Cadet, and displaying determination by showing up to events on time and giving their all at practices just as if they were performing. They are required to wear their uniforms every Wednesday. In addition, when students rank up, they earn different ribbons for their achievements. Some students go to a training camp called JCLC, and they participate in rigorous challenges to prepare them to serve in U.S. military forces. All in all, JROTC allows young people to learn how to be responsible, and lead in a positive way.



New Year’s Wishes From Our Spartan Students, Faculty, & Staff
BY KELSEY LEE & JAMAL MCDONALD

After a nice, relaxing break, many are not so eager to be back to school. But, we can all agree that we are excited for the new year and what is to come with 2024. *Spartan Chariot* reporter, Kelsey Lee, asked Spartan students around campus about their 2023 experience.



Jaylin West is a junior at our high school and his year was described as “eventful”. His year was eventful because he went to Atlanta for his birthday and was also given a car. His favorite memories of 2024 were times spent hanging out and getting lunch with his friends. Jaylin's hope for the new year is getting his life together and establishing more connections and

routines. His goal for 2024 is to start healthy habits like going to the gym.

Samantha Burns, an 11th grader, described how good of a year she had. She truly enjoyed Christmas, but is sad to be back at school. Her favorite memory was waking up on Christmas and having breakfast with her family. Her hopes and excitement for the new year are focused on the Salmen 2024 softball team’s success. Lastly, her New Year's resolution is to maintain her good grades.

Onto the last student, which is Victoria Avery, who is a senior at Salmen. She stated that her year was pretty good. Along with that, her favorite memories are hanging out with family and friends. She is most excited for graduation and going to college. Lastly, her New Year’s resolution is to be nicer to people.

Staff Interviewer, Jamal McDonald, also asked our Spartan staff about their 2023 memories, New Year’s resolutions, along with their hopes for the new year ahead.



Mr. Thiaville explains that to him, 2023 went very quickly, mainly because of the significant changes that happened here at school. His hopes for 2024 are to continue with the good things that are going on at Salmen, and to keep helping with the advancements that will benefit the students and teachers. Mr. Thiaville

hopes to continue building toward a better future. Among his favorite memories of 2023, Mr. Thiaville lists some major life events, such as his son becoming a senior in high school and his daughter getting her driving permit. He also got a Jeep that he always wanted!



Our wonderful school librarian, Ms. Cousin, stated that 2023 was very busy! There was never a dull moment dealing with chromebooks and IDs, but her and

her assistants managed to make sure everyone was taken care of. Her favorite memory of 2023 was when her oldest daughter got married, and now her daughter is expecting a baby. Her hopes for 2024 are always wonderful cheer, peace and blessings. She always likes to be a blessing to those around her. Ms. Cousin’s New Year’s resolutions are to exercise more patience in her work life and personal life. In 2024 Ms. Cousin’s expectations for students are that she'd love for students to be more responsible with chromebooks, be prepared for their classes, IDs and she would love for them to take school more seriously, because school is a privilege.



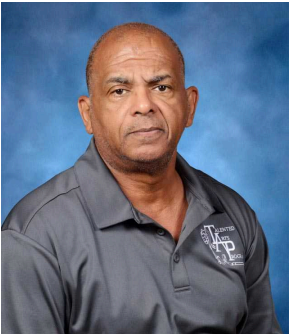
Mrs. Walden, everyone’s favorite ISS teacher, thinks that 2023 had been excellent because she saw so many improvements in all students.

It started out very good, but unfortunately, at Christmas she had a lot of sickness in her family, so she had a challenging Christmas break. Her favorite memory of 2023 were all of the fun activities that she spent with her family, like birthdays and Christmas. She is thankful for all the times she has with her family, and can't wait to have many more. Her hopes for 2024 are continuing the success of the students, teachers, and administration. She is wishing for 2024 to become an even better and brighter person as she always is than last year.

Good luck this year, Spartans! 2024 will be our year!

Teacher Spotlight - Mr. Despenza
BY KENNEDY WARNING

Salmen has many electives available to choose from for the student body, but for those who have the spare period, are seeking an art credit, or want to further pursue art we have Talented Art taught by Mr. Despenza in room 603.



Mr. Despenza switches between teaching at Salmen and Pearl River High, but he doesn't only teach art. He has a PHD in Theology which he also teaches night classes for; in addition, he is a resident artist who prefers painting over other mediums. Though he does not sponsor or coach any sports or clubs at the moment, he has previously co-sponsored the chess club at Salmen and coached football, baseball, and track at Archdiocese of New Orleans High School. Speaking of chess, it's one of his go-to hobbies including swimming.

When asked If he had any role models, he said that he looked up to his sixth-grade art teacher, Mr. Bluent, and when why he decided to become a teacher he told me "I was inspired by my fellow peers in the art field.", that he was approached by others asking him to pursue educating others in art; he stays motivated to continue teaching through the potential he sees in his students, learning from them that the "fountain of youth be stained at heart", that the joy and passion we possess in our youth will always be with us. In addition, he says that he loves being a Spartan and that even though people might underestimate us, it allows us to surprise them with our talents and abilities.



Thank you for believing in us, Mr. Despenza. Salmen is lucky to have you!

Comic Relief
BY BRADLEY PAGANO



Q-Tip of the Month
TIPS AND TRICKS FROM MR. Q. BRISCO

What are some time management strategies students can use to finish the school year STRONG?



Does it seem like there's never enough time in the day to get everything done? Feel like you're always running late? Here are some tips for taking control of your time and organizing your life.

1. **Make a "To Do" List Every Day.** Put things that are most important at the top and do them first. If it's easier, use a planner to track all of your tasks. And don't forget to reward yourself for your accomplishments.
2. **Use Spare Minutes Wisely.** Get some reading done on the bus ride home from school, for example, and you'll kill two birds with one stone.
3. **It's Okay to Say "No."** If your boss asks you to work on a Thursday night and you have a final exam the next morning, realize that it's okay to say no. Keep your short- and long-term priorities in mind.
4. **Find the Right Time.** You'll work more efficiently if you figure out when you do your best work. For example, if your brain handles math better in the afternoon, don't wait to do it until late at night.
5. **Review Your Notes Every Day.** You'll reinforce what you've learned, so you need less time to study. You'll also be ready if your teacher calls on you or gives a pop quiz.
6. **Get a Good Night's Sleep.** Running on empty makes the day seem longer and your tasks seem more difficult.
7. **Communicate Your Schedule to Others.** If phone calls are proving to be a distraction, tell your friends that you take social calls from 7-8 p.m. It may sound silly, but it helps.
8. **Become a Taskmaster.** Figure out how much free time you have each week. Give yourself a time budget and plan your activities accordingly.
9. **Don't Waste Time Agonizing.** Have you ever wasted an entire evening by worrying about something that you're supposed to be doing? Was it worth it? Instead of agonizing and procrastinating, just do it.
10. **Keep Things in Perspective.** Setting goals that are unrealistic sets you up for failure. While it's good to set high goals for yourself, be sure not to overdo it. Set goals that are difficult yet reachable. Consider these tips, but personalize your habits so that they suit you. If you set priorities that fit your lifestyle, you'll have a better chance of achieving your goals.

STPSB SPARTAN SHOUTOUTS

"Helping my students find the tools they need to become well-rounded, productive members of society is a blessing."

Senior Counselor Montana Hanna greatly enjoys being a support system for each student that comes on campus. Although seniors are Montana's focus, she keeps an open door policy and works together as a team with the entire counseling department at Salmen High.

#LeadStrong #FutureReadySTPPS



★ ELA Leads the WAY in Journalism ★

Alexa Yates is an ELA teacher at Salmen High School who also dedicates a significant amount of her time volunteering as the sponsor of Salmen High's *The Spartan Chariot* Newspaper. Thank you Mrs. Yates for this incredible opportunity you have created for students at Salmen!

STPSB ELA January Newsletter - ELA Rock Stars