



THE OWL POST

HOLIDAY NOTE FROM OUR EDITORS

BY EMMA H., DAISY K. AND FRED K.

This trimester has come to an end, and Christmas break is right around the corner. The eighth graders are wrapping up their high school applications, and the end of the school year is coming fast. This holiday season we have much to celebrate here at The Woods Academy. Everyone here in our community probably has their own holiday traditions with their families at home, but we also have many exciting holiday traditions here. From Santa's Workshop to the annual Christmas Concert, the holidays are an exciting time at The Woods.

The holiday season is a time of giving and family. Over this long break, we encourage you to spend some quality time with your own family. Family is a big part of our community here and the holidays are a great time to connect with them. No matter what holidays you are celebrating this year, we here at The Woods hope that you have a very happy holiday season.

HOLIDAY GIVING MADE EASY AT SANTA'S WORKSHOP

BY MAGGIE B. AND EMMA M.

Tis the season to buy presents.
 Fa la la la la la la la!
 Where do you go do your shopping?
 Fa la la la la la la la!
 Chances are you go to Target,
 Fa la la la la la la la!
 But your parents see what you're buying.
 Fa la la la la la la la!

What if I told you that there is a place for Woods students to shop without their families knowing what they are buying for them? Santa's Workshop is the way to go! Santa's Workshop is a special event here at The Woods where students can buy presents for their families and keep what they bought them for Christmas a secret. Santa's Workshop has an abundance of gifts for everyone in the family, including pets! At Santa's Workshop they carefully wrap up your presents and send you off with a candy cane to spread Christmas cheer!

STUDENT COUNCIL INTERVIEW SERIES: PART 2

BY EMMA H. AND ASHA S.

Continuing our student council highlight series, we interviewed the treasurer of the student council, Max S. and the 6th grade girl representative, Cali B. We are asking the same questions of everyone, so we can compare their answers and see what they all want to do this year with the student council.

Treasurer Max S. said that he thinks he was elected because he knows a lot of people at The Woods, and he is friendly with them. He told us that his favorite part of being on the Student Council is being able to help the students and listening to what they want for the school. Max also stated that they are working on organizing dances and petitioning to be able to see updates on our grades whenever we want. Overall, he thinks this school year the Student Council has become more cooperative and active in the school.

We then interviewed the 6th grade girl representative, Cali B., and got her opinion on the Student Council. She thinks her fellow students elected her because of her connections with the new students at the school. She told us that this year, the Student Council is much more organized than in years before, which allows them to follow through on what they need to do. Her favorite part about being on the student council is being able to have some control over things happening in the school and that she is able to represent her grade. She said that they are trying to make new improvements in the school and complete tasks that others have started. Finally, Cali told us that she is excited to see what the Student Council is able to accomplish throughout this school year.

AROUND CAMPUS

STORYTIME COMES TO LIFE FOR MONTESSORI PRESCHOOLERS

BY DAISY K.

On December 9, the Montessori here at The Woods Academy had the privilege of watching a professional puppet show. The puppet show was performed by Kaydee Puppets, and it was about Santa's Workshop in the North Pole during Christmastime. The Montessori had been looking forward to this for a while, and right before the show we talked to a few Montessori students. Boomer said, "I'm so excited!" and Piper Rose said that the person she is most excited for is Santa Claus. All of the students loved the puppet show and found it hilarious. Overall the Montessori puppet show was a success!



MS STUDENTS STEP UP AS PRAYER PARTNERS FOR YOUNGER PEERS

BY EMMA M.

At The Woods Academy there is a thing called prayer partners. Prayer partners is a program where a younger and an older student are paired together to do activities. The older prayer partner is a role model for the younger prayer partner. They help the younger prayer partner with any activities that they do during the time and keep them out of trouble. The younger prayer partners... well they can do just about anything they want within reason. Being a younger prayer partner starts in first grade and ends in fourth grade. Being an older prayer partner starts in fifth grade and goes until eighth grade. You stay with the same person as your prayer partner unless they leave. Some people prefer being the older prayer partner, some people prefer being the younger prayer partner. Which is better? I asked five sixth graders and here is what they had to say.

Andrew R: It's really fun to be with the little prayer partners and fist bump them, give them candy and other stuff. That's why I like being the older prayer partner.

Riya: I like being the older prayer partner because I love being with little kids and teaching them new things. It is also sweet how much the little kids look up to you.

Maggie: I like the idea of being a younger prayer partner better because the older prayer partner takes care of you and makes sure you're always doing fine. Even though I didn't get the full prayer partner experience. I think being the younger prayer partner is better.

Emmett: I prefer being the older prayer partner with more decisions and responsibilities plus I decide where I wanna work maybe with my friends or my prayer partner's friend but that's just my opinion.

Jax: I prefer being the younger prayer partner because you get to do more fun things.

What do you think? Would you prefer being a younger prayer partner or an older one?

AROUND CAMPUS

FIRST EVER EVENT JUST FOR WOODS' MOMS

BY BROOKS C.

On Saturday, November 15, the Woods Academy Parent Teacher Organization (WAPTO) held a brand new event for The Woods' moms. It was called "Bonjour Maman" and provided a morning filled with French pastries, coffee, yoga, and massages.

From 10am-12pm, approximately 45 moms gathered in the MPR where they were treated to a barista making lattes and cappuccinos. There were three chair massage stations and two yoga sessions provided by Soulfire's Celine Delaney.

"The Mom's Morning event was such a relaxing event. I loved the yoga - it was equal parts calming and energetic," said Liz Potarazu, mom to Liam (4 th grade), Bella (1 st grade), and Sienna (Owl). "I left feeling accomplished and zen. And the lattes were amazing, too!"

In the past, WAPTO hosted a dads' barbecue event in the fall. This year, however, WAPTO created this new event specifically for Woods moms. According to Caitlin Chalke, Director of Advancement, the event was created to "give thanks to the moms and caregivers of our Mighty Owls in a fun a relaxing way."



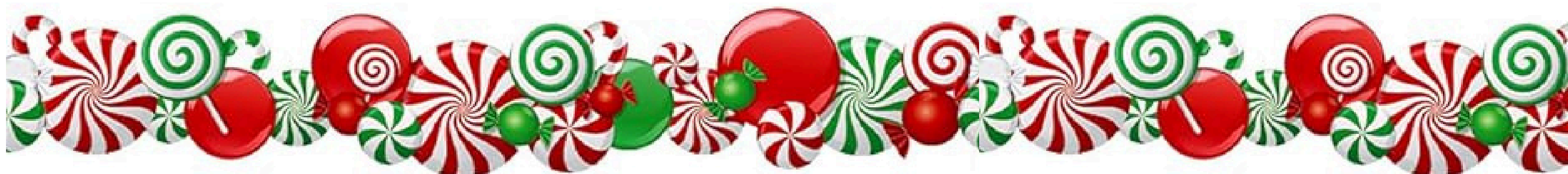
CHOIR SPREADS CHRISTMAS CHEER AT MONTCARE!

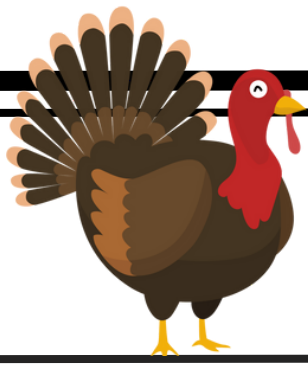
BY DAISY K.

Every year, the Woods Academy middle school choir takes a trip to Montecare in Bethesda, a nursing home for the elderly. There the choir sings carols, and eighth graders get to pass out candy canes and homemade cards to the elderly. Right after they get off the bus back to school, they stop by the front office to sing a few songs. Afterwards, the choir enjoys a selection of cookies while they reflect on their experience.

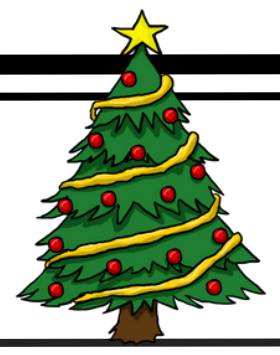
This year the choir sang a selection of traditional carols, as well as their Christmas concert pieces. These included, Mi Burrito Sabanero, Vive le Vent, Silent Night in the languages English, French, Spanish, and American Sign Language, and their focal piece, "Child of the Poor/What Child is This". They have been preparing these pieces since October, and at Montcare all of their hard work was prevalent.

Overall, this trip was a great experience to help spread some Christmas cheer! Eighth grader Maeve McC. said, "It was such a meaningful experience to witness the joy on all of their faces!"





HAPPY HOLIDAYS



THE HISTORY OF THANKSGIVING

BY MAGGIE B.

Thanksgiving is a big holiday that many people in the United States celebrate every year. It's a time for being thankful, eating yummy food, and hanging out with family. But a long time ago, Thanksgiving was actually a celebration for surviving! In 1621, a group of settlers from England called the Pilgrims came to North America. Their first winter was really hard. They didn't have enough food, and many people got sick. The Wampanoag Native Americans helped teach the Pilgrims how to grow crops like corn, so they would have enough to eat. Later that year, when the Pilgrims finally had a good harvest, they celebrated with a big feast. The Wampanoag joined them, and they all ate foods like deer, fish, and corn. They did not have pumpkin pie or mashed potatoes yet, but they were still grateful for what they had. Many years later, in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving an official national holiday. Today, people celebrate by having a big dinner, watching football and parades, and saying what they're thankful for. Even though Thanksgiving looks different now than it did in 1621, the main idea is still the same: giving thanks and spending time with the people we love.

SECRET SANTA CELEBRATES KINDNESS THIS SEASON

BY EMMA M.

Christmas is a fun time of year! Celebrating with food, presents, and family, what could be better? Well, there is another fun activity you can do: Secret Santa! Secret Santa is when you pick a person's name and get them presents, but you don't let them know who it's from. Then they open the present and they have to guess who it's from. Fun, right? Well, it happens here at our school. In advisory you pick a person for Secret Santa, then based on what they like, you get them all sorts of presents, like candy or cards! Of course, you can also get these things from Santa's workshop! Secret Santa is a fun activity to do on the holidays, and it doesn't just have to be done at school, you can also do it at home or with some friends! Have a fun time guessing!

HOW CHRISTMAS BEGAN: A LOOK AT THE HOLIDAY'S HISTORY

BY MAGGIE .

Christmas is a super popular holiday that lots of people celebrate on December 25th. There are lights, presents, cookies, and decorations everywhere! But how did it all start, and how did it become the holiday we know today?

Before Christmas even existed, people already had winter celebrations. They celebrated the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, because it meant the sun would start coming back and warmer days were ahead. These festivals made the cold season more cheerful. Christmas began as a Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. No one knows the exact day Jesus was born, but around the year 336, church leaders chose December 25th as the date. They picked that day partly because lots of other winter festivals were already happening then, which helped Christmas become more popular.

As Christmas spread to different places, it mixed with local traditions. In Europe, people used evergreen plants like holly and pine in winter because they stayed green and symbolized life. This idea eventually turned into decorating Christmas trees with lights and ornaments. Gift-giving became another big part of Christmas because of Saint Nicholas, a kind man who lived about 1,700 years ago. He helped people in need and secretly gave gifts to children. Over many years, stories about him changed and he turned into Santa Claus—the happy man in a red suit who brings presents from the North Pole.

Today, Christmas is celebrated all around the world in many different ways. Some people go to church, some open gifts, and some just enjoy time with family and delicious holiday treats. Even though Christmas has changed a lot over time, it is still a holiday about joy, hope, and being together with the people you care about.



PICTURES AND OTHER NEWS

PICTURES FROM OUR CHRISTMAS CONCERT



WASHINGTON AREA SPORTS ROUNDUP

BY MAX S.

Commanders:

The Commanders are having a tough season; they just lost their 8th game in a row 31-0. Their record sits at 3-10. They are 25th out of 32 in NFL power rankings. And the way they're playing right now I can't think about seven teams that they are better than. Let's just hope they can turn this around.

Capitals:

The Washington Capitals are a bright note in DC sports. They have surged into first place in the Metropolitan division and have one of the best records in the NHL. Their super star, Alex Ovechkin, continues to play well. Lets hope this year can be their year again

Wizards:

The Washington wizards are 15th out of 15 teams in the eastern conference. The only team in the NBA with a worse record than them are the New Orleans Pelicans. Obviously they are in rebuilding mode. One bright spot is the play of Alex Sarr who has shown significant progress in his second year. But they need a lot more pieces to help them rebuild.

Nationals:

After what was the most exciting World Series ever it is easy to forget how bad our Washington Nationals were. They finished in last place in the NL east and had the third worst record in the MLB. Let's hope they have a good offseason, acquire some good players, develop some prospects, and turn things around for next year.

DC United:

The MLS season ended with Messi leading his team to another championship. Unfortunately that team was not DC United who finished in last place in the eastern conference. They had the worst record in the MLS. Rumour has it that Ronaldo will be joining the club...**NOT**. Hopefully they can turn things around for next year.

