



The Paw Print

BCWMS

December 2016

New Year's Resolution Only Lasts for Some

by EMMA GRUNDSTROM

The new year of 2017 is waiting for us all.

For some, a new year means a new year's resolution: a chance to change a behavior or start making new, good habits.

However, if you do not have a resolution, you're not alone.

Many people don't make resolutions and those that do abandon it soon after the New Year.

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Photo by McKenna Morris

Student Council Raises Toys and Spreads Cheer to Children

by McKENNA MORRIS

Winter is a season of snow, lights, and joy. One way to celebrate and spread holiday cheer is giving back to the community and people who need some joy in their life.

WMS Student Council, lead by Ms. Katie Blundy, worked to do just that by collecting donations to help children through Toys For Tots.

During the first few weeks of December, students could bring

in gifts and place them under the tree in Ms. Blundy's classroom.

Any type of toy appropriate for kids was accepted and appreciated. All of the toys are given to kids in Kent County who are in need.

"Student council was interested in doing Toys for Tots because we wanted to make children happy during this holiday season. There's nothing better than bringing a smile to someone else's face.

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News

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Luke Barnum, a 7th grade student said, "I don't even have a resolution, most of the time."

Surprisingly, the Babylonians started New Year's resolutions thousands of years ago (<http://www.history.com/news/the-history-of-new-years-resolutions>). They would also mark the event with celebrations that lasted 12 days.

Today, many people admit that even if they make a goal for the New Year, most of the time they do not follow through with it.

According to a 2013 Forbes article, only 8% of people actually go through with their resolutions (<http://www.forbes.com/forbes/welcome/?toURL=http://www.forbes.com/sites/dandiamond/2013/01/01/just-8-of-people-achieve-their-new-years-resolutions>).

Everyone has different life goals because everybody is different. So, that means that during the New Year many will have different resolutions, right? Not exactly.

A recent study said that in 2016 the top goal was to spend more time with friends and family.

Close behind those were all fitness related and wanting to exercise more and eat healthier foods (<http://pittsburgh.about.com/od/holidays/tp/resolutions.htm>).

7th grade student, Elizabeth Gillespie said, "Most likely to stay healthier."

Whether you do make a resolution or not, the New Year will definitely be bringing a new chances and opportunities.

Will you make a resolution this year? If you do, will you stick to it for the whole year?

Midterm Exams Help Prepare Students

by McKENNA MORRIS

Midterm exams are around the corner.

I know, most of you probably want to stop reading now, but there is some good news: On the days we have exams we have half days!

First thing to know is that you have to get two tests done each half-day. It takes about 85-90 minutes for students to finish each one.

As a 7th grader, I am not sure if I will be ready for all of this. I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels this way.

Mrs. Amy Wauben, 7th grade Math teacher, said exams are beneficial for students.

"I think taking them in middle school helps kids understand how to prepare for them when they get to high school and college. In high school, they weigh much more than they do at West. I think it all about preparing our kids for the future. I like giving kids opportunities to see what the next level looks like," she said.

Reagan Proctor, an 8th grade student thinks otherwise.

"I don't like them. Most kids don't like it because it's an exam, but I like it better than the Final because you don't have to remember as much material. The midterm, you only have to remember half of the information."

Mrs. Katherine Sibalwa, a WMS and High School Spanish teacher said, "I think Midterms are essential in preparing students for High School and then College. Although it may seem overwhelming to have an exam on everything learned from first semester, since it is already learned, it shouldn't be hard. It is a review. This also helps solidify the knowledge and skills gained from classes by assessing at semester."

Midterms exams might be frightening but in the end will help students because it prevents students from forgetting the information they have learned so far in the school year.

If you are worried about the test, make sure you follow review guides from your teachers, keep up on current assignments, and ask questions when you do not understand.

If you study, you should do well and be ready to finish the year strong.

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It's always important to remember that not everyone has the same life experiences. While some of us are fortunate to receive gifts during the holidays, not every family can afford that. We want to help those families by spreading holiday cheer," Ms. Blundy said.

Student Life

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Share your opinion
with us! Send it to
our editor and you
might see it in the
next issue!



Thank you
Parents at West
for supporting the
printing of our paper!

Teacher Feature: Mrs. Post



Photo by Nathan Evers

by NATHAN EVERS

Mrs. Suzie Post has been teaching for 11 years.

She has taught at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, but middle school is her favorite. She teaches 7th and 8th Strategies and 7th and 8th grade Math at WMS. She loves working with kids, and her favorite part of teaching is watching her students grow and learn.

Mrs. Post is married and has one daughter named Kensley. Kensley is 5 years old and she is in kindergarten at Brown Elementary. Mrs. Post and her husband are expecting a baby boy in April.

Her hobbies are singing, running, reading, and spending time with her family. She sings on her church's praise team and also at weddings.

She has a fish named "Pinkie." She is not an animal person, but if she had to choose a favorite it would be the giraffe.

Her favorite color is teal. Her favorite food is salmon and her favorite drinks are coffee and water.

Her favorite Christmas song is "O Holy Night" and her favorite movies are "Where the Heart Is" and "The Rock."

Mrs. Post went to Hope College for her undergraduate degree and she went to Grand Valley State University for her master's degree.

When she first started college she wanted to be a news broadcaster, but during her sophomore year she volunteered to work with a student with special needs at his school. After working with him, she decided she wanted to become a teacher instead, and she is so glad that she did!

Student Life

8th grade Lewis and Clark Day

8th grade students spent the day outdoors to experience and explore concepts that relate to the expedition of the explorers Captain Meriwether Lewis and Second Lieutenant William Clark. Students learn about building shelters, filtering water, and other ways to survive in the wild. A special thank you to Mr. Jason Kaiser and Mrs. Becky Debowski for organizing a fun and educational experience.

Arts and Entertainment

Video Game Review:

Play *DC* and Become a *Legend*

By NOAH NOLAN

Do you like Superheroes?

I know the game for you: *DC Legends*, a 4 star rating.

You can collect your favorite DC Superheroes and you can protect the Earth from the manhunters and other dark heroes.

As you go along in your journey you collect other heroes such as the Flash. To collect these Superheroes you defeat levels and you have a chance of getting some essence.

You can get essence from opening crates for that certain hero.

For example, Harley Quinn requires 25 of her essence to actually get her as someone you can play in the game.

Next you can do player

versus player. When you do player versus player, if you get to a high enough rank you can

get a certain amount of essence for that character and you would keep going up and up with the essence and get that character.



Then in the story mode you fight through the different planets and fight manhunters to save that planet.

In my opinion, you should play this game because you get to power your hero up and put sweat gear on, too!

And you can play other people just in case you get bored of the campaign or you can't just beat that level just go beat a lower level rank on player versus player.

Now go on, play, and save the Earth.

Movie Review:

Worst is Great

by KENDALL MEAD

Middle School The Worst Years of My Life is a great book and an even greater movie, rated PG.

It's about a kid named Rafe who gets transferred to so many different schools that only one is left that will take him.

It turns out that this was the worst school of his life. As the main character, Rafe tells his friends, "I thought I was going to go to prison after this school, turns out this is."

The school is strict and doesn't even allow laughing in the halls.

Then he had a great idea. Since the principal ruined his sketchbook, he will now ruin his code of conduct book.

Rafe leads you on an adventure with many twists and turns. It has some funny parts with all of the rules he breaks, and some happy parts when he meets a new friend and teacher.

It also has a few sad parts; well, you will just have to watch the movie to find this one out.

I would truly recommend this movie because it relates to middle school students, like us.

Lastly, the effects and pacing keeps you interested through the whole movie.

You think one thing is going to happen and the opposite does.

This movie also does make you appreciate our great principal!

Soon in Theaters...



January 27:
A Dog's Purpose,
rated PG

February 24:
Rock Dog, rated PG

March 17:
Beauty and the Beast,
rated PG

April 7:
Smurfs: The Lost Village, rated PG

Arts and Entertainment

Orchestra Students Shine at Holiday Concert

by ADRIANA GOULD

Holiday music is always the best, especially when the WMS orchestra plays it!

This year the orchestra has many different concerts and is proud to perform in their Holiday concert on December 15 at the Van Singel Fine Arts Center.

The orchestra plays “Christmas Joy,” “Nightrider,” and “Ukrainian Bell Carol” which is also known as “Carol of the Bells.”

Ms. Nicole Langford is the Orchestra teacher at Nickels, West, and the High School. She always looks forward to the Holiday concert because of the season.

“We do a Holiday Concert to spread the joy of the season. In addition to teaching and exposing students to music, that is deeply rooted in our culture. A lot of this music also touches on many of the skills and techniques students are learning or need to learn, thus making it a fun way to learn new things,” she said.

Natalie Carrie is a 7th grade orchestra



Photo by Zoey Wedge

student who enjoys getting to play concerts during the Holiday season.

“I like it because you get to challenge yourself on new songs. Also Ms. Langford is funny and makes the class fun,” she said.

The orchestra always puts on a great concert for the crowd and looks forward to upcoming shows in the spring.

Land of Stories Brings Fairytales to Life

By McKENNA MORRIS

“The Land Of Stories” is an outstanding series written by Chris Colfer. It brings fairytales to life and the word “fantasy” a whole new name.

There are five books in the series so far, but Colfer keeps writing more tales that leave you breathless. The way he explains people's thoughts and scenes make you feel like you're in the story.

The books are *The Wishing Spell*, *The Enchantress Returns*, *A Grim Warning*, *Beyond The Kingdom*, and *An Author's Odyssey*. They all are stories that teach you something, and make you think about things that you never realized.

The series follows a set of twins, the girl, Alex, and the boy, Conner. They are complete opposites but they both have one thing in common: They love the fairytale world that their dad and grandma were from.

Every book is an adventure, each one better than the last.

They run into a bunch of villains in the

Fairy Tale World. Also, in the second and third books Alex has a chance to take her grandma's place in the Fairy Tale world. Only her grandma can travel between their worlds and her world, but that changes.

My favorite book is the fourth one, which is called *Beyond The Kingdom*. While I love all of them, this one keeps you on the edge of your seat, and it won't let you put your book down.

This book could easily get you to love reading!

7th grader Kyra Syswerda adores the book, too. “I love fantasy books with lots of thrill and adventure, and that was the exact book I was looking for. It was really exciting, and I could not wait to turn the next page. Personally, my favorite in the series was “The Grimm Warning” because I feel like the author left a lot of cliffhangers throughout the book,” she said.

As you can see this book series is brilliant and you must read it, So, go get lost in the Fairy Tale World!

Opinion

Gift Giving is a Great Tradition

by McKENNA MORRIS

Should we give gifts to friends? Yes!

Giving presents to our family is what we do every Christmas and our family means a lot to us. Our friends also mean a lot to us.

Giving presents to your friends can show them that you know them by getting them something they've always wanted.

Some families might not be able to afford presents, but that is okay.

Even if it's just a handmade card, picture,

or some other creation, it still shows people that you care about them.

I think a good gift idea for your friends is candy. Lots of kids love candy and it's super easy to find.

Socks and iTunes gift cards are always popular gifts to give to friends and you can find both in a range of prices.

Giving gifts to friends is a way to spread Christmas joy. I think it's a great idea, and I think everyone should give gifts to friends.

Best Ways to Enjoy Wintertime

by EMMA PARKER

With winter here, it is time to bundle up and figure out what fun things there are to do.

First, you could go play in the fluffy white snow. You could make snow angels, a snowman, or some snowballs for a snowball fight with some friends.

My favorite thing is after a day of fun in the snow is

a nice, warm cup of hot coco.

If you want to stay warm inside then here is some things you could do. So you could play board games, like *Monopoly* or *Checkers*.

Clue is one of my favorites though all the mystery in it. Also I enjoy *Monopoly* because of all the buying and selling and adventure in the game.

I know it is "old school," but just try to grab your family or friends and play cards; you never know, it actually could be a lot of fun.

Another thing you could do is cuddle up on the couch and play a Christmas movie or just any good movie.

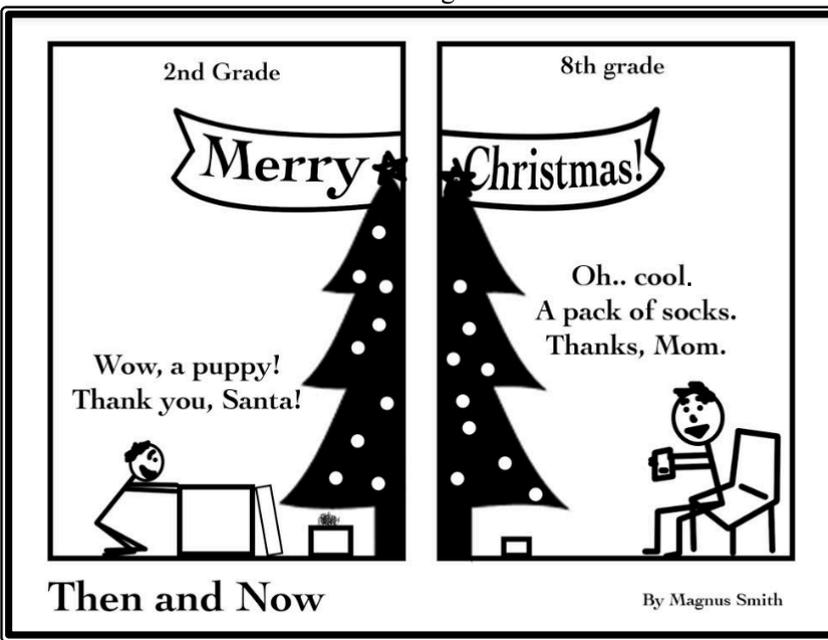
Decorating for the Holiday is also fun. My family puts our 2 Christmas trees up and then play some Christmas music.

Spending time with family is a great way to spend Winter break!

Try making a fun craft online or use Pinterest which is an app that is free and it basically gives you some fun ideas that other people have done.

One fun craft to do is to make snowflakes. Just grab a piece of paper fold the paper in half and then in half again, then cut shapes on edges of the paper and then when you open it up you got a snowflake.

Whether you go outside or stay in, spending time during winter with friends and family is what makes it the best time of the year!



Then and Now

By Magnus Smith

Sports

Dancing into Season with Spirited Sport

by FIONA WALSH

Grace, spirit, and fun are just a few words to describe the WMS Dance Team.

You can see a performance from the Dance Team at least once per month. The season lasts most of the school year, starting in August and ending in April.

In addition to performing at WMS, they compete. Their next competitions are at the West Ottawa Invite on Saturday January 21st, Wayland Invite on Saturday January 28th, the Jenison Invite on Saturday February 11th, and the Davenport University Invite.

The girls compete in pom, jazz, hip-hop, and kick line routines.

Marissa Myhre a 8th grader on the team said that her favorite routine is hip-hop because it has a

lot of attitude.

The team’s coaches are Cayla Hamilton and Andrea Glenn.

Coach Hamilton said the team has grown a lot since tryouts.

“This season has been successful for far, and we look forward to start competing after Byron Center invitational,” she said.

If you would like to support the team, you can by attend competitions or fundraisers.

Kayla Poll, a 7th grader on the team, said she was inspired to get involved in dance because of her sisiter. “Since my

sister was dancing first I decided to try it out and after that I realized it’s my kind of sport,” she said.

During practice the team likes to work very hard on technique and cleaning up the routines for competitions.



Photo by Fiona Walsh

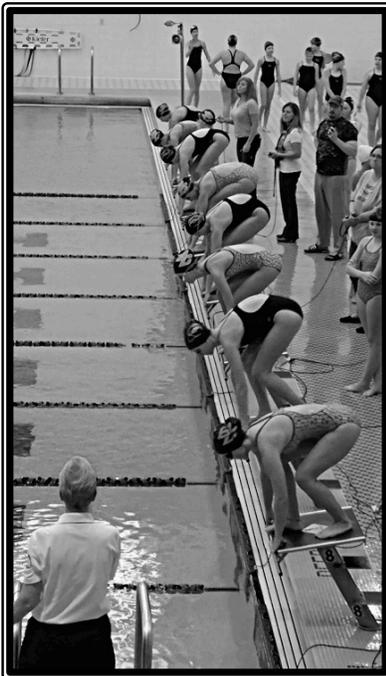


Photo by McKenna Morris

Sports Snapshots



Photo by Fiona Walsh

Above: 7th grade boys basketball players Brayden Elzinga and Trever Walter drove to the hoop during their home game against Rockford.

Left: WMS Swimmers participate in a meet at the High School.