

DECEMBER 2023

TIGER TALK

ST JOHN HUDSON USD 350



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PICTURE BY MORGAN GUNTER

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWS

by Josh Meyer, Superintendent

The Christmas season is one of my favorite times of year. There are a lot of emotions and feelings associated with this holiday: love, joy, peace, giving, etc. I always remember lighting the advent candles as a child and also with my own children talking about these very things. The first candle of the Christian advent represents hope.

While our daily hopes are not as profound as those in the Bible waiting for their Savior to come, it is still important to live with hope each day. The dark cloud of water rights issues in our region has not gone away, but at least there is some hope and optimism that a long-term resolution could be near. We have problems with our aging school facilities, but work is being done to find a workable and affordable solution.

On behalf of the USD 350 school family, I want to wish you all a happy holiday season and a very Merry Christmas full of hope.

After the recent general election, there will be a few changes on the board of education starting in January. Derek Foote and Katrina Hickel will both continue to serve in their current positions. Trey Burgan and Aaron Roach were voted in to replace Debby Waddle and Raymond Long. Neither of them chose to rerun for their seat. Debby has served on the board for the 8 ½ years and Raymond for 4 years. I want to thank them for their service to the community.

Just before the Thanksgiving break, we had an all-school assembly to recognize the Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction. The Kansas commissioner of education, Dr. Randy Watson came to St. John to present this award along with state board member Dennis Hershberger. We are one of only six school districts in the state to earn this recognition. I want to thank Dr. Watson and Mr. Hershberger for taking time to visit our district. I was proud to accept this award on the behalf of USD 350 staff members that work hard every day to ensure our students are equipped for success.

As the year draws to an end, many of you are considering charitable donations. I'd ask that you also consider the USD 350 Educational Foundation for any charitable giving. The Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides an avenue for patrons, businesses, and organizations to financially support the mission of St. John-Hudson schools.

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DECEMBER EVENTS

SWKMEA HS HONOR BAND

Dec 2nd @ Dodge City

4TH - 6TH MUSIC PROGRAM

Dec 5th

ACT EXAM

Dec 9th

BOE MEETING

Dec 11th

JH / HS WINTER MUSIC CONCERT

Dec 12th

NO SCHOOL - WINTER VACATION

Dec 18th - Jan 2nd

BACK TO SCHOOL

Jan 3rd

NO SCHOOL / STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Jan 15th

SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Our Foundation really captures the giving spirit of this great community. The Foundation accepts donations to support student scholarships, library funding, and various student and school programs. Donations can be given for a particular purpose or to be used at the discretion of the Foundation board to support our schools. Information about the Foundation can be found on our school district's website.

The district is pursuing options to replace the concession and restroom building at the football / track stadium. The restroom facilities are inadequate and are not handicap accessible. The concession area is in need of a complete renovation. We have a committee looking at options for a new building. This committee is also looking for donations to raise funds for this project. Contact Leah Alpers if you are interested in donating to this project, or see the Foundation website for specifics.

Mr. White has resigned his position as junior-senior high school principal effective at the end of the current school year. We are currently searching for a new principal for next school year. I hope to be able to announce a successor sometime after the holiday break.

As always, if you'd like to visit about any of these topics or have other questions or concerns, I can be reached at 620-549-3564 or meyerj@usd350.com. I am proud to be a Tiger and proud to serve USD 350 with Purpose, Passion, and Pride.

JANUARY EVENTS

BACK TO SCHOOL

Jan 3rd

ACT REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Jan 5th

BOE MEETING

Jan 8th

MID WINTER CLASSIC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Jan 15th - Jan 19th

NO SCHOOL / STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Jan 15th

PROGRESS REPORTS

Jan 31st



JOSH MEYER

Superintendent

meyerj@usd350.com

KID-FRIENDLY RESOLUTIONS: A WAY TO GROW IN THE NEW YEAR

by Angela Petersen, Elementary Principal

As we get ready to usher in another exciting year, it's the perfect time to encourage our little ones to embrace the spirit of growth, positivity, and fun! New Year's resolutions aren't just for adults; they can be a fantastic way for kids to set goals, build good habits, and develop a sense of responsibility. Now is a great time to start laying out your January plans. Here are some kid-friendly resolution ideas to try in 2024:

1. Read, Explore, Imagine:

Encourage your child to dive into the magical world of books. Set a resolution for a certain number of books to read each month or explore new genres together. This not only enhances their literacy skills but also fosters creativity and imagination.

2. Healthy Habits, Happy Kids:

Promote a healthy lifestyle by making resolutions centered around physical activity and nutrition. Whether it's trying a new sport, incorporating more fruits and veggies into meals, or taking family walks, these resolutions set the foundation for lifelong well-being.

3. Be Kind and Spread Joy:

Emphasize the importance of kindness and empathy by encouraging resolutions that focus on helping others

Whether it's volunteering at a local charity, sharing toys with friends, or being a good listener, teaching kids the joy of giving is a lesson that lasts a lifetime.

4. Screen Time Balance:

In today's digital age, striking a balance between screen time and other activities is crucial. Help your child set realistic goals for limiting screen time and replacing it with creative play, outdoor activities, or family time.

5. Learn Something New:

Stimulate your child's curiosity by encouraging them to explore new interests. Whether it's learning to play a musical instrument, trying their hand at a new hobby, or picking up a new language, this resolution fosters a love for learning.

6. Responsible Earth Guardians:

Teach your child the importance of caring for the environment. Resolutions like reducing plastic use, recycling, or participating in community clean-up events empower children to become responsible stewards of the planet.

7. Practice Gratitude:

Foster a positive mindset by incorporating gratitude into daily life. Encourage your child to keep a gratitude journal or share one thing they are thankful for each day. This simple practice can lead to increased happiness and resilience.

Remember, the key to successful resolutions is to make them achievable and enjoyable. Celebrate small victories along the way, and let this New Year be a time of growth, joy, and positive transformation for your little ones.

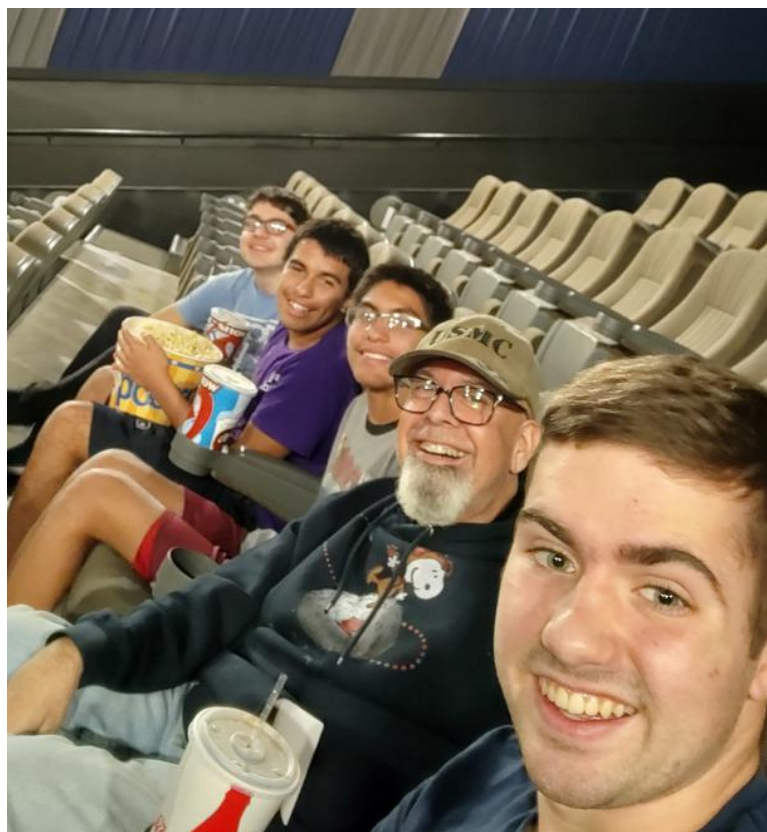
Wishing you and your family a fantastic and fulfilling Holiday Season!

CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

SJ COMIC BOOK CLUB

By Mark Bryant

On Saturday, November 11, the SJ Comic Book Club went to Golden Belt Cinema to see Marvel's *The Marvels*. Afterwards the club went to Wendy's to eat. Everyone had a good time and enjoyed the movies!





Support Your Local
YOUTH SHOOTING TEAM

PROCEEDS BENEFIT
St. John Hudson Trap Shooting Team

DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON JANUARY 20TH
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
JENNIFER AT 620-549-3564

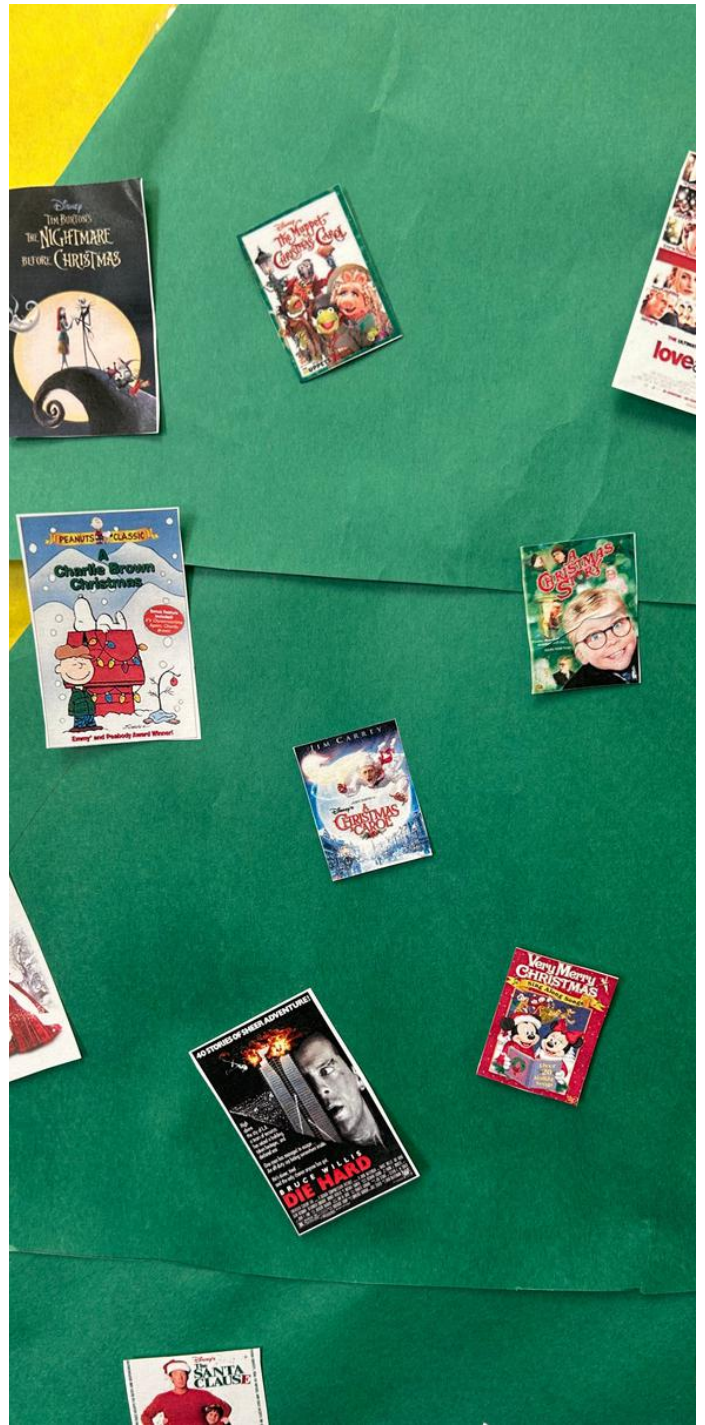


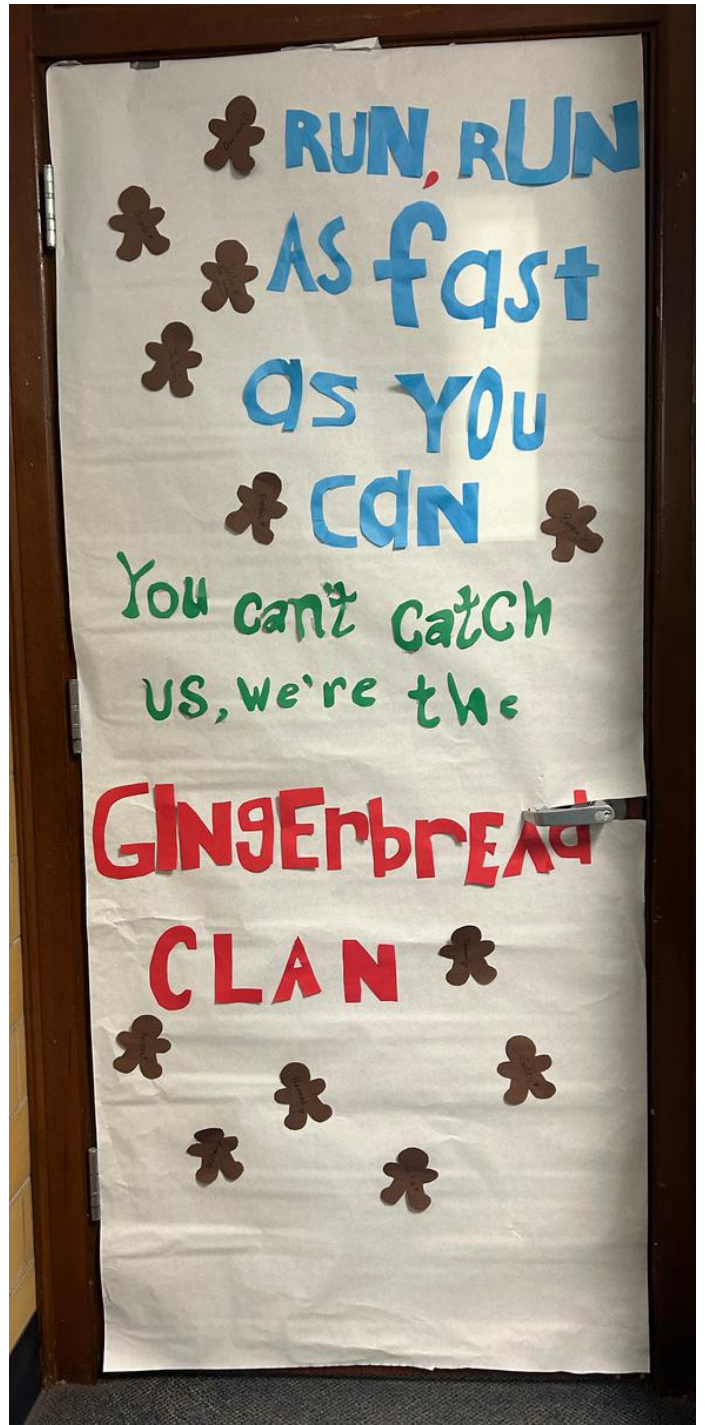
DOOR DECORATING CONTEST THIS MONTH

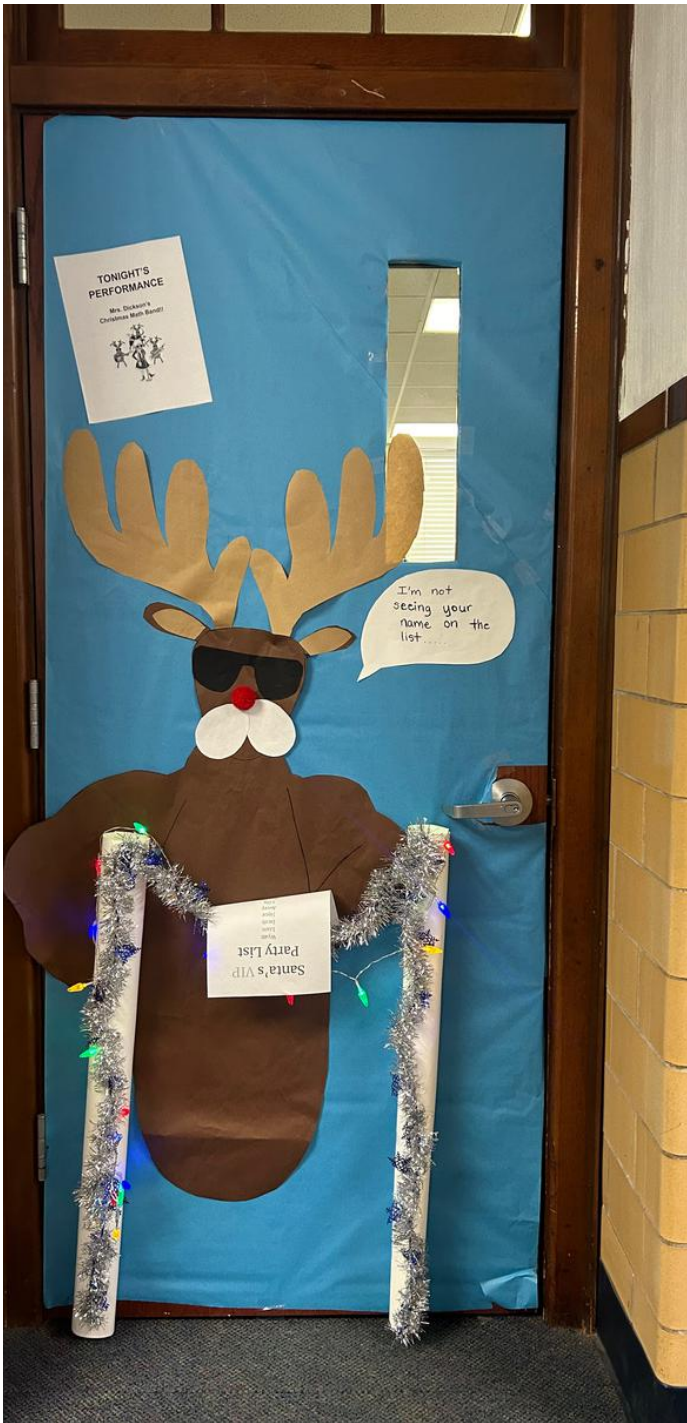
by FCCLA

WINNERS will be announced later this month.













JH/HS BB

<i>Date</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Time</i>
December 1st	HS STAFFORD	AWAY	4 PM
December 4th	HS LARNED	AWAY	?
December 4th	JH SPEARVILLE	AWAY	4 PM
December 5th	HS LARNED	AWAY	?
December 7th	HS LARNED	AWAY	?
December 8th	HS LARNED	AWAY	?



JH/HS WRESTLING

<i>Date</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Time</i>
December 1st	HS PRATT	AWAY	1 PM
December 2nd	HS PRATT	AWAY	10 AM
December 4th	HS LARNED	AWAY	4 PM
December 9th	HS HESTON	AWAY	9 AM
December 15th	HS HOISINTON	AWAY	3 PM



For more than six decades, the Delp Christmas Tree Farm has helped Kansans celebrate the holidays

By **Beccy Tanner**

Stafford County Economic Development
Special to the Tribune

For many Kansans, the Christmas holiday season begins first with a visit to the Delp Christmas Tree Farm in St. John.

It's tradition and for good reason. The Delp Christmas Tree Farm is the oldest continuously operating commercial Christmas tree farm in Kansas. Cecil and Ruby Delp started the farm in 1959 and were founding members of the Kansas State Christmas Tree Growers Association.

Decades later, one of the Delp's sons, Tony and his wife, Linda, returned to St. John to help with the farm. And now, Joel and Sarah Delp and their children help — representing the second, third and fourth generations of the Delp family to help with the farm.

Go now, and there are Christmas carols playing

nonstop on a sound system.

The scent of fresh-cut trees, swags and wreaths hangs in the air.

Inside the main office is a fireplace and a help-yourself area with peanuts, candy canes and hot apple cider. Outside are rows and rows of trees where generations of families have come to select Christmas trees.

In the beginning, it was small-town life that first drew the Delps to Stafford County.

Cecil and Ruby moved to St. John in 1946. Cecil was originally from the St. John area. His parents did some farming south of St. John, near the Antrim community. Ruby, although she was born in Arkansas, grew up near Guthrie, Okla. The two met in Oklahoma.

Tony and Linda were the next generation to move back.

"We moved back to St. John so we could be closer to family and also a smaller, rural community where we



Tyler and Leah Alpers with their kids Braxton, Easton, and Brecken at Delp Christmas Tree Farm.

Courtesy photo

could raise our family and have the advantages of a smaller school and the opportunity to work out on a farm," Tony Delp said.

How the farm began
The idea of a Christmas tree farm began with his father's cousins, who would talk of harvesting 40,000

to 60,000 trees grown in natural habit for sale at Christmas in Detroit and Chicago. Also, Cecil Delp's two brothers both operated fruit orchards in Yakima Valley, Wash.

"Dad always liked to try different things," Tony said. "He never liked to do like everybody else. So, he took trips and looked at nurseries and trees. He worked with Kansas State University with the state forester."

By the 1960s and 1970s, the Delp Tree Farm in St. John was a large operation. During the summers, high school and college students would often help with the farm labor.

When it was the first Christmas Tree farm in Kansas, it wasn't unusual to see car after car lined up along US-281, waiting for the chance to pull in and select a tree.

Travel the surrounding

KANSANS

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KANSANS

Continued from A1

highways then — especially after Thanksgiving — and it was a common site to see station wagons and pickups with Christmas trees tied securely on top or in back.

The Christmas tree farm heyday for the Delps and other tree operators was during the 1970s and 1980s, when there were 150 tree farms across the state. Now

there are closer to 30.

Pre-lit artificial trees have grown in popularity, Delp said, but he has seen their popularity peak and decline over time. Also, there are more trees available at local grocery stores and at organizations that set up lots in cities.

Cecil Delp was well past 50 when he planted 17,500 evergreen trees using his Fordson tractor, sons Phil and Tony and a planter he

borrowed from the local Soil Conservation Service.

Ten acres were set aside for a 4-H project for Phil and Tony.

For decades, Ruby Delp taught first grade to students at St. John Elementary School. Then, in the early 1970s, Ruby and Cecil built a combination tree office and pre-school on the farm. The center of the office included the huge fireplace where customers could go to get warm

after tromping through rows and rows of trees to select a Christmas tree. Cecil and Ruby both died in 1997 after 65 years of marriage.

Joel Delp has also experimented with various fruit trees including growing some paw paws. The paw paw trees are normally grown only in thick woodlands, usually close to streams in eastern Kansas, as far west as Butler County. And so, it is rare and exceptional the

trees are beginning to thrive on the sandy soils of Stafford County.

Still, it is the Christmas trees that remain popular.

"We couldn't have a better customer base than the people who come for the Christmas trees," Tony said. "Most of them are happy, pleasant, and easy to talk to and get along with. It's fun to see them each year."

It's all about family for the Delps.

Linda Delp — according to Tony — is an expert bow maker and has literally created and tied thousands of bows. She also runs the counter and keeps the office going.

For the Delps, Christmas is their family legacy.

"We care about the community," Tony said. "For our family, Christmas begins with Christ and then, it's about spending time with each other."

Hilton's Tigers will be hustling on defense this year

By Jennifer Stultz
Tri-County Tribune Editor
jstultz@cherryroad.com

According to Head Coach Danton Hilton of the St. John-Hudson High School boys basketball team, this year's Tigers are going to be fast and furious, especially on defense.

"We tried to play a high possession game last year (would try to mimic Hutch juco, Lakin, and Collegiate) and it just didn't fit us," Hilton said. "It did however get a lot of young guys a lot of playing time. We are continuing to play 5 out, positionless basketball and we should be a lot tougher to guard this year. We are planning on getting back to being really tough defensively in the half court. Our energy level and effort has been



The St. John-Hudson High School boys basketball team features 21 players this year who are working under the guidance to Head Coach Danton Hilton, to deny their opponents with aggressive defense. *Courtesy photo*

great during our defensive portions of practice."

Hilton shared the following information about this 2023-23 team leaders and

potential starters for the season.

"Quade (Smith) obviously has been a very important piece to us over the past

couple of years. His energy is infectious and has a really good motor. We are hoping he continues to improve on scoring the ball around

the rim and increasing his shooting percentage from 3. He is a really good defender with a high basketball IQ. He is a joy to coach.

“Jace (Reyes) played a lot of hoops over the spring/summer and is the definition of a gym rat. He is taking over some of the ball handling duties but is also one of our better shooters. If Jace plays with the right attitude he and we can be very good. He started 1-2 games last year, I think.

“Braxton Alpers is our energy guy who also played a lot of hoops in the spring/summer. He is a great rebounder and plays very hard. We are asking him to play inside a little more this year & be more physical around the rim. Started most games as a freshman.

“Brody Vieux is a very

lanky “3 & D” guy for us. After an early injury last year, Brody really came on late for us. He shoots it well and has some really good length.

“Aden Adame is our spot up shooter and does everything you ask him to do. If I could give anyone my height, it would be him.”

Hilton indicated that players seeing rotational time this year included Juan Ibarra, Ian Dunn, Alan Valenzuela and Daniel Portillo.

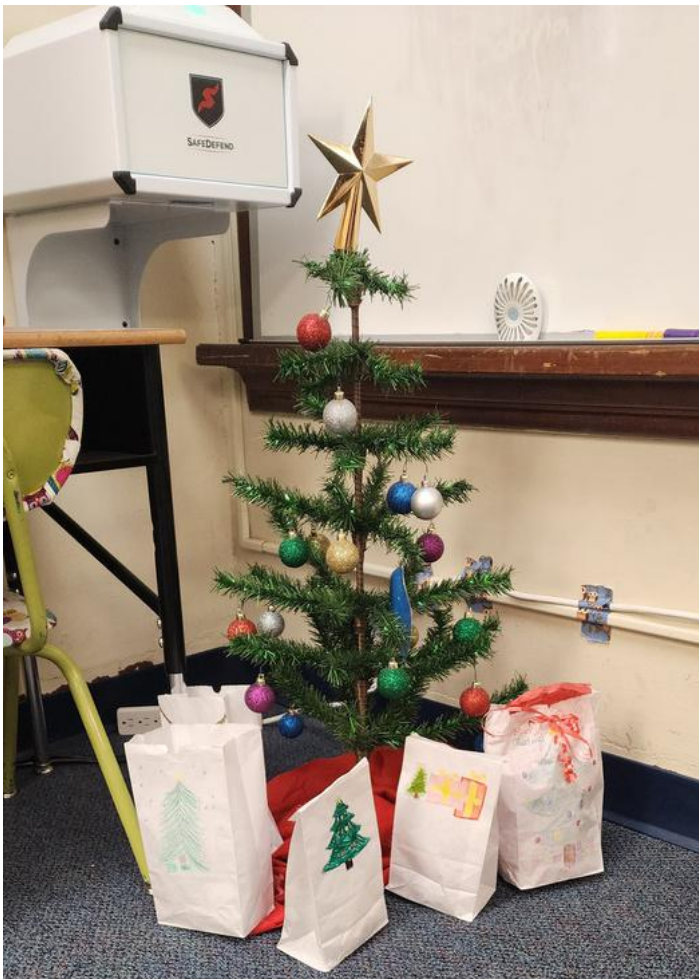
“I still think our top teams will be the same in our league (Ellinwood, Macksville, Lacrosse) but I am hoping we are right on the heels of that group and, more importantly, will be competitive in every league game this year,” Hilton said. “My hope is to finish in the top half.”

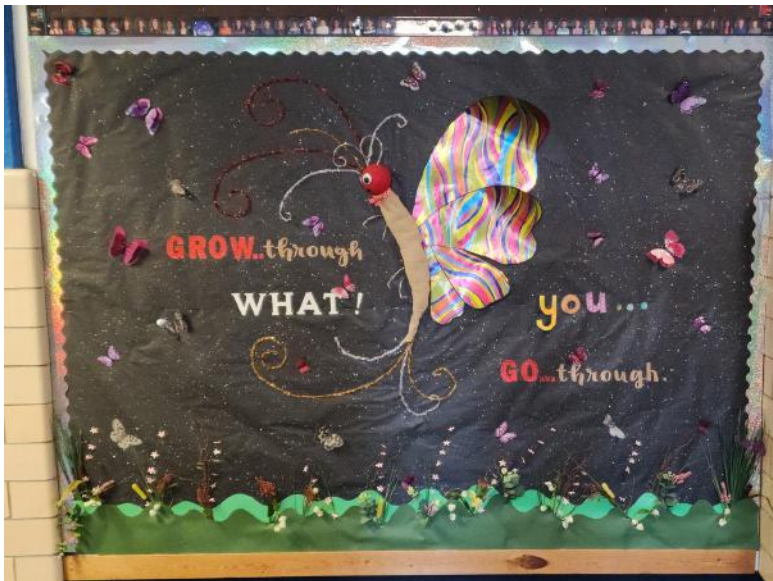
FOOD MENU



USD #350					DECEMBER		2023		MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE	
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY						
BREAKFAST		BREAKFAST		BREAKFAST		BREAKFAST		1 BREAKFAST		
								Banana Bread Pears Apple Juice Cereal Milk		
								LUNCH		
								Taco Salad Lettuce & Tomatoes Corn Peaches Fresh Fruit Birthday Cake Milk		
4 BREAKFAST	5 BREAKFAST	6 BREAKFAST	7 BREAKFAST	8 BREAKFAST						
Mini Waffles Applesauce Grape Juice Cereal Milk	Breakfast Pizza Mixed Fruit Apple Juice Cereal Milk	Muffin Peaches Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk	Breakfast Bar Pears Apple Juice Cereal Milk	Pumpkin Bread Pineapple Orange Juice Cereal Milk						
LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		
Cheese Quesadilla Lettuce Salad Baby Carrots Pineapple Fresh Fruit Milk	Chicken Nuggets Potatoes & Gravy Green Beans Sliced Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk	Sausage Pizza Lettuce Salad Corn Applesauce Fresh Fruit Milk	Salisbury Steak Potatoes & Gravy Broccoli Sliced Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk	Sloppy Joe/Bun French Fries Baked Beans Mixed Fruit Fresh Fruit Cookie Milk						
11 BREAKFAST	12 BREAKFAST	13 BREAKFAST	14 BREAKFAST	15 BREAKFAST						
Mini Waffles Pineapple Grape Juice Cereal Milk	Breakfast Pizza Pears Apple Juice Cereal Milk	Muffin Applesauce Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk	French Toast Sticks Mixed Fruit Apple Juice Cereal Milk	Banana Bread Peaches Orange Juice Cereal Milk						
LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		
Spaghetti & Meat Sauce Lettuce Salad Green Beans Pears Fresh Fruit French Bread Milk	Chicken Fried Steak Potatoes & Gravy Broccoli Applesauce Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk	Hamburgers/Bun French Fries Baked Beans Sliced Peaches Fresh Fruit Cookie Milk	Cheese Pizza Lettuce Salad Baby Carrots Pineapple Fresh Fruit Milk	Turkey & Dressing Potatoes & Gravy Green Beans Hot Roll Cherry Crisp Milk						
18 BREAKFAST	19 BREAKFAST	20 BREAKFAST	21 BREAKFAST	22 BREAKFAST						
NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!						
LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		LUNCH		
NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL!!	This institution is an equal opportunity provider		NO SCHOOL !!		NO SCHOOL !!				
25	26		27	28		29				
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!	NO SCHOOL !!		NO SCHOOL !!				

GALLERY









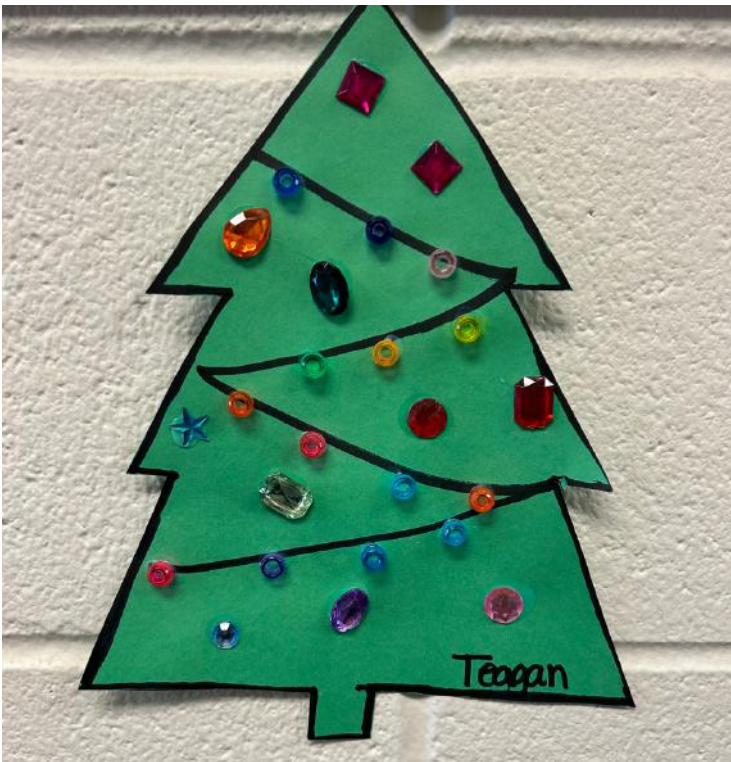
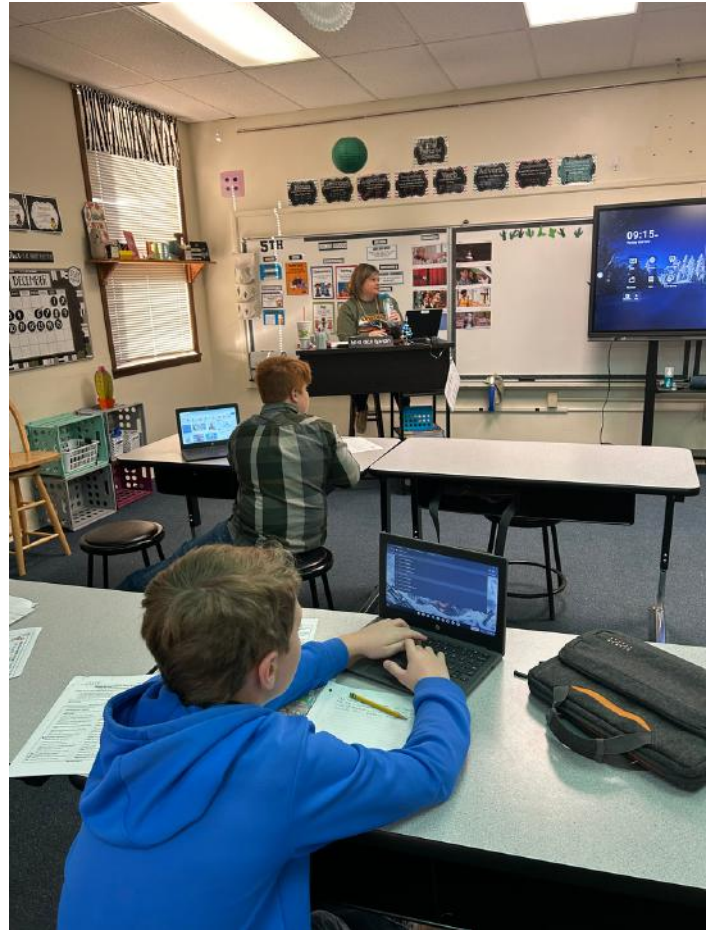


















MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

by Blain White, HS Principal

December signals the nearing of the end of the first semester of school and there are many emotions that are felt by students, staff and families that go along with that. Happiness, sadness, stress, panic, excitement, relief, and gratitude are a few that I can think of off the top of my head. It seems like everything is a rush. We just finish Thanksgiving break and then, as if we entered a time warp, school calendars fill up with sports practices, sporting events, concerts, etc. and families become busy with shopping and family gatherings. Then there is the excitement of Christmas and the holidays that go along with that. To top it all off, we expect that students not only continue normal learning at school but also prepare for final exams, start thinking about courses for the next semester (and even the next year) and consider postsecondary options. It is indeed a crazy and stressful time of year for everyone.

Whatever emotion you are feeling during this last few weeks before the holidays, take some time for yourself. Grab a cup of your favorite pumpkin spice latte (or whatever your preferred flavor) sit back and reflect on the past year, set goals for the new year, be thankful for what you have, and take time to relax.

Not trying to add to anyone's stress but here are a few things for students and parents to keep in mind.

1. The last day of school is December 15th. Under most circumstances, this is also the last day for students to be able to hand in any work.

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

2. Prioritize your time. Don't try to do everything at one time but make sure you allow enough time to do what you HAVE to get done.
3. If you need help or even just a quiet place to work on assignments you can attend After-School tutoring on Monday thru Thursday from 3:20-4:20. Listen to the announcements to find out where that is located each day.
4. For High School students, the semester grade (1st Quarter and 2nd Quarter average) go on a student's permanent transcript.
5. This is very important. Santa prefers homemade cookies. Primarily Snicker Doodles, White Chocolate Chip, and Sugar cookies. Make sure you find a good recipe. I am not saying that I'm Santa, but if you make cookies that you want delivered to him, I will make sure he gets them.

I thought to end this month's article I might add something you could enjoy that would not add to your stress. Here is a little bit of Holiday trivia for you.

1. The tallest Christmas tree ever displayed was in Seattle, Washington, measuring 221 feet tall.
2. Black Friday is NOT the busiest shopping day of the year. That distinction goes to the two days just before Christmas.
3. A popular tradition in Japan is to eat KFC for Christmas. It is so popular, in fact, that orders must be placed two months in advance.

- Blain White - HS Principal

4. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer got his start as an advertising gimmick for Montgomery Ward in 1939.
5. Jingle Bells was originally a song about Thanksgiving in 1857. It also was the first song ever played in space, by astronauts Walter Schirra, Jr. and Thomas P. Stafford.
6. One in three men wait until Christmas Eve to do their holiday shopping.
7. Toys for Tots was founded in Los Angeles, California in 1947. A handmade doll was the first donation, and more than 5,000 toys were collected during that first drive.
8. Bing Crosby's version of "White Christmas" is the highest-selling song of all time.
9. Americans purchase 1.6 billion Christmas cards every year.
10. Visa credit cards are used about 6,000 times every minute during the Christmas season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you.



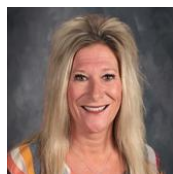
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ST. JOHN HUDSON USD 350

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“

Our mission is to ensure that students will find their purpose and become successful, lifelong learners and positive contributors in a changing world.

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SCAN ME



DIGITAL NEWSLETTER