Ever wonder what holidays are celebrated around the world? Let’s take a trip to see what other cultures do to celebrate their holidays.

In Ukraine, the 16th of December, St. Nicholas Day is celebrated. Legend has it that old St. Nick would deliver toys under the pillows of the good little children, but the naughty kids would receive sticks and coal under their headboards. On this day, they sing songs dedicated to St. Nick with their families. This holiday is targeted more towards the children. On 7th of January is when the Christmas season is celebrated. The families often present on Christmas Eve and the children go door to door singing Christmas carols. For dinner, they have provided 12 dishes with one main dish being babağan which is like porridge that has boiled wheat, poppy seed, honey, and raisins in it.

In Hungary, the northern part of Ukraine, Thanksgiving is not celebrated. For junior Anastasia Solovova, celebrating Thanksgiving with her host family was a “surprise.” This year was my first Thanksgiving in America, she said, “It’s like a big garage sale.”

On the second day the families visit the cemeteries to pray for their loved ones who are deceased. They bring flowers to put on tombstones and candles in their memory. When they are done, the families go back to church.

Foreign exchange student, Simona Gismondi, senior, said, “My family and I dress up fancier than usual and visit my grandparents houses. There the whole family comes together to celebrate this holiday.”

This Christmas in the first time Garay has been away from his country and family for the holidays. The weather during this time is very different. “This is my first Christmas with rain and cold weather and not warm weather,” he said Garay. All three of these students will experience different cultural celebrations on Christmas as their host families while in America. Regardless of their celebratory customs, they all are excited to learn and experience new things.

LARISSA JAMES

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Rebel Playoffs

Colin Meyer, senior, walks off the football field as a high school football player for the last time.

“Even though we lost the first round of playoffs, I’m still extremely proud of our team. Summit has a fantastic football program and they gave us a hard game. The way that this year’s team has carried themselves throughout the season has made me very proud to have called myself a Rebel football player,” senior football player, Colin Meyer, explained, “I will always remember this group of guys, and I’m happy that I have not only a League title to look back on, but a family as well.”

Meyer has been playing football since he was a freshman. His freshman year, he played right tackle; sophomore and junior years, he played left tackle. This year, coach Jason Platt, moved him over to play left guard because he needed someone fast to play that position. Meyer has always enjoyed the sport, but he got interested in playing football because one of his friends, who taught him all about the way air conditioning works, which ended up being useful information when the one in a friend’s house broke.

In the second half of the day, we were taken to a place where impoverished people could work for a meal. We were seated and served food by people who had received a meal earlier and were paying it off with service. The leaders of our program encouraged us to stop feeling like volunteers for a moment and understand that we were the ones being helped. I felt weird at first. I thought “I have more than these people, so I should be helping them.” Actually, it was really humbling to sit there and just say “thank you” and that’s it. We learned what it was like to be at the mercy of someone else’s goodwill, which was terrifying. Our lesson for the day was that charity is not a one way thing in that, someone gives, and someone else, charity must involve both giving and receiving to be significant.

It turns out that volunteering does have its benefits. Learning new skills, making connections, giving back, and improving one’s health are all things one can gain by lending a hand here and there, but the mere act of volunteering isn’t where the real gifts come from. The real gifts come from a person, and every single person that has ever existed on this earth can receive something from anyone else. That being said, everyone can give something to everyone.

Since then, I’ve been more aware of the ridiculous amount of pride I have. It’s easier to accept help and receive charity now that I don’t feel like I’m at the top and need to help someone else. I’ve realized that sometimes, I am the little guy. Whether it’s helping out a neighbor and receiving help in return, or going to a local soup kitchen, food bank, reaching out to an animal shelter, or going to an organization, help can be given in lots of ways. The important thing is to be humble enough to be helped, too.

I wish you all a happy season of giving and receiving.

COMMENTARY BY
OLIVIA GUILLEN

CHARITY = RECEIVING

The holidays are just around the corner and businesses need help to keep up with the demand of the people. The signs are everywhere and to some students it is appealing. It happens every year, businesses put up their “hiring” signs. This year seasonal jobs are not filling up and businesses need more workers. “Retailers are expected to add about 755,000 jobs,” according to Challenger, Gray & Christmas, an outplacement industry, that helps people get a job. Automatic Data Processing reported around 182,000 new hires in just October. More hires are most likely to occur in November and December especially with bigger companies.

“The company plans to hire up to 95,000 seasonal employees this holiday season, nearly double last year’s total of 55,000,” wrote CNN Money. That is an increase over recent years of employment. UPS will end up delivering two million packages a day, and about four million around Thanksgiving.

“Working holidays means extra holiday cash, if you only want to work for Christmas money. It’s an opportunity to get your foot in the door for a company that may fire full time after the holidays,” wrote WHSV, a news channel.

Then there are the Christmas tree workers. They’re the ones who cut, wrap and load the Christmas tree, that someone might buy early or mid-December. All throughout Oregon, people see Spruce and Fir trees and they need workers to cut the trees, cut, wrap, and load them to be shipped around the state.

The Kohl’s here in Albany hired about six people, including Colin Meyer, senior, who started working there this fall. He found the job on a hunting site called snagajob.com.

“I love working there. The other workers are really friendly,” stated Meyer. He believes he’ll keep working after the holidays.

In the summer most farm workers are needed to pull weeds, harvest berries, and work in a plant to clean the fruit and vegetables that come in. Stilhudson Island Farms, a farm right outside Corvallis, tried and hire as many workers as possible over the summer (usually high school students). The positions filled in quickly to work on the farm, but not inside the facility.

Most people do not know if they would be able to keep working after the holidays. But there are some seasonal employees who get lucky and keep the job after the holidays.

“While one had nothing to gain from helping someone out, the mere act of volunteering does have its benefits. Learning new skills, making connections, giving back, and improving one’s health are all things one can gain by lending a hand here and there, but the mere act of volunteering isn’t where the real gifts come from. The real gifts come from a person, and every single person that has ever existed on this earth can receive something from anyone else. That being said, everyone can give something to everyone. Since then, I’ve been more aware of the ridiculous amount of pride I have. It’s easier to accept help and receive charity now that I don’t feel like I’m at the top and need to help someone else. I’ve realized that sometimes, I am the little guy. Whether it’s helping out a neighbor and receiving help in return, or going to a local soup kitchen, food bank, reaching out to an animal shelter, or going to an organization, help can be given in lots of ways. The important thing is to be humble enough to be helped, too. I wish you all a happy season of giving and receiving.”

Tis the Seasonal Jobs

PERLA JIMENEZ

The way that this year’s team has carried themselves throughout the season has made me very proud to have called myself a Rebel football player; I will always remember this group of guys, and I’m happy that I have not only a League title to look back on, but a family as well.”

- Colin Meyer, senior football player

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STUDENT & COMMUNITY LIFE

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Suddenly, Sequels

RAMON HERNANDEZ

Hollywood has surprised many people lately by extending childhood movies such as “Finding Dory,” “Incredibles 2” and “Toy Story 4,” which are continuing the franchise after many years of being hidden. Movies such as the ones listed have been childhood memories for millennials, so when the news broke, there were mixed feelings among cinemagoers. People were excited to see their childhood heroes come to life again; how could you not be? Some people were excited to see the Incredibles family come back together, while others were excited to see the adventures of a new group of heroes in the “Finding Dory” sequel. Still others were excited to see the adventures of a new group of heroes in the “Incredibles 2” sequel. But for some people, these movies were less than exciting. They were just another way to stretch out a franchise that was already long in the tooth.

But for others, these movies were a welcome return to the magic of childhood. They were a chance to relive the excitement of seeing your favorite characters come to life again. They were a chance to experience the joy of discovering a new world of possibilities. And for some people, these movies were a chance to see a familiar face in a new role. For example, in the “Incredibles 2” sequel, a new character was introduced: a cat named Puss in Boots. The character was a welcome addition to the Incredibles family, and many people were excited to see him in action.

Still, others were excited to see the “Finding Dory” sequel. In this movie, the character of Dory was introduced, and many people were excited to see her adventure. She was a new and exciting addition to the “Finding Nemo” universe, and many people were looking forward to seeing what she would do next.

In the end, it was hard to say whether the “Finding Dory” sequel was a hit or a miss. Some people loved it, while others were less than impressed. But one thing is certain: the sequels are here to stay, and they will continue to bring joy to people of all ages for years to come.
Don’t Judge a Person by Their Phone

ABBY SLANGA
As pointed out by numerous opponents to the technology-based Generation Y, life seems to be in a rut. Many complain about how youth spend more time on social media instead of being more responsible or spending time with family. However, the current generation has had benefits that others did not, and it has also, like others, developed its own complex pop culture. Plus, smartphones are considered by many users to be incredibly handy for many situations.

According to a Gallup survey reported by Business Insider, “More than half of U.S. smartphone owners check their devices a few times an hour or more and most Americans have their smartphones with them all day and many all night.” Some suggest that phones should not be used as an alarm clock because the user may have a tendency to check it after setting the time at night. It can also be a distraction during meals as one may not be focused on eating and will end up being late for school or work.

Unfortunately, sometimes people let phones take over their social lives. Live Bold & Bloom points out that phones have benefitted that others did not, and it has also, like others, developed its own complex pop culture. Plus, smartphones are considered by many users to be incredibly handy for many situations.

If a phone is in the kitchen and there was no privacy, he said with a laugh, VanCauteren does not label himself as obsessed with his phone because he prefers call over text and possesses a limited data plan. He believes that “every generation has a cross to bear,” meaning everyone went through a fad that made older people uncomfortable.

While phones are definitely overused (which is a problem that should be solved), they are also very helpful to have in possession. With a cell phone in hand, emergency contacts can be called in case of an emergency; undoubtedly making urgent medical aid easier. If someone needs help, they are also very convenient to use.

In addition to efficiency, smartphones are also a part of Generation Y’s pop culture. Taking selfies is a new trend and arguably a positive influence to one’s self-esteem. Lifelong friendships could be formed out of social media, and sometimes one can be noticed by one of their favorite celebrities. Who has not dreamed of talking to the people that inspire them?

Austin Winner, junior, does not label himself as “phone-obsessed.” “I only use my phone when I need it and I only check my Instagram two or three times a day.” He believes phones and cell phones will serve as useful tools during school for research, how to do certain things, math problems, and social media. “Negative comments often thrown towards the generation in question, he thinks it is true. “Everyone is on their smartphone all the time and they never leave without it.” Winner also remarked that bigger and better phones come out every year; whether they have more features or are literally increased in size.

Chris VanCauteren, teacher at South Albany High School, stated that the phones in his generation were landlines, and they were shared amongst a single family. His family’s phone was in the kitchen and there was no privacy, he said with a laugh, VanCauteren does not label himself as obsessed with his phone because he prefers call over text and possesses a limited data plan. He believes that “every generation has a cross to bear,” meaning everyone went through a fad that made older people uncomfortable.

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Have you ever experienced a moment in your life where you feel like it may be the last few minutes, and there is nothing you can do about it? A situation that caused a shift in your life forever. That caused mental, emotional, and physical trauma to you, but others around you and those you love. Most people have experienced a moment of impact. A moment that determined life or death. Maybe a parent dying, serious illness, or in my case, an accident.

My moment of impact was the weirdest and craziest moment of my life. My family and I were driving down Highway 20 on Black Friday, 2014. It was dark and pouring rain, so we were extremely cautious.

Next thing I know, I’m stuck in a hospital bed with a brace around my neck. I couldn’t move, I couldn’t feel my body. I couldn’t even drink or eat. The paramedics in the ambulance had to put my entire outfit, which I was not happy about. I remember laying down on a stretcher, comatose and bashed at all the noise going on in the background. It was like I was in a movie, the kind where the guy is about to get knocked out for surgery and all he sees is a bright light in his face. My vision was blurred, and the rain was pouring down my cheeks. The only thing I knew was the taste of blood and the sound of a deep, muffled scream beside me. My family was all surrounding me asking me different questions and I was having a hard time focusing. “Are you okay?”

BAYFIELD MAILEY

Terrorism is prevalent everywhere in the world around us. The events that happened on Thursday evening of November 13th were tragic and devastating to the entire world. It is a serious attack that should not go unnoticed, and respect should be paid for the lives lost. For Paris, supporters are able to change their profile picture so the French flag overlay it. There are hashtags on Facebook.

Everyone is sharing the story of Paris, and its destruction. A story or the attacks on Paris, or a university in Kenya?

Terrorism is not just a force from outside of the U.S. It happens everyday to people in America, by people in America. What strikes more interest? A story or the attacks on Paris, or a university in Kenya?

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WHAT ABOUT WHEN A WHITE PERSON SHOOT UP A PLANNED PARENTHOOD, OR ANY OTHER CONSOLE FOR THAT MATTER, AND PLAYING?


THE DEVELOPERS, 543 INDUSTRIES HAVE NOT TOLD DOUG HERD OF IMPORTING THE MASTER CHIEF COLLECTION TO PC. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR YOU, XBOX GAMERS? SOMETHING THAT I CAN SEE MAY NOT SEE ANOTHER ADVANCE THE BELOVED XBOX.

ANOTHER REASON I CHOOSE COMPUTER Gaming over console gaming is for the customization and upgradeability. A PC you can almost endlessly upgrade anything from RAM, to graphics cards or processors and so, so much more.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A CONSOLE? Well, you can play the same game regardless of the hard drive! And that’s only if you’re lucky. Most of the time you’re stuck with the huge $990 price tag and are always behind the times in terms of modern hardware. Sadly, these days gamers feel like they’re stuck in a rut. PCs are the expensive ones here, right? Well, you’re getting some sweet perks. You’ve got all the freedom of switching to PC, only certain fighting games really are played on console, but even then many of them have PC iterations as well.

There’s really one advantage console has over PC, and that’s local multiplayer. But as your gaming progress, they’re becoming less and less local friendly. Will the PC be the last console platform? No. This is how the PC plays towards Xbox specifically, but the same argument can be said for PlayStation, or even more on any other major console. Even as much as I love Nintendo, they have their fan share of console flaws as well.

Oh, and by the way, if you see me, feel free to argue with me.

DREW MAYFIELD

Abh, the age old console vs. PC war, eh? Well, baffle around, I’m about to set you straight on the real argument here, fact vs. ignorance.

So, let’s start by taking exclusives. For those of you who are like Xwell, well, you’re good. Halo, Halo, the legendary super popular first-person shooter revered by many to be the best game of all time. Halo one and two were both on PC and XBox, with three through four look everywhere in between XBox and 360 exclusives, and the Master Chief Collection is only on the newest generation of XBox, the console named XBox One (Xone for short).

The developers, 543 Industries have not told Doug Herd of importing the Master Chief Collection to PC. What does that mean for you, XBox gamers? Somethings that I can see may not see another advance the beloved XBox.

Another reason I choose computer gaming over console gaming is for the customization and upgradeability. A PC you can almost endlessly upgrade anything from RAM, to graphics cards or processors and so, so much more.

What can you do with a console? You’re stuck with the huge $990 price tag and are always behind the times in terms of modern hardware. Sadly, these days gamers feel like they’re stuck in a rut. PCs are the expensive ones here, right? Well, you’ve got all the freedom of switching to PC, only certain fighting games really are played on console, but even then many of them have PC iterations as well.

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JESSICA CHILCOTE

“Jessica, wake up.”

“How do you know what happened? Do you remember?”

The instant my sister asked that last question my mind woke up and I looked at her and stared until I heard the words: “You were in a terrible car accident.”

The first thing I thought about was my family. I had to make sure they were okay. Thankfully they were fine, but we were so blessed to one in our family was permanently hurt.

The night at the hospital was hell. My hair was in one big knot, my head was throbbing, and all I could do was tear up. Something in my body stopped me from crying because I knew I had to be strong along side my parents.

The worst part? Not remembering the crash, the ambulance ride, my sister trying to get me out of the car, my mom’s yell when she saw the entire accident coming and couldn’t stop it, and the most heartbreaking moment… when the guy that helped us, just found out his fiance and friend were dead in the most impacted car.

Flash forward to a year later, and nothing has come to my mind. My mom thinks that the reason I don’t remember the accident is because I saw the two ladies dead in the small car and my brain is trying to block it out. Maybe, maybe not.

I guess I probably sound like I’m holding onto something that happened in November 2014, and I just need to get over it. And honestly, I am over it, but sometimes it still hits me that I could have lost my soul and that two boys lost their loved ones in an accident I was in. I can go days where I don’t think about it, but then someone asks why I have knee problems, or why I only have my right hand.

Whether you have experienced a moment of impact or not, always know that something can happen in the blink of an eye. Although, just because there is life changing moment doesn’t mean everything bad can come out of it.

I learned my lesson to always expect the unexpected. Learn from a mistake or a moment of impact, and make the best of it.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS, SOUTH ALBANY!

Have a safe and fun winter break!

–The Sentry Staff
For those who are unaware, the constant fear you see when you type on Google and type something into the search bar, that precious treasure trove of Wikipedia articles, social networks, pirate websites, and other riches; that is only one percent of what the internet actually contains. The rest is, in a word: undead.

Removed from the public eye, the Darknet. The Deep Web. In any case, it is the place neglected by Google, and the place where illegal goods are exchanged, where the surreptitious trade of violence is conducted.

The Hidden Wiki. The Darknet. In the case above, it is actually a domain graveyard, but, as the saying goes, “Here, a dead page or something more.” This massive chunk of the internet that is the internet is all underwater, unknowable and untouchable. It goes by many names: The Deep Web. The Darknet.

Not all of these names are as accurate. What people largely refer to as the Deep Web is simply the portion of the Darknet that can be accessed via a conventional search engine. As long as the user does not keep the sources of journalism hidden from their public eye, using this software means the user has no right to keep the sources of journalism hidden from the public eye. This includes all searches, even a search in a deep web browser history, no cookies, and no traceable evidence that they ever were on the page. It also grants access to the Deep Web, a more lively section of the Darknet.

The Hidden Wiki, a hub for various, unintelligible links that either lead to the darkest corner of the web. People like Ross Ulbricht, mastermind behind the lightning.young smuggling site “Silk Road” may occasionally face justice, but for the most part, the crazy folks who make up the most well-worn and disgusting places that humanity has created. However, many people believe that the Darknet even exists or think that these depths of Internet are the only things to be found. First of all, the Deep Web is not entirely made up of vonans, and illegal dealers of various persuasions. Do not misunderstand… these things do exist, and they can be found. However, it also hits a wealth of information not found elsewhere. There are unflushed government handbooks, military documents, how to guides, and other nuggets of information that media blackouts and gag orders can’t simply “delete” with the press of a button. Alternative reality games (ARGs) are also fairly popular here, and many have degrees that make more “mainstream” equivalents such as Ingress appear as children’s games. In a way, the Deep Web is both the darkest part of the internet as well as the internet in it’s purest form. And you should never go there. Any information found on the Deep Web should be taken with a grain of salt, most of it is outdated, out of place, or entirely fabricated. What there simply is more than anyone can know or guess. It is a dangerous place, make no mistake about it. People believe the Deep Web is simply because it brings pleasure to the Distributed Denial who support the forgotten parts of cyberspace. People like Ross Ulbricht, mastermind behind the lightning.young smuggling site “Silk Road” may occasionally face justice, but for the most part, the crazy folks who make up the most well-worn and disgusting places that humanity has created.

Of course, I believe that people should wear whatever makes them comfortable without being called out for it (excluding offensive text and such). The bothersome problem is not always being given an option to dress more realistically for a quest if that is what’s desired by the player. In what way will minimal clothing on any character protect a body from potential danger mid-battle? Men’s arrows would be more of a threat than any fire-breathing dragon. It’s the same logic behind wearing a hat if you want to ensure your warmth throughout the day. The fact is, for many it is going on in that person’s life. This, my friends, is called generalization, which seems to happen a lot in this day and age. Not all boys and girls arecookie cutter molds of each other. It constantly baffles me to why these issues are still very prevalent even when it is, in fact, the 21st century. If anything, game developers of the present nature, lack more options clothes-wise for all genders and not being treated like an object just because I am a woman. I just want to explore the captivating story that you have worked so hard to make a reality! The next time I run out to a field to rebel against a tyrannical monarchy, I want to be sure I will not be tested by tripping on a rock.

Income Disparity

Our city and even our school perfectly represent income inequality, a disease plaguing the United States. The fact is, for many people it is a freeway into income disparity, but getting out of it is like walking up a downwards escalator. To put this into perspective walk down the hallway at South Albany. Statistically one out of every five students you walk by is living in poverty, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty.

When talking about the imbalance of poverty in our city the first thing that comes to mind is no to pointing at the school around. One side of town is completely disguised in juxtaposition to the other side.

Most of us probably know someone that is economically immobile even though they are working hard. Someone that works 50+ hours a week. Someone that just cannot find a way to get ahead. These are the people that should be raised to the top. Yet some of these people I know are as far into any career you can get in like a man. An average high school student that previously worked five to ten hours a week. The reason is that their parents are caught in a never-ending cycle. Adolescents that are born into low-income households have a fraction of the opportunities in education. These children are less likely to be educated early, more likely to go to schools lacking the proper resources, and less likely to access post-secondary educational opportunities. Citizens born into low-income households have a life expectancy of nearly five years less than those of the upper class, according to CNN.

The United States is the wealthiest nation in the history of the world, yet the wealthiest 400 citizens are as rich as the bottom 150 million. Tricked down economies have never worked. The richest of the rich are not common consumers, and consumption is the most common method of the spread of money. It’s simply saddening for a nation that makes itself dependent on luxury and consumerism to have such a major gap in wealth. Our social programs are lacking, and our solution is to do nothing. The people of the United States are suffering, and legislators are being paid by corporations and lobbyists, all of which lack interest in the greater amount of people. The fact is that most of us are walking by. We are bystanders to an ongoing issue. The snowflakes on Starbucks cups are more prevalent in the media of established countries than the fact that 12.6% of the population of this planet is living in extreme poverty. We are focusing on the wrong issues. The domestic issues that tear our country apart are being simply ignored. So this holiday season don’t walk by. Don’t blame people that are struggling. Donate to the Salvation Army and help someone this holiday season is about giving. Personally, I have tried to give back this holiday season, and be a better person than most people perceive me to be (noted that this is not difficult).

Children in Low Income Families in Oregon, by Race, in 2013

Data from the National Center for Children in Poverty

http://www.nccp.org/
History of Christmas

Present, like the ones found in the SAHS library, are typically given and received during Christmastime, but there are many more times one can celebrate!

BRITTANY BECK

Now we've all heard of the big holidays like Christmas, Easter, Halloween etc. but there are some that not many people know about. Let's explore some of these hidden and unique holidays.

First up is the Electric Day on February 11th. Professional speaker Carolyn Finch founded this unique holiday in 1998. As stated on bugsandbunnies.blogspot.com, the club's goal is: "To remember George Westinghouse, inventor and holder of 1090+ U.S. patents, inventor and "Wizard of Menlo Park," holder of the abbreviation for an electrification.

Finch defines electrific as; "An undertaking which means to put light where it has not been before."

February 11th is to be a celebration of Thomas Alva Edison's birthday. Edison was "The Wizard of Menlo Park," holder of 1090+ U.S. patents, inventor and businessman. Edison was also the founder of General Electric and he put light where it had not been before.

Next up is National Jelly Bean Day on April 22nd. Ever read The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe? Well, according to bugsandbunnies.blogspot.com, Turkish delight, the dessert that gets Edmund into a whole lot of trouble, is described as a candy with a soft, chewy center and a firm outer shell: jelly beans! Jelly beans were one of the first items sold by weight. They were also one of the first penny candies. Now there are traditional and gourmet jelly beans. Traditional have flavor in the shell and gourmet has flavor in the shell and the center.

Mr. Potato Head Day is third on the list. It is celebrated on May 27th, the day on which Mr. Potato Head was first released for sale. Inventor George Lender who then sold his idea to Hasbro Inc. in 1952. Then April 30, 1952 it had become the first toy to be advertised on television. For its 40th birthday 1992, Mr. Potato Head was given an award from the president's Council for Physical Fitness in a ceremony on the white house lawn, as stated on bugsandbunnies.blogspot.com.

Number four is National Grape Popsicle Day on May 27th, celebrating the accidental invention that is loved by many around the world today. In 1905 Frank Coppsen accidentally left some grape flavored soda outside and it froze overnight. Starting in 1923, Coppsen sold seven flavors of Epsicles at a lemonade stand at an amusement park in Oakland, California. His patent was then granted in 1924 and the name was changed to Popsicle.

Fifth on the list is left-handers Day on August 13th. There's actually a left-handers club that formed in 1990. According to bugsandbunnies.blogspot.com, the club's goal is: "The left-handers club was formed in 1990 and is open to individuals in touch with developments; make their views known to manufacturers and others, provide a help and advice line, to promote research into left-handers to discover new left-handed items."

An interesting fact about lefties: most lefties draw figures facing to the right and adjust more readily to seeing underwater.

For pencils, the most taken for granted tool, were invented in 1856. Pencil Day is celebrated November 19th. In 1565 the first recorded pencil was documented by Conrad Gesner, a German botanist, which is celebrated December 5th. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 17, 1985. Bugsandbunnies.blogspot.com stated that it was created as a day to "recognize the contribution of volunteerism to peace and development."

There are so many hidden holidays out there that many people don’t know exist, but that is needed is to go out and find and explore more of them.

Better Christmas for Kids

THE SENTRY STAFF

Throughout the year, Christmas can be the hardest for low income families. The Albany community has helped out those families by doing the Tree of Joy. The Tree of Joy is an opportunity for South Albany High School students help out other their peers in need. The Tree of Joy’s priority is to make sure every kid in need gets a gift for the holiday. Whether it is socks, a t-shirt or a toy car, the Tree of Joy provides a student in the community with a present, making their Christmas jollier.

The SAHS students and staff has helped out kids in the community by bringing gifts that ranges from things the student needs, or things the student wants on a wish list provided by feeder schools. These elementary student's names are confidential, and only the family of the students and the counselors know of such information.

Although bringing gifts in can be a challenge for some high school students, teachers will help a student in any way to make sure a child receives a gift. Teachers such as Eliese Lipke and Jeff McCabe have their ways that they do things differently. This year, Lipke's third period class did not bring enough gifts, but some provided money instead. With the money collected, Lipke went out and bought gifts based off the list provided for her class.

Eldredge's class made sure every one knew about the child in need was by announcing it in class and spreading happiness and love.

Overall, the Tree of Joy can benefit both the child receiving a gift and the student or teacher giving a gift by keeping the Christmas joy alive and spreading happiness.

X-mas Tree Alternatives

By Abby Slanga

The holidays: a time of gift-giving, good will towards men, the occasional large-mouthed nutcrackers, and bringing trees indoors to string lights and ornaments on them (depending on what someone celebrates). When the holidays eventually roll around, it may not bring Christmas trees to everyone. There are various reasons behind this, including lack of funds, no room space, allergies, small children and/or pets, worry for the environment, and more. Luckily, many people have created alternatives for those who really want a tree of some sort. A mock-up tree could be made of anything, really!

2. A plastic Charlie Brown tree, complete with a powder-blue blanket and a singular red ornament.
3. A tree made with tacks on a cork board.
4. A tree made of nick-nacks placed in a tree shape in a bookshelf.
5. A tree made of driftwood or seashells.
6. An ordinary plant decorated with ornaments.
7. A tree made of coffee filters.*
8. A tree made of sticky notes.
9. A tree of food served arranged in a tree shape on the day of the holiday.**
10. A blanket fort tree.

* A tutorial can be found at "http://www.bhg.com/design/make-and-celebrate/handmade/diy-omelettes-coffee-filter-christmas-tree/"
** This can be laid out on a plate/table, placed on a tiered platter, or stacked in a tree shape.
What’s your favorite holiday tradition?

“My favorite tradition is staying the night at my grandma’s on Christmas Eve (my birthday) and waking up early to open Christmas presents with the family and have a big family breakfast,”
-Tucker Peterson, 12.

“I open half of my presents the day before Christmas since Christmas is my birthday. It’s nice because it seems like I get more presents. I feel like it’s more my birthday than Christmas,”
-Zack Leverich, 11.

“My favorite holiday tradition would be Christmas because you get together with family and you eat food. You also get gifts and it’s a good time to be thankful for a lot of things.”
-Ilse Perez, 10.

“My favorite holiday tradition is opening one Christmas present on Christmas Eve.”
-Cade Miller, 9.

What’s the best thing that has happened to you in 2015?

“The best thing that has happened to me in 2015 is probably just coming to accept who I really am. I’ve just kind of been finding out who I am as person and what makes me happy.”
-Sydni Meyers, 12.

“Well the best thing that has happened to me during 2015 was definitely meeting my boyfriend Keizer [Ray]. He has also helped me point my junior year in the right direction.”
-Virginia Mitchell, 11.

“The best thing that has happened to me would be football, overall this year we increased our partnership, ability to work as a team. I’m sure next year we’ll get farther ahead as a team.”
-Lauro Ramirez, 10.

“The best thing that has happened to me during 2015 is getting to see my aunt. I met her this year for the first time when I went to California, so that was amazing.”
-Madi Dedera, 9.