



# Paw Prints



- THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL NEWS -

DECEMBER 2023

TTHS



## TTHS Woodworking & Wood Technology Clubs Focus on Beautifying our School

**Mr. Todd Whitaker**  
Principal

**Dr. Mason Newell**  
Assistant Principal

**Mrs. Charissa Berrini**  
Assistant Principal

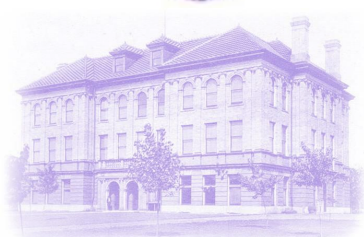
**Ms. Marilu Gonzalez**  
Assistant Principal

Mr. Lamont Bibbie is not only a teacher and a club sponsor here in Wildcat country, he is also a proud alum that always finds creative ways to show off his purple pride. In past years, his students have created many beautiful items out of wood to display throughout the school. Various signs, suggestion boxes, portable podium stands, and benches can be found in several of the hallways for people to stop and admire the craftsmanship.



Many people might not realize the value in taking a shop class or joining a woodworking club. Mr. Bibbie introduces his students to new skills as he teaches them how to safely use and operate various tools to construct things that come from the imagination. As a result, students gain confidence, strength of character, and problem solving capabilities that will come in handy throughout their entire lives.

The Woodworking Club and the Wood Technology Club recently created new benches for the IB hallway without being asked. Mr. Bibbie and his students took it upon themselves to beautify the hallway in an effort to encourage the IB staff and students to keep up the great work. They did a wonderful job and they certainly fill our school with lots of Wildcat pride. If anyone is interested in learning more about woodworking, Mr. Bibbie can be found in room T-109.



# 5 Ways to Prepare for Final Exams

*Written by: Tiara Witcher*

Hey Wildcats, how are you? You're probably feeling pretty stressed out about final exams week. Although it can be overwhelming, it is time to get serious about preparing for your exams. Finals might look different for each class, but they are all worth twenty percent of your semester grade. Here a few pieces of advice to help get you started.

1. **Make a Schedule.** Create a study schedule that will allow you to review all of the necessary information before you take your exams. Refer to the final exam schedule below and start with your first 3 classes of the day and then continue on with the rest. This will help you stay organized and ensure that you have enough time to review all the important topics covered on your study guides, class notes, previous assessments, and so on.

2. **Study with a friend/ group.** Approach your classmates and offer to help each other out. Whether at home or at school, it is always nice to have a study buddy. Studying with friends can reduce stress and boost motivation. We are all in this together!



3. **Prioritize Self Care.** Make sure you take care of your mental and physical health. Try to get enough sleep, eat nutritious meals, take vitamins, and engage in physical activity. You can't perform at your best if you're not feeling well.

4. **Use Class Time Wisely.** Try not to miss any classes and be on time so you don't miss any important review time. This is your opportunity to ask for clarification from your teachers if you have any doubts or questions. Be an active participant within the classroom and engage in meaningful conversations.



5. **Don't Stress!** If you study and try your best to prepare, there is no need to feel anxious. Plan ahead, manage your time effectively, and have confidence in yourself. You are literally days away from a restful winter break and the semester will be over soon enough. Remember to stay positive, believe in your abilities, and approach the exams with confidence. Good luck!

## FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

Tuesday December 19, 2022	Wednesday December 20, 2022	Thursday December 21, 2022	Friday December 22, 2022
<b>Period 1</b> 8:00- 9:30	<b>Period 4/5 or 5/6</b> 8:00- 9:30	<b>Period 8/9 or 9/10</b> 8:00- 9:30	<b>Make-Up Day</b> Teachers finalize grades. All grades must be completed prior to 12:00 noon.
<b>Period 2</b> 9:35- 11:05	<b>Period 6/7 or 7/8</b> 9:35- 11:05	<b>Period 11</b> 9:35- 11:05	
<b>Period 3</b> 11:10- 12:40			
<b>Optional Grab n' Go Lunch-</b> 12:50- 1:15	<b>Optional Grab n' Go Lunch-</b> 11:10- 11:35	<b>Optional Grab n' Go Lunch-</b> 11:10- 11:35	



# My Influence Matters Field Trip Gives Wildcats New Perspectives

*Written by: Tiana Watson- Dell and Amiracle Brooks*

On December 15th, select members of My Influence Matters had the exciting opportunity to go on a field trip downtown. The students took a charter bus to the Willis Tower where they learned about the rich history of Chicago from the great fire of 1871 to now. They also discussed the fascinating aspects of Chicago architecture and even had the chance to bravely step out onto the ledge of the sky deck on the tallest skyscraper that Chicago has to offer. Students also reported learning about how the sky deck was built and had an opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. Jason Clark, the head of My Influence Matters, has personally worked on the construction of the ledge of the Willis Tower. He has made it clear that it is his mission to expose the students of Thornton Township High School to new and exciting opportunities outside of the local community in order to help the next generation see the endless possibilities that life has to offer. After the visit to the historical landmark, students enjoyed a delicious lunch at Giordano's restaurant. My Influence Matters also has some exciting events in store for students next semester, so stay tuned for more information!



*The Willis Tower was all decked out for the holidays!*



# Dealing with Stress

## COMMON SOURCES OF STRESS

HOMWORK  
TESTS AND QUIZZES  
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES  
SOCIAL CHALLENGES

CHANGES IN ROUTINE  
RELATIONSHIPS  
PEER PRESSURE

## RECOGNIZING THE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

MOODINESS  
IRRITABILITY  
ANGER  
ANXIOUS THOUGHTS  
HEADACHE

STOMACHACHE  
FORGETTING TO EAT  
LOW ENERGY  
SWEATING  
BODY TENSION

## TIPS FOR DEALING WITH STRESS

**1** MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP. WHEN YOU AREN'T GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP IT CAN BE MORE DIFFICULT TO BE PRODUCTIVE, TO LEARN, AND TO COMPLETE TASKS.

**2** GET ACTIVE! PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS WALKING, RUNNING, RIDING A BIKE, PLAYING OR PRACTICING SPORTS, AND EXERCISING ARE ALL PROVEN WAYS TO WORK OUT SOME OF THE STRESS THAT YOU MIGHT BE FEELING

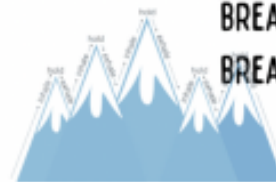
**3** LISTEN TO MUSIC! LISTENING TO MUSIC CAN HELP TO CALM THE STRESS YOU MAY BE FEELING IN YOUR MIND AND YOUR BODY.

**4** PRACTICE GROUNDING TECHNIQUES SUCH AS CHECKING IN WITH YOUR 5 SENSES.

**5** TALK ABOUT IT. GO SEE A SCHOOL COUNSELOR, A TRUSTED ADULT, OR A PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND TALK ABOUT WHAT IS WORRYING YOU.

**6** GET YOUR FEELINGS OUT THROUGH CREATIVITY. EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS THROUGH DRAWING, PAINTING, COLORING OR ANY OTHER CREATIVE OUTLET

**7** WORK ON CALMING DOWN YOUR BREATHING. PRACTICE BREATHING TECHNIQUES LIKE MOUNTAIN BREATHING OR FIGURE 8



BREATHING INHALE EXHALE



5- THINGS YOU CAN SEE  
4- THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH  
3- THINGS YOU CAN HEAR  
2- THINGS YOU CAN SMELL  
1- THING YOU CAN TASTE

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## December 2023

- December 19-21- Final Exams
- December 22nd- Semester 1 ends
- December 25th- Merry Christmas

## January 2024

- January 8th- Teacher Institute Day
- January 9th- Students return to school
- January 15th- MLK Day (No school)



## February 2024

- February 1st- Black History Month begins
- February 10th- Speech IHSA Sectional Tournament
  - February 14th- Valentine's Day
- February 15th- Parent Teacher Conferences (5- 8 pm)
- February 16th- Parent Teacher Conferences (8- 11 am)
  - February 19th- President's Day (No school)





# Celebrating Winter: Exploring Diverse Holidays Beyond Christmas

*Written by: Tiana Watson- Dell*

As the winter season brings its snow and the cold, various cultures around the globe celebrate other holidays during this time too and some of those are right here in America. Winter holidays extend beyond the widely known Christmas. While Christmas holds a special place in the hearts of many, it's worth looking into other winter celebrations that showcase the diversity of traditions, customs, and festivities that brighten the coldest season of the year.

## **Hanukkah: Festival of Lights**



Hanukkah, celebrated by the Jewish community, usually falls in December and is known as the Festival of Lights. Lasting for eight nights, this joyous occasion commemorates the miracle of the menorah's oil lasting for eight days instead of one. Families come together to light the menorah, exchange gifts, play traditional games like dreidel, and indulge in delicious dishes such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly-filled doughnuts). Hanukkah brings a warmth to Jewish households during the winter season.

## **Kwanzaa: A Celebration of African Heritage**



Kwanzaa, a relatively recent addition to the winter holiday landscape, was established in 1966 to celebrate African American culture, community, and heritage. Spanning seven nights from December 26th to January 1st, Kwanzaa focuses on seven principles, known as the Nguzo Saba, including unity, self-determination, and collective work and responsibility. Families celebrate by lighting the kinara, exchanging symbolic gifts, and partaking in traditional African feasts. Kwanzaa provides an opportunity for reflection, unity, and cultural pride.

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# Celebrating Winter: Exploring Diverse Holidays Beyond Christmas

## Las Posadas: Mexican Tradition of Seeking Shelter

Las Posadas, a beloved Mexican tradition, is celebrated in some American communities, particularly those with a significant Mexican-American population. The festivities reenact Mary and Joseph's search for lodging in



Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. Participants go from house to house, singing traditional songs and seeking shelter, culminating in a festive gathering with piñatas, traditional foods, and the breaking of a star-shaped piñata to symbolize the triumph of light over darkness.

## Winter Solstice Celebrations:

While not tied to a specific cultural or religious tradition, the winter solstice, occurring around December 21st, holds significance for many Americans. Some communities organize solstice celebrations to mark the longest night of the year and welcome the return of longer days. These events often include bonfires, lantern parades, and communal gatherings to appreciate the beauty of the winter season.

## Native American Winter Ceremonies:

Various Native American tribes have their own winter ceremonies and celebrations that honor their cultural heritage and spiritual beliefs. These ceremonies often include rituals, dances, and storytelling that connect community members with their ancestors and the natural world. Winter ceremonies provide a time for reflection, gratitude, and the passing down of traditions from one generation to the next.

As winter comes to America and the snow falls with festive cheer, it's important to recognize and celebrate the diverse array of holidays that contribute to the season's magic. Beyond Christmas, these winter celebrations bring communities together, fostering unity, cultural pride, and a shared appreciation for the unique traditions that make America a melting pot of festive diversity during the coldest months of the year.

# Gift Giving on a Teenage Budget



With the holidays quickly approaching, you want to let your loved ones know that they are special and they're cared for. However, gift giving can be quite expensive, especially when you want to give gifts to multiple people. Most teenagers don't make a lot of money because of school, extracurriculars, and sports. Here are 5 stores and gift ideas that can cost you under \$25!

**Five Below:** The proof is in the pudding! Five Below has many things that you can get for under \$25 for that special person. Five Below has clever t-shirts that might make that special someone laugh. They have perfume, makeup, technology (i.e chargers, phone cases, bluetooth speakers), candles, mugs, and much more. At Five Below you can make a sentimental gift basket or give gifts individually.

**Walmart:** Sometimes Walmart can be more on the expensive side, but like most superstores they always have amazing sales and value sections. If you're on a tight budget, try your best to weed out the sales and deals. Walmart can be similar to Five Below with cheap tumbler cups, socks, t-shirts, novelty mugs, and once again, food! With Walmart also being a grocery store, you can gift baked goods and buy ingredients for well under \$25.

**Bath and Body Works:** Bath and Body Works has the best sales during the holiday season. Bath and Body Works has different size candles, body wash, soap, perfume, cologne, the list goes on! If shopping on a small budget, shop at Bath and Body around Black Friday and the whole month of December. They have an annual sale on 3-wick candles for only \$9! They also have half off body mists for the holidays. Just about everyone likes to smell good, so you can never go wrong at Bath and Body Works.

**JCPenney:** JCPenney has absolutely amazing sales for the holiday season. JCPenney has a sale on good quality jewelry for under \$20! They also have endless options for inexpensive gift giving. Speakers and home appliances can go as low as \$15 with no coupon! They also have novelty Christmas items like mugs, decorations, and more. JCPenney has gifts for everyone in the family. Oh, also you can use coupons on top of sale items.

**Ross Dress for Less:** Ross is already a discount store, so you can get an amazing gift for under \$25-\$30. Ross has great household items like paintings, signs, rugs, mirrors, etc. They also have novelty items and cheap tumbler cups. For women, they have high quality robes under \$40, undergarments and very nice clothes. They also have skin care, bed sets, and accessories for the whole family.

If you're shopping on a small budget you are not alone. I suggest you start shopping around so you can check everyone off your list. Also, don't feel bad this holiday season if you can't buy what everybody wants, it's always the thought that counts.

**Happy Shopping!**





# The Grinch: Unveiling the Origins of a Christmas Icon

Written by: Tiara Witcher

The story of the Grinch is pretty popular all around the world. You know the green creature that stole everybody's Christmas because he was angry at the world? His story comes from a book that was written and illustrated in 1957 by Dr. Seuss. When the Grinch was turned into a movie, he became even more popular. There were 3 movie adaptations made; two were animated and one wasn't.

The story of the Grinch revolves around a solitary creature who lives with his dog in a cave on Mount Crumpit, overlooking the town of Whoville. The Grinch despises Christmas and all the joy it brings to the people in town. He is known for his hatred of the holiday and his attempts to steal Christmas from the Whos, the residents of Whoville. He sneaks into the homes of the Whos and steals their decorations, trees, gifts, and food in an attempt to ruin their holiday celebrations.



What led the Grinch to become such a bitter character? Dr. Seuss' stated that the Grinch's heart was "two sizes too small." He has a lack of love and connection with others. Throughout the story/ movie, the audience sees the Grinch's heart begins to soften when he watches the Whos celebrate Christmas despite the absence of material possessions. As he watched the community come together, Dr. Seuss wrote, *"Maybe Christmas (he thought) doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more."* This realization leads to a change of heart, and the Grinch returns all the stolen presents and decorations to the Whos, embracing the true meaning of Christmas. The character of the Grinch serves as a reminder that even the most cynical and bitter individuals have the capacity for change and redemption. It teaches us the importance of love, compassion, and the power of community.

In conclusion, the Grinch is not just a fictional character, but a symbol of transformation and the triumph of love over hate. His story serves as a timeless reminder of the true meaning of Christmas and the power of kindness. So, this holiday season, let us all embrace the spirit of the Grinch and spread love and joy to those around us.

