

The Pawprint



Christmas Then and Now

By: Amanda Nebral

Do you remember waking up before sunrise on Christmas morning to see what gifts Santa brought you? Christmas was all about the jolly man in red. Well, for kids today, Christmas isn't all about Santa anymore. Since the creation of the Elf on the Shelf, Christmas has changed more and more each year. There are now four different options of elves to "adopt." In fact, it's no longer just elves that Elf on the Shelf is selling. You can also purchase an arctic fox, a Saint Bernard, or a reindeer. Each elf and pet comes with its own book for kids to read, as well. There are also clothes that can be purchased for both elves and pets, along with activity sets, such as a small gingerbread house for your elf to live in. Finally, Elf on the Shelf sells elf stuffed animals, "Letters to Santa" kits, and has even made a number of Christmas movies. There are a total of 56 items that can be purchased from the Elf on the Shelf company. Is Elf on the Shelf truly the new Santa? Although that is a possibility in the future, at the moment, the majority of kids still wait for Santa to leave them gifts on Christmas Eve. Kids appear to just be using the Elf on the Shelf as a method to communicate with Santa Claus, as kids can write letters to Santa through their elf. Kids can also now video-chat with Santa via the Video Call Santa app. A lot has changed since we were kids, but hopefully, Santa will always be the main gift-giver of Christmas for kids.

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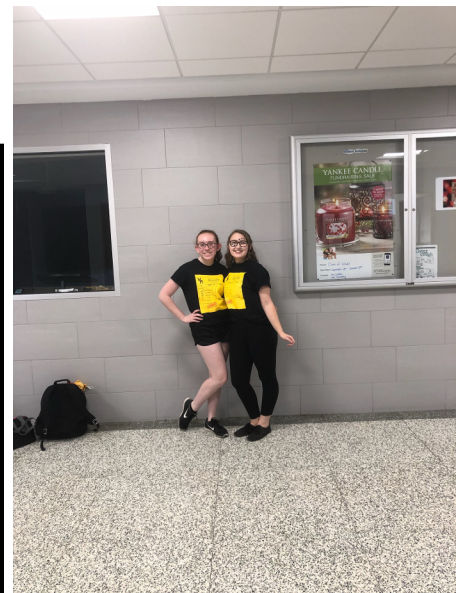
Contributors for this issue: Noah Albanese, Tari Civerolo, Amanda Nebral, Justin Zimmerman



Letter from the Editors:

Lily Stephens and Jenna Wilkinson

Winter is finally here! Inside this issue, find out about winter driving tips, Drama Club's upcoming production and whether or not Santa is real. . Just a friendly reminder to drive safely on the roads with this colder weather. We hope you enjoyed the holiday season with your family and we also wish you a Happy New Year!





What's News?

Mental Health Initiative

By: Amanda Nebral

Maple Hill's Mental Health Committee has been working very hard to try and create wellness throughout the school. This year, various students have joined the committee to work to improve the well-being of their classmates. So far this year, the committee has started a wellness word of the month. This month's word is **COMPASSION**. The committee also hung up posters to promote the ending of the stigma that often surrounds mental health, and held an assembly to explain to students what they are accomplishing. At the assembly, the words of the month were listed and students were asked to come up with synonyms to them, the seniors' new approach to Spirit Week was discussed, as they decided to try to make the Pep Rally more unifying, and a TED Talk by Drew Dudley was shown. The TED Talk explained that some people don't even know that they are making a difference, and how it truly is the little things in life that matter. Finally, students shared their "lollipop moments," since Dudley referred to his moment of giving someone a lollipop, and unbeknownst to him, changing their life. All in all, the assembly was a success and the Mental Health committee will continue to work hard to bring as much wellness to students as they can.

Welcome to the Cabaret!

The Maple Hill Drama Club is back again with an all new cabaret! This year the cabaret is directed by Sam Siciliano and choreographed by Adam Salerno with help from some Drama Club Alumni, Brayden Renslow and Hunter Pomykaj. The show features songs from hit Broadway shows like *Hairspray*, *The Addams Family*, *Heathers*, and *Wicked* as well as the t.v. show *Smash*. So come on down to see the Cabaret and support some of your favorite student singers such as: Tobiah Geiser, Jack Pomykaj, Joe Brewer, Makaila Maier, Willow Coleda, and some new faces like Tari Civerolo and Aidan Percey. The Cabaret is sure to be hit. Stay tuned for show dates and times!

The College Process

By: Tari Civerolo

To outsiders, navigating the college process can seem really daunting. As someone in the midst of it now, I can confirm that at times, it is--but there are definitely some tangible pieces of advice that have helped along the way.

Visits:

1. **Go on visits when you can--but not too many.** It's important to see a variety of schools to get a feel for what you want. Consider factors such as size, location, and overall atmosphere. However, college visits can be expensive and time consuming, so once you feel you've seen it all, it's probably a good idea to stop. It's hard to distinguish the fortieth school you've seen from the first.
2. **Experience campus the way you would as a student at that school.** If you like watching basketball, go to a game. If you're interested in religious life, visit the chapel. You can even eat a meal in the dining hall. This really helps you get a feel for the culture of the school.
3. **Talk with current students.** Before you visit, reach out to a current student and set aside some time to talk to them. You can meet up with someone you know and have them show you around, or you can email a student in a specific program you're interested in to learn more about it. They're usually really passionate about their school and happy to schedule a short meeting while you're on campus.
4. **Try to visit when school is in session.** School breaks are a great time to visit colleges, but keep in mind there might not be any students, and that there is a huge difference between a campus full of people and a campus that isn't. A dead campus can often give the wrong first impression of a school, even if you love everything else about it.

Applications:

1. **Become passionate about your college essay.** Don't try to write too many essays; narrow it down to one or two topics you love. Write them each, and decide which is best. After that, it's time to edit. Get a few unbiased people to read your essay over and give serious edits. Editing your essay can definitely be overwhelming, but it'll be worth it once you have a thoughtful, polished essay that will look great on a college application.
2. **Be smart about standardized testing.** A good rule is to give yourself a goal: a specific score that's a bit of a reach, but still reasonable. If you get that score or above, don't take the test again. Only taking the SAT or ACT once can save a lot of stress and money. And remember, a "good" score for you might not be the same for someone else. If you believe your score is the best possible reflection of your academic abilities, it's a good score.
3. **Apply Early Action to schools that offer it.** Early Action isn't binding, and doesn't require any extra work; it's just an earlier deadline. Early Action applicants also receive acceptances much earlier (usually around mid-December) and it can be a relief to know you got into college only a few months into senior year.

Winter Driving Tips

With everyone's favorite winter season right around the corner (and already started for the most part), some upperclassmen have to deal with possibly the most difficult part of upstate living: winter driving. So here are a few basic tips for the least enjoyable part of winter.



Number 1: Leave early!

This tip can be very difficult for perpetual late leavers (like myself) but there's so way to foresee some of the hold ups that winter weather can cause. Icy roads, collisions, downed power lines, or any other combination of classic winter annoyances. And, extra time to drive also allows you to...

Number 2: Drive slow!

Again, this might be quite difficult for people in the habit of leaving late, but when it comes to winter driving, precaution is everything. Giving yourself ample time to react to any hazard that may appear. Nobody wants to skid into a fender bender at the first stop sign from your house. Speaking of skidding...

Number 3: Steer into the skid!

One of the most famous driving tips, and one of the most confusing. I always completely over thought this tip when I started driving, but the basics are: if your back tires start sliding, steer in the direction that they skid. And if your front wheels are sliding, straighten the steering wheel. Both of these serve to straighten the car, avoiding a spin out, and hopefully keeping you on the road.

Most important tip!!

Just be smart! Most of us have grown up around this type of weather, and as long as you don't do anything stupid, you should be able to get where you need to go. Good luck out there! And be safe!



Arts & Entertainment

***The Irishman*: Martin Scorsese's unapologetic return to old cinema.**

This review contains no spoilers.

The Irishman is a movie that ignores the basic trend of film today. The movie is three and a half hours long, breaking the two hour rule of most movies, the movie is not made by *Disney*, and it is not a sequel, prequel or a remake. In *The Irishman*, Martin Scorsese takes a risk in making a gangster film by referring back to the [*old style of cinema*](#) but he nevertheless succeeds in making a near perfect movie.

The Irishman follows the life of Frank Sheeran, played by Robert De Niro, a gangster in Philadelphia who works as a truck driver. Frank is later recruited by teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa, who is played by Al Pacino. The film also stars Joe Pesci, as the head of the Buffalino crime family, Russel Buffalino.



For those who haven't heard of Jimmy Hoffa, Hoffa was a head of the Teamsters union in the 1950's to 60's. He was very successful in lobbying for truck workers, but his huge success also stemmed from his tie with the mob. His fame originates from the secrecy surrounding his death. Hoffa was last seen in 1975 at a restaurant, being driven away by a vehicle.

Scorsese tackles the secrecy surrounding Hoffa's death, at the same time telling a story about the friendship between Frank and Jimmy. A story about life, family and regret. There are brief scenes of action and violence, but the conflict is generally composed of euphemistic dialogue. This kind of dialogue is sometimes hard to pick up because they are code phrases for the mob, but to fully appreciate the foreshadowing and the tension that surrounds this kind of dialogue, one must fully pay attention to the movie.

The big three, Robert de Niro, Joe Pesci, and Al Pacino were near perfect in their performance. Mobster movies are intriguing because unlike normal stories, the main character and his supporting

characters are all flawed in nature. The three all make their characters seem like humans with flaws, and even relatable.

However, the highlight goes to Joe Pesci as mobster boss Russel Buffalino. In the past, Joe Pesci has played characters, mostly gangsters, who were aggressive, hyper, and in your face. Joe Pesci does something different in *The Irishman*. In *The Irishman*, his character is mature, calm, and subdued. It's like he knows he doesn't have to assert his authority, because everybody knows how powerful his presence is.

The Irishman is a great movie to watch in the theater or on *Netflix*. Just make sure you don't watch it on your phone, [Scorsese really wants the audience to watch it on the big screen](#). I'm going to make a prediction that it will be nominated as best picture at the Oscars and win it.

©*Rotten Potatoes* rates it a 99%

*In a recent op-ed article in the *New York Times*, Martin Scorsese makes his case for what he thinks is wrong with the film industry today, looking at franchises like *Marvel*. Definitely worth the read.*





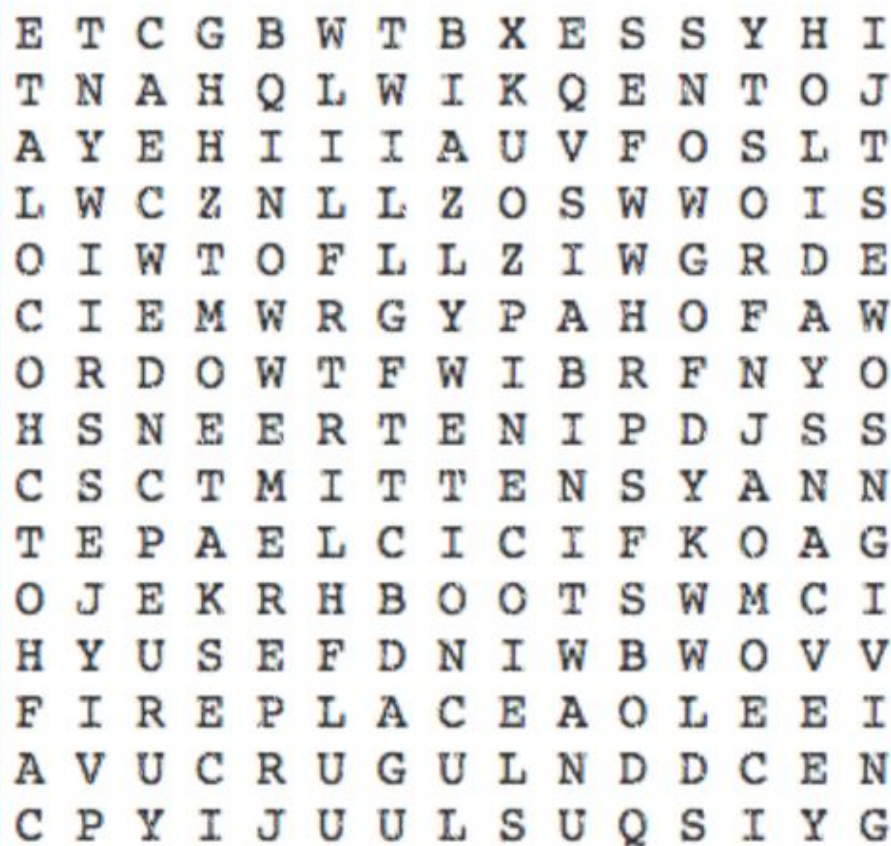
Winter

Fun Winter Activities

By: Justin Zimmerman

- Build a snowman
- Go see a movie (The Rise of Skywalker)
- Read a book
- Try to learn something new
- Have a family game night
- Get together with friends
- Go sledding
- Have a movie marathon
- Spend time with family
- Look for a job
- Go see a concert
- Start watching a new TV show
- Follow through on your New Years Resolution
- Do any school work you have to do
- Go Ice skating
- Go see a sporting event
- Bake something
- Take one day to clean and organize
- Take a road trip with friends
- Go out and get the things you didn't get for Christmas
- Volunteer and help others
- Relax and play video games
- Study for the Sat/ACT
- Go bowling
- Have a snowball fight
- Go to a museum
- Volunteer and help others
- Go roller skating
- Stay up all night
- Play laser tag
- Start going to the gym or exercising at home
- Prepare for college
- Spend a day watching Netflix
- Have a sleepover
- Get rid of things you don't need anymore
- Actually use the new things you got
- Enjoy yourself and have a good time

WINTER WORD SEARCH



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WORDS TO FIND:

BLIZZARD

COLD

FROZEN

HAT

ICE

MITTENS

SNOW

SNOWMAN

WINTER

BOOTS

FIREPLACE

GIVING

HOLIDAYS

ICESKATE

PINETREE

SNOWBALL

SNOWSUIT

CHILLY

FROSTY

GLOVES

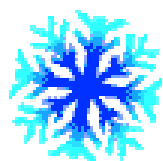
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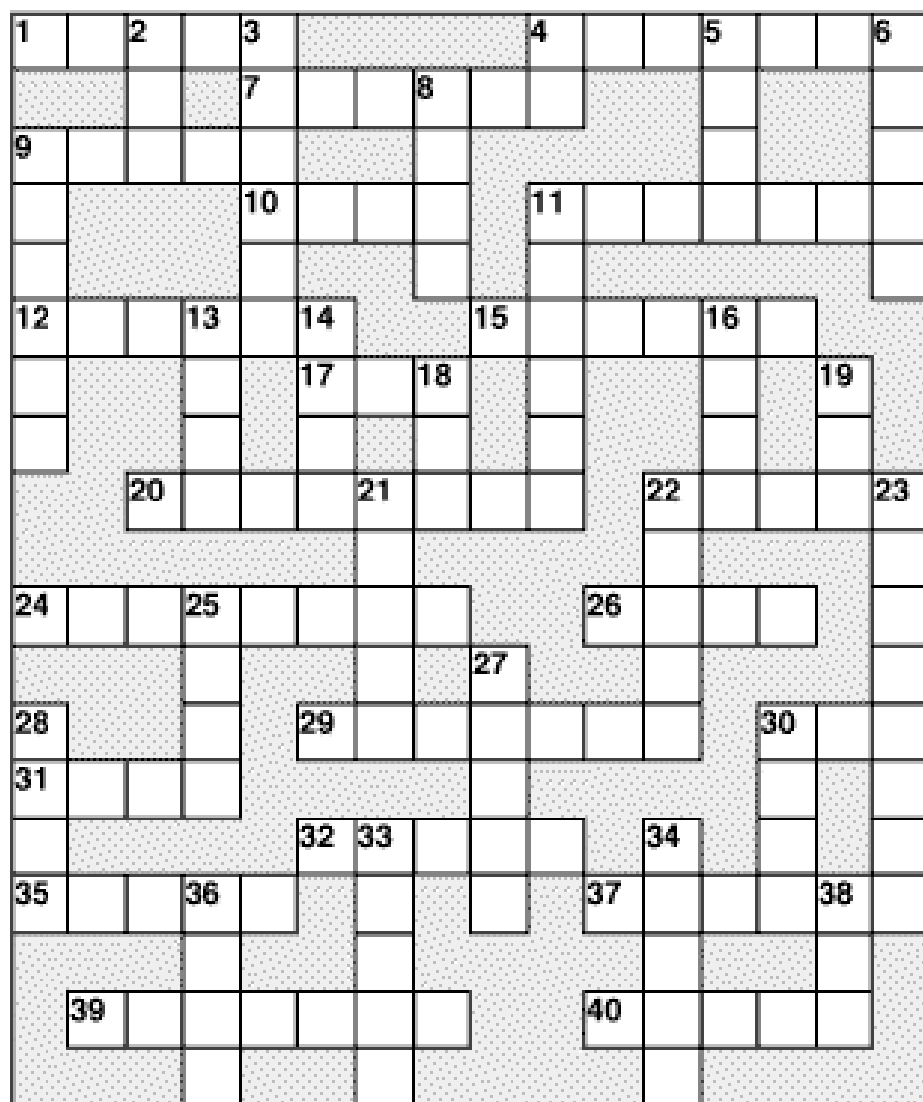
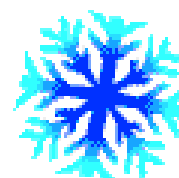
SCARF

SNOWFLAKE

WIND



Winter Crossword



Down:

- 2. Frozen water
- 3. Small
- 4. Myself
- 5. Small pie
- 6. Neck warmer
- 8. Chilly
- 9. Used to move snow
- 11. A season
- 13. Strong emotion
- 14. Ripped
- 16. Nil
- 18. Bath _____
- 19. Cloud of water vapour
- 21. Last month of winter
- 22. Wooden snow vehicles
- 23. Winter road condition
- 25. Be carried on
- 27. Locomotive
- 28. Carried along by wind
- 30. Piece of hockey equipment
- 33. Make this in the snow
- 34. Winter foot wear
- 36. Faucets can do this
- 38. You hear with this

Across:

- 1. Sudden cold breeze
- 4. Hand warmers
- 7. Hanging spike of ice
- 9. Freezing rain
- 10. Show and _____
- 11. Conditions outside
- 12. Flowering plant, colour
- 15. Achoo
- 17. Not in
- 20. Month of winter
- 22. Carols, etc.
- 24. Valentine month
- 26. Thaw
- 29. Keeps drinks warm
- 30. Small dog
- 31. Winter Olympic sport
- 32. Silky material
- 35. Breezy
- 37. Ice sport
- 39. Foot warmer
- 40. Direct a vehicle's course

