

THE WESTAMPTON EYE

The latest news and updates from Westampton Middle School



Christmas

BY FAKIHA R.

It's holiday time, and that means Christmas. Here are some Christmas facts you may not know! Did you know that the *New York Times* cooking page provides recipes for twenty-four cookies for the twenty-four days of December before Christmas Day? One Christmas tradition some people do is track the days on an Advent calendar. Another international Christmas tradition, Christmas lights, originated in Germany. People back then expressed their Christmas spirit by lighting candles before light bulbs were invented. The downside to candle lighting was fires. Edward Johnson, a friend of the inventor of light bulbs, Thomas Edison, had an idea to use light bulbs instead of candles. Gingerbread houses originated in Germany and then later got associated with Christmas. Gingerbread houses became popular after the story "Hansel and Gretel." "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," a famous family Christmas movie, is a great movie to watch if you want to get the Christmas vibes. "Home Alone" is also a classic comedy Christmas movie.

WORLD HOLIDAYS

KWANZAA

BY MICHELLE A. AND NIA M.



Kwanzaa is a common African-American holiday that is celebrated from the 26th of December to the 1st of January. Kwanzaa is a celebration of community, family, and culture, and was established as a means to help African Americans reconnect with their African roots and heritage.

The seven principles of Kwanzaa utilize Swahili words. Some examples of these words are self-determination (*kujichagulia*), purpose (*nia*), creativity (*kuumba*), and faith (*imani*). The seven candles are used to represent these words.

For a traditional Kwanzaa meal, try African Creole, Cajun catfish, jerk chicken, or groundnut stew, a tasty dish from West Africa.

Kwanzaa is going to celebrate its 55th birthday this December. Kwanzaa is still not a very well-known holiday, and more people should take time to appreciate it!

HANUKKAH

BY MARLEY C.

What is Hanukkah? Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday usually celebrated from late November to early December. Hanukkah lasts a total of 8 days and is celebrated in several ways.

In addition to lighting one candle on the menorah per day, rituals include the daily reading of Scripture, saying some of the Psalms, giving to charity, and singing special hymns.

Hanukkah is the remembrance of a historical event that took place in Jerusalem in the 2nd century BCE when the Seleucid Greek empire was the ruling power. In 168 BCE, the king Antiochus IV Epiphanes outlawed Jewish practice and defiled the Jewish Temple in the city by installing an altar to Zeus.

The original Hanukkah menorah dates to 164 B.C.E., when Judah the Maccabee defeated the Syrian oppressors in a hard-fought battle. As the Jewish people reclaimed their temple and lit its golden candelabrum, their only supply of oil, which should have run out after one day, miraculously lasted for eight.



Happy Kwanzaa and Hanukkah!

MORE COOL FACTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS

BY DAVID O.

- Decorated trees were first used by the ancient Egyptians and Romans.
- "Jingle Bells" was the first song to be played in space.
- Santa has his own postal code in Canada.
- There is a Christmas tree in Spain worth 15 million dollars.
- The Statue of Liberty was the largest Christmas gift ever given.
- A record number of babies is conceived around Christmas.
- The U.S. grows 77 million Christmas trees a year.
- Santa Claus has 30 different names.
- Tens of thousands of people go to the ER each year from accidents that occur while decorating their houses.

NEW YEAR'S EVE ACROSS THE WORLD

BY MANNAT K.



The New Year is closer than we think. Have you ever thought about what other cultures do to celebrate?

- In Spain, locals think that eating twelve grapes brings good luck for the New Year.
- In Russia, it is a tradition to plant an underwater tree. They plant it in the largest freshwater lake. Typically decorated spruce would be buried 100 or more feet under the surface.
- In Brazil, people would throw white flowers in the ocean to make an offering to Yemoja, a major water god who is said to control the seas, to have her blessing for the year to come.
- In Greece, it is a tradition to hang an onion. An onion is a symbol of rebirth. They hang the vegetable on their doors in order to promote growth throughout the new year.
- In Chile, New Years Eve masses are held not at the church, but in cemeteries. They do this so they can include their deceased family members in their activities.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYBODY!

THREE KINGS DAY BY CHRISTIAN D.

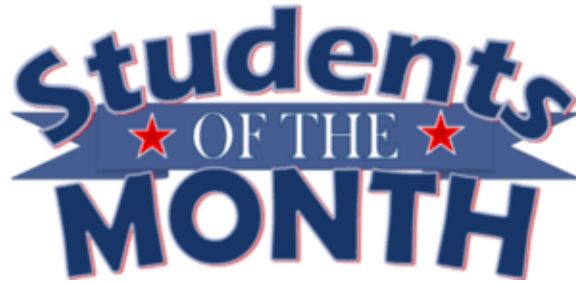
On January 6th, Three Kings Day, also known as Epiphany Day, is celebrated by certain people of Spanish and Latin American descent. Three Kings Day marks the last of the twelve days of Christmas. It's similar to Thanksgiving in a way that you just prepare a large meal for family and friends.



There are many ways to celebrate Three Kings Day and many things that can be included in the celebration. The most important part of the feast is a baked cake called Rosca de Reyes. It is in the shape of a crown.

¡Feliz día de los Reyes Magos!





Amanda W. — 6th Grade

Mason W. — 6th Grade

Maliah H. — 7th Grade

Michael J. — 7th Grade

Toi P. — 8th Grade

Gabby Q. — 8th Grade

Musician of the month:

Eliana B.

And...

Giant of the month:

Phillip P., for being noticeably polite, respectful and hard-working

Go, Phillip!

LIBRARY NEWS: TOP 10 LIBRARY READERS FOR DECEMBER

BY MR. LEONE



Congratulations to the following TOP 10 readers for the month of December:

Rashawn M. — 7th grade, 7 books checked out

Gianna B. — 6th grade, 6 books checked out

Alison F. — 6th grade, 6 books checked out

Micah B. — 7th grade, 5 books checked out

Lia F. — 7th grade, 5 books checked out

Tylar L. — 7th grade, 5 books checked out

Reyhan Y. — 7th grade, 5 books checked out

Chelsea L. — 8th grade, 4 books checked out

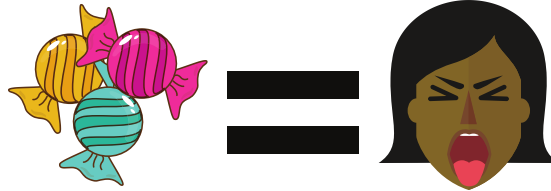
Paytyn B. — 7th grade, 4 books checked out

Sonia L. — 7th grade, 4 books checked out

Keep reading, everybody!

STRONG OPINIONS

A COLUMN BY MICHELLE A.



In my life, people seem to think I have controversial opinions. One that seems to enrage people the most is my taste in food. Food that I *hate*, to be specific. These are some of the foods that make me physically angry. (You will notice a pattern of sweet things.)

Pancakes. What is up with pancakes? It's just horrible breakfast food. Nothing is good about pancakes. Waffles are a little better, but honestly, they're mediocre and un-special. Speaking of breakfast food, muffins are another food I don't like. The only thing I can say about muffins is that they taste bad. Really bad. (I had one today and almost went into cardiac arrest.)

Don't get me started on chocolate. It's the worst thing ever. I know some people who don't like it, but it's still liked by most people. You are all fools. I only pray one day you will see the light and redeem your ignorance.

Strangely, I *do* like chocolate ice cream, so I don't know how that works.

You may also find it weird that I hate cake but like cupcakes. They're the same thing, right? But I despise cake with my soul. I hate sugar. The icing. Everything about it makes me cry.

Most candy is on my hate list too. I don't like caramel, and most candy bars—Twix, Milky Way, you name it. Way too sweet. I could probably list even more, but I'm tired and people are gonna call me old.

I hope you all took something from this. I wish I could leave this piece anonymous for the sake of my well-being.

If you like all the foods I mentioned, please dial 1-800-NOCANDY now!

INTERVIEW: MS. IRWIN

BY SYNAI G. AND JAZMIN A.



There is a new teacher at Westampton Middle School, Ms. Irwin. We had the opportunity to interview Ms. Irwin for *The Westampton Eye*. Below is the interview we conducted with Ms. Irwin.

Westampton Eye: How long have you been teaching?

A. Sixteen years.

Q. How long have you been at WMS?

A. This is my first year teaching here.

Q. What's your favorite grade to teach?

A. 8th grade math.

Q. Why did you choose to teach at WMS?

A. I always wanted to teach at a public school. I've always worked at a private school.

Q. Where did you teach/work before?

A. Hampton Academy for the last fifteen years.

Q. How do you like it at WMS so far?

A. Everyone is nice. It's been a good change. I look forward to more growth.



The NBA's Top 75

by Jordan O.



The NBA recently released their list of the 75 greatest players of all time. The list is currently becoming a tradition for every quarter of a decade that passes in basketball. Twenty-five years ago we had the top 50 list and this year ago we got our top 75 list.

For the most part the list was accurate. The players that people would consider no-brainers made the list like LeBron James, Michael Jordan, and some of the other greats.

However, there were a few players that were very surprising. Take Anthony Davis for example. Don't get me wrong: he is an extremely talented and accomplished player, and he'll probably retire as a hall of famer, but top 75? Not possible.

I think there is a somebody who should definitely be on this list, and it is Davis's teammate, Dwight Howard. Howard's resume is very impressive: he is an 8-time all-star, and a 3-time defensive player of the year. He has a championship to his name, and he was on the all-rookie team in 2005, and the defensive team five times. He was an all-NBA 8 times. Howard even led the league in blocks twice and rebounds five times.

Based solely off of accolades, it isn't clear who the better player is, but what made Howard so great in his prime was his physical impact. Davis's only finals trip came when he had LeBron playing on his team. Howard was different; he took a roster that in today's league would barely be in the playoffs, if at all. He was easily the most dominant player to touch the floor since Shaquille O'Neal, and the best thing about him is he didn't have to get 30 to take over. Dwight was the type of player who controlled a game with his presence. Three blocks and twelve boards was easy work for him.

The name on this list that bothered me the most was Damian Lillard. While he is one of the most well-known stars in the league today, he doesn't have the accolades to be considered a top 75 player. Back in 2013, Lillard started his career off strong by winning Rookie of the Year. Since then he has been an All-NBA player six times and has been named to the All-Star game six times. He hasn't won an MVP, a defensive player of the year, and he hasn't even had post-season success. The furthest he's been is the conference finals, and that was only one time.

To be fair, however, it isn't easy to list the top 75 players to play in the past 75 years and manage to satisfy every single fan who reads it. Some people simply need to understand that and move on with the season.

The Worst Teacher Ever

Non-Fiction by Christian D.

This is about a third grade teacher I had, way before I came to Westampton Middle School. This was the strictest teacher ever. I understand how teachers are *supposed* to be strict, but this is a different type of strict, like an *abusive* type of strict. She hated joy, like when we laughed or smiled. She was like, “Stop laughing! Stop smiling! Nothing is funny!”

She always yelled at you for making the most minor mistake. I remember this one moment so vividly. One kid was pronouncing “nothing” like “nofing,” and the teacher was screaming at him, slamming her desk and all up in his face.

“NOFING?! DO YOU MEAN NOTHING?!” It was the worst moment ever, and I haven't even gotten to the worst part yet. After screaming at him for like five minutes, she got up, came up to the kid, and dragged him out of the room by his leg! You could hear him crying, screaming, and the dust marks he made on the floor.

It was a terrible sight.

This teacher finally got fired around the end of the school year. She was replaced by this good, well-known sub around the school. She treated us like her grandkids.

Third grade wasn't really the best year with that teacher. My old school doesn't seem as good compared to this school, but I had my fair share of fun and good times, too. I've enjoyed my time at WMS and I look forward to making more hilarious and fun memories in the future.



The Taco Apocalypse

Fiction by Marley C.



It all started on a typical Tuesday morning. The sun was shining and the leaves were just starting to turn color. I had to go to school, which was not my favorite—but whatever—but then I remembered it was Tuesday! At Banana High School there was Taco Tuesdays!

As normal, there was a crash on Fruit Highway, which made us miss thirty minutes of school. It was my favorite class, which made my day start bad but I didn't let that stop me from smiling as I always do. We had first period then Special, which was my favorite Special—library!—sh, don't tell any other teacher.

After Specials we had lunch and my friends and me were so excited we couldn't contain ourselves. Our table was called, and we speed walked. We got our food and drinks, and we sat down and started making our tacos. We all finished and they looked like a yummy disaster, but we were so hungry we didn't care.

We were just about to take a bite then Timmy screamed, “Don't eat the tacos!”

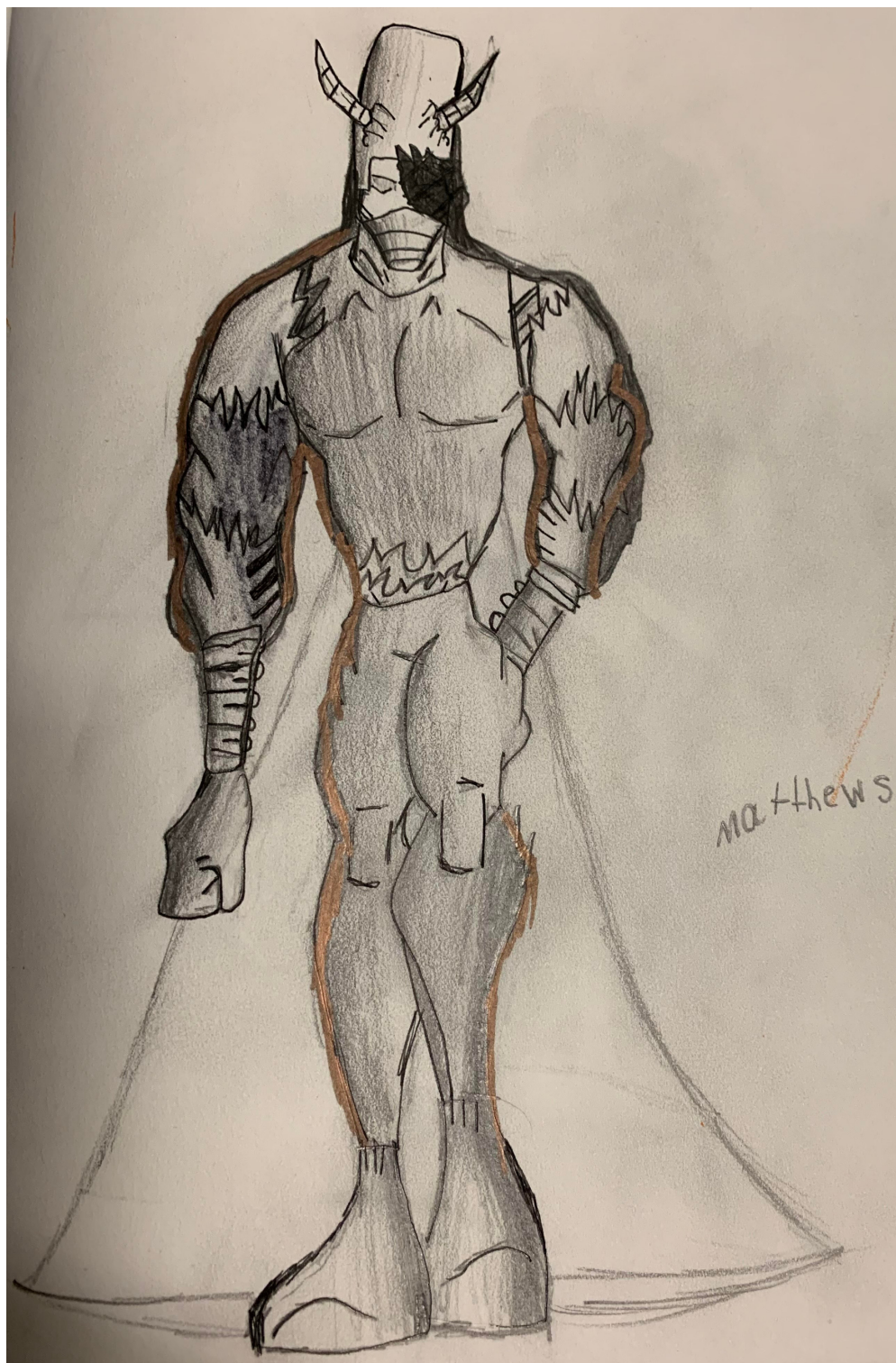
Just then my taco grew arms. I stood there in disbelief. Then “POP” it grew legs, and “BAM” it grew eyes and a mouth. Everyone screamed and ran. Of course I tripped and got pushed and trampled on, but I kept on running. My legs hurt and so did my arms.

We all ran to our next period classes and all at once we started saying what happened. Our teacher understood us and what we were attempting to say. She grabbed a big fork out of her book bag and called the other teachers into the room. They all grabbed big forks and went to the lunch room and as soon as they entered...I woke up from my dream and started my lovely Tuesday.

DECEMBER 2021

ART

BY MATTHEW S.



DECEMBER 2021

ART

BY JEWEL S.



DECEMBER 2021

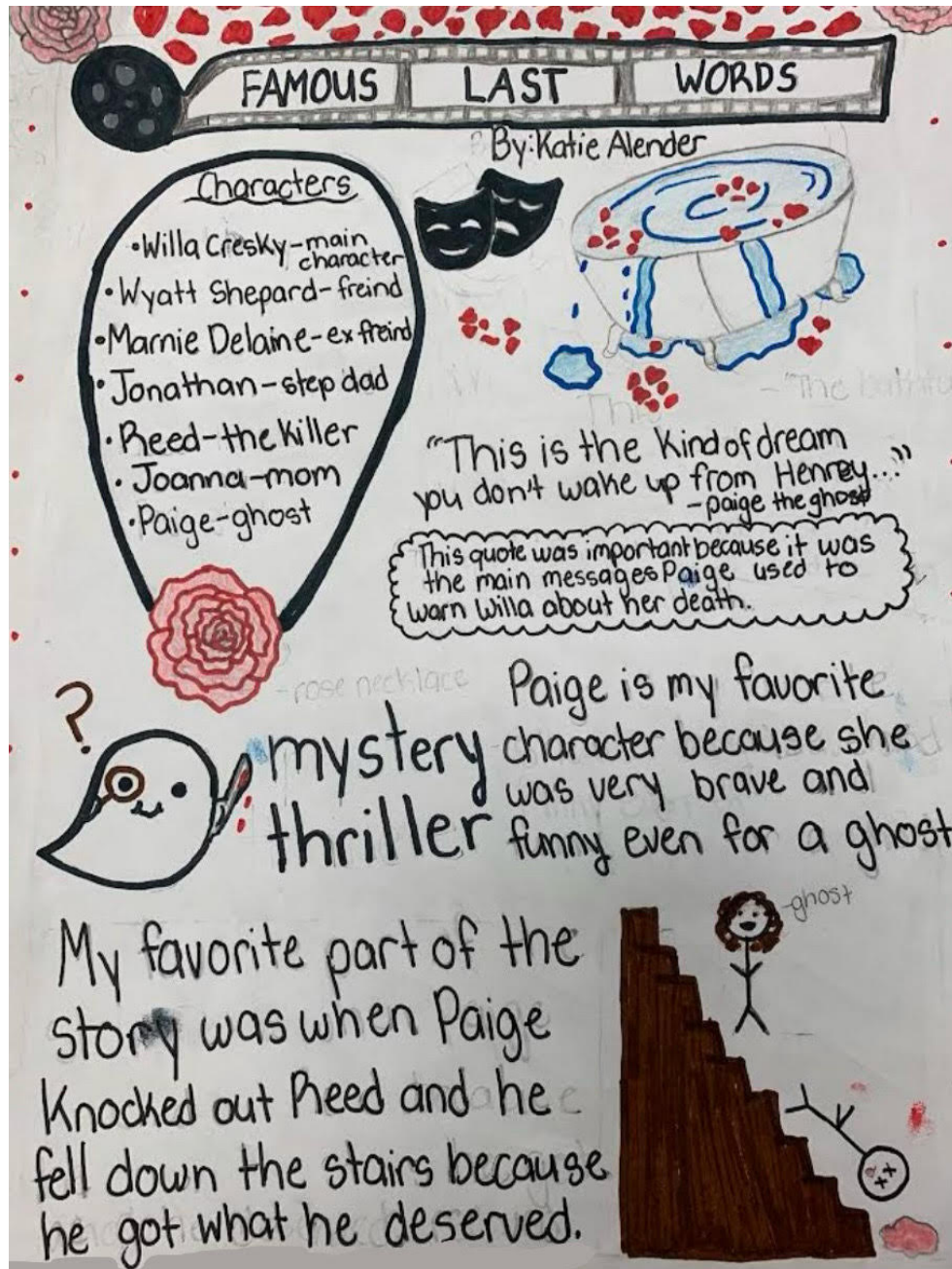
ART

BY JOACHIM A.



ONE PAGE NOVEL REVIEWS

BY MICHELLE A.



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