

THE BASIS SCOTTSDALE GAZETTE

NEW YEAR, NEW TEAM

BY SAHIL SUD

When you think of BASIS Scottsdale, the first thing that comes to mind may not be soccer. While our school’s athletic department has expanded over the years to house strong basketball, cross country, tennis, and track and field programs, soccer has never formally been part of our school’s sports. This year, however, some of our own teachers established a soccer team at our school in hopes of bringing further athletic success to the school and creating a more enjoyable environment for our current and future student-athletes. The coaches say the team will also help improve school spirit and form lasting friendships for the players.

With the soccer season underway, the junior high (JH) team is up on their feet and ready to make our school proud. I sat down with Mr. Flores, the boys’ coach who, along with assistant coach Ms. Arora and girls’ coach Ms. Wong, was instrumental in the founding of the team and discussed his expectations for the upcoming season.

What motivated you to establish these teams?

Mr. Flores: There has always been a need for a soccer team at BASIS. The student body is filled with talented young men and women who are phenomenal student-athletes. This, and the fact that coaching club soccer years ago led me to become a teacher, is why I wanted to

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BASIS Scottsdale’s JH Girls’ Team with Coach Wong

SAVE THE DATE

**Dec. 20-31:
Winter Break**

**Dec. 25:
Christmas**

**Jan. 1: New
Year’s Day**

**Jan. 3: First Day
Back to School**

FEATURED

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have a yearly JH team that could also provide future varsity soccer players.

What are your expectations for these teams?

Mr. Flores: For the JH boys team, my expectation is that they grow as a team, work hard, look out for each other on the field, and if possible, secure some positive results. These young men are capable of a lot, and I'm hoping to provide them with an alternative outlet for them via the soccer team.

What were some of the challenges you encountered when first establishing the teams?

Mr. Flores: The biggest hurdle is always getting the word out about the team. Even this year, I had players who tried to join after the roster was finalized because they had not heard about the tryouts until it was too late. The second biggest hurdle is having the students believe in the soccer program. Given how new it is, a lot of club level players are hesitant to join at times because they don't expect it to be a high caliber and competitive program, which it always is. Lastly, the hardest task is having to select the best 18 players from those that come to tryouts.

How were you able to persuade BASIS Scottsdale administration to establish a soccer team?

Mr. Flores: No persuasion was needed. After they approached me about coaching varsity soccer, I asked them if I could also start a JH team that would serve as the feeder team to the varsity team.

What was the most difficult part of preparing the players for games?

Mr. Flores: The most difficult process is always getting fields because Scottsdale has a lot of clubs that rent most if not all of the best fields around campus. The other difficulty is, at least early on, helping the parents establish a carpooling network since there is no transportation provided to/from games/practices.

What kind of style do each of your teams play?

Mr. Flores: I like to run a very offensive oriented game plan. This usually results in having 3 forwards, and high scoring games, for and/or against.

How have the early games of the season gone?

Mr. Flores: The early games have gone as expected. Scottsdale Prep was a high caliber team from my experience in having coached them years ago, and unfortunately the result did not go our way. But we were able to bounce back against BASIS Phoenix with a decisive 6-0 victory, which provided many great opportunities and learning moments for the players. As we play more games, I hope that we can improve our record.

As the season continues, our team will face many challenges as it navigates through its schedule. But as the players gain chemistry, the team will become stronger, and the results and skill of the players will improve. We are excited to see how this new group of student-athletes will grow and mature!



BASIS Scottsdale's JH Boys' team with their coaches, Ms. Arora and Mr. Flores

CAMPUS COMMENTARY

THE WINTER BREAK OF A BASIS STUDENT

BY ALLISON LI

Dashing through the halls, in a pair of broken sandals, o'er the children we go, crashing into lockers...every year, people all over the world celebrate what we call Christmas. Year after year, schools shut down for two full weeks, giving their students a nice mental break right after "finals." This break actually provides us with a critical period of time in which we can carefully observe a BASIS student living in their natural habitat. To begin our study, let's take a careful look at one of the specimens we've already grown at the BASIS Scottsdale laboratory: Subject A, a current junior.

Subject A starts off winter break by looking through their planner and assessing all of the assessments that they'll take immediately after the break. At this point, the subject will do absolutely nothing or begin their work and whatever they do they will stick with for the rest of the break--I'm sorry, it appears that Subject A has chosen to create a third option. They are currently scheduling a little hangout with some of their fellow specimens. How strange. In all my years of research, I don't believe I've ever had such an abnormality occur. Let's go along with it and see what happens...

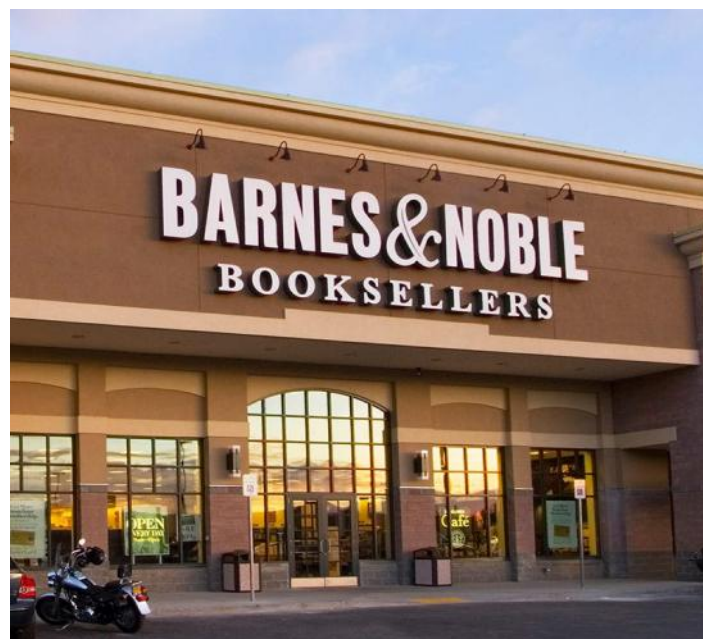
So, Thursday the 30th we can all meet up at Barnes and Nobles for a study sesh?

It appears that they're going to choose both choices which not only allows them to procrastinate for the majority of the break but also get some work done. According to my fellow researchers, this subject is a part of the fifth BASIS Scottsdale generation starting at the young age of 6th grade. Apparently a couple of them managed to survive to this point through pure caffeine and will power. Now, let's return to observing this situation. Between the time period of 12 PM to 7 PM, Subject A is observed scrolling through TikTok on their phone without consuming any food or water. At precisely 7:15 PM, Subject A gets up and walks around the exhibit for some time before returning to their position.

Throughout our observation of Subject A, they settled into an erratic routine of scrolling through TikTok,

sleeping, and eating. However, it appears that this specimen can stay awake for an extended period of time when on their phone, setting a new record of 79 hours for their species. As the 30th of December approached, Subject A began to sleep and eat more regularly spending much less time on their phone. On the 30th, Subject A realizes that they never actually scheduled a time to meet at Barnes and Nobles and texts: "Uh...when are we meeting?" She does not receive a reply at all and as a result the subjects never come together to study. Subject A ends up doing all the review on their own over the course of the next three days revealing their extraordinary skills of procrastination and focus.

Over the course of this experiment, we have discovered that not only do most BASIS specimens have an utter disdain for celebrated holidays, but they also have exceptional abilities far beyond that of a normal high school student. It is truly these abilities that ultimately put these BASIS specimens on top of the academic food chain.



The place where the study sesh was supposed to take place, Source: usatoday.com

BASIS STUDENT WISH LIST

BY RAHUL JASTHI

With break just around the corner, gift giving traditions seem to follow. When giving gifts to other people, people usually consider their hobbies and personalities. For BASIS Scottsdale, each student wish list would look completely different from one another due to the diverse population. But what exactly might they look like? To find out, I talked to members of different grades: a sophomore, junior, and senior.

What do you want for Christmas?

Senior: The motivation to finish my senior year.

Senior year is always difficult with the stress of college applications and capstone classes. But in February, they are free to leave either for work experience or for a senior project. Hopefully, the seniors can finish their college applications and relax.

Junior: The exemption from all tests in 2022.

Not having to take tests would be amazing for our stress levels. The juniors would also have much more free time on their hands since they wouldn't have to study. Hopefully, the teachers don't give extra homework because of this.

Sophomore: Happiness.

Although vague, happiness can refer to a variety of things: a happy family, a happy life, or even a happy break. If only this gift could last for the whole year. With Mock AP exams coming up, being happy seems to be a far-off luxury.

What are your plans for Christmas?

Senior: Writing more college essays.

College application season is ending, and eventually our hardworking seniors will finally be able to relax and finish up their capstone classes as their time at BASIS Scottsdale comes to an end. Best of luck to all the seniors!

Junior: The three r's: rest, relax, and respite.

Break should be a time when students should take it easy, while also preparing for the upcoming year of school, and, hopefully, every junior gets the opportunity to take a break.

Sophomore: Relaxation.

Again, it seems relaxation is the most common plan among BASIS Scottsdale students. Sophomores definitely deserve it, as there is a major step between 9th and 10th grade with the change in curriculum difficulty. I hope the sophomores can have a restful break.

What do you think the other grades would want for Christmas?

Senior: The lower grades would want more tests and quizzes for mental stimulation. They need it to prepare for their tests like Precomps and Mock APs.

Although very logical, I don't think the other grades would appreciate it, since they too would like to take a pause from school over break.

Junior: Also the three r's: rest, relax, and respite.

This thought is probably correct since other grades have also been working very hard. The transition from online to in person was not an easy one, but everything seems to be working smoothly now.

Sophomore: Electronics.

Surprisingly the only tangible item on this list, I can understand why it would make a good present. It would provide entertainment to some students, which helps reduce the stress put on by school.

When do you think winter break should end?

Senior: February since the seniors would be able to graduate immediately.

Junior: At least a week longer, so they can catch up on all the homework assigned before break.

Sophomore: The end of February since then winter break would at the same time winter officially ends.

To be honest, I was surprised by the lack of AP Prep books considering the ever-approaching Mock AP Exams. All in all, with break quickly approaching, students and staff should focus on spreading positivity and preparing for the next year, which hopefully will be much better than 2021.

CURRENT EVENTS

JOLLY OLD ST. PHYSICIST

BY CALISTA WILK

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Santa traveling through a wormhole? When thinking about delivering billions of gifts to children all around the world in one night, it may seem like Santa Claus would never be able to complete his job with just an open-top sleigh and a team of reindeer. Certain Scrooges among us entertain this idea, insisting that such a feat would be scientifically impossible. But what if Jolly Old St. Nicholas was actually an ingenious physicist? With a dive into general relativity and quantum mechanics, all we need is a little Christmas spirit to unwrap the mystery of Santa.

One of the easiest strategies Santa could employ to achieve his task is wormholes. Wormholes, tunnels that connect two distant points in space or time, are theoretically possible according to Einstein's theory of general relativity, and they would allow Santa to travel enormous distances in short amounts of time. Dan Holz, a professor of Physics at the University of Chicago, explains that without traveling through wormholes, Santa would have to travel near the speed of light and that the constant deceleration and acceleration of stopping at and starting from each house would kill a human, posing issues for Santa. So, this is why Holz finds, "Santa can keep going through a wormhole, doing what needs to be done at whatever leisurely pace he prefers — and given his belly, it's easy to imagine that's the option Santa would take."

If Santa is unable to find a wormhole which he could travel through, he could have become a master of the multiverse. Quantum mechanics interprets the universe as being made of a countless number of duplicate universes, with the past unchangeable but the future uncertain until we make a decision. Dick Ahlstrom, Science Editor of the Irish Times, explains that Santa "can choose a home and appropriate toys and instantaneously be there to deliver them, with that house and presents fixed in time," moving on to "the next multiverse home with its mix of toy options." If this theory is true, Santa may have found a way to handle and traverse the multitude of universes in order to ensure every child receives their gifts.

Speeding from one house to the next with a whole sleigh of presents, though, would require great amounts of energy and, as such, fuel. A brilliant explanation for this

obstacle arises from one of the most indispensable traditions of Christmas: leaving out cookies and milk. Assuming that Santa delivers around 4.5 pounds of toys to each household, he would have to carry about 4000 times the payload capacity of the largest aircraft. As it turns out, however, rocket fuel is inefficient, as only about 0.001% of its mass is used for powering the spacecraft. As American science writer Ethan Siegel considers, it is theoretically possible for Santa's reindeer to convert every bit of mass from the cookies and milk into energy according to Einstein's $E=mc^2$, which demonstrates that mass can be converted into energy with 100% efficiency. These treats, then, would supply his sleigh and reindeer with enough energy to deliver every toy to all the households in the world.

The application of just these few physics principles can help prove that it truly is possible for Santa to exist. The magical mystery of how he can complete his job in such a short period of time not only makes the holidays more exciting but also serves as a reflection of science taught in schools. Certain concepts are taught to exist and apply to various situations, even though we are not explicitly shown why or how. Sometimes, though, we need to trust the process and have faith that accepting what we learn will make sense as we continue developing our understanding of the sciences and the world. Because, as Holz notes, "it's nice to have some magic in one's life."



Source: www.irishtimes.com

UNIQUE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

BY ANDREW KANG

Christmas in the United States generally involves families spending time together, decorating Christmas trees, and opening presents, but many other countries have their own unique Christmas traditions to celebrate the holiday. Here are a few of them:

Roller Skate Mass: Venezuela

In Caracas, Venezuela, city-dwellers roller skate to church on Christmas morning. The tradition is so popular that the city's streets are closed for the safety of the skaters. This Venezuelan tradition has occurred for many years and is a great way for families and friends to spend time together.

Shoes by the Fire: The Netherlands

During the days leading up to Christmas in the Netherlands, children fill their shoes up with carrots and place them by the fire. They do this in hopes that Sinterklaas, an inspiration for the modern Santa Claus, will give them presents during the night. The tradition of putting carrots in the shoes is meant for Sinterklaas' white horse named Amerigo. It's a fun tradition that encourages children to be kind-hearted people.

Flying Witches: Norway

Norwegian folklore mentions that Christmas Eve was a time when evil spirits and witches would come outside to look for broomsticks to ride on and cause mischief. So to prevent this from happening, Norwegians would hide their broomsticks so that the witches wouldn't be able to find them and to ward off the evil spirits. It's certainly an unusual Christmas tradition but one that has been celebrated for many centuries.

The Yule Goat: Sweden

One of the oldest Christmas traditions, the Yule Goat dates as far back as the 11th century during pagan times. As a result, the tradition has changed many times throughout history. During the 17th century, men used to dress up as the Yule Goat and run around places committing mischievous deeds, but by the 19th century, the Yule Goat became a benevolent figure. Men would dress up as the goat and give gifts to their families. In the modern day, however, the dress-up is no longer practiced and the Yule Goat is now a traditional ornament on Christmas trees in Sweden. In major cities, large figures of the Yule Goat are crafted by using straw and red ribbons.



Source: gizmodo.com

Advent Calendars: Germany

Advent, lasting from the First Sunday of Advent until December 24th, is a widely celebrated German Christmas tradition that uses beautiful calendars and wreaths to count down the days until Christmas. Because of the varying date of the First Sunday of Advent, many calendars begin on December 1 and end on the 24th. Generally, each day on the calendar has a little window that contains a piece of chocolate inside but more intricate ones have 24 bags which contain small gifts for children, teens, and even adults. Opening these up every day only takes a few minutes and is an enjoyable family activity. Although originating from Germany, the tradition has become so popular that it is now common in both the U.S. and Europe.

Posadas Pinatas: Mexico

From December 16th to December 24th, a series of nine parties in Mexico begin with the Posada. The posada is a reenactment of the Census pilgrimage of Mary and Joseph arriving at Bethlehem and finding no room at the inn. Customarily, Mexican families hold a posada party where people sing Christmas carols and try to break a seven-pointed star-shaped pinata made of papier-mache and decorated with candy and small toys. Once broken, the children collect everything in it and have a fun time.

From hiding broomsticks to making an enormous Yule goat made of straw, these unique Christmas traditions show us how diverse cultures are. They can create everlasting memories and form stronger bonds between family and friends. Hopefully, I've increased your knowledge about different cultures—happy holidays!

OPINION

A CAPITALIST CHRISTMAS

BY DERRICK KANG &
SAHIL SUD

Millions of children every year leave cookies and milk out in hopes of luring the magical Santa Claus into their homes to leave gifts. But, Santa Claus as we know him today, is really an amalgamation of a multitude of European traditions: the Catholic-origin Saint Nick, the English pagan Father Christmas, and the Dutch Sinterklaas.

In order to talk about Santa Claus and Christmas, we must first talk about the characters that influenced his creation. Saint Nicholas, also known as Nicholas the Wonderworker, was an early Christian bishop that was known for his secret gift-giving--the basis for the modern Santa Claus. He was known for his generosity and goodwill with many stories based on his charitable actions to the needy. The English Father Christmas was not as concerned with gifts as he was more with food and celebration. However, there was no connection between him and children nor gift-giving, but he was portrayed as a jolly old man wearing a holly wreath and holding a staff and is probably best known today for terrorizing Scrooge as the Ghost of Christmas Present. The Dutch Sinterklaas lends his name to the Americanized "Santa Claus." He is a legendary figure based on Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of children. But our current image of Santa Claus has deep roots in consumerism and capitalism and has profound impacts on both.

Santa Claus has become an icon to promote products during the holidays. In 1925, White Rock, a



Source: welldoing.org

company that sells carbonated beverages, used the modern depiction of Santa Claus to promote its drinks during Christmas. More famously, Coca-Cola used the image of Santa Claus in 1931 to increase sales of its own beverage during the holidays. It is clear that the modern image of Santa Claus has also impacted our consumerism culture as evidenced by the increase in sales during holiday seasons. Santa Claus has become an easily identifiable symbol that some product or service will be cheaper during the Christmas season encouraging people to make purchases.

In the same vein, our culture of consumerism has also influenced our own interpretations of Santa Claus. When Coca-Cola hired Haddon Sunblom to "create" an image of Santa Claus for its marketing department, he drew the Christmas figure as amicable and welcoming. While this was in pursuit of increasing profits for the company, this led to the depiction of a Santa Claus that was more friendly and open rather than the traditional, scarier drawings of him, especially significant to the youth of the time. His friendlier image encouraged people to become more open to the idea of Santa Claus and Christmas as a whole. This started the ever-increasing presence of Santa Claus in commercials, TV shows, books, and more. So while our Santa Claus has certainly influenced our consumerism culture, our consumerism culture, in turn, has also influenced our image of Santa Claus.

Our consumerism culture has certainly influenced the way we place focus on values during holidays, especially during Christmas. Rather than having ideas of family and companionship take precedence, the idea of gift-giving has become so prevalent that Christmas has become more of a materialistic holiday. While it has been secularized, the core values of Christmas, outside of its religious origins, have unintentionally moved away from the idea of human affection and more towards the drive to give gifts to others for the sake of it being the holidays. We can see this in children as well, as many young boys and girls are more excited about the presents under the Christmas tree rather than spending time with their

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families. According to Deloitte, the average American household spent \$1536 during the holidays in 2018; moreover, a survey from the NRF claims that 62% of Americans buy their gifts before Christmas. This rush to purchase gifts, as well as just how much we spend on them, not only highlights our extremely consumerist culture, but also the lack of importance we place on celebrating with our family. This shift towards gift-giving has been an impact of the growing focus we place on consumerism and its ever-increasing presence during the holidays.

Some may argue that this focus on shopping and gift-giving are the representations of our affection towards one another that we seemingly lack during the holidays, and in some ways, this is correct. According to another

survey from Deloitte, 66% of Americans say they do their research online before shopping at stores. Not only is this to compare different bargains at retailers, but it is also (according to some respondents) to find the best gift for the recipient by looking at a wide catalog of items. Additionally, many individuals complete their shopping at brick-and-mortar stores (around 60%) to examine the quality and interact with the products before purchasing them and giving them to recipients.

The influence of consumerism on Christmas and the impact Christmas has on consumerism has evolved over the course of decades. An originally religious holiday has become increasingly secularized and lost its original purpose, but has also improved the companionship between individuals and became a unique and iconic part of American culture.



Source: coca-colajourney.co.nz/

SPORTS, ARTS, AND ENTERTAINMENT

GOSSIP WELL TOLD: THE CASE OF THE MISSING AUTHOR

BY TRISTAN CLARKE

Everyone loves a good mystery! Perhaps none knew that better than the woman who currently owns the title of most prolific author of all time (a title currently shared with William Shakespeare): Agatha Christie. Over her career that spanned more than 55 years, Christie wrote more than 80 novels, most of which centered around the mystery-solving adventures of Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. Even beyond the pages of the books she wrote, however, the esteemed author's life followed her propensity for mystery, exemplified by the eleven days in December of 1926 when Agatha Christie disappeared.

Let's start where any good mystery starts: the backstory of our protagonist and the leadup to that fateful day. Christie was born Agatha Miller, the youngest of three to a wealthy English family, on September 15, 1890. From childhood, against her mother's wishes, young Agatha took a marked interest in reading, particularly in the booming children's genre of the era. This all came to an end in 1901 when her father died and the family came upon financial troubles.

Over the next few years, she attended several disciplined schools in an attempt to socialize into post-Victorian sensibilities or in hope of becoming a professional singer. Returning from these attempts, she spent the late 1900s and early 1910s traveling Europe and the Middle East with her mother, all the while honing her blossoming skills with the quill.

In 1912, she met a Royal Artillery Officer by the name of Archie Christie with whom she fell in love and was married in 1914. During the First World War, Christie served as a volunteer for the Red Cross, serving alongside her uniformed husband, but by the time her service came to a close in 1918, she was ready to take up writing again, more seriously this time.

During the war, she had been enchanted with the mystery genre and thus, in 1916, published her first detective novel: *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*. Although

the book was not an instant success, over the next ten years, Christie's sales would grow exponentially, until 1926 when a series of unfortunate events would take a mysterious turn.

In 1926, Agatha's mother died and her marriage took a turn for the worse. That August, Archie asked Agatha for a divorce in order to pursue his affair with his mistress Nancy Neele, and because of this in the late night of December 3, 1926 an argument between the two would be the last account of Agatha for eleven days. Following the dispute, Agatha left the family home in her automobile which was later discovered in a chalk quarry with Agatha's attaché, clothes, and an expired license inside. This discovery set off a massive manhunt that was canceled three days later due to a letter received by Agatha's brother-in-law detailing her flight to a spa in Yorkshire. This decision was quickly undone, as police questioned the veracity of the letter and continued the search. In the coming days, all police attempts were foiled, though press releases purported the author to be in London



Source: *Scientific American*

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hiding under a fake name and in male attire. In all, nearly 20,000 people joined in the search for the author. The mystery came to an end, however, on December 15, 1926, when Christie was found in a spa in Yorkshire, as her original letter had indicated.

As Christie was found exactly where she had told the authorities she could be found, the mystery of this situation mainly draws from the strange details of the case. For example, it was discovered Christie had paid for the hotel under the name Theresa Neele, she had brought with her no luggage, and perhaps, most troublingly, that she had no memories of who she or her husband were once she had been discovered. Over the coming years, she would eventually regain the majority of her memory through an exhaustive gamut of psychiatric counseling, but still no memories from her disappearance ever materialized.

Following the press frenzy around the event and the nearly hundred years that have passed since, Christie's refusal to speak on the matter has generated several theories about the disappearance and what may have caused it. The most prominent at the time was that it was simply a publicity stunt by a shrewd author in order to further her catapult to stardom. Of course, this theory is hampered by the real world break of over two years

following the disappearance in which Christie published nothing, though this is not rock-solid evidence to disprove what the cynical media of the time purported. Yet another theory was that the disappearance was staged to embarrass her adulterous husband. This theory is largely speculation, but could certainly fit with her flair for the dramatic. The final theory, largely purported by those closest to Christie, was a mental break that caused Christie to enter the state of physiological disbalance needed to spark the disappearance. This theory was even lent credence by Agatha herself, who suggested it in her only public statement ever made on the matter. This trauma could have also been caused by a car crash Agatha believes she went through on the night of December 3rd; however, there is little evidence to prove this theory.

Sadly, Hercule Poirot is nothing but a figment of the imagination of one of the world's greatest authors and won't be able to help the readers of the BASIS Gazette come to a solid conclusion of what happened that December nearly one hundred years ago, but perhaps that was never the point of the mystery. Perhaps, this great mystery, still unsolved to this day with three competing solutions, each seemingly thrown out by concrete and compelling counterpoints, was just the masterstroke of a brilliant author. Perhaps Christie wanted to leave behind one mystery that she didn't have to solve, and instead would be left up to the audience: you and me.



Source: *American Libraries Magazine*

PUZZLES, RIDDLES, AND MORE

MONTHLY MUNCHIES

GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Gingerbread cookies are best eaten homemade and fresh out of the oven. In my opinion, gingerbread cookies are probably the most delicious winter dessert out there, especially with a nice cup of hot chocolate. So, I'm going to give you the best recipe for the best dessert in the 'hottest' and the coldest month in the year.

Ingredients:

- 10 tablespoons ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed light or brown sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup unsulphured molasses
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract
- 3 and $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon of ground ginger (yes, 1 full tablespoon but trust me;)
- 1 tablespoon of ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground allspice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground cloves
- Optional: cookie icing

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter and add it to a large bowl.
2. On top of the butter add the brown or light sugar.
3. Lastly, add your unsulphured molasses before mixing.
4. Mix those three ingredients until the contents of the bowl reach a creamy texture.
5. Add your egg and your vanilla extract and mix for 2 minutes.

BY ZAID JASSER



Source: recipetineats.com

6. Now, take another bowl and add your flour, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, allspice, and cloves.
7. After, combine the dry and wet ingredients, mixing them together slowly.
8. Once mixed to a nice doughy consistency, spread out the dough to a flat surface and let the dough chill for 3 hours.
9. When the dough is almost done, preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
10. Line 2-3 large pieces of parchment paper.
11. Take the chilled dough out of the fridge to be rolled—don't forget to put flour under the dough so it doesn't stick to the surface!
12. Once your dough is at a nice smooth consistency, cut out any shapes you want.
13. Put your cookie cutouts into the oven and bake for 9-10 min.

Once those babies come out of the oven let your stomach take over and enjoy your holiday treat. But don't forget to share the cookies—who am I kidding, eat 'em all! You deserve them. ;)

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

BY ALLISON LI

It's officially Christmas time! This means fancy lights, gigantic blow up reindeers, and those shiny round balls that you hang on the trees. Additionally, with all the festivities come two full weeks of not going to school and sleeping in. However, with those two weeks off also means forgetting everything that you learned so here's a little quiz to keep your mind in shape over the course of the break and prepare you for all of your tests that you'll get after it! :)

- Without using a calculator**, what is the square root of 273495?
 - 522.99749421
 - 532.96749421
 - 522.96749422
 - 521.96749421
- If Santa Claus starts from rest and accelerates to 23 m/s and he weighs a total of 622328.42 N how fast will he be traveling in the near future?
 - 0 m/s
 - 23 m/s
 - 9.8 m/s²
 - 75 m/s
- Columbus sailed the ocean blue in _____.
 - 1498
 - 1592
 - 1292
 - 1492
- What is the molarity of the solution?
 - What solution?
 - 20 M
 - 2.3 mol
 - 17.855 M/s
- In *The Inferno* how many rings does Dante pass through?
 - 13
 - 2
 - 7
 - 9
- Delivering gifts require a lot of energy from Santa Clause and his reindeer, what is the powerhouse of a cell?
 - Mitochondria
 - Chloroplast
 - The Matrix
 - Caffeine?
- Where will a perfectly competitive firm produce if it somehow enters a monopolistic competitive industry?
 - Apples
 - They'll shut down
 - MR=MC
 - Wherever they want because they are the industry
- Why do humans exist?
 - To figure out the meaning of life
 - To do stuff?
 - What are humans?
 - Area 51
- Given that Rudolph has three apples, what is the derivative of e^{2x} ?
 - 17
 - 3 apples
 - $2e^{2x}$
 - This problem makes no sense
- How many people does it take to get through a day at BASIS Scottsdale?
 - 14
 - 23 cups of coffee and one person
 - In what way?
 - Who?



Source: cooking.nytimes.com

Congratulations! You have reached the end of this quiz. I hope this quiz refreshes your memory and hopefully it was helpful in some way. Good job on making it to the end of the year and happy holidays!

Key: there is no correct answer, a, d, a, d, a, c, varies, c, b

MISTLETOE MUSINGS

Many holiday traditions are strange (especially decorating one's house with lights *before* December), but perhaps the strangest of them all is the practice of kissing under the mistletoe. The legend goes back to old Norse mythology, where Frigga, Goddess of Love, was so intent on protecting her son, Baldur, God of the Sun, that she pleaded with every living and nonliving being on Earth to keep him from harm. She knew that if any injury befell him, the sun would stop rising and all life would perish.

However, in her endeavors, she failed to reason with a single plant—the mistletoe—overlooking it among a tangle of trees. Loki, Frigga's brother-in-law (not Thor's brother), seized the opportunity to gain a path to the throne, and fashioned a sprig of mistletoe into a poisoned dart. He tricked Baldur's brother, Hodr, who was blind, into playing a game with the dart, but instructed him to aim straight for Baldur. The mistletoe pierced Baldur's heart, and Baldur was seemingly dead. Upon finding his

BY STEPHANIE LOBODANESCU

body, Frigga cried for three days and nights, finally resurrecting him, and her tears, falling onto the mistletoe, became the berries that we now think of when we envision the plant. Having come from Frigga, the Goddess of Love herself, the berries now granted anyone who stood under them safety and health, as well as a kiss as a symbol of Frigga's gratitude.



Source: earth.com

PREPARING FOR 2022

December is almost gone and so is 2021. It's hard to believe how quickly the year went by. With a new year comes new opportunities. After a year of mainly online school with a lot of bumps, and a whole lot of staying at home, everyone is so excited to have a new year. To prepare, I like to complete a checklist of items each year.

1. Accomplishments of the year!

The first thing I like to do is to make a list of my accomplishments of the year. The accomplishments of the year usually come from the last year's resolutions. These accomplishments also include random achievements, but many are from my successful resolutions.

2. Resolutions

The next thing I like to do is make New Year's resolutions for things I want to do! I usually only do half of them, but it's the thought that matters. Sometimes there are things that I wanted to do from the last year or the year before that I did. Things like "study more," or "learn how to speed skate." Last year, a resolution I had was to keep my room clean, and I kept it for most of the year.

3. New Year's cleaning

After the resolutions, I clean my room by throwing

BY MINTRA WARAM

away things I don't use often. This, then, allows me to start anew, as I can buy new things that I need and don't have.

4. Updating calendars

Since I don't do activities like bullet journaling that help me keep track of what I have to do, I always need to buy a new calendar. It's a whole process! I go to different shops to look for the calendar that is just right, then when I find the perfect one, I immediately buy it. Perfect calendars are so rare because sometimes the size of the boxes aren't right or it don't show holidays. Then, I color code the calendar for all upcoming events like tests, breaks, holidays, and birthdays. After that, step four of preparing for the new year is done.

5. End of year retreat

At the end of every year, my family and I usually go on a retreat, which is both calming and rejuvenating. I get rid of all my end of year stress (except tests) this way. At cabins, we roast marshmallows and enjoy nature. It's an enjoyable way to bond with family and look forward to the new year!

2022 will hopefully be a much more fun year than 2021. These 5 steps always help me prepare for the new year, so I hope these can be of help to you, too!

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

To the Editors of the BASIS Gazette,

With respect to the article titled “Hardship of life,” A Country in Need of Liberty, I wish to add on to the points made and to express my concern for the conditions surrounding the Syrian Civil War.

The Syrian Civil War officially began in 2011, but harsh conditions had been brewing since the reign of Hafez Al-Assad who took over after both the 1963 and 1966 coup d'etat. Hafez Al-Assad's policies were significantly lacking in all aspects, including most notably the economic and political contexts. For the economy, the largely experienced effort to nationalize jobs and firms led to increasingly socialist, possibly even communist-like conditions; however, what individuals fail to realize is the extent to which the government actually controlled jobs and forced individuals to work for the government. Nearly all jobs that paid living wages were in the oil industry which in Syria was monopolized by the government officials who were able to control the oil-rich territory in the northeast. In Syria, my grandfather was forced to work for a private oil company after being restricted from participating in government organizations due to his political views, and the poor organization barely kept food on the table. Even worse was the abuse of the top few individuals in the Syrian government as their corrupted tactics were aimed to further concentrate their power while neglecting the needs of the people.

The message of the picture presented, titled “Hardship of Life,” depicts hope in the eye of the hurricane that is the Syrian Civil War, and the moment characterizes the Middle East as a whole from the late 1900s to the early 2000s; however, the promotion of “symbols of hope” unto the international audience has been overused, and the idea that by spreading awareness we can combat the distress in the Middle East is only understandable to a certain degree. While there is an importance of educating Americans and coordinating with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) through monetary donations, both options have demonstrated little to no progress in achieving peace in the Middle East because both passively avoid intervention in the Middle East.

While there is a margin to improve, we live in a time in which more than 90% of Americans have graduated from high school, many later receiving higher education, so using even more of our limited resources on education

would be inefficient when direct intervention from the American government would be game-changing. There exists the argument that the type of education in the United States is flawed as it ignores key topics, yet changing such a system would require decades, only to improve almost nothing.

Although donating to NGOs has always been an understandable alternative for Americans seeking to help but unable to do more than contribute monetarily, the Syrian government, in addition to several other Middle Eastern governments, has long suppressed the views of the people, and government leaders would not hesitate to take violent action against the opposition.

But if the traditional methods we have been using to attempt to alleviate corruption in Syria and other countries are ineffectual, what measures can we take to prevent further death and destruction? In Syria, The United States government must be able to cooperate with other member states of the United Nations to develop a carefully-coordinated method to send assistance to the civilians and troops in Syria to provide much-needed resources such as food, healthcare, shelter, and basic necessities. Additionally, the United States government would have to recognize the importance of its diplomatic relations with Turkey and Russia. Not only is Turkey a prominent NATO ally, it has long been an opponent of the current Syrian government so the United States government should focus on improving diplomatic relations there. As for Russia, the United States should consider imposing sanctions on Russia in the hopes of limiting its backing of the Syrian government. Furthermore, the United States should continue to diminish the power of ISIS as despite ISIS's territorial defeat, the group is far from extinct. On a personal level, we can enforce such actions through lobbying, participating in elections, communicating with state politicians, and advocating for political change through methods such as peaceful protesting to communicate the importance of the topic to our lawmakers.

We should all contribute in any way possible to encourage civility and stability in Middle Eastern nations. Having been to Syria myself in recent years, I know that in spite of the violence and corruption that has characterized the nation for years, Syria is still a beautiful country.

Sincerely,
Jacob Shamoun

WORD SEARCH

BY GAZETTE STAFF

K F A M I L Y T R N K B J L H
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 Y U P L R C A R O L S I Y I F
 Y C M R R E Q N W E E V E N N
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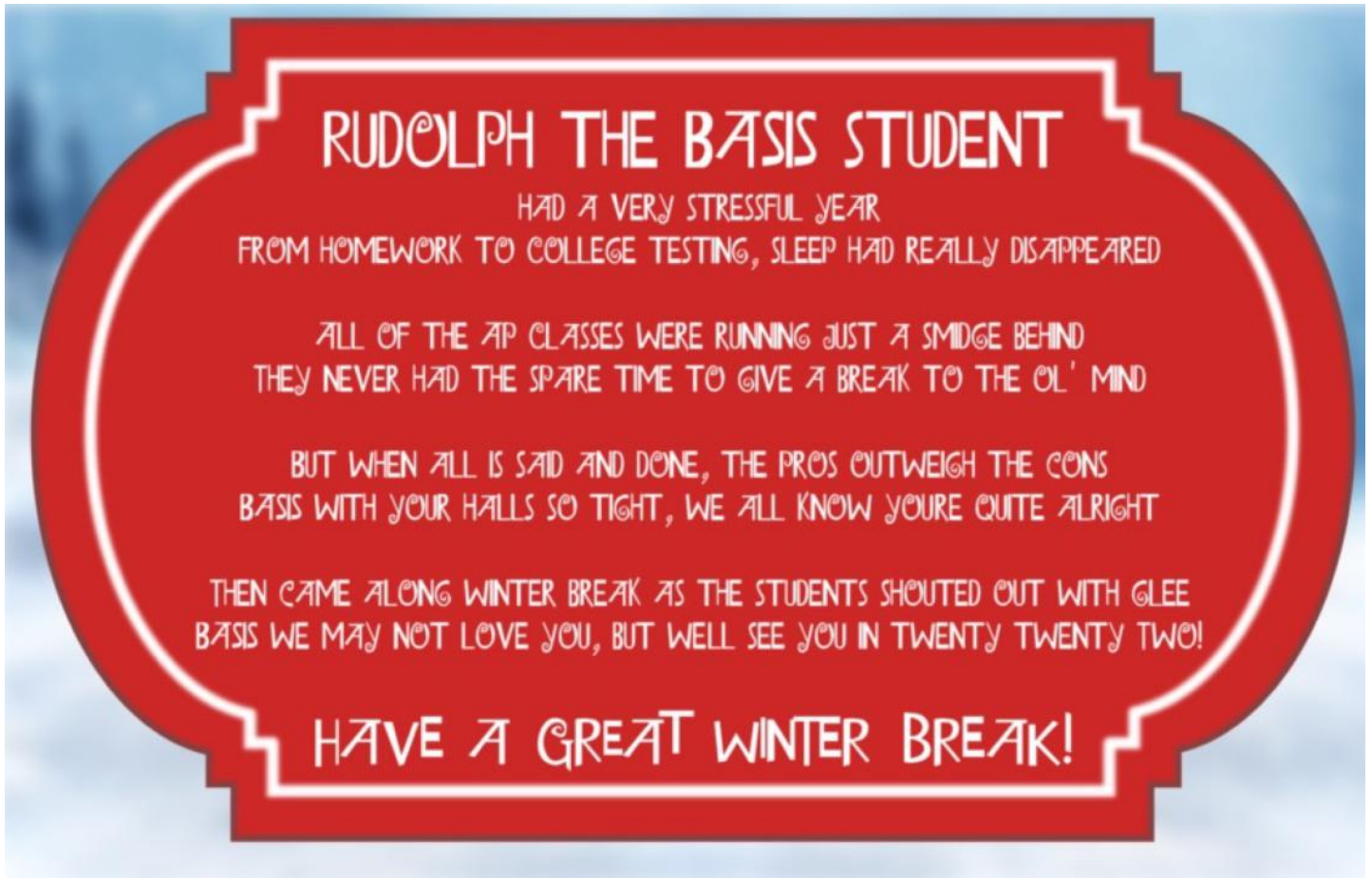
BOW
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FAMILY
 GIVING
 JINGLE
 JOY
 LIGHTS

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