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WINTER  
SPRINT

Check out the Christmas King  
candidates on pgs. 6-7



MNTCK

MERCY'S NEXT TOP CHRISTMAS KING

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## Mercy Newsprint Editorial Policy

As Mercy Newsprint staff we promise to keep you entertained and informed with accurate and unbiased information. Our goal is to provide timely news while promoting diversity and representing the entirety of the Mercy community. We encourage letters to the editors and any other feedback you may have. You may reach out to us through our email (newsprint@mhsmi.org), our instagram (@mercy.newsprint), or through any of our staff members.



# Slipping and sliding into the holidays

STORY AND GRAPHICS: LENA LAJOY

As the weather shifts and snow begins to fall, roads across Michigan become slick from snow and ice. As these conditions arise, it becomes easy for drivers, especially inexperienced teens, to lose control of their vehicles.

There are many different things that can go wrong when driving on icy roads including sliding and potentially crashing. Reasons for crashing and/or sliding while driving include: speeding, quickly hitting breaks, driving too close to other cars and turning sharply.

“Making sure that I am going at a speed that is safe for me and the drivers around me is the best way to stay in control of my vehicle during these conditions,” sophomore Evelyn Miller said.

It is extremely easy to misjudge road conditions and therefore not change your driving habits to accustom these changes. Some cars have specific features that allow for driving in

snowy weather to be slightly easier.

“Having a four wheel drive vehicle is really helpful, as well as windshield wipers,” sophomore Madison Linton said.

Access to four-wheel drive is mainly important due to the traction it provides when driving. Traction is used in this instance through the pushing of back wheels and pulling of the front wheels, helping to decrease odds of spinning out when turning.

“Four wheel drive is for being able to move through the snow better with all four tires moving,” Taylor, an employee at Top Driver in Farmington Hills said.

Although four wheel drive can be extremely beneficial when driving in ice and snow, it is not always effective and should not be the only source of prevention used. Being cautious while driving is the only way to attempt to truly ensure safety.

In some cases, however, accidents caused from rough conditions in the winter may

not be the driver’s fault, and instead another person on the road.

“More experienced drivers tend to go much faster than they should be in the conditions and they make some risky decisions that threaten other drivers,” Miller said.

Teen drivers must be especially attentive while driving in snowy weather. Lack of experience can result in unpreparedness for icy roads, and an absence of knowledge during dangerous circumstances.

“I usually just go extra slow and give myself plenty of time to come to a stop,” Linton said. “If it gets really hard to see, I will pull over or let one of my parents drive.”

Based on Michigan’s patterns of snowfall during winter months, it can be assumed that there are many ice filled nights ahead. To ensure safety watch the road and adjust your vehicle as needed during the impending flurry of stubborn snow.



# Dive into diversity: winter holidays

STORY AND GRAPHICS: LENA LAJOY



## “Habari Gani!”

All around the world millions of people celebrate holidays in the winter. No matter what is celebrated, these holidays unite family and friends in celebration.

Kwanzaa is a celebration of African American culture lasting from December 26 to January 1. The seven days of Kwanzaa are meant to focus on self reflection, affirmation and celebration.

Kwanzaa uses seven candles held by the kinara, one black, three red and three green, all of which hold special meanings. There are two different ways to light the candles. One way is to start in the middle with the black candle and then go from left to right (red to green), and the other is to light the middle first and then alternate between left and right.

“The first candle to be lit is the black candle, Umoja. The second candle to be lit is the reds,

which are called Kujichagulia. The last ones are the green candles which are called Ujima,” junior Jaanaki Tarver said.

Despite the difference in ways to light the candle, the first one is always the black candle called Umoja which symbolizes unity or the strength of family.

“The meaning of the black candle is unity,” Tarver said.

The order, if going left to right, starts with the three red candles which symbolize the struggles African Americans have gone through. The second candle lit is Kujichagulia (self determination), the third is Ujamaa (faith) and the fourth and final red candle is Kuumba (creativity).

The final three candles are the green ones, which represent the future and its possibilities. The first green candle lit, fifth overall, is the

Ujima (responsibility), the second candle, sixth overall, is the Nia (principle of purpose) and the final candle lit is the Imani (faith).

“These candles represent the seven principles of Kwanzaa - unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith,” Tarver said

Kwanzaa is a holiday which celebrates family and the importance of family through time, focusing on goals for the community. Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, and is instead built upon culture.

“The importance of Kwanzaa is being with family and learning new things from each side of the family,” Tarver said. “My favorite aspect is this sense to my family and learning more about my culture and religion.”

## “Hanukkah Sameach!”

Hanukkah is an eight day celebration that commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple by the Maccabees. To celebrate Hanukkah, a Menorah with nine candles on it is lit. The holiday always occurs on the 25th of Kislev in the Jewish calendar, but that falls on a different day on the Gregorian calendar each year.

Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days due to the fact that when the Holy Temple was taken back, oil was lit inside the temple which stayed aglow for eight entire days.

“There were people that only had enough oil to light a candle for a few hours, but basically the oil ended up lasting for eight days, hence the eight candles of Hanukkah,” senior Giavanna Flynn said.

This is represented in the Menorah through the eight candles on the sides which stand for the eight days the oil stayed alight. The ninth and final candle which sits in the middle of the Menorah stands for the oil itself.

“The menorah is the rededication of the temple. It’s a candle holder for eight candles to signify the eight days of Hanukkah and you light a candle on each day,” Flynn said.

During Hanukkah, to remember the days the oil burned in the Holy Temple, dried foods are eaten, most commonly jelly donuts and latkes which are potato pancakes.

“There are many traditional foods eaten at Hanukkah. Here are just a few: potato latkes, beef brisket, jelly donuts, challah,

noodles and matzo ball soup,” Religious Studies teacher Mrs. Sandra Mals said.

Another important tradition during Hanukkah is the dreidel. The dreidel has four words to cover its four sides which altogether means that “something great happened here” referring to the many days the oil continued to burn.

“Every time it’s your turn, spin the dreidel once. Depending on the side it lands on, you give or get game pieces from the pot,” Mals said.

Hanukkah is a major holiday for Jewish people and brings together families to celebrate religion. Hanukkah celebrates religion and when the oil burned brightly this symbolized hope for Jewish people.



# Think twice before grabbing a cup of coffee

STORY AND GRAPHIC: MICAH ROGERS, GUEST WRITER

Since its discovery, caffeine has been used by people globally for an extra boost of energy to get through the day. Dubbed the most widely used psychoactive substance worldwide, most commonly consumed in the form of coffee, tea, or cola, its use has become a part of normal, everyday life.

As a result, studies about the effects of caffeine on people have become increasingly popular, and now consumers have access to more information than ever before about caffeine usage. The studies, along with social media and general public opinion, have allowed for more conversation about caffeine, and even those who previously enjoyed a daily cup of morning coffee have begun to evaluate their consumption.

At Mercy, it is not uncommon to spot students drinking iced coffees or energy drinks. Some students feel that with their busy schedules and late night study sessions, caffeine is essential for survival. Junior Katelyn Cronan often indulges in a Celsius, which has about 200mg of caffeine, or a V8 energy drink, which has about 80 mg of caffeine, to keep her focused.

“I drink [Celsius] when I am extra tired, typically after a late night of studying,” Cronan said.

Many students benefit from the short term effects that caffeine has to offer: increased mood, decreased fatigue and increased attentiveness, amongst other things. Those who drink in excess, however, may start to experience the negative side of caffeine.

“I have become more reliant on caffeine to stay awake, and sometimes use that to procrastinate,” Cronan said.

Math teacher Mr. Adam Walker reported similar effects. “The morning jolt of coffee was fleeting; it didn’t last long,” Walker said.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the stimulation caused by caffeine peaks about one hour after consumption. After it is absorbed into the bloodstream, it can increase metabolic rate, blood flow and respiratory rate for several hours after. The way caffeine moves through the bloodstream and to the brain can invoke even more symptoms.

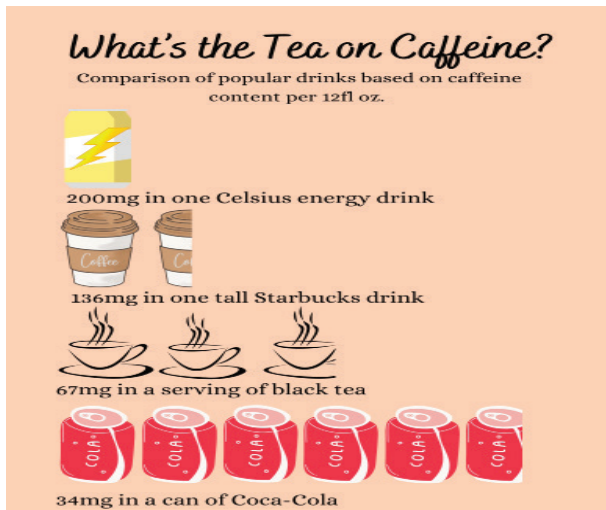
“[Caffeine consumption] can cause increased heart rate and anxiety,” Nurse Pat Attaway said.

In extreme cases, where up to 600 mg is consumed, upset stomach, nervousness, shaking and insomnia can ensue. Midday coffee drinkers have reported difficulty falling asleep later in the day. Some caffeine drinkers have tried to quit completely in order to combat these symptoms, yielding varying results.

“At first it was a negative effect, I couldn’t get used to it,” Walker said.

Walker is not alone in his initial struggle to quit caffeine. A study conducted by the National Library of Medicine reports ‘withdrawal-like’ symptoms in individuals attempting to curb their caffeine consumption, ranging from mild headaches and fatigue to severe migraine attacks. These symptoms, however, can be used to emphasize the addictive nature of a drug such as caffeine.

When the research that has been done is taken into consideration, caffeine usage is a much more complex



issue than previously thought. In schools, like our own, it has proven to be a somewhat effective study tool, allowing students to keep focus when they need it most. With time, the negatives of caffeine can start to outweigh the positives, making it dangerous for the user. Based on many of the studies that have been done, however, caffeine is safe to be consumed in moderation. While some members of the Mercy community may want to evaluate their usage of caffeine, others can continue to enjoy their occasional Dunkin’ cold brews or morning teas.

# New AP classes interest many Mercy students

STORY: MAURA MCSWEENEY



Junior Shreya John holds a stick as her AP Environmental class takes a nature walk to become familiar with common topics and vocabulary within the class. Photo used with permission by Shreya John.

## AP Environmental Science

One of two new science classes offered this year, AP Environmental Science was a popular choice for incoming juniors and seniors. A year-long college course, AP Environmental Science offers many opportunities to learn about issues affecting our world today, like climate change and human impacts on the environment, while also being able to participate in labs and gain a possible college credit.

Junior Shreya John is one of many students who elected to take this class and despite some difficulty, she likes the class and the topics it covers.

“I really like APES! The content we learn is really interesting and I also like the fact that labs make up a majority of our class,” John said.

Achieving the feat of getting through four units this semester, the class has covered everything from an introduction to biodiversity to learning about wind patterns and ecosystem services. For many, this may be the only AP science course that they have taken thus far at Mercy which can come with some challenges.

“It definitely is [different from other science classes] but I think a majority of that chalks up to it being an AP science. How we learn, the course load, and what is expected of students has changed,” John said.

Regardless of challenges, numerous students would recommend this class to any future junior or senior, especially if they want to go into a career involving environmental science.

Offered online up until now, AP Psychology is taught in person this year at Mercy due to its popularity among juniors and seniors. Taught by Associate Principal Ms. Colleen McMaster, AP Psychology covers a wide variety of topics stemming from behavior and the sciences behind why humans do what they do.

While there may be benefits from offering the class online, many people seem to think that the benefits from in-person classes outweigh the positive aspects of online. Interacting with classmates, getting to take a real life approach to the problems and discussing it with others is vital to the learning process especially in an AP subject during which you move at a rapid pace.

Out of the many topics that the class offers, junior Morgan Sarafa has found numerous discussions interesting, but

the discussions about dreams are what she has found to be an interesting topic.

“We discussed potential reasons for the dreams you have, and a lot more things that I found really interesting,” Sarafa said. “We also spent a lot of time talking about learning, and how we learn and process information, which is actually really beneficial to learn about.”

AP Psychology is a unique class in the sense that you are really learning about yourself and it is a subject that many go on to pursue as career choices. Learning about the mind can help us understand ourselves better while also taking a class that may help students attain college credits.

“I would totally recommend the class to others,” Sarafa said. “I love how engaging the material is and how it is something you can relate to.”

## AP Psychology



Juniors Morgan Sarafa and Alana Harvill show off their blue tongues after learning about taste sensitivity in AP Psychology. Photo used with permission by Morgan Sarafa.



# Ticketmaster faces controversy

STORY AND GRAPHICS: ALYSSA TISCH, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If you have been to a concert recently, chances are that you bought your tickets through the popular ticket site Ticketmaster. Selling nearly 500 million tickets a year and having a market share of over 70% of primary ticketing services for concert venues according to Salesforce and Yale Insights, this company seems unstoppable. When faced with Taylor Swift fans, however, the site appeared to go up in flames.

Presale for Swift's Eras tour in the U.S. began on November 15 and due to both unprecedented demand and traffic, according to Ticketmaster, this sale resulted in horrible experiences for many people.

Senior Megan Brissette's father had tried to buy tickets while she was in school, however, in the end they were unable to purchase them.

"My dad was in the queue all day trying to buy tickets. He got in to buy tickets within the first 20 minutes but got kicked out when checking out," Brissette said. "So after that he rejoined and waited for three hours and then by the time he got in again no tickets were left."

Even for people who did manage to get tickets, the process of getting them was far from enjoyable.

"It just kept on kicking me off and I was a little worried about it. I thought that this might be happening for everyone or it might be something wrong with my account," music teacher Mrs. Abha Dearing said. "I had to double, triple check my password and it still was not working and kept asking me to verify my identity. Eventually I got into the higher levels and by the time that I finished it had been seven hours."

Senior Caroline Butcher also managed to snag tickets, but through a slightly different way.

"I was at school when the sale went live so my mom

got in line at work. Unfortunately it kept crashing for her like it did for everyone so she sent the code to my aunt who lives in Chicago," Butcher said. "I think she was able to get the tickets successfully because she was in a different time zone than everyone else trying to get tickets for the Detroit concert."

Ticketmaster cites several reasons for these issues, the main of which being the unprecedented amount of demand. They said they had around 3.5 billion total system requests, over 3.5 million people pre-registered for the presale and over 2 million tickets ended up being sold. With this historical demand their Verified Fan platform, a way Ticketmaster confirms that fans are actually fans and not bots, had a hard time, resulting in about 15% of buyers having issues.

This drama brought up the question, though, of whether or not there is a problem with Ticketmaster being the sole site for concert tickets as well as the resale market.

Back in 2010 Ticketmaster merged with Live Nation. This combined two parts of the industry: Live Nation, which covered concert promotion and venue operation, and Ticketmaster, which covered ticketing. Prior to this merger Ticketmaster already had a monopoly on ticket sales but with this merger, Live Nation - Ticketmaster is more powerful than ever. Not only that but according to the Vulture, Live Nation-Ticketmaster for many years has been engaging in harmful exclusionary practices.

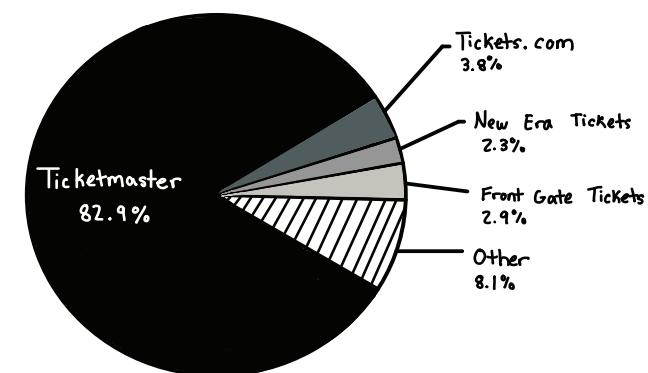
Now, with the Taylor Swift concert sale drawing lots of critical eyes, people are speaking out.

"It's the worst, I hate it. Any tickets ever are through Ticketmaster, whether to see comedy shows or other big name people come through," Dearing said.

"Ticketmaster just has so many fees which at least they explain it now, but they never used to. But it is still a bunch of jargon that doesn't necessarily justify the ridiculous extra cost."

Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has also spoken out, tweeting "Daily reminder that Ticketmaster is a monopoly, its merger with Live Nation should never have been approved and they need to be reined in. Break them up."

With so many people indignant, the U.S. Senate Antitrust Panel is having a hearing and conducting an investigation about Ticketmaster and the lack of competition the company has. The results of this have not come out yet and in the meantime ticket buyers can continue to expect their tickets to come from Ticketmaster.



Pre-Live Nation Ticketmaster Entry Share of Venue Capacity according to Popular Information.

## Elon Musk takes over Twitter - is he responsible enough for this new role?

Who is Elon Musk? He is the founder, CEO and chief engineer of SpaceX; angel investor, CEO and product architect of Tesla, Inc.; founder of The Boring Company; co-founder of Neuralink and OpenAI; president of the Musk Foundation; and now the owner and CEO of Twitter, Inc.

On October 28 Musk bought Twitter for a price of \$54.20 a share at a total cost of roughly \$44 billion, according to abcnews. The question that many people are asking however, is whether or not Musk is responsible enough to own this site and what changes will/have already occurred due to this transaction. Even simply looking at the road to get to this transaction reveals the chaos that seems to accompany this man.

April 14 was the first time that Musk offered to buy Twitter for \$44 billion and on April 15, Twitter's board of directors attempted to block this. This did not come to fruition however as on April 25, Twitter accepted the deal. Next on the timeline, on May 17, Musk threatened he would back out of the deal unless the number of bot accounts were verified and he again made this demand on June 6. Then two days later on June 8, Musk officially terminated the deal to buy Twitter and was immediately sued by Twitter with a trial set for October. When October rolled around though, Musk changed his

mind yet again and agreed to buy Twitter on October 4, before the case was to appear. This deal was finalized and Musk bought Twitter on October 28.

Since Musk has taken over the app, several changes have already occurred. One of the first things to happen was massive job cuts. Musk cut a reported 50 percent of Twitter's workforce which is a total of around 3,700 jobs according to the L.A. Times and has additionally dissolved the board of directors, firing several of them and making himself the sole director of Twitter.

Not only that, but Musk is making changes to the verification system or the official blue checkmark that appears by a name if they are a celebrity confirming that they are who they say they are. According to the Guardian, as of right now, more than 230 million people tweet daily and about 420,000 of them have the blue check next to their name, but with this new system, anyone can get this checkmark if they pay \$8 a month.

Musk also decided that former President Donald Trump would be allowed back onto Twitter however, Trump opted to decline and remain on his own sites such as Truth Social.

One other change that users have quickly picked up on is the increase in hate speech on the platform since the takeover. According to the New York Times, before Musk bought Twitter, slurs against African Americans

showed up on the social media service an average of 1,282 times a day and now with the takeover, have risen to 3,876 times a day. Likewise, slurs against gay men increased from 2,506 times a day on average to 3,964 times a day now. Finally, antisemitic posts have risen over 61 percent since the acquisition.

These changes do not inspire faith in Musk and many Mercy students and staff agree.

"I think he is vastly under qualified to be operating a social media corporation," junior Jessica Koehler said. "In my opinion he should have hired someone else to handle the changes being made to the app. He is being irresponsible and has caused mass chaos without taking responsibility."

Facilities Director Mr. Gary Bank voiced a similar opinion.

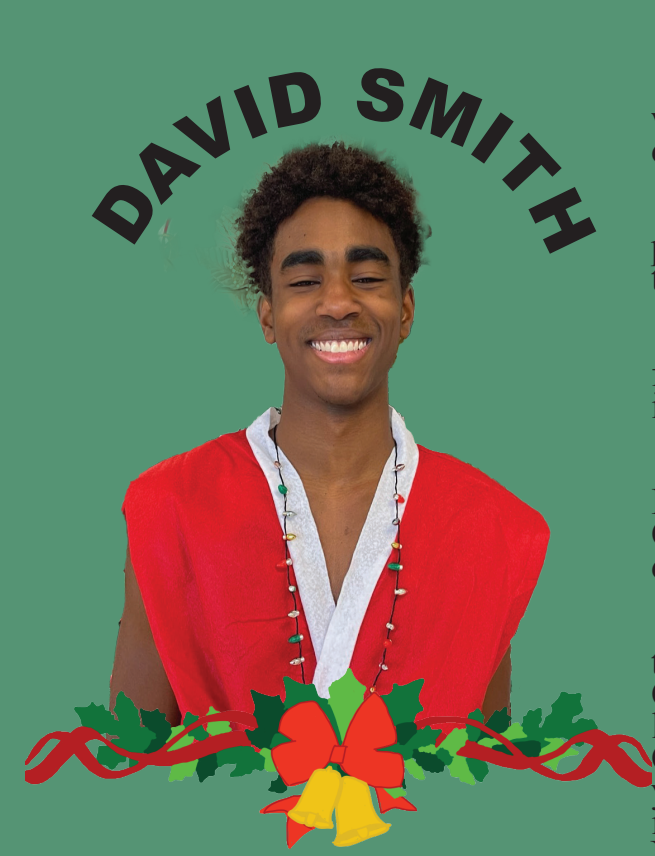
"I think he bit off more than he can chew," Bank said. "Musk is good at building things. He is good at building rockets and building cars, I don't think he knows anything about his clientele."

With a negative public opinion on Musk taking over Twitter, Twitter users can only wait to see what the future of the social media site will look like.



# Mercy’s Next Top Christmas King👑

As holiday break and A-Ball rolls around so does the tradition of Mercy’s Christmas King competition. This year, five seniors are competing to earn the title of Mercy’s Next Top Christmas King. Read up on this year’s candidates and check for an email from Newsprint for the links to watch the “Mercy’s Next Top Christmas King” video and vote for this year’s Christmas King!



**Date:** Nandini Desaraju

**If you were stranded on the North Pole and could bring three things, what would you bring:** “A coat because I don’t want to die. My dog, but he is going to die. And a coat for my dog so he doesn’t die.”

**What’s your favorite thing about Mercy:** “My favorite thing about Mercy is probably my little sister. She’s my favorite person in the entire world and she likes this school. So honestly if it’s doing good for her then it’s doing good for me.”

**What is your favorite movie line:** “Probably ‘I could use a little social interaction’ from ‘How the Grinch Stole Christmas’ because some people could use some social interaction. And yeah let me not comment any further on that.”

**Real tree or artificial and why:** “If you’re married and you have kids, real tree. If you don’t have a family, artificial tree. The only reason you go out to get a real Christmas tree is to decorate it with your family and have that experience. If you don’t have a family there’s no point. You’re just wasting your time. Buy one.”

**Why do you deserve to be Christmas King:** “The question is why don’t I deserve to be Christmas King actually because there’s no reason. I deserve it because Christmas is my favorite holiday. It is literally the best holiday ever. Do you see me literally perfectly dressed? I have so much Christmas spirit. I’ve been listening to Christmas music since November 1. Some people say that’s extra, but honestly if you’re not listening to it November 1 then you’re doing it wrong. I have three trees in my house, two of which are fully decorated. And then honestly because I love Nandani and that’s the whole spirit of Christmas, is being with the people you love.”



**Date:** Lauren Smiley

**If you were stranded on the North Pole and could bring three things, what would you bring:** “I would bring a coat to keep me warm and a shovel to scoop out the snow and build a little igloo maybe. And then I would bring a heater.”

**What’s your favorite thing about Mercy:** “All of the wonderful people that go there, especially Alison Smiley”

**What is your favorite movie line:** “It’s the one from ‘Elf’ where he’s like ‘you’re an elf.’”

**Real tree or artificial and why:** “I would say a real tree. You know it’s got the personality. Fake trees are made in the lab but real trees, they’re grown.”

**Why do you deserve to be Christmas King:** “I’m just dedicated to Mercy, you know. Like I’ve been to nearly every Mercy dance, every hoco, and I’ve been part of the cleanup crew nearly every year, shout-out to Mrs. Richter.”



**Date:** Madison LeMieux

**If you were stranded on the North Pole and could bring three things, what would you bring:** “Probably something to bribe the elves with so then they can just work for me now. Probably some cookies because apparently Santa likes cookies and I could try to team up with him. And probably a coat because it seems cold.”

**What’s your favorite thing about Mercy:** “Probably the dances. I’ve always had fun at them.”

**What is your favorite movie line:** “Probably in ‘The Christmas Story’ with the BB gun ‘You’ll shoot your eye out.’”

**Real tree or artificial and why:** “Real trees probably just because they have a good smell to them.”

**Why do you deserve to be Christmas King:** “I’m a very dedicated candidate. I can push through illnesses to be here. For example, yesterday I had a 102 degree fever and yet I’m here. No fever. Still don’t feel the greatest but you know, I’m here.”



**Date:** Fran DeNardo

**If you were stranded on the North Pole and could bring three things, what would you bring:** “A jacket, for warmth. Some food and probably some water.”

**What’s your favorite thing about Mercy:** “A-Ball.”

**What is your favorite movie line:** “When he just screams Santa in ‘Elf.’”

**Real tree or artificial and why:** “Artificial because you don’t get all the pine stuff on the floor.”

**Why do you deserve to be Christmas King:** “I really want it. I just want it more than [the others candidates]”



**Date:** Abby Maroun

**If you were stranded on the North Pole and could bring three things, what would you bring:** “I would probably bring a sled so I could go sledding. I would bring Abby to keep me company because I would get lonely. Then I would maybe bring like cards just to play cards.”

**What’s your favorite thing about Mercy:** “My favorite thing about Mercy is Abby because I love her so much and I know how much she loves Mercy.”

**What is your favorite movie line:** “I would say it’s probably from ‘Elf’, it’s where Buddy is in his dad’s office and the phone rings and he picks up the phone and says ‘Hi I’m Buddy the elf, what’s your favorite color.’”

**Real tree or artificial and why:** “Artificial because it’s less maintenance than a real tree.”

**Why do you deserve to be Christmas King:** “Because, one, I want the first Christmas A-Ball dance with Abby. Two, I don’t just want to be king, I want to be Christmas King and I think I embody that the most. I also have a picture of when I used to dress up as Santa. And yeah, I’ve just been dressing up as Santa forever.”



# Winter athletes prepare to conquer their season

STORY AND GRAPHIC: JULIA LORELLI, SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROMOTIONS EDITOR

## Hockey looks to improve as the season continues

The varsity hockey team has been rebuilding for a couple of years, and has had a rocky start to their season. After losing four seniors, including their goalie, they lost their first three games.

However, they are not letting the difficult start of the season break their spirit as a 3-0 win against Troy United becomes their first win.

“I think that we had a rough start to the season,” senior Riley Hollis said. “But I think we’re getting a lot better at practice and the season is only looking upward.”

The current hockey roster has been playing together for two years and this year, they have added some new faces. The team has four new players this season, two of whom have never played hockey before.

The start of the season, for any sport, does not determine how a team will finish. The hope is that as team chemistry improves, so will the game results.

“We don’t really know the competition that well since we’ve only played two games,” Hollis said. “But I think if we keep improving then we could have a chance at Catholic Leagues and maybe even states.”

## Figure skating: a small team with big goals

The varsity figure skating team has combined with United Farmington this year to keep both programs going. United Farmington is made up of Mercy High School, Farmington High School and North Farmington High School.

Combining these programs will increase their chances of winning. With new players and coaches, the figure skating team feels that at least one of their teams (A,B,C) can make it to states.

The figure skating team is one team broken into three teams. Each team is ranked at different points depending on their level and each team competes in three categories (moves, jumps and spins) at each of the three competitions. The scores competitors received in each category are combined. After all of the competitions, the highest of these combination scores win districts and move on to compete in states.

The figure skating team practices once a week on Thursday mornings, but they also do their own skating throughout the week.

Their first competition is on December 17 and senior Abby Maroun is very excited about competing with a combined team.

“I am a little biased because I skate at Farmington Hills ice arena and have known everyone on that team for a long time, so I was very excited when this merge happened,” Maroun said.

Maroun believes that the merger will help bring Mercy figure skating to the next level.

“I may have helped to move this merging process along because I love Mercy’s team and I love theirs, so combining it was a win-win,” Maroun said.

## Basketball hopes to capitalize on experience

Despite the varsity basketball team having a short roster of only ten players, they are very optimistic heading into the season, with hopes to win Catholic Leagues and possibly states. They are a veteran team, meaning they can hopefully use some of their previous team chemistry and experience to their advantage against newer, younger teams.

The team is looking promising to win and go far in the playoffs. Each basketball team (9th grade, Junior Varsity and Varsity) has all won their first game against Plymouth Christian.

Senior Lauren Smiley is very eager for the season.

“This team has the potential talent to go far,” Smiley said. “So it’s really going to come down to staying determined and engaged through the long four month season.”

Marian is one of Mercy’s biggest rivals, but Smiley believes that Divine Child is another fun rival to play against.

“It’s definitely more of a personal game,” Smiley said. “Most of our teammates are friends [with them] or [they] play with us in the off season.”

Since the varsity basketball team is on the smaller side, they are going to have to rely on everyone working hard in practice to keep up with the teams with the bigger rosters.

“We’re really relying on the girl next to us in practice to make us better and push us to get better,” Smiley said.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Basketball:

- Dec 16 @ Northville, 6:00
- Dec 29 vs Shrine, 5:00
- Jan 6 @ Fr. Gabriel Richard, 7:00
- Jan 10 vs Marian, 7:00
- Jan 12 @ Regina, 7:00
- Jan 13 vs Davidson, 7:00
- Jan 17 vs Regina, 7:00
- Jan 19 @ Lakeland, 7:00
- Jan 24 vs Divine Child, 7:00
- Jan 27 vs Fr. Gabriel Richard, 7:00
- Jan 31 @ Marian, 7:00

### Hockey:

- Dec 16 vs Northville, Eddie Edgar Arena, 4:30
- Jan 12 vs Regina, Big Boy Arena, 5:00
- Jan 13 vs Cranbrook, Wallace Ice Arena, 7:00
- Jan 19 vs Liggett, McCann Ice Arena, 5:00
- Jan 20-22, Mid Michigan showcase, Bay Country Civic Arena
- Jan 27 vs Livonia United, Eddie Edgar Ice Arena, 4:30

### Bowling:

- Jan 10 vs Regina, Frasier Star Lanes, 3:30
- Jan 11 vs OLSM, universal lanes, 3:30
- Jan 12 vs Marian, Bowl One, 3:30
- Jan 15, Oakland County Championship, Cherry Hills North, 8:30 a.m.
- Jan 17 vs Mercy Gold, Perfect Game, 3:30
- Jan 22, Plymouth Tournament, Super Bowl Lanes, 8:30 a.m.
- Jan 23 vs Marian, Bowl One, 3:30
- Jan 27 vs Divine Child, Perfect Game, 3:30
- Jan 28, Tri-County Baker Tournament, Five Star Lanes, 3:30

### Figure Skating:

- December 17, Farmington Hills Ice Arena, 4:30



Sophomore Grace De Klerk skates with the puck. Photo used with permission by Duane Tursi.



# Holiday romance: A review of this year's biggest hits

STORY: MAURA SULLIVAN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With first semester's exams and papers soon to be behind us and the hustle and bustle of last-minute gifting drawing to an end, it will finally be time to relax on the couch with a blanket and watch something entertaining to ease your mind. And what could be more soothing than watching a few of the hundred plus new seasonal romantic comedies ("Rom-coms")? To assist you in this pursuit, below are reviews of a few of the features released this season.

## A CHRISTMAS CLICHE FULL OF FAMILAR FACES "FALLING FOR CHRISTMAS"

What better way to find your true love than to get a head injury and suffer from about with amnesia? This formula has been used in quite a few romantic comedies over the years from "Overboard" to "50 First Dates". "Falling for Christmas", too, centers around memory loss from a head injury as the catalyst to rediscover love when spoiled heiress of a ski resort empire, Sierra Belmont (Lindsay Lohan), tumbles backwards down a mountain right after becoming engaged to her over the top, influencer boyfriend, Tad Fairchild, (George Young). After her dramatic fall, Sierra is found by Jake Russell (Chord Overstreet), a widower and owner of a small struggling ski resort. Jake's young daughter, Avy (Olivia Perez), wants nothing more than for her father to find love. Sierra (known as Sarah during her amnesia) becomes happy with the simpler things in life and transforms into the perfect partner for Jake.

Lindsay Lohan's return comes with an element of excitement and I, too, was excited to see her back. This film was filled with fun references to Lohan's top performances, however, I would have liked to see her return in a different vehicle. There were some glimmers of fun and warmth throughout the film, yet the movie lacked much cohesion and chemistry between its stars. Chord Overstreet, best known for his role on Glee, seems very dull and almost bored in the leading male role of Jake, which is in sharp contrast to Lohan's quirky and excited performance. George Young as Tad is very comical and over the top, but does not seem like he would ever be a match for Lohan's character and their relationship and engagement seem less than believable. Regardless, Lohan is entertaining to watch, and the film is worth the view, despite its flaws, if you are a Lohan fan.



Photo courtesy of Janeen Damian.

## RIVALRY TO ROMANCE "FIT FOR CHRISTMAS"

After an unsuccessful attempt starting her own exercise studio in New York City, Audrey (Amanda Kloots) leaves her boyfriend behind and returns to her small hometown aptly named Mistletoe. The center of Mistletoe is the Recreation Center, housing local businesses and restaurants, as well as the exercise room where Audrey teaches fitness classes. The stability of the small town and its residents are threatened when Griffin (Paul Greene), a prominent businessman, enters town with the intent to purchase the recreation center and convert the area into a large, profitable ski resort. Griffin uses his charm to mingle with the city council members to secure their votes and hopefully receive approval for the purchase. Amanda, however, sees through Griffin's actions and has concern that a large resort will bankrupt the local businesses, forcing them to close. Amanda and Griffin are at odds yet cannot help but appreciate one another's determination. Can



Photo courtesy of CBS. Amanda and Griffin resolve their differences and pursue a potential relationship?

If you can get over the guilt of sitting on the couch while watching characters exercising, then it is a fun, lighthearted movie to view. The story itself is very predictable, yet the chemistry between Amanda and Griffin makes the movie entertaining. Kloots is energetic and likable, and Greene is well cast as Griffin, as he can be charming while schmoozing with the residents of Mistletoe. Overall, an entertaining film that will put you in the Christmas spirit.



Photo courtesy of Jessica Kourkounis.

Angelina Costa (Aimee Garcia) is a famous pop star who seems to be losing her appeal. A new, younger, up and coming star is quickly taking center stage and Angelina is struggling to come up with something new and original. Emphatically, she promises her producer that she will come out with a hit song for Christmas. Frustrated with her lack of progress as the deadline draws nearer, Angelina retreats to a small town for inspiration, aiming to meet a teenage girl, Christina (Deja Monique), whom she had stumbled across on Instagram singing one of her hit songs. Upon seeking her out, Angelina meets Christina's father, Miguel

## SUPERSTAR TACKLES SMALL TOWN "CHRISTMAS WITH YOU"

(Freddie Prinz Jr.), a music teacher who, coincidentally, has started composing a Christmas song that Angelina knows could be her next hit. The two decide to collaborate, quickly forming a connection. Will Angelina follow her heart or go back to her career in the big city?

The performances of the leading and supporting characters kept me entertained throughout. Garcia showcased her singing and dancing ability and was very believable as a pop star. Freddie Prinz Jr., remembered for his iconic leading roles in teen movies such as "She's All That", "Scooby-Doo" and the "I Know What You Did Last Summer" movie series was lovable and humble as a small-town music teacher. The supporting cast of characters including Miguel's stubborn mother, Angelina's flashy, conceited producer and self-centered boyfriend, added humor throughout. Overall, the movie had heart and kept me entertained.

## FINDING LOVE WHILE SEARCHING HISTORY "THE NOEL DIARY"

Jacob Turner (Justin Hartley) was just sixteen years old when his mother, suffering from mental illness, kicked Jacob out of the house to live on his own. Now, twenty years later, Jacob is a very successful writer, yet still very much alone. He receives a call from an attorney to inform him that his mother has passed, and he has inherited her estate. Jacob returns to the home he had been estranged from to settle her estate and clear out the house of her belongings. During his cleaning efforts he comes across an old diary his mother once kept and begins reading the passages. Jacob uncovers many unknown elements of his past. Yet, with still many unanswered questions, Jacob embarks on a journey to better understand his beginnings and his mother's struggles. During his journey he encounters the companionship of a young woman, Racheal (Barrett Doss) who also

shares a similar journey while looking for her biological mother. Little by little, the two begin to bond over the experience but will the walls they have both built around themselves be too much to overcome to find true love?

"The Noel Diary" is much more of a drama romance than the romantic comedy I was expecting. Yet, it was refreshing to see a more moving, serious romantic story. Hartley, is very convincing as Jacob Turner and has the viewer pulling for him as they witness his pain. Doss is also very intriguing as his love interest, and you see their relationship develop and unfold as they together seek answers regarding their early years. At times the movie moved a little slow and did have some dull patches, however, overall, the movie is heart-felt and compassionate. I would place this on my viewing list but just make sure you're in the mood for a bit of a solemn and interesting tear-jerker.



Photo courtesy of Riya Singh.



# Editorial: Sale was Ticketmaster disaster

STORY: NEWSPRINT STAFF

Today’s world is one in which technology is more reliable than it ever has been. While occasional snares and technological failures will occasionally make headlines, they are very few and far between when you consider how much technology is running things these days. With technology running so smoothly and integrating perfectly into everyday life, people have become accustomed to things working as they are supposed to. Thus, when faced with Ticketmaster’s inability to provide Taylor Swift fans with a reliable platform to purchase tickets for The Eras Tour, there was mass outrage.

It’s not as though Ticketmaster was caught off-guard by the unprecedented demand. Ticketmaster themselves publicly stated that over 3.5 million people pre-registered for the ticket presale. Ticketmaster has since blamed a “staggering number of bot attacks as well as fans who didn’t have codes drove unprecedented traffic on our site, resulting in 3.5 billion total system requests – 4x our previous peak.”

The reality is that unlike most other technology-dependent companies whose continued existence is predicated on staying on the cutting edge of or at least current on technological advances, Ticketmaster does not face that same pressure. That is because Ticketmaster is in a monopoly position and has been for decades. Due to its monopoly status, its platform has not been improved the way it would have been necessary if the forces of competition existed for Ticketmaster, forces that exist in almost any other business in the United States. Competition breeds enhancements, improvements and innovations much more swiftly than they would occur in the absence of such competition.

Unfortunately, when a company has a monopoly status in an industry that is not top of mind for either customers or the federal government, it is rarely mentioned, much less challenged. For this reason Ticketmaster has been able to maintain its monopoly status for as long as it has.

And, truth be told, if the presale of Swift’s The Eras

Tour had gone smoothly, Ticketmaster would have stayed under the monopoly radar. But not now.

As a result of the disastrous sale, Ticketmaster is no longer able to hide away and is now facing an antitrust lawsuit from the federal government. Ticketmaster may be forced by the federal government to relinquish its monopoly status and be broken apart.

Next, when this occurs, the forces of competition will swoop in and propel the ticket-selling industry into the level of technological advancement where it should and would be today if Ticketmaster had not been allowed to exist as a monopoly.

Additionally, as an added bonus to consumers, competition within the ticket-selling industry would also lower the “all-in” ticket prices meaning that consumers would spend a lot less money without all the extra fees Ticketmaster has enforced over the years.

With all of these benefits to the overturning of the Ticketmaster monopoly, we can only wait with bated breaths to see what the government decides.

## Mercy’s 2022 Christmas List

BASED ON TOP ANSWERS FROM THE DECEMBER NEWSPRINT POLL





# How to: Wrap a Christmas present

STORY: HELENA NAJAR



Step 1: Gather your supplies. For this project you only need six items; scissors, tape, wrapping paper, a bow, a gift tag, a pen and your gift. It is recommended to place your gift in a box for the easiest process.



Step 2: Choose your wrapping paper and measure. A fun Christmas pattern is the ideal choice. Unroll your paper on a hard, flat surface. Measure your wrapping paper by making sure it is about twice the size of your gift.



Step 3: Place your gift on your paper and make your first fold. Be sure that the gift is face down and in the center. Fold the right side of your paper to the top of your box and secure with tape.



Step 4: Repeat on the left side, if the paper is too long, cut until it reaches halfway across the box.



Step 5: Fold the sides of the box. Then, tuck the remaining paper onto the corners of the box.



Step 6: Tape down the triangle shaped paper. Next, crease the triangle shaped folds, push them down onto the box and secure with tape. Repeat on the other side.



Step 7: Add your bow and gift tag. Choose a bow that matches your wrapping paper, place it in the center and secure it with tape. Take your gift tag and using pen, label it with who it is for and who it is from.



Step 8: And then your gift is done! Place it under the tree and get ready for the recipient's reaction on Christmas Day.

Check out our  
December  
Spotify Playlist!



Open Spotify  
and Scan to  
listen!

## December Photo Recap!



On December 6 and 7, Junior Classical League holds their annual Salmagundi celebration. At Salmagundi, JCL members made an assortment of goods to sell to raise money for the Latin program. Photo courtesy of Helena Najar.



On December 9, Mercy's Human Relations Council hosts Ethnic Bazaar, where students from different cultural backgrounds perform dances and songs to represent their diverse traditions. BASE juniors performed Step. Photo courtesy of Lena LaJoy.



On December 3, The Mercy Mimes present their Silent Night performance. Photo courtesy of Margaret Geraghty.



# CHRISTMAS COUPONS





**Kowalski:**  
1 free multiple choice on any final

Name:



**Sattler:**  
Chappy Holidays! Don't let chapped lips get you down this winter... come by the Principal's office to recieve a lip balm (while supplies last!)

Name:



**Muscat:**  
2 free points on Biology or Forensic Science final exam

Name:





**McMaster:**  
1 free multiple choice on any final

Name:





**Lavelly:**  
2 free points on final project for Health or Life Skills

Name:



**Perry:**  
2 free points on Honors Precalculus or Calculus final

Name:




**Theisen:**  
1 free multiple choice on Algebra I or Honors Geometry final

Name:



**Tarplin:**  
1 get out of detention free (expiration date: 12/21/22)

Name:



\*In order for the coupon to be valid, you must write your favorite Christmas movie before redeeming it. If it's the same as Ms. Grove's, you get 2 free points!



**Groves:**  
1 free point on History exam or final project

Movie:  
Name:



**Wilson:**  
1 free multiple choice on any final

Name:



**Lavelly:**  
Swim/Gym & Fitness Swim and Weights: 1 free makeup day (cannot be used on assessment days or all Swim/Gym days

Name:



**Bajorek:**  
2 free points on any final project

Name: