

KEEPING UP WITH











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(they're all doing amazing, sweetie.)

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A sleigh of seasonal brews

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: MAURA SULLIVAN

hristmas carols on the radio, the hustle and bustle of holiday shopping and baking holiday sweets for Santa will put any Christmas enthusiast in the holiday spirit. Coffee is the perfect thing to add to the warm feelings of the season. Be sure to keep the flavors of this season on your Christmas list. *Newsprint* reviewed four local coffee houses that boast holiday roasts. Ratings are from 1 to 5 filled coffee cups.

Sweet Brew 'N Spice



Sweet Brew N' Spice is the perfect cafe for the coffee enthusiast that enjoys sipping their blends while window shopping and taking in local holiday festivities. Located in downtown Northville in Northville Square on Main Street, the convenient location provides a little relaxation from the busy Northville holiday festivities. There are many seating options, including a cute outdoor patio that overlooks the sidewalk for great holiday people watching and friendly staff that make the coffee house feel homey. The menu is diverse with coffee flavors and features Peppermint Bark, Eggnog, Gingerbread and Christmas Cookie flavors for this holiday season. Their drinks are reasonably priced with a small flavored latte at \$3.59, however, the flavors were fairly bland. The Christmas Cookie latte's flavor was indistinguishable from a regular coffee, and the Gingerbread Latte lacked flavor when compared to other coffee houses. However, the Peppermint Bark latte was rich and very distinct. Still, all were very enjoyable. The location also provides many sugar-free flavoring options. Altogether, Sweet Brew N' Spice is a great option if you are looking for a laid back coffee house with a large variety of Christmas specialty options.







After a long day of holiday shopping or studying for exams, Farmhouse Coffee in Farmington Hills is the perfect place to help you get grounded and regain your mojo. Right around the corner from Mercy at 12 Mile and Middlebelt, this quaint cafe is inviting, calm and cozy, and offers a large variety of fun Christmas flavors. Coffee goers that are fond of the distinct, traditional eggnog flavor must give the Farmhouse's Eggnog latte a sip. If you are not an enthusiast of eggnog, choose instead the Gingerbread, Peppermint or Peppermint Marshmallow lattes. All three are subtle, sweet flavors to put your mind at ease in anticipation of the holidays. Their beverages are reasonably priced with a small flavored latte costing \$3.70. This small coffee shop holds little seating. However, if you manage to snag a seat, you can expect to enjoy a calm atmosphere perfect for homework, meetings or talks with friends.

Sweetwaters Coffee and Tea











A local franchise established in Ann Arbor in 1993, Sweetwaters now operates 12 Michigan locations and 22 locations out of state. Their new Novi location, located in the Novi Towne Center on Grand River and Novi Road has a hospitable and helpful staff that highlighted the experience. However, with its modern look and feel and limited seating options, the atmosphere is not as quaint, cozy and comfortable as some other local coffee shops. Their menu tends to trend on the pricier side with a small flavored latte costing \$4.35, flavored premium tea starting at \$5.00 and other frozen and ice cream specialties costing closer to \$7.00. However, with its wide variety of brews, teas and holiday specialties it does come with its "perks" to please everyone in your party. Their wide range of hot, iced and frozen specialty drinks definitely aided in the coffee dining experience. The Chocolate Spice Dragon, a frozen shake made with chocolate, espresso, cream, spices and ice with a finishing touch of whipped cream, was heavy on the holiday spices but lacked the sweetness and richness of the chocolate. The Mistletoe Matcha Iced Dragon, a cold drink made with premium Japanese matcha green tea blended with vanilla, sweet cream and ice, topped with housemade whipped cream, left a strange and bitter aftertaste. However, if you are a green tea lover and enjoy a cold drink to meet your cravings, this drink is definitely for you. The Peppy Bark Mocha is rich, delicious and sprinkled with peppermint shavings to add a nice element of texture to its creamy blend. Along with their large variety of drinks, they also offer many sandwiches and pastries. Overall, the Sweetwater Cafe is definitely worth a stop for its diverse menu with something for everyone and a welcoming atmosphere that will leave all members of your party waiting for their next coffee run.







Coco Rico Café is a great escape from the stresses of daily life. The location is a bit off the beaten path at Maple Road and Haggerty. This establishment's bright red walls and cool decor aided in its ability to provide a unique and fun coffee shop experience and its comfy seating for larger groups makes it the perfect place to go with friends. Drinks trended slightly more expensive, however, with a small flavored latte priced at \$4.25. Gingerbread and Toasted Marshmallow are two flavored lattes that the Coco Rico Café has introduced for this holiday season, however the flavors were fairly nondescript. The drinks are far from overpowering and many flavors were forgetful or blended together with other menu items. Overall, there is little that differentiates Coco Rico Café from the other establishments reviewed, yet it does have a warm and friendly staff and plenty of seating options with mild-tasting menu items.



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2021 Wrapped

STORY AND GRAPHICS: FATIMA SIDDIOUE, DESIGN EDITOR

ith New Year's Day only a couple of weeks away, it's nice to look back and reminisce on all of the defining moments of the year. From the biggest hits in music to the most shocking pop culture news, here's a look at the most powerful and memorable moments of 2021.

Music

- "drivers license" by Olivia Rodrigo was released on January 8th and was a great (and emotional) start to the year. The pop ballad reached #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 for 8 weeks and had young girls everywhere sobbing over a non-existent boyfriend.
- "Butter" by BTS was released on May 21st and immediately became the song of the summer with its smooth beats and tasty lyrics. The song spent an astonishing 10 weeks at #1 on the Bill-board Hot 100 and broke five Guinness World Records, including the most viewed YouTube music video in 24 hours and most streamed track on Spotify in 24 hours.
- spent 7 weeks at #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 after its release on July 9th and became the fastest song to reach 1 billion streams on Spotify. The catchy song was quick to go viral on Tik Tok and gave Laroi his first #1 hit and Bieber his 8th #1 hit.

Shows

- Friends: The Reunion aired on May 27th and was a highly-anticipated reunion of the American television sitcom Friends.

 The special featured all of our favorite characters and the iconic moments we know and love.
- You Season 3 continues the thrilling saga of the American psychological television series following the infamous Joe Goldberg. The season, released on September 9th, was an addictive continuation filled with love and horror that definitely worked its way under your skin.
- **Squid Game**, a South Korean survival television series created by Hwang Dong-Hyuk, had quite the grip on us after its release to Netflix on September 17th. The smash hit created nearly \$900 million in value for Netflix and had us yelling at our screens then sobbing right afterwards.





- **Oprah with Meghan and Harry** is a television special hosted by Oprah Winfrey that aired on March 7th, giving us an inside look at Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex, and Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex. The special featured many shocking revelations on the Royal Family.
- #FreeBritney is a social movement fighting, since 2007, for American singer Britney Spears' autonomy from her conservatorship. The movement became especially popular in 2021 after social media and Spears brought awareness to the confinements surrounding the conservatorship. As of November 12th, Spears is free from her 13-year conservatorship.
- The 2021 Astroworld Festival was expected to be an enjoyable music fest hosted by Travis Scott, but soon turned into a devastating tragedy when eight people died. Concertgoers were caught in a surge and struggled to get out as people began collapsing.

Trends

rise jeans.



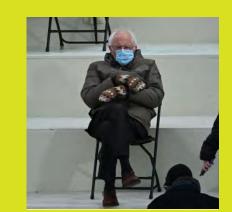
- **Squismallows** have been all the rave this year with their adorable faces and huggable plushiness. The collectible toys are so popular, they sell out immediately when they hit the shelves.
- Thrift shopping is roaring back, as teens are raiding their local thrift stores for cute finds that take them back to the early 2000s.



Movies

- **Luca**, directed by Enrico Casarosa and released on June 18th on Disney+, is an Italian-set animated film surrounding two young sea monsters exploring an unknown and forbidden human world. The film created quite the buzz through a story of friendship and acceptance that may or may not have had people shedding a couple of tears.
- Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings brings together the elements of a typical superhero Marvel movie with a soulful reflection of family, love and Chinese culture. Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton and released on September 3rd, the film has become the highest-grossing film released during the pandemic.
 - **Spider-Man: No Way Home** directed by Jon Watts has yet to be released, but given the anticipation and overall excitement the movie has garnered, it's definitely earned its place here on this list. The trailer for the movie has broken the 24-hour record for the most views and generated the largest 24-hour social media conversation of all time, so there's no doubt the movie will be one of the biggest of the year when it hits theaters on December 17th.

Memes



Bernie Sanders and his mittens.
photo by CNBC



The Weeknd's Super Bowl performance. photo by Buzzfeed



Kim Kardashian at the Met Gala.
photo by Vogue

FINALS SEASON













STORY, PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS: ALYSSA TISCH

ue to COVID-19, students at Mercy High School have not had final exams since 2019. This year, we are somewhat back to normal and so are final exams, which are 20% of the semester grade.

"It just seemed like because we were all in person, and we were proceeding as usual that we should put back into place our 20% weight and final exams," Ms. Colleen McMaster, associate principal, said.

The decision over finals was made by the curriculum council. The curriculum council is a group made up of the heads from each department, as well as chairs from counseling, the media center, IT, campus ministry, and AMES. Additionally, the dean of student affairs, Mrs. Eleasha Tarplin, will come in whenever a decision regarding her role is involved. The council meets every day six in the cycle and are in charge of making curriculum and academic decisions according to McMaster.

These final exams can range from a project to a paper or a test.

"As the [English] department, we know it's either a paper or a project," Mrs. Gillian Herold, an English teacher, said. "We meet, and we talk about what would be the best method to evaluate the progress of our students."

This year the exams are from December 15-17. Many years ago, the decision was made to have final exams before Christmas break rather than after in an attempt to give the students more of a break.

"In the past, [students'] Christmas break was spent writing your last paper and having these final exams hanging over your head," McMaster said.

With everything done and out of the way before Christmas break, the idea was that instead of studying and stressing over break, students would relax and have fun. Some students still stress however, as they want to find out how they did on the finals.

"Not knowing my grade [over break] stresses me out because I constantly question how good I did on my finals," junior Emily Kuebler said.

In addition, taking the finals before Christmas break means some teachers may have to grade over their vacation depending on what classes they teach.

"When I walk out of here for Christmas vacation the only final I might have to grade is that last one I gave on the last day. Everything else is done and put in. But especially for teachers who have to read essays and papers, I know they are going to spend their break grading," math teacher Mrs. Vicky Kowalski said.

While there are both positives and negtives, administration feels they made the right choice to have finals before Christmas break.

"I think that's a real plus having [finals] before break," McMaster said

Stress is one of the main issues students believe is a con for having finals. Students have many exams to study for which can impact their grade. Based on the December *Newsprint* poll, the majority of freshmen, sophomores and juniors have three to four finals they have to go in for on exam days while the majority of seniors have between one to four finals they have to go in on their exam day to take.

If a student doesn't know proper study methods, their workload can get harder. This makes it especially tough for freshmen and sophomores who may not have taken finals before. Freshman Liadan Siegel said she knows it will be stressful trying to prepare for them.

To help out the freshmen, Cocoa and Cram was created several years ago. Cocoa and Cram is December 13 after school. At this event, freshmen enjoy hot chocolate while studying with the help of link leaders. This was created to help the freshmen learn study methods and be less stressed.

While students agreed they were stressed about preparing for finals, both students and staff agree that these exams are necessary.

"I can't say I'm excited about having finals again this year, but I understand why they are needed," senior Brenna VanDenBerg said.

Mercy High School is a college preparatory school, and in college, students are required to take finals. If students do not take them in high school, they are not going to be prepared for them in college.

"The majority of math courses in college you take a first test that's 20% of your overall grade, a second test that's 20% of your overall grade, a third test that's 20% of your overall grade and a final exam that's the other 40% of your grade," Kowalski said. "That's literally all that your grade consists of, only those tests."

To help her students prepare, Kowalski has three days of in-class review and a review worksheet that they can hand in for some extra credit. In addition, certain teachers are offering coupons for extra credit among other helpful coupons that you can find on page 16 of this newspaper.

First and second hour classes are taking their exams on December 15. Third, fourth and fifth hour classes are on the 16th. Finally, sixth and seventh hour classes are on the 17th. Exams begin each day at 8:30 a.m. with the first exam taking place from 8:30-9:50 a.m., the second from 10:00-11:20 a.m. and on the 16th, the fifth hour exam lasting from 11:30-12:50 p.m. Students only have to come into school for their finals, so if a class isn't having a final test, students can stay home and relax.

In addition to a relaxed schedule, students also have a relaxed dress code. Instead of being in uniform for their finals, students can wear comfy clothing to take their exams.



Juniors study in the cafe together during their unscheduled hour.

FINAL EXAM

Study Tips From Upperclassmen:

"Don't procrastinate and use your planner to help you prioritize."

- senior Carissa Hodges

"Personally, I just make a bunch of Quizlets and watch YouTube videos for studying help."

- junior Emily Kuebler

"Some study tips for underclassmen would be to study with friends and not try to cram the night before. Actually go to the study groups that your teacher may be hosting, as they are honestly very helpful, especially for AP classes."

- senior Brenna VanDenBerg

"Start studying early, but don't study too much in one day. Take it easy and don't be stressed. If you're stressed, it's more difficult for your brain to retain the information."

- junior Madeline Schroder

Go Figure!

STORY AND GRAPHICS: JULIA LORELLI

arly morning practices, competitions, team bondings and the before-school coffee all contribute to the figure skating team. The team consists of juniors Abby Maroun, Felicity Bennett and Linny Maier and sophomore Julie Castillo.

Ice skating would definitely be a sport for early birds. They practice Fridays at 6 a.m. at

Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

Most of the team doesn't like getting up for

"It's really tough for me because I have to get up at 4 a.m. because I live 45 minutes away from the rink," Maier said. "But a triple shot espresso usually fixes that."

Some of the skaters, like Castillo and Maroun, don't have to wake up at 4 a.m., but

it's still a struggle to get out of bed.

"It's really tough [to get up for practices] because I don't want to and having to go to school after," Castillo said.

The early morning practices are a part of the

figure skating team for five months.

"We [practice] November through March. It's not a huge time commitment and everyone is super nice," Maroun said.

The skaters either compete individually or

as a team.

"We each compete on our own, but the team's score adds [up to one score]," Maroun said.

There are three competitions: one in December, one in January and one in February. Their state competition is in March which they can compete in individually or as a team.

"A meet is 4-5 hours becasue we need to sit there and watch everyone before we can all do our stuff," Castillo said.

There are no specific requirements for the costumes except for school approval. While the school decides on the costume, the skaters choose what they want to do with hair and makeup.

"I don't do as much as other people do," Maroun said. "I don't go all out with makeup and everything, so it usually takes me like 30 minutes, 45 depending on what I need to do, but some people take a lot longer with full make up and everything."

The Mercy figure skating team practices weekly to prepare for their competitions

throughout the year.

"We compete against all the public schools in our district," Maroun said. "Divine Child is the other private school, but we don't compete against them unless we make it to states because they're in a different district," Maroun said. Maroun said that the Marlins' toughest opponent is "a tie between Plymouth-Canton-Salem (PCS) and Northville because they both have like 30 people on their teams."

Castillo concurs that the bigger teams are harder to compete against because Mercy's team is smaller.

"It's hard to be able to really place. Northville's pretty good just because they have a lot of people. They're all just really tough."

Maier agrees with Maroun in that "probably PCS [is our biggest rival] just because they have so many people and they're doing triple axles."

Like everyone else, the figure skating team has stage fright or butterflies when they're about to perform, but they have found a way to get rid of the jitters.

"We'll play music and hang out to make ourselves not stress out as much," Maroun said.

Castillo and Maroun agree that talking helps calm themselves before a competition.

"I just try to relax and talk to everyone and see how everyone else is doing. That usually clams me down," Castillo said.

Maier said she doesn't get rid of the pre competition jitters.

"Large iced [I] just go out compete and she said.

coffee [before]. there and do my best,"

The team newcomers, are brand new

"Pretty you're and lot of people new and up," way "You don't good to letter. to show up" and compete [It's] more commit to the welcome that

While extra n e c e s s a r y, recommended.

"It's not encouraged to skate or

w e l c o m e s even those who to skating. much, show up

on the team. A start off brand work their Maroun said. have to be get a varsity [Skaters]have to practices in states. of you need to sport. Anyone is is interested." skating is not

it is highly

required, but it's that you do learn something else besides just showing up to the practices on Friday," Castillo said.

Last year, COVID-19 hit figure skating like it did everything else: badly. The team couldn't hang out in the locker room and team bondings were put on hold.

"Last year,we didn't do much because of COVID-19. Now we're doing more stuff after practice because it's from 6-6:50, so we still have like an hour or so before school starts," Maroun said.

Team bondings for figure skating happen weekly and the skaters are trying to find new things to do together.

"We have a mass coming up that we're going to go to together and we're going to try to come up with more activities to do as a team," Castillo said.

"Sometimes, we'll do little meets just for like coffee or just hang out and try to bond with each other."

According to Maier, they have been going to Biggby coffee.

"It's on our way to school and it's Biggby coffee. It's better," Maier said.

Each figure skater has her favorite jump; Maroun's is a double loop.

"You skate backwards two feet and go around in the air twice and land it," she said.

Castillo said her favorite is the vault jump. "It's kind of hard to explain, but you jump forward and you land backwards," she said.

Maier said that her favorite is either Dead Thrusts or Flying Camel.

"It's both a jump and a spin. I love it."

Castillo was initally uneasy about being the only newcomer on the team.

"At first I was nervous because I didn't really know anyone, but I met a lot of friends. Even even though they're juniors, we've gotten really close over the years," Castillo said.

Castillo looks up to the juniors, especially Maroun.

"She's the one that sent me eyeshadow in the eight grade, and we just grew closer," Castillo

From the early morning practices, to team bondings, the figure skating team is a group of girls who want to go out and represent Mercy to the best of their ability while having fun.

"It's a lot of fun. It's hard to get up for early morning practices, but it's worth it. We have to work for every victory," Castillo said.

Julie Castillo, a two-year Marlin figure skater, lands a jump at a competition. Picture used with permission by Julie Castillo

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KEEPING UP WITH THE CHRISTMAS KING

STORY AND PHOTOS: GRACE O'DEA, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: GRAPHCS: CAITLYN BEGOSA, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

othing says "holiday cheer" like a little friendly competition, and nothing says "Mercy holiday cheer" like the Christmas King contest. This year's title of Christmas King is up for grabs between the A-Ball dates of five seniors. Read up on this year's nominees to vote for who you think deserves to be the 2021 Christmas King, and check for an email from Mrs. Smith for the links to watch the "Keeping up with the Christmas King" video and vote for this year's Christmas King!



COLIN BAILEY

DATE: SORAYA PUERTO-KHALIL

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVIE: "Elf, just because Will Ferrell is probably my

TOP OF HIS CHRISTMAS LIST: "Probably a new snowboard or some new soccer cleats; I'm not sure yet."

THREE ITEMS HE WOULD BRING IF HE WAS STRANDED AT THE

NORTH POLE: "Coal for a fire, so I could be warm, a book so I'm not bored, and then a horse so I can try to get out."

IDEAL CHRISTMAS DATE: "Probably a nice dinner [and] a campfire since it's cold outside. We're inside, relaxing, watching Christmas movies, maybe listening to music, not Christmas music, though."

BEST PART OF CHRISTMAS: "Seeing my family and giving to my family; that's

CHRISTMAS CHARACTER HE WOULD CHOOSE TO BE: "Santa, just because I like how he gets to ride a sleigh all day, and he gets to give people presents; that's always fun."



7HANF YAMIN

DATE: MAYA KHADR

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVIE: "Honestly I think *Die Hard*, because in *Die Hard* you really get all the amazing aspects of a Christmas movie, like family, drama, and love, but what you also get is an intense movie with an amazing plot."

TOP OF HIS CHRISTMAS LIST: "A signed copy of Ferris Bueller's Day Off." THREE ITEMS HE WOULD BRING IF HE WAS STRANDED AT THE

NORTH POLE: "A flag, just because I like flags, a TV with a DVD player, let's count that as one and Ferris Bueller's Day Off."

IDEAL CHRISTMAS DATE: "Spending Christmas time in the Meijer Gardens because I just love gardens and I think surrounding yourself with nature is the best way to go with any date."

BEST PART OF CHRISTMAS: "Definitely being Christmas King. I think that being Christmas King is all I've ever wanted, and I think it would make my Christmas amazing."

CHRISTMAS CHARACTER HE WOULD CHOOSE TO BE: "Jack Frost, because there was this movie I watched when I was 12 called *Rise of the Guardians* and Jack Frost was really cool, literally and figuratively."



ETHAN KAMEN

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVIE: "*Elf*, because who doesn't like *Elf*?" THREE ITEMS HE WOULD BRING IF HE WAS STRANDED AT THE

DATE: MAGGIE MCLOGAN

TOP OF HIS CHRISTMAS LIST: "A new car."

NORTH POLE: "A fishing pole, so I could eat the fish there, water and Maggie."

IDEAL CHRISTMAS DATE: "Going to an ice rink." **BEST PART OF CHRISTMAS:** "The presents."

CHRISTMAS CHARACTER HE WOULD CHOOSE TO BE: "Scrooge,

because he gets to just yell at people and go to bed."



DANTE RIELI

DATE: KIRSTEN FITZGERALD

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVIE: "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation because it's pretty funny, it's a family movie; I'm a family guy. It's got a lot of good stuff, there's a couple explosions, it's pretty cool."

TOP OF HIS CHRISTMAS LIST: "New snowboarding goggles."

THREE ITEMS HE WOULD BRING IF HE WAS STRANDED AT THE

NORTH POLE: "An ice pick, water and climbing shoes."

IDEAL CHRISTMAS DATE: "In the city, in a nice restaurant, with a bunch of windows so you can see the snow falling, and there's the Christmas lights in the restaurant and outside and all the people wearing coats."

BEST PART OF CHRISTMAS: "The joy and fun and laughter it brings for every-

CHRISTMAS CHARACTER HE WOULD CHOOSE TO BE: "The kid from A Christmas Story, the one who wants a BB gun."



EVANJACKSON

DATE: ELLE MCCARTHY

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVIE: "The Grinch."

TOP OF HIS CHRISTMAS LIST: "Airpods." THREE ITEMS HE WOULD BRING IF HE WAS STRANDED AT THE

NORTH POLE: "A jacket, a couple bottles of water and some granola bars."

IDEAL CHRISTMAS DATE: "A date in the city, downtown, getting a nice dinner, maybe going shopping and just doing stuff together, spending quality time."

BEST PART OF CHRISTMAS: "Being able to sit back, take a break from the real world, spend time with your family and just relax."

CHRISTMAS CHARACTER HE WOULD CHOOSE TO BE: "The Grinch because he's a cool man, and I'd like to see what it's like to be him.'

Addressing Seasonal Affective Disorder

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: CAITLYN BEGOSA, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The transition from season to season raises many emotions for people. Whether it's ioy for the approaching holidays or sadness for a limited-time drink going out of season, many people experience different emotions to the seasons. This is not the case for everyone as the decreased lighting and gloomy weather can trigger Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), commonly referred to as seasonal depression.

SAD is a subset of major depressive disorder (depression) that usually occurs during the fall and winter months due to the lack of sunlight and decreased outside interaction.

One reason SAD occurs is because the seasons cause serotonin and melatonin levels in the body to fluctuate. Serotonin is a hormone that stabilizes mood. Normal levels of serotonin create a happier and calmer mood, while low levels can result in depression, anxiety or other mood disorders. Melatonin is a hormone that regulates the body's sleep/wake cycle. Darkness triggers melatonin production, while light can stunt the hormone's production.

As the nights grow longer, melatonin production increases, resulting in or worsening depression symptoms. Due to the reduced sunlight, serotonin levels decrease, which can trigger SAD or related side effects.

Furthermore, the winter and fall months disrupt the body's circadian rhythm.

"Circadian rhythm is our bodies' biological clock," Dr. Judith Malinowski, a clinical psychologist practicing at Outpatient Behavioral Medicine in Novi, said.

Circadian rhythm regulates many aspects of the body like sleeping, metabolism and internal temperature. The lack of sunlight interferes with circadian rhythm by delaying the sleep/wake cycle in the body and developing SAD side effects.

The signs of SAD are similar to depression such as a change in behavior and self-esteem. However, some depression symptoms differ from its subset.

"With more typical cases of major depressive disorder, you'll see weight loss, lack of sleep [and] lack of appetite," Mrs. Trish Brown, Mercy counselor and licensed therapist said. "With the seasonal pattern, you'll see the opposite with sleeping more, eating more, gaining weight [and] the lack of energy comes into play in a different

Other symptoms of SAD include apathy, a feeling of hopelessness, snapping at friends and family more often, daytime fatigue, and sleeping more and not feeling rejuvenated afterwards.

Relating to any of these symptoms does not necessarily mean you have SAD. Everyone is affected by the changing seasons and the decreased sunlight, but those with SAD are affected with these indicators to a higher and more radical degree.

"In order to be diagnosed in that category, there

are patterns with seasons, most often in the fall and winter," Brown said. "Major depressive symptoms appear, and they sort of dissipate or go away come spring. You have to have this pattern for two years at least to be diagnosed with the subset of seasonal depression. It is very similar to the nuance of major depressive disorder."

These symptoms usually dissipate in the spring as the body's circadian rhythm naturally adjusts to the increase of sunlight. Having SAD in the spring and summer is a rare occurrence.

There are many treatment options available for SAD and for its symptoms.

Similar to depression, therapy is a course of action to help with SAD. Additionally, antidepressants can also work for the seasonal subset of depression. Finding the right antidepressant can be a vigorous process to figure out which medication is right for your mind and body, but always check with a medical profession to see if antidepressants are the right choice for you.

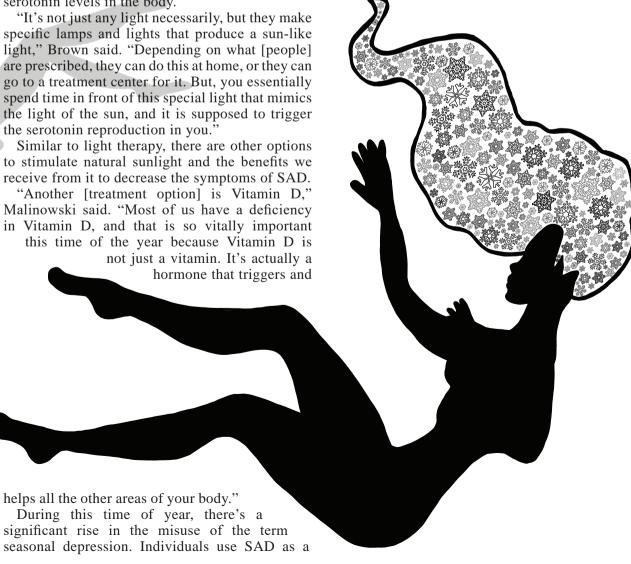
A viable treatment option to compensate for the gloomy atmosphere is light therapy. This option emits bright white light to imitate sunlight, which can restore balance to the body's circadian rhythm and improve symptoms of SAD by increasing serotonin levels in the body.

scapegoat for their shifting emotions, not realizing many suffer from this disorder every year.

"They don't really know it's an actual diagnosis that some people deal with every single year at this time," Malinowski said. "It can be very debilitating, and I just think it's really important for all of us to be conscious about what we say because our words have power. We have to be cognizant of what we're saying. I may not have SAD, but that doesn't mean I'm not affected by the lack of sunlight."

If you have been experiencing any of the symptoms mentioned and believe you are a possible candidate for SAD, reach out to others to receive proper help.

"It's okay not to be okay," health teacher Mrs. Brandi Lavely said. "If you think you might be affected or a friend might be affected by seasonal depression, go and talk to our counselors, or if you have your own therapist, don't be afraid to ask about it and ask questions. Be honest, so you can get the help that you need to get through the season until we can be outside more."



Alumna author returns to Mercy roots story and graphics: Grace o'dea, editor-in-chief

r. Julie L. J. Koehler's passion for her work in German literature is tangible through her contribution to the recently published anthology Women Writing Wonder, a compilation of English-translated fairytales from 19th century English, French and German authors. It is also extremely evident in the way she beams while discussing the subject. The 2001 alumna's first publication was a long time coming, but her passion for the German language and culture, as well as literature, dates back to her time at Mercy.

"The English teachers really inspired me to go into literary studies," said Koehler, who strengthened her writing skills by working on Newsprint staff.

"I learned analysis and critical thinking at Mercy at a really high level," Koehler said. "That was a piece that really helped me be successful."

Koehler can recall her early courses at Mercy creating a foundation for the tools that would help in her area of study in college.

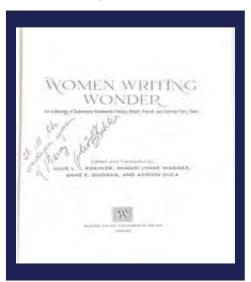
"[My analysis skills] started in freshman English class talking about what stories mean and what a metaphor is," she said.

Koehler also acquired important skills that are not taught in the classroom which equally contributed to her success in college.

"I think it was easy at Mercy to have a strong voice as a woman," Koehler said. "Going into a co-ed situation when I got to college, I feel like I had a lot more confidence."

After graduating from Mercy, Koehler attended the University of Michigan (UofM), where she double majored in German and Creative Writing. Not knowing exactly what to do next, Koehler decided to stay at UofM to earn her Master's of Education, which placed her on the next steps of her career path.

With her Master's in Education, Koehler began teaching English Second Language (ESL) classes at a middle school through Detroit Public Schools, where she remained for two years. While working in Detroit, Koehler discovered a master's program for German at Wayne State University.



Koehler inscribes a message on the front cover of her anthology for Mercy. Photo by Grace O'Dea

"[Wayne] was going to give me a teaching assistantship to pay for me to go to school," Koehler said. "And then I was at Wayne State until last year; I was there for 13 years."

Koehler was able to earn her master's degree in German at Wayne State while simultaneously teaching German classes there. Once her master's program was complete, Koehler remained at Wayne, where she earned her doctorate in Modern Language with a specialization in German, and continued to teach and engage in the research work that would ultimately lead to the publication of her anthology.

At Wayne State, Koehler worked with English and French teachers in what she called a "fairytale research group". The group came up with the idea to create an anthology of fairy tales by female English, French and



Dr. Cheryl Kreger poses alongside Koehler with her anthology. Photo used with permission from Julie Earle Koehler also chose the artwork for the cover of the anthology. Photo by Grace O'Dea

German authors when they noticed how authors of these backgrounds were writing about similar experiences and tales within the same time frame.

It was in 2016 when the project for Koehler's anthology really started. She and the French contributors to the work received the funding to travel abroad to do their research. Koehler spent two weeks in Germany gathering as much information as possible on works from 19th century German female fairy tale authors.

"It was this cool excavation of finding these texts and books that had been so popular and important to so many people in the 19th century," Koehler said.

Many of the works Koehler discovered and translated into English were fairly popular in their time but never published, and as the literary canon became increasingly



The German section of the anthology is introduced with an analysis of a female-authored German tale. Photo by Grace O'Dea.

dominated by male authors, many of these stories were lost to history. Now, through Women Writing Wonder, the fairy tales are finally in a published format to be better preserved and studied.

Along with the German works translated by Koehler, French fairy tales by female authors from the 19th century were translated and researched by French teachers at Wayne State to be included in the anthology. Female-written British tales from the same time period were also added.

> "We all worked on [the anthology] pretty equally," Koehler said.

> On top of translating all of the German tales, Koehler also wrote the German section's introduction and the athology's overarching introduction.

> Although Women Writing Wonder is complete, Koehler's work with fairy tales and the German language is nowhere near finished.

> "My next project is my monograph, which is the book based on my dissertation," Koehler said.

Her research on German fairytales will continue as Koehler completes her next project. She is excited to now be teaching Fairy Tales and Folklore at Michigan State University (MSU), as this instruction pertains more to her area of research.

At MSU, Koehler looks forward to both teaching her students and learning from them, as the ideas they have often inspire what she will research next.

"I feel like my craft is teaching, and my passion is research," Koehler said.

Evaluation of Mercy tradition

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: CAITLYN BEGOSA, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



n 1992, Mrs. Andrea Kowalyk held hands with her fellow seniors and ran through the rows of the auditorium, celebrating the tradition of Moving Up Day. In 2019, as freshmen, my class followed suit holding hands, rushing throughout the auditorium and officially transitioning to our sophomore year of high

However, in 2020, Moving Up Day looked quite different from years past. Breaking tradition, students were advised not to run in the auditorium and were not allowed to hold hands. The sensation of unity we desperately needed after being separated into cohorts for the majority of the school year was lost. I did not receive the same symbolic message of "moving up" to the next grade as I did at the end of my freshman year. Those who never experienced a true Moving Up Day barely understood the reason why it remains a Mercy

The days of holding hands while running through the rows of the auditorium seem like a thing of the past. In this current day where every event is up in the air and subject to change, preserving tradition appears an impossible feat.

COVID-19 brought upon an era of breaking tradition. Many of these customs were thrown out the window and replaced with watered down versions to maintain safety among individuals.

While some traditions had a replacement, many did not, leaving a multitude of newer members of the Mercy community clueless on these important and exciting aspects of being a Mercy Marlin.

As the only grade to have experienced a full school year, the senior class has a responsibility to preserve Mercy traditions for new students and staff. This duty proves a difficult achievement as we have also missed out on cherished Mercy customs. None of the current

body

Dance, an event designated for upperclassmen.

Right now, a large part of preserving Mercy tradition relies on student leaders, executive board members, Human Relations Council (HRC) representatives and class officers. While those individuals hold a certain title, it's important for those who have witnessed these traditions to also act as a leader. This chance to inform, share and maintain our beloved Mercy customs should be a responsibility for all who have experienced these traditions.

Consequently, the debate between preservation and change has been forced onto us as we adjust to fit our current climate. As a former Mercy student and current member of staff, Kowalyk said this is a perfect opportunity to evaluate existing traditions to prioritize what we should move forward with versus what we should leave in the past.

In the evaluation process, questions regarding effectiveness and meaning come into play. Is this tradition as effective as we think it should be? Why do we keep having this tradition every year? Do students understand the reason why we have this tradition?

The underlying message of many Mercy traditions is neglected as students focus on the fun exterior of the event rather than gain an insight on why we keep having these traditions every year. The cultural performances, food and artifacts of Ethnic Bazaar appeal to the student body, but these aspects only act as messengers to portray the purpose of Ethnic Bazaar: celebrating and informing about each other's differences.

Although the event may not convey the message to the entire Mercy community, it's important the context resonates with individuals to act as motivation to preserve this tradition for future grades.

The next step of evaluating Mercy tradition is adaptation. Although altering tradition seems

contradictory, society thrives on advancement, and change is inevitable. Kowalyk expresses the necessity of not

sticking to a certain mindset when it comes to customs. Just because it is a tradition does not necessarily mean it needs to be set in stone.

Avoiding resistance to change is a key component to this evaluation process. Instead of preventing change, it's crucial to preserve the essence of the tradition.

The newly adapted Ethnic Bazaar is a great example for adapting tradition. HRC realized it needed to host Ethnic Bazaar or the tradition would be lost, since the last time the event happened was in the fall of 2018. The senior class was the last to plan and watch Ethnic Bazaar their freshmen year. Knowing how the event works, the senior representatives worked closely with the HRC moderators to preserve the meaning of Ethnic Bazaar while simultaneously making the tradition fun and enjoyable for new viewers.

The event was adapted to maintain the spirit of the tradition while incorporating COVID-19 precautions. The trays of steaming hot dishes and cold salads were replaced by prepackaged snacks, bottled drinks and bake sale style wrapped desserts. The performance aspect mainly remained the same. The performances were still in the Drama Studio with the addition of performers wearing masks and social distancing between viewers.

Even performances followed the theme of change. The Indian/South Asian dance mixed traditional Bollywood and bhangra styles with modern-day music to create a fusion of conventionality and modernism.

While the pandemic makes it difficult to maintain Mercy tradition, this responsibility cannot rely on a singular grade. The upperclassmen must assume roles of leaders to guide, educate and help others celebrate our school's beloved customs. As well, underclassmen need to be open to learn and partake in our customs as they will soon be the new leaders of the school and have to inform incoming students. We celebrate these traditions as a singular community, and we must preserve them as a united community.



Two seniors hug after the senior blessing mass.



South Asian dance for Ethnic Bazaar.



Junior Nandini Desaraju pratices the Indian/ Sophomore Anika Lopes paints HRC's "United in Mercy" banner for Ethnic Bazaar.



The senior tailgate is a tradition that brings unity to the 12th grade class.

Make a Difference Day!

STORY AND GRAPHICS: ALYSSA TISCH

























ith COVID-19 still prevalent in Michigan, Mercy has had to rethink the typical Make a Difference Day this year.

In prior years, Mercy students and staff have gone into the community and helped many different places, doing service ranging from playing with children to washing dishes. This year, students were sent out in groups to different places around the school to learn about the critical concerns of Mercy before heading back to their advisers. After sharing what they learned, the adviser groups created service projects focusing on one or many critical concerns. Students and staff had varied feelings about how Make a Difference Day worked this year.

"I wish we had gotten to do [the traditional Make a Difference Day] this year because it made me feel like I was actually making a difference in our world," junior Maddie Schroder said.

Both Schroder and several other students felt that by going out into the community, they could more easily see the difference that they were making. On the other hand, some students enjoyed connecting with their adviser group and learning about the critical concerns with this new Make a Difference Day.

"I enjoyed Make a Difference Day because I learned more about the concerns and was able to better connect to my adviser group," sophmore Katelyn Cronan said. Mrs. Judi Griggs-Dennis from Campus Ministry felt that all of the different service projects went amazingly well.

"For two or three years now, I've been offering to write letters to the Sisters of Mercy, but this actually got people to do it," Griggs-Dennis said.

There were numerous service projects happening in Mercy to help make a difference in the community. Two of these Mercy adviser group projects include the book drive and the pet supply drive.





















Ms. Angela Harris, an English teacher, and her advisees created a book drive for their Make a Difference Day project. The group tried to focus on the critical concern of earth, as well as the ideas of inclusion and poverty. For the earth portion, rather than getting rid of books, they were being donated and recycled, so others could read them. As for inclusion and poverty, their goal was fostering equal opportunity. They wanted to make sure that everyone had access to books for both leisure and learning.

The book drive finished on November 5. The adviser group collected a good amount of books according to Harris, and they are now working on sending the books out to local organizations. They reached out to some lower income schools that Mercy has worked with in the past, as well as a school that one of her advisees had a connection with.

"This has allowed the students to be creative, and to help each other step up. They've learned each other's strengths and weaknesses in terms of who has taken the lead on announcements or posters, or bringing in books," Harris said. "They've been holding each other accountable which has been nice to see."

Freshman Mia Bruno agreed that this helped them bond and especially loved when they were all sharing ideas and talking about the critical concerns.



Harris' advisees hold their donated books. Photo used with permission from Angela Harris























Cook's senior advisees with some of the pet supplies they plan to donate. Photo by Alyssa Tisch

Ms. Rebecca Cook, an English teacher, and her advisees decided to make a pet supply drive for their Make a Difference Day project. The project went through the month of October with the supplies going to Happy Haven Paws, a recently founded non-profit foster-based rescue.

The group chose to focus on the critical concerns of earth and non-violence for their project. They decided almost immediately that they wanted to apply these concerns to animals.

"Sometimes with the critical concerns, people think they are only focused on our school community or even just humans," Cook said. "A lot of times animals are kind of bypassed, and pets are something most of us have. The rescues need a lot of help, and this is something with the critical concerns outside of the Mercy community."

Cook's advisor group worked together to make posters and social media posts to advertise the drive, and were able to collect two boxes of supplies. They recieved leashes, toys and food for both

Now they are working on getting these supplies to Happy Haven Paws. The rescue doesn't have a main location, so Cook and her advisees have reached out to the rescue to see what they should do with the supplies. Some students may drop supplies off at different locations, or some people from the rescue will come and pick up the supplies from Mercy.

"I feel like this was a good bonding activity with my other advisees because it stimulated communication between us and improved our collaboration by sharing ideas and incorporating each other's creativity," senior Alaina Liddell said.



FIOT BY FIOT"

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: MAURA SULLIVAN







Audrey Guyot '24



Mallory Smith '23



Elizabeth Widun '22



Mrs. Anne Burras

What is your favorite holiday movie?

"National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation"

"Elf"

"Home Alone"

"The Polar Express"

"A Christmas Story"

What are some of your family's Christmas traditions?

"All my siblings and I wake up at 2 a.m. to open gifts."

"We have a white elephant exchange."

"My family dresses in matching pajamas."

"We always make cookies on Christmas Eve." "I spend Christmas Eve with extended family, go to church Christmas morning and have Christmas dinner."

What is your favorite Christmas song?

"Snowman' by Sia" "Kelly Clarkston's 'Underneath the Tree'" "All I Want for Christmas Is You' by Mariah Carey"

"Winter Wonderland' by Michael Bublé" "This Christmas' by Donny Hathaway"

What is the best Christmas gift you have ever received?

"I got a nice watch from my mom."

"Money"

"My phone"

"A quote jar from my best friend."

"Tickets to go to How the Grinch Stole Christmas with my family."

Real or artificial trees?

"Artificial: It's just a lot easier and less maintenance."

"Artificial: My mom and I are both allergic to pine trees." "Real: Getting a tree is one of my favorite parts of Christmas." "Artificial: I have pets, so having a real tree is hard."

"Real"

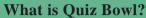
Mercy Meet and Greet

STORY BY JULIA LORELLI; GRAPHICS BY FATIMA SIDDIQUE, DESIGN EDITOR

ercy Meet and Greet introduces you to the Quiz Bowl team, who have had quite a change going from in-person, to Zoom, back to in-person.



Sophmore Carson Keckes. Photo used with permission from Keckes



"I didn't join when I was a freshman because of swim. I thought it would interfere or take up too much time. I went to the informational meeting this year and found out that I could join and keep swimming so I did. It's really more of a come if you can, if you can't don't worry about it."



"Pretty much, it's four people on each team. And there's a moderator off to the side. Whoever is the first to buzz in gets to answer. If they get it wrong, then the team can't answer. The other team can steal. Then if you get it right, you get 10 points. And then for each additional question you get right, you get five points. After that, the team gets three bonus questions that they can collaborate on and answer. There are about 20 rounds per competition and there's a lot of questions per round. The competitions usually last from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m."



Senior Juliana Santillan. Photo by Julia Lorelli

Why should someone join Quiz Bowl?

"I think it's a great way to meet new people. And it's really open to anyone, like you can have knowledge of anything from science to history or even if you like things like pop culture or sports. There's a place for everyone on the team."



Junior Caitlin Condon. Photo used with permission from Condon

Was it difficult to coach Quiz Bowl while we were on Zoom?

"Oh my gosh, yes, it was really hard. The hardest thing was that there were no in-person meets, no in-person competitions. Everything that we had to do was online. Quiz Bowl is not an online competition; it's supposed to be in person, you're supposed to see your competitor, buzz in and all that kind of stuff. Everything was done over Discord or Zoom last year, which was really tough. And because you don't have that human connection like at a meet, you're on your computer for eight hours on a Saturday and we did that for 14 Saturdays. It was really tough."



Coach Mrs. Lauren Marquard. Photo by Grace O'Dea

Looking Back on this Month..



Senior Meghana Govindaraj performs at Ethnic Bazaar. Photo used with permission from Juliana Piccirilli



Mercy ice hockey tapes their sticks blue and yellow to support Oxford High School. Picture used with permission from Paul Rorick



Mid American Pom team members from Mercy pom pose for pictures before performing in the Detroit Thanksgiving Day Parade. Photo used with permission from Megan Mato

Christmas coupons

