

Maroon & White

“For a better Tennessee High”

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Morelock Family Grows Through Miracles of Birth and Adoption

By Danica Mai

Tennessee High School history teacher Brad Morelock and his wife waited patiently for that fateful call from the hospital. The silence of the hotel room was deafening as the couple awaited the sound of a single phone ringing. This call could determine the future for their family. The birth mother's allotted 48 hours to decide on whether to keep the infant the couple was hoping to adopt were coming to a close. Finally, the phone in Coach Morelock's pocket began to buzz. On September 19th 2021, the Morelocks received the call confirming that they were allowed to take newborn Ella Rose Morelock home.

When the nurse rolled Ella Rose into the room, Coach Morelock knew Ella was his daughter. Morelock sweetly says, “there was never a doubt in my mind.” The couple held the little bundle of joy at the hospital and his “mind felt so at ease.” While watching his wife hold their daughter, Morelock thought that “this is who is supposed to be in our lives.”

Becoming a parent can come in a variety of ways. Some people choose to take the expected route of natural birth, but others choose the path of adoption. There are an array of reasons for families to choose to adopt, but many are due to infertility issues. Studies from the National Institutes of Health shows that at least 12-15% of

couples in the United States deal with infertility.

The Morelock's first daughter, Gracie, was conceived naturally, but she was an “absolute miracle.” After many doctor visits, the couple was told that they would never be able to have a child naturally. Despite all the doctor's predictions, Mrs. Morelock became pregnant with Gracie. However, after she was born, their doctor told the couple that her body could not handle another pregnancy. The couple, still wanting more children, decided to pick the path of adoption.

Through thorough research, the pair came to the decision that domestic adoption was the direction they wanted to take as well as an adoption agency to aid in their journey. The first 6 months of the process were filled with mountains of paperwork. Once they completed this, they were contacted about various adoption options, including the birth mother's health history as well as the reason for giving up her child. Morelock and his wife would read the emails and then decide whether to present themselves to the birth mother. To “present” themselves, the Morelock family created a profile book, described by Morelock as a “magazine” containing information about their family and their home. When they presented themselves to the birth mother, their

profile book would be sent to her and she would decide which family the child would be given to. Coach Morelock was presented with “well over 100 situations.” From those, he and his wife presented their profile book to over 20 of them, but they were picked once.

Through the adoption process, Morelock states that “all you hear are nos”. When the pair found out about their first rejection, he did not think adoption was going to work out. Morelock questioned “what is it that she did not like about us?” He micro-analyzed everything about his profile book from their house to the color of his own shirt. But, after the first couple of refusals, Morelock was expecting the dismissal. “There were a lot of no's and a lot of waiting,” he says.



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THS Teachers Celebrate the Good Times

By Lilly Chafin

The holidays are a wonderful time to celebrate with friends and family. No matter religion or beliefs, December is a time to be cheerful and make good memories. After asking the staff of our school their funny or heartwarming holiday stories, we got several interesting answers.

This first story comes from one of our art teachers, Mr. Quales. Back in 1995, Mr. Quales' wife had a dog named Sandy for 18 years. Sadly, the dog had to be put down while they were living in Atlanta, GA. They came back to Bristol that Christmas to visit family. While they were sitting in the living room, this puppy came up to the sliding door. The dog was scratching at the door, and Quales describes it as, “looking exactly like Sandy”. Not only that, but it was wearing the custom collar that they had gotten Sandy. The dog came into the house, everyone pet

it, and then it left. Quales says to this day they have not seen the dog again. This next story comes from Tennessee High's French teacher, Madame Toby. Mrs. Toby says that she remembered one Christmas when she was a big New Kids on The Block fan. Almost everything she got that Christmas was new kids on the block themed. She got a hat, a bracelet, a shirt, shoelaces, a watch, and even a fanny pack. She states, “it was a really fun Christmas because that was my first experience really loving a band.”

Mr. Richardson tells us when he used to work at a prison that it was actually very beautiful during Christmas. He even says, “when it snows, the way the lights hit the razor wire it sparkles like Christmas lights”. He also mentioned how the prisoners' chains would clank together and sound like bells. His comment was so interesting because it

shows that even places that are usually dark and gloomy, can be beautiful during the holidays.

Mrs. Robinson tells us of the Christmas after her and her husband had just gotten married. She explained how they were very poor at the time and didn't have much. For that Christmas, she got her husband a shirt, and he got her a colander. Several years later, she found out that her husband wasn't even the one who bought the colander - it was his mom all along.

The holidays are filled with endless moments of joy and laughter that are unique to everyone. Hearing and telling stories like these are some of the best parts of celebrating this time of year. Even the small memories can last a lifetime when shared with the ones you love.

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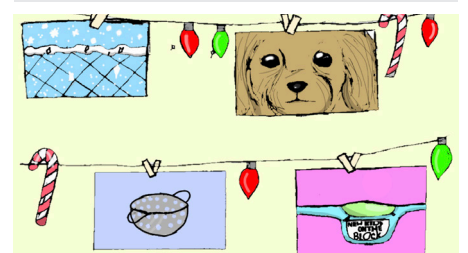
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Diving into Viking Swim Season

By Callie Eckley

It is now time for the AquaVikes to start their season once again! Both in and out of the pool, the Tennessee High School swim team is working harder than ever. When asked about expectations for this year, Coach Mary Johnson states, “My expectations are for everyone to have fun, learn more about the sport, and personal improvement.” Since there were 12 graduated seniors this past year, the team now has a very young demographic. Coach Johnson states that the team is, “starting over” in a way that will prepare the athletes for

future seasons. When asked about what other successes she wants to see the team achieve besides award-winning athleticism, Coach Johnson replied, “...what it means to be part of a team, how to make a commitment to your team and to yourself, and how to grow as a person.” This year is special for the team because they will be the host team for the conference championship meet, which will be held in January at the Kingsport Aquatic Center. There will be many meets before then though, so come out and make a splash for your AquaVikes!



THS 2021-2022 AquaVikes!

Bristol Ballet Continues Nutcracker Tradition

By Lucy Paulson



Artwork by Nyla Surber

Fifty-five years and one pandemic later, Bristol Ballet’s “Nutcracker” returns to the Paramount stage. Started in 1966 by the Company’s founder, Constance Hardinge, this seasonal ballet was first performed at the Virginia Inter mont’s Fine Arts Theater. It soon became a lasting favorite and tradition for families all around. Present Artistic Director, Michele Plescia, was one of her students at the time and currently continues the tradition. Despite the past year’s hardships, the company performed the “Nutcracker” virtually, shown at the Moonlite Drive-in. This year, however, Bristol Ballet is offering in-person performances on December 10th and 11th at the Paramount as well as a live stream during the Friday school show. “Audience members will not be required to mask or show proof of negative tests or vaccination, as that will be nearly impossible to regulate and enforce,” Ms. Plescia says, “The ballet does encourage everyone in the

audience to take whatever precautions they feel are best for them and the people around them.” So, what makes Bristol Ballet’s “Nutcracker” different from the rest? It honors Bristol’s heritage by adding some wonderful additions: “In the party scene, where children are given dolls as gifts, the dolls are rag dolls dressed in a more old-country attire, and one child is given a fiddle. The fiddle is one of the instruments that is prominent in country music,” Plescia explains. “In the second act, the variation of Mother Ginger and her Polichinelles has been transformed to Mother Maybelle and her Carter Sisters, which is an homage to the all-important and famous Maybelle Carter and the Carter Sisters act. The Carter Sisters in the ballet play banjos and fiddles.” The Bristol Ballet Nutcracker is back, so be sure to catch a show this weekend!

Skip the Shipping and Shop the Pinnacle

By Rachel Kent

The Holiday season is here and so are the deals! The rippling aftermath of Black Friday and Cyber Monday help us save through door buster sales. From Bristol’s only department store, Belk, expect epic deals such as 70% off of jewelry for that special someone and up to 50% off of holiday decor for those finishing touches on holiday decorations. These deals only last two more days, through December 12th, so hurry over to Belk at The Pinnacle! Take a pitstop at the Eddie Bauer Outlet to find cute and cozy coats for loved onest. They are currently having varying deals on flannels, jackets, and even fleece lined pants! Go quick while supplies last.

Then, stroll on over to Bath and Body Works to purchase a cute and sweet-smelling gift for a friend or sibling. For the month of December, B&BW has consistent deals to share some holiday cheer through body sprays and candles! For example, they have a 2 for \$20 deal on single wick candles. For the athlete in the family, try Dick’s Sporting Goods, which is offering up to 50% off many items throughout the story, or buy-one-get-one-free cozy cabin accessories. Whatever your gift needs, if you’re in a bind and afraid that ordering online will leave you giftless on Christmas day, try shopping in town at the Pinnacle.

Cross Country Girls Leave Their Footprints at the State Meet

By Joseph Burriss

On a cool and tranquil November afternoon in Hendersonville, Tennessee, the girl’s cross country team prepared for the state meet. As the start of the race inched closer, a shared feeling of anxiety and suspense loomed over the runners, countless coaches, and other onlookers. Yet as the announcer raised his hand to fire the starting pistol, another emotion dwelled among Tennessee High’s six qualifiers as they hovered just behind the starting line: eager anticipation. The state meet was a huge deal for the girls on the team, and much anticipation centered around it. “There was a lot of energy and excitement,” recalls Grace Singleton, a senior who is now preparing to run at East

Tennessee State University. The meet undoubtedly served as a fulfilling end to Grace’s high school running career, and as an exhilarating start to Felicity Darby and Molly Johnson’s first year running in high school. Furthermore, Zoe Arrington, junior, managed to make All-State, placing seventh out of two hundred and thirty-five runners. The state meet in Hendersonville was monumental for Tennessee High. After not going to state in years, the girls’ team placed tenth out of thirty teams. With all of the talent and hard work present on the team, and with lots of talent bound to come from incoming freshmen, only time can tell how far the team will go next year.

The Chain Mail Feature: Nurse Martinez Amidst Covid-19

By Lucy Paulson

When she was five years old, Suzanne Martinez told her father, “When I grow up, I want to be a nurse or a teacher.” In this sense, it could be said that today, working as the school nurse at Tennessee High, Nurse Martinez has landed her dream job. “THS has become my family,” she expressed. On two occasions, she found comfort and support from the Viking community. First, in January of 2018, she lost her home to a fire. “I could not believe how many people donated and just sent money and love,” Martinez said. More recently, when she lost a family member, “so many people here reached out to me, and when I came back there were just so many that showed me love and understanding” Martinez remembers. “I feel like my relationship with the students here is wonderful, I feel respected by them and very appreciated. When I miss a day for sickness or an appointment, I have students that are worried and want to know if everything is okay, I feel so missed by them.” However

successful she was at envisioning her future career, Nurse Martinez never imagined that she would also be a school nurse during a global pandemic. When she learned about Covid and how quickly it had spread across the globe, Martinez, like most of us, was in shock, “I have never been through a pandemic—only watched movies about pandemics. I think I was in denial about the whole thing in the beginning,” she said. “I do not believe Covid-19 will go away anytime soon. I think we are going to have to live with this for a while.” Covid has made Martinez’s job harder, presenting her with new sick students each day. As the district has also begun testing students at school, she believes the clinic has become busier. “We have just started doing in house testing, so I am sure I will see more and more Covid issues. It is very busy here in the clinic and sometimes I do not have enough time to work one-on-one with a sick student.”

Managing her personal life with Covid has been challenging as well. “I have a special needs daughter, Karli, and I must be very careful not to take sickness home to her,” Martinez said. “I test once a week to make sure that I am not positive with Covid.” Unfortunately, despite her best efforts, in December 2020, just after Christmas, she tested positive. “I had a mild case; I did have horrible body aches as well as a runny nose and headache. I started to experience shortness of breath after about 12 days and still struggle with that. My doctor says that could last for a long time, I also lost smell and taste and still have issues at times with that.” Martinez was quarantined in her room, and thankfully, no one else got sick. For precautions, she follows CDC guidelines by wearing a mask and keeping things sanitized and clean. “I try to stay positive by praying. Talking with friends and family, and staying busy.” Martinez advises students to take care of both their

physical and mental well-being. “Pay attention to your body, how you are feeling,” she said. “Talk to your friends and your counselors if you need that. Surround yourself with positive things and people that are positive.” Continuing the chain features, Nurse Martinez has nominated Ms. Belcher to talk about her time as a new teacher at THS!



Sam the Substitute

By Sophia Detrick

We all know the feeling of expecting to spend the class period engrossed in a lecture usually about something boring as part of the ongoing routine of school, only to walk in and find a substitute waiting for you instead. The relief washes over you and instantly your day becomes brighter. That was the case on a particular sunny Tuesday morning. Except this time, the relief wouldn’t last. Walking into Mr. Cross’s 3rd period Honors Government and Economy class, we prepared ourselves for the entire period to be a power point lecture involving us furiously scribbling down everything Mr. Cross said, getting black graphite smudges all over our hands in the process. Instead, we found a familiar teacher sitting at the desk. Mr. Morelock had informed us that Cross was out today and after lunch a sub would be coming in to take his place. We had been left specific instructions on what to do and we began work. After walking back from lunch that afternoon, the class was a bit hectic as usual, people up from their seats, others finishing their lunchroom gossip. Sam Weddington, a senior in the class, being his usual comedic self, stood up, walked to the front of the

class, wrote his name on the board, and announced, “Alright everyone, my name is Mr. Weddington. I’ll be your substitute for today. Mr. Cross has left some things for you to do.” The class easily caught onto the joke, after

for our class, a friendly, middle-aged gentleman that we had all had in the past. Sam proceeded to walk over to him and say, “Who are you?” Confidently, Sam went on with the prank: “I’m the sub for today; you

out into chaos. What started as a joke quickly turned into a misunderstanding and left us with a big problem. Simple highschool common sense rule number 1: don’t mess with the sub. In all of our 13 years of education, none of us had ever dealt with a situation like this. We were all nervous for a multitude of reasons. What would Mr. Cross say? Where did the sub go? Were we terrible people? If you could insert yourself in that moment, it’s pretty easy to imagine the stress Sam was suddenly feeling. He instantly shot up from his seat, erased his name off the whiteboard, and tried to calm the class with, “Shh guys, let’s just do our work,” but to no avail; the class was still in complete shock. “I started to panic. The consequences didn’t register,” Sam said as he reflected on the occurrence. In the end, everything turned out alright and Mr. Cross was only slightly upset... we think. Sam the substitute definitely goes down in history as one of the scariest and funniest moments any of us have ever experienced. But what can we expect, it is American public school after all.



all, we knew Sam as a jokester in the class. But it didn’t seem like Sam was quite finished. Sitting in Mr. Cross’s desk seat was the assigned substitute

can go.” The class was in awe as we all watched the sub stand up, pack up his stuff, and leave. The entire class instantly burst

Artwork by Nyla Surber

Mai Closet

By Danica Mai

Hey THS, it's the most wonderful time of the year and I am back again to give you guys some fashion advice! For anyone who does not know what this is about, this is my fashion advice column where I help people elevate their outfits to the next level. Winter time approaches and it is time to change out your sandals for something new. Instead of taking out the same old tennis shoes or boots you wear every year, why not walk a mile in a different pair of shoes.

I believe that everyone should own a pair of staple shoes. If you are confused on what I mean by a "staple" shoe, they are footwear that are basic enough to go with any outfit. Examples of these types of shoes are high-top Converse, Doc Martens, Air Force 1's, slip-on Vans, and Reebok Club 85's. Your staple shoe does not even have to be a name brand. It can be from the thrift store or even from Walmart. Whatever sneaker you pick, it should be basic colors such as black and white. These staple sneakers can clean up your outfit without going too much out of your comfort zone, as well as being able to go with anything you wear.

Once you have a solid shoe foundation, you can spread out into different colors and styles of shoes. I would start with a sneaker in a color that you wear most often. With buying a shoe in a common color in your wardrobe, you will have more options to mix-and-match and you will wear them more often. Another route you could take, is to branch out to shoes with a multitude of different colors. Buying shoes with multiple colors guarantee that the colors on your shoes will match something on your outfit. These shoes can also add a pop of color to a possibly bland outfit.

If you are not able to buy a bunch of different colored sneakers, then you can customize your own. Grab some sharpie from Walmart and be as creative as you want on an old pair of shoes or a cheap pair of sneakers. These creations can be whatever you want to be and may be your favorite pair of shoes. To take it to another level, you can change the plain white laces for some checkerboard or flamed laces. With a great shoe collection, you can take your fashion to different heights. For more tips and tricks for upgrading your closet, make sure you read the winter issue of the Maroon and White!

Maybe We are Already Pinterest Perfect

By Rachel Kent

The constant creaking of the old midcentury door opens and closes, letting in a cool draft of December air. As an aroma of coffee wafts through a quaint coffee house, a girl wraps up in the cozy and plush sleeves of her "Rory Gilmore" inspired sweater, cupping her hands around a warm, perfectly frothed, cappuccino, which has been poured into an elegant, yet simple clear glass mug. She kicks her feet casually out in front of her, knowing that her Dr. Marten Bex Oxford style shoes are crossed stylishly at the toe. What could be better than this? The only thing that could be better is if this weren't just a fantasy created on a Pinterest board.

Some of us spend hours dreaming about how to create the perfect style, the perfect mood, the perfect experience. We make Pinterest Boards that, if ever enacted in real life, would almost certainly—we tell ourselves—make our lives infinitely better. It can be so easy to fall into the trap of believing that the people in the pictures truly have it all. But, let's be honest, it is a kind of trap set for us by influencers and advertisers alike. The challenge for those of us who love to pin ideas and cultivate our aesthetic, is to be aware of this, to appreciate what we have, and to realize that just because something appears picture perfect doesn't mean that it is.

In today's world, our decisions are influenced by, low and behold, influencers. For most of them, influencing others' opinions on

what to buy, what to wear, and even how to live is what they do FOR A LIVING. This means that they are actually profiting off making us want to be like them. Out of our generation, Emma Chamberlain is probably the most influential person in our style decisions today.

Accompanying Chamberlain's influence, no-named pinterest "stars" also appear to have the picture perfect life in which they have achieved the ideal balance of the most desirable priorities: 25% traveling, 25% working, 25% working out and eating healthy, and 25% spending time with family and friends. And, they do all this, but in style. They can be seen in their fancy matching pj sets and that clear glass coffee cup housing a fresh espresso in their hand. They "rush" to work in their "business casual" look with unrealistically empty streets stretching into the blurred distance behind them.

Why has this facade of life tricked us into thinking WE are wrong for not living like THEM? Some may blame society, but I think each of us has some responsibility to push back. After all, it's simply not healthy to let our cellular devices feed into our insecurities.

Pinterst isn't alone in tapping into our self-confidence and reshaping our perspectives. Tiktok, too, uses everything from cooking, fashion, aesthetics, and even cats, to create unrealistic ideals in our minds. We all remember the age of airbrushing



and photoshop. Yes, it is still around, but rather than focusing on making someone appear slimmer or their skin appear flawless, the "airbrushing" of Tiktok takes the form of editing out the less captivating parts of a video. In other words, everything is perfect for the short video or picture captured, almost as if it was "airbrushed".

So, how is the average person to resolve this unfeasible mindset? I don't have a Pinterest-perfect answer to this question, but I have a couple of ideas. First, we can take stock of even small pleasures or positives in our real lives. Rather than wishing we had a life that looked good in pictures, we could practice gratitude for people or gifts that make our lives better in the real world. Second, if we still want to be influenced by Pinterest, we could also try choosing to make even one of our pins a reality—just a small one. Such as buying that glass mug featured in the cozy coffee house picture. Lastly, we could turn the whole thing around and become our own influencers. We could find things that we like to do, or wear, and set the trends ourselves.

Why am I Writing This Article?

By Nathaniel Morefield

I have struggled to write this article. I think that's almost entirely because a few people that I love and respect will be reading it. I want, more than anything, to create something that those people think is profound and moving. How do I do that though? Well, writing, specifically within journalism, is about telling a story. I have my own experience of life, and that personalizes every story I tell. A goal of writing is to cause one's reader to share their feelings and understanding. It's the way I feel connected with Ada Limón as she says, "Gleaming in its dying, like us all, like us all." Is a true connection through art attainable though? Is it possible that I can reproduce an entirely personal experience in my head for you in yours?

I have no way of knowing of course. Maybe there is some incredible secret I've yet to find about writing. Maybe it's something that shows everyone

exactly what I mean. I guess that would render this article somewhat useless, but that would be a good problem to have, I think. I want so much for you to understand.

I want you to understand how difficult it is for me to write this for you. Nothing that I write can really exist solely as the vision of my own mind. I don't exactly write what I want to write. I write what I want you to read. The knowledge that you are reading this changes what I write. I write, not for sincere self-expression, but for the purpose of my work being read.

Why am I writing this article then? If conveying my emotions to you with honesty is an insurmountable obstacle, why should I bother? Why am I spending my limited seconds on this lonely, spinning rock chasing a fantasy?

I think I'm missing the point. Of course, there is no "point" to writing, not in the grand scheme of things

anyway. I'm just a blob of self-aware matter that fancies myself a writer. I think though, that I'm misguided in thinking that I must be able to realize a goal in order for it to be worthwhile. One of the best qualities of our existence is striving and fighting for things that we could never possibly accomplish. We look at hopelessness, and we persist. It's hard not to fall in love with something so romantic as that.

You might not have understood what I meant in this article. But my attempt, I think, is a rebellion against the loneliness of our existence. Despite our inability to ever entirely grasp each other, I am trying. I have spent a long time trying, and I will spend much, much longer in the future, trying. Through my writing and through your reading, we've attempted a connection with each other. Does that matter? It matters to me, and I hope, at least one reader.

Comidas Navidenas en Diferente Culturas

By Sheany Regules

Con la época “más feliz del año” a la vuelta de la esquina, también están las comidas deliciosas que acompañan la alegría. En los Estados Unidos la “comida tradicional” durante la Navidad consiste de jamón, pavo, macaroni con queso, salsa de arándanos, y demasiados vegetales. En lugares más lejanos como México, Alaska, e India se sirven comidas muy diferentes. En México la comida más popular son tamales, pozole, y corundas. A pesar que corundas y pozole casi siempre contiene los mismos ingredientes, los tamales pueden contener pollo, puerco, queso, vegetales, o hasta pasas para hacer el tamal dulce.



Mexican Tamales

Esta comida está acompañada con rompopo o ponche que se considera refrescos Navidenos. Para terminar la cena comen ensalada de manzana, buñuelos, o arroz con leche. Beneranda Lopez y Jericó Regules, residentes de Bristol TN, reconocen que los tamales son su comida favorita de Navidad, sin embargo, Lopez dice que “el pozole también me encanta, no nada más durante la navidad, si no cuando sea. Así de bueno está.” En Alaska la comida navideña se considera pescado seco, normalmente crudo. Esta comida contiene pescado, foca, ballena, y beluga, y se acompaña con aceite de mar. Otra comida navideña es “muktuk.” Esta comida contiene grasa de ballena pero también puede contener beluga y narval. Shawna Hudson, una estudiante

de último año de THS y nativa de Alaska dice, “el día de Navidad tenemos una comida compartida en un ‘ayuntamiento.’ Había una mesa enorme de comida entonces formamos una línea y agarramos lo que queríamos. Compartimos historias con todos del pueblo y como había tantas sobras, todo se lo dimos a nuestros mayores.” En India, la mayoría de las tradiciones se centran más en el Hinduismo que en el Cristianismo, por esta razón no celebran la Navidad sin embargo, los alimentos nativos siguen siendo muy cruciales para esta cultura. Por ejemplo, una comida muy popular es el Pav Bhaji. Esta comida contiene pan, verduras, lentejas, y coliflor. Como postre, de vez en cuando se sirve Ladoo. Este es un dulce de forma redonda hecho con pequeñas bolas de besan. Este plato también contiene garbanzos o harina de garbanzos y puede contener nueces picadas o pasas secas. Pavitra, una estudiante de segundo año en THS y ascendencia India, explica las similitudes y diferencias entre las tradiciones “americanas” e indianas. Ella dice, “son bastante diferentes pero también son similares en la forma en que los estados unidos decoran con luces navideñas. En India nosotros también decoramos con luces para Diwali. Esto es un festival de luces para simbolizar que podemos ‘rechazar la oscuridad’ en cada aspecto de nuestras vidas” Con más de 160 países que celebran Navidad, es seguro decir que hay miles de comidas navideñas diferentes en todo el mundo. Los Estados Unidos, México, Alaska, y India contienen muchas comidas diferentes pero una característica similar, y eso es tradiciones hermosas y comida deliciosa. Que nuestra Navidad, Diwali, y todos los días festivos esten llenas de mucho amor, generosidad, y comida deliciosa!!

Christmas Foods in Different Cultures

By Sheany Regules

With the “happiest time of year” right around the corner, so are the delicious foods that accompany the joy. In the United States the “traditional Christmas foods” can include ham, turkey, mac and cheese, cranberry sauce, and plenty of greens. In other places such as Mexico, Alaska, and India the traditional foods are much different.

In Mexico the most popular food during Christmas is tamales, pozole, and corundas. Although corundas and pozole all usually contain the same things, tamales can have chicken, pork, cheese, vegetable, or even made sweet with raisins. This food is then accompanied by eggnog and punch, these are both considered Christmas drinks. For dessert they proceed to have sweet apple salad, fried cinnamon sugar fritters, and rice pudding. Beneranda Lopez and Jerico Regules, residents of Bristol TN, both agree tamales are their favorite Christmas food however, Lopez says “I also really enjoy pozole, not just during Christmas time, but whenever. It’s just that amazing!” In Alaska, Christmas food is considered fish jerky, normally raw. Fish jerky contains fish, seal, whale, and beluga and is also accompanied with sea oil. Another Christmas food is Muktuk. This food contains whale fat, but it can also contain beluga and narwhal, depending on where you are. Shawna Hudson, a senior at THS and Native Alaskan, says, “on Christmas day we have a potluck at a ‘city council type of place.’ There would be a huge table of food so we would form an assembly line and get whatever we wanted. We shared stories with everyone in the village and since there were so many leftovers, all of it would go to our elders.”



Alaskan Muktuk and Caribou Jerky

In India most traditions are based around Hinduism, so they don’t celebrate Christmas. However, native food is still crucial to this culture. For example, a very popular food is Pav bhaji. This contains bread, vegetables, lentils, and cauliflower. As a dessert, ladoo is occasionally served. This is a round shaped, sweetmeat made from tiny balls of besan. This dish contains chickpea or gram flour but can also be made with semolina, along with chopped nuts or dried raisins. Pavitra, a sophomore at THS of Indian descent, explains the similarities and differences between “American” and Indian traditions. She says, “they’re pretty different but they’re also similar in the way that Americans decorate with Christmas lights. In India we too decorate with lights for Diwali which is a festival of lights to symbolize that we can ‘turn away darkness’ in any aspect of our lives.” With over 160 countries that celebrate Christmas, it’s safe to say that there are thousands of different Christmas foods all around the world. The United States, Alaska, Mexico, and India all contain very distinct foods. However, all contain one similar characteristic, and that’s beautiful traditions and delicious food. May our Christmas day, Diwali, and every holiday be filled with lots of love, giving, and delicious foods!

Morelock Family Grows Through Miracles of Birth and Adoption

Continued from front page...

By Danica Mai

After many nos, Coach Morelock received a call at the end of June that they were matched with Ella’s birth mother. Even though the family was matched with Ella, her biological mother could decide to keep the child up till 48 hours after her birth. The Morelock couple also had a phone call interview with the birth mother. He states “the call to the birth mother was the most nerve racking phone call in this entire process.” After the

interview with the mother up until Ella’s birth, Mrs. Morelock would text the biological mother. On a fateful Sunday morning right before church, Mrs. Morelock received a call saying that Ella was born. 48 hours after Ella was born, the couple could still not head home with their daughter. They had to wait for both the state of Florida and Tennessee to approve for them to leave Cape Canaveral. Once Ella was released from the hospital, the Morelocks proceeded to rent a condo in Jacksonville where they spent 12

days waiting. After their extensive stay in Florida, Morelocks and their beautiful girl Ella were all welcomed home with open arms and a whole lot of love. Ella Rose is now three months old. Morelock gushes over how Gracie loves being an older sister. He recalls Gracie’s hand-made poster to welcome Ella home from Florida. Her adjustment from being the only child to becoming an older sister has been a smooth transition. The history teacher says that he and his wife let Gracie “help as much as she can so she can

feel included.” When asked about the process as a whole, he says “adoption is really expensive, but it is very rewarding.” The people that had helped Morelock the most through the highs and lows of the entire undertaking were his wonderful wife and the support of Mr. Cross, Mr. Whitson, and Mrs. Parker. His advice to anyone considering adoption is to “have patience and don’t let the bad things ruin everything. There are so many bad things before the good things come.”

The Problem with Simplified Logos

By Callie Eckley

You're driving down the street and you notice something. That one childhood Burger King you always used to go to looks a little different, the logo has changed. As time goes on you realize that many companies are starting to follow this trend, which seems harmless at first, but is there a deeper meaning to it? The simplification of logos causes a loss in individuality in branding and in the generation as a whole. This will result in change that is counter-productive and digressing in progress.

I know it sounds silly at first, I mean how can brands simplifying their logos have any major effect on my everyday life? The thing is, logos aren't the only example of it. Take a look at architecture and clothing; fashion trends are being renewed from previous decades and buildings are becoming less detailed and built focused on quantity rather than quality. It can make you wonder if the products inside are created with the same outlook. Through today's media, this generation tends to follow unsaid rules and trends, and the thing is, most of the time we don't even notice that we find ourselves participating in it.

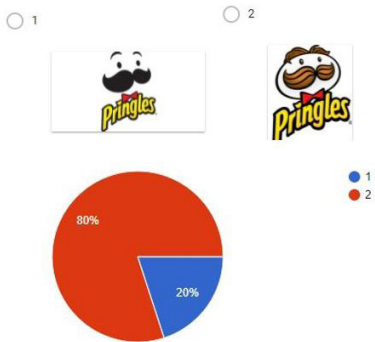
After creating a 3-question survey which compared two logos and asked for the preferred one, there was a conclusion to be made. Two out of the three questions resulted in a 60% to 40% ratio, with the original design winning, whereas the other question

won by a landslide of 80% in favor of the original design. When I created the survey, I didn't expect for the other two questions to be so close to equal. Some people answered similarly, "I like the second one better because it looks more simple." Referring to the new design. Yet, others responded in another way saying, "It looks cooler, and the detail is nice." When speaking about the older design. The surveyors who took this were from the ages of 15-16 and have lived with the original design longer. With this knowledge, I expected the more well-known option would be the one that would greatly overtake the other in the category of favorability, but that wasn't the case. This can show how this generation is influenced by the media and don't always keep things from the past in their mind throughout day-to-day life. The website "logomaker" conducted a study on logos and their font that posted the results in 2020. The question that was asked was "What are the 10 Most Popular Fonts for Business Logos?," with number one being "Impact". The site says, "the typeface works best with minimalist designs." If the number one font for logos in 2020 was one that is commonly paired with simpler logos, that showcases just how often the same fonts are used. As the logos become simplified, so do the fonts. Inventiveness is slowly being covered up by what companies think their consumers want. I asked 15 people what brand they

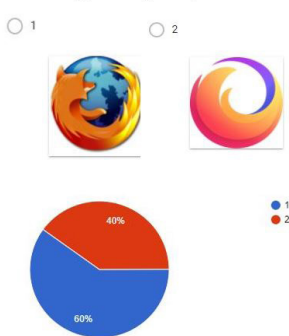
thought of when I said blue and yellow. Every answer I received was different and the types of products completely unrelated. The ages of these people were all around the same, meaning it wasn't a generational issue that caused the divide. To put things into perspective, the list of popular brands that no one mentioned consists of Walmart, VISA, Geico, Juicy Fruit, and more. This color palette is so common that our associations with it don't even connect it to major companies. The thing is we don't often realize just how many options there are and how the available choices continue to grow. Red was the most popular color choice for branding until the last decade when blue took the #1 place. This can be seen in graphs depicted on the website emblematic. This is evidence that over time the look of logos has become more like their rivals rather than their own individual trademark. Most companies only update and simplify their logo based on what is popular at the time, but not all have that motto. Pepsi uses much of their history to create new forms of their logo. he pepsi-arnell-021109.pdf is a released document of how Pepsi uses globe dynamics and magnetic energy fields when drawing up new logo ideas. They dig deep into their history to use old memos and renew them in a way that keeps the individuality yet simplifies them at the same time. If companies use Pepsi's method, a change can be made. The balance of

originality and popularity is key to having what I deem a successful logo. My expectations for logos consist of more detailed designs and a greater variety of shapes and textures. Designs should be more symbolic of the business they are associated with. With the addition of fonts that are still easier to read adds another layer of individuality. Additionally, logos should use more complex color palettes that grab people's attention in a way that keeps it special but are still recognizable. Even what most would consider an unusual color combination will be beneficial when trying to be more identifiable. If companies meet these expectations, it will set a better example for this generation. It will show character and how a trend following is not the only way to be successful. While logo designs are a part of the corporate machine, and as such are expected to help the company gain a profit, these businesses also have a responsibility to create a culture of beauty and creativity. Logos are one small way that the companies can show their appreciation for the customers that make their businesses possible. Sadly, if we as a culture continue to disconnect from the past, and only allow ourselves to be defined by simpler and simpler branding, then eventually, I fear that our personal creativity will be lost.

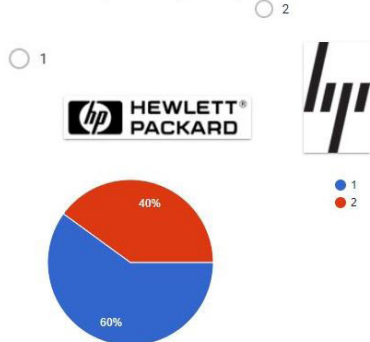
Which design do you prefer for Pringles?



Which design do you prefer for FireFox?



Which design do you prefer for HP?



The Eternals: Delightful Theme, But Less Inspiring Than Shang-Chi

By Lucy Paulson

Marvel's new Phase Four movie 'Eternals' introduces us to a whole new set of heroes. This new superhero group is referred to as the Eternals, or Celestials. This diverse team consists of ten people: Ajak, Sersi, Druig, Sprite, Makkari, Ikaris, Kingo, Gilgamesh, Thena, and Phastos. These immortal beings known as Celestials were created with superpowers to destroy the Deviants. The movie was composed with the perfect balance of comedy, romance,

and action. There were hardly any slow parts, always keeping you alert. It focuses on their philosophical dilemma of 'why are we here?', which is revealed later in an unexpected explanation. The recurring theme of "better together" was delightful to watch them go through as a family. I love how Marvel stepped out of their usual formula and provided us with the first LGBTQ+ hero, Phastos, as well as the first deaf hero, Makkari. At first, this movie didn't completely

wow me like past movies; but upon further reflection, I enjoyed how each character is different from the other and how surprising the film's conflict was. Marvel gave us two post-credit scenes to keep us on our toes, one introducing yet another character that could possibly appear in the next movie. Eternals is a great mesh of diverse characters and I would recommend everyone to experience this movie in theaters while you can!



Artwork by Nyla Surber

Reindeer Cupcakes

By Sheany Regules-Lopez

Cake Ingredients:

- 1 box devil's food cake mix
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup milk or buttermilk (personal preference)
- ½ cup sour cream

Chocolate Frosting ingredients:

- 1 cup butter
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2-3 cups powdered sugar (personal preference)
- 2 tablespoons milk
- **you could also just buy chocolate frosting**

Toppings/Decoration:

- Vanilla wafers, for muzzles
- Pretzels, for antlers
- Brown M&Ms for noses (some red for Rudolph)
- Edible googly eyes

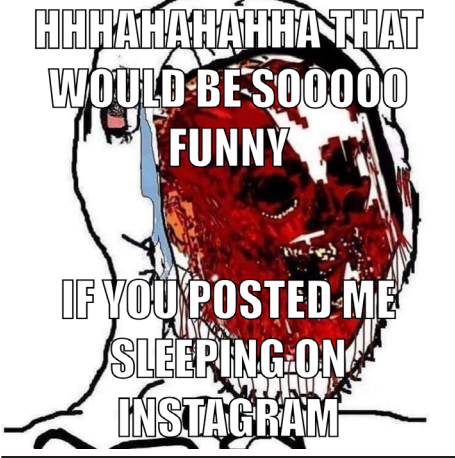
Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line cupcake pan(s) with cupcake liners
- Sift cake mix into a small bowl and set aside
- In a large bowl combine oil, eggs, milk, vanilla extract, and sour cream until smooth
- Stir in cake mix
- Fill cupcake liners ¾ full and bake for 16-20 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean
- Let cool completely (30-40 minutes)
- For Chocolate frosting, beat butter, add cocoa powder, 2 cups powdered sugar and milk. Slowly add more powdered sugar until you get your desired consistency
- Prepare reindeer “faces” by using the frosting to stick brown M&M’s on Nilla Wafers-some red for Rudolphins if you want-
- Frost cupcakes
- Place Nilla Wafers with M&Ms on cupcakes, then place pretzels right above. Use frosting to stick on 2 eyes...and you’re finished!!



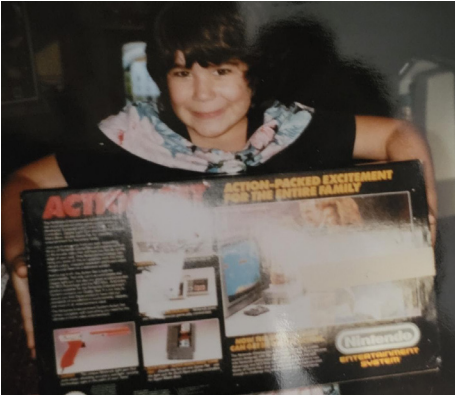
THS Meme of the Month

By Ruth Rose



Guess the Teacher!

By Joseph Burriss



Answers to “Guess the Teacher!” reading left to right, top to bottom: Mrs Davis, Mr. Snyder, Mrs. DeClercq

Vikings Vocalize

“Is The Nightmare Before Christmas a Halloween or Christmas movie?”

By Lilly Chafin

Aubrey Tester (9th grade)
“It’s like a scary Christmas movie.”

Micah Norton (9th grade)
“It’s called ‘Before Christmas’.”

Caden Tide Chartwright (10th grade)
“The aesthetic is more Halloween.”

Caitlin Vining (10th grade)
“He’s trying to celebrate Christmas in his own way.”

Ava White (11th grade)
“It’s about Halloween traditions.”

Chris Wilson (11th grade)
“The hacky sack man dies at the end.”

Miles Bolden (12th grade)
“They sang a song called ‘This Is Halloween’.”

Sara Keene (12th grade)
“It has a Halloween aspect but it’s mostly Christmas.”



Artwork by Lilly Chafin

What Your Tree Decorations Say About You

- 1. A collection of old ornaments**
You are a sentimental person. Your past is important to you! You may be family oriented, and traditions are commonplace.
- 2. Nature Themed**
You’ve definitely been to Bass Pro. You like the scent of sap and have warm colors in your house.
- 3. White**
You like the classics, in décor and in music. You are the type to believe it should snow on Christmas and love the Instagram aesthetic.
- 4. Blackout**
You want to take a step away from the norm and appreciate the modern black and white style. You may also enjoy curling up in a big fur blanket.
- 5. Sweets**
You like the cuter things in life. You were inspired by Candyland and like the peppermint look. Dr. Suess was a big part of your childhood.
- 6. Green, Red, and Gold/ White**
Christmas. Must. Be. Everywhere. You also are a big fan of a classic Christmas. Hallmark movies are a must for you.
- 7. Copper and Blue**
You are very unique. You have an eye for the beauty that isn’t always seen by everyone. Stars or star signs interest you, and you may like the rustic Earthy vibe.
- 8. Remote Controlled Lights**
One phrase. “Gamer room”



Artwork by Joan Weddington



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