

THE TOWN CRIER

Volume 14, Issue 8

phhstowncrier.weebly.com

Dec. 16, 2014

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.

By James Janis

It's that time of year again! The time when Dad gets on the roof (and hopefully doesn't fall off) to put up lights, the time when the tree and stockings are dug out of the totes and set up, and the time when the mall Santa comes to town and your little brothers and sisters sit on his lap. Yup, it's Christmas time!

Even though we celebrate Christmas, many people do not know the history of the holiday, and just think of it as a day to get presents. Christmas is actually the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, but Christmas goes back even further than his birth. Several centuries before his birth, other religions celebrated the winter solstice, or the return of the sun, because on the solstice, the night is longest and the day is shortest. In Rome, they celebrated Saturn, the god of agriculture, and in Germany they worshiped the Pagan god Oden.

A Christmas celebration similar to ours came many years after. In the early fourth century, Christian church officials decided to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but this was a problem because in the Bible it does not say when his birth is. Pope Julius I decided that his birth would be celebrated on December 25. As Christianity gained more popularity, a tradition started where the poor would go to the rich people in town, and the rich would feed and clothe them as a way to pay their debt to society.

Fast forward a few centuries to early America, and you would see that Christmas celebrations were actually outlawed in Boston until 1681 because the Puritans did not celebrate Christmas. It wasn't until Charles Dickens created his holiday classic, *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, that Christmas gained popularity in America. With the rise in popularity in this story, we looked back into old traditions and created our own celebration of Christmas with pieces from many different cultures.

As we all get ready for the Christmas celebrations and weird family traditions that happen around this time of year, it is important to remember our roots. And from all of us on your *Town Crier* staff, we want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Courtesy of Google Images.

Crime: From the Eyes of a Police Officer

By Cody Schindler

There has been a lot of tension between law enforcement and every day citizens as of late. How does that impact us locally? By now, you surely know of the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, two African Americans who were killed at the hands of white police officers. Garner died of a heart attack resulting from compression of the neck and chest. Brown was shot multiple times by police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri. I will not go into opinion, as everyone here is capable of forming their own opinion based on what they know.

Anyway, I spoke to our school's resource officer, Officer Vaughn. I asked him what he thought of police officers wearing a body camera during a call. "I think it's a great idea. Actual happenings can be completely different from allegations. The only negative would be the cost." Officer Vaughn also said that body cameras could "show all the good work officers do." Which I thought was interesting, because rarely do you ever see good police work make the news.

Speaking of the media, could they be partly to blame for the tension between officer and citizen? "I blame the media," said Officer Vaughn. "They follow their own agendas. There was no intent to kill Eric Garner." I agree with Officer Vaughn here. The media chooses what they want to report. I'm not sure if all the facts from either case have been reported to the public. For example, Officer Vaughn told me things about the Garner case that I was unaware of, which is pretty shocking considering how big this story is nationwide.

I would like to thank Officer Vaughn for his time. And with 2015 right around the corner, hopefully the relationship between officer, and everyday citizen improves, and we will not have a repeat of Eric Garner or Michael Brown.



Officer Vaughn speaks with Mr. Stoner. Thanks for the interview!

Boys' Basketball

By Cody Schindler

The boys' basketball team is now 2-0 in Prairieland Conference play after Friday's win over Lewistown. Deantre Mixon hit two free throws to put the Patriots up by one in the final seconds. Lewistown would then draw a foul with under five seconds left with an opportunity to take the lead. The Indians missed the front end of a one-and-bonus, and Noah Persich would hit two free throws to seal it. The Patriots won 46-43.

Tonight the Patriots host 7-0 Roanoke-Benson. We hope to see all the students

out in the Red Storm, as the Patriots go for their third straight win!

Also, a congratulations to the JV team for winning the Galva sophomore tournament!



The boys' team gets ready for Friday's game against Lewistown.

Hittin' The Shot

By Kirstan Bennett

This week the girls had to travel all week. On Monday December 8th, the girls traveled to Rushville to try and get a victory. The score for that game was 27-67 with Rushville Lady Rockets winning. The girls traveled to Farmington to play the Lady Farmers. The score for that game was 16-57 with Farmington winning. Leading scorer was Adrienne Summers-Reynolds with 5 points and followed by Kirstan Bennett with 4. The girls had 14 fouls and Brittney Williams fouled out. This weekend the girls played against the Midland Lady Timberwolves. The score was 16-36 with the Lady Timberwolves. Monday on December 16th the girls traveled to Henry to play the Lady Mallards. The score was 26-34 with the Lady Mallards winning. Adrienne Summers-Reynolds had 9 points followed by Tiffanie Miller with 7 points. The girls had 10 fouls with Tiffanie Miller fouling out. The girls have a home on December 18th against Illini central at 6 and an away game on Monday December 22nd at west prairie. Come and out and support your Lady Patriots.



Kirstan Bennett tries to knock in two free throws.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Volume 14, Issue 8 phhstowncrier.weebly.com Dec. 16, 2014

Book Review

By Wanda Rogers

☆☆☆☆: 4 Stars

Even in Paradise by Chelsey Philpot was a very interesting book. Fans of *The Great Gatsby* will see similarities between the two, but even those who haven't read or seen *The Great Gatsby* will still find reasons to like this book.

The novel details the tumultuous friendship of popular-girl Julia Buchanan and not-so-popular-girl Charlotte Ryder. Set in a prestigious high school and upscale town called "Arcadia," this book beautifully betrays the broken Buchanan family, and the girl, Charlotte, who is expected to put it back together.

If you would like more information, read the book! The Peoria Heights Public Library will be hosting a book club where we will discuss *Even in Paradise*. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 17th from 3:15-4:00 P.M. If you would like to join, please sign up either by phone (309)-682-5578 or in person. We hope to see you there!



Courtesy of Google Images.

Christmas survey

By Shannon Son

Just for the fun of it, the Journalism class made up a cute Christmas survey just to enjoy the time around Christmas. The choices of being either a reindeer or an elf, the majority of our students chose an elf. The decision to give or receive presents most of us chose to give. If we had to choose to celebrate Christmas or our birthday the class chose to celebrate Christmas. The decision of getting many small presents or one large present the majority of the seniors chose to get many small presents for Christmas.

If we students had the unfortunate decision of having to have pointy ears like an elf or a red nose like Rudolph, we decided on living with having pointy ears like an elf. If we all had the advantage of either riding the Polar Express or living in a giant gingerbread house, the majority of us decided on taking a ride on the Polar Express.

Thank you all for participating in our survey, and we hope everyone has a Merry Christmas!

The Sounds of the Season

The music department of Peoria Heights School District opened their Holiday Program on December 15, with *Jingle Bells* played by the Fifth Grade Band. The Band followed that with *Good King Wenceslas* and *Jolly Old St. Nicholas*. PHHS junior Emmy Tiethoff provided a vocal solo, *Born in Me*, to the hearty approval of the audience.

The PHGS choir, directed by Mr. Boulton, sang *O Christmas Tree* in a mixture of the original German and the more familiar English lyrics. They finished their part of the program with *Silver Bells*.

PHHS sophomore Kia Williams followed with a vocal solo, and Patriot Concert Band, consisting of musicians from both PHGS and PHHS closed the program with two numbers, *Do You Hear What I Hear?* and *Adventum*, which was reminiscent of the lovely and traditional *Carol of the Bells*.



AROUND THE SCHOOL!



2014-15 Journalism Staff

Kirstan Bennett
Seth Boyer
James Janis
Sarah Knott
Tiffanie Miller
Colton Reilly
Wanda Rogers
Cody Schindler
Madison Schneider
Kensley Schol
Shannon Son
Shawna Stewart
Madilyn Tortat

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!