

Holiday season shows GHS rich in diversity

Faith Evans
Feature Editor

The U.S. is the world's melting pot full of diversity. Although Christmas seems to dominate midwest culture this time of year, many other religious beliefs are represented richly at GHS with various celebrations.

Sophomore Jaden Duong is a practicing Buddhist. Living in Indiana, where 0.1 percent of people practice Eastern faiths, can be alienating.

"People are really surprised when they find out I'm Buddhist. I feel like a minority all the time. I don't feel like being Buddhist should matter. I know a bunch of Buddhists, mostly my family and in the Asian community. I don't know if there are any Buddhists in Greenwood High School," Duong said.

Along with celebrating a secular Christmas, Duong's family also participates in Chinese New Year.

"Chinese New Year is like a month after the regular New Year. It's based off of the lunar calendar. Every Chinese New Year we have red envelopes where our parents give us money," Duong said.

For Jewish sophomore Zakary Rasener, being around his Christian friends at Christmas-time can be awkward.

"Most of the people I hang out with are Christian. Everybody's listening to Christmas music. I don't really like Christmas music because there's no Chanukah music. Mariah Carey didn't do a Chanukah song, so it's a little bit harder for people to get into it. Everybody asks, 'what are you going to get for Christmas?,' and I say, 'I don't know, I'm not worrying about that right now,'" Rasener said.

As practicing Catholics, sophomore Collin Campbell's family not only celebrates Christmas but Saint Nicholas Day.

"Saint Nicholas Day is Dec. 6. The old story is that you leave your shoes out and Saint Nick would give you a present and that's the inspiration for Santa Claus. We just leave out our stockings, and we get a couple of things in there," Campbell said.

The holiday season is a special time for the Campbells.

"Christmas is a religious holiday to us. We go to church on Christmas Eve. It's a special mass that's usually longer. We sing some Christmas songs. We say a different prayer before meals on Christmas. I think my family's traditions are cool. We do them to commemorate the holidays and Jesus," Campbell said.

Sophomore Ashlee Walton loves celebrating Christmas with her family. Walton attends the First Baptist Church of Greenwood.

"Every year my family goes to the Christmas Eve service at my church. I think that's probably the biggest tradition we have every year. I think we really try to include Christ in most of the things we do as a family and just try to glorify His name in all the things that we do," Walton said.

In Walton's family, the holiday season is all about religion.

"Obviously, we also have family stuff that we do, like exchanging presents in the family and decorating the house. I think one of the biggest things in our house, not by size but by meaning, is the porcelain live nativity that we have on our dining room table. We set it up every year as a family," Walton said.

Walton tries to keep her religious values in mind at Christmas time.

"I am very happy that my family tends to keep Christ as our number one priority during the season. It's all about him and not about the things that we're receiving, but just spreading his love throughout the season," Walton said. "That's just how my family is different from some other families. We do keep in mind that there is a reason and some families don't."



Hannah Heilman
Feature Editor

Students throughout the school place anonymous gifts under Christmas trees or on counters before school starts every day for a week, then proceed to look for gifts with their own names on them.

Organizations throughout the school are participating in their annual Secret Santa gift exchanges; senior Kaetie Reuter is participating in the choir's Secret Santa.

"You get a gift or gifts every day," Reuter said. "Normally, we go in a crescendo pattern, so your gifts get bigger from the beginning to the end of the week. We have a sheet everyone fills out that lists their favorite food, drink, candy and even a wish list. Maybe someone wanted something that they forgot to ask for for Christmas, so their secret Santa could get that if it's within a nice price range."

Sophomore Abby Walls is involved with two Secret Santas this year with both club and high school swim teams. She likes to make "Do It Yourself" gifts.

"I do something more thoughtful, like a DIY, normally," Walls said. "I like to -- if we have pictures together -- make something with pictures for them."

The journalism program -- consisting of broadcast, yearbook and newspaper -- also holds a week-long Secret Santa. To remain anonymous, many students bring in gifts, notes and trinkets before school each day.

"Most people come into the journalism room at the beginning of the day, before anybody is here, so that way nobody sees them," senior Olivia Franklin said. "Then, you just put it up on the front counter with everyone else's. If they are in there, I'll just wait until the period's done and put it up there. I make sure they get it before

the end of the day."

Similarly, choir students often arrive at school early to remain anonymous.

"We bring the gifts in before school," Reuter said. "We have a Christmas tree in the choir room in the corner so everyone puts their labeled gifts under there. Then whenever you have choir throughout the day, you pick up your gift."

The band program held its Secret Pal, which is the same idea as Secret Santa, the week leading up to State. Junior Jenna Dhondt has participated since her eighth grade year.

"My eighth grade year, Jenna Rollings and I were the only eighth graders, so we secretly gave each other presents," Dhondt said. "But my freshman year, a guard girl had me, and I had no idea. I was like, 'Oh, it's a band person,' but it wasn't, and I was so surprised."

Franklin participates in the journalism, WBN, choir and swim Secret Santas as well as one for her work. One year, she and her friend had each other, which made participating that much more fun.

"For swimming one year, we were going around the circle and giving each other our gifts," Franklin said. "We went all the way around, and I still had my gift and somebody still had theirs. It was really cute because we had each other, and we were friends, so we got to open our gifts together."

Students participate in Secret Santas because it provides opportunities to encourage each other and make the atmosphere cheerier during stressful final exam period.

"It's fun to get little gifts and watch your person be like, 'Oh, I love this,'" Dhondt said. "It also makes everyone cheerier before State. I like the atmosphere because in the morning everyone's like, 'What am I going to get, what am I going to get?' It's just a lot more fun the week before State, to hype everyone up."



Faith Evans
Feature Editor

Pentatonix is known for their Christmas albums. PTX, the abbreviated name for Pentatonix, is an acapella group that sings covers. Their newest album is "Christmas is Here". They came to Indiana for their "Christmas is Here" tour was December 11. The songs included in this album were new and something that they have never done before. I give this album a 9/10 because I knew the majority of the songs they sang, so I could easily sing along, but I didn't know all of the songs.

One of the aspects that I find unique about the album is that they sang Making Christmas from The Nightmare before Christmas. It's an interesting addition because I never thought to consider that song a Christmas song. Another song that was included in the album was Sweater Weather. This song is more of a winter

song, not Christmas.

Other songs included in the album were Waltz of the Flowers, Where are you Christmas?, Here Comes Santa Claus, and Rockin' around the Christmas Tree. PTX collaborated with Kelly Clarkson to sing Grown-Up Christmas List. The mashup was fire.

I was overall pleased with the album. I recommend everyone should listen to this album because this album more so celebrates the holidays and winter season. This is not a Christmas dominant album. Even the fellows who do not celebrate the Christian holiday are advised to listen to this amazing holiday album.

The song that most sounds like it's original song is It's Beginning to Look a Lot like Christmas. Of course the song has its own twist of acapella on it, but it still sounds like the original song. The rest of the songs sound like PTX songs. They all sound like a PTX song because they all have their own twist and they're all sang beautifully.

Pentatonix rings in season with new holiday album

Two Grinches compete for best story



Mckenzie McClarney
Sports Editor

The classic Christmas song, "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch," usually rings through the heads of many people during the holiday season; however, due to the new Grinch movie being released, the once classic Christmas song is now unrecognizable. It is just as rare to find a person who does not know the Grinch than it is to find one that does not know Rudolph or even Santa Claus himself.

The story about a grumpy, grumbling Grinch who lives by himself just outside of Whoville has become a Christmas classic and continues to make an appearance every Christmas on televisions world-wide. The classic movie from 1966 is what started the spread of the green hermit, and it did so with a story that lasted less than 30 minutes. The question I have for this holiday season is why Hollywood was so eager to remake another animated Grinch when the original is still popular and a common tradition in many households.

The new Grinch story is not bad by any means; however, I wished it stayed with the original plot a little more. This movie portrayed more of a children's comedy than the traditional story. There were situations that were meant to be funny, but the only laughter in the theater was that of a three-year-old.

The whole movie was an attempt to modernize the Grinch. He constantly craved coffee, worked only with power tools, and listened to songs that had only come out in recent years. Going in, I knew the movie would be directed to kids in 2018; however, it was overly-modernized. Instead of it being a holiday classic, it portrayed more of the classic 2018 where everyone is overly-sensitive and cannot handle any form of crude humor. It also conformed to today's society by including bad music. The once classic "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" was transformed into a practically intolerable rap song.

Also, I was not fond of the additions to the original plot. We learned of the Grinch's back story which was a new addition. The new movie revealed that the Grinch became bitter because he was an orphan as a child. At a young age, he was isolated, which caused him to resent the entire village of Whoville. He also looked for an actual reindeer to guide his sleigh rather than Max, his dog. Luckily, Max eventually was the reindeer but that addition felt unnecessary.

Cindy Lou Who, along with her friends, also played a much larger role than in the original. Practically half the movie centered on her. Although I did not enjoy a lot of the new additions, I did enjoy the new and improved Whoville. The colors used to create the village were beautiful and bright. From a distance, the creators made the village look as if it were made of gingerbread, and the close up scenes showed how joyous and merry Whoville was. It was extremely similar to the movie, if not better, which was refreshing.

Although it sounds as if I hated this movie, that is not true at all. It simply was different, and for a die-hard Grinch fan like me, I found it hard to accept the changes. The new Grinch story was cute and very child-friendly. It had some funny moments and a lot of heart-warming ones. I recommend seeing it; however, it will never compare to the original story and will definitely not join the list of traditions for every Christmas in my house.



"I recommend seeing it; however, it will never compare to the original story."


Don Wilson Ins Agcy Inc
Don Wilson, Agent
50 Airport Parkway, Suite R
Greenwood, IN 46143-1438
Bus 317 889 1299 Fax 317 865 7272
don.wilson.byji@statefarm.com
The greatest compliment you can give is a referral.


EMPOWER
Learning


Transformation Movement
Connecting people to the TRANSFORMING Love of Jesus Christ!
Sundays 6 pm
1550 W 600 N (Tracy Road)
Whiteland, IN 46184
Authentic Passionate Purpose