

BASIL PIZZUTO AND JEFFREY NYHUIS NAMED CO-INTERIM PRINCIPALS

JACKSON STONE-ESPOSITO
staff writer

In the wake of Principal Jack Lorenz's resignation announcement last month, administrators are preparing to launch a full-scale search for Ridgewood High School's next leader.

According to Superintendent Dr. Daniel Fishbein, both the student council president and RHS representative to the Board of Education will be asked to represent the student body in the selection process.

Meanwhile, Assistant Principals Jeffrey Nyhuis and Basil Pizzuto have been named Co-Interim Principals effective January 1, 2011. Lorenz's last day at RHS will be December 31, 2011.

Nyhuis has been a member of the high school's faculty for fifteen years. Before being named Assistant Principal in 2008, Nyhuis served as a Mathematics Teacher, Guidance Counselor, District Math Supervisor, and an Athletic Coach.

Nyhuis said he plans to maintain the school's current policies during his upcoming



HELEN PENG/the high times

Assistant Principals Basil Pizzuto and Jeffrey Nyhuis will serve as Co-Interim Principals starting January 1, 2012.

ing six month term. "Mr. Pizzuto and I will keep things as status quo," he said. "Our job is to support the teachers and the students. Mr. Pizzuto and I make a great team."

Nyhuis has not yet decided whether he will seek

the principal position permanently. "I am happy with where I am right now," he said. "I'm not sure if I want to jump into another situation at this time."

Similarly, Pizzuto, who has been on the RHS faculty for thirteen years, also says

that he is undecided on whether he will put his name in for consideration, although he acknowledges that the position does appeal to him. "I have not decided yet," he said. "I will probably have to decide soon; Dr. Fishbein wants to know if I

will be on the search committee. I would like to go for the next step – I love the school, and I would like to have a wider impact. On the other hand, I love my job, and the connection I have with the students."

Fishbein said the Board of Education will advertise locally for the job in the *Bergen Record*, as well as nationally in the *Education Weekly* and online publications.

He told *The High Times* that he is looking for a candidate that has the ability to "understand and promote the entire high school experience: arts, academic, co-curricular and athletics." Furthermore, he added that the candidate not only "needs to be part of the RHS community" and hold "experience in high school administration," but also must have an "understanding of what make RHS special."

The Board of Education hopes to have candidates submit their resumes by the middle of February. Ultimately, the goal is to have a permanent principal in place for the start of the 2012-2013 school year.

TEACHERS SHOW SUPPORT FOR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

HELEN PENG
news editor

On Monday December 12, Ridgewood teachers gathered outside the Board of Education in an effort to support their team of negotiators in the contract negotiations and to encourage the Board to reach a settlement. History teacher Michael Yannoni, Vice President of the Ridgewood Education Association (REA), said it was an "effort to show our solidarity for the negotiations."

Since September, teachers of the Ridgewood Public Schools District have worked without contracts. The nego-

tiations team represents these teachers and the REA.

The team consists of a group of teachers who have worked with the Board of Education in previous years to compromise on points such as teachers' salaries, benefits and responsibilities during the school day.

This year, there is an unknown issue or set of issues about which the two sides cannot agree.

Chief Negotiator Laura Grasso, who also teaches at George Washington Middle School, said, "The BOE and REA have been working hard

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THE HURT LOCKER STUDENTS SPREAD AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SAMANTHA FINK
news editor



MERCEDES WHITMAN/
the high times

The Hurt Locker is a student-run project that stemmed from the domestic violence assembly hosted by Freshman F.O.C.U.S. Following the assembly, RHS juniors Ryan Ardelle, Zach Flicker, and Gaby Tapia decided to take action. With the help of crisis intervention counselors Lauren DePinto and Kevin Feeley, the group spearheaded "The Hurt."

On November 30th, three professional speakers came to Ridgewood High School to speak to freshmen and peer counselors about the rising issue of domestic violence.

Several students noted

how one of the speakers gave examples from her personal experience as a therapist and domestic violence counselor, which made the presentation more effective.

Freshman Catherine Negron "found her inspiring." Negron added, "I think it's important to figure out how dangerous [domestic violence] really is, and how prevalent it is among high school students."

Freshman Nick Borghoff stated, "A lot of people had personal experiences, which kind of shocked me."

During the assembly, boys and girls were separated into

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Our List of the
Best Albums of
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Student Athletes
of Class of 2012
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Colleges

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DECA HOSTS WINTER WONDERLAND WALK TO SEND SHARING THE ARTS TO BROADWAY

JUN KIM
news editor

Ridgewood DECA recently teamed up with Sharing the Arts to host the Winter Wonderland 5K Walk/Run. This fundraiser was an effort to raise money in order to send the students of Sharing The Arts (STA) to see “The Lion King” on Broadway.

STA is a special needs theatre program led by Mrs. Landa. Participants of the program come from all parts of New Jersey and New York.

The Ridgewood STA was first introduced in 2008. Since then the kids have put together and performed several musicals with the help of Ridgewood High School students.

Students and teachers at RHS design the scenery, props

and T-shirts for the musicals.

So far, they have performed “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” “The Wizard of

Oz,” “You’re A Good Man Charlie Brown” and “Seussical.”

Junior Margaret Ekblom served as a chief coordinator of

the Winter Wonderland Walk.

She commented, “Since these kids host such good shows, we wanted them to be able to see an awesome show. We saw this as a great cause, as well as an opportunity to spread awareness of the Sharing the Arts program and their accomplishments. I was not disappointed with the outcome.”

With the attendance of 25-30 people and the raffle, all donations for this raffle were donations from local businesses, the walk was able to raise a total of \$960. However, Ridgewood DECA’s efforts are not finished as it plans to sell candy and hot chocolate at the local basketball games to raise additional money for STA in the weeks to come.



SARAH SHEA/the high times

A participant runs vigorously in the Winter Wonderland Walk

NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY UPDATES:

BLOOD DRIVE

ANNA NATHANSON
staff writer

On November 29 Ridgewood High School’s National Honor Society held a blood drive to assist the Community Blood Services, a fully accredited organization that provides blood to 30 hospitals in New York and New Jersey. Fifty people donated, giving enough blood to save 150 lives.

Donors had to fill out a detailed survey to determine if they were eligible to give.

According to senior Spencer Gellman, who helped potential donors sign up, anyone interested in donating must be at least 17 years old, in good health, and weigh at least 110 pounds. Donors are also required to bring a valid license to the donation site and eat prior to donating.

Donating blood is quick and relatively pain-free. The registration process takes

approximately 45 minutes and giving blood takes between 10 and 15 minutes.

Every 2.5 seconds, someone needs blood and almost 4 million Americans die each year because of blood bank shortages. Donated blood can be used to help auto accident victims, cancer patients, heart surgery patients, organ transplant recipients, sickle cell anemia patients, and others. It is tested for HIV, Hepatitis B & C, Syphilis, West Nile Virus and other blood diseases.

As volunteer and NHS committee member Catherine Cleary said, “the blood drive is an excellent opportunity to save lives without having to leave RHS.”

If you are interested in donating blood but were unable to make this fall’s drive, please visit the Community Blood Services website www.communitybloodservices.org.

PEER TUTORING

SIDNEY KANELL
editor-in-chief

If you are struggling to keep up in one of your classes, working with a tutor is often a good option. But hiring a professional is expensive. Therefore, taking advantage of the peer tutoring program at RHS is helpful if you need some academic support.

The RHS peer tutoring program, which is run by the National Honor Society (NHS), is a complimentary service offered to all RHS students. Members of the NHS volunteer to tutor students in a variety of subjects ranging from math to English to social studies.

And so far the program is a success; students are truly benefiting from the extra support. “I like having someone closer to my age help me because they have taken the same class before. My tutor is very knowledgeable and she is helping me to improve my grade” stated an anonymous freshman who has a peer tutor for Algebra.

Tutor Carolyn Stichnoth said, “It’s been a very fulfilling experience so far. I am happy for the opportunity to help other students at RHS understand certain subjects better and hopefully improve their grades.”

Students can meet with tutors before school, at lunch, during free periods, and after school. Meeting times will depend upon the individual tutor’s availability but for the



most part, the peer tutors operate on flexible schedules.

One parent, who prefers not to be named, stated “The tutors are very easy to work with in terms of availability. My daughter’s tutor is always willing to accommodate our irregular schedule.”

Although peer tutors are definitely capable of offering other students some extra support, it is important to remember that they are not experts. Mollie Grunat, member of the NHS Peer Tutoring Committee, asserts that “tutors are not professionals and are not meant to teach all subject material or complete the work for the students. Students should make a solid effort on their work before asking for assistance.”

If you are interested in signing up with an NHS peer tutor, request an informational pamphlet from your guidance counselor.

the
high times

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RIDGEWOOD HOSTS 25TH ANNUAL “DOWNTOWN FOR THE HOLIDAYS”



Families and friends gathered near the tree to enjoy the performance and watch the tree light up.

middle school, and elementary school students began stage performances. Some of the stage performances featured students from one of Ridgewood’s local performing arts schools, Art of Motion. Other performances featured Irish dancers from Ridgewood Irish Dance.

Following the performances, there was a ten-second countdown to the tree lighting. As the towering tree at the Ridgewood train station was illuminated, the crowd burst into cheers.

“This year’s tree lighting ceremony was great! As I watch it every year, I feel like it gets better and better! The number of people who show up to the event also increases every year. You can also recognize and celebrate the talents of many children and adults. You have the opportunity to spend more time with your family and friends now than you ever do throughout the year,” said an anonymous Ridgewood resident.

Much like the ceremonies of the past two and a half decades, the Christmas tree lighting of 2011 was successful. “This year’s tree lighting was amazing! I loved walking around the streets, smelling hot chocolate and being with my friends,” stated Swathi Kella, a fifth-grader from Hawes Elementary School. The tree lighting ceremony helped to bring the town together, and reminded residents to appreciate living in the village of Ridgewood.

and White organization sang Christmas carols. Students from the RHS’s band and orchestra performed holiday selections in small ensembles.

Each restaurant set up personal stalls. It’s Greek to Me, located on East Ridgewood Avenue, had a festive holiday display outside their restaurant of inflatable snowmen and Santas eating the restaurant’s infamous Greek food.

In Van Neste Park, Santa sat for pictures with people of all ages. Across the park, there was a red double-decker bus.

At 7:30, high school,

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to reach a settlement. There has been movement from both sides but we were unable to reach a tentative collective bargaining agreement Monday evening.”

Grasso went on to explain that the Public Employment Relations Commission “assigned a mediator to work with us for the last three meetings. The mediator will be filing the paperwork to take negotiations to the next level of bargaining, which is called fact finding.”

Fact-finding is the process of determining which facts are relevant to the controversy. Fact-finding will be used to help the two sides compromise and reach an agreement.

Grasso was quick to emphasize that “the REA members were not in attendance at the education center as a protest, but as a means of support.”

The teachers and secretaries have been working without a contract since September and both sides are eager to settle this contract.”

LOCKER from page 1

different gymnasiums. At the end of the girls’ presentation, peer counselor Wandy Ortiz, junior, shared a personal experience in helping a friend. After completing the required peer counselor training on domestic violence prior to the assembly Ortiz felt she had gained the courage to approach and help her friend. Ortiz hoped the assembly would show her peers “not to be afraid” to reach out to friends in need.

According to the RHS Hurt blog, “The Hurt” is a “comprehensive dating abuse awareness campaign sponsored by the Ridgewood High School DECA Public Relations Project. This campaign serves to spread awareness of dating abuse to the Ridgewood community through numerous routes of media advertisement.”

One of “The Hurt” initiatives is the “Hurt Locker,” locker number 1300, located on the first floor in the Arts hallway. The locker cover artwork, designed by RHS senior Elise DeLoca, displays questions on post-its, information about myths, contact information for crisis counselors, and website links for more information.

The “Hurt Locker” was

created as a venue to voice complaints, questions, comments, and concerns regarding domestic violence.

DePinto stated that she hoped it would “create interest and spark conversations” among RHS students in an effort to generate publicity and raise awareness about domestic violence.

Another “The Hurt” initiative is the sale of wristbands. “The Hurt” wristbands are currently for sale in Gilbee’s Corner for \$2 each. Wristbands are purple, the universal color of dating abuse awareness, and are engraved with “THE HURT” and “RHS CAN HELP” in black lettering. All proceeds will be donated to the Second Floor Youth Helpline charity.

“The Hurt” has also created a blog, titled “RHS Hurt Blog,” where student administrators have posted their mission statement, the group’s latest initiatives, and various myths and facts about dating abuse. “The Hurt” plans to revamp their blog soon with “Share Your Story,” “Statistics,” and “Donate” tabs.

For more information, visit www.loveisrespect.org and the RHS Hurt Locker Blog, rhshurtblog.blogspot.com.

“A Tree in the Village”

RHS Multimedia Contest submissions should depict your feelings about a specific tree or tree issue in Ridgewood

Artwork

Drawings, sculptures, paintings

Writing

Essays, poems, song lyrics



The Ridgewood Earth Day Fair
Saturday, April 21, 2012
Van Neste Square

Contest run by
REAC and SEA Club

Winning entries will be displayed in the glass cases of the RHS hallways and in the Ridgewood Earth Day Fair.

More information to come next year!

A SHOT AT SAFETY: THE NEED FOR GUN CONTROL

CURRAN McSWIGAN and
CONNOR ANOVICK
op-ed editors

On April 17, 2007 a student at Virginia Tech University killed 32 people before killing himself in what was one of the deadliest school shootings in the nation's history. Tragically, yet another shooting occurred on the Virginia Tech campus on December 8th, 2011. A man, who was not a student, shot and killed a police officer on campus before killing himself. Thankfully, this shooting proved to be nowhere near as deadly as the last, but an innocent man lost his life. His death illustrates that the precautions taken by the university against incidents like this one are not enough. Federal actions must be taken to limit individuals' access to firearms so that incidents like these cease.

After the 2007 attack, Virginia Tech installed an alert system, part of which is a mass email/text program that warned students to stay inside, which proved to be successful in this case.

While this measure has increased the safety of the students, it is the ease with which firearms can be obtained in this country that must be addressed on a federal, rather than a local, level. This will decrease the amount of random school shootings

such as this one and promote a safer environment.

At some "gun conventions" where sellers have booths lined up selling the newest and most high tech forms of guns, people can purchase weapons without a gun license or even a form of identification. This demonstrates how in America we are inadvertently promoting violence by allowing guns to be so freely accessible.

In addition, Virginia's "open carry" law, which stipulates that one doesn't even have to have a license on his person to freely carry a gun, makes shootings like this more convenient and therefore more likely to occur.

In a recent study, over 57% of people stated that they believe that there should be major restrictions on gun possession.

Yet there are those who argue that the right to bear arms is guaranteed by the Constitution. As Philip Van Cleave President of Virginia's Civil Defense League said, "Our belief is that you have to protect yourself from crime. It again just reminds everybody that there's some awfully vicious people out there."

Although the 2nd amendment grants people the right to bear arms, it is important to note that more often than not, guns are used in an act of violence rather than in self-defense. Thus there should

be no need to stress the idea of self defense when previously arrested criminals simply should not be granted access to guns in the first place.

In another study in Florida, over 1500 previously convicted felons had been granted the right to carry a concealed weapon. Statistics like these support prove that an absence of strict gun

57% of people believe there should be major restrictions on gun possession

laws only furthers violence at the hands of these shooters.

While the 2nd amendment mandates that the people have the right to keep and bear arms, this provision does not necessitate that arms be available to all those who would seek them. Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding father's guns rights advocates idolize, once stated that every law should be rewritten every nineteen years. Given the changing nature of civilization, it is necessary to pass legislation which more closely controls and regulates gun accessibility.

THE SAT: A TEST OF APTITUDE OR AFFLUENCE?

KATE BUCKLEY
staff writer

The SAT tests basic knowledge that high school students are supposed to have. The tests are supposed to be unbiased and everyone is supposed to have the same opportunity to achieve high respectable scores, but is that really the case? People can argue both sides of the debate, but when it comes down to it, the tests heavily favor a particular demographic of student.

Where someone is from, goes to school, and his or her socio-economic class are some of the factors that can affect students' performances on the SAT. The test itself may be fair, but students' abilities to prepare for the test make a difference.

Most school systems do all they can to prepare their students for a post-secondary education or for entrance into the workforce. The Ridgewood school system in particular gives its students so many options to learn and it encourage us to want to do well. So even without preparing outside of school, most of them have a good idea of what to expect on test day.

Some people start preparing for the SAT outside of school sophomore year, but usually people focus on it junior year. Preparing for the

SAT is a very long tedious process. I can confidently say that a majority of students at Ridgewood High School either have had private tutors or have attended an SAT class. Some even attend a camp designed to prep for the SAT.

Both of these resources are extremely pricey and they do not teach students how to improve their math or critical reading score by increasing their proficiency, but rather by teaching them how to beat the test.

People in Ridgewood may be able to afford these test prep options, but Ridgewood is in one of the fifteen richest counties in America. How is it fair to expect people from less privileged towns to do as well as people from Ridgewood? It's not.

No matter what way you look at it there is no fair way to test people given the diversity of those taking the tests. There really is nothing that can be done to make the SATs fair.

Thus it is time to abolish this money-making business all together. Instead of placing so much emphasis on test scores, colleges need to start looking more seriously at students' academic achievements and at their letters of recommendation.

Those are the true indicators of a student's ability and intellectual promise, not a test.

WHAT REALLY OCCUPIES THE HEARTS OF PROTESTORS?



The Occupy Wall Street Movement was a good first step in raising awareness, but a solution needs to be reached in order to make this a successful protest.

Madeline Morsch
staff writer

Zuccoti Park in NYC was overtaken by hundreds of protesters for the movement against income inequality. The enthusiasm and optimism of the

protesters in the "Occupy Wall Street" movement seemed unreal. One protester said "we plan on staying here until we make a change." How could you blame them? This strategy they were using was proven effective in the recent

uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, although for different reasons, so they gave it a chance. But during the final days of protest in Zuccoti Park, the protest was transformed into the actual thing they were battling against—disparity.

Some protesters claimed they were all equal, but that's just one side of the story on one side of the park. This protest was said to be leaderless, instead having many leaders and some people with more power than others. The west side of the park seemed to be where the people who tried to "rule" the park camped out. They were a combination of college hipsters who lived in Brooklyn and other decently dressed middle to upper middle class people. Keep in mind that that side of the park was complete with their very own library, a center to use their laptops, and even a bicycle powered espresso machine. (Maybe just a little different than the protesting in Egypt.) These people on the west end

were making decisions for the whole movement without "the general consensus of everybody in the park" said a man camping on the opposite end of the park. Where exactly did they make these decisions? The action groups and committees met in the Deutsche Bank building's lobby to make resolutions and plans on what they were going to do next. It is hypocritical that these so called "protesters" were simultaneously fighting against the banks while using them for meetings.

One of the main issues with this protest was that the leadership was not clear and many had different agendas. Some didn't even know their own reasons for being there, while others were clearly being hypocritical (such as the Deutsche Bank protesters).

The East side of the park was a whole different story. These were the actual poor people, the real 99%. They were the ones who only had

a drum circle for entertainment. And these were people of all ages, in debt and some in raggy clothes. They even called this east side "the ghetto" of this movement. So they were fighting against income inequality but there was inequality within them, which was detrimental to their many agendas. They never got to make decisions until the going got tough and the west-siders would look to them for answers. This inner class warfare was too ironic.

In general, protests make people feel important, like they have a voice. Some college students who were a part of the "Occupy Wall Street" movement described it as "empowering". Many people feel some of the issues raised by the Occupy Wall Street protesters are real problems in our society. Income and class inequality cannot be part of a long lasting society. However, they need to work on the second step of a successful protest: finding a solution.

"I think it is wrong to vilify all private businesses...I would like to see some action."
-Medha Kirtane
History Teacher



"It seems like a lot of people complaining about not having jobs when there are plenty of jobs in the military."
-Youngbin Yoon
Junior



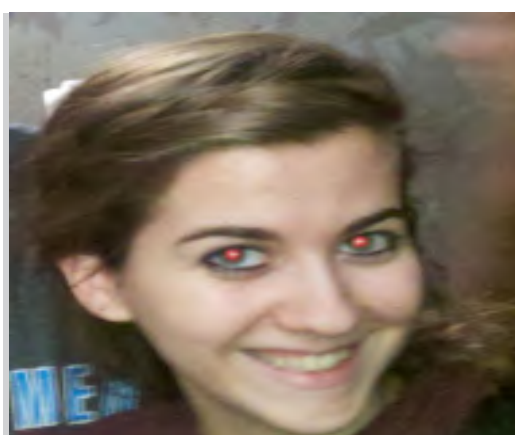
**RHS
SPEAKS:**

"I don't have enough information about it to give an opinion."
-Theo Hong
Sophomore



**"WHAT
IS YOUR
OPINION
ABOUT
OCCUPY
WALL
STREET?"**

"It can't be a protest unless it starts with a cause. But they started with a protest and ended with a cause."
-Rebecca Lampiasi
Junior



"If they were more organized and weren't just protesting for the sake of protesting it would be more effective."
-Jeff Lampiasi
Freshman



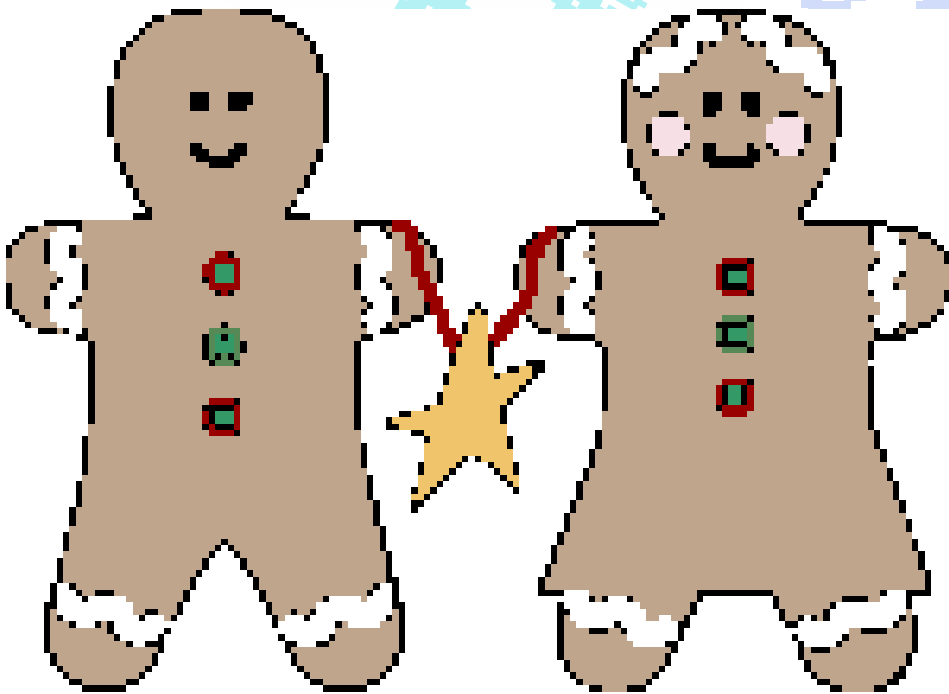
FESTIVE GINGERBREAD COOKIES

LAUREN KIRSHNER
staff writer

Make your holidays just a little more festive with these sweet and tasty gingerbread cookies. Give them a face, a few buttons, and a cute hat, and suddenly your cookies have come alive. Enjoy!

Ingredients

3/4 cup butter, softened
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
3/4 cup molasses
4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
Vanilla frosting of your choice
Red and green paste food coloring



Directions

- 1) In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy.
 - 2) Add egg and molasses.
 - 3) Combine the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
 - 4) Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight or until easy to handle.
 - 5) In a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8-inch thickness.
 - 6) Cut with floured 2-1/2-inch cookie cutters.
 - 7) Place 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheets.
 - 8) Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm.
 - 9) Allow to cool.
 - 10) Tint some of the frosting red and some green.
- And of course, DECORATE!!!



It's the Little Things...

GABBY BONFIGLIO
staff writer

As the hectic holiday season approaches in all its festive glory, remember what really makes these days so special. Maybe it is...

- 1) Being able to see your breath in the morning.
- 2) The sight of the RHS field covered in frost.
- 3) When Starbucks puts Peppermint Hot Chocolate back on the menu.
- 4) Biting into a fresh-from-the-oven holiday cookie.
- 5) The magical smell of a gingerbread house in your kitchen.
- 6) Hearing Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You" on the radio.
- 7) Laughing at Delilah's clichés on 106.7 (Light FM).
- 8) When the ornament that breaks is NOT your favorite one.
- 9) Actually using your fireplace.
- 10) The ability to wear fuzzy socks without being judged.
- 11) Driving through town and spotting the houses with the most lights.
- 12) And, of course, just spending time laughing (and eating) with family.

The First Chill of Winter

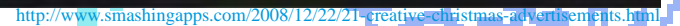
AUSTIN KIM
staff writer

As I walked into school a couple of days back, I shivered as I took off my coat and hung it in the locker. I took a glance outside. The warm, pleasant weather with which I had grown so comfortable had now given way to still, icy air - the kind that stung my throat as I drew breaths in. Hmm... that was surprising. It made me wonder, how long had it been like this? How long had the weather been icy; since when had people been huddled in their heavy coats, shuffling to and fro without a thought of stopping for quick conversation?

Even more surprising was my realization that I had already acknowledged it to be winter! When I was younger, I used to judge the coming of winter by the gentle fall of snow or the arrival of holiday surprises. Neither gave me quite as much of a thrill as they had once. Deep in thought, I almost missed the early bell ringing through the hall, but I eventually came to an answer. I started to joke with my friends a few days earlier, especially about the fun (and embarrassing) times during the previous winter. That was it! Because I saw the approach of winter, my mind wandered to a time quite like today, where I shivered as I took my coat off and glanced outside.

After finally coming to an answer I was satisfied with, I hurried to my first class of the day. I was able to rest easy knowing that I still had something that let my heart know that I was in winter, and I absolutely had to share my experience. Ask yourself the same question: What does the beginning of winter mean to you?

ALISON GRAHAM
features editor



Now stop. Look, listen, smell—but stop to think. Yes, the holiday season should be rich with merriment and frolicking and gift-buying galore, but the jingle-bells and whistles that fill the air can easily entrance the unaware holiday celebrator in a spending frenzy.

There is a limit to luxury. What was once special in the store loses its impact when accompanied by packages more of the same extravagance.

<http://pics.livejournal.com/majorjune/pic/001bf35x/s320x240>



TAYLOR SWIFT IS SPEAKING NOW

SARAH SANDLER
staff writer

November 22 was a freezing rainy night, but thousands of teenage girls (and some boys) flocked to New York City's Madison Square Garden despite these harsh conditions. Many of these girls, including myself, had been counting down the days to this concert since they bought their tickets six months ago. The majority of them, decked out in silly costumes, had florescent

than just singing and strumming the guitar into her show. A few of the special features included acrobatics, percussion on a giant bell, and even some very special guests. One of the highlights from the show was when Taylor stepped down from the stage and walked through the crowd, embracing her loving fans on the way to a small, revolving stage at the back of the arena. During this segment of the show, Taylor made a closer, intimate connection with the fans



Taylor Swift takes the stage with James Taylor and Selena Gomez at her concert at Madison Square Garden.

signs in tow. What was causing all the traffic between 7th and 8th Avenue and West 31st and 33rd Street? Who was clogging all the trains to Penn Station? This mystical enigma was none other than the lovable Taylor Swift.

Madison Square Garden was a magnet that Tuesday night, attracting any girl who had ever sympathized with the musical tales of Taylor Swift. The concert officially began at 7 p.m. and was opened by country/rock band Needtobreathe. They got the crowd on their feet and excited to see the main act. Around 8:30, with every single person in the stadium screaming as loud as possible, Taylor appeared on stage.

She opened with her emotional and energetic hit single, "Sparks Fly". Other songs that Taylor performed included hits such as "Love Story," "Back to December" and "Mine." I do not exaggerate when I say that the screams from fans were literally deafening. Even some of the accompanying parents had their hands over their ears to block out the noise.

Taylor incorporated more

farther away from the stage. Two special guests were featured in this show. One was Taylor's best friend, Selena Gomez. Together they sang Selena's teen anthem, "Who Says." Appealing to the parents at Madison Square Garden, Taylor's next guest was James Taylor, whom Taylor Swift was named after. They sat on a cozy couch together, located on center stage, and sang James Taylor's song "Fire and Rain."

The most magical moment of the concert was when Taylor stepped into a balcony that was raised over twenty feet into the air and revolved around the arena, ending the show with a burst of sparkly confetti from the ceiling.

The applause for Taylor performance was well deserved- she has won four Grammys and sold over 20 million albums. Her Speak Now World Tour consisted of over 100 shows and visited four continents. Amazingly enough, Taylor Swift is only 22, and she is well on her way to accomplishing even more.

DANIEL PARK
staff writer

Have you ever wondered about the truth behind Facebook's history? Well, David Kirkpatrick reveals the complete history of Facebook in his interesting and engaging book, *The Facebook Effect*. The book goes into extreme detail about its past, with quotes from the staff of Facebook, who were cooperative in the writing of the book.

The Facebook Effect has staff witnesses who confirm the truth behind Facebook's documented history. Mark Zuckerberg and Dustin Moskovitz make frequent comments. For example, Zuckerberg commented that he will not sell Facebook because he "might never have an idea this good ever again." And Moskovitz recalls several memories while working for Facebook, such as getting bonus points for writing a report for the site.

Kirkpatrick's book truly entertains its reader in talking about the social network. It vividly describes scenes in Facebook's past and allows readers to find out about the lives of the website's creators. For example, the book makes the reader feel like he

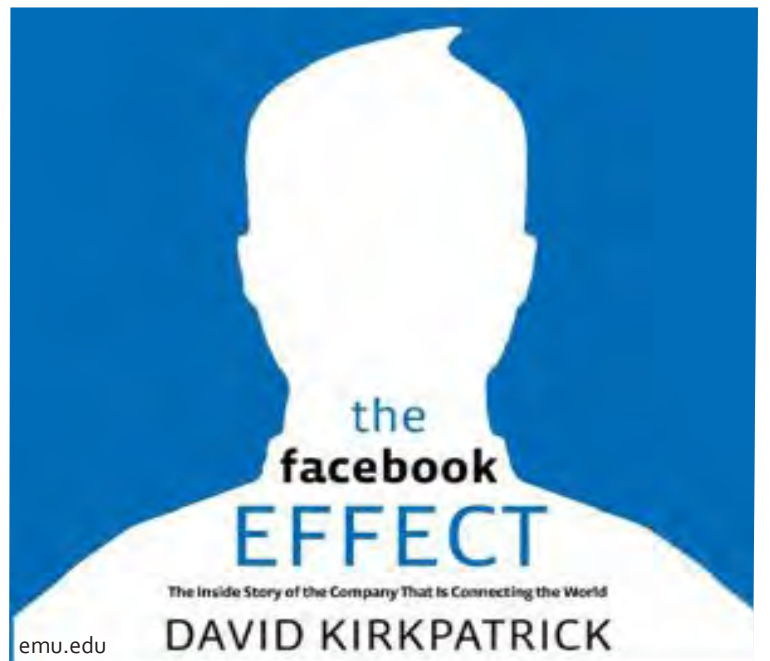
SEASON FOR CINEMA

STEVEN LEE
staff writer

We are now almost four months into the school year, and winter break and the holidays are fast approaching. For those who enjoy watching some excellent movies during the time off from school, this holiday season will surely be a blast. Some exciting new movies include, *Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol* and *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*. Both movies were released on December 16, 2011 and are a great way to start off holidays.

Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol is a spy and adventure movie, part of the popular *Mission: Impossible* film series starring Tom Cruise. According to Rotten Tomatoes, *Mission Impossible Ghost Protocol* is the most consistently entertaining, most laser-focused entry in the series so far."

In contrast to the modern setting of *Mission: Impossible*,



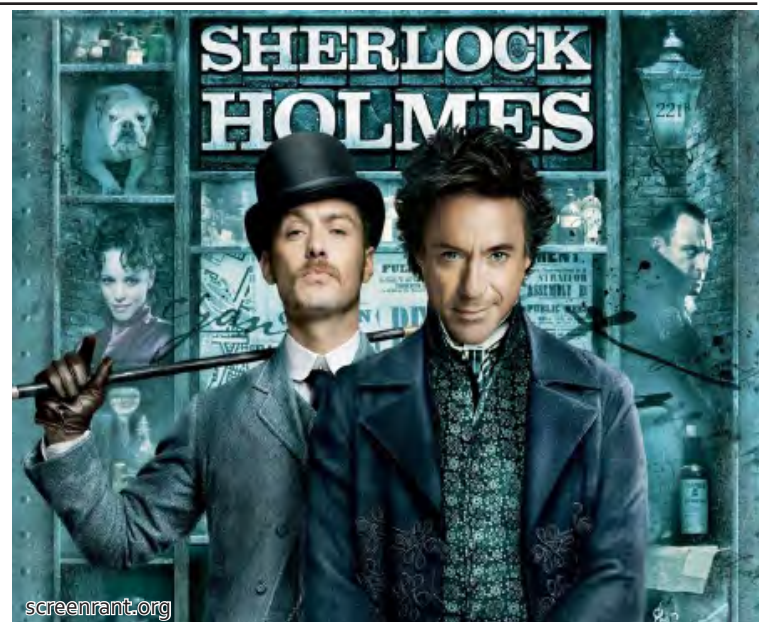
The Facebook Effect gives a thorough history of the social networking site Facebook.

or she is in Mark Zuckerberg's dorm with him as he first started creating "thefacebook.com" (the facebook was the original name of Facebook).

This comprehensive novel begins at Harvard University, where Mark Zuckerberg codes many "social programs," including "thefacebook.com." The novel continues with an engaging description of Facebook's growth, first with all colleges, to high school students, and eventually, to the entire

world. It even covers the low points of the social network, such as the lawsuits that were placed upon the company.

The Facebook Effect doesn't leave out a single detail while recounting the history of the development of Facebook. So if you are interested in learning about the phenomenon of facebook, then the best choice is David Kirkpatrick's engrossing and detailed book: *The Facebook Effect*.



Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law is now playing.

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows, takes place in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Adapted from the Sherlock Holmes book series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Game of Shadows*, starring Robert Downey Jr., follows the plot of the book in which Sherlock

Holmes faces his foe, Professor Moriarty, with the help of his sidekick Professor Watson. So along with your hectic last minute shopping and family bonding, brace yourself for an action packed holiday movie season.

MY 2011 PLAYLIST

THE YEAR IN MUSIC

ETHAN SAPIENZA
staff writer

Here are my personal choices for the three best albums of the year.

“Circuital” by My Morning Jacket

My Morning Jacket started off as an alternative country band hailing from Louisville, Kentucky. Their most recent album, “Circuital,” was recorded in a hot, old Church gym in

The simple fact that a blues-rock duo can produce such a large quantity of music, including side projects, in a relatively short amount of time, while making each album sound unique, is a phenomenal feat. “El Camino” clocks in at around thirty-eight minutes, building on the quirky and poppy sound of the song “Tighten Up,” off of “Brothers.” The two strongest songs on the album are “Sister” and “Lonely Boy,” as both manage to be criminally catchy



The album cover of the Black Keys’ seventh album, “El Camino”.

their hometown. Their sound over the years has gone from wide-open, rock-based music to tightly knit, electronic inspired music. With “Circuital”, their sound has returned to its rock roots, without forgetting how their music has evolved. On such tracks as “Holdin On To Black Metal” the sound of their more recent creations is evident in Jim James’s voice in a well fitting falsetto over a rendition of a Vietnamese gospel song. However, on the title track, MMJ’s beginnings are thought of in its sprawling, rock inspired tone. “Circuital” as a whole is a strong addition to My Morning Jacket’s catalogue, one that both builds upon their sound and recognizes how it all began.

“El Camino” by The Black Keys

The Black Keys seem to be almost unstoppable. “El Camino” marks their third album with producer Danger Mouse. The Black Keys continue to make highly popular music videos, the latest being a man dancing and mouthing out the lyrics to “Lonely Boy,” the first single off of “El Camino.” And most importantly, this album does not let up on the high standard of music the Black Keys are known for.

and absurdly entertaining. “El Camino” is just another point to show how well this simple duo can constantly reinvent themselves, all in unbelievably short amounts of time.

“Within and Without” by Washed Out

The genre that Washed Out is classified under is entitled “Chillwave”. If that word alone is not explanation enough, then it is a brand of music that is strangely psychedelic and extremely relaxed, all in an electronic manner. “Within and Without,” Washed Out’s debut album personifies this genre perfectly. The music is extraordinary in its capacity to calm its listener at any time. Ernest Greene, who is Washed Out, has a talent for weaving his voice into the tranquil tones of each song he crafts, as each part compliments the other. “Eyes Be Closed,” the first track off of the album, sets a tone that is maintained throughout the entirety of the album. A peaceful wash of electronic tones kick in, accompanied by an almost 80’s video game-like drum beat, all the while as Green’s voice is greatly taken into account, guiding the whole song.

BRADLEY ALSOP
staff writer

Independent hip-hop and indie rock dominated critical circles and musically minded ears this year. Here are four albums that deserve particular attention.

“Araabmusik” by Electronic Dream

The producer for this track, Abraham Orellana, is known for his grand, snare-heavy beats for the likes of Cam’ron and the rest of the Dipset collective. What he is also known for is for his live performances, where he takes well-know pop songs like Lil’ Wayne’s “A Milli” and deconstructs it completely with his MPC into a new beat. Neither of these two personas show up on “Electronic Dream.” Gone are the grandiose strings and cavernous drums. What there is instead are longing female vocals, remixes of European techno songs. This mix, available online, shows furthermore how versatile Araabmusik is as a producer and single-handedly proves that he will be coveted as a producer in many different fields of music. Key tracks: “Streetz Tonight” and “Golden Touch”.

“St. Vincent” by Strange Mercy

Dallas Texas’s Annie Clark, known musically as St. Vincent, followed an evolving trend through her first two al-

the standout track “Surgeon” for example: With jutting bass, hard hitting drums, and a strange guitar effects odyssey that sounds as if an old pinball machine was capable of awesome melody, Clark details a lost summer. The chorus is taken from an excerpt from Marilyn Monroe’s diary, and which says something about the album as a whole: Clark’s lyrics are inconspicuous behind the music, but they tell the story of a woman emotionally lost and unavailable, relying on cheap thrills for entertainment. “Cause I don’t wanna be a cheerleader anymore” she coos on “Cheerleader”. The lifestyle is now lost on her, yet the lyrics detail that she can’t get out. Key tracks: “Northern Lights”, “Surgeon” and “Cheerleader”.

“Fleet Foxes” by Helplessness Blues

Fleet Foxes released their newest album almost 3 years after their 2008’s self-titled. While that album is filled with longing acoustic folk songs, the occasional Crosby, Stills, and Nash cover, and beautiful harmonies, “Helplessness Blues” goes farther than that. The instrumentation has evolved, adding a searing violin part in “Bedouin Dress”, slicker production, and harmonies that are more ascendant than before. But the standout lead singer Robin Pecknold: Pecknold’s lyrics are vague, cryptic, haunting, and at the same time incredibly personal.

Foxes truly evolved on this album, and if they continue to grow instrumentally, and Pecknold’s lyrics continue to their narrative heights, their third album could be a stone-cold classic. Key Tracks: “Helplessness Blues”, “Bedouin Dress” and “Lorelai”.

“Bon Iver” by Bon Iver

Bon Iver’s “For Emma Forever Ago” was an intimate, lonely record that Justin Vernon recorded in a cabin in the woods of Wisconsin. The album was very well received, but in that space of time between albums, Vernon became well known in other circles of music, particularly when he was featured heavily on Kanye West’s “My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy”. Those experiences definitely shaped the sounds of Vernon’s latest. For the most part “For Emma” was him and his acoustic guitar, lamenting about love lost with a tape recorder. The lyrics are still sad and archaic, but the sound of the record is undeniably different. Album opener “Perth” gradually layers sound upon sound until a melancholy collage of music arises, while voice effects carry the sad but forward “Calgary”. Vernon’s self titled show Vernon as a changed man, not in lyrical content, but in how ambitious he is willing to be as an artist. Electric piano, subtle drums, and Vernon’s soul-crushing voice are only a few of the many great treats that are to be found on



The album cover of Bon Iver’s “Bon Iver”, which was released June 21st.

bums: Dark lyrics disguised by pretty vocals, with the occasional foray into insanely distorted guitar passages: Clark is the enfant terrible of female indie-rock. Her music lacks boundaries. There is an overall haze over the entire record, like an endless stretch of reverb providing the background for the entire record. With that as the base, the instrumentation runs wild. Take

This is absolutely apparent on the title track. Behind a quiet acoustic strum, Pecknold details how he was expecting his life to turn out. This evolves into a progressive, rolling chorus, and then a truly powerful last 2 minutes. “If I had an orchard I’d work til’ I’m sore” Pecknold shouts. That may mean nothing, or it could be a genuine metaphor for what Pecknold wants in life, or the uncertainty of the future. Fleet

this album. “Bon Iver” portrays Justin Vernon as a changed man musically, with continuous room for growth. Key Tracks: “Beth/Rest”, “Perth” and “Calgary”.

Honorable Mention: Check out new albums by Shabazz Palaces, Danny Brown, Washed Out, the Black Keys, Jay-Z & Kanye West, The Smith West-erns, and many more.

STUDENT ATHLETES SIGN COMMITTMENT PAPERS



Seniors Courtney Tarleton, Meghan Roxas, Kelci Smesko, Tripp Telesco, Lucie Kloak, Kiley Donovan, and Kailin Concilio proudly for a picture in their new college attire.

CAMILLE DAVIS
sports editor

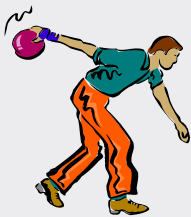
On Tuesday December 6 in the Campus Center a select group of seven student athletes signed commitment papers to the colleges and universities for which they will play Division I sports. Four girls will play lacrosse: Kaitlin Concilio at Holy Cross, Kelci Smesko at Duke, Kiley Donovan at Colgate and Courtney Tarleton at University of Southern California. In addition, Meghan Roxas is going to Temple to play basketball. Tripp Telesco is going to Lehigh for lacrosse and Lucie Kloak will be going to the University of North Carolina for crew.

When asked what she thought of the ceremony, Concilio said the signing off celebration definitely made her feel special to be rewarded by her college and the community for her lacrosse accomplishments. Even more exciting than the prospect of committing to their schools were the tantalizing cakes that awaited each of the athletes after the signing ceremony. Each cake was decorated with impressive action shots of the students playing the sport that won them their admission tickets to college. Without a doubt, they had their cake and ate it too!

WINTER SPORTS PREVIEW

Frosty weather doesn't stop Ridgewood athletes from hitting the gym. Winter sports have a busy season ahead, and the coaches have a lot to say about what our Varsity teams have coming up. Here are predictions, expectations and upcoming games from the coaches of the bowling team, the wrestling team, winter track, women's basketball, men's basketball and swimming. Our apologies go out to the hockey team for not including them in this month's issue-- they have a great season ahead of them as well! Show your Maroons spirit by coming out to support all these teams!

BOWLING
COACH BENNETT



Upcoming games for bowling include a game against FDU (1/7), Northern Highlands (1/9) and Hackensack (1/10).

MEN'S BASKETBALL
COACH TROY



Upcoming games for basketball include a game against Cliffside Park (1/7), St. Anthony (2/1), Teaneck (2/3), Don Bosco (2/7) and Paramus (2/9).

WRESTLING
COACH WATSON



We have a fairly inexperienced team this season and our expectation is to steadily improve and compete with all of our opponents on our very difficult schedule.

We have been working on creating a competitive environment in our practice room and increasing mental toughness.

Our team goals are to qualify for the team state tournament and to win the District 6 tournament.

Senior Brandon Giovanetti and Sophomore Joe Oliva are our two wrestlers who qualified farther as individuals last season and we will be looking for them to carry our team this year as well.

All of our conference, sectional and district matches are important.

WINTER TRACK
COACH MULLEN



My expectations for this team are high on both the boys and girls teams. Ridgewood has always had a great reputation in winter track and this year's team should perform well.

Our early focus in practices is to get in good shape. After the athletes get a sound base, we then will get more specific to individual events like the jumps, hurdles, and throws. They have been working real hard so far.

I have lofty goals. Last year we won the state sectionals and the league for the boys and won the county and the league for the girls. This year I think we can compete for those honors once again.

The three most important team meets of the year for us are: County Relays (1/25), the League Meet (1/30) and the State Sectionals (2/11).

Hopefully the team will have a lot of fun and experience success along the way.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
COACH PALMER



Since we have eleven returning players, I expect not to have to reteach everything.

I want to work on enhancing the program and to go on and hopefully win the county tournament and State Sectionals.

We have a really strong starting lineup with three seniors, Kelsci Smesko, Mae-ghan Roxas, and Courtney Tarleton. And we have two juniors, Lauren Beausoleal and Maggie Carver.

We aren't going to take any game too lightly. Each one will be important to us in the upcoming season. Must-see upcoming games include Montclair Kimberly (1/7),

SWIMMING
COACH COOK



We expect both the boys and the girls teams to be very competitive over the course of the upcoming season. The girls are coming off of another stellar year in which they won the Big North Liberty Division and their second consecutive North 1-A Sectional Title. The boys (who also won the Liberty Division) are looking to regroup after failing to make it to the Sectional Final for the first time in 6 years.

We look to develop strong work habits and foster dedication and commitment to the program.

All the meets are important in their own way. We set different benchmarks for each meet whether it is to swim a personal best, fine-tune a stroke, experiment with a different approach to a race. They all provide us with a new challenge to better ourselves over the course of the season.



JANUARY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Years Day	2 No School - Winter Break	3 -2 DAY -DECA Regional Competition -Ski Club trip	4 -1 DAY -New Players Meeting	5 -4 DAY -9th Grade CML Contest -SEA Club Meeting	6 -3 DAY -Local Scholarship Application due -Latin Club meeting	7 -Region 1 Band, Choir, Orchestra auditions -RAHP info session
8 -Band Fruit Sale -Football Dinner	9 -2 DAY -Supervisors Meeting -Global Learning Mtg -Faculty Meeting	10 -1 DAY -Tri M Music Honor Society Meeting -Ski Club trip -Band Parents Mtg	11 -4 DAY -RAHP info session	12 -3 DAY -SEA Club Meeting -New Players in Concert	13 -2 DAY -New Players in Concert	14 New Players in Concert
15 -New Players in Concert -Bergen County Band Concert	16 -Martin Luther King Jr. Day - NO SCHOOL	17 -1 DAY -Ski Club trip	18 -Midterm Review Day	19 -Midterm Exam Period 1 -Midterm Exam Period 5 -ALPS Meeting	20 -Midterm Exam Period 2 -Midterm Exam Period 6	21 -All State Band Auditions -RHS Winterguard Competition
22	23 -Midterm Exam Period 3 -Midterm Exam Period 7	24 -Midterm Exam Period 4 -Midterm Exam Period 8 -Ski Club Trip -Band Trip Meeting	25 -4 Day -8th Grade Parent Meeting -Winter Dance Concert	26 -3 Day -SEA Club Meeting -Maroon and White Recital Exhibit -Peer Counselor Training Small Ensemble Concert	27 -2 Day -2nd Quarter Ends -ALPS Winter Weekend -Harlem Wizards Game	28 -SAT at RHS -ALPS Winter Weekend
29 -ALPS Winter Weekend -Region 1 Band Concert	30 -1 DAY -3rd Quarter Begins -Global Learning Mtg	31 -4 DAY -Ski Club Trip -Music Dept Orientation for 8th graders and parents				

UPCOMING MEETINGS FOR THE HIGH TIMES

If you are interested in writing for The High Times please attend our next staff meeting!

**FEBRUARY
ISSUE**



Meeting: Monday, 2/6

Staff meetings will be held at Unit Lunch in Room 244.



Winter Snowflakes



Kathleen Simon

The uniqueness of snowflakes has always intrigued me. I love the fact that no two are exactly the same, and the small joys like observing snowflakes on my window are what make December one of my favorite months of the year.

Christmas Regalia



Theo Hong

The Nutcracker was originally developed as a cottage profession in Germany during the 15th century. Today, whether it be from the famous ballet or not, nutcrackers represent the spirit of Christmas as decorative figurines.

Brighten the Holidays



Talia Kanell

Snowmen represent not just the holidays, but the entire winter season. Building a snowman shows celebration of winter and one's love for it. They can really make the holiday season a much more cheerful and exciting time of year.

December



Sunny Kim

The year is officially beginning to wind down. Lights adorn houses across the country, shopping mania has set in and families are once again reunited. Use this time to bond with your loved ones. Remind them how much they mean to you, and show them your appreciation of everything they've done.

A Winter Garden



Choong Ryu

The cozy snowman and the lighted tree in the Ridgewood Public Library show that the holiday season is near. So you better watch out, you better not cry...Santa Claus is coming to town!