

The Castle Caller

HAZLETON ELEMETARY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Holiday Edition ~ December 2011

What Student Council Does For You

By Elyssa Pizarro & Pricilla Rodriguez*

For those of you who do not know, the HMS student council is an organization designed to promote good citizenship, enhance positive school and community relationships, and promote school spirit.

Ms. DeLuca is the club advisor and we spoke with her a bit about why students should join this organization and what activities the student council will be taking part in this year.

Q: Why should students in seventh and eighth grade want to be a part of the student council?

DeLuca: To serve their school by participating and volunteering in many worthwhile activities.

Q: What types of activities?

DeLuca: Community service projects (like raising money for the American Cancer Society), we

sponsor school dances, conduct school activities to promote school spirit, and help the elementary students throughout the year.

Q: Speaking of the dance, when will the next one be?

DeLuca: The Valentine's dance will be held on Friday, February 10, 2012.

This year's student council officers are as follows: president, Pricilla Rodriguez; vice-president,

Kyle Plesh; secretary, Jerry Gasser; and fundraising chairperson, Julissa Herrera.

Seventh grade members include: Ciara Bannon, Leyole Garcia, Natalie Gonzalez, Brian Harry, Carson Kinney, Frank Mussoline, Destiny Nika, Anthony Palaggi, Selena Sanchez, Jordi Soto and Cody Tallaric

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Holiday Traditions

By Alonna Weaver & Kendra Synder

The holiday season is near and everyone at Hazleton Elementary Middle School is looking forward to not having school for a week, and most are thinking about sleeping late and having no homework! We interviewed some students and teachers to see what they are looking forward to most this holiday season and what traditions they follow at this time of year.

Sixth grade teacher **Mrs. Ciotola** said her traditions are finding the perfect Christmas tree, baking lots and lots of Christmas cookies and attending Christmas Eve mass.

Seventh grader, **Sonya Arias**, said she enjoys partying, eating lots of food, praying, and listening to music.

Cassandra Tavarez, 7th

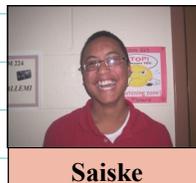
grade, said her traditions are eating food, having fun with her family and listening to music.

Other students had different types of traditions they like. **Brian Garcia**, 7th grade, said his tradition is playing video games and eating too. He also enjoys playing football with his family.

Other 7th graders like **Destiny Henry** enjoy opening presents. Henry also goes to her uncle's house for food with family.

Lizdani Ventura said she helps preparing her Christmas dinner, cleans her entire house, fixes the guest bedroom for her family that comes for Christmas, prays with her family before she eats and waits until midnight to open up her presents on Christmas Eve.

Rachell Castro said she enjoys going to her cousin's to open her presents.



Saiske

Eight graders had a lot of traditions to report too. Some of them were very interesting. For example, **Elwais Saiske** said, "We go surfing, pray and then eat." Uh, surfing?? Really!

Mineylie Ramos's family opens their presents on Christmas Eve.

Leslie Paredes said she looks forward to the tradition of when her mom makes apple pie for the holiday.

Ashley Land said one of her holiday traditions is going around visiting family at their houses.

Everyone interviewed was looking forward to spending time with family, eating and just relaxing. Whatever your holiday tradition is, be sure to enjoy yourself, rest and have a great holiday season.

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MOUNT'S CORNER CHAT

By: Keyla Perez and Audrey Castillo*

Do You BELIEVE?

60% No
40% Yes

*Based on a poll taken of 100 HMS seventh and eighth grade students.

The information for this article was taken from the September 21, 1897 edition of the *New York Sun* and the following website: www.newseum.org/yesvirginia/

In 1897, a saddened eight-year old girl by the name of Virginia O'Hanlon was teased by her friends because she believed. She became very sad. Her dad told her to write a letter to the *New York Sun*. He said if she wanted an honest answer, the *Sun* would give it to her because what they printed had to be true.

Virginia wrote her letter and received a very quick response, which was printed as an editorial on September 21, 1897. The reporter who wrote did not sign his name, but it is believed to be the work of veteran newsman Francis Pharellus Church.

Church's answer entitled, "Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus," became one of history's most famous editorials to date. The following is a reprint of Virginia's letter to the *Sun* and the sincere response she received over 100 years ago.

Note: Students polled didn't have the opportunity to read the following *Sun* editorial.

Dear Editor: I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in THE SUN it's so.' Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?

VIRGINIA O'HANLON.
115 WEST NINETY-FIFTH STREET.

VIRGINIA, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except [what] they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge. Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and

you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. *Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no VIRGINIAS.* There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.



O'Hanlon
Associate Press photo

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not,

but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, VIRGINIA, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.



Church¹

¹Photo from www.newseum.org

Secret Santa Anyone? By Christley Mena and Vianny Rojas

Naughty or Nice?? By Isis Torres & Yuliana Martinez*

Christmas is coming up which means holiday spirit is in the air and everyone is thinking about spending time with their families. But we all know what everyone is looking forward to the most...PRESENTS!

This year no one really knows that they are getting but they do know what they would like to give someone. We thought it would be fun to do a fictitious secret Santa with the middle school students at HMS.

Secret Santa is when you are assigned a friend to get a gift for, but you can't tell them or anyone else that you have their name. So if you could be anyone's Secret Santa, who would you want to give a gift to and what would you get them?

Here is what some students at HMS said they would do in our pretend secret Santa game. Let's start with the jolly seventh graders.

Samantha Diaz said if she could be someone's secret Santa it would be 7th grader **Jassiel Smith** and her Christmas present would be a big hug! Aw! That's showing the love of Christmas.

Next, **Valeria Lopez** and **Alex Hernandez** both would like to be secret Santas to **Mrs. Karlick**.

"I would give her flowers because she is nice," say Hernandez.

Valeria said she would give Mrs. Karlick a box of chocolates because she is the best teacher she ever had!

Sonia Arias said she

would like to be **Alissa Garcia's** secret Santa and get her a teddy bear because she is special to her.

Now on to our wonderful eighth graders!

Pricilla Rodriguez said she would give **Keyla Perez** diamond earrings

world!
Mia Leonardo would be getting a sweater if **Grisel Tufino** was her secret Santa.

Diana Colon is taking a tip from seventh grader **Samantha Diaz** and giving **Diana Colon** a big hug.



Mineylie Ramos would give **Chelsea Marte** a friendship bracelet if she was her secret Santa.

Vianny Annay Rojas would like to be secret Santa for **Mari- aelena Martinez** and

give her a pack of Skittles because of her love for the candy.

Alexander Salvador said he would give **Chelsea Marte** a beautiful necklace.

Finally, 5th grade teacher **Mrs. O'Donnell** said if she was anyone's secret Santa it would be

Mrs. Karlick's and Mrs. Howey's. She would give **Mrs. Karlick** a feather for her hair because she knows

she is really dying to wear one and she would give **Mrs. Howey** a night out with friends because she knows she needs one!

Santa only brings gifts to those on the nice list, right? If you did anything to be on the naughty list this year, you are probably out of luck! Most students at HEMS are on the nice list, but there are a few people who may find coal in their stockings. The following seventh graders told us where they think they stand.

Natalie Gonzalez knows she is on the naughty list because she yells at people who make her mad.

John Varges said he's on the nice list because he helps around the house.

Samantha Brea said she's on the nice list because she is very respectful to people that respect her back.

Alissa Garcia said she's on the nice list because she IS nice and very respectful to her family and friends.

Patricia Espinal said she's on the nice list because SHE IS NICE to people!

The eighth graders felt they were just as nice as the seventh graders this year. **Diana Colon** said she is on the nice list because she helps her mom around the house.

Matthew Houser said his on the nice list because his just a nice person.

Julio Arizmendi said he's on BOTH lists because sometimes he's bad & sometimes he's good.

Liernest Varona said

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Boys' Basketball Back in Action

By Jennifer Alberto and Julissa Herrera*

This year's boys' basketball season has begun. The coaches and the players are very excited to get back into action. We have many new players this year, and a few returning from last year, along with Mr. Pollock, eighth grade team coach, and Mr. Leshko, seventh grade team coach, returning too.

The 7th grade team members are **Jerry Gasser, Isaac Pereg, Brian Harry, Kyle Plesh, Joshua Walper, Carlos Moldan, Joshua Capriotti, Frank Mussoline, Christian Lantigua, Gabriel Pujols, and John Mikucko.**

The eighth grade team members are **Johnny Pepen, Jose Reynoso, Tyler Tallarico, Jose Cabrera, Richie Rosario, Adrian Valerio, Yasel Alcantara, Dante D'Amato, Ismael Santos, Adolfo Cerantes and Isaiah Santiago.**

The following is a brief interview with the coaches:

Q: Are you excited for another season back at the castle?

Coach Lesko: Yeah, its fun.

Coach Pollock: Yeah, I always look forward to new seasons at the castle.

Q: How many players do you have this year?

Coach Pollock: 22

Q: What teams are you most looking forward to playing this year?

Coach Lesko: Freeland.

Coach Pollock: Can't say. We take all teams seriously.

Q: Do you think you have a good team this year?

Coach Lesko: Yeah.



2011-2012 MOUNTS eighth grade boys' basketball team.

Coach Pollock: We will soon find out if we have a good team. **Q:** Do you expect to have a good season?

Coach Lesko: Yeah. **Q:** Who's going to be the captain of varsity?

Coach Pollock: We have a couple of leaders Dante D'Amato, Jose Cabrera and Adolfo Cerantes.

Q: How much progress has your team been making since the first practice?

Coach Lesko: A lot, very good. At least they listen.

Coach Pollock: Everyday they seem to get better and better.

We'd like to take this

opportunity to wish the boys' basketball teams a terrific season and hope to see them go all the way to playoffs.



2011-12 MOUNTS seventh grade boys' basketball team.

Boy's Basketball Schedule



Dec. 12—@ Heights

Dec. 15—@ Holy Family

Dec. 19—vs. W. Haz.

Dec. 21—@ MMI

Jan. 3—vs. Valley

Jan. 5—Freeland

Jan. 9—@ Drums

Jan. 12—W. Haz.

Jan. 17—Holy Fam.

Jan. 19—vs. MMI

Jan. 23—Heights

Jan. 26—@ Freeland

Jan. 30—@ Valley

Feb. 2—W. Haz.

Feb. 6—@ Heights

Feb. 9—@ Drums

Feb. 13—@ Holy Family

Playoff games will be held at the HAHS gymnasium.

HEMS Spelling Bee Winners Ready for Round 2

By Vivian Ruiz and Tori Vache

Extemporaneous. Circumlocution. Linguistically. Slantindicular.

Can you say these words? If someone were to say them to you, could you spell them? By entering the spelling bee, our four winners are testing whether or not they can.

On November 16, two sixth graders, Ashleigh Correl, from Mrs. Karlick's homeroom, and Elias Mendez, from Mrs. Molosky's homeroom, competed in our school bee won. Correl placed first and Mendez was second.

On November 18, Brian Harry and Tori Vache', both from Mrs. Force's homeroom won the middle school bee. Harry placed first and Vache' came in second.

Q: How do you feel about winning the Spelling Bee?

Correl: Good.

Mendez: Great. (*shrug*)

Harry: (*shrug*) I feel happy.

Vache': Excited and surprised.

Q: How did you feel before the bee?

Correl: Nervous.

Mendez: Nervous, I thought I was going to lose.

Harry: Confident.

Vache': I was really shaky and scared. I felt hot and cold at the same time.

Q: How did you prepare for it?

Correl: By studying every night.

Mendez: I didn't study at all.

Harry: Studying a lot.

Vache': I studied...A LOT.

Q: What was the hardest thing about the bee?

Correl: Just being up there (was hard).



From left: HEMS Spelling Bee Winners Mendez, Vache', and Harry. Correl was absent when photo was taken.

Mendez: The words.

Harry: The words, yup.

Vache': Getting up in front of all those people. Half I didn't even know.

Q: What word/words did you misspell?

Correl: None

Mendez: I can't remember.

Harry: Syringe.

Vache': I misspelled *insulation* and screwed up *reimbursable*.

Q: How do you feel about the district bee coming up?

Correl: Nervous.

Mendez: I don't really care about it.

Harry: I feel happy that I got that far.

Vache': I'm glad I got that far, but I don't think I want to do it again.

Q: Is there any special way that you are going to prepare? If so, what is it?

Correl: By studying every night.

Mendez: Study.

Harry: No, is that a trick question?

Vache': I don't think so. What kind of question is that?

Q: Who is the number one person or people you would especially like thank for support or encourage-

ment?

Correl: My mom.

Mendez: Mrs. Karlick.

Harry: (*jokingly*) My mommy.

Vache': My whole family and Mrs. Karlick.

After we talked with the winners, we went behind the scenes, to speak with Ms. Rimshaw, the organizer of the spelling bee, who teaches eighth grade Language Arts at HMS.

Q: What are your feelings about the outcome of the spelling bee?

Rimshaw: I was surprised that there were no eighth grade winners. Seventh grade beat eighth. They whooped them. I am proud of all the contestants for having the guts to compete in our first ever spelling bee to be held in the auditorium.

Q: Will the same word list be used for districts?

Rimshaw: Yes.

Q: What kind of work goes into organizing a spelling bee?

Rimshaw: It's a matter of having all the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who want to participate sign up. Then they have to take a written

test. The top ones participate in the school spelling bee.

Q: Do you advise the spelling bee alone?

Rimshaw: Yes, but special thanks to Mrs. Kelly for assisting me with my first year running the spelling bee and also to the teachers who served as judges.

Q: What is most difficult?

Rimshaw: Probably organizing a time for them to take the written test.

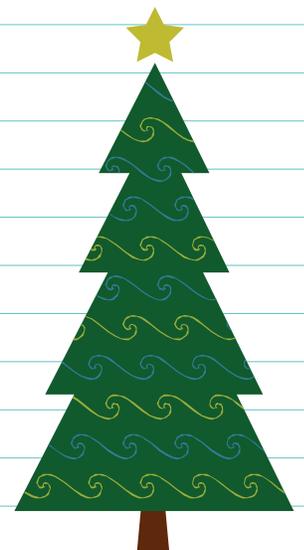
Q: Are you confident in the abilities of our HEMS contestants?

Rimshaw: Yes, I think that they will do well at representing our school.

Q: Is there any advice you'd like put out to them?

Rimshaw: Study their word list. Review their "Spell It" booklet. Try not to be nervous. Win or lose, we'll all be proud.

Like Ms. Rimshaw said, no matter what, we'll all be proud of our contestants. The district spelling bee will be held on January 4, 2012 at WHEMS at 6:30 p.m. Good luck to everyone!!!!



Naughty or Nice??

is on the naughty list because sometimes he's mean to people.

Joanny Jimenez is on the nice list because she helps people out during her spare time.

If you made Santa's naughty list this year, don't worry there's always next year. Be kind to others and do as you are told by your parents and teachers. You will be sure to make the nice list in 2012.

Student Council cont. from p. 1

The eighth grade members of student council include: Jennifer Alberto, Junior Arias, Julio Arizmende, Jessie Caso, Diana Colon, Sarah Gordineer, Olivia Kokinda, Randy Pineda, Elyssa Pizarro, Gabriella Smith, and Kayla Wiseman.

The student council does many great things for the school and community. All members serve as role-models for the student

body and must maintain good grades and positive behavior.

Anyone interested in joining will have to wait until next year's elections. Members are voted into this club by their peers. Elections will be held in September for the 2012-2013 school year. This is a great organization to be part of because it teaches students to give back to the school and community.

Editor's Notes

The following students did not meet their editorial deadline for this edition of *The Castle Caller*: **Emily Barazza, Destiny Mundo, and Victoria Gobeo.**



Thank you for your support all year!
HAPPY HOLIDAYS



The newspaper staff at The Castle Caller

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Mrs. O'Donnell

*Denotes Mrs. O'Donnell assisted with the article.

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