



Seussical

The world of Dr. Seuss is brought to JA in this highly anticipated student performance.

Page 2

Seasonal Struggles

This time of year can be a big struggle for students, with a lot of complex feelings of stress and depression revolving around finals and the holidays.

Page 6

Santa Scam?

Santa Claus is coming to town, breaking in via the fireplace, and stealing all your home baked goods in exchange for the gifts every child can only dream of.

Page 11

Seussical the Musical

By: Hunter Hobbs

Long notes and panicked screams drift down the hallway spreading excitement and buzz throughout JA as the opening date for “Seussical the Musical” drew closer. But that has all passed now that the long-anticipated performance has finally opened to JA.

“The start of Seussical has been stressful just with auditions and trying to learn all the different songs. It’s been very fun and support-



ive and I’m super excited to be a part of it!” exclaims musical participant sophomore Aiden Hohnstein.

There is a lot of excitement circling this performance, especially with the audience involved improvisations and new opportunities that have been presented on the tech side of the production.

“I am most excited that we have a solid tech side taken care of, so we can fully concentrate on the artistic side,” states Ms. Grace, the director of Seussical and JA drama teacher.

Seussical is a special play and has a theme within it, mostly containing components of Horton Hears a Who.

“The focus of the musical is the land of Seuss and of Horton, the elephant trying to save a clover with a small world atop it,” explains Hohnstein.



Double casting was a decision that Ms. Grace made, and people like and dislike it for various reasons. Eliza Eichelberger, a sophomore participating in the musical, has her own opinion on it.

“I would prefer everything not to be double cast, but I understand Ms. Grace’s concern. Instead of double casting everything, she could have just had understudies, because now everyone who got a part would have less stage time, and everyone who would want a part would want more stage time,” states Eichelberger.

On the other hand, senior Valera Noland has a much more optimistic view on the double casting.

“I love the cast!” Noland exclaims. “It’s pretty different to have 2 different casts, but it’s pretty amazing to have 2 people on the same character.”

With everyone having a blast, no doubt the people watching will have just as much fun, especially with the famous, energetic character

narrating the show commonly known as the Cat in the Hat!

“My role is Cat in the Hat, and I share it with Alton Peacey,” Noland explains. “We are both Cat in the Hat for all of the shows, so we don’t have to split it like all the other people do. The character is very enthusiastic and exciting, and the cat can be many different actors and many different roles whenever the cat wishes.”

With the lead role, it is also important to see what other people are playing as well, and Chris Rock is a perfect example.

“Sometimes I play General Genghis Khan Schmitz who’s crazy for war,” Rock says. “He’s very into it and serious, but sometimes he can be silly and obsessive when you get into it. The other night I played Yertle the Turtle, and he is essentially the judge of the jungle and he is a very law-focused citizen, I guess.”

In the end, the musical has a ton of teamwork and effort put into it, making it a show worth seeing.

“Everyone should come see the show, because who doesn’t like Dr. Seuss?” Ms. Grace points out. “It’s going to be colorful and fun, and at the time of holidays when most people are getting tired of Christmas music, they can see Seussical!”





Art-tastic

By: Hannah Strumpher

Bright colors flash and bustling art classrooms fill with children eager to create something before their parents pick them up.

On November 30, the National Arts Honors Society (NAHS) hosted a kids' craft night from 5-8 after school in both Mrs. Garcia's and Mrs. Stadler's rooms. There were many tables with different, easy crafts to entertain the children while their parents took a break to go Christmas shopping.

"I've already heard from a couple parents," stated Mrs. Garcia. "They were super grateful. Their kids had a great time and they gave compliments to all the students who helped."

With a total of 24 kids attending, they were able to do multiple crafts with the guidance of the NAHS members who were at each table. Some of the crafts included making mosaic treasure boxes, kumihimo bracelets, and African face masks.

"My favorite part was watching all the children and what they came up with as their designs," said senior Rose Gray. "Some of them were really funny and some of them [were] really good color coordinating and everything just being really neat... I really enjoyed that I got to see



that."

At times, tables would become a bit crowded, leaving the NAHS members with multiple kids needing assistance and overwhelming them.

"There were just a bunch of kids that came around in the room and it was kind of a handful," mentioned club member Sean Beasley. "We were a bit overwhelmed, at least I was, but after, like, 20 minutes it was fine just because we got used to it and most of the kids were kind of chilling out."

To get a break from the crafts, the children were taken to the makerspace to watch a Christmas movie. This gave the club members a chance to breathe and spend some time away from the kids.

"...We were getting the kids over to the makerspace and doing the hot chocolate and candy canes and just having them sit while getting the movie all set up. That definitely was the calmest part of the night and easiest to get all ready," mentioned NAHS co-president Elise Seiffertt.

Although most of the club members were exhausted after the night was over, they were extremely proud of how they had run the event. "I am actually quite happy with how everything turned out. It was a bit chaotic at times, but I think overall, it ran pretty smoothly," stated Seiffertt. "There were a few hiccups at times, but that is to be expected. So as my last craft night that I'm doing here at JA, it was a really good one to end with."

Music Matters

By: Hayley Smith

In a show of musical talent, the Tri-M Music Honor Society at JA recently put on their annual Induction Night, welcoming new members into the club. The event showcased the diverse talents that define the Tri-M community.

Aubry Duncan, who has been a Tri-M member for the past 10 months, reflected on her journey within the club, stating, "I joined right after Induction Night last year. I definitely think that the community is really supportive and is a no pressure club. I would suggest people join if they are into performing music at all. It's cool, and it's a good time."

Induction Night is an important event as it inducts new members into the club such as Duncan herself. When asked how she thought the induction night went Duncan said that she thought it went well because "everybody had their stuff down, [and it was] very well-rehearsed."

The feeling was shared by Zach Lemanski who explained, "I think it went very well, we had a couple of new members inducted into the club and some great musical performances."

Tri-M is a very special community that all the members love.

"I think what makes Tri-M special is the medium in which we can convey what we've done and our work and progress," Lemanski explains.

Other members including Duncan said that she

loves performing with the Tri-M community because it helps immensely with her self-confidence.

"My friends are in it and I can just come and have a good excuse to hang out and sing," Duncan says.

Chris Meier, another member in the club, reflected on the evening and shared, "I liked [Induction Night]. It ended up being pretty long, which is a problem we've had in the past. These things tend to be pretty short. I really liked it. I liked how we had collaborative pieces because they are all really cool."

She believes that Tri-M is such a great club to be a part in because, "as a whole it is nice to work and make music with people and not just [perform] solo." Meier also revealed a personal growth aspect, stating, "I like performing because it is a good way to challenge anxiety. I'm a lot less anxious now."

Peacey explained the special community within Tri-M, stating, "Tri-M is the only place where I've felt like everyone of every instrument, and of every genre of music, can really connect with other people. When I first came here in 7th grade I got to perform with Tri-M and it was really cool to see all these people [come together]. Some people were playing classical, some people were playing pop, some people were making songs. It was just a really special experience to me."



Final Focus

By: Kris Kientz

The clock ticks faster as finals approach and students slowly lose their minds, the stress taking over.

There are fewer than ten calendar days until finals come to JA, and students' stress levels are rapidly rising. Junior Ian Sloan is burdened with three core classes and several personal issues, but one thing in particular is his biggest stressor.

"I'm currently figuring out how to find the time to study for all of these core classes," Sloan comments. "I will have several quizzes before I even get to the finals, and I also have a concussion and bodily injuries."

Post-Secondary Advisor Ms. LeValley has also seen an uptick in students' stress this past week as finals loom ever closer. She believes that College Biology I is the class with the most panicking students, but she tries her best to reassure them.

"College Bio gets brought up the most with stressed out students, and it truly is one of the most challenging classes JA offers," LeValley remarks. "However, it's also the class that students are most proud of completing. Our students generally do fantastic in it, but the



fear of the unknown causes a lot of students to stress themselves out."

Despite the stress that comes with the season, Sloan and others feel prepared for their finals. They know that they still have a lot to do, but students that have productive study habits are not too worried.

"I honestly think I'm going to be prepared for my finals," Sloan says. "I've spent a lot of time this year really focusing on my problems and making myself a better student, so I think it's going to be okay."

Every person has their own way of relaxing when they're anxious. Some like to read, others like to draw, and some even surround themselves with friends. Sloan and Ms. LeValley both provided some insight into what they do when they're stressed, but their answers were quite different.

"[When I'm really stressed out I] usually just listen to music and try to do something I enjoy," Sloan reveals. "I will go train and play soccer or I'll sit and talk to my friends. It depends on my mood."

On the other hand, Ms. LeValley takes a more practical approach to her stress. She is unable to relax until the source of stress is gone.

"I tend to write everything about [the stressor] down," LeValley explains. "I make lists to help me remember things, and I have tons of old-fashioned sticky notes in different colors that I use to make it more colorful. The colors don't even mean anything, it's just whichever one I grab!"

JA has several different resources that students can use to ease their stress, but not a lot of them are actually used. Sources of Strength, free tutoring, and the school's social worker Mrs.

Severance are all under-utilized tools that can be incredibly helpful.

"My goal is to at least make students aware of the resources available to them," LeValley shares. "Know that we're here to help. Perfection is never the expectation."

Helpful Hints

By: Benjamin Schumm

Tests and classes can be extremely difficult, but effective study habits save the day.

Mr. Bilinski, the Chemistry teacher at JA, has unique insight on studying due to being a teacher. He's seen the study habits of passing students right alongside the study habits (or lack thereof) of students who don't quite pass the test.

"One of the things that I've seen previous students do is use Quizlet as a way to study, where they create their own Quizlets based on questions that could be coming from review guides, questions from homework assignments, and questions from previous tests," Bilinski recalls.

Along with Quizlet, he has also noticed that study groups can be effective options for students who are prone to distraction.

"I've also seen students going through and having study groups with a select group of individuals where they schedule in a chunk of time to work together on studying for a particular subject using a study guide," Bilinski states. "They all collectively help each other with the study guide and then help each other with things that they have misconceptions about, along with leveraging strengths that each individual has."

Josiah Mena-Wenstrom, a JA junior, has taken enough tests to know how to study well, and what's helpful to have and what isn't.

"It's really helpful when the teachers have a study guide, because they know all of the material that will be on the test," Mena-Wenstrom says. "It's especially helpful for students who may struggle with studying in traditional ways."

He also recognizes that even though it may be difficult, it's never a bad idea to ask one of your teachers for help if you don't understand something.

"Even though it's definitely intimidating, it doesn't hurt," Mena-Wenstrom encourages. "Teachers are always very friendly and receptive."

Sophomore Ozwald Ozment is another student that acknowledges that while classes can be stressful, there are some strategies that can be implemented.

"I get less stressed when I tell myself I'll do alright," Ozment explains. "I work on things to ensure that I'll do good, and I check how high of a score is necessary for me to get my desired grade in that class."

Ozment also mentions that it can be difficult to juggle both your classes and your personal life at times.

"I have made a rule where I can't work when I eat dinner so I can ensure I have a break," Ozment relays. "The best way to do it is probably

to do your homework and study for 2 or 3 hours when you get home from school every day so you can relax the rest of the day. This also means you practice the subjects throughout a period of time, rather than only once right before your final."

If studying by yourself isn't your style, JA hosts many events like the Cocoa and Cram where you can study with friends in a constructive and supportive environment. This STU-CO-hosted event is in the library on December 15th and is a great opportunity for students to study for upcoming finals while getting to enjoy treats and holiday movies.

Another great option for students who are struggling in their classes is free tutoring from NHS. Offered Wednesdays from 3:30-4:00 and Thursdays from 7:45-8:15, this is a great chance for students to make sure they're ready for whatever comes their way throughout the year.



Seasonal Struggles

By: Mackenzie Estep

While this season comes with many joys and fun traditions, the holidays can also come with a lot of difficulties.

This time of year can be a big struggle for students, with the longing for the break, upcoming finals, and the many feelings that come with the holiday season. Although they can be good, the holidays can also bring a lot of complex feelings of stress and depression.

Senior Ava Chung shared her experience by saying, “I struggle with depression year-round but I feel a spike during the winter time and the holidays. Sometimes I just feel really dejected and defeated. I don’t have as much motivation for school, and I’m very much tired all the time.”



There are a lot of reasons why these feelings come about during the holiday season, including family struggles and seasonal expectations, but many students at JA attribute this feeling to the weather.

“I feel more tired and less motivated to do stuff around this time,” stated senior Grace Doulas. “I feel this way because the sun goes down at 4:30 and I want to go to bed immediately.” Chung continued this theme by saying, “I think how early it gets dark as well as the cold really causes me to get in a slump, which in turn affects my schoolwork, which is more stressful as the semester gets close to the end.”

These feelings can be very overwhelming and have a big effect on students as they try to navigate through the rest of their school days until break, and because of that, many of them have found coping mechanisms and activities to help push them through.

“I really like to stress bake,” said senior Kate Rock. “Sometimes the baking itself can stress me out but by the end, but it really helps me feel better and helps with those feelings.”

Chung continued the discussion by describing some of her personal strategies: “I’ve built up a multitude of different mechanisms to deal with [the stress], but I think maintaining a routine that emphasizes healthy behaviors is going to be the most beneficial.”

Though there are many struggles that come along with this time of year, it is important to appreciate the good things of the season and enjoy this time while it lasts.

Rock stated, “You really just gotta appreciate the fun small things about Christmas and use that to push through the hard stuff, cuz then you can just enjoy the break and time with your family. That’s what I do.”

Round Two

By: Ender Gressett

New classes are right around the corner, and students are getting excited, or not so excited, about their new schedules.

The semester is finally coming to an end, and new schedules are soon to be in place, with students being put into new classes and environments.

Sophomore Claire Pillow expresses her feelings about the coming semester, describing what she’s looking forward to.

“[I’m excited for] track season because I like the environment of track, and I think it’s a lot of fun,” Pillow states. “[I’m also looking forward to] Chemistry because I like science and I’m excited to hear what [Mr. Bilinski] has to say about it. I enjoy math, so I think it’ll be a good crossover between math and science.”

Pillow is also excited to take Spanish next semester, as the class will provide her with opportunities unique to JA.

“I actually want to know Spanish,” Pillow says. “I want to go into the medical field and be able to open that door to other people who maybe don’t speak much English, and I think that it’s a really cool opportunity that we have here. I’m really excited for the change of schedule, as this semester was a lot harder than I thought it would be.”

Junior Ryan Alexander is also looking forward to next semester, anticipating the freedom of an off-block.

“[I’m looking forward to] my off-block because it’s a time where I can do my homework,” Alexander expresses. “Especially with harder classes next semester. [I’m also looking forward to] College Biology, though I heard it’s hard, but I think it’ll be fun.”

Alexander expresses his feelings for the change of schedule for the new semester, as the routine of the current one goes away.

“I think it will be fine, I’ll just get used to it kind of how every other semester goes,” explains Alexander. “I’m looking forward to having Mr. Kirkley and Mr. Thimsen for the first time, I haven’t had them yet.”

Another junior, Ethan Watson, isn’t excited about too much for next semester, as his schedule is a lot busier than what he has now.

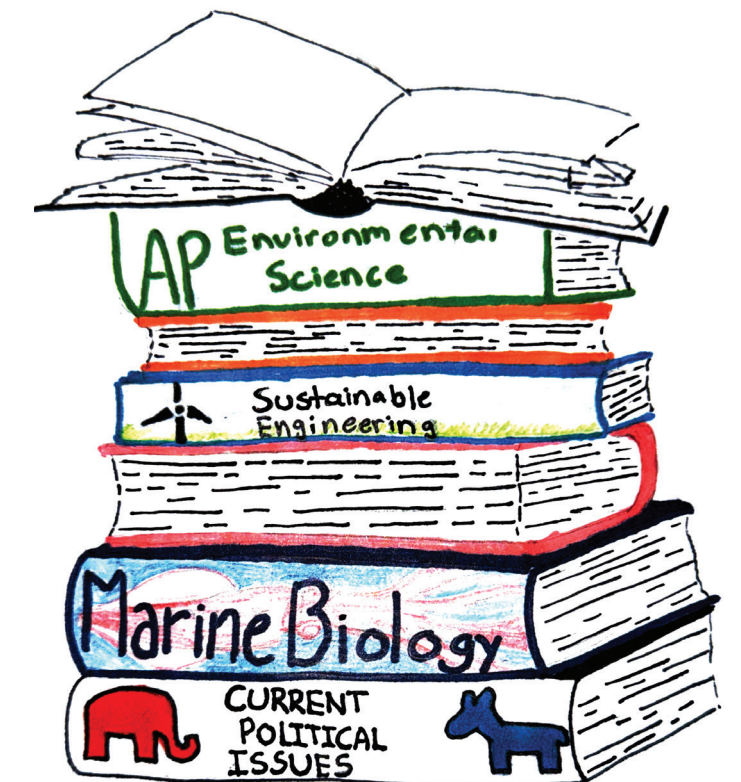
“Honestly, [I’m not looking forward to] much, because I’m taking both AP Physics and AP Euro,” Watson states. “They’re really hard classes, and you read a bunch, do a bunch, and do a lot of assignments.”

However, Watson is excited for one thing next semester, which he hopes will make up for his challenging schedule.

“I’m excited for my off-block, D block, quarter four,” Watson says. “It’ll be pretty fun going out with [other people] that have it off as well.”

Lola Damers expresses her mixed feelings about the change of schedule for next semester, talking about the events that will take place and her grades throughout the semester.

“Sports are always fun to watch, and seeing your friends is always really fun,” Damers says. “I’m nervous about the change of schedule because I like my straight A streak so far, and I don’t know what the challenge is going to be.”



Holiday Happenings

By: Jordan Leschuk and Lucia Mott

What do you do on winter break? Do you make cookies at your grandma's house? Do you watch Elf or The Grinch? Do you go ice skating with friends? Do you bake until you can't anymore? Do you travel to see family and friends?

Some students like sophomore Aliana Gonzales spend lots of time with their relatives.

"During winter break we go around and visit some family," Gonzales says. "We also have neighbors that have a light show every year, so we constantly stop to watch it. Christmas lights are all around our neighborhood so we often drive around to look at them all. We watch lots of movies and do a lot of baking. We even have an elf on the shelf for my younger siblings. They love to look for it in the mornings."

Other students like sophomore Tiffany Bunce, prefer to stay at home to enjoy the holidays.

"Me and my family make and decorate cookies on Christmas Eve," Bunce explains. "We also go to The Westminster City Center to look at all of the Christmas lights they set up."

Sometimes parents have just as much fun on break as their kids. In sophomore Sydney Murphy's home, Christmas morning can be quite chaotic.

"My parents lock us in our rooms overnight and we cannot leave," Murphy reveals. "Then we run down the stairs as soon as the doors unlock; it's all recorded too!"

These fun traditions give excitement to both the kids and the family and make winter break

special to them.

Gonzales explains that, every year "during break we always have at least one baking day. We spend the whole day baking, and we share it with the family that comes and visits us for the holidays."

The students might be on break, but so are the hard-working staff at JA. Mr. Hartmann has had the same traditions for quite some time that he takes part in with his family.

"We watch Die Hard every year. That's about it. It is a Christmas movie despite what others may think," Hartmann mentioned.

Bunce is quite excited about her upcoming holiday plans, where she is going to be participating in "...

the ice rink's annual holiday exhibition. This year, me and [fellow JA student] Sierra Buzick along with the RMFSC Jr. Board will be hosting a bake sale, selling baked goods and personalized ornaments."

This time of year is great to get a break and to get away from school and be able to reset our minds. Especially after finals, it is nice to get a break from it all.

Gonzales shares that the break is "...one of the best times for us to get together and make new memories as a family as well as indulge in our holiday traditions, such as tamales and bizcochitos. These are traditions that have been passed down throughout our culture."



Santa Scam?

By: Sabrina Madruga

Santa Claus is coming to town, breaking in via the fireplace, and stealing all your home baked goods in exchange for gifts every child can only dream of. With a net worth of over fifty one billion dollars (\$51,600,160,268 to be exact) this holiday legend is a Christmas tradition that has stood the test of time and lasted through the ages.

There are many perspectives as well as family customs relating to this icon that differ from family to family, truly making the memory of Santa Claus a harmonious element to the magic of the Christmas season.

"I like the original story behind Santa Claus and where he came from," recalls sophomore Katelyn Harding. "I remember in first grade, we all set out our boots and then 'Santa' went through and put candy inside our shoes to reenact the first time which I thought was really cool."

Santa Claus has created an impact on many kids across the nation, each in their own special

and unique way. With that being said, there are still many ups and downs relating to this idolized character, each of which additionally brings forth strategic inquiry.

"Just think about the logistics here," continues Harding. "There's a really old fat guy who has to go through these chimneys, and he has thousands of them per night. That's just terrible." Although the rationale might be difficult to overlook, Santa does still have some positive things going for him, albeit with some negative ones working against him as well (let's face it, the whole "he sees you when you're sleeping, he knows when you're awake" thing isn't exactly

warm and welcoming).

"The best part about Santa Claus is getting free stuff," states eighth grader Reyah O'Neill, "but he is invading your house."

Even though Santa is supposed to be an early introduction to karma, bringing toys to good kids and justifiably punishing those who have not lived up to his standards, many people still can't get over the propaganda surrounding 'good' Saint Nick.

"There are a lot of stereotypes about Santa," mentions freshman Trevor Nichols. "One of

them is that he is into slavery because of the manual labor the elves are forced to do."

While this may not be the most popular of rumors, it has still managed to taint the views of many unsuspecting Americans as to what really goes down in the North Pole. On the contrary, some students at JA still have belief in their hearts that Santa Claus is indeed real, and one of the greatest of childhood experiences.

"I believe in Santa," declares freshman Isabella Ayala. "That elf on the shelf, he moves all by himself."

Yet another convincing factor supporting the reality of Santa Claus is the annual visit from one of Santa's little helpers, spying on children to ensure their kindness throughout all endeavors and good actions within every encounter.

"Santa is a good tradition because he gives me presents," continues Ayala. "He also gets kids to listen to their parents, which is good for them."



Holding Court

By: Rylan Mills

It's officially winter season. The snow is on the ground, the air is cool and crisp, and the gym is full of eager spectators watching the JA basketball teams dominate on the court. Whether it's hitting threes or hitting consecutive free throws, the basketball teams are full of energy with the season underway.

The boys' basketball team is already off to a great start winning their first three games and dominating the Bob LaVoie Memorial Tournament championship.

"The team will be better [this year] because we have more chemistry than last year," junior Boston Harris explains.

The boys' team is young, with only a handful of seniors, so the juniors appear to comprise most of the varsity squad. This lack of seniors has led to juniors stepping up and taking the leadership roles, including captain Josh Neely.

On the girls' side, they have also had a great start despite some complications. The girls' team finished second in the Bob LaVoie Memorial Tournament even with fewer than 10 players. The lack of players from the tournament is mainly due to most of the girls' team being a part of multiple sports teams.

When asked how the coaches manage to work with the girls with multiple teams, Coach

Sharpley responded, "It's a challenge, but we make it work." Sharpley has been the boys' basketball coach for 24 years and just joined the girls' coaching squad 5 years ago. "Both teams have excellent potential to make

a run at the State Tournament and advance in brackets," Sharpley notes.

Sharpley isn't the only person hoping for a big run in playoffs; many of the seniors this year are also hoping for a playoff run including senior Sarah Welsch who said, "I think our team will be great this year because we have gotten a lot of new players who have experience with basketball."

Junior Elsa Nygren added, "There is a great team chemistry and a positive atmosphere this year. Everyone is constantly trying to get better and make each other better."



JAGWIRE

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