

THE ACADEMY

TORCH

A CHRISTIAN BROTHERS ACADEMY NEWS PUBLICATION

DECEMBER 2018 ISSUE

**WINTER
BREAK
SCHEDULE
OF EVENTS**

Also in this issue:
The Best
and Worst of
NBA Christmas Jerseys

PLUS
**SPIDERMAN:
THE HERO OF GENERATION Z**



Letter from the Editor / The Academy Torch

Premiere Issue / December 2018



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER
AND EDITOR IN CHIEF
MS. BILOHOLOWSKI

One of my favorite podcasters just started an Advent Instagram account and talks about the fact that it is a time of waiting. This resonated with me because it feels like all of December and even the end of November is a waiting game.

All of us are waiting for the festivities of Advent and the beginning of Winter Break. We all look forward to Holiday Express, the Christmas concert, and the Advent Prayer Service, amongst other things. In our waiting, it feels like we are rushing along the month of December. We are rushing the events and components that actually make us enjoy and treasure this time of year.

So, rather than rushing and focusing on the waiting that we all are experiencing, try enjoying the journey of the season. It sounds kind of cheesy, even as I write this. However, rather than focusing on the end goal (whether it is the due date of a paper, the beginning of Winter Break, or Christmas) embrace the events of the day and the season.

PUBLISHER
Ms. Biloholowski

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Ms. Biloholowski

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Ms. Biloholowski

EDITORS
Brian Hack
Kieran Leister
Francisco Roig
Matthew Vaccaro

STAFF
Shane Brennan
Gary Fletcher
Michael Goddard
Alistair Hackett
Jonathan Heite
Conor Morris
Joshua Scharf
William Seijas
Michael Sullivan

Below and Cover Photos by Larry Levanti



#WE ARE CBA

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

WINTER BREAK EDITION

Will Seijas '20 & Michael Goddard '20

We're almost there! The sixteen full days of Winter Break have almost arrived! Since the majority of us usually waste our days until we start to panic about the school work we didn't do, we have some ideas for all of the days of break.

December 22

Wake up to the feeling of freedom, as your sixteen days of break starts now. First, I would suggest having a plate of pancakes and hot chocolate to start the break right. Shortly after, might I suggest spending the day in the city or more locally for some holiday cheer. There is the annual Christmas light display at PNC Bank Arts Center. You could always drive around with either family or friends to enjoy the first night of break.

December 23

On this beautiful Monday, consider spending the day in downtown Red Bank, maybe shopping for Christmas gifts. The most widely known store in Red Bank would be Urban Outfitters. Although it arguably carries the best merchandise in town, you may find their prices tend to be a bit steep. If you want to save some cash, or are shopping for another person, you might find that going to a few of the thrift shops might be the thing for you. All in all, downtown Red Bank has every store you could want, including some of the best food in the state.

December 24

On Christmas Eve, it would only be right to do something in the spirit of Christmas. Consider taking a trip to Atlantic Highlands, and buy a wreath or a tree! At the scenic Veteran's Park, in Atlantic Highlands, there will be a Christmas tree and wreath sale. As an annual event, this is the best place to find things to fill a room with holiday cheer.

December 25

Today is Christmas Day. Along with other holidays, the majority of stores close on Christmas Day, making it hard to find something to do. Although most people plan to stay inside with family, if you're looking for something to do, a long walk in Thompson Park is a great way to spend a lazy afternoon. With fourteen miles of trails and scenic views along the way, you can not go wrong with spending a couple hours here.

December 26

With the Christmas season being essentially over at this point, anything festive will not be as much fun. Just north of Sea Bright, Sandy Hook is one of the most unique spots in the country. With an unmatched view of New York City from the beach, there is excessive wildlife here, including birds, fish, deer, and numerous other types of animals. If long walks on the beach aren't your forte, keep driving past the beach parking lots and you will find yourself in an old military base, where the Coast Guard is currently stationed. In the park, there are numerous structures to explore. All in all, this is the ultimate adventure day.

December 27

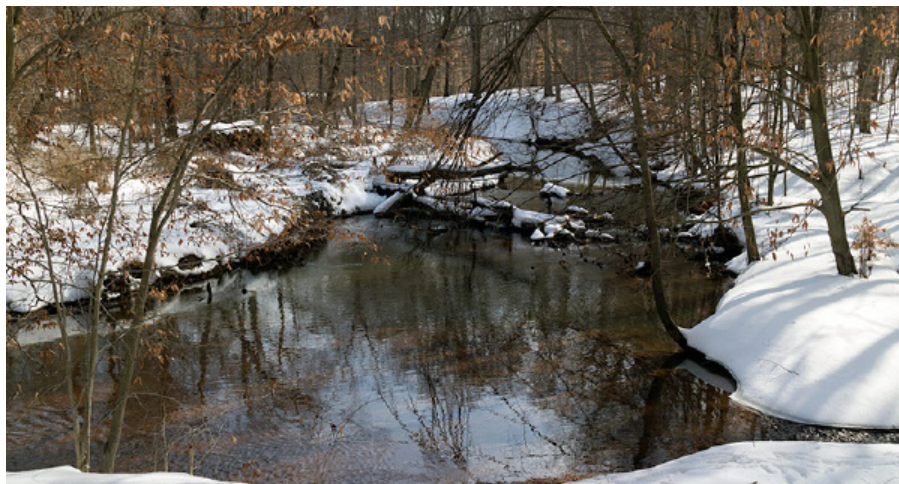
December 27 happens to be a Thursday. On Thursdays, Buffalo Wild Wings practically gives boneless wings away. If you are a wings' guy, you must try this place. As a massive football fan favorite, they are the main place to go if you want to watch football and eat wings. Although there is no football that night, do not pass up the opportunity to try delicious wings. For just 75 cents, try these boneless wings at the Monmouth Mall, Manalapan, or any other Buffalo Wild Wings location.

December 28

If by now you have never been to the Stone Pony, today is the day. As one of the most iconic locations on the shore, this spot in Asbury Park is legendary. On the 28th, "Promised Land" will be performing at 7 o'clock. If you have not heard of the group, do not worry, neither have I. But the night is destined to have the best music from Jon Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen, and numerous other artists from the area. At only fifteen dollars per person, this event is a must-see for anyone with an interest in good music.

December 29

Nowadays, to hear of someone going to an arcade seems very old-fashioned, and out of our time. This may be true, but one arcade in Red Bank defies the odds. This arcade in downtown Red Bank is called, "Yestercades." For just \$8.75 an hour, or \$25 for the day, this place offers tons of fun for hours. With classic games, like PacMan, multiple pinball machines, and an Xbox and PS4 console, they have everything. I suggest paying for one hour, and try every game there, for no more than five minutes if you are under a time constraint. If not, take advantage of this time capsule, as arcades are on the way out, and this is one of the best in the area.



December 30th

An abundance of important events happened this eighth day of CBA break. Just five days after Christmas, relaxing and catching up on sleep after a busy holiday might be a good option. Although, “Mary Poppins” will be making a return to your local theaters and it might be a good idea to go watch it considering it has been hyped up for a few months now. The movie is always a fun and exciting idea and seeing this revival of a historical figure in Mary Poppins is definitely a thing to check off your Christmas break to-do list.

December 31st

The last day of 2018, A.K.A, New Year’s Eve! The best ideas for today are to fulfill any promises or resolutions you promised to complete before the coming of 2019. You may be having tons of family over, or going to visit family, so sleeping in and enjoying peace before you are bombarded with conversation by other family members. Also, sleeping in is a good idea because you may be bold enough to attempt to stay up all night to watch the 11,875-pound ball of metal fall from the sky marking the termination of 2018 and the beginning of 2019.

January 1st

New Year’s Day is an important day for many people. For the average person, it marks the beginning (and/or end) of your New Year’s resolution. One of the most popular activities to do on this day is ice skating in the city. Though it will be packed, it will be a beautiful day to get out and skate on the crisp first day of 2019.

January 2nd

The day after New Year’s is generally a day for the lazy side of yourself to show. Though it may be a good idea to start to take out the backpack and get a go on the homework your evil teachers gave you over break. The newest scary horror movie, Psychopaths, will be premiering in theaters and if you are in the mood for a good scare, wander over to the theaters.

January 3rd

With the termination of break just four days away, today is the day to enjoy the crisp winter weather and go ice skating at Middletown Ice World which has free skates some weeknights. Another great idea is bowling, which is a great attraction with lanes in Middletown that usually has live performances at night.

January 4th

One of the last nights before it is a school night, it is probably best to enjoy staying up late playing the hot new video game, Call of Duty. Call of Duty premiered at the end of November as one of the most popular game of the recent years. If video games are not your thing, enjoy some Netflix. There’s tons of content to enjoy

January 5th

Today is a day to finish any school work that still has not been completed yet, still. It is a good day to enjoy the snow, if there is any, and reflect on the great break that was had. It might be a good day to wander into the city wearing the new clothes you received for Christmas and enjoy the beautiful atmosphere before being tied down to the daily routine of school days.

January 6th

The last free night of break happens to be today. Today is the day to reflect on the career of the great Jackie Robinson who retired from MLB on this day. The last night of break is a day to get back into the swing of things and get used to getting to bed at a reasonable time. A great idea for this day is to spend time with your family who hopefully made this break so special. Any last ditch effort to do anything you may have not done over break should occur on this day.

The Polar Bear Plunge and Why It Matters

Francisco Roig '19

Here at CBA, we make our passion for helping others known to everyone, whether that be at a Lasallian Youth trip, the annual Thanksgiving food drive, or at one of the several service immersion trips that run throughout the year. However, in order to run so many opportunities to give back to the community, the school needs the funds to do so. The Polar Bear Plunge event is how the school funds the majority of these other opportunities.

This year, campus ministry plans to run more immersion trips to Montana than any year prior, having already led successful trips, this previous October and November. In addition to the planned trip in May, Campus Ministry hopes to run an extra Montana trip for anyone else who would wish to go.

After going there in November I highly recommend that everyone at least try to go to one of these trips, as I know that I will. However, in order for this dream to become a reality, absolutely EVERYONE will need to participate in the polar plunge. I understand that most people could write off the trip, claiming, "Who'd want to hop in the ice cold, January water?" In my opinion, one's

personal comfort is a small sacrifice to pay for all the good that you will be doing, by participating. It actually can be a very fun event. The exact date of the event will be announced towards the end of January/ beginning of February. I expect at least half the student body to attend and I look forward to seeing you there.



The Mood Enlightenment of Twitter

Shane Brennan '20

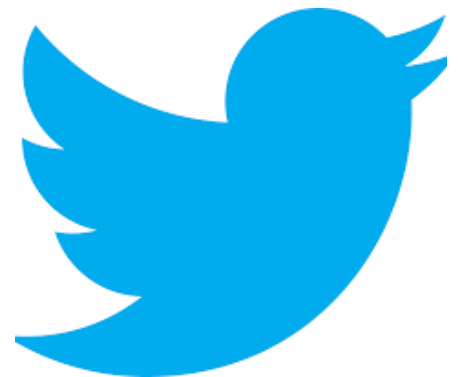
Social media, as a communication tool, is accessible to everyone around the modernized world. However, social media's downside is that it is often abused to demean or hurt others. Twitter has garnered a negative reputation as the most popular platform for this type of cyberbullying. The site was originally a place where anyone could become twitter-famous for a day, as in they get a tweet with thousands of likes and goes viral. Mike Krall, a former student here, tweeted a joke about the election two years ago and ended up with 79k likes. These people faded away, as Twitter became a place where political agendas were pushed above all and mainly negative news and racism populated people's timelines.

In spite of this negative atmosphere, many people have begun to use the platform to bring Twitter back to its original place for people to tell jokes

again. Some people have taken this opportunity and ran with it, like Jonny Sun. Jonny Sun is just a funny guy a Twitter account whose account grew so large that he became a figure in today's comedy scene. He had appearances on late shows like Stephen Colbert and now writes for television shows like *BoJack Horseman*. Stand-up comedians have begun to use Twitter to get more exposure and rise up the ranks quicker.

Another example is Patrick Monahan, who used Twitter to tell jokes and comment on news and went from working independent shows around New York to getting national exposure while writing for the likes of GQ and BuzzFeed while getting specials on networks like Showtime. These rising stars in the comedy industry are just examples of countless rising stars who used Twitter as their first platform to take off into the industry. The rise of

comedy in Twitter again has given rise to big corporations to use comedy to promote themselves. Wendy's, MoonPie, Steak-Umm, and Pop-Tarts have used Twitter to attract new customers through viral tweets with relatable humor. After Twitter fell into depressing disarray because of politics and social abuse, people and companies are using comedy to lighten the mood.



Why is Spider-man The Superhero of Generation Z

Jonathan Heite '20

It is hard to argue the popularity of superheroes in today's age. There are two major comic book companies, Marvel and DC, with Marvel being one of the most lucrative companies in the entire comic and movie industry. The most popular heroes include Batman, Superman, Captain America and Iron Man just to name a few. Superhero movies dominate the movie box office, and draw in not only comic book enthusiasts, but also the average fan who simply enjoys the action and thrill of the movies. However, there is one superhero that has stood out and has become the symbol of the current generation of society (Generation Z). This hero is not a wealthy billionaire, an alien from outer space, or a super soldier that has lived for decades. Peter Parker was just a dorky, scrawny, alienated teenager, until he got bit by a radioactive spider and turned into your beloved "Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man."

The story of Spider-Man is very unique, with many twists and turns. Both of his parents died in a tragic plane crash, and he was raised by his Uncle Ben and Aunt May. He also lost Uncle Ben when he got older, and struggled with many painful losses in his life. Once he got bit by a radioactive spider by accident, his whole life turned around for the better. During the day, Peter would attend school with very few friends,

became alienated from his peers, and would be bullied because of his intelligence. At night, he would put on his iconic costume and clean up the crime in New York City, while battling many intimidating foes. Some of these include the Green Goblin, Doctor Octopus, Electro, Venom, Rhino, and Kingpin. His abilities enabled him to perform incredible feats, such as crawling up walls, enhanced strength and agility, and web-slinging. It is safe to say the average fan envies Spider-Man's abilities and consider them to be truly amazing.

Although Spider-Man has these extraordinary capabilities, many people in Generation Z can relate to Peter Parker. Present day teenagers and young adults are constantly being judged on numerous characteristics such as social status, beliefs/religion, and sexuality. Many are pushed away from friends and family because of people simply trying to be themselves. Therefore, it is easier for people to relate with Peter Parker, who also is an outsider in society. He was gifted with amazing powers that he could have used for personal gain and cause harm upon a world that was only cruel to him. Instead, he chose to do good for society, and become a hero; a role model for people to admire and look up to. Even the average fan who watches Spider-Man movies, reads the comics, or plays

his video games, can find it easy to root for the underdog. Peter Parker is almost always overcoming obstacles, and can provide an example for those struggling with their own problems in life. When times are tough, people turn to their heroes for comfort and support. Spider-Man is that symbol.

Spider-Man has also become even more popular in pop culture in the past few years due to the most recent actor to portray the hero, Tom Holland, has starred in a solo movie, Spider-Man Homecoming (2017), played a pivotal role in Avengers Infinity War (2018), and will star in the upcoming film, Spider-Man: Far from Home (2019). In December of 2018, Spider-Man will also hit the big screen in the cartoon flick, Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse. The film has already been critically acclaimed, receiving a

100% on Rotten Tomatoes, and I can't wait to see it for myself on the big screen.

Spider-Man has been dominating the movie and video game industries, with his influence over pop culture growing there is no wonder why he is so popular.

People like to see an underdog defy the odds, and Spider-Man has certainly had his trials in his stories. Many struggle with life's numerous challenges and difficulties. Spider-Man teaches the world to do good throughout life's journey. Life is not easy in any shape or form, but this hero teaches through his actions to defy the odds, be brave, and let nothing stand in the way of success. In today's age, Spider-Man is the hero the world craves.



It's the Most Wonderful Christmas Movie

Kieran Leister '19

It's that time again. It's the time for counting down the days until Christmas break, blasting Mariah Carey in the car, and most importantly, watching all of those classic Christmas movies that never get old. There are so many phenomenal Christmas Movies out there and it is almost impossible to narrow it down to just a few films that just perfectly embody the spirit of Christmas. There is one movie however that I and most other logical human beings believe, that is synonymous with being the greatest Christmas movie of all time.

"It's A Wonderful Life," many of you reading this will agree with this without any questioning, is not only a phenomenal Christmas movie but also a great film in general. Others may disagree with this statement due to another movie that you stick with or maybe you just have never seen "It's A Wonderful Life." To those of you who haven't seen it, please stop reading and go watch it right now

or go see it on Thursday night in Henderson Theater.

Those of you who have seen it and are still non believers, allow me convince you (SPOILER FREE) why it is the ultimate Christmas movie. If there is one thing Mr. Villeta has taught me during my short time in his Alternative Class this year so far, it is that all those classic films that you hear are amazing, but never make time to watch are actually some of the best movies you'll ever watch. I know the movie is old and also very lengthy, but the message and story are timeless and are especially meaningful in today's world.

It is honestly hard for me to think of any film, television, or literature character that is more loveable than George Bailey. Jimmy Stewart brings that classic old movie actor charm, but does it in a way that keeps the audience hooked with his unique and

emotional performance.

This film also separates itself by being one of the original Christmas films that remembered to have a narrative to show the audience what the true meaning of Christmas time is: to appreciate and love all the great aspects of life including friends and family, and to always remember God in Christmas. This aspect is what many Christmas movies often lack today. The love between George and Mary is the ultimate romance in all of film. The ending of the film is one of those film endings that gets better each time you watch it. I will be watching this movie on this upcoming Christmas again and I hope all of you reading this will do so as well.

2018's Good News

Matthew Vaccaro '19

As we bid 2018 adieu and ring in the New Year, many may be tempted to write off the year's events as another in a series of 'dumpster fires,' as 2016 and 2017 have been called. Between human cognitive bias and the marketing strategy of some news outlets, our culture tends to overfocus on the negative news. Therefore, we at The Torch would like to recap the most uplifting news stories of 2018.

Many will recall back in July when the 13 junior members of the "Wild Boars" soccer team were trapped in a flooded cave network in northern Thailand. Rescuers and engineers from eight countries-including Thailand, the United States, England, China, Japan, Sweden, Myanmar, and Laos- worked tirelessly to rescue all thirteen members of the "Wild Boars" Soccer team. After a seventeen-day effort, during which valiant diver Saman Kunan perished

when attempting to save the boys, all thirteen young men were rescued unharmed.

Among the various breakthroughs in the scientific community, what has been called the largest land animal to ever exist on Earth, a 26,000-pound dinosaur known as *Ledumahadi mafube*, was discovered in South Africa last September. This relative of the *brontosaurus* was more than twice the size of a modern African Elephant. In the field of medicine, two patients with severe age-related macular degeneration, the most prevalent cause of blindness, were recently restored to sight through means of a revolutionary new stem cell treatment, courtesy of the London Project to Cure Blindness. Finally, NASA recently revealed a slew of 21 newly discovered constellations using Fermi's Large Area Telescope (LAT). Scientists at LAT have chosen to name the constellations

after national monuments (such as the Washington Monument and the Eiffel Tower), influential figures (such as Albert Einstein), and even cultural icons, including the USS Enterprise, Godzilla, and the Incredible Hulk.

US Homicide rates have decreased by 7.6% since just last year, contributing to an overall decrease in the crime rate over the past few decades. Child Mortality has plummeted by more than half over the past few decades (and continues to do so) dropping from 12.5 million deaths of children under 5 in 1990 to 5.5 million last year. Those numbers may seem staggering, (which they are) and reveal just as many problems as they do progress. The fact remains, however, that on a global scale, life is improving for our species, and no matter what obstacles lie ahead of us in the new year, there is always cause for celebration.

Die Hard? A Christmas Movie?

Gary Flecher '20

When someone mentions a Christmas movie, you may not imagine a fast-paced, action thriller from the eighties, but that is exactly what “Die Hard” is. There are many Christmas classics: “A Christmas Story,” “It’s a Wonderful Life,” “Elf”... the list goes on and on. If there is one movie that deserves to be on this list of Christmas classics, it would have to be “Die Hard.” Anybody can point out the obvious— that yes— “Die Hard” features a plot during the Christmas season, but this alone does not classify the movie as a Christmas must-watch. The truth of the matter is—“Die Hard” features the very characteristics that constitute a Christmas classic.

How can we talk about Die Hard without talking about the great protagonist, John McClane, who is played by Bruce Willis? At the beginning of the movie, McClane appears to be visibly distraught and worried because of the estranged relationship between himself and his family, who live in Los Angeles. When McClane agrees to attend the Christmas party in Los Angeles with his wife, it gets crashed by Hans and his henchmen, who want to take the party hostage in order to steal millions of dollars worth of bonds. This moment allows McClane to suit up into his role as an ultimate Christmas hero. Essentially, McClane tries to save the hostages from Hans and his evil cronies throughout the movie. A moment which cements McClane’s holiday character is when he writes, “Now I have a machine gun. Ho-ho-ho,” on Tony’s sweatshirt and sends it to Hans. This moment demonstrates McClane’s Christmas wit and dry humor while showing his resilience against the terrorists. John McClane is a perfect Christmas hero for whom the audience roots for the entire movie.

Perhaps no other villain besides Hans Gruber could suffice for the movie “Die Hard.” He is the perfect Christmas villain, because he is the antithesis to Christmas ideals. For one, he completely ruins the Christmas party in Los Angeles for his terroristic heist. Furthermore, all of Hans Gruber’s hostage-taking is really in pursuit of one goal— to steal over six hundred million dollars worth of bonds. Thus, Hans Gruber is fueled by greed, which is the antithesis to the holiday spirit of giving. Lastly, when Hans discovers that Holly, one of his hostages, is in reality the wife of John McClane, he personally torments her and uses her as leverage against McClane, showing Hans to be against the aspect of family, which is a major Christmas element. Overall, Hans Gruber is an heartless, but fitting, Christmas villain.

Every Christmas story needs a happy ending, and Die Hard gives just that. Towards the end of the movie, Hans Gruber takes Holly hostage and is about to kill John McClane when McClane begins to laugh. Hans, visibly confused, begins to laugh as well out of the direness of McClane’s situation. Just then, McClane pulls out a gun in wrapping paper and shoots Hans, freeing Holly. This moment shows the power that laughter and happiness, two central tenets of Christmas, can have on a situation. When Hans gets shot, he falls out of the window but holds on to Holly’s Rolex, threatening to take her down with him. Fortunately, McClane is able to unlatch Holly’s Rolex, and Hans falls to his well deserved demise. This action is loaded with symbolism. McClane unlatching the Rolex is symbolic that money should not come first this Christmas season, and that only evil will come from greed. This fact is obviously evident from the movie, as Hans’s greed has caused the death of many (including himself) and the spoiling of



the Christmas party. With the death of Hans, McClane and his wife are able to reconnect at the ground level and their estrangement comes to an end. McClane also meets Al, the cop who talked him through his time fighting the terrorists. This ending sequence brought everybody together, which is the sole purpose of Christmas. In a larger sense, this entire movie brings the family together for Christmas as well.

Obviously “Die Hard” takes place during Christmas, but the themes and characteristics of the movie transform it into a Christmas classic. It has a hero with Christmas values, an anti-Christmas villain, and a fantastic ending to capture the essence of the meaning of Christmas. Without a doubt, “Die Hard” is a Christmas movie that needs to be enjoyed by all this holiday season!

SPOOKY CHRISTMAS LEGENDS

Brian Hack '19

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house, not a creature was stirring; except for some giants, demons, and other horrific creatures of the supernatural world! We like to rest all cozy during the holidays and think that jolly old Saint Nicholas will give all the good boys and girls presents, and we'll sing Christmas songs and enjoy the company of our families. Well apparently not in these cultures. I'm proud to present a list of all the supernatural horrors and legends that have sprung up around the holidays since the first Christmas (or any pagan traditions relating to Christmas).

Let's start with a nice and not too creepy legend. Back in the Middle Ages, (possibly before then) the Polish had a strong belief about the Christmas season. Being dutiful Christians, they celebrated the birth of Christ every December 25th fervently. To that end, it would be a shame if you were born on Christmas Day. The Polish believed that children born on Christmas were an affront to God and His Only Son. Basically, these kids were stealing Jesus' thunder and on his birthday, nonetheless. It was said that God would smite the children born on Christmas and curse them with lycanthropy. (Yep, that's right.) God supposedly turned babies into werewolves. Imagine having a friend born on the 25th, and he/she was like, "Oh gotta go, or I'll maul you to death! Merry Christmas!" I would be on the fastest train to as far away from wherever I was.

Next I'd like to present a very familiar face in the Horror Christmas Tradition: the German-born Krampus. Krampus

is essentially "Anti-Santa." He's a large deformed goat-man with a whip. While Santa brings all the good German boys and girls toys and treats, Krampus gets to go around whipping the bad children. He's supposed to also be best buds with St. Nicholas, so that's unusual too. Besides a chain whip, he likes to use a bundle of birch wood to flog those naughty kids. German children are supposed to leave their shoes out for St. Nick to put presents in. If you got a rod, you knew something was not right. The scary part about this legend is that many countries brought it to life and employed (and continue to employ) drunken men to dress up as demons and chase around frightened little children.

Another evildoer is Knecht Ruprecht/Belsnickel. I'm putting these two guys together due to the similarities of character and place of origin. These two East European legends are a bit more humane than the demonic Krampus but still freaky. Knecht is Santa's top helper, who rides with him and makes sure that the boys and girls are good for the year. He'll ask kids if they can pray and rewards them with sweets if they can. If not, they get swatted with his bag of ashes. He is often followed by fairies and guys dressed as old women wearing blackface, relaying the racial undertones of old European tradition. He'll even leave the parents of bad children a switch to beat them with. A switch is a flexible rod that was common used for corporal punishment. Now, Belsnickel is a man dressed in furs wearing a mask who travels by himself. Thought to be inspired by the legend of Ruprecht, Belsnickel



will go house to house, rewarding good children and beating the bad ones himself with a switch. There seems to be a theme going on here, and it's not a good one.

Now, I would like to take things up Northwest to the beautiful island of Iceland and its two terrifying monsters of the holidays. First up, we've got Gryla. Gryla is a giantess who has a simple motto: eat naughty children. That's right folks! What better way to soothe that hunger with a fresh heaping stew of little brats this Christmas season. Gryla's hunger is insatiable, so you'll know that she will be back next year ready for more kids. Some artworks of Gryla even show the parents watching their kids get devoured and not look horrified at it. "Ok, Jimmy. You were bad. Now shut up and let Gryla eat you." Gryla gets worse with her children. The Yule Lads, as they've become known as, are the children of Gryla who are at the very root of their existence Christmas goblins. Looking like gnomes, these puny



ones because "ODIN WILLS IT" is beyond me. I'll be putting up some traps to keep these dudes away from my house, thank you very much.

Well, that wraps up my little gift to you all for the holidays. Make sure to tell your little cousins and siblings about these colorful characters with a grim and spooky face and switch to a jolly "Merry Christmas" right after. Do your best avoiding the Belsnickel and Gryla! Remember when you had nightmares about getting coal in your stocking? Now, try to avoid thinking about Krampus or participation in the Wild Hunt,

To CBA, have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and to all a good night!



jerks will go around and cause chaos in Iceland to those who've lost their Christmas spirit. They don't care if you die, as long as they have fun along the way. Talk about family issues.

I would like to end this list with a very dark idea about Christmas that goes into my final monster. Yuletide itself, as a tradition, is soaked in ancient Nordic lore. Yuletide was the time for the Vikings and Slavs to celebrate the coming of the mysterious Wild Hunt, led by the Norse God Odin himself. Now, what's so bad about some mythological hunters right? WRONG! The Wild Hunt literally searches the countryside hunting and kidnapping people to either join them (damned your soul) or dragging you to Hell (also damning your soul). The fact that people even celebrated the disappearances of loved



The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly NBA Christmas Jerseys

Alistair Hackett '19

Every year, the NBA holds some of the most exciting games of the year on Christmas Day. While the games draw in millions of dollars for the NBA, the jerseys that are created for the players are unique every year and are only worn on Christmas. There are NBA Christmas jerseys have been hits and some that have been disasters. Here, we take a look at the best and worst NBA Christmas jerseys.

BEST

2012 Brooklyn Nets



The black on black for the Brooklyn Nets during their inaugural 2012-13 did a tremendous job of displaying the gritty culture that exists in the NYC borough of Brooklyn. This was a great step in planting their roots down in Brooklyn and solidifying the brand of the team when they played on a major stage in one of their first Christmas games as a transplanted organization.

2013 Miami Heat



“Red Hot” was a term the Miami Heat liked to use during the LeBron James era. The term fits the jersey well and is a solid look. This red color along with the silver Heat logo creates a vibrant look for the jersey. Many were not fans of the fact that the jerseys were sleeved, but everything else the jersey has to offer makes up for it. It was an exciting jersey for an exciting time in the franchise’s history.

2012 Los Angeles Lakers



There is a certain swagger to this 2012 Lakers Christmas day jersey that simply catches the eye. This was at a time when there was a lot of hype surrounding the Lakers organization, following the

Dwight Howard and Steve Nash trades. Simply put, the jersey is a clean look.

WORST

2014 New York Knicks



These jerseys are an absolute atrocity. They have the “unique” Knicks alternate logo on the front of the jersey, and then top it off by deciding to put the first names of the players instead of the last names of the players on the back of the jerseys, which was not received well. The fact that the Knicks were even playing on Christmas day in the first place is laughable. A joke of an organization, and a joke of a jersey.

2015 Cleveland Cavaliers



This jersey has a depressing vibe to it due to its simplicity and dark color. It looks much more like a YMCA practice jersey than an NBA jersey. The ugly font on the front, followed by the unappealing maroon color on the jersey, makes it out to be a repulsive jersey.

2016 Orlando Magic



This jersey is not as unlikable as the two above are, but this jersey is simply a very boring jersey. But the Magic are surely a boring team to watch for many at that time, so it should not be surprising that they had a boring Christmas jersey.

AN NBA CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Josh Scharf '19

Some of the biggest events during Christmas Day are the basketball games. While it is not like opening presents, these games has become a tradition similar to the Thanksgiving football games. Today, I will give you a breakdown of how to spend your Christmas Day. I will tell you what games to watch, when to cook, when to drive, and when not to leave the couch.

Knicks vs Bucks (12:00)

While the Knicks did beat the Bucks the beginning of this month, I still think the game will not be close. This will be the least important game as the Knicks will not be making the playoffs, and the Bucks will be a top team in the East. I believe the Knicks will have no answer for the Greek Freak Giannis Antetokounmpo with Porzingis still out. The only thing that you might miss are some highlights from Giannis, but you can always look them up on Youtube later. This game is set for a great time though because you can do all your driving then. You will not be missing an important game, so you do not have to rush. You may take your time driving and socialize with family before the day of basketball truly begins.

Rockets vs Thunder (3:00)

By now, you should have had time to socialize with family and share a couple jokes, but now it time to turn the T.V on as it is time to watch some basketball. Russell Westbrook and the Thunder take on James Harden and the Rockets. With the Western Conference being very close this year, this game could be very meaningful. Both teams look to be one of the top contenders in the west and challenge the Warriors for the NBA title, which means this games could have an effect on seeding. It is very far from playoffs, but the way the west is shaping every game matters. This game is going to be a battle: Paul vs Westbrook, Harden vs George, and Capela vs Adams are the big matchups to watch. Make sure you got grandma's eggnog and some wings because you are in for a treat with this one.

Celtics vs 76ers (5:30)

Better go get some eggnog and wings cause your butt is going to be glued to the couch for next game. If you can only watch one game on Christmas for some reason, it should be this one. Not only is this a battle of two of the top teams in the east, but it is a big rivalry game. These two teams hate

each other, but that just gives the games more excitement. Also, a new all-star is introduced to the rivalry. This will be Jimmy Butler's first game against the Celtics in a 76ers uniform, and I'm sure it will feel a lot different. Joel Embiid will definitely be enjoying himself in this game and will be talking a much trash as possible. Gather the family around, tell your aunt to stop cooking, and have the kids all quiet down. This is going to be a Christmas game to remember.

Warriors vs Lakers (8:00)

It's starting to get late now, and the younger kids are getting tired. Your uncle's jokes are starting to dry up. You are thinking about going home, but wait. While this game might not be the closest, it is still a game to watch. It's LeBron James vs the Warriors. While he is not in the same uniform as the past years, it is still the same storyline. The best basketball player in the world against the best basketball team in the world. This time though in the same conference. This game is going to have a lot of highlights and clutch plays that you will not want to miss. I would recommend to at least watch the first half. Once the Warriors start to break away, I would say your family goodbyes and head on home.

Jazz vs Trail Blazers (10:30)

You're home. You're tired. The little kids are asleep, and only you and your parents are awake. Now, there is one more basketball game left, and you are deciding on watching it. If you're a casual fan and do not like these two teams, go to bed. These two teams are good, and it will be a great game, but these teams are not championship caliber teams. With the West stacked from head to toe, most likely both teams will be knocked out in the first round or second if they are lucky. If you are a big basketball fan or like one of these teams, be prepared for a late night. This will be a great way to end your Christmas. Two teams that are very close in talent try to fight for a higher seed.

Hopefully this helps give you the perfect schedule for your Christmas, and hope you have a happy holidays.



Abolishing the Franchise Tag

Ralph DeSevo '20

Pittsburgh Steelers star running back, Le'Veon Bell has recently just decided to sit out the entirety of the 2018 NFL season. His reason for missing this season was because the Steelers did not offer him a lengthy contract extension but instead a one year franchise tag. Bell reluctantly signed the franchise tag this past year with the Steelers, and this time he refused to sign it. If he signed the deal and played this year, he was due to make \$14.5 million. Many people are puzzled as to why Bell would leave so much money on the table. The reason is because when a player is franchise tagged, said player has almost no power over their future and gives all the power to the owners of the team. Because of the corruptness of this practice, the franchise tag should be abolished.

You may be wondering what the franchise tag is, and why do players not want to sign this deal. It is a one year deal worth no less than the average of the top five salaries at that player's position. While this is a large sum of money, it would only be for a year, which leaves the player with no security. If a player were to suffer a season-ending injury that year, it would be unlikely that he would be able to get a big contract. Teams would offer him shorter contracts with less money since they are unsure if he will be able to play like his old self. In fact, this happened to Seattle Seahawks safety, Earl Thomas. After

being franchise tagged by Seattle, Earl reluctantly decided to play in the regular season after sitting out all of the preseason. Earl was seeking a long term deal with Seattle, but they refused to offer him a contract. In a Week 4 game against the Arizona Cardinals, Earl Thomas broke his leg late in the 4th quarter. He was out for the remainder of the year. Now with his NFL future in jeopardy, it is unlikely that a team will offer Thomas a long term deal. That is why players like Le'Veon Bell are deciding to sit out. They do not want to seriously hurt themselves and possibly put their careers in trouble without long term security.

Multiple superstars in the NFL are finding ways to gain leverage to fight against the restrictions of franchise tagging. In most cases, when a player is franchise tagged, they decide to sit out all of the preseason and training camp in order to avoid injury. This year, the two best defensive players in the NFL decided to not play until their team offered them a long term contract. Khalil Mack, former defensive player of the year for the Oakland Raiders, refused to play in the preseason and said he would not play in the regular season either. This did not make head coach, Jon Gruden, too happy. Jon Gruden decided to trade Mack to the Chicago Bears in exchange for two first round picks. After being traded to Chicago, Mack signed a six-year deal

worth \$141 million. This trade was a direct result of the franchise tag being placed on Khalil Mack. Now the Chicago Bears are playoff bound after the addition of Mack, and the Oakland Raiders are likely to have the first pick in the next NFL Draft.

Another player who threatened to sit out all of the regular season after being franchise tagged was Aaron Donald of the Los Angeles Rams. This was the second time that Donald has been franchise tagged. The 2017 defensive player of the year refused to play another game for the Rams unless he was offered a long term deal.

He got exactly what he wanted. He signed a six-year \$135 million deal. This was another example of a player advocating against the team that franchise tagged him.

The franchise tag needs to be addressed by NFL commissioner, Roger Goodell. It has started to create rifts between players and their organizations. The franchise tag is also very unfair to the players. They are forced to play under a one-year deal where they have no control over their future. Now, there is superstars like Le'Veon Bell sitting out regular season games, and everyone wants to see the best players actually playing, not sitting on the sidelines. This needs to be changed before the NFLPA starts to protest, and before there is another player lockout.



The Armistice: 100 Years Later

Conor Morris '21



Despite the armistice happening 100 years ago, the significance of the peace treaty and the war has not faded.

One hundred years ago on November 11th in 1918, the world's first war came to an end with the signing of the armistice in France. So long after the signing, that day has not been forgotten as countries all over the world honor those who fought and sacrificed their lives in the war. Many remember the day in somber while others choose to rejoice in the conclusion of the civil unrest. Throughout the world, red poppies were displayed to commemorate those who lost their lives in battle. The red poppies were the first flowers to spring up from the grounds of the battlefields in Belgium, and it is rumored that the reason the flowers were red was due to the blood of the soldiers that seeped into the soil.

In addition to the red poppies, countries around the world held events in commemoration to the end of the first world war. In England, the Prime Minister, Theresa May, laid a wreath on the first and last soldiers' graves that were killed in the fighting. France, where the armistice was signed, held numerous ceremonies including a symbolic meeting at the train carriage

where the armistice was signed 100 years prior. President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump attended the Arc de Triomphe ceremony held in France. During this ceremony, thousands of flowers were displayed outside of the Paris City Hall, and the 9.7 million people who died fighting were remembered for their brave service. Prince Harry attended a service at the National Memorial Arboretum, a year-round site of remembrance for the war, in the United Kingdom where he read the poem, "The Soldier," written by Rupert Brooke at the beginning of the first world war. Additionally, in California, the California Military constructed an exhibit for the 100th anniversary in order to commemorate the armistice at the state library in Sacramento. The city of San Diego, California, held a WWI Armistice Centennial Concert and Ball where all attendees dressed in formal wear suitable for the 1900-1920 time period.

Aside from all of the ceremonies and events that were held, towns and cities all throughout the world rang bells at 11:00 am, the exact time the armistice

was signed and the fighting ceased.

Despite the armistice happening 100 years ago, the significance of the peace treaty and the war has not faded. Those who sacrificed their lives for their country are remembered as heroes and prominent figures to history. In spite of all the unrest that has taken place recently, one thing has remained constant: the importance to remember and honor the past, even 100 years later. There are few, if any, people alive who remember World War I, but the world was completely changed by it. We remembered this day in order to continue our quest in ensuring that the people who died will not be forgotten.





ACADEMY OATH

We the men of
Christian Brothers Academy; do solemnly
promise before God
To live always with honor and integrity
To serve and to stand for those in need
To strive for wisdom in our
pursuit of knowledge
To uphold the legacy and proud
tradition of our Academy
St. John Baptist de La Salle
Pray for us
Live Jesus in our hearts
Forever

850 NEWMAN SPRINGS ROAD • LINCROFT, NJ 07738-1698
732-747-1959 • cbalincroftnj.org