



Just five more days of school until Winter Break: Monday through Friday next week with a 1:30 out on the 22nd.

Blue Ink



Time to travel to Europe

Ms. Pliska organizes trip to England and Scotland for summer 2019



Educational Tours

by Heather Huether
staff writer

If you like to travel and want to get a summer escape, now's your chance to sign up. Garretson is teaming up with West Central and Brandon Valley to go on a trip to Ireland and Great Britain. It will be through Education First (EF) Tours and will be a great experience to learn new cultures, meet new people, travel, and try new things.

One million students experience the EF tours each year, and there are a little over 46,500 staff, educators, and Tour Directors that work with EF Tours. There are over 500 schools

The trip, without the extension, will cost \$4,300 which covers breakfast, dinner, hotels, flights, and more. Students have the chance to get a \$200 discount if they sign up by Dec. 22nd.

Mrs. Pliska had a meeting for the trip on Monday at 6:30 p.m. If you missed the meeting you can still talk to her and get more information about the trip and who is going or you can check out more information by



In June 2019 Mrs. Pliska is taking students to experience the historic cities of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin. Plus the scenic Ring of Kerry, the mystical circles of Stonehenge, Shakespearean Stratford and much more.

and offices, and over 50 countries around the world involved.

The group will be traveling for 15 days in Ireland and Great Britain. They plan to visit Killarney, Dublin, North Wales, Lake District, Edinburgh, Yorkshire, Bath, London, and if you pay for the extension, Paris.

visiting <https://www.eftours.com/tour-website/1890841NM>. Spots are filling up quick and the discount will end sooner than you think, so hurry and sign up before it's too late to get the discount.

ta's _____ (5) feet swinging in their chimney. My friend tried pulling Santa down but he must've weighed _____ (6) pounds. He finally got Santa down and helped put the _____ (7) presents under the trees. After that Santa ate the cookies with my friend and _____ (8) caught them eating cookies together. They said, "Are you eating _____ (9) cookies with Santa?" After that they went to the rooftop and saw all the _____ (10) reindeer.

This Week's Need to Know

FACT OF THE WEEK: There are almost 3 times as many real trees sold each holiday season as artificial trees.

LIFE HACK OF THE WEEK: Stumped on what to get someone for Christmas? Tell your friend you already bought their present and have them guess. You'll have a few ideas in no time.

JOKE OF THE WEEK: What type of pictures do Santa's helpers like to take?

BRAINTEASER OF THE WEEK: Decipher this Christmas song rebus puzzle.



Answers to joke and brainteaser are on the bottom.

Upcoming Events

- Saturday, December 16**
 - Wrestling @ MVPCS Wrestling Meet in Plankinton (9:30)
 - GBB v. Arlington @ Entringer Classic in Colman (3:30)
- Monday, December 18**
 - JH GBB @ Tea (4:30)
 - JH/JV Wrestling @ Salem (5:00)
- Monday, December 18**
 - Music Pie & Ice Cream Christmas Concert (7:00)
- Thursday, December 21**
 - First official day of Winter
 - GBB v. Tea (4:30/6:15)
 - BBB v. Tea (4:30/7:45)
- Friday, December 22**
 - MS Pizza Ranch Outing
 - Early Dismissal @ 1:30

Worth Mentioning

Basketball is in full swing. The girls have put together some pretty impressive performances on their way to a 2-1 record. The boys have shown moments of brilliance but have failed to secure their first win.

Winter break runs from December 23 through January 2. Be safe and enjoy the extra time with family and friends.

Holiday Mad Lib

by Gregorio Arana and Mason Hofer
staff writers

1. Person in the room
2. Color
3. Word of frustration
4. Adjective
5. Adjective
6. A number
7. Adjective
8. A person



9. Type of cookie
10. Action

One time, my friend _____ (1) told me a story about Santa getting stuck in his chimney. He was sleeping in his _____ (2) room when he heard a loud " _____ (3) " coming from his living room. He saw a _____ (4) man stuck in his chimney. He said who are you? The man replied "I'm Santa of course, who else would come down your chimney on Christmas Eve?" They said they were astonished when they saw San-

Alabama's monumental decision

Dem winning the election may be sign of shift in power during next election cycle

by Isaiah Miles Mader
staff writer

On Tuesday, Alabama held a senatorial race to fill the seat left vacant when Jeff Sessions was appointed to U.S. Attorney General. The vote was between Republican Roy Moore and Democratic candidate Doug Jones.

Alabama has not seen a democrat in office since the '90s. However, sexual misconduct allegations surfaced against Moore pushing votes to Jones and away from himself. By the end of the night Jones had shocked America and had been declared the winner in the huge senate race.

Moore was backed by President Trump who was attempting to rally more support and help keep the Re-

publicans' majority in the Senate. Yet with strong opinions of opposition and support from people like Obama, Jones edged out his competitor and claimed his place in Washington D.C.

Moore is currently sitting around 20,000 votes behind in the official count but has stated he will not concede until the secretary of the state declares it official. The democratic win slims the majority rule in the senate, jeopardizing that lead for the midterm elections.

The problem with Jerusalem

Centuries of war, controversy not so easily dismissed despite President's recognition

by **Zebadiah Johnson**
guest writer

Last Wednesday, December 6, in a move that could have far-reaching repercussions, President Trump officially recognized the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This is a foreign policy move that has infuriated many people throughout the world, and could destabilize a region known for its fragile and violent political dynamics.

The political tension in the area stems from two groups of people, the Israelis and the Palestinians, two groups of people that seek to own the same land. These two populations have been at odds in the area for roughly a century, the conflict being a result of Israel occupying land that it has no right to control

When Israel was formed, two sections were given to the Palestinians, Gaza and the West Bank. Gaza under the control of Egypt, and the West Bank belonging to Jordan. However, at this point in time, Israel is occupying almost the entirety of the West Bank, a large area of land that includes Jerusalem, a city of special importance to Christianity,

Islam, and Judaism. Under the current international law, Jerusalem is supposed to be owned by no nation, but governed by an international committee instead.

While Jerusalem is supposed to belong to no nation, Israel has consistently claimed Jerusalem as its "eternal and undivided capital". This statement has never before been given credibility by the United States, as the city cannot be Israel's capital without also being the capital of Palestine as well.

Throughout most of recent history, the United States has been the primary mediator between Israel and Palestine, acting as a dispassionate entity attempting to broker a "two-state solution". This means that Israel would relinquish its grasp on the land it is currently occupying, and allow the Palestinians to establish their own sovereign nation. However, a sticking point in the solution is the treatment of Jerusalem, as both Israel and Palestine claim the city as their capital.

This hopeful solution was generally only seen as possible through the assistance of a neutral nation, a possibility that is now in jeopardy.

The United States has been neutral in the past, not recognizing Israel's claim as the sole possessor of Jerusalem. Donald Trump did away with that precedent, as his statement recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital without also recognizing it as Palestine's. This statement puts the United States into a precarious position as a negotiator, as the vast majority of Palestinians see this as an act of favoritism towards Israel, lending an air of insincerity to any peace talks that have happened in the past or could happen in the future.

Presently, the full magnitude of Trump's decision is unknown, but some repercussions have already been felt. Christian leaders throughout the Middle East have spoken out against Trump and have cancelled plans to visit with Vice President Pence during his upcoming tour of the area. The Palestinians themselves have shown their displeasure through anti-USA riots and protests, hinting at the possibility of further violence in the near future. What was already an unstable situation has grown even more unpredictable, as a region full of anti-American sentiment has just received one more reason to distrust our nation and attempt to achieve a solution through violence.

Wish List

What are you asking Santa for this year?



"The Pokemon Ultra Moon because I have the normal and I want the ultra." - Scottie C., 3rd Grade



"A locker to hang up in my room." - Hope W., 4th Grade



"I'm asking for Minnesota Wild tickets and healthy grandchildren." - Norinda, Administrative assistant



"I don't know. That's a good question. Probably going to ask for new bedding." - Bryn S., 6th Grade



"A better senior office aide other than you [Isaiah M.]" - Leslie, Administrative assistant



"I'm asking Santa to pay for my daughter's wedding; she just got engaged last week." - Ms. Blok, MS/HS computers

Trump in hot water...again

by **Isaiah Miles Mader**
staff writer

The President of the United States, Donald Trump, has been under scrutiny since his political career began, whether it has been caused by actions, statements, or tweets put out to his 44 million followers. Tuesday he strengthened the people's cause in a tweet about a Senator calling for his resignation.

The tweet said, "Lightweight Senator Kristi Gillibrand, a total flunky for Chuck Schumer and someone who would come to my office "begging" for campaign contributions not so long ago (and would do anything for them) is now in the ring fighting against Trump."

The senator responded saying, that Trump would not silence her, or the millions of women speaking out and calling for his removal from the Oval Office. Several women have reiterated their sexual misconduct accusations against Trump which could strengthen the Democrat push for impeachment.

Across the nation, people continue to speak against the President which can be seen by the voter backlash that is dwindling the Republicans majority in Congress. With midterm elections coming up in 2018, and Trump's approval rating at record lows, a huge swing is in the making as Donald Trump continues to drag fellow Republicans with him.

Santa's Naughty List

A sneak peak at who may be getting lumps of coal in their stockings



Editorial cartoon created by **Isaiah Miles Mader** and **Peyton Sage**

S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G B-E-E

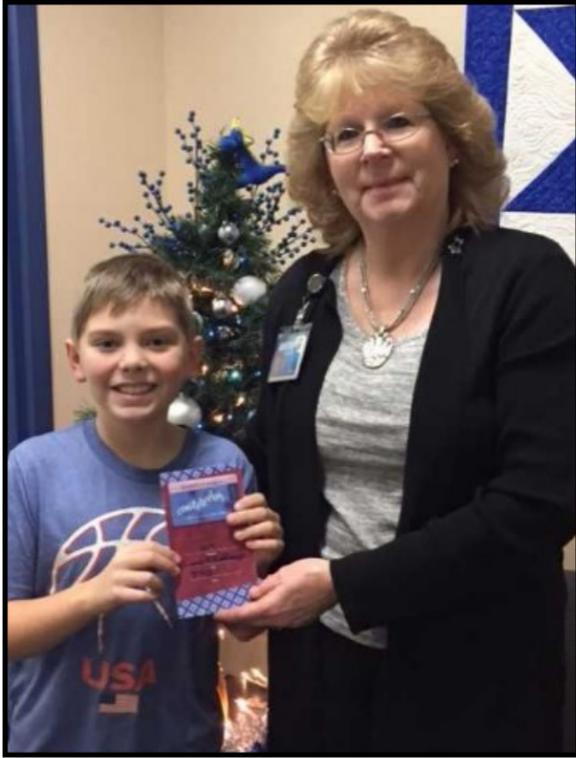
New champion crowned after five rounds

by **Heather Huether**
staff writer

For the first time in three years, there was a new elementary school spelling bee winner. For the past few years Hannah Frewaldt has been the spelling bee champion. This year 5th grader Lane Ellefson took the win on the word segregation.

Lane was the alternate which means he came to school today not knowing he was going to be in. One of the students had to stay home sick so Lane got the spot.

The elementary has been practicing and waiting for this year's event. The spelling bee started at 9a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13th. The spelling bee went five rounds this year.



Fifth grader, Lane Ellefson, is the newest spelling bee champion. The oral competition was held Thursday morning. Ellefson won on the word segregation. Lane was presented a Barnes and Nobel giftcard by PTO representative Kathy Brady

Netflix changes monthly plan

Chilling about to cost more for users

by **Peyton Sage**
staff writer

Netflix is raising its prices again. Its most popular plan, which costs \$9.99 for HD and allows two people to watch shows at the same time will now cost \$10.99 per month. The premium plan, which is currently priced at \$11.99 for 4K Ultra HD and viewing on four different accounts, will cost \$13.99— a \$2 increase.

Stock shares of Netflix jumped more than three percent following the news of a price increase, with a 0.98% change in the stock's overall value. This will be profitable for those who have shares with Netflix.

Netflix made the decision to in-

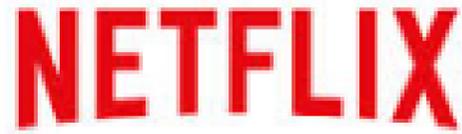
crease the price of its plans in an effort to add to the number of shows available, while also planning to spend \$8 billion on creating hit original series such as *House of Cards* and *Stranger Things*. That marks about a third more increase in spending from 2017.

Netflix first raised the price of its HD streaming plan back in April 2014, from \$7.99 to \$9.99. Existing account users were able to keep the original \$7.99 price on their HD plan.

However, in May of 2016, everyone was bumped up to the higher price tier. Netflix introduced a new \$7.99 non-HD option for those who wanted to save money.

Due to past changes in pricing and a rise in popularity, Netflix is expected to raise the monthly prices even more in the future.

Whether or not this change actually occurs, Netflix will have to add even more quality content if they want to keep its millions of users.



Holiday Maze

Get the candy cane at the bottom of the stocking to the top



Maze created by **Heather Huether**



Fifth Grade Spelling Bee Participants: Front Madison L., Eliza P., Ava N., Torielle G., Taylor B., Back Lane E., Cassidy D., Noah S
Photo submitted by Ms. Teresa Johnson



Fourth Grade Spelling Bee Participants: Front Lucie F., Brooklyn T., Jack P., Drew C., Back Jasmine J., Wyatt T., Serie R., Jordan D
Photo submitted by Ms. Teresa Johnson



Third Grade Spelling Bee Participants: Front Benjamin W., Aiden J., Carter S., Natalie B., Tatum B., Back Lucas S., Ethan M., Isiah C., Tennessee M., Emma W
Photo submitted by Ms. Teresa Johnson