

Did you know that Ralphie from A Christmas Story was also in the movie Elf?



Jag P.A.W.S

By Joseline Felipe-Huerta

This year, unlike any other year, has been very difficult. Far too many students have struggled with their mental health because of the challenges brought upon by the global pandemic and the changes it has brought. Here at Jackson Memorial High School, there are many helpful resources that support mental health, such as our wonderful program Jag P.A.W.s (Positivity, Awareness, Wellness). Jag P.A.W.s is a club led by Mrs. Kearney (Student Assistance Counselor) and Ms. Stenta (School Counselor) whose main goal is to spread positivity around the school and to bring awareness to mental health issues.

Mrs. Kearney is our school's SAC as well as the advisor for the club. She provides counseling to those who need it and is able to help hundreds of kids! Don't be shy to reach out to the resources in this school. Any problem can be talked about with Mrs. Kearney, no problem is too big or small and everything stays confidential. She works closely with the Guidance office and your School Counselor. Her door is always open.

As far as the club, many ideas have

already been planned by our Jag P.A.W.s program for this year in order to reach their goal in spreading a positive message. The students in Jag P.A.W.s have been working hard on making those plans happen, so be on the lookout for some positive words to brighten your day! In the hallways during the day, posters will be up for your viewing that will surely bring a smile to your face.

In the future, they hope to have after-school peer buddy sessions where you can meet a new friend. There are also plans to have our message added to our daily announcements. All of the hard work put into the activities by the Jag P.A.W.s is to provide our JMHS students with a positive, safe, welcoming school environment. We understand that this is needed now more than ever!

Positive messaging is so important during this time. When things get hard, even a simple word or smile can make the weight you're carrying a little lighter. Anyone's life can change, but it's all about how someone perceives it. Even reading something from a wall or off the media can change how you think or feel. Espe-

cially now, it is so important to spread positivity everywhere you go for that reason.

When in a dark place, you may feel negative thoughts begin to take over, and these small gestures of kindness may mean everything to someone. It can be something as simple as a smile or a wave to brighten someone's day. You also may not realize the impact you have on someone else's life. Jag P.A.W.s is and always has been making the effort to help spread more positivity, awareness, kindness, and love around JMHS.

If you would like to speak with Mrs. Kearney, you can email her at: tkearney@jacksonsd.org, or stop by her office in Clayton.



Room 403

By Beatrix Morrell

The Student Council at JMHS plays a very important role in the planning of our schools events, programs and activities. Recently they transformed an underused classroom into their own personal meeting area. "In the past, our student council would call for a meeting that required a group setting, but no room big enough for that, like for example the map room or lecture hall, would be available." Says Mr. DiEugenio. "The basis of it was that our Student Council finally needed a room dedicated to them."

Originally JMHS had a room that was used solely for a single AP art class with a very small number of students, 7 to be exact. Many of the Student Council advisors, members, and art teachers,

along with Mr. DiEugenio deemed the current use of that room not necessary, and they knew they could put it to better use! After discussion of transforming the room was thrown



around, last spring was when the work on the "new and improved room 403" finally began. Head of the student council Mrs. Holm, and many of the staff in the art department worked after school hours and all during the summer to finish the transformation of this room. After the removal of sculptures, art supplies, pottery, and a whole lot of paint everywhere, the Student Council room was finally finished and ready for use by mid September. This room has greatly benefited everyone. "It has been turned into a large meeting space where every-

one can come together as a whole organization and bounce ideas off one another." Says Mr. Pienkowski, the new head of the Student Council while Mrs. Holm is out.

After attending a Student Council meeting myself, the environment that was created in the room was phenomenal. Mr Pienkowski was able to address the entire room while each individual grades council was able to address each other and other grades as well.

The format of this room has allowed the Students to collaborate better with each other, plan events more thoroughly, and overall has created a better and more efficient work environment for everyone. "Room 403 is now a one stop shop for everything Student Council" says Mr. DiEugenio. There are cabinets filled with supplies for decorating the halls, decorations from previous events, even the Jaguar mascot costume is in those cabinets. Room 403 is a pleasant addition to our school and will be a wonderful opportunity for years to come.



Back on the Cheer Mat

By Rebecca Weisselberg

After a year of being off the cheer mat and canceled competitions, the Jackson Memorial Cheerleaders have not missed a step. It almost seems as if no time was lost in the rough year of 2020. After securing their bid to once again return to Florida for Nationals by getting second place in their Lancaster Regional Competition, they will be taking off to Florida in February.

The excitement is high as they look to take first place in their division. Samantha Weisselberg, senior and one of the captains of the cheer team is in good spirits.

“After being without competition for an entire year I think it’s exciting for not just the seniors being that this is their last year here, but for the entire team” says Sam. “I think returning to Florida is going to be more competitive than ever. Covid prevented teams from going to the UCA nationals last year. Everyone now has something to prove and show that

Covid hasn’t slowed them down. And it certainly hasn’t slowed us down.”

The captain is in high spirits as the clock counts down to competition.

Let’s go Jags!



Masking the Deaf

By Victoria Henriques

Masks create a barrier not only between you and the virus but also the deaf. Those who are hearing impaired or deaf have been left behind in mainstream talk about the virus. As of now masks are mandated in more than half of the world’s countries and though proven beneficial to our health they are simultaneously hindering our communication.

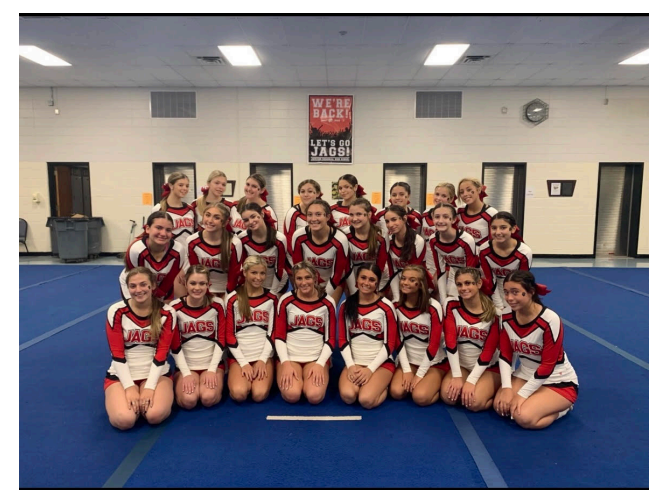
Many can attest to the fact that masks tend to muffle the wearer’s voice. This can be particularly difficult to get around for those whose hearing isn’t very prominent. Masks also partially cover one’s face hiding facial cues, expressions, and most importantly the ability to read lips that are heavily relied on by the community. Masks not only impede on the ability for the deaf to understand you but also those within their own community. According to the National Deaf Center, “American Sign Language (ASL), facial expressions are so critical, they can affect the meaning of a sign.” Knowing this one can infer everyday life may become progressively difficult as the pandemic goes on. Therefore, masks have in a sense isolated the community from each other and the outside world.

In addition to the speech barrier, masks provide those with hearing aids significant discomfort. The hindering of proper speech may be mentally straining but being paired with physical discomfort makes the community all the more frustrated. A Health Hive article written by Clinical Audiologist Lindsey Saltsman confirms the struggle between masks and hearing aids. “Since most masks are worn around the ears, there

are a few issues that arise for those who wear hearing aids. They may lose them or experience increased discomfort from having too much behind their ear.” It is common knowledge that hearing aids can be costly for many, therefore, losing even one may quickly become a burden. Along with that many of us can attest to the fact that masks can at times put large strains on our ears despite not having any add ons. This allows us to infer that having necessary devices resting on the ear can become far more tedious than before.

However, the fact that masks won’t be going away any time soon has encouraged the deaf and hearing impaired to come up with ideas to possibly get around this issue. For example, there are masks that have a clear window that allow others to view your mouth. But in reality most people avoid these sorts of masks since they are viewed as strange or out of place. The same applies to face shields. In addition, though the clear window and shield do assist a deaf person’s comprehension significantly, they are also more costly than standard disposable masks. This fact paired with the CDC’s new April 2021 recommendation to wear two masks, fabric and disposable, will only further increase discomfort and the unlikelihood of such masks being normalised.

Despite this some schools and colleges have found possible ways to improve communication. Following the CDC’s Covid-19 prevention guidelines for colleges and universities, “[Colleges are recommended to] use written communication, closed captioning, or



I WEAR MY MASK IN PUBLIC FOR THREE REASONS:

1. **HUMILITY:** I don’t know if I have COVID as it is clear that people can spread the disease before they have symptoms.
2. **KINDNESS:** I don’t know if the person I am near has a child battling cancer, or cares for their elderly mom. While I might be fine, they might not.
3. **COMMUNITY:** I want my community to thrive, businesses to stay open, employees to stay healthy. Keeping a lid on COVID helps us all!

decrease background noise to make communication possible while wearing a cloth face covering that blocks your lips.” Additionally, there are live speech to text services, live translators, and one on one accommodated tutoring sessions that are available in select schools, most commonly and obviously those with larger amounts of money. With such accommodations it seems that deaf students are covered.

However, those who are not students might not have access to such resources. Deaf people carrying out day to day errands will find communication necessary to find their way around a new store in search of a product for example. Or even at their jobs where lip reading was once utilized. Accommodations such as translators may prove costly thus leaving many deaf people stripped of their ways of communicating.

People who are deaf or hearing impaired have been left in the cold in discussions regarding Covid-19’s victims. Masks undeniably make communicating with anyone much more difficult than before. Standard masks are known to muffle speech, cover facial expressions, and the ability to lip read. The idea of clear masks may seem like an easy fix but in reality they aren’t a practical solution. However, those with access may utilize translators and other services to help get through the barrier. The current pandemic’s effects have proven to have created devastating conditions for those in the community.

Mr. Apa’s Top Five Holiday Watches

Every year, my family, like most families, watch a set of holi-day movies. We don’t always get to watch them all, but these five are our must watch.

1. A Christmas Story

We never... never miss watching A Christmas story. We watch it on Christmas Eve, and then it is on repeate all day Christmas as TNT runs their marathon.

2. Christmas Vacation

Spending any vacation with the Griswolds is always a fun time, but spending the holidays with them is a blast as we watch Clark and family battle their way through visiting family and everything that can go wrong during the season.

3. Home Alone

Sure, Kevin McCalister can be a bit of a brat, but he is an adorable brat. He’s also clever as he outsmarts, outwits and outdoes two thieves set on robbing his house all while be-ing, you guessed it, home alone.

4. Pee-Wee’s Playhouse Christmas Special

Speaking of brats, come watch Pee-Wee celebrate Christmas with a huge roster of celebrity guests (that our students have never heard of), and receives enough fruit cakes to build a new wing onto the playhouse.

5. Merry Christmas Mr. Bean

Mr. Bean knows the true meaning of Christmas as he cele-brates with his girlfriend, Irma, and Teddy, his teddy bear. Watch and laugh as he bungles his way through the holiday.

There are plenty more holiday classics to watch, so gath-er some family and friends for a relaxing night of viewing pleasure.

Have a great holiday break, Jags. We’ll see you in the New Year!

The History of the Poinsettia

Brought to you by the LEAD Club

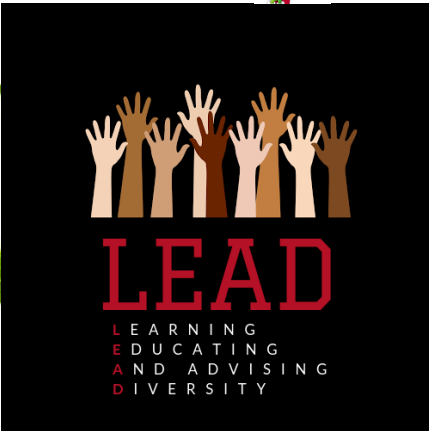
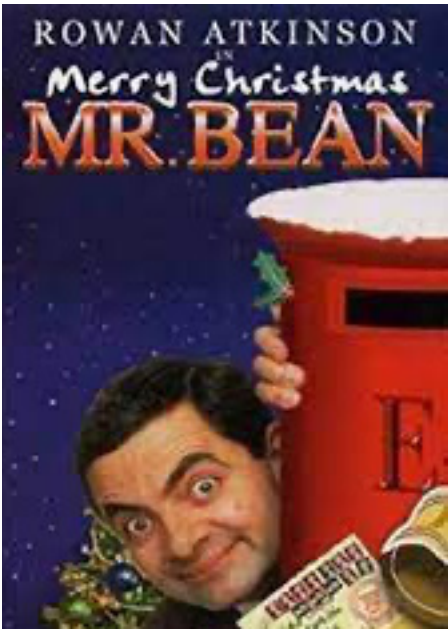
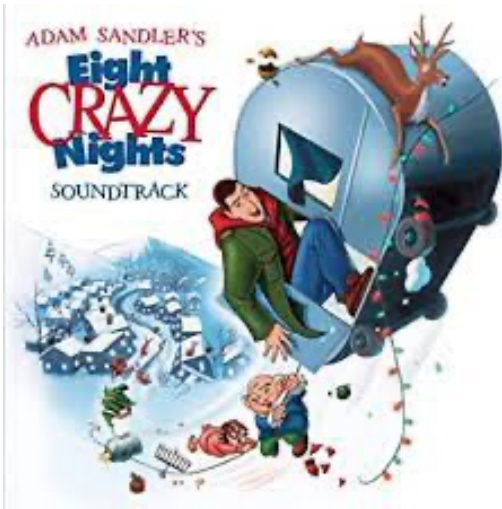
Poinsettias have always been known as a Christmas flower; however, many do not know of its Mexican roots!

Poinsettias are from the southern Mex-ican area of “Taxco del Alarcón.”

They are primarily a winter flower and their scientific name is Euphorbia pulcherri-ma.

An old tale from Mexican culture is the reason why poinsettias are so popular among Christmas time.

Pepita, a young girl, had no gift to give for Christmas. All she had were weeds but when the time came, the weeds sprouted into the Flores de Noche Buena, the poinsettia.



Christmas Around the World



By Fernanda Santiago and Kiana Boshart

The Christmas season is finally here, and what better way to celebrate than to bring an article filled with holiday cheer into our December issue. As you may know there are a variety of other countries that celebrate this holiday, but not many know the different traditions that take place this time of the year around the world. Due to the fact that we live in the US we don't pay attention to other cultures and how they celebrate this season. For this reason we've chosen five specific countries to teach you how different places in the world celebrate this time of the year!

Making our way to Europe the first country is Spain. Spain has to be one of the most strangest but unique countries during the holiday season. They have many fun celebrations that couldn't have been left out. "El gordo," which is the "fat lottery," is for the people the most exciting tradition of Christmas time. Most of the country takes part in the Spanish National Lottery which is the biggest lottery in the world. It is called "The Fat Lottery" because of the huge cash prize of 2 billion euros. The winning numbers are announced live on TV on the morning of December 22nd. For many people in Spain the holiday season isn't over after the 25th. On the 28th of December they celebrated "Dia de Los Santos Inocentes" which is a spanish version of April Fools day. It is a day where people play harmless pranks on each other and have fun. If someone falls for the prank, you yell out "inocente, inocente" which means innocent, basically saying someone was innocent enough to fall for a silly lie.

Next on our list is Poland. Poland is a largely catholic country that takes the religious part of the holiday very seriously. That is why Christmas Eve is the most significant part of the holiday season. Traditionally in most parts of the country Christmas Eve is a day of fasting and abstinence. Meat isn't allowed to be eaten. Once the fast is over then families are able to come together and enjoy a lovely dinner. On the table there are 12 main dishes which they believe is a form of good luck for the upcoming 12 months. The meals are meat free to remember and honor the animals who took care of baby Jesus during his birth. Some of the meals include "Pierniki" which is a gingerbread cookie that is made a month before

christmas and left to ferment in order for it to taste best. "Barszcz Czerwone z Uszkami" is a red borscht with mushroom dumpling. "Kapusta z Groszek" is fried cabbage with split peas. "Jarzynowa Sałatka" is a vegetable salad that contains carrots, pickles, eggs, parsley root, and other foods of choice. "Golabki" is a rice stuffed cabbage roll. Some desserts include "sernik" a delicious polish cheesecake, "Makowiec" a poppy seed cake, and "kutia" which is a wheat-flour and honey dessert. Lastly Poland's most famous holiday drink "Kompot" which is a tasty drink made of smoked cherries or plums.

Now we make our way to Mexico. Their holiday season officially starts off with "Posadas". Posadas last nine days beginning on the 16th and ending on the 25th with the birth of baby Jesus. Each night homes welcome groups of pilgrims who go from door to door with cheerful carols and asking if there's an open room. This tradition is meant to represent the story of Mary and Joseph who went around Bethlehem seeking shelter. People then are given permission to come into the homes and continue the celebration with prayers. The homes are all decorated inside with the nativity scene altar which includes figurines of baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the three kings, and animals. Once the prayers have finished they transition into a festive get together. Delicious foods like hot chocolate, conchas (which are a type of bread), rice pudding, tamales, atole (a hot drink), buñuelos (fried dough covered in cinnamon sugar), and more are served to the people as a gratitude for coming. Christmas in Mexico is based more on religion since most of the country is Roman Catholic. Whether people practice the religion or not the country does a great job at getting together and celebrating as one.

A very common tradition in Greece is called "Karavaki" where they decorate boats with lights. This tradition commenced years ago when Greek wives would adorn wooden boats as a welcoming to their husbands and sons who return from the sea safely. The country starts their holiday season on the 25th and it ends on the 6th of January with "Epiphany Day". In the Greek Orthodox church Epiphany celebrates Jesus' baptism. In the celebration most young men

dive into really cold water to try and get a cross blessed from the priest. It is said that the first to get the cross is meant to have good luck the upcoming year. The Greeks may have one of the best dinners during the Christmas season. Their dishes are filled with a tasty Mediterranean flavor. The main dish served is roasted Pork with a delicious petimezi glaze on top. Other foods include "Avgolemono;" a tasty chicken soup with a base flavor of bright lemons. "Spanakopita," which is a spinach and feta-filled pasty with a nice salty taste. The desserts are the highlight of the night, with treats such as "Melo-makarona," which are small cookies covered in soaking honey and chopped walnuts, "Kourambiethes," a shortbread type of biscuit covered in powdered sugar, and "christopsomo," also known as christ bread that contains walnuts, raisins, and is flavored with Greek spices.

Saving the best for last, Germany. Germany along with some other European countries start their Christmas season with "Saint Nicholas day". This event is one of the most fun days of the month as it kicks off the holiday season. St. Nick is a revered gray-haired figure who dresses in bishop garments. On the night of December 5th, children place their polished shoes out on their doorstep in hope that the following morning they will wake up to treats, small toys, coins and other goodies inside their shoes. Once the country is asleep Nicholas then travels by donkey leaving presents to all the good kids. Although he does not travel alone, with him comes his partner "Knecht Ruprecht." Knecht is a half goat half demon sinister figure who deals with all the naughty kids. It is said that he goes around taking all the misbehaved children in a sack. The following day on December 6th St. Nick travels around Germany receiving poems, songs, and drawings from children as a form of gratitude for the goodies they've received.

Even though people celebrate Christmas differently around the world, the meaning behind it will always be the same. The holidays are a time for family and gathering around. Most importantly it's about spreading cheer and kindness.

We wish you a Happy Holiday from your Jaguar family!

