Colorado Springs Shooting

Colorado Springs suffered a terrible event at the beginning of the holiday season this year. On November 27, a shooting occurred at the Planned Parenthood Clinic in Colorado Springs. The shooting involved a five-hour standoff with police; killing one police officer and two civilians and injuring five police officers and four civilians.

Law enforcement responded to a report of an active shooter in Colorado Springs around 11:58 that morning. The shooter, identified as Robert Lewis Dear, first opened fire outside before moving into the clinic. Staff inside the clinic moved people out of the waiting room, and locked a security door. As responding officers approached the building, the suspect fired at them, hitting several. A five-hour standoff then took place. At the time of the incident, twenty gunshot reports were reportedly fired within five minutes.

During the standoff, officers who made it inside the clinic reportedly shouted to communicate with a suspect, attempting to persuade him to surrender. He eventually surrendered at 4:52 p.m. following his arrest; law enforcement began searching the building, as well as the suspect’s car. Dear was identified as a 57-year-old man from North Carolina.

Investigation for possible motives began on November 29. According to a 9News reporter, Dear gave a “rambling” interview after his arrest in which he said at one point, “No more baby parts,” a statement that has been seen as a reference to the Planned Parenthood 2015 Video Controversy. The unnamed official added that Dear “said a lot of things” in his police interview, including that he has anti-abortion and anti-government views, and that his acts were “definitely politically motivated.”

On November 30, 2015, Dear was charged with murder of the first degree and was ordered to be held without bond.

China’s One Child Policy To End

After 35 years, China will end its “one-child policy”. The decision was made due to China’s rapidly aging population and to improve the economy. Now the law will be relaxed to allow for a “two-child policy”, but citizens must follow the existing policy until the new law is legally enacted in March 2016.

China’s controversial one-child policy was introduced nationally in 1979 to slow the population growth rate, and is estimated to have prevented about 400 million births. Citizens who opted for multiple children had to pay a fine or undergo forced abortions. Second children whose parents did not pay the fee are not considered citizens of China; there is no legal paperwork or birth certificate to even show they exist.

The one child policy also lead to a gender imbalance, where men greatly outnumber women in China (by at least 33 million) due to the country’s favor of male children to carry on the family name. One report suggested at least one million babies were killed in the first ten years of the policy, most of them girls. “I loved my daughter”, one farmer explained in a 1985 article, “but sooner or later she would get married and leave me for a husband. I would have supported her for 20 years for nothing” (The Washington Post). Parents would later use sex-selective strategies to ensure they had a male child and orphanages would hold mostly female children.

The two-child policy will be rolled out over the next five years in hopes of saving China’s future economy. Because of China’s aging population, the labor force is shrinking. An estimated 17 percent of China’s population will be aged 65 years or older by 2030, up from ten percent this year. However, the rise in the cost of living and parent’s hesitation to support more children causes considerable uncertainties about China’s economic future.

Danger Overhead? The Drone Controversy

There is much controversy surrounding drones, with some fighting to ban them and others fighting to keep them. Today they can be bought almost anywhere and are used as anything from toys to cameras. Yet they still have a negative connotation due to their history as weapons, creating the dilemma as to if drones should be in the hands of the everyday consumer.

In the military, drones or UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) and are used when it is too dangerous to use soldiers. They are a source of protection, giving the military eyes and ears and detailed reports that a human would not be able to obtain. Most are equipped with a variety of sensors: infrared, radar, cameras, etc. They can stay in the air for up to 17 hours. The U.S. is given crucial information from these drones that wasn’t possible to obtain before the drones existed.

The drones protect the U.S. and its assets not only by acting as a spy of sorts, but also by acting as a weapon. There are drones that carry missiles and highly accurate laser targeting systems. The military can guide the drones to take out threats in areas soldiers can’t reach, and U.S. drones are responsible for several Al Qaeda member deaths. These strikes, however, have also killed many civilians. The drones can hit very specific spots where enemies are known to be, but they are not as advanced enough to know what else is being destroyed. Rachel Stohl, of the Stimson Center, a Washington research institute stated, “These are precise weapons. The failure is in the intelligence about who it is that we are killing.”

According to the New York Times, President Obama declared in a speech in 2015 about drones that declared that any strike was to be taken without “near-certainty that no civilians will be killed or injured.” He added, “Nevertheless, it is a hard fact that U.S. strikes have resulted in civilian casualties,” and said, “I see our innocent people being killed in the way we live.” U.S. lives are protected by these drones, but unfortunately they also take the lives of civilians elsewhere. Cole Herring, sophomore, thinks that “If they’re (civilians) near a target, it’s their fault for being in the way. If a bomb is dropped from a plane, civilians are also killed, and drones kill less because they are more targeted.” Keely Masser, sophomore, disagrees saying, “If the drones are being sent to target who are a threat then I agree with that, but not with drones inadvertently killing civilians.”

This is where drones get their negative connotation, from the death they have brought. From military drones, people know that these devices can be made into weapons and spyware. But drones sold to the everyday person are just toys, right? Most people use them as that, a fun device you can fly all over a neighborhood or city. Some use it as a camera, taping views the human eye wouldn’t be able to physically capture. One can get a bird’s eye view of basically anywhere, or get a new angle on a performance, a city, and landmark. Yet it is this part of household drones, the videotaping part, that is getting drones banned all over the world, and not the concern over how they are potential weapons. Kimberley Bramwell, freshman, says, “I don’t think they should be banned, because they could be quite useful, but I do think that there should be more rules on where they are allowed to fly, to respect privacy.”

It is a question of privacy. Many are calling for drones to be banned for private use because they infringe upon privacy. You can never know when you are being filmed by a drones, so how can consent be given? Drones can also be used for illegal personal gain, such as recording private football plays. Some argue that they are dangerous and can interfere with aircraft, or have some sort of failure and fall from the sky and kill someone. They can be used to transfer drugs or other illegal things.

In the end, recreational drones were intended for just that, recreation and having fun. But there is always someone who misuses and ruins the experience for everyone else. If people would use drones to have fun, to film amazing sights and not spy, this problem wouldn’t exist. But it does and steps need to be taken to ensure drones aren’t being used for crime. The only way to do that without banning them completely is to regulate them and have laws that prevent them from being used improperly. Tamara Coy, junior, says, “If you use them (drones) incorrectly your right to use them should be revoked, but you shouldn’t be punished if you haven’t commit a crime.” Unfortunately as of now the laws restrict even those who haven’t commit a crime. These laws take away from the fun, but are necessary due to the greed and stupidity of others.

—ALEX MARES

—HOLLY HUMPHRIES
Turmoil in North Korea

From small actions, like discouraging children from drawing in schools, to larger insurts, like a museum dedicated to made up atrocities committed by the so-called U.S. Imperialists, the North Korean government has been waging a war with its people to subvert any attempts at Western influence. Through a federally mandated hermetic sealing of the nation’s borders combined with the technological roadblocks in place to prevent unapproved internet (mostly porn and news sites), Kim Jong II has orchestrated a perfect information dead zone. Following a recent visit to the renowned Mirae Scientist’s Street, Kim Jong II was amazed at the beauty and efficiency of a district without humans. By limiting travel around districts and cities he has perfected the art of faux innovation. Empty buildings are constructed with the promise of scientific and cultural development, though this is never delivered upon.

Now, for a look at some of the statistics involved with the current and former Kim regimes. Since the Korean War, over 200,000 foreign citizens have been abducted. This is combined with the standing order of “Shoot to kill” for all border guards. The current estimate for undernourished citizens is 32% of the population with some even turning to cannibalism, though it is not widespread, it did happen. The common consensus in industrial and rural areas is don’t eat the meat unless you know where it comes from. Hopefully, these chilling numbers have given you a glance at some of the trials the North Korean people face in their day-to-day lives.

In the last 62 years since the Korean War, South Korea has become a beacon of technological progress while it’s northern counterpart has stuck to a strong class-based regime, refusing to innovate or advance. With the most wealthy being allowed to live in the larger cities and the poor set to live in the rural farming communities. Even those cut off from direct ties from the tyrannical reign of Kim family suffer from lack of supplies and medical care. Food production is constantly falling short of the countries needs because of the strict distribution policy of the government. With few products shared in the quantities required, many North Koreans are left starving.

In recent years their most ambitious foray into the modern world, i.e. nuclear weaponry, the North Koreans have fallen short with only a projected 48 weapons available. For comparison the current United States stockpile exceeds 4,700 weapons. With pop culture and news outlets commonly turning to North Korea as our biggest nuclear threat, it is unrealistic to expect much trouble from them in that department.

Whatever business you think you have in North Korea, keep it short. The current state of affairs is thoroughly anti Western culture which proves it to be a less than enjoyable vacation destination for anyone who fits that bill. While there are many economic and cultural gains to be found in the fine nation of North Korea, the current appeal is overshadowed by the dictatorship in place, this empty streets regime has created a Kafkaesque nightmare for its citizens and a real pain in the ass for the rest of the world.

—Eric Holbert

Prier Pour la France

World events as of late have been scarly reminiscent of the terror attacks of 9/11, though instead of being one concentrated attack, recent ones have been scattered all around France. On November 13, there was a multitude of attacks in the country, ranging from suicide bombings to shootings and hostage situations.

It all started at around 9:20 pm. Three suicide bombings occurred outside the Stade de France in Saint-Denis. Along with this, there were more suicide bombings and six mass shootings at different locations and restaurants in Paris. The total number of fatalities was 130, not including the deaths from the three hour stand-off between the attackers and police forces at the Bataclan Theatre. 89 people were killed, and 368 were injured.

These attacks are as deadly as the attacks on France from World War II, and the city of Paris hasn’t seen this much damage since the Paris Massacre of 1961.

The group that everyone suspected, ISIL (The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), took responsibility for all of the attacks, claiming their motive was retaliation for the French’s involvement in the Syrian civil war and the Iraqi civil war. The suspected lead operator of the attacks was Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a man originally from Belgium. On November 18th, he was killed in a police raid that took place in Saint-Denis.

As a result of the terror attacks, France placed temporary controls on their borders and announced a state of emergency, the first since the 2005 riots. A few days later they sent its largest air-strike to targets in Al-Raqqa as retribution for the terrorism.

Going back to the similarities of the recent attacks and 9/11, one of those seems to be that France has been a powerful ally for the United States at many points in recent history and older times, as well. France was a powerful ally during the devastating weeks and months after 9/11 by contributing their own troops and housing for ours, warplanes and commandos, intelligence and naval assets while we descended into Afghanistan.

Recent events have shown us it is our turn to assist France in not only mourning but fighting back.

On Tuesday, November 17, Barack Obama traveled to France to meet with Francois Hollande. The two agreed to intensify the strikes against ISIL/ISIS and are strengthening the bond between the countries even further.

NATO, which is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, now seems as if it has an opportunity to invoke article 5 for only the second time in history, the first being after the 9/11 attacks. Article 5 states that if there is an organized attack against any of the participating countries of NATO (now 28) the others can declare war and work together to stop the offensive force.

Once again as we reminisce about the recent and not-so-recent terrorist attacks on both France and the United States, we can remember how during 9/11 France claimed, “NOUS SOMMES TOUS AMÉRICAINS,” or “We are all Americans.” For us Americans, now is the right time to say, “We are all French.”

—Caitlan Waldrop

The Official Text of NATO, Article 5

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.
Fall Sports Review

Cross Country:
After being near the bottom of the region standings last year, the boys cross country team bounced back and were much more successful this year (7th), but just fell short of making State, as a team. Although the goal for everyone on the team was to make State, only one of them had the opportunity to do so. Senior Caleb Thompson, our top runner for boys cross country, had an excellent season, as he not only made All-State, but finished 20th out of 174 runners.

Most athletes, if not all, have had their ups and downs during their career and have learned that success is not given, but earned. When Thompson moved from Washington state, during his freshman year, where he lived two miles from the beach, he had to adjust to the altitude here in Colorado. As a runner, this transition was very difficult for him. His fastest times as a freshman in Colorado were much slower than his fastest times as an 8th grader in Washington. For Thompson to ever make State, during his high school career, would require him to work hard, practice, and improve. That’s exactly what he did, and it all paid off.

“It was really cool that our region course this year was the same one that I ran at the end of my freshman year. It was awesome to see how I ran around a 19:56 as a freshman and a 16:08 this year,” said Thompson. Although his 16:08 time was not the time he ran at State, it shows how much he improved throughout the last four years. His accomplishments this year and throughout his career are very impressive, and open the doors for more success to come his way in his future at the Air Force Academy.

Volleyball:
Volleyball captain Kyleigh Kappas said, “Though we didn’t win many league games, we worked our butts off at practice and never gave up, no matter how big the challenge was. We stuck together through thick and thin, and made the most out of each win/loss.” This season, like any other, the volleyball team would have loved to make it to State and win more games, but their record does not show how much effort they had and how willing they were to compete. The team was quite young and new this year, where not many of the girls had ever played with each other. After a year of getting familiar with new players, the competitiveness of being on varsity, and the importance of winning each game, the volleyball team is confident that next year the girls will showcase what they have learned on the court.

Softball:
Varsity softball player Abbey Montoya said, “The fact that we have a really young team and that everyone was able to step it up and play well was definitely our biggest accomplishment this year.” Although the softball team did make playoffs, we fell short from making State this season. They started off very well going undefeated in the Grand Junction tournament, and later in the season finished second place in the Don McCall tournament. Still very successful in League and finished with a winning record, the girls culminated in another playoff run.

Boys’ Soccer:
This season, the varsity soccer team was able to break a six-year streak of not making the playoffs, and Ryan Lee was awarded the Aspires Athlete of the Week. The team made it to the first round of playoffs, but unfortunately lost to Cherry Creek in a thrilling overtime game.

Going into the game, Cherry Creek was ranked #7, and our Douglas County team was ranked #26. When there was about 15 minutes left in the first half, Ryan Lee received a through ball and scored in the bottom corner. When the second half began, and for the majority of it, Cherry Creek had most of the possession and had many more opportunities to score, but our goalkeeper, Cedar Haugen, made several incredible saves to keep us in the lead.

Eventually, Cherry Creek was able to score, due to the fact that we were playing very defensive in order to keep the lead. But it wasn’t over yet and still tied 1-1. With 15 minutes left in regulation, our game style completely changed from a defensive-mindset to an attacking one. Eventually, the game went into a sudden death overtime of two 15 minute periods. A goal would win the game.

Only a few minutes into the first overtime period, Cherry Creek was able to generate a scoring opportunity. A Cherry Creek player standing far post rifled a shot directly above Cedar straight into the back of the net. That was the game and the season for our soccer team, ending in devastating manners.

Even though the way the season ended was terrible, it didn’t mean the season was not a success. The team was able to reach their goal of making playoffs, which was a great way for many of the seniors to end their soccer career here at DC.

Tennis:
Although the Tennis team was not happy with how the season looked on paper, the ways in which the team improved and learned as a whole meant much more. There were some young and inexperienced players who joined the team this year, and the goal was for them get better so that the team could be more successful in future years. Success does not always mean winning matches, but sometimes a successful season is one where everyone grows. The tennis team is hoping to use this year as a foundation for years to come.

Golf:
In the eyes of David Roney, a junior on the varsity golf team, the team greatly improved throughout the season. After a slower start to the season, individual players were able to come up with great scores, which overall and over time led to the team’s success as a whole. In the last regular season tournament, the team finished in 3rd place and were able to carry that momentum into Regionals, where they were also very successful.

Football:
Unfortunately, the football team did not finish the way they wanted to, due to injuries and a lot of young, yet talented, players who are still learning and adapting to the competitiveness of the team. Coach Gene Hill believes these aren’t excuses for how the season ended, but they will do their best to make improvements to make next year much better.

-Blake Grimes
Sanari woke up in the body of a young woman. She was a slim thing, with curves that would make a man whistle. She had long, brown hair and eyes that were almost black. The year is now 1948. It wasn’t unusual for Sanari to skip centuries or decades.

“Madam Seya.” Someone said quietly from the door. “Are you still going to go to the grocers?” Sanari looked up at the women who addressed her through the mirror. She nodded and studied herself in the mirror.miled at the women.

“Yes, will you be accompanying me, Miss...?”

“Jones, ma’am. You told me not to come along because you had other errands to run.” Sanari waved her hand in the air, trying to make it seem like she was almost dismissing the lady. Jones had a hint of a smile on her face, yet she hesitated. Sanari changed her mind. She would enjoy some company on her way to the.. grocers.” Sanari waved her hand in the air, trying to make it seem like she was almost dismissing the lady. Jones had a hint of a smile on her face, yet she hesitated. Sanari started to the door and Jones quickly stepped out of the way.

Maybe Seya isn’t kind to Jones. Sanari thought. She shrugged it off and continued out of the room. Jones followed silently behind Sanari.

“Are we going to drive to the grocers or walk, Madam Senya?” Jone questioned while helping Sanari into a mink stole coat. Sanari has never driven a car, but she knew what one was because of Seya’s memories.

“Well of course you would drive me to the store Jones, why wouldn’t you?”

Before Jones could answer, there was a knock at the door. Jones walked over to the door and opened it to reveal a handsome man. He was tall with dark hair that was slicked back. His shoulders were broad and his suit was fitting to his body.

“Monsieur Benjamin, what brings you here?” Jones asked, but the man paid no attention to her. He pushed her out of the way and walked towards Sanari.

“For the love of God.” He gasped. He yelled for Jones with desperation. The small woman came running in with an angry huff. Sanari turned to Jones, unsure of what was the matter.

“What do you need Monsieur~” Jones stopped in her tracks, dropping the bowl she was drying. “Madam Seya, your eyes!”

Sanari felt she could feel a hot liquid run down her cheeks. She brought her hand to her face, touching the now cool liquid. When she pulled her hand away, she gasped. Blood was pouring out of her eyes.

Sanari cried out, trying to mop up the blood with her hands. It dripped onto the carpet, and smeared all over the couch. Sanari ran to her bedroom, searching for anything sharp. She shredded the pillows and ripped opened the mattress. She was desperate for anything. Sanari searched desperately as the blood pooled into her hands.

—KIKI EMERSON
Christmas Charity

The Christmas season is coming and it is the time of year where there are many families in need who you can help. There are many ways to help just imagine how happy they would be. Some of the organizations that need help:

Operation Christmas Child asks for shoes boxes filled with toys for certain age groups and genders. You can also pay seven dollars to see where your box goes. These shoe boxes are collected in U.S., Australia, Finland, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, and the U.K. People all over the world are able to participate and make Christmas’s everywhere better.

Toys for Tots collects new, unused toys and gives them to less fortunate kids. Run by the United States Marine Corps, they collect these toys in the front of most grocery and toy stores.

Adopt a Family is run by The Denver Rescue Mission. They accept nominations of families in need and then choose certain families to have people adopt and give presents to.

Make-A-Wish is a cancer foundation that people normally know for granting wishes, but they also help with Christmas presents for families who don’t have money for presents because of the cost of medical bills.

The Salvation Army collects money around the Christmas season to help aid families, seniors and the homeless. They collect money for Christmas dinners, clothing, and toys for families in need, including families of prisoners.

Angel Tree is a ministry that reaches out to the children of inmates and their families to help provide them with toys "from" their parents that are incarcerated. This mission helps families come together even though there is something big separating them.

Every year Macy’s has the Make-A-Wish Believe campaign. For every letter that is written and sent to Santa in the special mailbox they will donate $1 up to $2 million dollars.

So if you are looking for a way to help out the community there are these and many more organizations to get involved and help those that are less fortunate.

—MIKAYLA BENSMAN

Black Friday: A Survival Guide

Does your family do something you find a little weird around the holidays? Maybe your favorite uncle gets blitzed on christmas and you all go to a movie just to hear his commentary. Maybe your mom compulsively cuts out hundreds of snowflakes to avoid the pressure of interacting with her in-laws. Whatever weird thing your family does, it pales in comparison to some of the strange things that countries around the world do.

Now come with me on a cultural adventure to rival none that you’ve had before, our first stop Oaxaca, Mexico. You step out of your home on December 23, the town is silent, save hundreds of tiny dolls. Wait, not dolls. Radishes. Hundreds of carved radishes. They depict the nativity scene, they depict glorious victories for the Mexican people, but most of all they depict the sense of camaraderie associated with sitting with your friends for hours on end whitting away at radishes. And in case you aren’t tired of reading the word yet, radishes, radishes, radishes.

After an exciting and nutritious visit to Mexico let’s head to Wales, where they have an interesting tradition called Mari Lwyd, where in a group of people, one person dresses up as a horse (actual skull required) while their buddies lead them door to door in search of food and drink, dancing and singing all the way. Though, if you decide to try bringing this tradition to the good ole U.S. you will face the certain challenge of finding a horse skull that isn’t currently in use.

Let’s move next to China, a country with a long standing tradition of colorful and meaningful traditions. The Ghost Festival is the annual tradition of setting fake money and other paper trinkets ablaze as a gift to long gone ancestors to prevent them from troubling the living, as well as letting them know that they are not alone.

—ERIC HOLBERT

Santa From The Past

When you were little, every year on Christmas Eve, you left cookies and milk for the big man in the red suit with presents. But where did he come from?

Santa Claus was actually a real person! He was a bishop of a turkish church in the fourth century. Although his real name was Saint Nicholas, over the years it changed and morphed to be Santa Claus.

Several traditions revolve around Santa Claus, like leaving him cookies and milk. This tradition originated from Saint Nicholas’ Day. On December 5th the people of Myra would celebrate him by bringing him food, which created his round belly.

How did he get around? The reindeer emerged from the thought of Santa living in the North Pole. According to www.altogetherchristmas.com, “In 1812, American author Washington Irving” made up the reindeer in a children’s book because Santa needed a way to travel and carry all this presents. Just as the song said,”Then one foggy Christmas Eve Santa came to say, ‘Rudolph with your nose so bright, won’t you guide my sleigh tonight’”. Rudolph was Santa’s flashlight on foggy nights.

Even though your parents said he was fake, Santa remains real through the spirit of tradition.

—DANI NAVARRO
I Have Decided in 2020 to Run for President

“I have decided in 2020 to run for president,” said Kanye West at the MTV VMAs this year. There are several presidential candidates that everyone thought they were a joke at first, but turned out to be true.

According to the ABC News website, West said that he hates politics. “I’m not a politician at all. I care about the truth and I just care about human beings,” said West.

He plans to research and “grow up” in the next 5 years before the election in 2020. Another 2020 candidate is Lindsey Lohan.

In October 2015 she posted a photo on Instagram with the caption, “In #2020 I run for president. Through ups and downs #YESWECAN let’s do this @kanyewest.” Even though she is one year too young, she is keeping the idea in her mind.

Later she captioned another one of her photos “The first thing I would like to do as president of US is take care of all the children suffering in the world #queenELIZABETH showed me how by having me in her country.”

Also, Will Smith is another celebrity who is running for president.

He has been talking about becoming president for awhile now. During an interview for the movie I Am Legend, in 2007, Smith said, “I’m going to be president of the United States.”

In November on a “Awards Chatter” podcast Smith shared more, “As I look at the political landscape, I think that there might be a future out there for them. They might need me out there. This is the first year that I’ve been incensed to a level that I can’t sleep, you know? So I’m feeling that at some point, in the near future, I will have to lend my voice to the conversation in a somewhat different way.”

This year when presidential campaigns were starting, Donald Trump made an obvious effort to begin his. Most people thought he was joking around just to see what would happen. Trump is now one of the top candidates for the republicans.

These stars might have the right intentions for being president, but America should be asking themselves; Are they really qualified to be president? Will they actually know what to do in order to run a successful and happy country?

Want to know who you should vote for? Go to http://www.isidewith.com and take the quiz now*

— Dani Navarro

Ingredients (for cookies)

• 1 cup (2 sticks) room temperature butter, room temperature
• 1 cup firmly packed dark-brown sugar
• 1 large egg
• 3/4 cup unsulfured molasses
• 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
• 2 teaspoons ground ginger
• 1 teaspoon baking soda
• 1/4 teaspoon salt
• 4 cups of flour
• the most pleasing sprinkles you can find

Ingredients (for sustainable icing)

• 1/2 cup of confectioners sugar
• 3 tablespoons of water
• If you’re really daring- add a couple table spoons of chili powder to assert your dominance over your friends and petulant family members and spice up any Christmas party.

Note: If these are being used as tree decorations, triple the spices and replace the butter with shortening for longer lasting (but less buttery) cookies.

Cooking Directions

In a mixer, cream together the butter, sugar, molasses, egg, cinnamon, ginger, and baking soda. Slowly add the flour. Remove dough from mixer, carefully tuck the dough in saran wrap like a small chubby baby, and refrigerate. (Please do not practice this skill with real babies).

Once your dough has been waiting for your loving touch for 3-4 hours, dust a CLEAN table with flour and roll out the dough. Roll dough to the thickness of 1/4 of an inch and if your high school education hasn’t graced you with the skill of measuring, roughly the thickness of a two good sized coloring books stacked on top of each other. Now you can choose to use cookie cutters to obtain a your ideal cookie shape.

Space them evenly, about 3/4” apart, on a greased cookie sheet and bake those suckers for 8–10 minutes.

Let gingerbread rest until cool on flat surface. When as as cool Nsync on a scale of Barry Manilow to the Arctic Monkeys, mix icing, ice, and add some super sick sprinkles. Then allow gingerbread men to rest until the icing has hardened, over night is good so they can enjoy one last night before they are devoured

— Abigail Borden

Those Wacky Holidays

So, you want to go Black Friday shopping. Cool.

You’re going to take it easy on the turkey, wake up at 3 am, gather everybody up in the car and go, right? WRONG. This is war. If you wish to survive, pay attention. PS: This can be applied to any holiday shopping.

Black Friday is Friday, November 27, 2015. Different retailers will open their doors at different times. Some places will even open in intervals for their doorbuster deals. Intense grandmas and extreme couponers are going to be right at the front at every single moment. You’ll try to get up there but they’ll see right through you. They can smell fear. They have no mercy. Trample the weak and hurdle the dead.

Don’t worry. I can help you. I’ll get you out of their with minor cuts and bruises and the great deals you naively set out for. Just follow these steps to compete with veteran shoppers and get what you want:

1. Obtain and absorb material. Check for Black Friday ads online and print them out. Read the fine print. Ads will tell you what’s on sale, when doors open, and even how much in stock you have.

2. Eat light. The purpose of Thanksgiving is not to be thankful, it is to eat food. Try not to eat too much. You’ll be a lot more tired and a lot slower when you’re running for your life.

3. Be wired, not tired. Dragging yourself out of bed for school is hard enough. Make sure you energize with massive amounts of caffeine.

4. Put it in park. The goal is to be in and out. Park as close as possible but don’t waste time. Punctuality is key.

5. Shop Gladiator style. You are going into sale war. You’re a shopper on a mission. Think of this day as the Olympics of shopping. Run with rage (Gladiator shoes not recommended).

6. Proper Form. If you find yourself in a stampede of people, try to get to the edge (it’s not as sweaty). Stand straight with feet firmly positioned. Stay calm, conserve oxygen (shouting does not help you), brace for impact.

7. Assemble the Dream Team. Find people to go with that want to visit the same stores as you. Divide and conquer. Carry emergency whistles for communication (remember that “Friends” episode? You are Monica buying the perfect wedding dress).

8. Simmer down. You’re at the checkout, the home stretch. Relax, collect your thoughts. The line will move.

And that’s it! You’re out the door. The first signs of dawn have appeared, birds are chirping. Once you’ve safely returned to your vehicle, lock the doors and smile. You’re alive. and you got some awesome deals. Good work, soldier.

— Holly Humphries
Best Ski & Snowboarding: Colorado Winter Recreation

How much do you appreciate the Rocky Mountains? As someone who comes from California, the Rocky Mountains are perfect, offering soft, white snow, as well as unforgettable memories made skiing, snowboarding, and snowmobiling with friends and family. Many can agree that the mountains are absolutely amazing and breathtaking.

As the winter season gets closer and closer, so does the ski/snowboarding season. Colorado has so many resorts to choose from, all having something unique to offer, as well as an incredible experience. Since there is so much to choose from, the decision of where to go might be difficult. A lot of things should go into consideration when choosing a location to spend your vacation: the town environment, activities, pricing, ski/snowboarding difficulty, etc. Here are some common resorts that you can choose from! So where will you spend your winter getaway?

“I love Breckenridge because it’s actually cleaner than most resorts, the people are friendlier in my opinion, and the environment is more welcoming,” said Ashley Haws.

**Key Features:**
- Breckenridge is an authentic mining town filled with history, character, and so many places to shop, dine, and socialize. As you walk through Breckenridge, take a look at the historic buildings that have stood for over 100 years.
- Breckenridge can satisfy any abilities or interests with its huge 5 peaks that span over 2,908 acres.
- It is seen as the perfect resort, combining the stellar mountain as well as the historic town.
- Mountain Stats:
  - Beginner: 18% Intermediate: 31% Advanced/Expert: 55%
  - 187 trails with 3,398 feet of vertical rise
  - 500 inches of average annual snowfall
  - Pricing:
    - For a 1 day lift-ticket: $86 for an adult (13-64), $56 for a child (5-12), $76 for a senior (65+)
    - To rent skis for 1 day: Junior Skis ($42), Sports Skis ($58), Performance Skis ($65), Demo Skis ($73)
    - To rent snowboards for 1 day: Junior Snowboard ($42), Sport Snowboard ($63), Demo Snowboard ($73)
    - Full day private lessons for skiing and snowboarding cost $615.

“I enjoy snowboarding at Vail because it has absolutely everything I am looking for,” said JD Ahrens.

**Key Features:**
- Vail is commonly known for its Back Bowls, offering a thrilling challenge for more advanced skiers. When you arrive at Vail, you are only seeing a fraction of the mountain. Vail has a very large amount of terrain, attracting ski-lovers around the world. Unlike other mountains, Vail began as a sheep-grazing land, and has completely changed into what it has become today.
- Vail, unlike other resorts, has 3 main villages with shops, restaurants, bars, and hotspots.
- Mountain Stats:
  - Beginner: 18% Intermediate: 29% Advanced/Expert: 53%
  - There are 193 trails that cover 5,289 acres of skiable terrain!
  - The vertical rise is 3,450 ft and the average annual snowfall is 550 inches
  - Pricing: age range is same as Breckenridge
    - For a 1 day lift-ticket: $100 for an adult, $69 for a child, and $90 for a senior
    - To rent skis for 1 day: Junior-$46, Sport-$61, Performance=$71, Demo=$81
    - To rent snowboards for 1 day: Junior-$46, Sport-$71, Demo=$81
    - Full day private lessons for skiing and snowboarding $630.

“I love Beaver Creek because the employees are always so kind and helpful. I also like the variety of levels, because some days I feel like taking a challenge, while other days I like to take it easy,” said Isabella Heinitz.

**Key Features:**
- Beaver Creek has won several awards and accolades for its food, wine, service, lodging, and safety standards. The staff are trained in a way where they not only provide what guests want, but anticipate it as well.
- During the evening, they have a selection of concerts, taverns, broadway performances and other entertainment options. A popular local hotspot is the Coyote Cafe where guests can enjoy live music, drinks, and free ski movies.
- There are four gourmet on-mountain dining options, which are open the entire day (lift times).
- Mountain Stats:
  - Beginner: 19% Intermediate: 43% Advanced/Expert: 38%
  - 145 trails that make up 1,832 acres of skiable terrain and 3,340 ft of vertical rise.
  - The average annual snowfall is 325 in.
  - Pricing:
    - For a 1 day lift ticket: Adult (15-64)-$108 Child (5-12)-$75 Senior (65+)-$98
    - To rent skis for 1 day: Junior ($58), Sport ($78), Performance ($88), Demo ($98)
    - To rent snowboards for 1 day: Junior ($58), Sport ($78), Demo ($98)
    - Full day private lessons for skiing and snowboarding are $650.

“My favorite ski resort is Copper because it has great slopes and moguls, and I have a great time with my family and friends,” said Bradley Van Egeren.

**Key Features:**
- Unlike any other resort, Copper has naturally-dividing terrain, where more difficult runs are on the left and easier ones are on the right (if you’re facing the mountain). This allows skiers/snowboarders to be around those of the same skill level (those who are learning don’t have to worry about crashing into more advanced skiers/snowboarders and vice versa)
- The layout of the mountain can serve as a progression chart—the more you move to the left, the more you are improving and gradually working your way up to challenging terrain.
- There are three main bases, each leading to a different level of difficulty.
- Other activities include: ice skating, tubing, and Woodward (an action sport training facility for all ages and abilities).
- Mountain Stats:
  - Beginner: 21% Intermediate: 25% Advanced/Expert: 54%
  - There are over 140 trails that cover 2,465 skiable acres and a vertical rise of 2,601 ft
  - Pricing:
    - For a 1 day lift ticket (14/15 season prices): Adult (13-64)-$138 Child and Senior-$69
    - To rent skis/snowboards for 1 day (walk-in rate): Junior ($29), Sport ($45), Performance ($49), Demo ($59)
    - Full day private lessons for skiing and snowboarding are $629.

“My favorite ski resort is Winter Park because it has a good selection of runs that are all great...I’ve never had a bad experience at Winter Park,” said Isaac Longacher.

**Key Features:**
- With a 75 year history, Winter Park is Colorado’s longest continually operated ski resort. There are a variety of activities other than skiing and snowboarding such as: Dog sled rides, fat biking, sleigh rides, snowcat skiing, snowmobiling, and ice skating.
- Alpenglow Massage is new in Winter Park, offering a variety of massages to restore sore and tired muscles.
- There are a variety of dining options in the village as well as on the mountain. There are also new shopping centers in the village, where you can get some more winter gear, as well as other clothing and accessories.
- The Seven Territories is something unique about Winter Park, each for different skill levels and the skiing/snowboarding varies in each.
- Mountain Stats:
  - Beginner: 8% Intermediate: 18% Most Difficult/Expert: 39%
  - Winter Park has a vertical rise of 2,220 ft and an average annual snowfall of 548 in.
  - Pricing:
    - For a 1 day lift ticket: Child (6-12)-$40 Adult (13-64)-$59 Senior (65+)-$55
    - To rent skis for 1 day: Junior ($26), Performance/Sport ($35), High Performance ($57), Demo ($63)
    - To rent snowboards for 1 day: Junior ($25), Sport ($33), High Performance ($56), Demo ($41)
    - Full day private lessons for snowboarding and skiing are $629.

**Season Passes:** There are 4 major season passes by Epic: Epic Pass, Epic Local Pass, Summit Value Pass, Tahoe Local Pass. All these passes offer unlimited access to certain resorts and limited access to others. For more information about the prices and/or the passes go to snow.com.

—BLAKE GRIMES
Driving Dangerously: Perils of...Becca?

We’ve all said it. “No one knows how to drive in the snow.” As if our teenage selves are somehow better or smarter than all the more experienced drivers on the road. The fact of the matter is that Colorado weather has a tendency to get very dangerous, and teenagers have a tendency to ignore danger. This can have some potentially fatal results. The best option is to be honest with yourself, you’ve been driving for 16 months. You’re not exactly an expert. Learn how to be safe.

Black ice: My friends, it is real. Black ice tends to form in early mornings and evenings. If you hit black ice, the best plan of action is not to hit the breaks (this is crucial) also try not to move the steering wheel, in most cases you’ll be able to slide right over it with no problem at all. If you are unsure of road conditions it’s always best to head for textured snow.

Visibility: Snow can get pretty heavy here, and especially up towards the mountains visibility can become a big issue. This may come as a shock, but it is important to see the road when driving. When conditions are rough, the best advice is to drive slowly, you don’t want to run into something you didn’t know was there. In some cases, the safest bet is to stay home. That is also the least fun option though, so I’ll leave it up to you.

Turning: It is easy to forget, in the summer, that winter turns are often slippery. Therefore students try to take their turns in the snow as fast as the ones they take in the sun. As a person who has crashed their sad little car trying to turn in the winter, my #1 recommendation is to drive slow. You must also know not to overcorrect while turning in winter. The best plan when you’re spinning out is to look at where you want to end up. They teach it in all the classes; where you look is where you’ll end up. So, if it wasn’t already clear, eyes on the road.

The bottom line is, be careful and give yourself plenty of time! You know what? Wake up just that little bit earlier or head out before you normally would. This little thing just might keep you and others safe on those snowy roads.

—REBECCA WEISS

‘You’ll shoot your eye out, kid’: Last-Minute Shopping Tips

For all the procrastinators and those who haven’t finished checking off their Christmas list, you are not alone. Last minute shopping can be difficult, especially when all the stores are running low on the biggest bargains. But have no fear, there are still a hundreds of holiday gifts out there that any of your friends or family would love. We have ideas that are cheap and affordable that anyone can create in less than ten minutes. All it takes it a little browsing, some budgeting and a few lists to have the perfect Christmas gift for your loved one.

At this point, there is no time to create an elaborate gift—it’s just the thought that matters now. The biggest key to last minute holiday shopping is being as simple as can be, whether the gift be handmade or bought from a local store. For simple gifts, try incorporating what they enjoy into it. Some examples could be if your friend/family member loves coffee, you could buy a good quality package, add some cinnamon sticks and wrap it all together with a scarf. Or for the music lovers out there, burn a CD with all your favorite songs on it, and decorate it. Not only is it unique, but it’s a special way to share you love with them.

Another key to last minute shopping is avoiding crowds. Crowds tend to gather at stores that are holding last minute sales, and with sales come agonizing lines and pushing through groups of people to get what you want. Try sticking to the smaller stores that not many people are at; sometimes it’s cheaper since it’s products are not high in demand! To avoid this, plan out exactly what you’re getting and where you go to get those items. Not only does it make the trip faster than if you had to come up with an idea on the spot, but it keeps you from impulse buying the hottest items on the market.

The last tip we have is for those who may have relatives or friends that live far away. It may not always be easy (or cheap) to send a package across the country, so why not try creating a special Christmas card or video. This gift can be done quickly, and is something the person may keep or cherish for years to come. All it takes is either buying a card at the store and writing a meaningful message, or recording a quick video on your phone and emailing it with just one click of a button. This way is cheap and affordable for anyone, and if it’s late, you could always blame it on the timezones.

—SARAH MANASSEE

We All Remember ‘The Big One’: Snowstorm Histories Around the Globe

At partially temperate climates, the United States and Canada have always been prone to snow and cold weather during the winter. December and the months prior can get pretty chilly at home in Castle Rock, but what snowstorms in other parts of North America and around the world rival the unpredictable nature of Colorado winters?

In March of 1888, a massive blizzard struck the United States’ East Coast. The height of accumulated snowfall allegedly reached anywhere from 20 to 60 inches in New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Snowdrifts towered at some odd 50 feet following the frigid downpour, and railway systems were temporarily shut down as a result of excess snow. Casualties of the blizzard amassed to a little over 400 people. A whopping 80 mph wind chill was reported, although 40 mph gusts from New York are acknowledged as the official extremes of what is now simply dubbed “the Blizzard of 1888.”

More recently, East Asia, (Mongolia, China, Nepal, the Korean Peninsula, Japan, and nearby nations and islands) saw especially destructive winter weather activity in 2009 and 2010. Blizzards and ice storms, among various other events, resulted in severe conditions. In Mongolia alone, 38 people had died as a result of storms in December of 2009. In Russia’s Primorsky Territory, temperatures reached a bone-shattering -7C, indicating an ominous Siberian snow cyclone, one of which had apparently struck regions earlier in November, and been cause for avalanche and ice warnings in the Primorsky Krai and Amur Krai regions of Russia.

Storms from the Russian east would only disperse upon reaching the Gulf of Alaska.

In light of those startling statistics, let’s talk about Colorado’s extremities.

From December 1st to 5th of 1913, 45.7 inches of snow fell in Denver. That’s pretty close to the reported levels of snowfall during the Blizzard of 1888.

The primary issue with the Colorado blizzard was that there was virtually nowhere to dump excess snow. In New York, there was a convenient body of water to sink the packed ice in. Mountain communities of Colorado probably had it even worse, since snowfall was even more severe there than at lower elevation, and there was still nowhere to get rid of it. Fortunately though, there were no casualties as a result of the Colorado blizzard of 1913. The same cannot be said for the Blizzard of 1888.

So, for the time being, it’s relatively safe to say that winter in Colorado could be indefinitely worse. Although, I wonder if Douglas County Schools would have actually called a snow day in 1888? Naaah. But, they might have gotten a late start!

—Haley Hickson
Disney Princess Duels

Mulan Wins

- Snow White vs. Rapunzel: Snow White couldn't handle Rapunzel's luxurious locks (who could though?)
- Mulan vs. Aurora: Mulan missed the duel because she slept through her alarm
- Merida vs. Cinderella: Merida used her archery skills while Cinderella must have left her's at the ball
- Anna vs. Belle: Anna just isn't as cool as her sister and can't really do anything
- Pocahontas vs. Ariel: The duel was on land, so Ariel just flopped around
- Jasmine vs. Tiana: Jasmine brought her pet tiger
- Esmerelda vs. Meg: Meg's sarcasm crushed Esmerelda's confidence
- Giselle vs. Jane: Jane went ape-crazy
- Rapunzel vs. Mulan: Rapunzel tripped over her hair
- Merida vs. Belle: Merida's skills that kill won over Belle's
- Pocahontas vs. Jasmine: Jasmine's not really good at anything and Pocahontas is slightly better
- Meg vs. Jane: Let's be real, Meg has only made it this far because she's cool
- Pocahontas vs. Meg: Her tree grandma helped her out
- Mulan vs. Merida: Both are kick-butt, Mulan slightly more so
- Mulan vs. Pocahontas: Mulan is swift as a coursing river with all the force of a great typhoon

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JOSIE RODRIGUE
The Effects of Fast Food on Teens: Surprise, It’s Not Good

As the amount of fast food restaurants increase, the health of teens is decreasing. Teens are constantly surrounded by the tantalizing restaurants that encircle their schools and homes. Influx in fast food makes it nearly impossible for teens to resist the want to consume fast food. The more the teens eat, the more their health is at risk.

Teenagers are becoming addicted to eating out. Advertisements are a constant reminder of food that teens can’t ignore. It has become so easy to choose the unhealthy choice because the low prices and convenience in busy schedules.

Teenage boys should consume around 2,800 calories and teen girls should consume around 2,200. However, when a teen eats from a fast food place, they are consuming more calories than they need. Fast Food meals tend to be larger in portions and higher in calorie count than at home meals. Teens are often eating the calories they are supposed to eat in one entire day in one meal. There is also a large intake of sodium that teens are consuming. The maximum amount of sodium a teen should consume is 2,400 milligrams a day. Fast food items have staggering amounts of sodium that put teens at risk. For example, a bag of potato chips has 1,680 milligrams of sodium, which is 67 times more sodium than just a regular potato. The increase of sodium elevates blood pressure. High blood pressure puts a person more at risk for heart attacks and strokes. Sodium can increase the risk of osteoporosis as well.

Another problem with fast food, is that it is high in fat. Most foods at fast food places are high in saturated fat, instead of healthy fats like monounsaturated fats (found in olive oil and nuts). The increase of saturated fat will not only make your stomach larger, but can clog arteries, along with many other problems.

Along with the high amounts of salt, processed meats, nitrates, and MSG found in fast food, eating fast food may even cause depression. The likelihood that a teen may develop depression can be elevated by eating fast food. According to the Public Health Nutrition, people who eat fast food are 51 percent more likely to develop depression.

No teenager wants acne, however, the more fast food a teen eats, the more acne they’ll get. Higher blood sugar levels are a major cause of acne. Fast food contains lots of carbohydrates that increase blood sugar levels. Consequently, acne can be triggered.

Teeth are also harmed by fast food. Foods high in carbs and sugar cause the bacteria in the mouth to produce an excess amount of acids. These acids can wreak havoc on teeth. They destroy dental enamel that can’t be replaced and can cause dental cavities.

Karson Hilgendorf, a sophomore, has suggestions for her peers to improve their health, “They can pack their own lunches with fruits and vegetables and try to learn how to make real meals instead of microwaving something or using processed ingredients.”

Hilgendorf rarely eats fast food and agrees that teenagers have way too much of it. She adds, “Unhealthy and processed foods are causing lots of problems in America such as obesity, diabetes, and heart diseases.”

Abby Brown, a sophomore at DC, has similar views. She believes, “ Teens can improve their health by not eating as much fast food, exercising more, and not watching as much TV.” Brown suggest to eat more healthy foods because of their benefits. “Healthy food is good for your body, gives you more energy, and you don’t get sick as much.”

Healthy foods are beneficial as well because it improves moods, combats disease, and improves longevity. Healthy foods are packed full of proteins, vitamins, and minerals that are essential to the body, without these key substances the body will decrease in muscle mass as fat stores increase. Instead of fast food that is a low-nutrient filler that the body burns through quickly, eat healthy food because it is filled with nutrients that sustain the body for longer periods of time.

Teens should follow Brown’s and Hilgendorf’s advice and put down the fast food and instead choose healthier foods to help stop the bad effects of fast food. There are many disadvantages of fast food and the less teens eat, the better off they will be.

H 10 Lies You Used to Believe: You Don’t need the Mythbusters to Bust These Myths

Have you ever believed something for your entire life and then, one day, found out it’s a lie? For example, did your parents instill in you the belief of one particular jolly, bearded fellow? Well, spoiler alert, Santa is not real. I know, I couldn’t believe it either.

But while this is a widespread lie, it is mostly believed by children. Yet there lies a lies that most of society believes, even adults. So below is a list of all the things you think are true... but are truly not.

#1 You can see the Great Wall of China from space. Everyone always talks about how the Great Wall is the only manmade structure you can see from space, but nope. This rumor has been around since the 1930’s, before any manned space missions. Astronauts have looked but after much searching it has been determined that you can’t make it out from the moon or even the space station. You can, however, see the Greenhouses of Almeria and the Great Pyramids at Giza.

#2 Napoleon was short. Napoleon was actually 5’7”, which was considered average if not tall in France during his time. The average height of a Frenchman was 5’5”. The rumor was believed to be started by Russia as war propaganda.

#5 Vikings wore horned helmets. This idea was brought about by a costume created for a 19th century Wagner opera. Vikings actually wore fur hoods or caps. They also didn’t sing in Italian, in case you were wondering.

#3 Vikings wore horned helmets. This idea was brought about by a costume created for a 19th century Wagner opera. Vikings actually wore fur hoods or caps. They also didn’t sing in Italian, in case you were wondering.

#4 Humans lived with dinosaurs. 41% of U.S. adults believe that at some point dinosaurs coexisted with humans. However, the dinos and humans are separated by 65 million years. So your great-times-100 grandfather never met a t-rex. Bummer.

#5 Humans have only five senses. We actually have around 20, and in addition to sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing we also have balance, movement, hunger, thirst, etc. So we have a 6th sense. And a seventh sense. And a fourteenth sense...

#6 Einstein failed math. He was actually always a brilliant mathematician. The rumor was thought to be made up because people identified more with the genius when they saw he had the same faults as themselves. He once failed an entrance exam for a school, however, so if you fail a test, no biggie. You could still be the next Einstein.

#7 It is not ok to pick up that baby bird. You won’t scare away the mama by tainting the baby with your horrific human stench. Birds actually don’t have a great sense of smell and probably won’t even notice. Now don’t you feel terrible. Think if all those babies you could’ve saved but let die.

#8 George Washington actually had wooden teeth. His teeth were made from ivory, animal teeth, and human teeth, thought to be the teeth of his slaves. Ew.

#9 Swimming less than an hour after eating will give you cramps or make you drown. People think that because your body is digesting, blood will be diverted from the rest of your body to your stomach, causing cramps which led to drowning which led to death. But this has never been proven and no one has died directly because they didn’t wait an hour after eating to swim. However, if you drink alcohol before swimming, that has been proven to cause deaths for obvious reasons.

#10 Humans evolved from apes. This may just seem like an opinion or a religious view, but it’s science. We evolved from a common ancestor, but not directly from the apes. Scientists believe this common ancestor lived 5 to 8 million years ago, and then then the species diverged into to new and separate species; monkeys and humans.

Now you can go confidently into the world knowing you and a select group of intellectual elites know the truth about 10 common misconceptions. Now go forth and enlighten your friends so that truth will be the accepted standard of mankind.

—Josie Rodrigue

—Alexandria Mares
Farewell Koppel: Yes, He is Smarter than You

I’m gonna climb mountains, and I’m going to travel the world with my wife, and I’m gonna moose hunt in Newfoundland if I make it that far. So yeah, I have all kinds of plans, lots of places to go, lots of people to see.
I work with the greatest people. I work with great kids, I work with great faculty members. I’ve always had a great administration. So the best part of it is the people.

I’ll tell you, I’m going to miss a lot of things. I’m gonna miss all the interactions with people. So I’m sure there’ll be a void in my life, an emptiness. I’ll fill it somehow but it will be hard to replace teaching. I’m going to feel that for sure.

There comes a time when you can go on and do other things. I mean, I don’t teach right now for the money, I teach because I love to teach, so I’m really not doing it for the money, that’s just a plus. I could’ve bowed out earlier, but I’m still having some fun; but, I can do some other things too. And my wife, we will have some time together. And she’s my best friend, so I’d like to spend some time with her. That will be the best part.

A compassionate and passionate man who will surely be missed by many. Although our time together is at its end, he will be remembered as the man who taught us the meaning of life itself. Congratulations, Mr. Koppel, and we all wish you the best of luck with the roads ahead of you.

—OLIVIA PETTIT

We Might Miss You: Saying Goodbye to Kingery

In the hierarchy of high school, there are a couple stereotypical teachers you are always bound to meet. The new one, who is roughly as experienced as you are and tries not to show it. The hard one, whose class is dreaded until after you’ve struggled your way through and realize that you actually learned a lot. Or, maybe the naive one who tries to be your friend. Only sparingly do you find the true teachers that really embody everything they’re supposed to be. They know their subject better than they know themselves, and more importantly they know the students. This is Ron Kingery, with a thin facade of pretentious brute thrown in to keep you guessing.

How long have you been teaching?
“28 years,” replies Ron Kingery, who’s nearly three decade legacy has lasted longer than the lifespans of his students.

What are you going to miss the most when you leave?
“The kids.”

Any plans for retirement?
“Not really, I’m trying to talk my wife into letting me buy a sailboat and live in the Caribbean, but I’m not sure if that’s going to happen”

And why did you want to go into teaching?
“I had a teacher in high school that was a great teacher and made education fun; but, I can do some other things too. And my wife, we will have some time together. And she’s my best friend, so I’d like to spend some time with her. That will be the best part.

A compassionate and passionate man who will surely be missed by many. Although our time together is at its end, he will be remembered as the man who taught us the meaning of life itself. Congratulations, Mr. Koppel, and we all wish you the best of luck with the roads ahead of you.

—OLIVIA PETTIT

Good-bye to an Authentic Woman: Mrs. Janice Johnson Retiring

Janice Johnson has been teaching at Douglas County High School for 19 years. She decided to join the school in January of 1997. During her teaching years, she has helped students grow and succeed in their education.

These past several years in Douglas County School District have been challenging for many reasons – class sizes have increased, the District believes I’m overpaid for the work I do, and I’m tired of having to fill in boxes on documents that change every year to prove to another new administrator that I’m an “effective” teacher. I still love (almost) every minute in my classroom with my students. DCHS students are the reason I’m still here. Sadly, however, it’s time to leave.

Yes, I will definitely miss teaching. I’ve been able to get to know and develop a trusting relationship with 150+ teenagers every year, and every year my trust in their abilities to make our world a better place has grown. My favorite moments occur when students connect to literature and begin to understand why we read. I’ve also found joy and personal growth working with the Speech and Debate team, GSA and the Mock Trial team.

I’ll still have to work part-time, but I don’t know what that work will be at this point. I’m sure I’ll be riding my bike lots of places and spending quite a bit more time with family and friends. I do have plans to walk the Camino de Santiago in Spain next fall and spend a week in Yellowstone next winter. Life looks good!

Mrs. Johnson is a wonderful teacher who not only pushed her students to be the best academically, she supported them to live their life proudly. She was always willing to listen and help; no matter the situation, she was willing to be there. She taught students to approach situations with open minds and respect other’s views. Mrs. Johnson was and is an amazing woman who will be dearly missed.

—KIKI EMERSON

“Once I asked if Kingery could bring his sister to school on the last day. All he said was ‘Okay, but you pay for the truck.’”-courtesy of Sam Zimmer.

“He always talks about how cool his red Ford Bronco was, and in high school when his car broke down he made his date push it.”-courtesy of Scott L’Esperance.

“Kingery and I are sworn enemies until he brings my class donuts.”-courtesy of Holly Humphries.

“On ugly sweater day last year, I wore a normal sweater and Kingery congratulated me for having the ugliest in the class.”-courtesy of Jason DesVeaux.

“He must love his sister and her enormous gravitational pull.”-courtesy of Emma Holle.

“On the first day of class, Kingery had us do a lab. My partner and I slowed down the speed of turntable to measure it better, and when we showed our calculations to the class, they were way off. Kingery saw our value and said ‘These guys…I don’t know what they did,’ so I raised my hand and told him why he was wrong. Kingery was not happy.” -courtesy of Caleb Thompson.

“Once the two best grades in our class were girls, and Kingery told everyone that that was impossible, and the other girls better do poorly to even it out. We all knew he was kidding, but it was funny anyway”-courtesy of Ryan Finnell.

—REBECCA WEISS
Indonesian Prison Island: A Travel Guide

Indonesia has taken an interesting approach to tourism, with a whole island dedicated to detention centers combined with lush island living. The island Nusa Kambangan, dubbed the Alcatraz of Indonesia, houses several hundred prisoners at any given time. Opened in the 1920’s, the island is home to nine prisons, four of which are active. It’s primary long term guests tend to be corrupt political officials, including Bob Hasan, the former Indonesian minister of forestry. The island is commonly used for capital punishment, housing most of the countries executions. How exciting is that!?

After opening its doors to tourists in 1995, it has seen a huge amount of visitors that come to see wildlife not naturally present on the main island. It’s also fun to hike close to any of the active prisons and listen to the screams of the poor folks being tortured. It’s kind of like listening to bird calls, but like, filled with horror. There is wildlife aplenty, beautiful beaches, rich forestry, and horrible murderous monsters. Who wouldn’t want to visit?

One of the big tickets that will land you a spot at this wonderful island resort is drugs. Of the nearly 1,400 prisoners, 278 of them are locked up in connection to narcotics. Indonesia is a hotspot for the eastern Asian drug trade. Don’t worry though, with how tightly these guys are locked up, you don’t have to worry about stumbling across any of the devil’s lettuce on your prison sightseeing trip around the world.

With the air tight security in these lush island prisons good luck getting selfies with any of the inmates. There are all sorts of restrictions on who can visit and when. The only exceptions are directly-related family members, who are free to visit as long as they don’t bring any weapons or liquids with them into the facility. So, the pro travel trip of this section is to marry someone before they go to prison. At least if you want to hang around the island for more than the beautiful landscape.

Whether it’s for the many types of deer, birds, and rich plant life or the crazy indonesian prisons there is all sorts of exciting things to do on your visit to Nusa Kambangan. Come for the executions, stay for the beaches. All I can ask is that you consider this beautiful Asian paradise when planning your vacation.

—ERIC HOLBERT

It's Going to be a White Christmas
Merry Christmas, I Could Care Less

• That Bat Black Licorice- Jack White • Sixteen Saltines- Jack White
• Screwdriver- The White Stripes • You're Pretty Good Looking (For A Girl)- The White Stripes
• Conquesty- The White Stripes • Blue Orchid- The White Stripes
• We're Going to be Friends- The White Stripes • Love Interruption- Jack White • High Ball Step- Jack White

Finals Study Tips from Dani Navarro

DO

Study early
Get a good night sleep
Eat a HEALTHY breakfast
Arrive to class on time or early
Review your textbook and class notes
Take 5-15 min. breaks when studying
Mix up subjects when studying
Rewrite your notes
Read directions/questions carefully
Budget your time
Be confident
Review your work
Reward yourself when you're done

DO NOT

Cram the night before
Pull an all-nighter
Eat foods that will make you feel tired
Arrive 2 or 3 minutes late
Throw them away
Study straight through with no breaks
Focus on one subject for a long time
Reread your notes
Rush through/skip over them
Spend too much time on questions
Panic
Neglect to review your work
Beat yourself down once you've finished

Types of Questions

True/False Questions
Recognize a fact or idea in exact detail
If any detail is false, the entire answer is false

Multiple Choice/Matching
Recognize facts or ideas among several options.
Look for keywords/phrases
Try to answer the question without looking

Short Answer & Fill in the Blanks
Recall information
Know what you are being asked
Never leave it "blank"

Story Problems
Analyze a problem, recognize the solution method, apply the method and express the answer in proper form
Clarify the problem being solved
Notice clues/information provided
Show all work

Discussion/Essay Questions
Synthesize, organize and express your understanding of the question in your own way
Read the question carefully, circle/underline verbs
Plan your essay - create an outline
Reread your essay & make any corrections
The Lighting of the Star
79 Years in the Making

Since 1936, the Saturday before Thanksgiving has seen a plethora of Castle Rock residents swarming towards the downtown area, prepared for a night of spirit, warmth, and holiday memories. Next year, Starlighting will have been a town tradition for 80 years. What’s the origin story of this radiant town symbol?

80 years ago, the Great Depression was laying waste to American livelihood, and Castle Rock was a small town, with a lack of funding and crops. The County Fair was only being held off and on since 1930, and residents were in need of a pick-me-up.

Strangely enough, the Castle Rock star wasn’t actually the town of Castle Rock’s idea. The Douglas County History Research Center states that Palmer Lake had been juggling the “Star” proposal, but Castle Rock was simply the one to physically put stock in the suggestion. By 1936, the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp designed, facilitated, and constructed the Star. From 1936 to 1941, the Star was lit during the holiday season from 5:00 p.m. to midnight, and lit the winter night sky every New Year’s and Christmas Eve.

Later, World War II eliminated distinctions between military and civilian resources. Excess electricity became a luxury, and Castle Rock, Colorado was no exception to this “total war” ambience that would define 1940’s America. The Star would stay, unlit, atop the Rock, signifying sacrifice and hope for triumph.

By 1945, the war was over and the United States, Soviet Russia, the United Kingdom, and China emerged as victorious allies. In celebration, the Star once again brightened Castle Rock’s nighttime streets on December 7, 1945 (Pearl Harbor Day). And since then, the Star has been lit every year.

The Starlighting of old was most likely not as all-encompassing as the one we attend today. Now, it involves everything from food to fake reindeer antlers, to dancing and actual reindeer. It’s very much a well-rounded celebration, designed to make the season jolly, for all merry intents and purposes.

Rich with history and symbolic significance, the Star of Castle Rock has seen America at war, and in steep economic depression. With any luck, the Star will see Castle Rock grow and progress as the years go by, through thick and thin, and remain a beacon of hope to residents and travelers alike.

—SARAH MANASSEE

The New School Board

On November 3rd, 2015, three seats on the Douglas County School District Board of Directors were up for re-election. The three seats were District A, District C, and District F. All three of the seats were filled with new board members: Wendy Vogel, Anne-Marie Lemieux, and David Ray. These new board members hope to regain the trust of the parents within the district. There has been no community survey since 2010 and the general public’s comment time at board meetings has reduced from 60 minutes to five minutes. Each member believes that the principles of unity and trust need to be built back up again.

Not only do the three new board members want the parents to be heard, they care about the well-being of the kids who go through DCSD schools. David Ray said, “It’s been difficult to watch our school system become polarized and distracted from the only focus that matters - the growth and development of children.” They hope to also listen carefully to the staff members and teachers of the district.

It will become easier to meet with the school board, too. Teachers used to have a hard time meeting with the school board about issues, but now they will be able to voice their thoughts to a listening audience. Hopefully, teachers will trust the new school board and vice versa.

The new school board members are looking to turn around the Douglas County District. We’ll see if it is for better or for worse.

—KIKI EMERSON

Anne-Marie Lemieux

Anne-Marie is a parent of two children, but only one attends a DCSD school. She wants the tax dollars to be spent wisely on the maintenance of the current district and school building properties as well as efficiently meeting the requirements of the student body. She hopes to meet the needs of the students, as well as the responsibility to the community.

David Ray

David Ray is a parent of two DCSD children. He used to be an elementary Principal for 25 years. He wants to ensure that the culture of DCSD is the focus of the school board. The culture was defined by trust, compassion, and synergy. He hopes to restore these traits along with the principles of unity and trust.

Wendy Vogel

Wendy Vogel is a parent of two DCSD children and an active, long-term volunteer in the community and schools. She wants to work towards reprioritizing the district funding. She wants to make sure that teachers are provided with resources, support, and professional development that will help them provide the best education for students.
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Wish Week Assembly on Monday February 1st
No School- February 12th and 15th
Graduation is in 70 days as of the 31st of January