

The Lion's Epistle

Serving the community of Faith Christian School

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FCS senior soccer players Mike Stoltzfus, Hill Wilson, Matthew Ocasio, Kilee Goss, Shayla Bartholomew, and Hope Steinman.
Photo credit: Meg Erwin

FCS Honors Senior Soccer Players

By Stephen Williams

Congratulations went out to all the senior soccer players of the 2022 season. As a celebration for all the seniors who played soccer this season, the school held an "Honor the Seniors" party after the game on October 11th. There were a total of 6 seniors on the boys' and girls' varsity teams this year. From the boys' varsity team, the school honored Hill Wilson, Matthew Ocasio, and Mike Stoltzfus. The girls' varsity team celebrated the success of seniors Kilee Goss, Shayla Bartholomew, and Hope Steinman. Students received special customized jackets as commemorative gifts.

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Celebrating Christ Around the World

By Megan Erwin

Many know Christmas as a holiday that is associated with familiar traditions, such as decorating a Christmas tree, making Christmas cookies, and exchanging gifts. (FCS hosts its annual door decorating contest, see p. 3.) The most popular international holiday, Christmas has many traditions and celebration styles surrounding it that date back to ancient times.

Italy

Similar to American culture, many people have nativity scenes in their houses. However, this tradition is much more prominent in Italian culture. After visiting Bethlehem and seeing the presumed site of Jesus' birth in 1222, St. Francis of Assisi made the nativity scene a popular way to tell the story of Christmas. Many set up nativity scenes on December 8th, leaving the Jesus figure out of it until Christmas Eve. It is also a common tradition in Italy to decorate Christmas trees on December 8th, leaving them up until January 6th. As with many cultures, Italians associate certain foods with the holiday season. Panettone, a sponge cake filled with dried fruit and nuts, is often enjoyed with hot chocolate after arriving home from Mass on Christmas Eve.

Germany

Germany, has a myriad of holiday traditions; One, which has become popular in the US is the recognition of Advent. According to the US Army's website, "People use an Adventskranz, or advent wreath, with four candles on it to celebrate the four advents or the four Sundays before Christmas. On each of the four Sundays



preceding Christmas Eve, a candle is lit. After lighting the first candle, the Christmas season officially begins."

Mexico

The holiday season in Mexico lasts from the 12th of December until the 6th of January. From December 16th-24th, children perform a series of nine Posadas. These celebrations represent Mary and Joseph seeking shelter on the night of Jesus' birth. During the Posadas, people decorate their houses with plants, such as evergreen and moss, and with paper lanterns made of paper, known as "luminarias" or "farolitos", used to guide the children as they role play Mary and Joseph seeking shelter. Another type of play held in Mexico around Christmas time is Pastorelas, meaning 'the Shepherds. These often comical plays show the shepherds traveling to see Jesus around the time of his birth. An angel may be shown helping them resist temptations from the devil, who tries to prevent them from reaching Jesus.

Egypt

Christmas in Egypt is not very widely celebrated as a religious holiday, due to the

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Everything at FCS Is Just Ducky!

By Megan Erwin

Duck, duck, goose, anyone? FCS students have noticed small, plastic, colorful ducks hidden in various places throughout campus. These ducks have been found strategically placed in hallways, pockets of unsuspecting students, and on bookshelves, window sills and planters. This is the covert work of junior, Hope Light.

Hope's obsession with ducks began during the spring quarantine of 2020, when her dad bought a box of real-life ducklings. Because it was too cold for the ducks to be outside, they were with Hope for the majority of the day, often in her pockets; they even went to Zoom meetings with her. Bonded together, Hope's fondness for the animals continued to grow. During the 2021-2022 school year, Hope got the idea to anonymously place small paintings of various birds, mostly ducks, in teachers' classrooms. This was the precursor to the duck invasion this year.

One of her first hiding places was Ms.



Dempsey's classroom, where she hid around twenty ducks one day when Ms. Dempsey was absent. Upon her return, Ms. Dempsey gave stickers to any student who could find one of the ducks. Encouraged by the response, Hope's main goal behind placing the ducks everywhere was "to make everyone smile."

Ducks were soon waddling their way into many surprising locations. There have even been reports of an FCS parent finding a duck in a laundry basket! The duck hide-and-seek has only grown; other students have even begun to help Hope in her efforts, hiding them in places where she may not have access.

And the response? "It made me feel like this

school was being brought to life," said junior class member, Serena Gonzalez. She observed the ducks make the students happy, giving them something to be excited about when they come to school each day. Many other students attest to the fact that the ducks are fun to seek, find and collect.

Though many questions about these ducks have been answered, one question remains - where will the duck outreach go from here? Hope knows she wants to specifically hide them with certain people. Beyond this, she is not quite sure what she will do next. "I have big dreams for the future," Hope says. "They just haven't fully materialized yet."

The duck-loving mania is contagious. Spotted recently at North Campus have been large, thematically dressed rubber duckies, duck earrings, and a Christmas gift for Hope from a friend, a large duck purse. No matter how extensively the spread of these ducks will stretch, one thing is certain. Wherever these tiny ducks appear, joy and a good laugh seem to follow.

Fall Sports Highlights

By Stephen Williams

The soccer season is over and players will have to wait another year until the time of sweat-filled cleats comes again. The playoffs were very intense following the the October games. Here are the soccer highlights of the month of October.

The boys' varsity (BV) had a great second half of the season. Their first game in October was against Quakertown Christian. With FCS missing four of its starting lineup, the team couldn't grab the win, although the game went into overtime. Similarly, the next game, against American Christian, brought a loss. FCS

boys were then given a forfeit from Bergen Christian, followed by a win over Warren Tech, 4-1.

In game two against American, the BV scored a victory, 4-0. Heading into their next game, the Lions knew it would be difficult to beat undefeated, Abundant Life; they couldn't find the win, but played an intense game. They then took on Trinity and after a difficult battle, the game ended with a tie. The last major game the BV had before the tournament was another against Abundant Life. This time the Lions came out on top, winning 3-1, giving Abundant Life their first loss of the season. In the season ending tournament, FCS boys could not grab the win from Veritas or Trinity, and ended up in 4th place.

The girls' varsity (GV) first game of October was against American Christian and they could not get the win. Losses to Summit Christian and Veritas followed. With another loss to American Christian, the October games were disappointing for the Lady Lions. They moved on to the tournament where they unfortunately did not win against CAS, taking 3rd place in the tournament overall. In spite of the losses, the girls' team did show improvement this season, and they are prepared to come back next year even



GV coach, Jim Snyder, and junior, Laura Magnin watch the action during a boys' varsity match.

The middle school team had an amazing season this year with much success. October started with a loss to Nutley, but followed with a win against Bergen; they beat them 6-3 with Leah Roometua scoring a hat trick. Against Arrow Academ, they could not grab a hold of the win. A tie game against Trinity followed, 0-0. Another win against Bergen, 6-1, came right before the final tournament. During the tournament, they had to play Trinity and Nutley, two of the best teams in the league this year. After a season of great gains, they played to the best of their ability ended in 4th place.

Watch for coverage of the next session of sports, middle school and boys' varsity basketball, both teams starting the season with new coaching staff and new student

The first action of a great team is to intimidate the opponent. Looking fierce on the sideline during a break in the "Honor the Seniors" event are 11th grade members of the girls' varsity team, Serena Gonzalez and Hope Light.



November Election: Democrats Win Big in PA

By Michelle Ortiz

November 8th marked a very important date in the nation; election day for United States senators and representatives, governors, and various other state and local officials. As of November 1st, political predictions forecast Republicans would have a hold in the House of Representatives, but not the Senate, which was predicted to maintain a Democratic majority. Republicans had fought to gain the seats in the Senate to secure balance between Congress and executive branch, while Democrats had fought to keep power. Within Pennsylvania, almost all available elected offices were being sought by candidates with extremely different viewpoints on almost every major issue.

With victories in many states, Republicans managed to take the House of Representatives, but appeared to have lost the Senate, having secured only 49 of the 100 Senate seats. Though elections closed in most states, Georgia required a runoff election, an election held when none of the candidates meet the required percentage of votes to win

in the first round. The runoff was held on December 6th, making Georgia the deciding state between a Democratic majority or a split Senate. Despite both parties spending approximately \$79 million on TV ads alone, the Democrat Raphael Warnock claimed victory over conservative, Herschel Walker, and won with about 51% of the vote. With the newly appointed Senator Warnock taking the final seat in the Senate, Democrats now hold a majority.

The senatorial candidates running in Pennsylvania were Republican and controversial television host, Dr. Mehmet Oz, and John Fetterman, a Democrat and the current lieutenant governor. Oz and Fetterman had a close race leading into the election; President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump both visited the city of Philadelphia to rally behind their respective candidates.

Pennsylvania was seen as a key state and saw great amounts of funding into campaigns. The Republicans struggled to get people to

move past Dr. Oz's "TV persona" and his only recently becoming a resident of the commonwealth, while John Fetterman's stroke before the election and his slow recovery was also an issue for the Democratic party, particularly after he appeared to struggle during a televised debate. Fetterman ultimately prevailed, as did the Democratic party's gubernatorial candidate, Josh Shapiro, against Christian, conservative candidate Doug Mastriano. Democrats won other key state positions, also. The values of both elected officials lean towards that of the progressive left, which may be troubling to Christians, whose views often conflict with liberal Democrats on issues such as the sanctity of life, school choice and curriculum content and priorities related to government funded projects. Christian and non-Christian conservatives have voiced serious concern over the election results and are sure to be alert to what may be perceived as government over-reach into areas such as these.

Creatively Crafted Christmas Door Decor

By Stephen Williams

FCS recently held its annual Christmas Door Decorating Contest, in which each class had to plan and prepare the best looking Christmas themed door! This annual event is sponsored by the Student Council and includes homerooms from 6th - 12th grades. The themed doors created a Christmas atmosphere and also inspired some healthy competition between classes. FCS Student Council announced the winner at the first December Chapel. The best decorated door for 2022-2023 went to the 9th grade class for their Grinchy door. 2nd place went to the 11th grade's whose door featured - DUCKS. The 3rd place winner was the 8th grade, with a welcoming door featuring a very Christ (and coffee) centered message. Other clever door themes included a plethora of holiday decorated Amazon boxes, some very industrious penguins and an Advent calendar. Christmas trees were a popular addition to many of this year's doors. The junior class has vowed to return to the top next year; they had taken first place the previous two years.



Left top and bottom: The 9th grade's winning door, and some of the students who participated in its creation piecing it together. Above: Members of the junior class use teamwork to move their door project from Mrs. Thomas's room back to their homeroom location. Below: The 8th graders pose in front of their creatively crafted door.



Celebrating Christ *continued from p. 1*

fact that Christians make up just 15% of the population. Egyptian Christians, who mostly belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church, celebrate on January 7th. Kiahk takes place during the month before Christmas; people spend time singing worship songs on Saturday evenings before they go to church the next morning. During Advent, Christians in Egypt refrain from eating any animal products, in a tradition known as 'The Holy Nativity Fast.' On Christmas Eve, Christians attend a church service that starts at around 10:30 PM and can last as late as 4 AM. After this service, everyone goes home to celebrate with a feast of foods not eaten during Advent.

Philippines

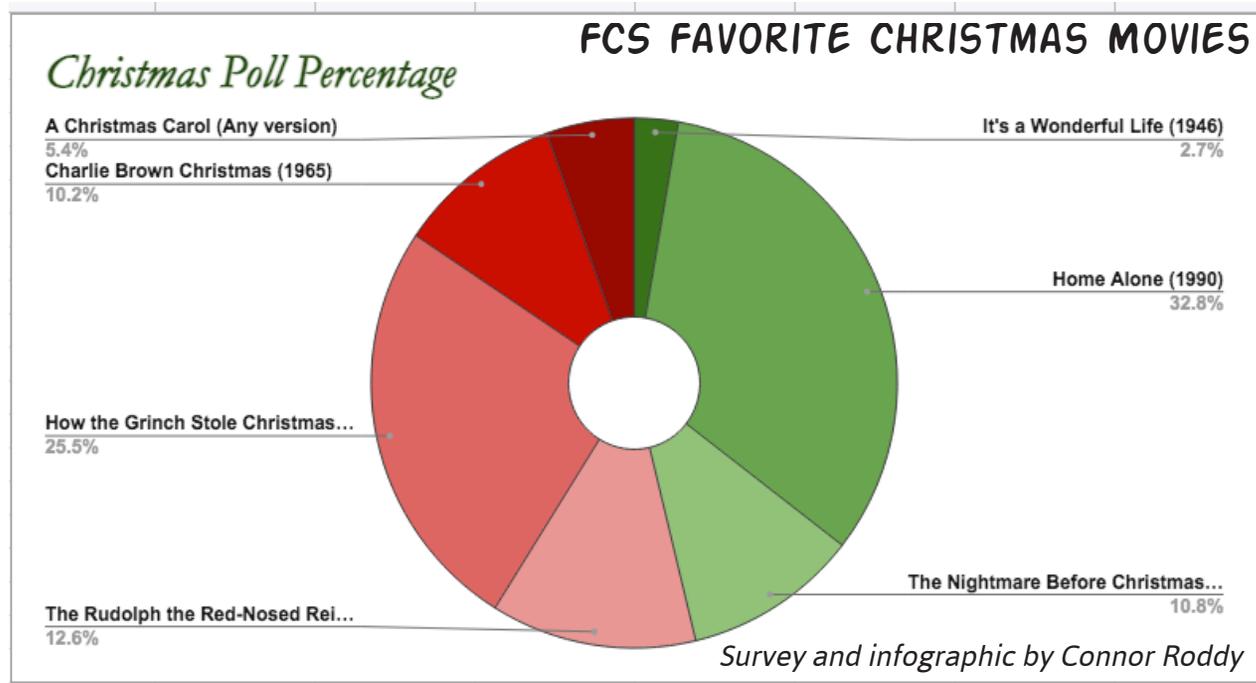
Some in America may complain about getting in the holiday spirit too early. However, in the Philippines, this is a normal occurrence. Christmas songs can be heard in September. Around 80% of the people in the Philippines are Catholics, making Christmas the most important holiday in the country. Beginning December 16th, they attend a series of masses early in the mornings, culminating Christmas

Day. However, the Christmas season officially ends on Epiphany, the Feast of Three Kings, which is the first Sunday of January. While they celebrate as many Westerners do, they also have many unique traditions. One is the making of 'parols,' decorations which consist of a bamboo pole and a lantern in the shape of a star to symbolize of the star that directed the Magi to baby Jesus. On Christmas Eve, many participate in a midnight feast, known as

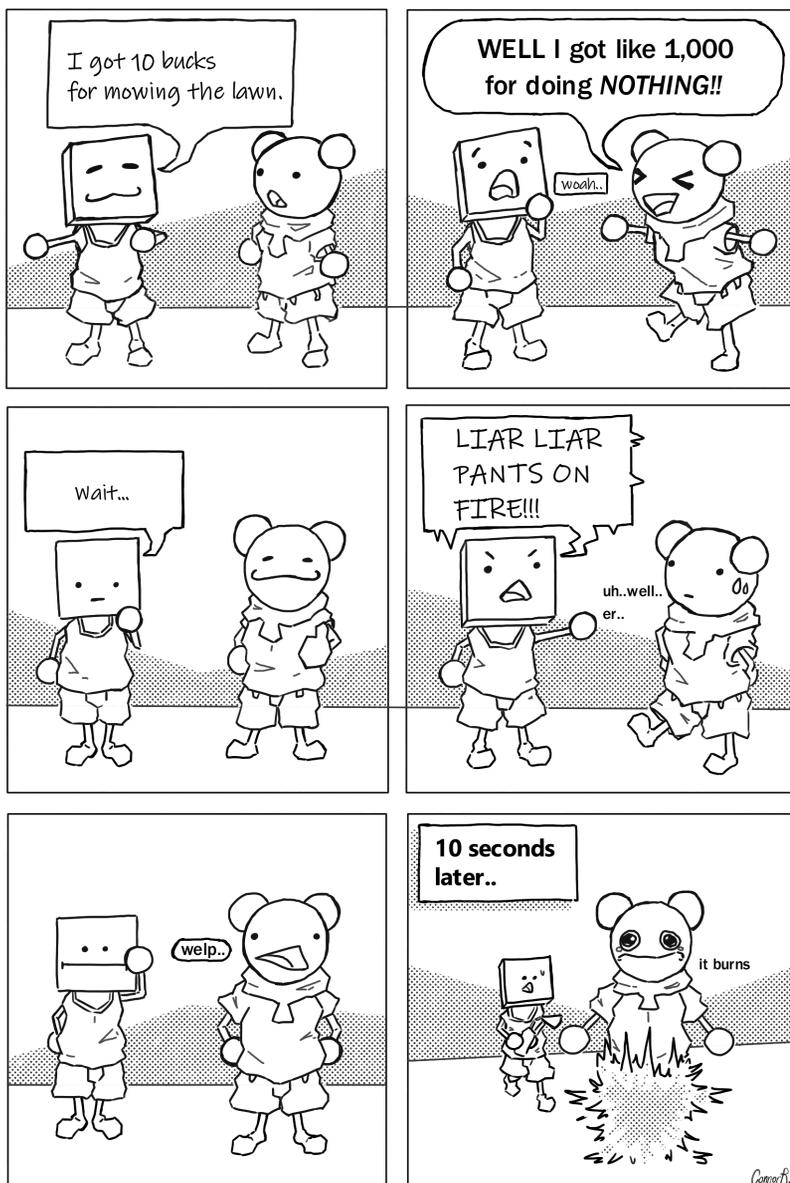
friends gathering to enjoy a feast of many traditional foods.

Although each country has its own traditions, there are many similarities in the way people across the world celebrate the sacred Christmas event. The birth of Jesus, the Savior, is the reason why so many across the world take part in Yuletide traditions.

*Check out our survey of FCS students and staff to see some of our favorite Christmas movies, another favorite holiday activity.



BLOCKHEAD by Connor Roddy



FCS Artist Wins Unique Experience

By Michelle Ortiz

FCS third grade student, Natalie Marek, entered a drawing contest sponsored by the Northampton County Bar Association. The art contestants were given the prompt of "My Favorite Place in America" and Natalie drew a picture of the Lehigh Valley Zoo with a family viewing giraffes. As a result of her receiving recognition as a contest winner, Natalie and her family were invited to the Northampton Court House to attend the naturalization ceremony of thirty-one immigrants. "It was really neat to be a part of the court ceremony!" stated Natalie and her family, who were all excited to be able to attend such a grand event.



Pictured above: Natalie's winning contest entry. On the right, Natalie is shown with Paul J. Harak, president of the Northampton County Bar Association