

# THE SMOKE SIGNAL

*December 2023  
Newton Local Schools  
Vol. 5 Issue 4*



## COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

By: Carson Tucker

The college football playoff is a tournament-style competition that determines the national champion in college football. It was introduced to add a bit more excitement and give more teams a shot at the title. The playoff consists of four teams that are selected by the committee. This year they have selected Michigan, Washington, Texas, and Alabama to compete in the playoff. These teams are chosen based on their performance throughout the regular season, taking into account factors like win-loss records, strength of schedule, and overall team rankings. Once the four teams are selected, they compete in two semifinal games. These games are held at different locations each year, which keeps things interesting. The winners of the semifinal games then advance to the championship game. The championship game is the grand finale of the college football season. It is a highly anticipated matchup where the two remaining teams battle it out for the national title. The location of the championship game is determined in advance, and it is usually held at a neutral site to ensure fairness. The college football playoff has brought a lot of excitement and buzz to the sport. It gives teams that may have been overlooked in the past a chance to prove themselves on the big stage. It also creates a lot of anticipation and debate among fans and analysts about which teams should be selected and who will ultimately be crowned the national champion. The playoff format has been widely embraced by college football fans, as it provides a clear path to the championship and eliminates some of the controversy that used to surround the old system. It is a thrilling conclusion to the season and a chance for teams to showcase their talent and determination. So, that is the college football playoff in a nutshell! It is an exciting tournament that determines the national champion and keeps fans on the edge of their seats! My prediction for the winners of the playoff is the Crimson Tide from Alabama.



# HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

By: Quentin Webb

**New Years** - People use this time to prepare themselves for the new upcoming year. They set goals for themselves, have better intentions, and better themselves for this time or replenish their mental state of mind. Date event occurs: Monday, January 1st 2024

**Hanukkah** - Hanukkah is a Jewish festival that celebrates the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem following the victory of the Greeks in the Holy Land. A candle is lit each night for eight days straight on a menorah. Date event occurs: Evening of Thursday, December 7th to Friday, December 15th.

**Kwanzaa** - The holiday celebrating African culture and heritage marks the beginning of the seven-night celebration of Pan-African culture, known as Kwanzaa. To celebrate this holiday you light a candle on a kinara for seven days celebrating a principle for each day. Date event occurs: Tuesday December 26, 2023 – Monday January 1, 2024

**Christmas** - Christmas is celebrated as the birth of Christ. Typically people exchange presents and get together with family and friends to share a meal in celebration. Date event occurs: Monday, December 25, 2023



Photo: Etsy



iSock

## CHRISTMAS MOVIE REVIEW

By: Erika Shellabarger

Anytime it is on I can not help but watch it, "Home Alone" is an original holiday movie. When I think about Christmas movies I cannot help but think about Harry getting his hair burnt off or the Christmas ornaments set up for Harry and Marv to step on. This movie really symbolizes the timing around Christmas and how crazy life can get around the holidays or as Miss Rhea said "I guess it is easy to forget important things during the craziness of the holidays!" Just as the McCallisters found out when leaving Kevin at home. During the holiday season you will always find me watching this whenever it is on. It is never a wrong move to get a hot drink and sit down to catch a good Christmas movie.



# SPORTS

## MONTHLY ROUND UP

Boys Basketball - 2-2

Girls Basketball - 3-2

Boys Bowling - 1-2

Girls Bowling - 1-2

## UPCOMING

Varsity Boys Bowling - December 15th

Varsity Girls Basketball - December 16th

Junior Varsity Boys Basketball - December 16th

Varsity Boys Basketball  
Pink out game - December 16th

Varsity Swim - January 13

## ATHLETES OF THE MONTH

By: Carson Tucker

**Male- Quinn Peters**

By: Carson Tucker

**Female: Katie Cruz**



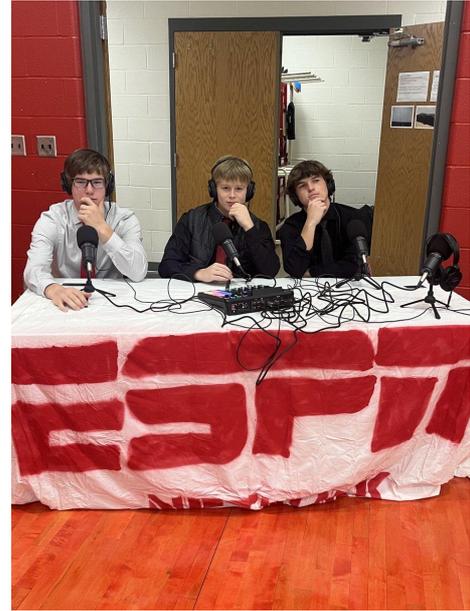
Quinn Peters is your male athlete of the month! The senior guard and is a huge part of the team this year. He is one of the top scorers in the WOAC this year. Be sure to come out and see him and the team play this year. Congratulations Quinn!

Katie Critz is your female athlete of the month! The Senior Cheerleader is a standout athlete! Her flips and tricks that she performs are nothing short of incredible! Be sure to come out and see her cheer during the basketball games. Congratulations Katie!

# RED WHITE NIGHT

By: Carson Tucker

Red and White Night was held on November 22nd, this event is held once a year in the High School gym. This Newton tradition allows the community and our fans to come out and meet our winter sport athletes and coaches. Another bonus to the Red and White night activities this year was the Alumni Game! The game ended up coming down to the wire, but in the end, the red team ended up winning the game. Red and White Night 2023 was an amazing turnout, and we are looking forward to an amazing winter sports season!



# NEW COACHES

By: Quentin Webb

As winter begins so does basketball and for this basketball season we have two new varsity coaches. Coach Cantrell is the new coach for the boys team and Coach Landis is the new coach for the girls. As a player and a spectator, I can tell both of these coaches have a burning passion for basketball. Especially Coach Cantrell, sometimes he is so into the game and his drive to win is so high he does not realize he has ripped the seams on his pants or he does notice and keeps fighting like a true Indian would.

It is clear Coach Landis knows what she is talking about and has high expectations for her players. One of her players Reese Hess had this to say about her “Love her.“ She’s so motivating and passionate about the game and we have so much fun. We’ve improved so much already” I think she gets her passion from the time she had as a player for the University of Dayton.



Instagram @aosp419

# LEO CLUB

By: Erika Shellabarger

Every year the Leo Club goes Christmas shopping to buy toys for children in need. The toys are then donated to the local Salvation Army. This year with the help of the Troy Lions Club we had \$300 to spend. This year’s selection entailed board games, stuffed animals, Legos, Hot Wheels, Uno Cards, Barbies, and toy phones. The age ranges from babies to teenage kids that we get to help have a Merry Christmas. Thank you to the students that participated in this activity to make Christmas possible for kids in need.



# TEACHER OF THE MONTH

By Erika Shellabarger

Our teacher of the month for the Holiday Issue is Señor Tacuri. He teaches all of the Spanish classes. You can always find Señor Tacuri with a smile on his face.

**What was your dream job as a child?** “A musician” He really liked playing the Spanish Guitar and playing with the “flamingo style.”

**Why did you pick Newton?** This is not Señor’s first district, it is actually his fifth district. He taught in inner city districts when he first started, because he did not know a lot about the school systems but learned a lot as he went through them. Yet, in the long run, Mr. Tacuri decided that he liked the small district setting. “You get to know a larger proportion of the student body in smaller schools. Here at Newton, our students are very respectful; that says a lot about their families and the community.”

**What is it like having a toddler?** “Well I started a family at a later age, but it is wonderful as well as challenging. It’s a lot of work, but my wife does a wonderful job. It is wonderful being a father, I love it.”

**What is your biggest accomplishment?** “My family.”

**What motivates you to do this job everyday?** “I like teaching languages. They are fascinating as well as the cultures that go along with it. What also motivates me is the students in general that really want to learn, they want to learn something about it.”

**Why did you choose Spanish?** “Before I became a teacher I was working for a company in Dayton in the early 2000’s. I worked for the company in 2007 and 2008. I did not want to move for the job. I did not want to repeat what I went through from coming here again. I had experience working with teens from youth groups for a few years. One of my friends told me to look into it, so I got my masters, and the rest is history.”



# CLUNKER OF THE MONTH

By: Carson Tucker

Senior Princeton Bess is our winner for your Holiday Clunker of the Month!

Princeton drives a 1989 BMW E30 325IS, he loves the fact that it is a European made car, that was imported from Europe. Princeton thinks of his car as a project car, that he has been upgrading overtime. He plans to keep the car for the rest of his life, and plans to do an engine swap in the near future.

# ARTIST OF THE MONTH

By: Quentin Webb

**Grace Stanhope**

Your artist of the month for December is Grace Stanhope!

**When did you get into Art?** “Freshman year.”

**What is your favorite medium?** “Pencils.”

**What does your art consist of?** “Pencil drawings, paintings, abstract art.”

**What motivates you to paint so well?** “Minimalist, and I am a perfectionist so I spend a lot of time to make it good.”

**Do you plan on pursuing a career in art after graduation?** “No, I will probably do this as a hobby.”

## ART GALLERY

### WORK BY GRACE STANHOPE



## NEWS FROM THE ART ROOM!

Jr. High and High School Art Club members are starting a painted rock trail to be displayed in the library. We want to involve the whole school, so EVERYONE is invited to paint rocks and bring them in to add to our rock trail. You can paint them however you would like and as many as you want. Bring them in anytime between now and the end of the school year. We will keep adding to our trail all year to see how long we can make it! K-6 students can give their rocks to their classroom teachers and 7-12 students can just drop them off in the library.

Any staff members can participate as well! Join us and let's see how we can all make a work of art together!

# HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

By: Erika Shellabarger

Holiday Lights at Lost Creek Reserve: Enjoy this 1.25 mile Christmas Light display as you drive through the beautiful sights of Lost Creek Reserve located in Troy.

Weekends: December 15-17, December 22-23

Weekdays for 2023 December 18-21 (Monday-Thursday) from 6-9 p.m.

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays from 6 to 9 p.m.

Winterfest at Kings Island: With a parade, live entertainment, experiences and activities you are sure to have fun. As well as select rides being open.

Select Nights, Nov. 24 - Dec. 31, 2023

Christmas Lights at Clifton Mill: For 35 years Clifton Mill has been lighting up the town with a lot of Christmas lights to celebrate the season. There were over 4 million lights turned on when the switch was flipped on November 24, 2023. The lights will resumed November 24, 2023 (Gates open at 5pm) 7 Nights a Week-6pm to 9pm, Dec. 24th & 25th-6pm to 8pm

A Carillon Christmas: Located at the Carillon Park in Dayton the tree is one of the most noticeable objects from the highway. Incorporating history and the holiday cheer all in one stop.

November 21 – December 30, 2023

Sunday – Thursday: 5:00pm – 9:00pm

Friday & Saturday: 5:00pm – 10:00pm

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden featuring PNC Festival of Lights: Take a look at the animals while also enjoying the light displays put on by PNC.

November 17, 2023 – January 7, 2024

Festival Hours: Sunday – Thursday: 10am – 9pm

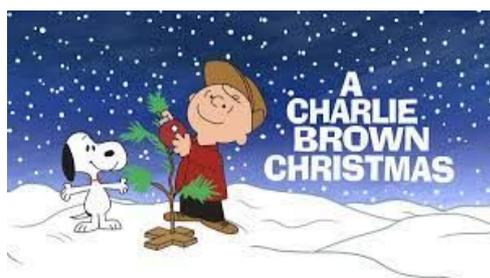
Friday – Saturday – 10am – 10pm

PNC Festival of Lights Activities begin at 4pm

## MUST WATCH CHRISTMAS MOVIES

By: Thomas Speer

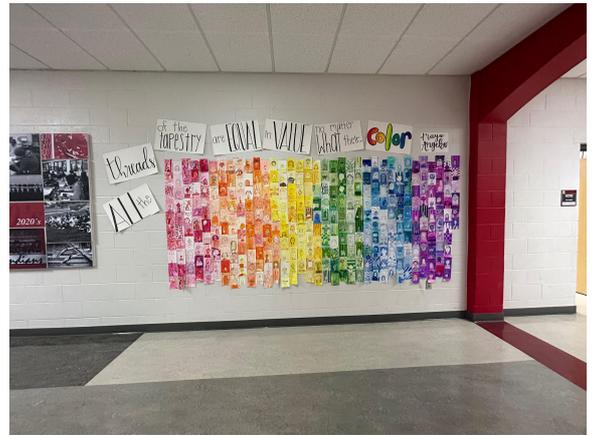
1. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation
2. A Charlie Brown Christmas
3. The Santa Clause
4. A Christmas Story
5. Home Alone
6. Elf
7. The Nightmare Before Christmas
8. Frosty the Snowman
9. Gremlins
10. The Polar Express



# PHOTO JOURNAL



Miss Rhea's holiday tree decorated with student's poetry



Student Artwork



Shopping for LEO Club



Happy Holidays from the Smoke Signal!



Breakfast in the ag room!



Lebanon Horse Parade

# QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH - THOMAS

By: Thomas Speer

For this month's Questions of the Month, we once again sent out a Google Form asking the high school students about their opinions on the upcoming holidays and what they normally do when the time comes.

The first question asked was if people participated in Christmas, and everyone said yes.

The second question asked was what were the students' favorite holiday traditions, and one that was unique to me was "Watch Christmas movies and play the Minecraft Christmas map from 2014," because if you know, you know.

The third question asked if people were excited for the new year of 2024, and the majority answered "Yes".

The fourth question inquired into when people started decorating for the holidays, and the majority of students stated that they put theirs up between December 1st and December 12th, and the runner-up by a slim margin was November 16th to November 30th.

The fifth question asked students when they took down their decorations, and so many people answered "January". I, personally, take them down around March because the colorful lights are nice to look at year-round.

For the sixth and last question, I asked what the favorite food to eat over winter break is, and most people said cookies, hot chocolate, pies, and normal festive dinners.

## HOLIDAY CONCERTS



High School Choir Holiday Concert



High School Band Holiday Concert

### ALL DISTRICT HONORS BAND

High School level:  
Chloe Shellenberger  
Ellie Bauer  
Princeton Bess

Junior High level:  
Trenten Butts  
Elise Stucki  
Preston Christman  
Parker Christman



Junior High Band Holiday Concert



Junior High Choir Holiday Concert

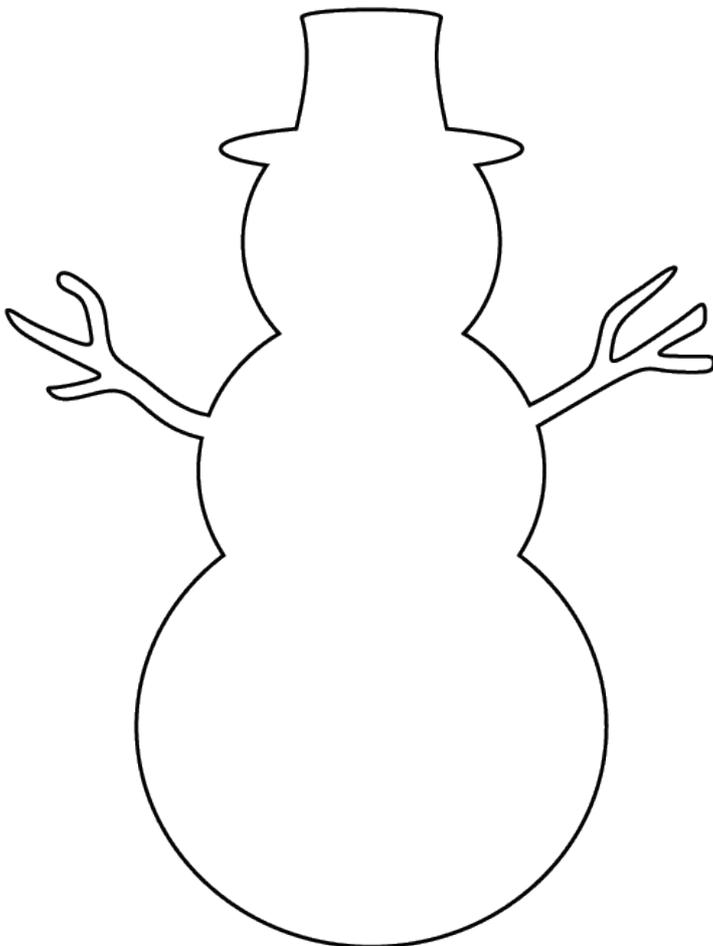
# INTERACTIVE PAGE

## Holiday Issue

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

~December~

Dylan Skinner

Gauge Gallow

Meg Yoder

Ava Meyer

Robert Peele

Hope Morse

Khloe Carver

Gisele Michaels

Gage Kesling

Chase Andrews

Canyon SInk

Nolan Knupp

Quinn Peters

Kyndell Renner

Aidan Williams

Felicity Harbour

Eli Leingang

Princeton Bess

Garrison Hughes