

THE PURPLE CLARION

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT
Celebrating Christmas
People of the community all do
different things to celebrate the
holidays



Crabb, Fehrenbacher assume new leadership roles

Kylan Jerrell

Following a recent shift in the leadership positions at HHS, former assistant principal John Crabb took the role of the principal position previously held by Scott Dewar.

Crabb has prior experience in terms of education and leadership.

"I'm kind of a non-traditional educator," Crabb said. "I worked in the business field for ten years and was a retail business manager for a while, and I decided to go back to school and actually didn't go back to school until I was 33 years old."

"My first teaching job was in Eldorado, where I taught in a behavioral disorder classroom for one year and then I got hired at the middle school to teach social studies and studies, did that for a year, and then took over as dean of students, transportation director, and taught three classes and was the athletic director. Then, I was hired as the

assistant principal.

"I did that for four years, and then I got hired as principal at the middle school. I did that for fourteen years, then I moved here, and I've been here for four-plus years as assistant principal here."

Though the positions are different, Crabb is confident in his ability to take on the responsibility.

"There's a lot of difference in terms of just the daily stuff," Crabb said. "Traditionally the assistant principal handles more of student issues, whether it be discipline or student concerns, while the principal deals more with the teacher side of things, through teacher evaluations, teacher issues, and just handling teacher problems."

Crabb and Dewar commonly worked side by side, sharing responsibilities.

"Mr. Dewar and I always have kind of shared those responsibilities, so it's a little bit nontraditional how we did it because if I was dealing with a student issue and had another student issue at the same time and we had another student come in, he would come in and handle it. If he was dealing with a teacher issue and one came to the office then I would handle it, so we shared those duties, so it's not totally new for me."

Dewar and Crabb's friendship through the years helped them make decisions.

"Mr. Dewar and I graduated high school together; we've been friends since we went to pre-K together, since we were four-years-old, so we've known each

other long enough to where it's kind of like being married," Crabb said with a laugh. "He can complete sentences for me because we were kind of on the same wavelength and shared the same ideas. There were a lot of times I would ask him for advice. Before I could tell him what I was thinking, he would tell me what he would do, and our ideas lined up. Ferenbacher and I haven't known each other as well, but so far in the year plus we work very well together, and we have a lot of the same ideas."

Even though Dewar has moved to West Side, they still communicate daily to help improve student life.

"We talk on a daily basis," Crabb said. "We both get to work very early in the morning, and I talk to him on a daily basis. I pick his brain and ask for advice on a lot of things, and it's crazy because people say 'Well, you've done this a long time, why do you feel the need to still ask him?' And it's not a confidence in myself kind of thing, but he has been so successful at it, that I'm so used to bouncing ideas off him, that we still do that."

"He even asks me things about the West Side, and I've never even been to the West Side. But we always say if we keep our eye on what's best for the students, and any decision you have to make has to be first."

Dewar accepted the position as principal for the betterment of students and staff according to Crabb.

"Mr. Dewar has always been the district's fixer guy. When there's been an issue in the building, he always seems to be that guy to go help for the betterment of the students and staff, and it was just a natural progression," Crabb said. "When he said yes to taking the West Side position, he and I talked at length about it and I thought it was probably the easiest transition for the students to have two guys who were already in the building just assume different roles in the building. It's a better, seamless transition for the staff and the students. It's kind of what we do in education, it's always 'Hey, what can we do to make it best for the students?' and we felt like it was best for the students."

Both Ferenbacher and Crabb are excited to help the school and its students.

"I've told many students that our job as principal or leader of the building is to give them the resources they need to be successful, and that is my number one goal," Crabb said. "Ferenbacher and I have talked about it, and we are both super excited to work with the staff here, to continue to provide a great educational setting for our students. Whatever arena that students find their niche in, we want to continue to make that comfortable for them and like I said, we really want to celebrate all of our student's success. We want to let our community know how special our students are and celebrate them."

'Matilda' taking a trip to Bloomington-Normal

Sydney DeVous

The drama department has been chosen to perform their fall show, "Matilda", at Theatre Fest at Illinois University in January.

Drake has never taken this group of students to a show and she looks forward to seeing them experience the event.

"We will be practicing at the Marion Civic Center for a few days before we leave for the fest," Drake said.

Junior Ilaria Okerson said Theaterfest is different because the audience will be more diverse.

"Performing at home is always fun because you know the people in the crowd and how they react. I don't have any experience performing away but it's nerve-racking to think about how the crowd will react," Okerson said.

Junior Zech Underwood said that there are many elements that are different when performing away. A big challenge is the space as the stage is different in every theater.

Okerson added that the cast will need time to prepare for the show, because they haven't practiced since October.

"I would say the most challenging part about preparing for Theaterfest is making sure it is exactly how we left it in October," Okerson said.

Drake adds that her kids were very prepared for the show in October and while they feel like they don't remember anything, she is confident that they do.

"Once the music starts they will remember what they need to do," Drake said. "It'll all come back to them."



Photo provided by Cathy Wall.

Junior Bella Dooley moves set pieces for "Matilda" at a rehearsal prior to the October show.

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Community Christmas celebrations bring benefits, cheer to area residents

Anyone who has visited downtown Harrisburg recently likely noticed a new addition to the intersection of Main and Poplar St. On the corner, a gingerbread house has been installed in the formerly empty lot. This is one of many things the city is doing to encourage people to get in the Christmas spirit this holiday season.

The Public Property Department built and painted the house under commission of Mayor McPeek in order to bring cheer to not just the lot, but Harrisburg as a whole.

"I built the gingerbread house because I'm trying to bring our uptown to the way it was in the past," McPeek said.

For many years, Harrisburg has kept Christmas traditions such as the annual Lights Parade, decorating downtown with lights, and the park's candy cane hunt. The involvement of the city and local officials when it comes to the holidays is something that tends to be unique to small towns.

To further the idea of community celebration, Harrisburg held a "Christmas in the Courtyard" event Nov. 30 as well as a Winter Wonderland event Dec. 9. The events featured photo opportunities, carriage rides, chances to meet Santa and the lighting of the mayor's Christmas tree. While the event was mostly geared towards children of the community, it encouraged the Christmas spirit for anyone who visited.

Buying presents is something else that almost everybody does come Christmas time, and people can help encourage Christmas cheer in their community by purchasing Christmas gifts locally instead of buying something from a big box store. Small Business Saturday is a good alternative to Black Friday. In a press release from American Express, they stated that every 67 cents to each dollar spent at a small, local business, remains within the local economy. Forty-four of those cents stay within the small business.

It can be argued that spending the time, effort and money on things such of these is unimportant or a waste, but we believe that it is important for towns, especially Harrisburg, to encourage events like this one and spread Christmas cheer if not for the benefits it can have for our community, to put smiles on the faces of the children who attend.

Overall, it is important for communities to take a part in spreading holiday cheer. It brings in tourists and brings happiness in a world that frequently focuses on struggles throughout the rest of the year.



Cartoon by Frankie Messerschmidt.

Wishing a Merry Christmas to everyone in Bulldog Nation.



Unwrap the joy: How nostalgia brings cheer to Christmas

Avery Woolard

The season of snow, gifts, sparkling lights, family gatherings, and warm home-cooked meals has arrived. There are usually special programs and concerts within our schools and churches that are made to spread Christmas joy. When the Christmas season hits, people from all over the world work on getting themselves into the "Christmas spirit".

But, what is the Christmas spirit? The Christmas Spirit is more than just an outward appearance. It's about being charitable, generous, and kind to others. To be compassionate and selfless is to be in the Christmas spirit. It really is crazy how much one season can change people's attitudes and outlooks. I have seen real Christmas magic within this holiday. It's not even that people feel like they have to fake being kind for the season, but it is a true change of heart.

Christmas cheer is important to most because of the memories with which they are associated. When I think about Christmas, I think of my younger years. When my family used to live in Port Byron, Illinois (about 6 hours north of Harrisburg), there was no doubt that we were having a white Christmas. There was always so much snow during this time of year. As a little girl waking up on Christmas morning with snow on the ground, presents under the tree, hot chocolate in my hand, and family surrounding me was the best thing I could've asked for. After presents, it was always time to go run and play in the snow. There would be times when my brother and I would sled down the big hill in the backyard or make gigantic snowballs. These vivid memories of Christmas are what put me into the Christmas spirit.

Was the snow the best part about Christmas? No, but now every time I see snow or when our small southern town gets a little bit of snow I will always think about Christmases from Port Byron and being with my family by the tree. The snow itself isn't the best thing about Christmas but I still think about the Christmas spirit and the delightful memories that come with snow every time I see it.

Christmas spirit isn't something that just goes away. Even if you don't celebrate Christmas there is still a spirit around the winter seasons. There is cheer all over no matter what you do or don't choose to celebrate, and once you have been a part of it, it will stick with you. It could be like mine where I can connect past memories to new situations that put me in cheerful moods for the holidays, or it could be helping out churches as they help people out for Christmas, letting a non-family member spend the holiday with you, donating to an organization, or maybe just helping out a fellow citizen. Spreading Christmas cheer is something that will stick with people forever and not only the ones on the receiving end, but when you pass on kindness you will feel full of cheer as well.

This Christmas as we decorate our houses with lights and mistletoe, let's remember to decorate ourselves with a smile and cast it onto others as we do our best to pass on the Christmas spirit.

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The Purple Clarion is non-biased, student produced news, sports and feature publication dedicated to accurately reporting events that interest and impact the students of HHS.

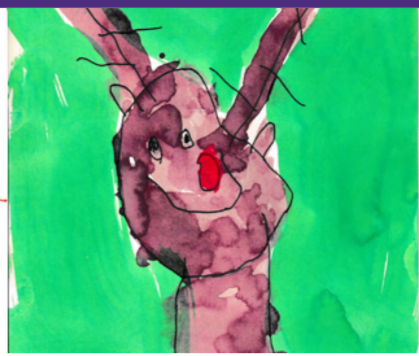
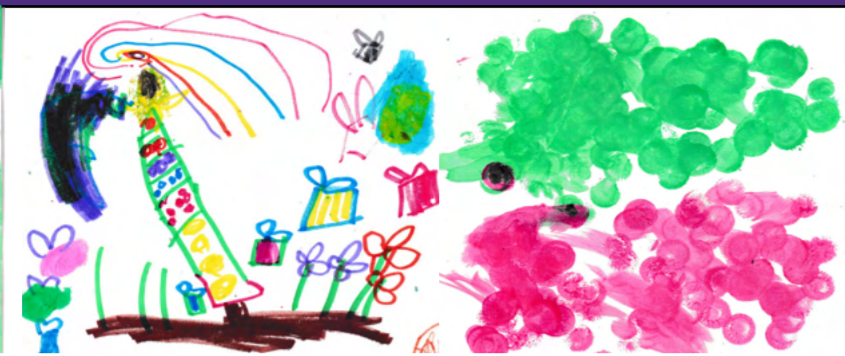
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The Purple Clarion is a member of the Southern Illinois School Press Association.



Lights brighten holiday spirits

Leah Haugen

Light displays are an entertaining way to lift your Christmas spirits. The local lights parade will be Dec. 14, presented by the Harrisburg Town and Country Lions Club and the Harrisburg Fire Department. The parade will start at 6 PM and will end at the Country Lions Club. At the Lions Club, there will be pictures with Santa for children and refreshments provided.

The vehicles include farm tractors, trucks, fire and police vehicles. Children are given candy and fake snow is blown.

"I went to see the parade with friends last year and it was a fun time," senior Whittleigh Trusty said. "Conveniently, there are restaurants to enjoy after viewing the parade, such as Morello's."

At the White Country Fairgrounds in Carmi, Christmas Lights of Hope is a drive through light show opened every Friday and Saturday from 6 to 9. The lights will be displayed and opened throughout the entire month of December. A suggested donation of \$10 is appreciated by those who run the lights. The skating rink, slide, and bounce house will all be opened throughout the month as well.

"Once again, we are so thankful that we can host this event for our community. We have worked very hard and have over 200 light displays," the Carmi Christmas Elves said.

Breakfast with Santa will be available at Stone Face Manor Dec. 9 from 8:30 to 9:45. This is a festive way to start a morning with family and friends. Children will receive a small gift bag as well as a digital photo taken.

Fantasy of Lights is a free experience to liven your Christmas spirits. It is a drive through display at the Foundation Park in Centralia, IL. The lights are displayed every night from 5 to 10 PM until January 1, 2024. Don't forget to take a visit to Santa in his cottage at 6 to 8 every Friday and Saturday.

The Lights is a three quarter of a mile trail with over one million Christmas lights shimmering in the night located in Mount Vernon at the Cedarhurst Center for the Arts. Admissions tickets for adults are \$15 and \$5 for children. Families are welcome to roast smores and view the art galleries as well. Enjoy snacks and lights including the Fluor de Lights, a display installed on the Cedarhurst pond.

For those interested in musicals, Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical will be shown at Old National Events Plaza, in Evansville, IN, Dec. 10. From 6:00 to 8:00, audience members will enjoy the spirit of Christmas with Rudolph. Children over the age of 2 will need tickets to watch.

There are many ways to celebrate the Christmas season. Light displays are a calming activity to participate in and

Christmas Around the world

Many Americans celebrate combine their traditions with those from other countries.

Jamaica celebrates Christmas as early as October. According to Jamaican Christmas Customs Junkanoo is celebrated as a Christmas tradition with street dancing and a parade with colorful costumes and masks.

According to How we celebrate Christmas in Greenland The first day of Christmas begins on Advent. Villages put a large tree up on a hill.

In Brazil, Christmas Eve is the most important, and according to Christmas Traditions. Celebrations start around midnight and consist of big dinners, opening gifts and the celebration of the Missa do Galo ('Rooster's Mass').

According to Foreign Festival Customs & Disi, every town in Austria will set up a big Christmas tree, and many will leave one with bread crumbs for the birds.

In Iceland, Christmas is celebrated Dec. 24-Jan. 6. According to CHRISTMAS IN ICELAND, there is one candle lit every Sunday. At 6 p.m., the church bells will ring to start the Christmas celebration.

In France, Christmas is mostly celebrated in a religious way. According to France Editions: Christmas Traditions and Customs Instead of hanging stockings they put their shoes by the fireplace or under the Christmas tree for "Father Christmas".

Christmas is celebrated Jan. 7 or Jan. 27 in Ethiopia. It is called Ledet. According to How the world celebrates Christmas many Christians fast for 40 days (the Fast of Prophets). On Christmas, people will dress in white and go to church.

According to Celebrating Christmas in El Salvador they honor the birth of Jesus. Children and young adults celebrate with fireworks.

Dec. 25 is not a legal holiday in China, but some still celebrate. According to Christmas in China, many individuals celebrate Christmas-like festivities by sending cards and exchanging gifts.

Christmas is a state holiday in India. Christians attend a midnight mass on Christmas Eve, and many homes will decorate with Christmas cribs, trees and brightly lit stars according to Christmas in India.

Russia celebrates Christmas Jan 7. Celebrations across the world says it is mainly a religious with a long service on Christmas Eve that includes The Royal Hours, Vespers and the Divine Liturgy.

Dec. 8 many Italians celebrate The Feast of Immaculate Conception is celebrated. According to Christmas in Italy, some Italians will hang vultures to symbolize the cleaning of their spirits.

In Australia, the day of and the day after Christmas, also called Boxing Day, are public holidays according to How do people in Australia... celebrate Christmas?

Infographic by Riley Mize.

Local groups help out at Christmastime

Gavinn Swann

The holiday season is often to be said as a joyous and happy time for families all over the Southern Illinois region. For others, it can be the hardest time of the year.

Many families in the region struggle with providing year round. Christmas is especially hard, and with inflation on the rise, providing Christmas gifts is getting more and more difficult.

"Many families in this area struggle around this time of year so we try to help them," Kathy Hires, the Human Resources lead at Walmart in Harrisburg said.

Walmart gives out grants to families who are participating in the Shop With a Cop program. The program usually helps around 45-50 children every year. The funds are used to buy necessities and toys that the children pick out. Prospective families should visit the Saline County Jail for more information.

"It's a good thing for this community and Walmart is excited to be a program sponsor this year," Hires said.

There are also less direct ways that families receive help. During the Christmas season, it's not uncommon to see red buckets outside of grocery stores such as Kroger and Walmart with people ringing the bell. These "Red Kettles" are owned and managed by the Salvation Army.

"In the U.S., The Salvation Army assists more than four-and-a-half million people during the Thanksgiving and Christmas time periods," according to the Salvation Army Website.

"Ringing the bell for the Salvation Army has been an annual tradition of the White Hats for many years. As a service club, we feel it is important to use the opportunity of being bell-ringers to enable the Salvation Army to continue to do admirable work throughout the year," said White Hats sponsor Heather Mandrell.

The Program was started in 1891 and in its sixth year provided over 150,000 Christmas dinners to the needy.

The Harrisburg community doesn't just help out with its own. Many churches in the area donate to a nonprofit called Samaritan's Purse, the organization has a worldwide program called Operation Christmas Child where shoeboxes full of toys and necessities are sent around the world to help impoverished children.

According to the Samaritan's Purse website, "The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations."

While providing gifts, the program also introduces children to the concept of religion, which could give them hope and the strength to carry on.

"Since 1993, more than 209 million children in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox," according to the website.

Dorrisville Baptist Church is the collection center for the program in Harrisburg.

"We've had a record high of donations this year, that's very exciting because it goes out to help kids all over the world," said Tiffany Michel, member of Dorrisville Baptist Church.



A very special thank you to the students and teachers of BELA for providing artwork for these pages.





Q&A: Insight from the Sidelines

Interview by Kennedy Borders



**ANDY
FEHRENBACHER
BOYS HEAD
BASKETBALL COACH**



**JAKE STEWART
GIRLS HEAD
BASKETBALL COACH**

Q: What is your favorite play to have your team run?
 A: I like to run a number of different offensive sets, but my favorite ones usually will have a combination of screening for the screener action. This makes it hard for the opposing team to defend.
 Q: How do you think your team will do this year?
 A: I am very optimistic about this season and this team. We have a lot of strengths on the offensive end that can make us a dangerous team. We have to improve defensively, but that will come. I feel we will be a strong, competitive team come tournament time.
 Q : Do you feel like they have improved from last year?
 A :Yes, I feel our returning players have developed their game and will continue to grow as a team.
 Q : What are team building activities you do?
 A : Not much, we get plenty of bonding through off-season workouts and tough practices.
 Question: What do you expect of your captains?
 Answer: Strong leadership and to set the example for the rest of the team.
 Q : How do you manage the balance between teaching fundamentals and allowing creativity in play?
 A: That can be tricky, but I am big on having a strong fundamental base. I feel that is a must before you can expand your game and be creative. That said, in order to be creative, you have to put in a lot of extra time. Those are special skills that are built through hours and hours of practice.

Q: Why did you want to become a coach?
 A: I have always wanted to become a coach. My dad coached me my whole life. I was always the neighborhood kid in Carrier Mills getting all of us friends together to play ball.
 Q: What does a normal practice look like?
 A: Throughout the season... It's a lot easier because we typically play on Tuesday and Thursdays. We do a lot of shooting and skill work and less running to try and keep the girls fresh for game days.
 Q: What do you do about bad sportsmanship?
 A: There is no place in our game for bad sportsmanship by a player or a coach in our program.
 Q: What's your favorite thing about basketball?
 A: In basketball, you can't hide. You are involved in every single play on defense. There is zero hiding in basketball. That's the beauty of it. That's every single trip down the floor on both ends. You have to do your job. It's a fast pace and you have to be a quick decision maker. It's also physical and you have people bumping , hitting, and pushing you at times. It's the longest sport through the toughest time of the year.
 Q: How do you manage playing time?
 A: We have a rotation that we use. We try to play who we think is playing the best or is hot at the time.
 Q: How do you keep your players motivated during a loss?
 A: Loses are always tough. We have very competitive kids in our program that love to win. If anything, a loss would make them mad and they'll be even more ready for the next game. Loses are going to happen, just gotta keep improving through the season and try and bounce back after them.

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Traditions cement Christmas memories

Riley Mize

Celebrating Christmas in America involves many different traditions. According to Top 10 holiday traditions in the US the top ten holiday traditions in America are decorating trees, baking Christmas cookies, writing a letter to Santa, looking at Christmas lights, building gingerbread houses, singing Christmas carols, wearing ugly sweaters, exchanging gifts, watching Christmas movies, and spending time with loved ones.

The top tradition is decorating a tree. Twelve out of 146 HHS students and faculty surveyed have pre-lit trees and the rest decorate their tree with their own lights.

“When we decorate our Christmas tree, we put our own lights up on our Christmas tree instead of having a pre-lit tree,” sophomore EmmaMorse said.

Morse isn't the only one to decorate their tree with their own lights, but junior Emily Green and her family take the other route.

“When it comes to putting our tree up, instead of having to worry about putting our own lights on the tree, we have a pre-lit one,” E. Green said.

Making Christmas cookies is another popular tradition. “One of my family's Christmas traditions is watching “Polar Express” every year on Christmas Eve, while we make Christmas cookies and drink hot chocolate,” Morse said.

Looking at Christmas lights during the Christmas season has slowly become a tradition over the years. Thirty-three students said they either go to Candy Cane Lane or Patti's 1880's Settlement. Out of 33, 17 students attend Patti's Settlement and 16 attend Candy Cane Lane each year, but there are numerous other places to see Christmas lights in the area.

When it comes to Christmas psychologist Deborah Serani said on Christmas Decorating Early Makes You Happier, Science Says that decorating for Christmas early can improve a person's mood.

“It does create that neurological shift that can produce happiness,” Serani said. “I think anything that takes us out of our normal habituation, the normal day in, day out signals our senses, and then our senses measure if it's pleasing or not. Christmas decorating will spike dopamine, a feel-good hormone.”

While decorating for Christmas could make people happier, some decorations may hold sentimental value. Sophomore Jamisen Green made decorations as a child that still get hung up on the tree. E. Green also has a sentimental ornament that is used every Christmas.

“My mom always puts the ornaments that my brother and I made at school when we were younger on the tree,” E. Green said. “We (also) have an ornament, inside it has flowers from a loved one that had passed, that we keep as a family tradition each year.”

E. Green isn't alone in using decorations to keep alive the memories of those who have passed on. Sophomore Seth Sherfeild has a Christmas decoration that has become his tradition.

“Each year I have a basketball with a Santa hat on it,” Sherfeild said. “It's special to me because I got it from a loved one before they had passed away.”

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Jan. HHS gained a new face as Amy Dixon takes over as superintendent.	Feb. Students participated in annual Scholastic Art and Writing awards.	March Students experienced their last day having lunch at Sloan Street Market.
April White Hats went to Ronald McDonald House to provide food for families in need.	May HHS welcomed a new face, Hannah Nance, into our resource department.	June Band took a trip to Disney to perform at Magic Kingdom.
July Band, speech members attended camp. Fall sports begin conditioning.	August First day back to school for HHS students Aug. 14.	Sept. Students, faculty enjoyed themselves during Hoco week.
Oct. Band finishes eighth undefeated parade season.	Nov. HHS has home playoff game for the first time since 2016.	Dec. John Crabb takes over as principle as Scott Dewar becomes principal at West Side.



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