



INSIGHT

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Other Stories

Christmas

- Renee Eid has an article on keeping your holidays merry and bright
- Sarah Abbottsmith reports on having an environmentally safe Christmas

Special Report:

- Chris Inglin has a collection of study tests for doing your best on Midterm Exams!
- Try your brains at Julie Brammer's Sudoku puzzle!

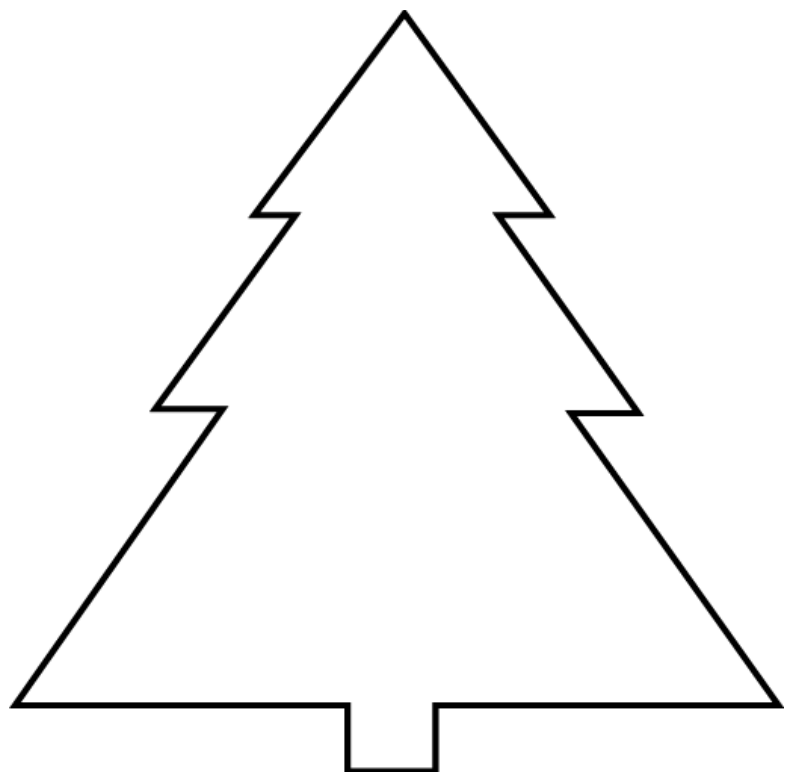
Coming Soon:

- Our special interview with Jenna Bush
- A summary of the Summit Clubs
- Summit leaders

Make sure you see the first issue of the new year!

Top Story

Have Yourself a Merry Christmas!



Celebrate the Holidays: Take a break from studying and decorate our INSIGHT Tree!

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IN THIS EDITION:
CHRISTMAS, CHRISTMAS, AND
MORE CHRISTMAS!

Christmas

Pass the Cheer

BY RENEE EID

The season of giving and receiving, of good tidings and festivities, of carols, of mistletoe, and of good cheer is upon us. During this time of year, the extremes of the spectrum emerge. People reveal their true colors. In my sixteen years, I have come across two kinds of people.

There are those who wait the entire year for this season to come about, dreaming in whirlwinds of red and green while summer blazes around them. They crack out their Santa hats in September, when school is just beginning. They make you a *ChRiSt-MaS MiX TaPe* that consists mostly of Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston with a smattering of Nat King Cole. These people give the best presents, and do not expect anything as exceptional in return because they know how truly awesome they are. A carol is perpetually sitting on the tips of their tongues, and there is never an inappropriate moment to burst forth with song.

For each Christmas zealot, a sinister rival lurks in the shadow of the mistletoe. They are the Ebenezers and the Grinches of the world. They are Santa's eternal foe and foil. An aura radiates about these people that makes your smile falter, that makes your sleigh bells turn brassy, that makes you doubt the existence of Chris Kringle, if only just for a moment. Grinches are the first to burst your bubble about the slim chance of a snow day, relishing in your misery, and they are the first to make Christmas a political affair, demanding you sing a song about their Festivus traditions. They sit and stew and refuse to just acquiesce to the force of the Christmas spirit.

For those of you whose spirits reside between



Who-Ville and the Grinch's lair, the time has come to make a decision. One cannot participate halfheartedly this time of year. To tip the scales in favor of merriment and joy, I have compiled a list of the Top Ten Ways to Celebrate Christmas and Spread Merriment. (because, really, no one wants to read a list of the Top Ten Ways to Make This Christmas the Worst Christmas, Ever.)

10. SING. "The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loudly for all to hear."
9. BAKE. Decorating Christmas cookies is just as fun as watching your friends wolf them down.
8. GIVE IN. The Trifecta of the media is too powerful to ignore: carols on the radio, an array of televisions specials, and Christmas themed movies.
7. SHOP. The commercialization of Christmas is unavoidable. An early Thanksgiving = an extra week of shopping.
6. COUNTDOWN. Tick off the days on your Advent Calendar until the joyous event and feel the anticipation mount.
5. GIVE BACK. Ring a bell, decorate a tree, buy a gift: spread cheer to those who need it most. And as the cliché goes, you'll feel so much better about yourself -- in case you feel just the same as before, you have your first New Year's Resolution: Thaw My Icicle Heart in 2008.
4. ATTEND. Holiday concerts (i.e.: the renowned Lessons and Carols) are perfect settings to siphon cheer from those who are more than happy to share it.
3. PLAY. Snow angels are the perfect companions on snowy days.
2. DECORATE. There are trees, roofs, tabletops, doorways, fireplaces and notebooks that would love nothing more than a wreath, tinsel or a doodle of a snow-covered tree.
1. BELIEVE. Santa is alive and well and checking his list. Heed this wise advice and have yourself a merry little Christmas!

I'm Dreaming of a Green Christmas

BY SARAH ABBOTTSMITH

The Christmas season is a time filled with happiness and joy, with a special feeling in the air that brings out the best of all of us. But be wary: for every set of the flashing Christmas lights, the holidays cause boatloads of extra garbage, allow millions of trees to be chopped down, and witness a huge waste in energy. So what is an environmentally-concerned person to do? Luckily, there is still hope. With these few tips, you'll have an eco-friendly holiday in no time!

According to Robert Lilienfeld (who is he?), Americans throw away a million extra tons of garbage each week from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. A good way you can reduce waste is to reuse your holiday gift wrapping. Ribbons and tissue paper can be used over and over again. Also, some presents, such as tickets to a show or dinner (or even a free hug!), do not need wrapping. If you do have to wrap your presents, try wrapping with things you already have around the house, such as posters or decorated grocery bags. If you must have traditional holiday wrapping paper, be sure to buy recycled versions and biodegradable ribbon made from cotton and soy-based inks.

Remember when grocery shopping to bring your own canvas bags to reduce wasting paper or plastic. If you forget, don't worry; just be sure to recycle them later. Another great way to reduce waste is to go paper-free with the cards. You can make a blog, or create a free multiphoto card or an online slideshow on photobucket.com. Simply e-mail the link to your friends and family. And, of course, you can always send an e-card.

When it comes to trees, Christmas just would not be the same for me without a large, fragrant, live tree.

The good thing is that most trees sold today are from seasonal holiday tree farms, so having a cut tree is not hurting the forests. Another great option is to have a potted tree, but these trees do not thrive in the unseasonably warm homes, so if you are planning on having a potted tree, make sure to store it outside. You could locate it right outside your window, or on a porch or balcony.

When it comes to artificial trees, contrary to popular belief, they are not an eco-friendly alternative. Artificial trees requires a considerable amount of energy and petroleum-based materials to produce fake trees, although the one-time purchase of a fake tree would save gas used for trips to the tree farm annually. Also, if you decide to buy a cut tree, make sure you recycle it. Trees can be ground up to make mulch for gardens and parks or to prevent erosion at local watersheds.

To save energy this Christmas, be sure to use lights made with light-emitting diodes, or LEDs. These lights use semiconducting material rather than incandescent filaments, and are much more efficient than the traditional Christmas lights. If everyone used LEDs, over two billion kilowatt-hours of electricity could be saved in just one month, which is enough to power 200,000 homes for a year.

With these helpful tips, which I hope are both informative about important issues and useful in providing ways to protect the environment, you can help make a difference amidst your holiday celebrations. Now that you know how to make your Christmas green, you can relax and enjoy a bottle of organic sparkling grape juice! Make a toast to the environment, and remember: everyone can make a difference!

From the Editors

As we leave for the Christmas holiday, there are some helpful study tips compiled by Chris Inglin on the next page. Remember to study, but don't forget to relax a bit, too. When we return, you can look forward to the first issue of *INSIGHT* being chock full

of the latest Summit news. Among the upcoming articles you can look forward to are an article on Summit Clubs by two of our Seniors, a discussion of Summit leaders and Youth in City Government, a review of French Week, and the exclusive

INSIGHT interview with Jenna Bush! Enjoy your holidays. We look forward to seeing you next year.

Exam Study Tips

BY CHRIS INGLIN

From Mr. VonHandorf:

- STUDY!
- Be organized, have everything at your fingertips
- Try to anticipate the main topics and what the teacher will put on the exam
- For math: do practice problems

From Mrs. Duggan:

- Don't try to do 50,000 things at one time

From Mr. Baechtold:

- Be organized: Know what is important, and what can be ignored
- Find the right studying environment for you

From Mr. Escudero:

- Don't attempt any long, multi-hour cram sessions

From Ms. Cronin:

- Use study guides, if you have them

From Me:

- Plan out your studying
- Group your notes by topic, and then study a topic or two at a time
- Find the best time to study
- Mix up which subjects you are studying

Common Themes: Start early, and do a little bit at a time!

Sudoku!

BY JULIE BRAMMER

1		7			9	8		3
	3		8	6			5	
6	2			5		9	1	
		2			8			6
3	6		5		4	2	8	
		1	9					7
4	7			8		1	2	
	9		4	1			3	
8		3			2	4		5