



THE TURTLEDOVE

St. Andrew's School | Middletown, Delaware

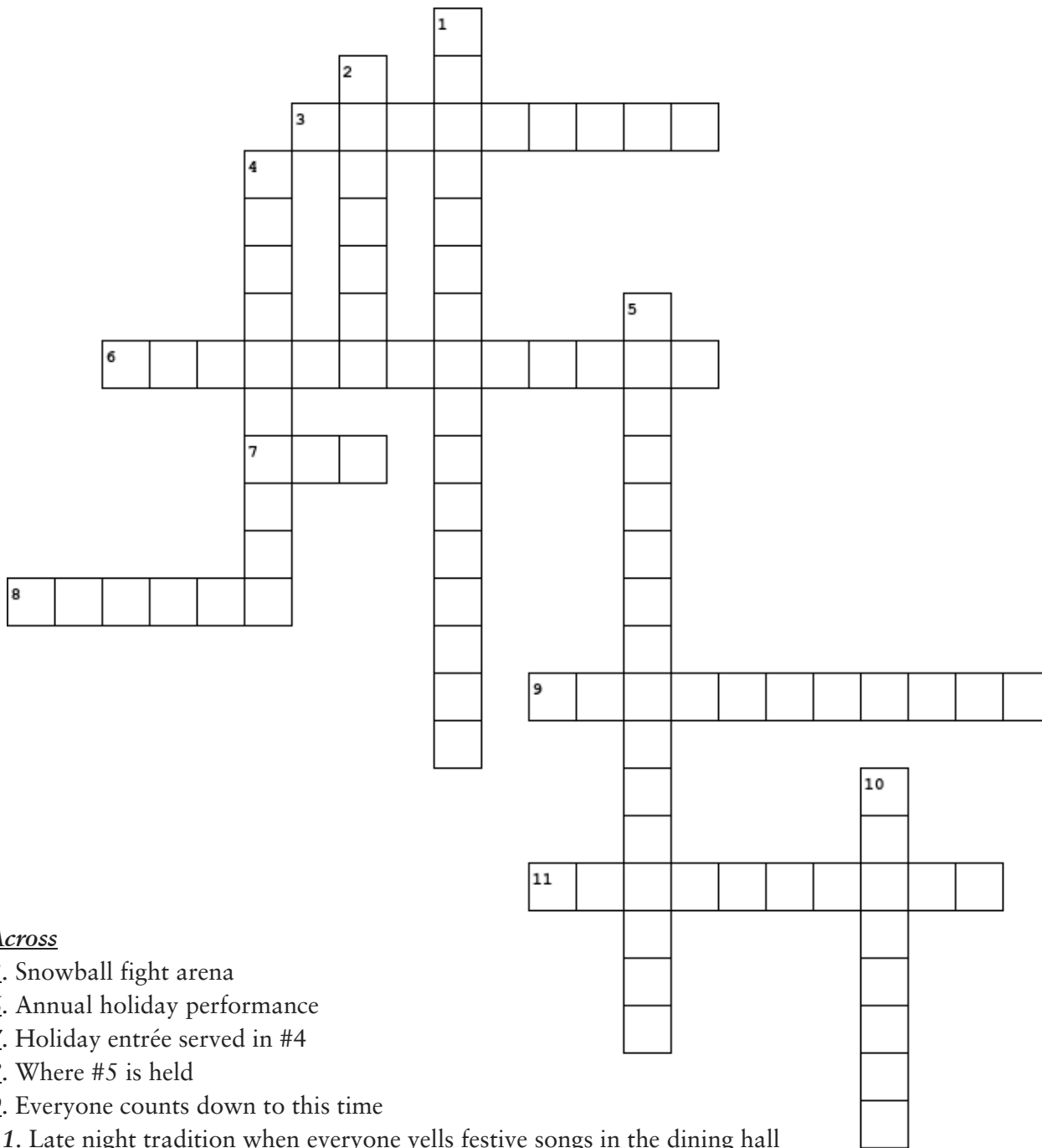


FIRST HOLIDAY ISSUE:
FACULTY SHOUT FOR JOY!



A Winter Crossword

by Janie Kim '26



Across

- 3. Snowball fight arena
- 6. Annual holiday performance
- 7. Holiday entrée served in #4
- 8. Where #5 is held
- 9. Everyone counts down to this time
- 11. Late night tradition when everyone yells festive songs in the dining hall

Down

- 1. Sweet structure built in an annual competition
- 2. You might give this to someone
- 4. Where everyone gathers for Christmas Dinner
- 5. Chapel service featuring beautiful music from the Andreans
- 10. Seasonal sphere you don't want aimed at your face

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MASTHEAD

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**Have an Opinion?
Write about it.**



**THE
CARDINAL**



Faculty Family Christmas Tree Farm Has Rich History

by Josephine Xie '27

Have you ever wondered how the stunning, towering Christmas tree magically appears in the Main Common Room? We have uncovered the festive secret, and it involves our very own Mr. Horgans (A and B) running a Christmas tree market!

In an exclusive, behind-the-pines interview, we got the inside scoop. Forget a simple tree lot. This is a heartwarming family legacy. “It began with my grandparents,” Mr. Horgan revealed, “My grandparents, they had eleven kids.” That’s right, eleven! The couple started the business out of their driveway in the 1950s with little more than a large wagon with Christmas wreaths, grave blankets, and holiday produce.

Today, the market is a full-scale holiday hub still entirely family-run. “I was working alongside my cousins, my aunts, uncles and grandparents this past weekend,” Mr. Horgan shared, describing the meticulous

handcrafting of every wreath and arrangement.

But the real drama unfolds with our own school trees. Mr. Guldin’s goal of sourcing a fourteen-foot tree is a pretty big deal. Mr. Horgan explained that “Farms don’t grow a lot of them, each year we only get about five or so of those trees in.” The logistics are a holiday mission in themselves. “They take up to four people to carry, they’re hundreds of pounds.” And the delivery method? “Mr. Guldin drives the mail van up to the market to transport the trees back to school.”

So as you admire the magnificent trees on campus this holiday season, remember the incredible story behind them: a sixty-season family tradition, handmade with care, and delivered by a most unlikely sleigh—our mail van. Now that’s holiday magic. Be sure to look out for the fourteen-foot tree in the Garth and eight-foot tree in the MCR!



SAS Iconic Christmas Characters!

by Sophie Hansen '26



Buddy the Elf is of course the one and only Mr. Perla. He has unwavering optimism, sees the cheer in every situation, and is always humorous and loves to laugh. He would 100% eat breakfast spaghetti with chocolate syrup!

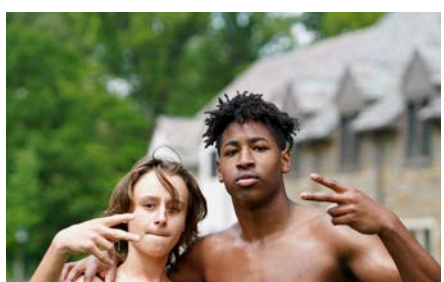
The Grinch would have to be Mr. Guldin. Like the Grinch, to many Mr. Guldin, in his role as Dean of Student Affairs, may seem like he hates students’ cheerfulness, his heart two sizes too small. However, when you get to know him, you discover that his heart is really three times too big. He cares deeply and has holiday spirit galore! Just ask his Christmas Committee!



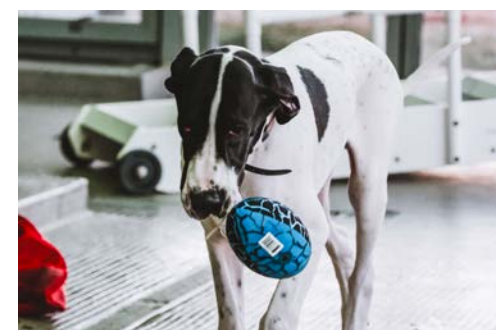
Cindy Lou Who is of course Xanthe Wilkins. She represents the spirit of Christmas and embodies kindness. She sees the good in everyone, including the Grinch, and helps all to find the Christmas spirit even when things seem gloomy. She brightens everyone's day!



Mr. and Mrs. Claus have to be Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Kerrane. Whether spending all winter wreath-making and Christmas decorating in forestry, or planning all of Lessons & Carols and running the Christmas market, the couple is the epitome of the Christmas spirit at St. Andrew's. Mrs. Claus, aka Ms. Kerrane, is kind and nurturing to all, and Mr. Claus, aka Mr. O'Connell, brings joy to children everywhere (except those in his AS Bio class . . .)



Harry and Marv, the robbers from "Home Alone," aka the Wet Bandits, are of course Abe and Gabe. They are a classic duo and plan diabolical schemes, which Abe and Gabe definitely did as faculty kids...



Snoopy from "A Charlie Brown Christmas" is of course Dressel. The way he climbs on various objects and people is just like Snoopy climbing on the house. Snoopy, aka Dressel, is always playful and spreads cheer everywhere.



Charlie Brown from "A Charlie Brown Christmas" would of course be Oliver Mize. Charlie Brown seeks to discover the true meaning of things like Christmas! Even though he sometimes faces bad luck, he never gives up and always tries again, and ultimately unlocks his Christmas spirit.



Kevin McCallister from "Home Alone" has to be Bradley Cook. Known for being clever, resourceful and mischievous, he sets up traps for burglars to defend his home. He loves the luxurious, spending way too much money on room service and laying down and watching TV (sounds like Bradley to me . . .). He has deep connections to others and always makes others smile.



Frosty the Snowman is a genuine, jolly, magical character. No one embodies Frosty more than Eli Meier. He spreads cheer to everyone, even though he knows he will melt come summer. He is a giver and does everything to spread holiday cheer.

That's a wrap on SAS's iconic Christmas characters! I hope y'all enjoyed. Merry Christmas to these characters and to all!!



Who Would Win an All-School Snowball Fight?

by Kayley Rivera '26

Returning students might remember the all-school snowball fight that ensued last winter upon the announcement of a free day. It was pure chaos: students rushed the front lawn to celebrate by chucking balls of basically ice at each other. While some people walked out with black eyes and bruised pride, I left with one of my most cherished St. Andrew's memories. So, when thinking about this winter, my thoughts returned to the snowball fight of February 2025.

I'm a competitive person by nature, so I spent a lot of time questioning what qualifies a snowball fight winner. It is a competition by nature: the word "fight" in the name defines it as something with clear winners and losers. Are the rules somewhat like laser tag, where as soon as you get hit you are out? Or more like an endurance battle, the winner determined by whoever can muscle through the feeling of soaked through shoes and frozen fingers the longest? I settled on the laser tag idea, which also meant conceding my defeat from last year after Paxton Wang nailed me in the back of the head with something that felt like a small cannonball (that's right, I didn't forget.)

In looking at our entire school population, and the looming idea of a repeat fight, a clear question arose: when left to our own devices, who would win in an all-school snowball fight? Most people might jump to the obvious people with brute strength, or years of experience in sports where upper body strength is essential. However, from what I

witnessed last year, those people got cocky early and found themselves with a target on their back. As a result, I ruled out every lacrosse player, and the baseball team. For good measure, I also removed every soccer player, considering the whole throw-in aspect of the game.

So if brute strength alone will not qualify someone as an easy winner, what does? Strength is a part of it, but so is stealth and subtlety. Those who wasted their time last year trying to make alliances were very fast losers, and also found themselves with snow down the back of their shirts. Those who were able to keep moving in a subtle way, taking people out from the outer ring established dominance, and the fight was over before anyone knew what had happened. Reconsidering the strength aspect of it, we would also need someone who is tall, so the force of their throw works with gravity instead of against. Perhaps also someone who is familiar with crew and the muscles needed for long-term endurance to not just dominate but also outlast.

From all of these traits; height, stealth, mild strength, and one familiar with rowing, a clear answer arose: Hector Beasley. Hector is so notably quiet he is the 'Happy Birthday Award' recipient. While the looming sound of Clairo and scent of matcha might give him away, the chaos of the fight would provide him a shield. A former rower and manager for the football team, his ability to throw aligns with the ideal snowball fighter. Also, his nose was broken (*continued on page 6 . . .*)



(. . . continued from page 5) during football season, showing his willingness to leave it all out on the field for the sake of a win.

I wish Hector luck in the 2025-2026 winter snowball fight season, and I hope to see him pursue professional ventures in the field. And to those of you who managed to hit me last year, I look forward to a rematch.



Snow Globe, Transport Me

by Kadence Sun '27

Too often assumptions made about worlds I've never seen, Neuschwanstein Castle under glass-domed ceiling, invisible life forms within watching slow fall of micro styrofoam

speckle the streetlights. Land of festivity? Rather, land where lungs hung over water instead of air as we stroke past diffusely lit windows. Replenished by snow, nothing falters, nothing

slinks in & out of effulgence. Eyeing ashen rings, "a glass pane harboring stain where ornamental candle flame was smothered must not be removed." In

my hand a pulse, pine needle alight sheen of ice: a sting, the smell of conifer. Day by day turtledoves sing



Photo Credit: Avi Gold

to death of an ear hiding beneath the ledge. Out of self-made blizzards, flakes stuck to apertures as stucco wall covering then "What

are you disguised as now?" I couldn't have spoken to the night, to hear my voice become lone leaf on branch bare, a crackling of boughs that cough out

what it reigned. Winter gushes along flashes of poppy red interfacing snowdrop white. I shout (to convince myself) for undercurrents to slap me free

of my skin. What have I turned into when I crush hollow trinkets, littering trails that said *next year* *Next year we'll replace them anew.*

Christmas Dinner: The Ideal Meal

by Grant Fenwick & Steele Malkin '27

Christmas is a time for family, laughter, and of course, great food. Everyone has their own personal favorite part of Christmas dinner, whether it's a slice of honey-roasted ham, creamy mashed potatoes, or freshly baked cookies with a glass of eggnog. However, it's not really what's on the plate that makes a Christmas meal good; it's the joy of being around your family and sharing it with people you love. This season, Grant and I decided upon the most ideal Christmas dinner, as no one knows the most delicious meal of the year like we do.

Starting with the side dish: these foods are always said to be light, but end up leaving you with no room for the actual meal. The easy favorite here is candied sweet potatoes. The sweetness of the brown sugar that melts into your mouth with soft and warm potatoes is unmatched. This is the right way to start off your big Christmas meal. Next up is the entrée, the part your stomach grumbles for. Grant and I agree: the right option is a nice medium-rare steak.

Whether it's Christmas or not, a fat-filled steak that cuts like butter always brings a smile to our faces. This pairing with candied sweet potatoes fills our stomachs up perfectly for the upcoming best part of the meal.

Finally, the part we look forward to the most: dessert. There are so many great options here it's so hard to decide. However there's one that sticks out easily. That is the *Bûche de Noël*. The chocolatey layers of this log that almost taste like happiness are something no one can say no to at the dinner table on the 24th.

At the end of the day, the best meal isn't the one with your dream dishes on it. Even if you're digging into warm candied sweet potatoes, taking a bite of a tender steak, or enjoying a festive *Bûche de Noël*, the real best part of the meal is the memories you create at the dinner table. That's what really makes the greatest Christmas dinner.



Our SAS New Year's Resolutions

by Addie Brown '29 and Lillian Hosty '28

1. Don't miss breakfast check-in
2. Actually go to the polar plunge (after telling my friends I'd go)
3. Be in dress code for once, instead of just finding loopholes
4. Befriend more faculty to get more trips to Chipotle
5. Use my free block for work instead of watching tiktok
6. Get featured on SAS bedtime songs
7. Never set off the fire alarm
8. Go to sleep straight after tuck in (or get better at pretending to)
9. Get funny pictures of friends to send to No Context
10. Take out my laundry on time, so it doesn't end up on the ground
11. Avoid being sniped on Noxontown News or Pixevity
12. Remember to stay in touch with family more often
13. Actually read the handbook (to get more marks revoked)
14. Remember to throw out my food when it goes bad
15. Finally win room inspection

What SAS Holiday Tradition Are You?

by Lillian Hosty '28

I. What is your favorite Christmas song?

- a. Frosty the Snowman
- b. Silent Night
- c. A Holly Jolly Christmas

II. What is your favorite winter dessert?

- a. Peppermint Bark
- b. Gingerbread Bundt Cake
- c. Sugar Cookies

III. What is your favorite activity on a snow day?

- a. Going sledding with friends
- b. Reading a cozy book with hot chocolate
- c. Building snowmen

IV. What is your favorite Christmas movie?

- a. Elf
- b. Polar Express
- c. Home Alone

V. What is your favourite part of winter?

- a. Playing in the snow
- b. Spending time with family and friends over the holidays!
- c. Decorating for the holidays!

VI. What is your favorite type of ornament to decorate your tree?

- a. Hallmark ornament that makes noise
- b. Nativity ornament
- c. Homemade ornament from elementary school

VII. What winter gear is your favorite?

- a. Colorful hat
- b. Cozy scarf
- c. Warm Gloves

Count up your answers. If you got . . .

Mostly A's

You are the Carol Shout! You probably love all things festive and you get really excited to celebrate loudly with your friends. You also love and look forward to joining in on all the fun SAS traditions.

Mostly B's

You are Lessons & Carols! You probably love how cozy winter makes everything feel and you enjoy reading classic holiday stories and singing carols. You love going to the greening of the chapel and doing lots of traditional Christmas activities.

Mostly C's

You are the Gingerbread Making Competition! You probably love being competitive and working with a team to build something. You are creative and love getting to make and design projects.





The Annual Christmas Pageant

by Catherine Phillips '27

Imagine: you are patiently waiting for Christmas to arrive, and day by day you wish for the holiday to come closer. At St. Andrew's we get to embrace this excitement by bringing on our holiday spirit! Whether through shouting holiday carols or challenging each other to build the most creative and often messy gingerbread houses, we can enjoy this time with one another. The SAS Christmas Pageant is another special way we experience the holiday at St. Andrew's, especially as we participate and appreciate this tradition as a community. On stage, we might see familiar faces: a faculty-kid classmate that once was on the stage years ago, Sunday school teachers, or a new faculty member. The pageant allows all to experience the holiday as a community, reliving a story that has brought students and faculty together for years.

Regardless if you participate or not, the pageant is a tradition for everyone to enjoy. Tanner Caldwell '26, a Sunday School teacher, shared her perspective: "I am really excited to be a part of the pageant because growing up I always was a part of a pageant at my church back home." She remembers her favorite parts were being able to "see parents watch their kids perform on stage and how proud they were." The annual pageant gives kids an opportunity to step out of their comfort zone, and gain the courage to get to know and perform in front of the students. As a Sunday School teacher, along with participating in the pageant, Tanner says that "being in Sunday school gives me the opportunity to get to know each kid while also being able to teach them about religion and their own faith." She describes her role as a way to also "grow my own faith through acts of service to younger children and helps me feel more connected to my family at home by growing my relationship with each kid."

Margaret Taylor '27, a former Sunday school student, sees the pageant as very "nostalgic, watching it happen again" because it reminds her of her own experience performing as a faculty kid. She always thought performing in the pageant was "really fun, and bonding to be a part of with her friends" and she also remembers "many fun memories around that time with the high-school kids." She really appreciates the ways the pageant "brings the community together as one." Margaret's unique perspective reminds the community of the ways the pageant is one tradition where faculty kids can experience belonging as well as their own sense of courage.



From the Archives: Christmas Pageant, 2001

Winter can be a stressful time, especially as we face challenges and darkness, but Caldwell says that the Christmas pageant and other traditions at St. Andrew's "give me hope, being able to see the light even in the darkness. And the star is a great reminder of that brightness and joy." For those who have not seen a Christmas pageant, the star of Bethlehem represents the star guiding the three wise men (this year is supposed to be Mr. Gold's children) to the birthplace of baby Jesus. Though the characters in the Christmas pageant are directly from the Bible, the story has a greater impact on the community. As Caldwell says, "the Christmas pageant is something to look forward to and a way to appreciate kids contributing to the community through their own performance and courage." There is no doubt that many face challenges through winter, but these traditions serve as a reminder to find light even in darkness, and embrace the joy and love all around us.

Let us embrace the ways the pageant and every Christmas tradition continue to bring the community close through light and love. Happy holidays everyone! It truly is the most wonderful time of the year.

Winter Crossword (answers)

by Janie Kim '26

