

# The Norse Code

## Holiday Issue 2011

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### DECA Districts

By: Sean Goddard

On Wednesday December 14, 2011, hundreds of students packing into the ballrooms at the Radisson Valley Forge for the 2011 DECA District 9 competition. Students from West Chester East, Bucks County Area Vocational-Technical School, Center for Arts & Technology - Brandywine, Church Farm School, Coatesville High School, The Episcopal Academy, Henderson High School, Rustin High School, Upper Darby High School, Upper Merion High School took tests and completed role plays, or mock business situations, to determine who earned the right to continue on to the state competition in Hershey, PA. East students proudly represented their school, boasting the largest chapter in the house at 253 competitors!

When the dust settled, and competition had concluded, East brought home a large portion of the trophies. Several individual competitors brought home 1st place their respective categories including Joe Coady, Steph Ou, Connor Cummings, Audrey Fleming, Jack Keenan, Danielle Kreppel. In the team events, a number of groups also earned 1st place including Karissa Smith and Megan Bullock, Drew Cancelliere and Ryan Kelly, Luke Lawrence and Nate Gale, and Jenna Fischer and Jill Emerson.

The day was also highlighted by a modeling competition featuring 5 models from East. Julia Pincus, Jess Rodier, Jill Sunderland, Tara Thoman, Noah Newton, and Kevin Bruton walked the isle with style. Julia took home 1st place as the top female model.

Wednesday's competition was run by Pennsylvania State and District Officers, including East's own Stephanie Ou (State Vice President) and Matt Barrett (District 9 Representative). They put together a wonderful event with the help of different chapter advisors and Pennsylvania DECA Executive Director Jerry DiGiovanni. East business teachers Mrs. Lill, Mrs. Minshall, along with former East teacher Mrs. Cosgrove and student teacher Mr. Steinmetz, worked tirelessly all day to put together a fun competition for the students.

2011 marked a new era in the District 9 DECA competition as it was held at a new location, the Radisson Valley Forge Hotel. This new location, although a little cramped for the hundreds of students in attendance, nicely accommodated the competition. As expected, the events were a little slow out of the gate as everyone took time to adjust to this new home. The hotel provided clean ballrooms and a tasty dinner to conclude the night. •

### Calendar of Events

December 23-30: Winter Break

January 9: Half Day

January 11: Career Day

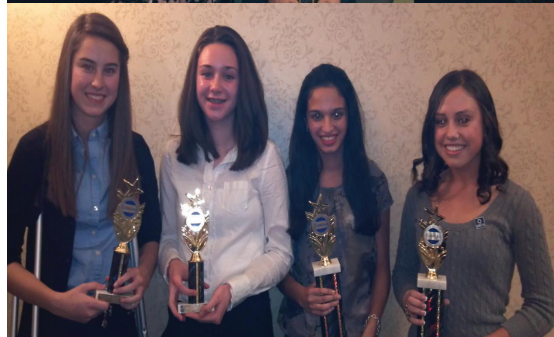
January 13-16: Ski Trip

January 16: No School

January 18: Financial Aid Night

January 20: End of 2nd  
marking period

February 8: Half Day





# Holiday Lists



## Top 10 Christmas Songs By: Emily Burke

We all know it's Christmas time when we first hear that holiday tune on the radio. Here are the top 10 that we hear year after year (or should hear!):

1. Walking in a Winter Wonderland  
Best Version: Richard Himber, 1934
2. Sleigh Ride  
Best Version: The Boston Pops Orchestra with John Williams, 1992 (instrumental)  
The Ronettes, 1963 (vocal)
3. Linus & Lucy  
Best Version: Vince Guaraldi Trio, 1965
4. Carol of the Bells  
Best Version: Peter Griffin, 2006
5. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas  
Best Version: Judy Garland, 1944
6. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree  
Best Version: Brenda Lee, 1958
7. You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch  
Best Version: Thurl Ravenscroft, 1966
8. Jingle Bell Rock  
Best Version: Bobby Helms, 1957
9. Baby, It's Cold Outside  
Best Version: Margaret Whiting and Johnny Mercer, 1949
10. It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year  
Best Version: Andy Williams, 1963 •



## Top 10 Christmas Movies By: Danielle Kreppel

1. How the Grinch Stole Christmas
2. Elf
3. The Santa Claus
4. The Year without Santa Claus
5. Frosty the Snowman
6. A Miracle on 34th Street
7. Rudolph
8. Charlie Brown Christmas
9. The Polar Express
10. Nightmare Before Christmas •



## The College Column

By: Emily Burke

### You're done Apps - Now What?

Ah, the waiting game. Possibly the most difficult part of the college admissions process. Just because you hit "submit" doesn't mean you're done!

1. Write Thank You Notes – Think about everyone who helped you throughout this entire process. This list for me included my guidance counselor, recommenders, essay editors, and general support. A simple expression of gratitude shows that you really appreciate that they took extra time from their own lives to help you! A card is lovely, but fudge doesn't hurt either.
2. The FAFSA – It's everyone's favorite acronym, and it stands for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Yippee. It essentially determines how much dough the government and your college can fork over to you to help pay for school, based on your family's financial situation. But yes, it's long, and tedious, and boring, and scary. Just do it quick, like taking off a band-aid! (Or put it on your Christmas list for your parents to do for you)

3. Revisit Campuses – When was the last time you visited your schools' campuses? Most likely summer vacation. Miraculously, it's been 4 months since summer. Not only might your memory need refreshing, but your taste in schools may have changed. Remind yourself that whichever college you choose will be your home for the next 4 years – not a bad idea to make a trip to your top schools.

4. Keep Your Grades Up – I know everyone is sick of hearing this one, but keep in mind that beyond needing to pass your classes in order to graduate, many schools ask for mid-year reports and want to see you doing more than just passing (hem hem that 72% in physics). Don't risk scholarships and even admission offers in some cases – wait at least until spring before you allow your senioritis to kick in.

5. Check E-mail Frequently – In this day and age, many if not most colleges are sending admissions and scholarship information electronically. Check your e-mail daily to know when you get into your top school as soon as it happens!  
Happy waiting! •



BROWN





# Thoughts on the Holidays



## New Year’s Irresolutions

By: Marshall Bowers

New Year’s resolutions – we all make them. As each year comes to a close, we look back on what has transpired in the past three-hundred and sixty-five days. We look at what we have done right, what we have done wrong, and just small things in our lives that could be improved. Despite the amount of thought that we put into a resolution, all too often it becomes a fool’s errand, doomed to fail before it ever has the chance to begin.

Personally, I cannot remember the last time I was able to stick with one of my resolutions. I have always started strong, telling myself, as we so often do, that “this time will be different!” But as the New Year begins to pass me by, nothing changes. I am still the old person that I was when I made the resolution.

What is it about the resolve to be a better individual that causes us to shy away from the idea? Perhaps we are afraid of making changes in our comfortable lives, or we are just too lazy or busy to be bothered with it. For most of us, a resolution is not of the highest importance in our busy daily schedules, especially if our resolve is something along the lines of waking up a half hour earlier and starting our day with exercise or the like.

Maybe it is not so much that we are afraid of making or keeping resolutions, but that we set the bar too high. That is not to say you should set the bar low – not at all – but if we are resolving to write a bestselling novel, maybe a more realistic goal should be set, at least to begin with. I feel that all too often we psych ourselves out by pursuing some high and lofty goal, only to realize just how much work it would be to reach it.

This year I challenge you to stick with a resolution. Try starting off with something small and building up from there, you might be surprised with what you can improve in your life. Do not just make it a onetime thing either. If you complete one resolution or you reach a major setback in your current one, start anew. Resolving to be a better person through change should be a constant process, not just a single event at the beginning and end of each year. I think that this coming year, my resolution will be to do away with irresolution. •



“Personally, I cannot remember the last time I was able to stick to one of my resolutions”

## What’s the Holiday Season Really for?

By: Erin Steel

When the holidays come around it seems like all anyone can think about is crossing off items on those Christmas lists. Advertisements and sales lure us into the stores and many of us end up spending more than the budget will allow. But is this really the season about frivolous spending?

Christmas is about giving more than receiving. And not just giving gifts, but giving your time to those who need it most. Thousands of Americans spend the holidays in a shelter that graciously opens its doors. For those of you who are better off than others, there are many ways you can help!

Many local organizations exist that always need volunteers. Safe Harbor of Chester County “is an independent, nonprofit organization providing food, shelter, friendship, counseling and recovery opportunities to homeless men and women in Chester County, Pennsylvania” ([www.safeharborofgwc.org](http://www.safeharborofgwc.org)). They are in constant need of supplies and volunteers. You can help by doing something as simple as dropping off some left-over food from your holiday feast. Visit their web site for more information, so you can start giving during this season.

The Chester county food bank is “a non-profit organization that collects, grows, processes, stores and distributes food to those who serve the hungry of Chester



“The best way to spread Christmas Cheer is singing loud for all to hear”



County, Pennsylvania” (<http://chestercountyfoodbank.org>) They have a weekly Volunteer night, every Tuesday at 6 p.m., where people help unpack and stock the shelves with food. If you are really proactive, then starting a food drive at your place of employment or school would be very helpful. This organization appreciates any and all help.

These two local organizations always need supplies and volunteers. If you are really too busy to volunteer your time, though, then here are some easy ways to help others:

- Make Christmas cards for the Elderly
- Donate money to a local organization
- Knit or crochet baby blankets
- Give a toy to Toys For Tots
- Shovel snow for an elderly neighbor
- Make get well cards for Patients at a hospital
- Donate toys to an Animal Shelter
- Practice random acts of kindness

Community service does not have to be a daunting task. It can be just as enjoyable as getting that unnecessary toy. Doing service projects with families and friends really brings the spirit of community and giving together.

Giving truly is the greatest way to say “Merry Christmas” to someone who needs it the most and represents the spirit of this joyous season. •

# Presents on a Budget

By: Emily Burke

For those of you who put your holiday shopping off until the last minute, do not fear. No need to fret over what to get for who and for how much – I've done the fretting for you. Here's what I found:

## For Anyone:

1. UNICEF Inspired Gifts – Make a gift donation in the receiver's name, whether it be water purification tablets for kids in Africa (my gift to Grandma this year) or soccer balls for children in refugee camps. From \$18.57 at <http://www.unicefusa.org/shop/>
2. Memory Foam Pillow – Who wouldn't want one? From \$19.99 at [www.kohls.com/MemoryFoamBedding](http://www.kohls.com/MemoryFoamBedding)
3. Shower Radio – Accompaniment for singing in the shower. From \$24.99 at <http://www.bestbuy.com/>



## For Mom:



1. House Plants – Give her a piece of spring! Starting at just \$9.99 at [www.homedepot.com](http://www.homedepot.com))
2. Britta Bottle – Tap water in, filtered water out (in multiple colors!) Just \$9.99 at <http://www.brita.com/products/filtering-bottle/brita-bottle/>
3. Burt's Bees Gift Set – All natural, good for the environment, and spectacular for mom. All their gift sets (think spa and manicure kits) are currently on sale for as low as \$9.00 at <http://www.burtsbees.com/other/gift-sets-kits/>



## For Dad:

1. Fantasy Sports Draft Board – Most are pretty pricey but smaller versions are available for a mere \$11.00 at <http://www.fjfantasy.com/>
2. Big Daddy Bacon – MEAT = MANLY!!! \$13.95 at <http://www.baconfreak.com/fathers-day-big-daddy-bacon.html>
3. Brew-opoly Game – You know he loves his beer. \$22.95 at <http://mancavesite.org/Merchandise.htm>



## For Girls:

1. The Fireside Thermal Shortie – Victoria's Secret favorite! And now on sale 1/\$19.95 or 2/\$35 at <http://www.victoriassecret.com/gifts>
2. Earbud Earmuffs – Already bought 2! Now on sale for only \$19.50 AND buy one get 1 50% off at [www.ae.com/](http://www.ae.com/)
3. Magazine Pack – Easiest gift ever. Pick 3-5 magazines that suit her interest, add a bow, and bam! Examples: Cosmopolitan, Women's Health, Self, Elle, Vogue



## For Guys:

1. Fantasy Sports Draft Board – I'm gunna go ahead and recycle this idea, simply because it's awesome. From \$11.00 at <http://www.fjfantasy.com/>
2. iPhone Case – From just \$20.00, there are so many options that you're bound to find ONE that works for him... <http://www.case-mate.com/>
3. Headphone Beanie – the earbud earmuff equivalent for our male friends... \$19.50 at [www.ae.com/](http://www.ae.com/) •



solo FX



# Bear Creek This Year

By: Colin Nicolson

It's that time of year again, so go ahead: grab your skis and boards and hit the slopes. For all you die-hard skiers and snowboarders out there, I'm sure you can agree that there is no better feeling than gliding down those fresh layers of powder on the slopes for the first snowfall of the season. Though the snow predictions seem to be dull for this upcoming winter, there are still many great local ski resorts in the area that are always packed with snow such as Bear Creek, Spring Mountain, Camelback, Big Boulder, Blue Mountain, and many more.

Many students may remember going on ski trips to Bear Creek every Friday during the winter in middle school, as part of the Fugett ski club. Even though, our school doesn't have a ski club like Fugett, there are still many easily accessible resorts around the area that are open all season long.

In my opinion, Bear Creek resort is the best option because for a few basic reasons. For one, it's not too far away from here. Second, it is a mountain that is accessible for all skill levels and has most flat slopes, so that every one can have an enjoyable time, especially first time learners. Third, You can rent any ski or snowboard equipment from the place every time you come to the mountain, if you do not own your own ski/rider equipment and gear. Also, if you are a person who just wants to learn how to ski or snowboard for the first time, there is a lesson package that the Bear Creek resort offers.



“The mountain has 100% of snow making capabilities and lighted trails (above)”

## Trail Map of Bear Creek Mountain



However, if skiing or snowboarding isn't your cup of tea, Bear creek also offers tubing as an option, in case you are not interested in snowboarding or skiing. In addition, the mountain has a lodge that includes a cafe or dining area, lockers, and an indoor arcade.



## Here are some brief statistics about Bear Creek Mountain:

- The mountain currently has over eighty-six acres of slope, trails, and terrain parks.
- It has a staggering elevation of 1100 feet and a vertical rise of 510 feet.
- The mountain offers something for every skill level and ability, from the carpet lift (beginner) to the triple chair(advanced).
- If you are a person who likes to do your own stunts, then just head over to the three progressive terrain parks that include a wide variety of freestyle features.
- The mountain has 100% of snow making capabilities and lighted trails.
- To learn more about the Bear Creek Ski and snowboard mountain/resort check out the web site at the links [bcmountainresort.com](http://bcmountainresort.com).



## The Norse Code

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# Prescott Alley Art Show

By: Jose Mestre

If you're a resident of West Chester there's a good chance you have been to the old Fashion Christmas parade in town at least once in your life. As exciting as this parade can be, there are a few other small events that attract visitors. One of these events is the Prescott Alley Art Show. Every year the NAHS, National Art Honor Society, sets up an art gallery composed of student artwork and sometimes even features a local music act.

Coming in as a freshman in 1996, Michelle Tecco started the movement to host an art show outside of East that still featured student artwork. Of course, that could be a possibility only if she found a place in town to host it. Luckily she met with a photographer who owned a workshop on Prescott alley, and asked if she could use it to host an art show. Some students and parents wonder why we have an art show hosted in a dark alley in town, but it is all for a good cause. To insure maximum exposure to the student's artwork, the day of the Christmas Parade was chosen as opening day because of the large amount of people that will be in town because of the parade. Since then, it has been a tradition held annually ever since. Thankfully this year was successful, as the weather was not freezing, and a great number of people visited. •



# School and Community: One Together

Featured Student: Ricardo Ferrer-Cruz

By: Mr. Bernard Harris Jr.

Early last month, on a cool and crisp November afternoon, I had the honor to attend an awards ceremony for one of our very own Viking family members. Unlike any ceremony I had ever attended recognizing someone's achievement, this event was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and one of the honorees was WC East Class of 2012 member, Ricardo Ferrer-Cruz.

The ceremony was held at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel in Harrisburg, PA, which marked the end of a long road and the beginning of a beautiful journey. A lavish banquet, a Pro Football Hall of Fame guest speaker, and nearly a thousand guests were on hand as the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission sponsored this grand event solely to acknowledge the achievements of former offenders. West Chester East High School's Ricardo Ferrer-Cruz was one of approximately twenty recipients who were applauded for various accomplishments ranging from graphic arts to writing essays to attaining outstanding personal achievements.

The famous guest speaker, Dwayne Woodruff, all-pro cornerback and 1982 NFL Most Valuable Player for the Pittsburgh Steelers, explained why this event was so important. As a juvenile court judge he emphasized that the only time they get to meet most young people is after a negative incident. Mr. Woodruff emphasized the important role adults play in providing an uplifting atmosphere to those who have fallen and needed a hand up. That support system goes well beyond the traditional court system.

The banquet takes involvement to another, more positive level. It acknowledges the hard work that has been done by some young offenders to enrich their lives and stay on the right path towards success. It was more than evident that Ricardo had impressed upon his counselors, teachers and advocates that he was serious about turning his life around, and he had a great amount of support along the way. After spending many months in the residential program, Alternative Rehabilitation Communities – Susquehanna Trail, Ricardo emerged as a man with special leadership skills who motivated his peers to do their personal best as well. A.R.C. Director Brandon Elby spoke highly of Ricardo noting that, "he was a shining example of what can be done with the right direction and mind set. He was a special leader in the classroom and formed lasting bonds with the staff and teachers at the facility."

Ricardo's journey was so impactful that his judge, Master Marshall of Chester County voluntarily appeared at Ricardo's school meeting to articulate the remarkable change he had seen Ricardo make. Although Ricardo faced a multitude of obstacles, he had made a fresh start and the judge wanted to personally convey to his high-school administrators how much he believed in Ricardo's sincerity to continue living as a positive role model. Ricardo completed the residency program with several carpentry certificates including electrician, plumbing, roofing, insulation, and asbestos abatement awareness.

Joining Ricardo for the festivities in Harrisburg were members of his support team from West Chester East High School, including Assistant Principal, Maureen Wallace, Juvenile Probation Officer James Wiggins, Intern Probation Officer Rachel Lewis, A.R.C. Youth Advocate Herb Harris and yours truly, Bernard Harris, Jr. Also in the air lingered the spirit as well as the strength and support of the entire Viking Family. He has set the bar high and intends to follow through with all of his goals, dreams and aspirations.

With all the credentials he now possesses, his interests still vary. When asked what he wants to do for a living, Ricardo surprised me when he stated, "I want to be a psychologist." I asked him why a psychologist and he responded in true and typical leadership form, stating, "Because I want to help people like people helped me." Spoken like a real champion and definitely a man on a mission, silently seeking excellence. I'll be looking forward to all the great work he'll be doing in the not-too-distant future. •

“I want to be a psychologist because I want to help people like people helped me”



Joy Woodruff, Honorary Dwayne Woodruff and Honorary Kim Berkely Clark (above)

## The iJournalist Project

The Daily Local News and the West Chester Area School District are proud to announce the continuation of a partnership that features district students as journalists and contributors to the newspaper's Web site.

The partnership – the iJournalist Project – involves students at Bayard Rustin, East or Henderson High Schools.

The students will be contributing to the newspaper's Web site – [www.dailylocal.com](http://www.dailylocal.com) – with a variety of communication models. They will blog, write stories, take photos and/or video and work on future projects like podcasts.

Currently the students are in the process of establishing their blogs and their material will be featured prominently on the Daily Local News Web site. Look for future announcements and promotions. •

“He believed in Ricardo's sincerity to continue living as a positive role model”



Extras

Christmas Trivia:

1. In the 1964 classic Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, what was the name of the elf that wanted to be a dentist?
- A) Stephen  
B) Thomas  
C) Hermie  
D) Freddie
2. Which state was first to recognize Christmas as a holiday?
- A) New York  
B) Pennsylvania  
C) Alabama  
D) Texas
3. Where is the United States national Christmas Tree located?
- A) New York City  
B) Kings Canyon National Park  
C) Yellowstone National Park  
D) Washington D.C.

Tongue Twisters:  
I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, but if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish

Seth at Sainsbury's sells thick socks

Test Your Knowledge:

From the list of special days below, only 5 occur in the month of December. Do you know which ones they are?

1. Shortest Day  
2. Good Friday  
3. St. Patrick's Day  
4. Boxing Day  
5. Mother's Day  
6. Christmas Day  
7. Yom Kippur  
8. Labor Day  
9. New Year's Day  
10. Shrove Tuesday  
11. ST. Stephen's Day  
12. New Year's Eve  
13. Longest Day  
14. Eid-UI-Adha  
15. Rosh Hashanah



Are you interested in joining the Norse Code?



Contact an editor or advisor at their school e-mail if interested.

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		1						5
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