

THE HOOP PRINT

ROCK CREEK HIGH SCHOOL - 9355 FLUSH RD. - ST. GEORGE, KAN. - 785-494-8591

DECEMBER 2009 - VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 3

NEWS BRIEFS

By MICHAEL PARKER & ERICA SMITH

Art students decorate Westmoreland

Some of art teacher Pam Delay's students painted Holiday themes on the windows of buildings on Nov. 18 and 19 in Westmoreland. In total, they painted 18 buildings, and some of the buildings had multiple windows decorated.

"They had a ball, but it was hard work," Delay said.

Band hosts annual battle of bands

The second Rock Creek Battle of Bands was held Nov. 21 at the school. Participating were Oujji, The After Party and Blood of the Harlot. The After Party took first place, and Oujji came in second. The only Rock Creek student participating in the event was junior DJ Denzien, who played in the band Flood of the Harlot.

The event was a fundraiser for the band's trip to Walt Disney World this summer. They raised \$400. Their next fundraiser is on Feb. 21 as the Topeka Symphony plays at Rock Creek.

School holds H1N1 flu shot clinic

The school sponsored a clinic in which nurses from Pottawatomie County Health Department gave free H1N1 shots Dec. 16 from 1:15-3:00. The clinic was originally scheduled for Dec. 8, but was cancelled due to a snow day.

A student needed a signed permission slip from his or her parent to be able to get the shot. Shots were also available by going to the health department.

"It is recommended that people get the vaccine," school nurse Caroline Valdez said. "We've all been exposed to it, so we have built up a little immunity, but the shot will be double protection."

Student creates new organization

Rock Creek has a newly formed Flag Corp. Eighth-grader Jacob Milham noticed last year that Rock Creek did not have a Flag Corp, so he talked to maintenance director Jan Garverick and asst. principal Scott Harshbarger.

"I liked Flag Corp when I was at St. George," Milham said.

Milham also said the goal of Flag Corp was to "serve the Rock Creek community, honor the flag code and put up and take down the flag."

Raffle held to benefit athletic trainer

A raffle was held for Kevin Larson, the athletic trainer who had to have part of his leg removed, on Dec. 6. Prizes that could be won included a Bill Snyder signed football, a Jordy Nelson signed football, a Bill Self signed basketball and a .22 rifle.

The event raised \$5000 total. \$2500 was raised from the raffle, and Modern Woodland matched the total raised.

Renaissance Club to give away ring

Renaissance Club has teamed with Jostens to give away a free class ring to a lucky junior or sophomore. To enter, a student has to write an essay on why he or she deserved to get a free ring.

The winner gets to design his or her own ring. The winner will be announced at a Renaissance assembly on Jan. 22.

Groups perform for many activities

The Rock Creek High School choir concert was held on Oct. 26. Now the choir is working on Christmas and other holiday songs for their Christmas concert

Winter Homecoming activities planned

By SARA LIMING

Students may have noticed on the school calendar that the Winter Homecoming date has been moved from mid-February to Dec. 18.

The cause of the change is a rather simple reason, principal Dennis Post said. Last year, alum Matt Unruh was a king candidate and was with the wrestlers at an away dual. The king and queen had been crowned before Unruh had the chance to make it back to school.

"The date changed partly due to last year's incident," Post said. "But, mainly, it was the only time that the wrestlers were not involved in a Saturday tournament, and we had a home basketball game."

Even though there was a change in the date, though much else has changed. The students can still expect the dance to be semi-formal, or dress slacks and a button-up shirt for the males and dresses for the females. The pep rally will feature the second-annual club shopping cart parade, Mr. Rock Creek and a game for the candidates.

This year's candidates are senior girls Danielle Area, Megan Feldkamp

and Torrey Peterson and senior boys Pake Ebert, Nolan Fike and Jared Hawkins. Candidates were selected Dec. 1 and were announced Dec. 3. Students had the chance to vote between Dec. 7 and Dec. 17 for candidates on one condition. Those students who wanted to vote had to bring a canned good item or 25 cents. The proceeds went to benefit the St. George and Westmoreland food pantries.

The theme for will be "Don't Stop

Believing" by Journey. Student Council and sponsor Dick Dugan came together to find the perfect theme.

"It wasn't hard to find a theme," Dugan said. "We like to base our themes off songs; it adds more meaning to them. 'Don't Stop Believing' is a good theme because it can be about anything. The clubs can have fun decorating the shopping carts, and it allows the candidates to dance together."



PRIOR TO WINTER HOMECOMING, senior royalty candidates Torrey Peterson, Jared Hawkins, Danielle Area, Nolan Fike, Megan Feldkamp and Pake Ebert sit for a photo. The king and queen will be selected during the basketball games on Dec. 18 at Rock Creek. PHOTO BY SARA LIMING

Concerns about lunch time arise

By TEVIN MATTHEWS

During the first three months of this school year, the Rock Creek staff discussed bringing back the 30-minute lunch schedule. At the beginning of last year, the school had made it a rule to shorten lunch time from 30 minutes to 25 minutes.

"Nobody was spending the whole time at lunch, and it was also negotiated with the teachers to have 25 minutes," principal Dennis Post said.

The change started out as a way to make sure that students ate their lunches and went back to class, eliminating the factor of just hanging out in the hallways.

"The problem is not so much the students hanging out in the hallways; we see that going on even with the new lunch rule," Post said. "The real problem is that if we go back to 30 minutes, time will be taken away from the amount of state hours we have for the school year."

Despite this dilemma, the talk about extending the lunch period is underway and will continue throughout this month into next semester.

"If the new lunch rule is going to

take effect, it will not be official until sometime during second semester," Post said. "But, like I said before, it is mostly about the state hours Rock Creek has."

According to Post, the high school has a legal number of hours for students to be in classes that is set by the state, and lunch time does not count into these hours. So adding an extra five minutes to the standard lunch period is taking away five minutes from any one class per day. Over time, the five minutes build up to the point where Rock Creek might actually have to start using snow day hours or adding in school days to make up for the lost time.

Some of the students strongly disagree with the current 25-minute lunch time, stating that lunch time can be used for more than just time to eat food.

"I think school lunches should be longer so we have more time to eat and socialize," senior Melanie Stubbs said.

Others agree that lunch time should be for just eating, but only if eating at a comfortable pace.

"I agree that lunch needed to be shortened, but I also do not like having to scarf my food down," junior Justin Redding said.

on Dec. 21 in the Rock Creek auditorium.

When asked what her favorite song to sing was, senior Courtney Brown said, "We're singing Christmas songs now, because the Christmas concert is coming up. My favorite Christmas song to sing is 'Comin' Up Christmas Time' because it's real upbeat, making it fun to sing."

The 1 band participated in the Veterans Day parade in Manhattan on Nov. 11. The band also helped St. George Elementary School honor Veterans Day by traveling to St. George and playing at the assembly that was held for veterans. Other recent band activities include the second annual Battle of the Bands on Nov. 21 and a Jazz Band concert on Nov. 23. The band's Christmas concert will also be on Dec. 21.

Musicians receive KMEA honors

Several members of the high school band tried out for the KMEA North Central District Honor Band. Members that qualified for the Honor Band were seniors Samuel Cott (tenor saxophone), Brad Duncan (trombone), Nolan Fike (baritone saxophone) and Jana Havens (flute), juniors DJ Denzien (trombone) and Brenda Stevenson (clarinet) and freshman Rachel Frank (flute).

Along with band members, choir members also tried out for the KMEA North Central District Honor Choir. Senior Justin Fronce (tenor) was selected to be in the group for the third year in a row.

PERSONAL PROFILE

FRESHMAN BEN BERARD

By ERICA SMITH

Q: Are you doing any sports this year? If so, which ones and why?

A: "Yes, I'm in basketball because I have always loved it, and cross country and track just because."

Q: Did you do any sports at your old school that you are not doing here?

A: "Yes, I was also in football [at Topeka]. I am not doing it here because I didn't enjoy it."

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: "I like to draw and make stuff."

Q: Do you like to do art outside of school, and if so, what types of art?

A: "Yes, [I like] drawing."

Q: What or who is one of your biggest artistic inspirations?

A: "My brother [junior Anthony Dultmeier]."

Q: Are you in band? What instrument do you play and why?

A: "Yes, I play the clarinet because that's what my mom bought me."

Q: Was it easier to transfer to Rock Creek with your siblings?

A: "Yes."

OPINIONS

DECEMBER 2009 - PAGE 2

Classic Christmas movie enjoyable for staffer

In Disney's 3D version of "A Christmas Carol," the director of "Back to the Future," "Forest Gump" and "The Polar Express," along with actor Jim Carrey, offers a unique twist to Charles Dickens' classic tale.

The classic story tells the life Ebenezer Scrooge (Carrey), who has not celebrated Christmas in many years. Upon the death of his business partner, Scrooge is visited by three ghosts.

The first ghost is one of humor and gentleness. The Ghost of Christmas

Past appears in the form of a candle and is very soft-spoken. To lessen the intensity of this character, Disney adds humor in the way the ghost's head is constantly moving to signify flickering. This ghost shows



SARA LIMING
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Scrooge's happy memories long forgotten. But every good memory is paired with a bad one. Scrooge has to relive the moment his sweetheart left.

The second ghost, The Ghost of Christmas Present, is an opposite of the first. This ghost has a large belly and a loud laugh, which reminds the viewer of Santa Claus. Ebenezer visits the present Christmas, where he views Tiny Tim's struggle and his father (Scrooge's clerk) trying to make the best of life. Scrooge then views his nephew at his house. Scrooge had declined an invitation to dinner, and now he is the center of jokes at the party. Very upset, Scrooge says he wants to see the last spirit.

The transition between the second and the last ghost is a surprise to the viewer; younger children will not quite understand as much as the adults. The last ghost, The Ghost of Christmas to Come, is death. After seeing the dislike of Scrooge by the townspeople, Scrooge spends his time trying to escape death. The turning point for Scrooge is when he falls on his tombstone in the graveyard. After this, Scrooge gives more to charity, is more caring and is more humble.

Personally, I enjoyed this movie. It offered me a chance to be young-at-heart again. The characters were cute, and with the added humor, and it was almost like the movie I used to watch when I was eight years old. But as the movie progressed, there were times when I saw young children cling to their parent's arm, and I heard laughter only three times. There are a few sequences in the movie that only adults and older kids would understand.

Carrey also did an excellent job as the lead actor in the movie. Besides being the voice of Scrooge, Carrey also did the voices for Scrooge throughout the years and all three ghosts. The viewer cannot tell that the same person did seven different voices.

Finally, the 3D version added to the movie. I found myself reaching out to touch some falling snow.

If you are in the mood for a good holiday film or a good family film, Disney's "A Christmas Carol" is a good choice.

SARA LIMING'S RATING
3.5 stars out of 4 stars

STAFF EDITORIAL

With exams and holidays near, students need to stay stress-free

It's that time of year again, the time for final exams and for holiday shopping. We all stress out about what we're going to get friends and family for Christmas, and we all know that finals put a large amount of stress on our shoulders. But do not worry; we have come up with solutions to help your holiday stress.

To combat the stress from the holiday season and the "blues" caused by winter, we suggest that you aim for an hour of sunlight per day and look at the colors of the rainbow. According to www.associatedcontent.com, the seven colors of the rainbow make a significant difference in your mood. Red can be good in minute quantities; it helps with vitality and creativity. Orange helps make someone more at ease, yellow is seen as cheerful, green is balancing and harmonizing and blue is also good in minute quantity because it can help someone relax. Indigo is encouraging, calming and instills authority, and violet calms the agitated.

To prepare yourselves for the holiday shopping, we suggest you start with the basic shopping list. Think of everyone you must purchase gifts for, write down what you would like to get them, and then the place where you can find those items. It cuts down on the time spent looking for the items, and it cuts down on stressing

out about where you may find the items. We also suggest that you don't stress about finding the "perfect" gift for that someone. Christmas is about giving, and no matter what you may give that person, it is always the thought that counts.

We also know that finals may be more stressful to you than what holiday shopping is. We suggest that you take

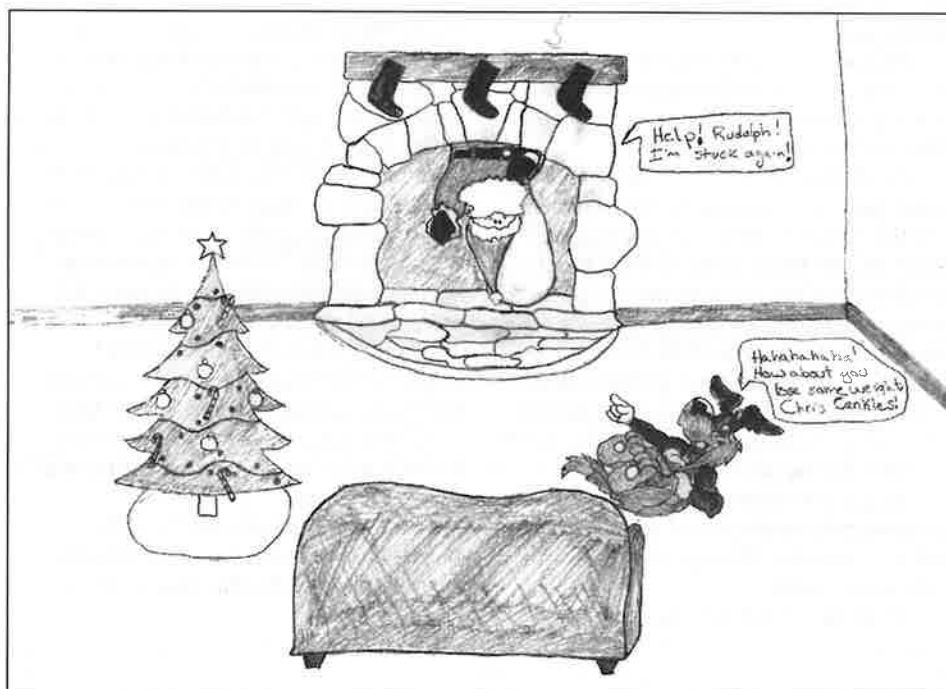
each test slowly and not to rush through to ensure your best grade possibly. First, set a study routine. Decide which test would be hardest for you and allot more time for that test for studying than the others. After you feel confident with the material, siphon out the information that you are sure won't be on the test. When it comes

closer to the test, we think it would be best for you to take a deep breath and think that this test is possible. And if you feel as though that you cannot do well just by studying, we have tutors available in the morning advisors for students who need just that little extra help.

Even though December is shown to be one of the most stressful times of the year, we have come up with solutions to calm the stress that you may be feeling. One, get an hour of sunlight, two look at the color aimed to boost your current mood, and three, prioritize, study and take it slow when it comes to exam time.

EVEN THOUGH DECEMBER is shown to be one of the most stressful times of the year, we have come up with solutions to calm the stress you may be feeling.

EDITORIAL CARTOON BY ANTHONY REID



YOUR PRINT BY ERICA SMITH

"Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" because I can do a little dance to it."



LEONA POESKE
SENIOR

"Jingle Bell Rock" because I saw it on 'Mean Girls,' which is an awesome movie."



ALEJANDRA TESTA PISON
JUNIOR

"Hell's Bells" which is a Christmas song because it talks about bells, and there are a lot of bells at Christmas."



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"I'm a Little Meatwad" off the Aqua Teen Hunger Force Christmas album because the lyrics are motivational."



JAKE ROGERS
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"The Muppets with John Denver singing 'Merry Christmas' because it embodies the Christmas glow."



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FACULTY/STAFF

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The staff chooses to reflect the mission of Rock Creek Junior/Senior High School, to serve the interests and the needs of the community and to provide fair, objective, accurate and truthful materials. Opinions do not necessarily reflect views of anyone other than The Hoof Prints student staff.

Digital photos have not been altered to manipulate reality. Photo illustrations are labeled to reflect any technical alterations.

Anonymity may be given in the following cases: the information is unable to be presented another way, the information warrants anonymity, the source's privacy and/or reputation requires protection and the source must be protected from damages.

Student or faculty member deaths during the coverage period will be covered with a short obituary and a mug shot photo if available.

If errors are negligently made, corrections will appear in the next issue.

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Letters to the editor must also meet the same guidelines as editorial content, must be 150 words or less and must be signed. Baseless accusations, libelous statements, insults and unsigned letters will not be considered for publication. The staff reserves the right to edit or omit letters. Letters should be taken to Room 112 or mailed to the address below.

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WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY SONG AND WHY?

"Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" because I can do a little dance to it."



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FEATURES

DECEMBER 2009 - PAGE 3

As the start of the winter season and the holidays approach, students find themselves

STRESSING OUT

By JESSICA JACK

As the year comes to a close, everyone gets into that normal routine of doing the holiday shopping and preparing for final exams. This time of year is often associated as being stressful. Many reasons account for this, ranging from the stress of school to the stress of family gatherings.

As for junior Ashley Altenhofen, she said she feels most stressed about final exams during the winter.

"I'm pressured to do well on the tests because of my grades," Altenhofen said.

Another student stresses out about which days the tests will fall on.

"I worry about having more than one test on the same day," freshman Breanna Stillwagon said.

Other reasons for stress may be about finding the perfect gift for someone, may be because of the problem with the economy, which affects money issues, or could be about family stress.

"When all of my family gets together, 1/3 are K-State fans, 1/3 are Missouri fans, and 1/3 are Kansas University fans," Title 1 teacher Jeremy Lehning said. "It makes for an interesting day of team bashing."

Winter blues is common in a small

percentage of adults in the United States around the holidays. Included in that is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a depression disorder that some people get in the winter-time.

There are many things that people could do to help stay stress-free during the holidays. According to www.associatedcontent.com, routine exercise, proper diet, light and color therapy and positive thinking are all ways to reduce stress caused during the holiday season.

For example, according to the site, proper exercising helps out with being

stressed during the holidays. According to the site, exercise "helps us to sleep better, relaxes our muscles, combats fatigue, and makes us feel good about ourselves." One form of exercise is yoga. Associatedcontent.com also says, "Yoga trains us to build up a natural response to stress, while becoming more relaxed in our everyday life."

"Exercising during break reduces my stress over maintaining my weight for wrestling," sophomore Sam Wilson said.

Proper dieting is also another way to keep people stress-free. According to www.associatedcontent.com, "unhealthy foods affects our brain chemistry causing us to feel sad or depressed."

"I know my limits," FACS teacher

Mary Siderewicz said. "I don't want to have to worry about taking it [weight caused by holiday snacks] off later."

Light and color therapy tends to help some people out with stress during the holidays. According to www.associatedcontent.com, it "can cleanse and strengthen the aura and restore our bodies back to health." When people go outdoors on a sunny day, it helps them become less stressed because the sun makes them happy. If they were to go outside when is cloudy outside, it will keep a person sad and depressed.

Aromatherapy is another way that people can relieve stress. According to the site, "certain scents can actually increase out production of serotonin, causing us to feel happy, uplifted and calm." Some examples of the aromatic scents are jasmine, lavender and clary sage.

"I put bath salts in my tub and it relaxes me," senior Danielle Area said.

In all the ways to stay stress free during the holidays and finals, positive thinking fits in with everything. If a person thinks positive during the holidays, the chances of them not getting stressed is lower.

"I play soccer, and I balance my diet," senior Trevor Anderson said.

Holiday stress is something that most people have. Holiday shopping and finals exams can tend to leave most people stressed out, but if they exercise regularly, have a proper diet, use light and color therapy, use aromatherapy and think positively, their holidays and finals can be less stressful.

ACCORDING TO WWW.ASSOCIATEDCONTENT.COM, routine exercise, proper diet, light and color therapy and positive thinking are all ways to reduce stress caused during the holiday season.

Student, professional tutors offer academic assistance

By JOSEPH CALMES

For students at Rock Creek, there are opportunities for students who need some extra help on their homework, since Rock Creek has a tutoring program.

Counselor Kevin Sullivan is the supervisor of the tutors at Rock Creek. He monitors all the activity of the students and makes sure that they are getting tasks done during the tutoring time.

"The tutors need to be dependable, reliable, capable, personable and have leadership," Sullivan said.

The tutors are students who help other students who have trouble passing academic requirements in class or who are passing and just want extra help. The tutors help them with homework and studying. They meet at first advisor and help them on their homework.

"I see academic improvement and contributing time and talent," Sullivan said. "I also see interaction and healthy bonds and a boost in a younger student's confidence."

Tutoring started when Sullivan first got here in 2006 and has been going on ever since. When a tutor can't make it to first advisor, Sullivan finds a substitute and has the new tutor help out the student. This year, Rock Creek has about 15 tutors, and the tutors do not have a limit on how

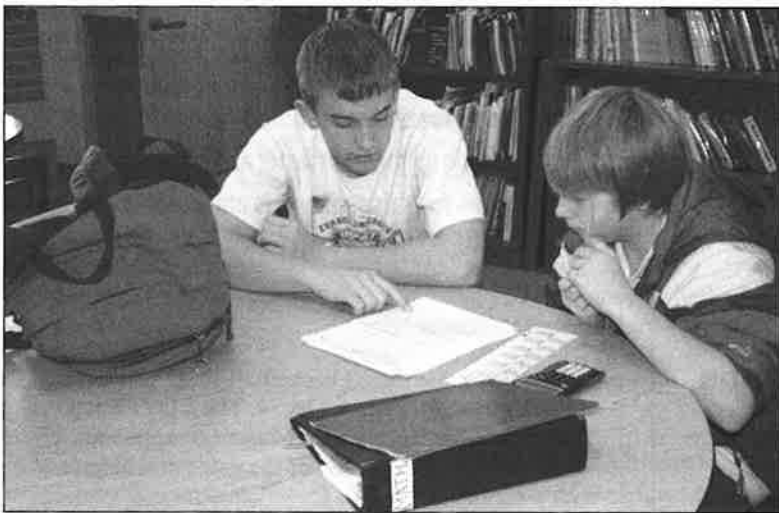
many years they can tutor or how many students they can tutor.

"The best part about tutoring is helping another student and connecting them," senior Becca Snapp, who tutors Algebra 1, said.

At the beginning of the school year, Sullivan picks out students who have experience in the class they are going to tutor and who have a solid grade point average. The tutors teach math, science, English and social studies, from seventh to 12th grade.

"Tutors must be patient and have knowledge on the subject," junior Macy Umscheid, who tutors math, said.

Many of the student tutors agree



DURING MORNING ADVISOR, junior Colten Smith assists eighth-grader Tim Pushee with his math homework in the media center on Dec. 11. Smith said he tutors because he "gets the opportunity to help" students who are struggling in their classes. PHOTO BY JESSICA AUGUSTINE

that tutoring is can be a challenge and is sometimes really hard, but in the end, it is worth it to see the students raise their grades or just connect with each other. Tutors do not get paid; tutoring is a volunteer activity.

"To be a tutor, you must excel in the areas that you are teaching," senior Jared Hawkins, who tutors math, science and English, said.

HOW DO YOU RELIEVE STRESS?

"I sleep the whole time."
- junior Skyler Beam

"I go over to the Fike's house, and I play games."
- senior Torrey Peterson

"Just lay down and chill."
- junior Dylan Treadwell

"I cook and read good books."
- senior Becca Snapp

"I talk to girls."
- sophomore Ryan Harshbarger

"I go for a jog."
- junior Brady Quinn

"I go fishing."
- PE teacher Mark Oberkrom

"I put puzzles together."
- maintenance director Jan Garverick

"I go running."
- sophomore Katie Hodges

"I go to a quiet place away from everyone else."
- sophomore Jade Marsh

"I lay down with music on."
- senior Mitchell McPhillamy

"I meditate on my roof."
- sophomore KJ Dobbins

"I listen to music or listen to my audio books."
- senior Cassie Marker

"I call a friend and chat."
- paraprofessional Marg Magnett

"I go sledding country-style."
- sophomore Codi Ebert

"I bake cookies for Santa."
- sophomore Abby Glendening

"I go deer hunting and talk to the deer."
- sophomore Emily Forge

SPORTS

DECEMBER 2009 - PAGE 4

Whether a minor or major problem, sports injuries can leave any athlete

On the Sidelines

By DEVIN MUIR

Almost everybody who plays sports will, at one point or another, suffer from a sports injury, ranging in severity.

Sports injuries are commonly thought of as a nuisance, due to the short-term effects they may have on an athlete. Some of the short-term effects simply get in the way, but some are more serious and may have an athlete on the bench for weeks or months.

Coach Michael Beam said, "It is important to follow the correct protocol after an injury occurs. RICE is what I try and follow after an injury: Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation. This will speed up the recovery process."

Sprains, breaks, fractures, runner's knee and shin splints are some common injuries that generally have no lasting effects. A broken leg could be in a cast or splint for up to six to eight weeks, and even after it is removed, may still be to tender to play on.

Freshman Trey Basa suffered two sports-related injuries last year.

"Near the end of football, I broke my pinkie, just a fracture, and then eight weeks after that, I fractured my foot," Basa said.

Basa's injuries were not preventable like some, but still had him sitting out for a while.

Not all injuries will simply have an athlete on the bench for a while; some could result in permanent damage and leave even the best athlete crippled. Some sports-related injuries can lead to arthritis, a debilitating condition caused by damage to the cartilage around bones.

Beam agrees, saying, "If the injury isn't taken care of, it can lead to problems in the future, such as arthritis in the injured joint or ligament damage, which can all lead to limited mobility."

Arthritis is not the worst outcome of a sports injury; some may even result in paralysis from the neck down. Runners knee, which first is present with discomfort in the knee, but if treatment isn't sought out, then it could result in permanent structural damage to the knee and may later require a knee replacement.

Many sports-related injuries can be easily prevented by taking a few simple precautions. Athletes should make sure they are physically prepared for the sport or activity they are taking part in. It is a common misconception the sport is supposed to get the athletes in shape; they should make sure they are in shape for the sport instead. One way to be prepared to prepare for the sport an athlete may be taking part in is to enter a conditioning program.

Beam agrees, saying, "complete strength and conditioning that will emphasize total body work," and "a good program will incorporate flexibility, conditioning and

speed/quickness work."

Conditioning programs are meant to get the athletes' bodies in shape and ready for the sport, but they also teach healthy eating and possibly the science of the human body to make sure the athletes are fully prepared for the activity they are playing.

Athletes participating in sports or other physical activities should always make sure they warm up before beginning the activity. Warming up is meant to get the body ready for exercise. After athletes are done, they should also cool down, which aids the body in safely returning to its normal rate. If an athlete does feel like something is wrong, he or she should take it easy or just sit out for a while.

Though some sports injuries cannot be prevented, most can be. The steps people can take to prevent any injury are quick, simple and well worth it.

"It is important to follow the correct protocol after an injury occurs. RICE is what I try and follow after an injury: Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation."

- coach/PE teacher Mike Beam

SCOREBOARD

By MICHAEL PARKER & DANIELLE DUNCAN

	RC	OPPONENT
VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL		
Clay Center (12/04)	49	59
Chapman (12/07)	55	43
JUNIOR VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL		
Clay Center (12/04)	29	43
Chapman (12/07)	52	45
FRESHMAN BOYS BASKETBALL		
Clay Center (12/04)	38	44
Abilene (12/10)	39	53
VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL		
Clay Center (12/04)	56	44
Chapman (12/07)	57	39
JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL		
Clay Center (12/04)	44	36
Chapman (12/07)	47	33
FRESHMAN GIRLS BASKETBALL		
Abilene (12/10)	42	27
WRESTLING		
Mission Valley Tourm. (12/05)		9th

Boys Basketball

Head coach: Jim Johnston

Number of years as coach: Seven

Team record last season: 11-10

Key returning players: Seniors Josh Camacho and Pake Ebert

Key newcomer players: Seniors TJ Andrade, Spencer Klocke and Harrison Newman and juniors Skyler Beam, Travis Briggs and Nelson Kawano

Toughest games this season: Rossville, St. Marys

Overall goal for this season: To get better each game

Expectations for this season: Hard work, unselfishness and class

By MASON SWENSON

Boys basketball has started, and the team had its first game against Clay Center on Dec. 4 at Rock Creek, with a score of 58-48 in favor of Clay Center.

"The kids are working hard, but we do need to improve some more," head coach Jim Johnston said.

The top scorer that night was senior Josh Camacho with six points. Johnston put in four sophomores that night, including KJ Dobbins, Dillion Johnston, Aaron Kuecker and Logan Miner.

From Dec. 7-12, the boys were competing in the Dickinson County Classic, from which results were not available due to press deadline.

This year, the coaches had each player on the team sign a covenant to ensure that the team had all the same goals; one of these goals is to go to state this season.

"I believe it gives something for the team to follow," senior Pake Ebert said. "It sets the goal to be the best we can possibly be."

Girls Basketball

Head coach: Mike Zabel

Number of years as coach: Three

Team finish last season: Third at state

Key returning players: Seniors Taylor Ebert and Becky Lightfoot

Key newcomer players: Junior Ashley Altenhofen and sophomore Lizz Herra

Toughest games this season: Riley County, St. Marys

Overall goals for this season: To improve their game, work on getting up the court faster and practice foot work.

Expectations for this season: To always focus, practice and play hard.

By DANIELLE DUNCAN

The first varsity girls basketball game was held at Rock Creek on Friday, Dec. 4. The Clay Center Tigers were the Rock Creek Mustangs' opponent.

The Mustangs led most of the game and came out with a victory of 56-44.

There are five seniors on the team this season, one of whom was the leading scorer in the Clay Center game, Taylor Ebert at 18 points. The other seniors on the team are Lora Blackwood, Becky Lightfoot, Becca Snapp and Ashley Srna. Right behind Ebert for leading points was sophomore Lizz Herra at 13 points.

Despite the win, head coach Mike Zabel said the team has room to improve.

"There were too many turnovers, too many bad passes, too many mistakes," Zabel said.

On Dec. 7, the girls pulled off another win against Chapman with a score of 57-39, as part of the Dickinson County Classic.

Wrestling

Head coach: Dan Pray

Number of years as coach: One (first year)

Team finish last season: Second in MEL, 7th at regionals

Key returning players: Sophomore Shane Schaake

Key newcomer players: Junior Colten Smith and freshmen Zac Rieck and Randall Thomas

Toughest matches this season: Clay Center

Overall goals for this season: To win at least 80 percent of matches and to take as many wrestlers as possible to state

Expectations for this season: To take about five wrestlers to state, which would be a Rock Creek first

By THOMAS McANERNEY

Rock Creek hit the mats when they opened the season at Mission Valley on Dec. 5. They placed six wrestlers at sixth or better. They include the following: freshmen Randall Thomas, fourth, and Zac Rieck, sixth, sophomores Trevor Sutton, third, and Shane Schaake, fourth, and juniors Jeran Fry, fourth, Dylan Treadwell, fifth, and Luke Goodenow, sixth. As a team, they also took ninth overall.

The team has many sophomores and juniors returning from last year, but no seniors this year. It also has a lot of freshmen who are small and can fill in the light weight divisions and a lot of newcomers who should make an impact this year. Also Schaake returns and is one of the three state qualifiers from last year. The head coach has also changed from Tony Andrade to Dan Pray.

The team faced one of its hardest tests Clay Center on Dec. 12, for which results were not available due to press deadline.