



Patriot Press

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photo by Peter V, sophomore



Christmas filled with music

FBTA students perform three separate concerts

by Caleb P, sophomore

Splitting our annual Christmas concert into three separate events would seem at first to not be a good idea during an already stressful month. But this was not the case. More time to prepare for the concert and less time for each concert were both beneficial and the advantages were seen during each concert.

“Students and teachers were given their own unique concerts for Elementary, JH/SH Choral, and JH/SH Instrumental,” said Mr. Van Den Berg, orchestra director. “In general, the three concert format allowed teachers more time to create and develop a concert with

music from the groups they’re working with, and each concert focused attention on one general group of music (choral/instrumental/elementary) streamlining the demands placed on students.”

Not only do the directors have more time to prepare for each concert, but the students also enjoy and appreciate the concert more when more time is given to them.

“I really like how everyone worked really hard to learn their songs and to sing,” said Jianna C, 8th grade.

“Mr. Baldwin cares about us . . .” said Amy F, freshman.

“ . . . and is passionate about music,”

added Jianna.

The high school speech class also presented several selections, including ‘The Christmas Truce of 1914,’ and the new handbell choir performed several selections in another concert.

“Under this new format it was wonderful to see the addition of some speech selections added to the choral concert,” said Mr. Van Den Berg. “Having the handbell numbers and string selection added to the instrumental concert proved a great success.”

Sometimes the events that seem to be stress-ridden are not actually that bad after all. Some actually turn out to be a great blessing for everyone.

Having three concerts allowed students to perform their best.

Below: Cindy Y, senior, plays ‘What Child is This,’ in the concert finale.



Each class dressed as a different people or animal group: K4 were pilgrims, K5 were turkeys, 1st graders were pilgrims, 2nd and 3rd grades were Indians.

photos by Mrs. Dyck, advisor

Stuffed with fun!

Thankful for Elementary Thanksgiving feast

by Julie U, senior

Toward the end of November, the lower elementary classes at Fairfax performed in the Thanksgiving program by singing different songs, quoting verses and different poems, and also eating great food after their performances. The Thanksgiving feast is one of the elementary students’ highlights of the school year. The students get the opportunity to dress up as different Thanksgiving-themed people or animals, and then they celebrate with a “feast” of food afterwards.

“I loved eating all of the delicious food with my friends after we sang,” said Isabella V, 3rd grade.

The students and their parents bring in different types of food including desserts, sandwiches, fruit, and chips to the feast. After the performances, students and parents go to the gym to get their choice of food and sit with their friends and family.

Several of the seniors have the opportunity to work at the Thanksgiving feast and help with serving drinks, setting up the gym, and cleaning it after it was completed.

“Working at the Thanksgiving feast with the seniors was fun yet sad because it was the last time we would be here for the feast,” said Sarah H, senior.

The younger grades especially loved singing the different songs that they learned for the performances.

“My favorite part was singing about the little pilgrim girl dressed in gray,” said Aubrey S, K3.

“I really enjoyed singing ‘T’was the night before Thanksgiving,” said Judah J, 2nd grade.

The feast was amazing as usual thanks to the help of the teachers, Mrs. Darby, and the hard work the kids put into making this feast one to remember.





The group from FBTA poses for a photo before the concert.

Singing, playing, and snow! Oh my!

ODACS band/choir festival delayed by snow

by Emma V, senior

Due to a snow day on Thursday, Nov. 15, the 2018 ODACS Band and Choir Festival was delayed for FBTA participants. The next day, however, everyone got up bright and early in order to get to school and then to the band festival down in Richmond, VA.

The students could participate in one of three areas: (1) a concert band, directed by Mr. Ron Fox from Faith Baptist Church and School, Fredericksburg, VA; (2) a symphonic band, directed by Dr. Rick Townsend, from Maranatha Baptist University, Wisconsin; (3) and a festival choir, directed by Dr. Cleusia Goncalves, from Pensacola Christian College.

"It was really cool to be able to sing with people from other schools for a concert, rather than against each other in an ODACS competition, for once," said Connor D, senior. "It was a lot of fun, and I was glad to be a part of it."

"I have always loved the Band Festival!" said Haston H, junior. "It's so much fun and quality time with your friends, so I was very sad to hear the first day was canceled, because the hotel is where so many great memories are made with your friends! Overall, it was still a great Band and Choir Festival! The symphonic band played many different selections that were thoughtfully chosen by our band director. Plus the choir sounded so good this year! This Band and Choir Festival was a smashing success even through all of the setbacks and delays."

When asked what the favorite choir song was, "I Am Not My Own" seemed to be the general consensus.

"I loved having the opportunity to go," said Caleb D, senior. "It was fun to re-learn old favorites like 'I Am Not My Own,' and 'In the Beginning was the Word' with a bunch of other people that were passionate about learning music. I learned a whole lot."



The snowfall delayed the festival by one day.

When asked what the favorite band song was, the students had several favorites. "Swashbuckler's March" was senior Jay M favorite band song.

When asked about how they felt about the snow day and missed band festival day, the main response was of disappointment.

"I would have gotten more time to maybe hangout with someone I met there and make even more friends," replied Jay M, senior.

"I was really looking forward to sleeping over in the hotel," said Amy F, freshman.

"I was kind of disappointed, but it did make things easier when we didn't have to get up early at the hotel and then leave," said Kysten W, freshman.

"I was a little disappointed that we didn't get to go the first day because I wanted to hang out with everyone at the hotel. That's okay though, because I still had a great time on Friday," said Alyssa R, junior.

Students Shakti C, Jay M, Justin G, and Amy F were in the concert band. They played "Blazon" by James Curnow; "Modal Song and Dance," by Elliot Del Borgo; "Of Castles and Kings" by Ron Fox; "Kenya Contrasts," by William Hines; and "Swashbuckler's March," by Mark Williams.

Students Ava J, Emma V, Julia W, Kysten W, Charity B, Jinnea B, Alyssa R, Andrew C, Caleb D, and Connor D were in the festival choir. They sang "Psalm 150," by Peter Anglea; "Festival Sanctus," by John Leavitt; "I Am Not My Own," by Craig Courtney; "The Word Was God," by Rosephanye Powell; "Prayer to Jehovah," by Molly Ijames; and "God is Our Refuge," by Allen Pote.

Students Savannah V, Lauren M, Hart Z, Josh B, Daniel P, Aaron M, Peter V, Haston H, and John F made up the Symphonic band. They played "Flourish for Wind Band," by Ralph Vaughan Williams; "Salvation is Created," by Tchesnokoff; "First Suit in E flat for Military Band—Chaconne and March," by Gustav Holst; and "Prelude on A Hymn of Praise," by James Curnow.



Thanksgiving break

Students enjoy time off for a long weekend

by Haston H, junior

Whether you are a teacher or student, parent or child, everyone is thankful for Thanksgiving break. The students of FBTA would agree 100% they all needed a much-deserved break.

Many students traveled over the holiday. Madison V, junior, especially enjoyed her trip to Connecticut to spend Thanksgiving day with her extended family.

"I loved getting to see my family members I haven't seen in forever!" said Madison.

Some traveled farther than others though, like Ethan C, sophomore. He traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, and then over to Alabama. He was excited to see his grandparents he had

not seen in a long time. While in Alabama, they hiked the start of the Appalachian Trail.

"It was such a beautiful hike," said Ethan.

Others stayed a lot closer for Thanksgiving. Melanie T, senior, enjoyed seeing her grandparents that live right here in Virginia. One of Melanie's highlights of Thanksgiving break was the Turkey Trot she and her family participated in.

"I enjoyed the challenge of the race, but I loved getting to spend time with my family during the run the most," said Melanie.

Whether you traveled far or near, I hope students got the break they needed, and everyone had the best Thanksgiving Day ever!

The most wonderful party of the year

Students plan Christmas class parties

by Nathan H, senior

It's that time of year again. The time when both students and teachers alike begin eagerly awaiting Christmas break. With this anticipation brings thoughts of the last day before break, and the Christmas parties and festivities that will take place on that day.

Each class in junior high and high school chose a theme and meets regularly during lunch to discuss their theme and the details that go into setting up and designing their party.

"I am really excited for our class's theme this year," said Julie U, senior.

The list of classes and their themes is as follows: FBI Investigation (seniors), Christmas Morning (juniors), Tacky Christmas (sophomores), 50's Diner (freshmen), Soccer Christmas (8th grade), and The Wizard of Oz (7th grade). The preschool and elementary classes hold their own individual parties in their classrooms.

The student body is excited for this yearly event, and is putting a lot of time into preparing for the parties.

"I am quite excited to see what the creative minds of the students at FBTA have to offer," said Ethan C, sophomore.

The junior high and high school competition has been slightly raised due to the fact that the student council added a door decorating competition to the festivities. Each class was assigned a classroom door to decorate and the best doors got points toward their class's score.

The Christmas season at FBTA is one filled with excitement, and the Christmas parties are an outflowing of that excited energy. Whether it is the eagerness to be gone from school, or an excitement to celebrate the season, the students of FBTA have put a lot of time into making this year's Christmas parties a memorable event.



Christmas doors to remember

Jr/Sr high compete with homeroom door decorating

by Shakti C, freshman

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Christmas break is almost here, but along with the merry hearts, hot chocolate, and Christmas carols, comes ruthless competition. Every year, the students compete by decorating the halls and lockers, but things were a little different this time around. The student council decided that the students should decorate the home room doors instead of the lockers.

"The hallways are always so much fun," said Amy F, freshman, "but the doors were a really fun twist!"

The sophomores placed 4th with their "mix matched Christmas" theme. Christmas lights and different types of wrapping paper are what really brought Mrs. Bullocks' door to life. The 8th graders placed 3rd with their

"soccer team Christmas tree." Each of the 8th graders had their own miniature jersey hung as ornaments on their Christmas tree door. The freshmen placed 2nd, with a huge picture of Miss Muller's face with a Santa Claus beard, plastered on her door.

"It was a little weird to see my face so huge," said Miss Muller. "It was still a little weird after the beard, but mostly just funny."

The 7th graders claimed 1st place with their adorable penguin-themed door!

Decorating the home room doors was a really fun experience for the junior and senior high.

"I enjoyed it! It was a lot of fun and a good opportunity to be creative," said Twila S, freshman, "but we definitely should have won."

Practice makes perfect!

Students and teachers are working hard for this year's ODACS

by Kiersten G, sophomore

Students and teachers have been hard at work preparing for the ODACS competition in March. ODACS (Old Dominion Association of Church Schools) is the fine arts competition comprised of all categories, such as art, speech, orchestra, and various choral groups. This year, our school made an effort to start preparation for the competition early in the year to give students more time to improve their submissions.

"Starting earlier helps us focus on areas that need more help, but overall it's been beneficial," said Mr. Briggs, ODACS coach.

The Level III speech participants began auditions in May of this year. Mrs. Bullock is in charge of Level III speech and has been working with students to perfect their speeches. All roles in group speeches have been filled, and rehearsals will be taking place over the next few weeks.

"I think we're in a good place, and I think

it's great that we started earlier this year," commented Mrs. Bullock.

Many art students have already begun to work on their entries. Several of them came to school over the summer to work with Mrs. Darby and Mrs. Lewis.

Musical soloists have been chosen and many of them have begun rehearsing their pieces. Mrs. Castilla and Mr. Van Den Berg, as well as many other music teachers, have been working hard with students to get them ready for the competition.

"I love the idea of the extra practice time being built into the schedule. Starting earlier has been great, and I hope we can start even earlier next year," said Mrs. Castilla.

The chambers choir with Mr. Baldwin has also been preparing for ODACS since the beginning of this year. The choir has been diligently learning their music and rehearsing two to three times a week.

Keep working hard to make this year's ODACS the best it's ever been!



Hart Z, senior, and Justin G, junior, work on their skeleton puzzle for a test grade.

photo by Connor D, senior

Skull, clavicle, patella

Anatomy class assembles human skeleton "puzzle"

by Hart Z, senior

Throughout the past week, the anatomy class has put together a skeleton to practice learning the bones in the body.

"It's very important to know how the bones work in the body," said Mr. Niggel, anatomy teacher. "Instead of just studying a diagram, the hands-on aspect of the skeletal system helps students understand better."

Every student had a partner and was given a practice setup before the test day, and each pair of students was given the entire class period to work putting together "George" the skeleton. Students were graded on having the bones facing the right way and having the bones in the proper order.

"My favorite part was putting together the foot even though it was difficult to find which tarsals and metatarsals were in the right place," said Justin G, junior.

All 206 bones of the body were not necessary for the test, but the rib cage, hand, foot, and vertebral column were some of the harder parts to get right.

"It's difficult but not impossible," said Monica C, junior. "The hand bones were really interesting, and it is cool to see what I can't see through my skin."

Anatomy, although it is a more difficult class, is really fun and helps students understand the human body and spark their interest in the medical field or other such areas.

Time for travel

U.S. History class goes hands on

by Caleb D, senior

On Nov. 30, the U.S. History class traveled to Fort McHenry and Hampton for a field trip. The trip was organized by Mr. Armstrong, the class teacher and "tour guide," with Mr. Van Den Berg as the bus driver. Instead of stopping by a museum, the students got to visit two historic sites located in Baltimore, Maryland.

"In the early-1800s Baltimore was one of the largest and wealthiest cities in the United States," said Mr. Armstrong, U.S. History teacher. "This makes the city an ideal place to learn more about what American life was like after independence."

Rarely have students had the opportunity to visit a historical site for a history class in recent times; the class was even able to participate in the flag raising at Fort McHenry. Jay M, senior, even got to pull the flag up to the top of the pole.

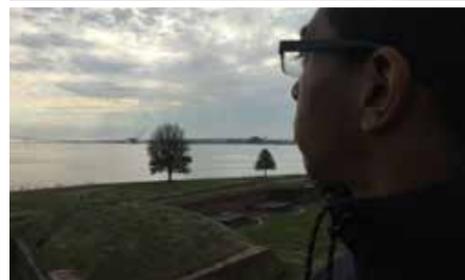
"I thought that was incredible," said Jay, upon recollection of the flag raising. "I loved it a lot."

Fort McHenry offered an experience that, in truth, is much different and definitely more eye opening than what can be obtained in a classroom setting. Students were given time to "explore" the fort and see what the site had to offer in the form of videos, memorials, relics, and info graphics. Each student was also given a set of questions about the fort and Hampton on a worksheet that they were expected to answer after or during the experience.

"I chose Fort McHenry because of the role it played during the War of 1812 and because of its influence on the writing of the Star-Spangled Banner," said Mr. Armstrong. "It's very special to see such an iconic site—and to be able to participate in the morning flag-raising is something that everyone should experience."

"Fort McHenry had marvelous infrastructure that still could be used relatively well for a base today," said Josh B, junior.

After buying a few curios in the gift shop, the educational trip continued to Hampton: a wealthy plantation owned by the Ridgely family in the 18th century. The national park service guided the students through many of the mansion's spacious rooms, each depicting



Jay Meredith, senior, looks out over the fort.

a slightly different time period from the last. The park ranger leading the students even told the stories of some of the many slaves that worked on the property.

"Hampton does a great job at showing how both free and enslaved Americans lived in the 18th century," said Mr. Armstrong. "The main house was once the largest private home in the United States, but it also boasts some of the best-preserved slave quarters in the [country]. The Hampton provides a slightly different perspective on the plantation society."

"My favorite part was probably when we got to go into the mansion and see all the stuff that they had in there," said Estefania M, senior. "It was mostly original pieces from the people that used to live there, so that was cool."

After taking selfies and pictures in front and around the rest of the property, the students filed back onto the bus and talked all about what they had learned on the journey back home. Thank you to Mr. Armstrong for orchestrating the event and for being our history tour guide!

"This is probably one of the best [field trips] I've been to in a long time," said Jay M.

"We live in an area that is rich in historic sites and museums," said Mr. Armstrong. "To be honest, we could probably fill every day of the school year with a field trip!"

That would be epic.

photos by Caleb Dyck, senior



K4 enjoys their time at the Pumpkin Patch.

photo by Mrs. Bradford, K4 teacher

Perfect pumpkin picking

Preschoolers visit Ticonderoga Farms

by Ava J, sophomore

Last month, the preschoolers went to their annual pumpkin picking. This year they went to The Amazing Farm Fun at Ticonderoga.

Excitement filled the air while the parents and students boarded the bus and traveled to their destination. When the children saw the farm, a scream of thrill ran through the whole bus. After unboarding, they ran through the pumpkin patch trying to pick their perfect pumpkin. Afterward, the teachers led the way to some fun activities.

There were many activities, and the top three were (1) bouncing in a bouncy house, (2) riding on a hayride, and (3) going down

the giant slide. These were not only the kids' favorites, but also the parents'.

"My favorite part of the field trip was going in the bouncy house," said Joyce L, K4.

"We all definitely had a fun time, everyone that went enjoyed spending time with the kids. I know that they will remember this field trip for a very long time," said Ms. Damm, K3 teacher.

"My favorite part was the slide, because it went really fast," said Aubrey S, K4.

"I loved the hayride! It was so fun, but at first I was a little scared," said Caleb T, K4.

"Picking the pumpkins was the best, because I got the perfect pumpkin," said Senaya B, K4.



The boys' team plays a very competitive game against Temple Baptist. photo by Julie U, senior

I believe that we will win! Basketball season begins!

by Jayden L, sophomore

Yes! It is finally time for basketball season to begin. It is time for a new team and a new spirit.

After suspenseful tryouts, the final teams were decided. Everyone who tried out gave it their best.

"Trying out for the girls basketball team was an exhausting experience, [but] I had a lot of fun," said Zoe W, 6th grade.

The teams practice very hard every week to prepare themselves, and the coaches help the teams tremendously by constantly pushing each player to do his or her best, and to always have fun.

"I really enjoy basketball it is soooooo much fun," said Amy F, freshman.

One can often hear the amplified words of Coach Spatz, girls' coach, and Coach Johnson, JV boys' coach, across the gym, while Coach Page, Coach Beach, and Coach Bradford deliver words of encouragement to the guys.

The teams did well in their first games against Keystone. The JV and Varsity boys



Coach Page gives the team motivating advice. photo by Amy Fahmy, freshman

both won their games, and performed exceptionally well for their first game.

The JV boys were especially excited about winning their first game, as this was the first time that some of them have played on a basketball team.

"I think that we played well, but there are improvements to be made, but I'm happy that we were able to win our first game," said Samson B, 6th grade.

The entire student body is excited for this year's basketball season and to see the great progress that has been made since last year.

Student council leads chapel

by Alyssa R, junior

Several weeks ago, the student council led high school chapel by leading singing, providing testimonies, and organizing special music.

"I loved seeing the student council work together in this endeavor," said Hart Z, president. "It was great to communicate what was on our heart with testimonies/devotion."

"It was very entertaining and amusing. It was also a heartwarming experience," said Charity B, freshman. "I like being able to get

an inside look at the student council. I would love to see it happen again."

"I thought it was really cool to have the student council participate in chapel since we don't get the opportunity to usually," said Julie U, senior representative.

"It was fun and creative from each individual who participated," said Andrew C, sophomore.

All the students enjoyed having their class representatives lead the chapel that day. It was a blessing and just a great time all around!

A product of God's leading

Bro. Kyle Spatz fills role as new youth pastor

by Connor D, senior

With Bro. Boyd answering the call to pastor a church in Collinsville, Oklahoma, a new youth pastor, Bro. Kyle Spatz, has joined the ranks of the ministerial staff to fill the hole that was left.

Bro. Spatz accepted the call to ministry when he was sixteen years old, assisting in the teen department of Grace Baptist Camp in Ottawa, Kansas. Kyle pursued the call after finishing homeschool and attended Crown college in Powell, Tennessee, with a bachelor's degree in Biblical studies, with an emphasis on youth ministry.

After college, Bro. Kyle married Marlie and became assistant pastor to his father-in-law, Pastor Martenn, who pastors Bethel Memorial Baptist Church in LaFayette, Georgia.

After eight years, Bro. Kyle and his family were offered the opportunity to work at Fairfax Baptist Temple. Pastor Abbey remembered them while he was youth pastor at Central Baptist Church in Greenville, Tennessee, and figured the Spatz family would be a good fit for FBT.

Upon hearing the offer, the Spatz family sought guidance through prayer. Despite the thought of moving to an entirely new area very possible to be outside their comfort zone, they felt peace in taking the opportunity.

Since then, the Spatz family has integrated incredibly quickly.

"It is much different than where we lived before because of the size of the area here and the size of the area there, but I think so far it's been a very seamless transition," said Bro. Kyle.

"I like my teachers, because they're really nice," said their daughter.

After only four months, Bro. Kyle has



already established a wonderful connection with the teen group.

"He's great," said Hart Z, senior. "I enjoy his attitude and his relationship with the teens."

The teen group is blessed to have Bro. Kyle as the new youth pastor, and looks forward to many teen events to come in the following months.

"My desire is to see young people saved, baptized, and steadily growing in their Christian walk as they prepare for their adult years," said Bro. Kyle. "Marlie and I love serving the Lord together as we serve

them, while raising our own two children."



Mr. Spatz was a Viking in our Patch the Pirate play.



Colleen M, 7th grade, gets ready to take a leap of faith.



Bro. Kyle remembers too late that he doesn't like heights.

Who's up for an adventure?

Teen group visits Sandy Springs Adventure Park

by Peter V, sophomore

Don't look down! The FBT teen group went to Sandy Springs Adventure Park on Nov. 10. The website describes the park as "essentially an obstacle course in the trees and includes climbing, zip lines, and combinations of the challenge bridges and zip lines; it has 13 trails, which are color-coded, with purple—the easiest—being a 12- to 20-foot-high course, and double black diamond—the most difficult—being 65 feet in the air. It is the largest aerial climbing course in the U.S."

This year at Sandy Springs it was freezing! It was so cold that some of the teens stayed in the gift shop just to be in the heat. The rope course at Sandy Springs looks very intimidat-

ing, but it is not—once you get up there, you have a plethora of safety systems.

"Sandy Springs is usually my favorite activity!" said Sarah H, senior. "This year it was just so cold! A bunch of us were constantly going in and out of the gift shop to warm up. I almost fell into the bonfire, too—so thanks Mrs. Marlie for catching me!"

"It was really cold but still enjoyable. I had a great time," said Ashley T, sophomore.

Mr. Castilla, teen parent, posted several Facebook Live videos for posterity and to keep parents in the loop.

Likely, even bitter cold will not keep the teens away from this activity for next year.