

The background of the entire image is a dense, overlapping collage of various newspaper pages. The pages are in grayscale and show a variety of content, including headlines, photographs, and text columns. Some visible headlines include "Plugged in to Dylan's guitar", "acting gyms in sh", and "S429". The newspapers are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured, layered effect.

# **The Manatee Times**

## **Volume 2**

### **Winter Edition**

**Myakka River Elementary School's  
Student Led Newspaper**

# Student Writers

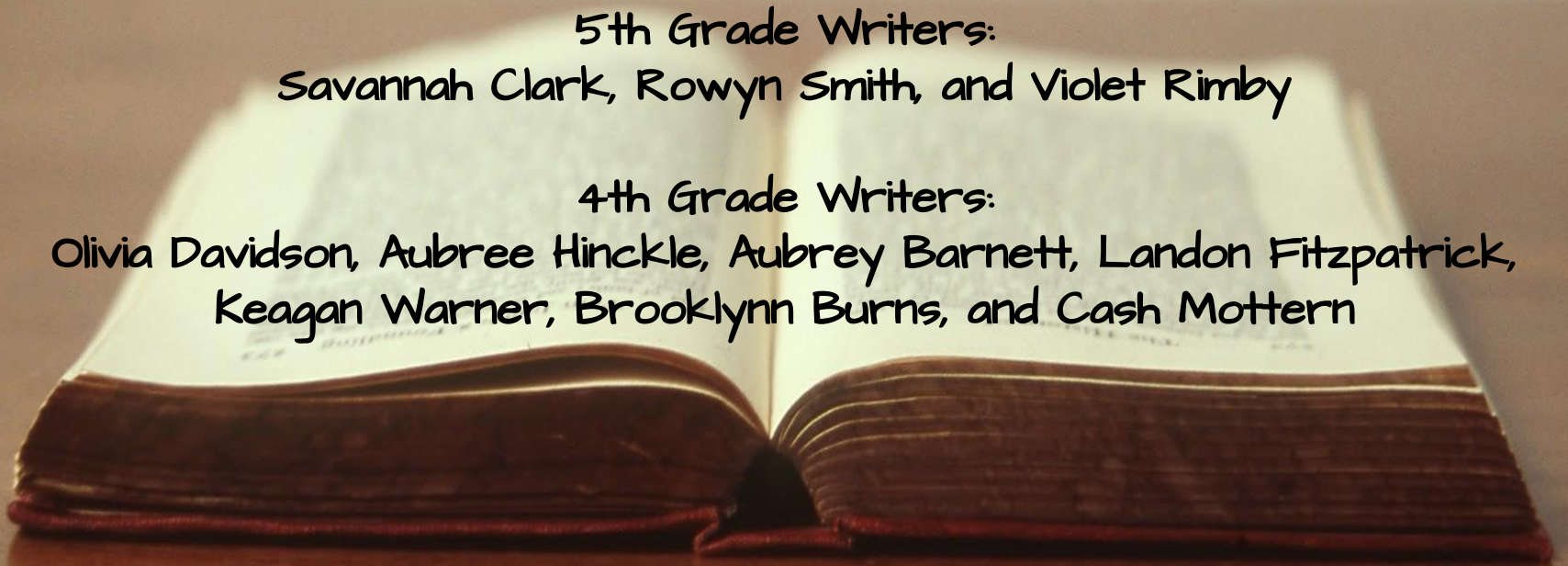
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Savannah Clark, Rowyn Smith, and Violet Rimby

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Olivia Davidson, Aubree Hinckle, Aubrey Barnett, Landon Fitzpatrick,  
Keagan Warner, Brooklynn Burns, and Cash Mottern





# What Does it Mean to be a Mighty Manatee Leader?

by Olivia Davidson



When you attend Myakka River Elementary, it's important to be a Mighty Manatee Leader. Being a Mighty Manatee Leader means that you are motivated, inspired, grateful, helpful, thoughtful, and making a difference. When a student or staff member is observed being a Mighty Manatee Leader, they can receive a Mighty Leadership Award. Remember that it is important to be a Mighty Manatee Leader all the time, not just when someone is watching you!

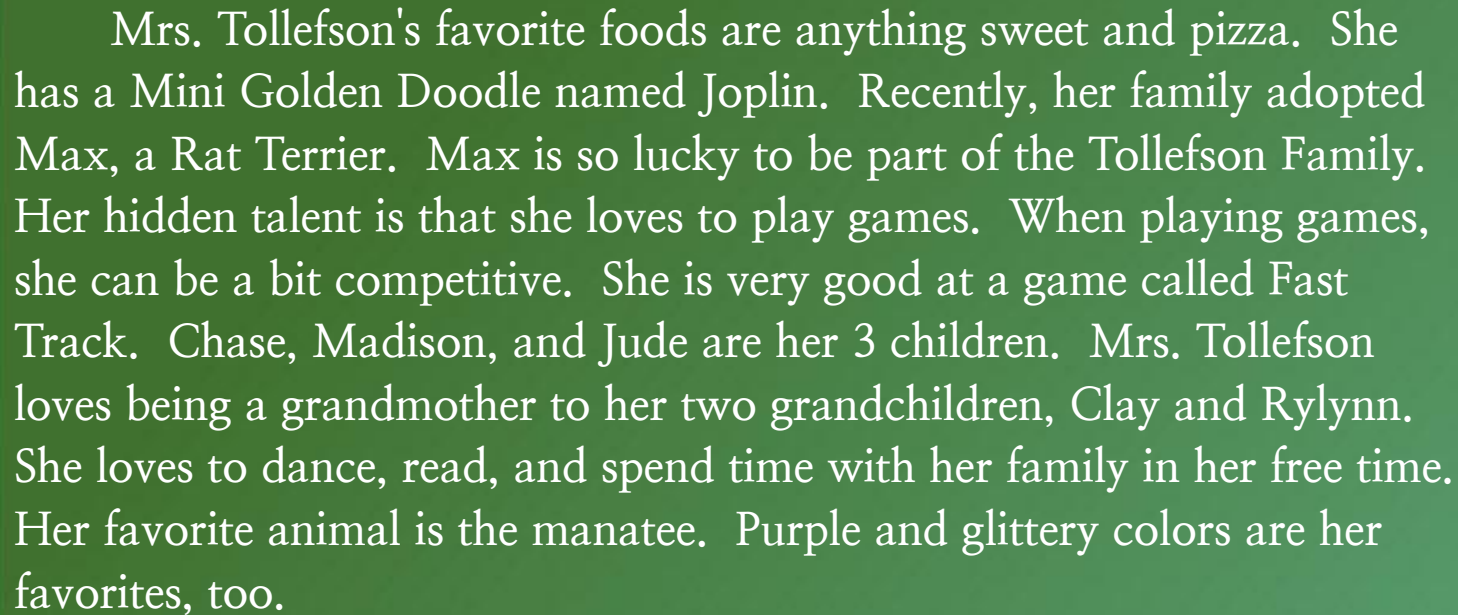


## Mrs. Tollefson

by Rowyn Smith and Landon Fitzpatrick

Mrs. Tollefson is Myakka River Elementary School's (MRES) loving principal. She was an assistant principal for 4 years before becoming MRES' principal. She has been leading the way for students and staff for 8 years. She went to Florida Gulf Coast University for her Bachelor's Degree and the University of South Florida for her Master's Degree. Before becoming an administrator, Mrs. Tollefson taught kindergarten. She said kindergarten is her favorite grade because she loved being the first positive educational experience for all of her students. She managed a retail store and taught Zumba classes before working in education.





Mrs. Tollefson's favorite foods are anything sweet and pizza. She has a Mini Golden Doodle named Joplin. Recently, her family adopted Max, a Rat Terrier. Max is so lucky to be part of the Tollefson Family. Her hidden talent is that she loves to play games. When playing games, she can be a bit competitive. She is very good at a game called Fast Track. Chase, Madison, and Jude are her 3 children. Mrs. Tollefson loves being a grandmother to her two grandchildren, Clay and Rylynn. She loves to dance, read, and spend time with her family in her free time. Her favorite animal is the manatee. Purple and glittery colors are her favorites, too.

Mrs. Tollefson's favorite thing about being a principal is being able to see all of her incredible teachers in action and meeting all of the Myakka families. She loves having 660 students in her care and making an impact on their lives. Mrs. Tollefson enjoys sharing her love of teaching with her teachers and students.

We are so lucky to have Mrs. Tollefson as our principal. She is the BEST!







Mr. Ross  
by Keagan Warner

Mr. Ross is Myakka River Elementary School's Dean of Students. He attended Seattle Pacific University (SPU), where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Special Education K-12. He taught in the state of Washington before coming to Florida. Mr. Ross has taught several grades. He has worked in kindergarten, 3rd grade, 4th grade, and 5th grade. He likes all the grades because he enjoys working with all students.



Mr. Ross has 3 sons, a little dog named Libby, a cat named Lucy, and a bearded dragon named Hank in a Tank. His favorite food is tacos, especially fish tacos. Mint chocolate chip ice cream is his favorite sweet. His hidden talent is that he is a grill master when it comes to BBQs. In his free time, Mr. Ross enjoys spending time with his family, fishing, and camping. The platypus is his favorite animal. His favorite sport is football and he enjoys rooting for the Green Bay Packers. Myakka River Elementary School is special to Mr. Ross because of all the great students that go to this school. We love seeing Mr. Ross around our campus.



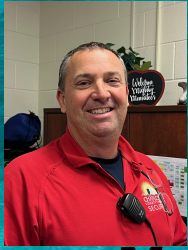


## Mrs. Dobson by Brooklynn Burns

Mrs. Dobson is Myakka River Elementary School's nurse. She has been a nurse for 8 years. Mrs. Dobson went to Charlotte Technical College and Florida Southwestern State College. If she didn't become a nurse, she would have been a chef, baker, or even a teacher. Mrs. Dobson has no pets. Her favorite food is seafood. Some of her favorite things are spending time with her family and friends.

She also enjoys boating, camping, cooking and baking, crafts, volleyball, and pickleball. Wow ... as you can see, Mrs. Dobson is a very busy person, who likes to do fun stuff all the time. Can you guess what her favorite animal is? If you guessed dolphins, you would be correct. Mrs. Dobson's favorite color is light blue and she roots for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Thank you for taking great care of all of us!





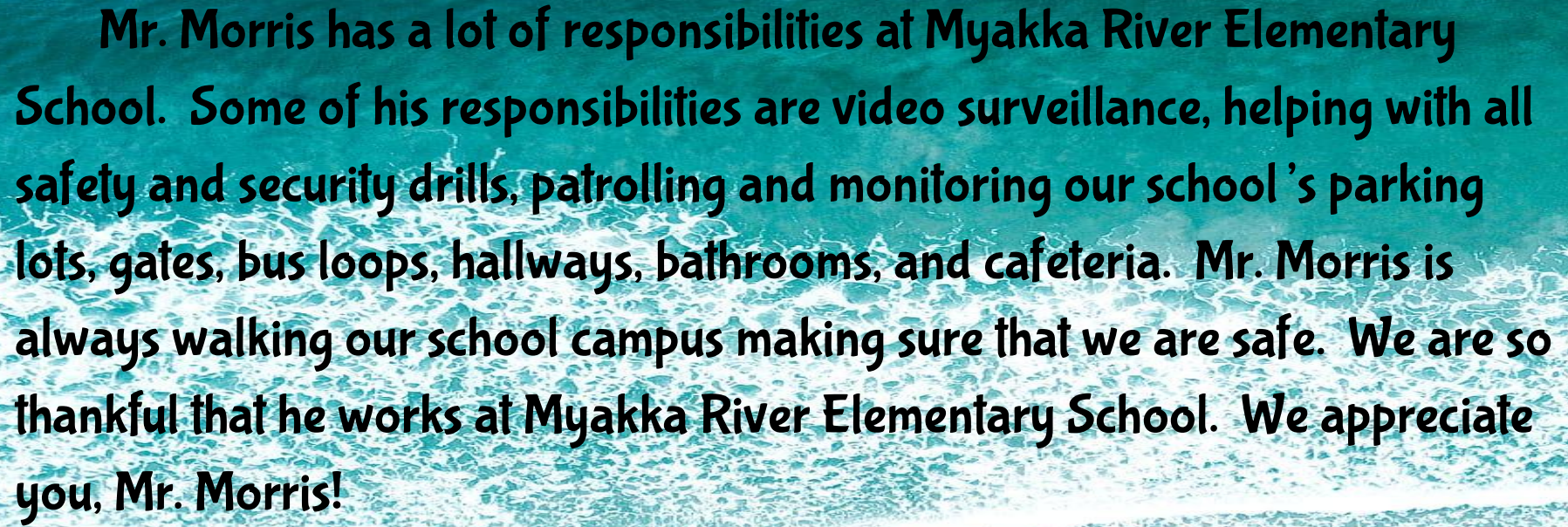
# **Mr. Morris**

## **by Violet Rimby**

**Mr. Morris is Myakka River Elementary School's security guard. He went to Northern Virginia Community College and became a police officer. He served and protected for 28 years before coming to MRES. If Mr. Morris didn't become a police officer, he would have become a landscaper or an Amazon driver.**

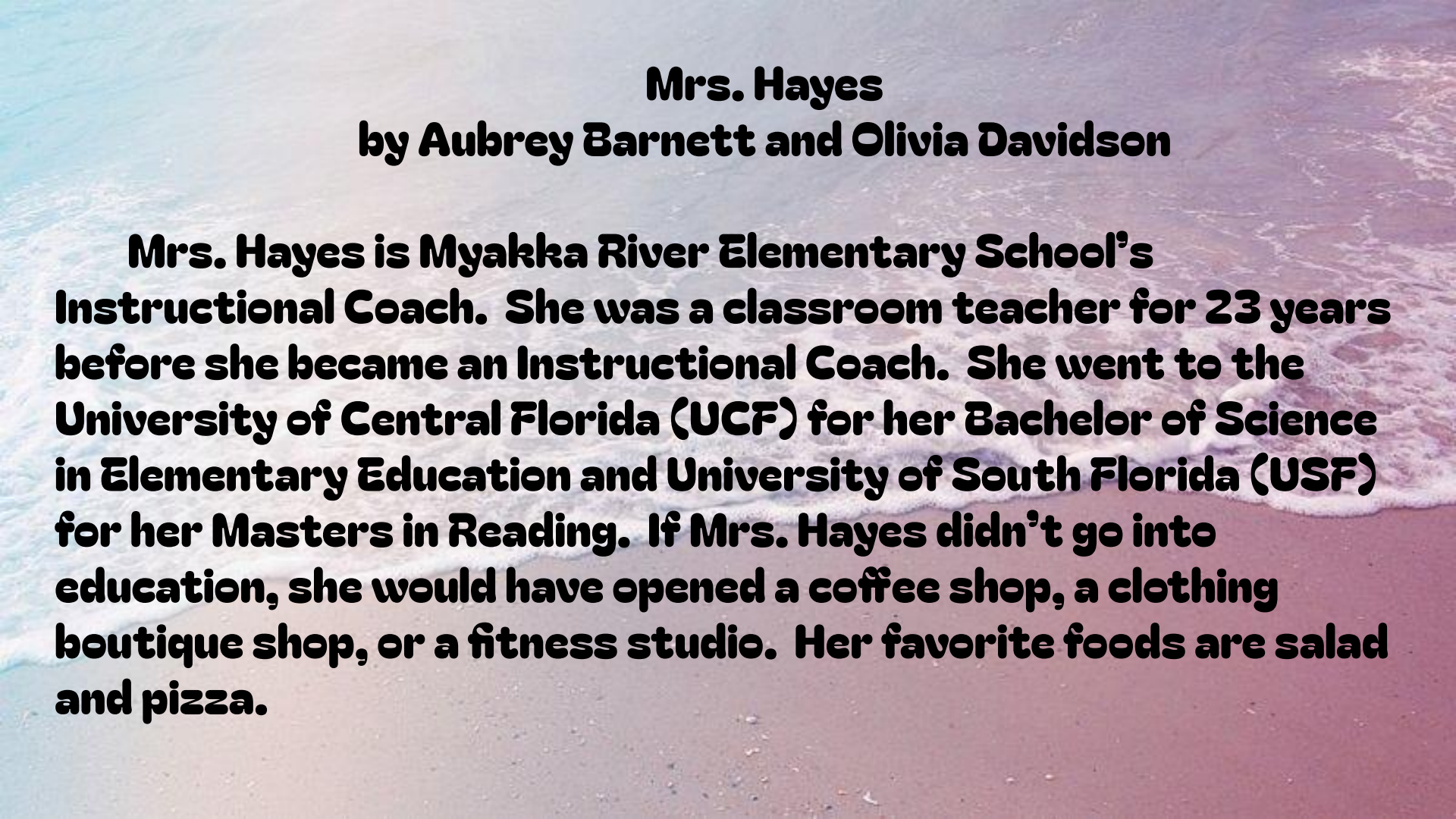
**Some of his favorites are the chicken bowl from Cava and dogs. Can you guess Mr. Morris' hidden talent? If you said playing the drums, you are correct. He enjoys detailing cars and sitting on the beach when he has free time.**





Mr. Morris has a lot of responsibilities at Myakka River Elementary School. Some of his responsibilities are video surveillance, helping with all safety and security drills, patrolling and monitoring our school's parking lots, gates, bus loops, hallways, bathrooms, and cafeteria. Mr. Morris is always walking our school campus making sure that we are safe. We are so thankful that he works at Myakka River Elementary School. We appreciate you, Mr. Morris!





# **Mrs. Hayes**

## **by Aubrey Barnett and Olivia Davidson**

**Mrs. Hayes is Myakka River Elementary School's Instructional Coach. She was a classroom teacher for 23 years before she became an Instructional Coach. She went to the University of Central Florida (UCF) for her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and University of South Florida (USF) for her Masters in Reading. If Mrs. Hayes didn't go into education, she would have opened a coffee shop, a clothing boutique shop, or a fitness studio. Her favorite foods are salad and pizza.**

**One of Mrs. Hayes' hidden talents is baking. In her free time, she likes to go to for a walk on the beach. Dogs are her favorite animals, especially Labrador Retrievers. Mrs. Hayes' favorite color is green. Her favorite part of being an Instructional Coach is that she gets to see all the creative things that the other teachers are doing in their classroom. When she was a teacher, her favorite grade to teach was 3rd grade. Myakka River Elementary School is so special to Mrs. Hayes because of the students, the staff, and working with Coach Hayes. We love having Mrs. Hayes at our school!**



# Officer Wilkes

## by Aubree Hinckle and Cash Mottern



Officer Wilkes has been Myakka River Elementary School's School Resource Officer (SRO) for 3 years. He earned a Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Certification from Southwest Florida Public Service Academy. He also obtained the Andrew Widman Award for having the highest grade point average (GPA) in his class. Officer Wilkes also attended Florida Southwestern State College (FSWC) and received his Criminal Justice Degree. He has been a Charlotte County police officer for 4 years. If Officer Wilkes did not become a police officer, he would have been a computer technician.



Officer Wilkes does not have a pet. His favorite food is hibachi and his favorite animals are koala bears and the fennec fox. His hidden talent is he has been playing the guitar for 28 years. In his free time, Officer Wilkes enjoys playing video games and spending time with his family. Hockey is his favorite sport to watch.

As MRE's SRO, Officer Wilkes' has many responsibilities. For example, he keeps everyone safe, helps the staff and students, watches the gates, and monitors the cameras. He enjoys mentoring and interacting with the students. Thank you for keeping us safe when we are at school. We appreciate you very much!



## **The Winter Concert by Rowyn Smith and Aubrey Barnett**

**The Winter Concert was a blast! The performance started with the Mighty Chorus singing Over the River, A Candle for Peace, I Feel Like Fa La La La, and I Hear Those Jingle Bells. When the Sea Notes took the stage they sang Cookie Crumble Calypso and Melody of the Merry Manatees. While the Sea Notes were singing, there was a drum circle in the middle of the concert. Everyone sounded terrific. At the end, the Mighty Chorus and the Sea Notes sang and played Mele Kalikimaka on the Ukulele.**

**At the end of the performance, Miss Matthews and Mrs. Kennedy were given flowers for their dedication and hard work.**



## Hanukkah Facts

by Savannah Clark and Landon Fitzpatrick

- ★ Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah
- ★ Hanukkah occurs between late November and December ~ the exact dates change every year
- ★ Hanukkah is celebrated for 8 nights and days
- ★ Hanukkah means dedication and is also called The Festival of Lights
- ★ Hanukkah can be spelled many different ways ~ Chanukah, Chanukkah, Hanukah, and Hanukkah
- ★ About 17,500,000,000 (17.5 billion) oily doughnuts are eaten during Hanukkah

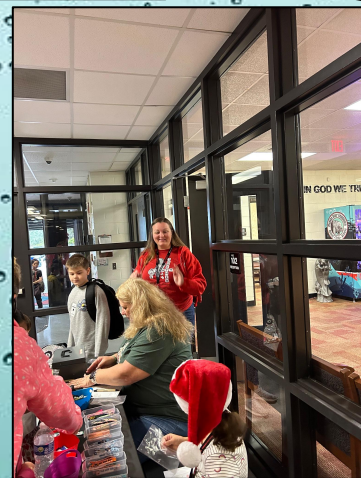


- ★ Hanukkah colors are blue and white ... the colors represent the Israeli flag
- ★ Gift giving is a common tradition
- ★ The menorah symbolizes the miracle of the oil lasting 8 days
- ★ Families light the menorah together each night
- ★ The world's largest menorah is in New York Central Park and it is 26 feet tall
- ★ Menorahs come in all shapes and sizes
- ★ Gelt, chocolate coins, and jelly-filled doughnuts are a popular treat
- ★ The six-pointed star called "The Star of David" is a symbol of Jewish people





# Spirit Sticks







Spirit Sticks



# Dads' Circle



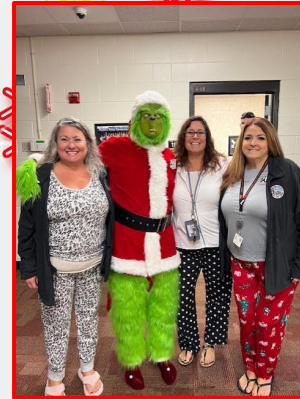


# The Grinch Visits Myakka

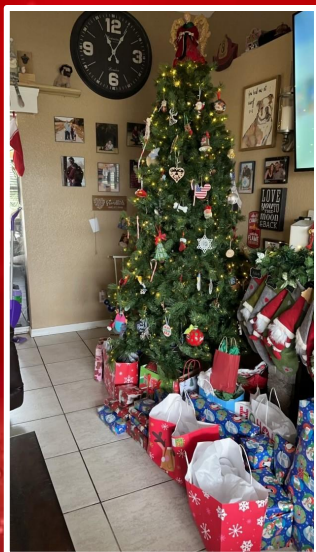




# The Grinch Visits Myakka





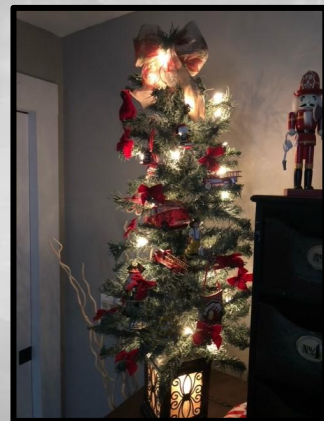
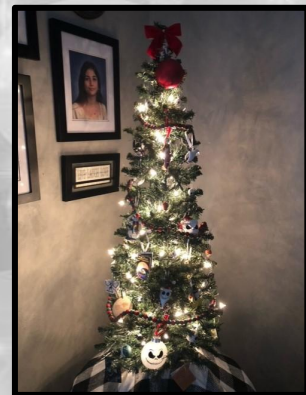
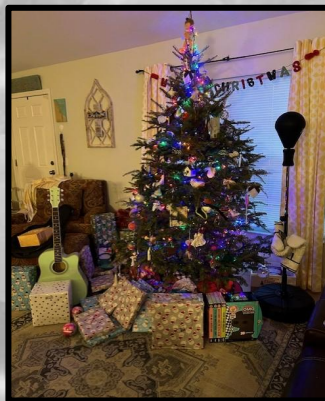


## Staff Christmas Trees





# Staff Christmas Trees





# Staff Christmas Trees





The background of the entire image is a light gray color, densely decorated with various white snowflake patterns. These patterns include simple six-pointed stars, more complex dendritic shapes, and circular motifs with radiating lines. The snowflakes are scattered across the entire frame, creating a wintry, textured background.

# **How are Snowflakes Made?**

## **by Cash Mottern**

**When a very cold droplet of cold water freezes around a speck of dust, a snowflake is created. When this happens a tiny ice crystal is formed. As the tiny ice crystal travels through the clouds, water vapor freezes to it and creates a snowflake. When the snowflake becomes very heavy, it falls to the earth.**

# **Snowflake Facts**

- Every snowflake is a hexagon (6 sides)**
- Every snowflake is different**
- Snowflakes fall between 1-4 m.p.h.**
- Snowflakes can be as big as 15 inches in diameter and 8 inches thick.**
- There are 8 different types of snowflakes.**

# 2024 New Year's Resolutions in Mrs. Porter's Kindergarten Classroom







## **My New Year's Resolution is to...**

- Eat healthier foods, more fruits and vegetables, and cut back on junk food (Mrs. Burrell)**
- Drink more water and start reading more (Mrs. Burge)**
- Ride my bike more, spend time with my grandbabies, and to travel to new places (Mrs. Dillmore)**
- Continue my work to be healthier and to stay positive always (Mrs. Beno)**





**My New Year's Resolution is to...**

**→ Make healthier choices and read more books (Mrs. Crane)**

**→ Drink more water (Mrs. Ramsey)**

**→ Cultivate a mindset of gratitude, finding joy in small moments and appreciating the beauty in everyday life. I aspire to strengthen connections with friends and family by spending quality time together and creating lasting memories (Mrs. Barnett)**





## **My New Year's Resolution is to...**

- Be the best that I can be every day (Ms. Humphreys)**
- Explore more of our Sunshine State ... to travel and see more of Florida (Mrs. St. Clair)**
- Focus on my health, eat better, and achieve all of my health goals for the year (Mrs. Cumberbatch)**
- Take my dogs on a walk every night (Ms. Knapp)**







## **My New Year's Resolution is to...**

- Take more time to appreciate the simple joys in life ... sunsets, walks, and a great cup of coffee (Mrs. Hayes)**
- Go to bed earlier, exercise daily, cut out junk food and get to the beach as much as possible (Mrs. Shakan)**
- Read more books (Mrs. Hickman)**





## What is Kwanzaa?

by Brooklynn Burns and Savannah Clark

Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26-January 1. Family and friends will give thanks, share feasts, and exchange gifts. They also celebrate African and African American culture.

The Kwanzaa candles have meanings too. The one black candle stands for unity. The three green candles represent the future. The final three red candles represent the struggle out of slavery.

# What is the Order of the Candles for Kwanzaa?

by Savannah Clark and Brooklynn Burns

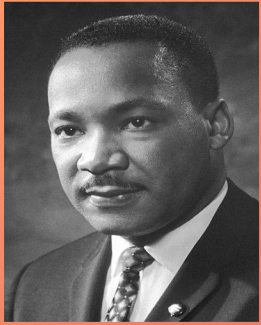
The candles are put in a kinara. A kinara is a candle holder with seven branches. The colors of the candles are important. The red candles on the left represent the past and the green candles on the right represent the future. Here's how the candles are lit each night.

- The black candle in the middle gets lit first and it means unity.
- The order of the candles goes back and forth so the second candle is red and it stands for self-determination.



- The third candle is green and it means collective work and responsibility.
- The fourth candle means cooperative economics and it is red.
- The fifth candle is green and it means purpose.
- The sixth candle means creativity and it is red.
- The seventh and last candle is green and it represents faith.





# Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by Violet Rimby



Martin Luther King Jr. Day is always celebrated on the third Monday in January. On this federal holiday, we honor the life of the Great Civil Rights Leader, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. On this day, we celebrate his life and legacy. Many Americans take time on this day to volunteer at shelters or community organizations to show honor to this amazing man.



## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia.
- At age 13, one of his first jobs was delivering papers. He was the youngest assistant manager for the Atlanta Journal delivery station.
- Dr. King skipped his senior year of high school and started college when he was only 15 years old.

## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- In the early 1950s, Dr. King met Coretta and they married in 1953.
- MLK was a Star Trek fan! His children were only allowed to stay up late to watch this show.
- He was inspired by Rosa Parks, when she refused to give up her seat on a bus and organized a boycott of the city buses.



## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- MLK delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech at the ‘March on Washington’ in front of more than 250,000 people.
- His "I Have a Dream" speech has become one of the most famous speeches in history.
- There are over 730 streets in the United States named after Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Fun Facts about Groundhog's Day by Aubree Hinckle



- Groundhog Day is when people look to the groundhog to predict the weather for the next six weeks.
- On February 2nd, the groundhog wakes up from hibernation.
- The most famous groundhog on Groundhog Day is Punxsutawney Phil. Phil lives in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.





- Punxsutawney Phil is the official groundhog forecaster on February 2nd.
- If Phil sees his shadow when he emerges from his burrow (a hole or tunnel dug by a small animal), there will be six more weeks of winter.
- If Phil does not see his shadow, spring will arrive soon.
- Some other famous groundhogs are: Chattanooga Chuck, Essex Ed, Sir Walter Wally, and General Beauregard Lee.





**This just in ...**

**Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow on Friday, February 2nd at Gobbler's Knob in Pennsylvania. When he does not see his shadow it means that he is predicting that we will have an early spring.**



## 10 Fun Facts about Valentine's Day by Cash Mottern

- ★ 145,000,000 cards are exchanged
- ★ 25% of pet owners give their pets gifts
- ★ Candy is the most popular gift
- ★ Teachers get more Valentine's Day gifts than anyone else
- ★ 250,000,000 roses are sold on Valentine's Day



# **SUPER BOWL LVIII**

## **by Landon Fitzpatrick**

**Super Bowl LVIII was played at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. The Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers played against each other. Brock Purdy completed 23 of 38 passes for a total of 255 yards. Patrick Mahomes led the Kansas City Chiefs to a 25-22 victory in OT (overtime). The game was exciting and fun to watch.**





# What is Daylight Savings Time?

by Keagan Warner

Daylight Savings Time is when we move the clocks ahead 1 hour in the spring so we have more light at night. In the fall, we move the clocks back 1 hour so we have more daylight during the mornings in the winter.

**SPRING FORWARD**  
**SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH**



**WINK**  
NEWS