



THE HAWKS' NEST

Volume I, Issue 2

DECEMBER 2024



Photo credit: Al Frey

Stars from this fall's CVU musical *Footloose*. From left to right: **Hannah Stein '25** (as Urleen), **Vivian Volzer '25** (as Wendy Jo), **Stephanie Miskavage '26** (as Rusty) and **Molly Silvia '26** (as Ariel).

Highlights From the Footloose Musical

Mikaela Montoya & Grace Warrington
Contributing writer/Editor-in-chief

This year's fall performance at Champlain Valley Union High School Performing Arts was a rendition of the 1980's hit movie *Footloose*. High school teen Ren McCormack, played by lead **Kieran Coolidge '27**, moves to the small rural town of Bomont, Oklahoma with his mother due to their financial hardships in the big city of Chicago.

As Ren learns about the town of Bomont, he discovers his unpopularity in a place where music and dancing are banned, and expression is limited amongst the youth by a coalition led by the town's Reverend Shaw Moore, played by **Nate McNabb '25**.

Ren's love interest and the Reverend's daughter Ariel Moore, played by **Molly Silvia '26**, accompanied by a few close friends, works with Ren to make a change and bring back music and dancing to Bomont.

This epic 1980's hit musical was brought to life by the talented CVU Performing Arts cast and crew as audiences laughed, cheered, and even teared up.

With the right balance of highs and lows, accompanied by refreshing musical tones and a gorgeous set, many walked away feeling nothing short of alive. Hard work and

Continued on page 4

CVU's Mural: Time For A Replacement?

Willow Martin
Staff Writer

The American flag mural in CVU's main floor hallway has become the focus of renewed discussion about representation and school identity. Created in 1992, the mural depicts an American flag with inspirational quotes on it, reflecting the student's perspective on the "American dream."

"It seems like this giant thing now, but really it was one person's project," explains **Peter Langella**, faculty advisor for the Racial Alliance Committee (RAC). "A student who was here as an exchange student from Sweden decided that for their Grad Challenge project, they would learn about America... and created this flag mural with all those quotes representing what they learned during their time here."

After at least two decades of being on display, the mural faces two main challenges: "Many of the quotes are unreadable, fading to the point where you can't even read what they [say]," Langella noted. "But the more meaningful concern is that students feel many of the quotes create an image that doesn't represent them."

In response, Langella shared that the RAC developed a proposal two years ago that secured a \$1,000 grant for renovation. The initial plan envisioned a collaborative design maintaining the American flag while incorporating elements from different clubs at CVU.

"The idea was to have ribbons on the bottom

Continued on page 2



Sports

Find out about the Championship Round Up on page 6.



Arts

See pages 4 and 5 for arts events.



Holidays

Learn more about the holiday season on pages 7 and 8.

CVU's Mural

Continued from page 1

designed by different clubs - like the Environmental Action Club, The Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA), Social Justice Alliance, Amnesty International, and others - all forming up high on the wall and holding up the American flag,” Langella explained.

“The American flag is obviously a contested thing, not everyone feels like it represents them, but this way we could say what it means to us,” Langella relayed.

Though the previous initiative stalled, current RAC members are reviving the effort.

The committee plans to distribute a school-wide survey seeking input on the mural’s future.

“We want to get feedback about whether the current mural reflects student values and whether a new mural should still be centered on the U.S flag or feature other symbols more prominently,” Mr. Langella said.

Following the survey, RAC hopes to launch a design contest open to the student body. The winning design would be chosen

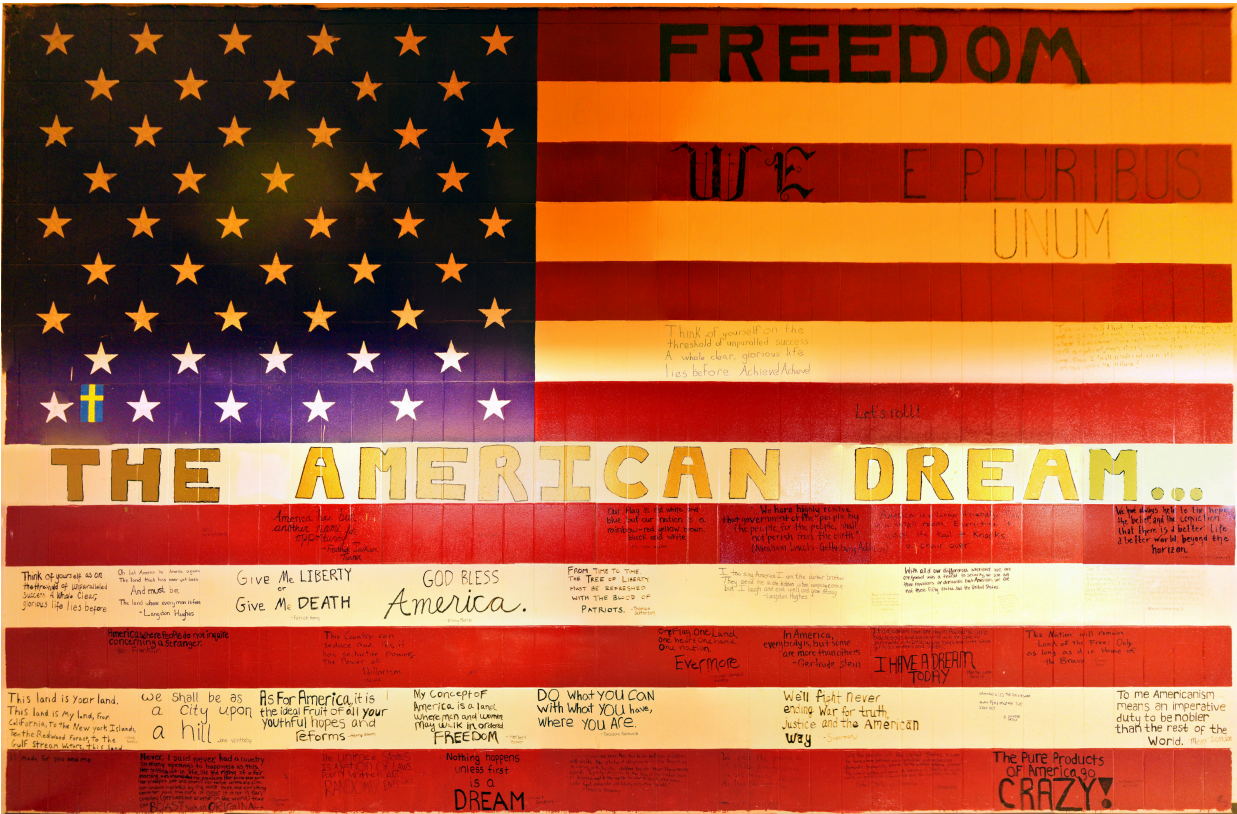


Photo credit and composite: Greg Warrington
Mural of the American flag that current resides in the CVU main hallway, circa 1992.

through a school-wide vote, ensuring the new mural reflects CVU’s community’s values and perspectives.

As described by the Burlington Free Press in an article from February 12, 2020: "RAC is a student club centered on building awareness around race at Champlain Valley Union High

School." This initiative is a representation of RAC's mission.

Featured Club: Swing, Salsa, and Ballroom

Karmen Wilbur
Managing Editor

Have you ever dreamt of dancing the night away to great music? At the Swing, Salsa, and Ballroom club you can. The club is led by CVU's band teacher **Andrew Miskavage**. Miskavage teaches students how to dance and/or how to expand upon pre-existing skills. Miskavage himself has been dancing since 1994 when he saw a poster for ballroom dancing and decided to try it.

Miskavage shared “dancing is a fun way to interact with new people in a low stakes environment.”

To share his art, he has held a C3 club for dancing on and off for a few years. There was also an afterschool program featuring dance at one point. Nowadays, the C3 is hosted in room 160 where Miskavage begins

with demonstrating a new step or skill. He often lets the students decide the dance, with swing being a favorite. After practicing, he turns on some music for people to dance to, switching up partners as the song plays.

Students said they enjoy meeting new people and discovering new music.

As **Nahomy Chavarria ‘26** said, “I like the way we dance and the songs are really good. You have to have a connection with the person you are dancing with.” Connecting with people is a huge part of both dancing and the club.

Abigail Usher ‘25, who attended the club two years ago and now goes again, said “I love the environment and how we as a group can be vulnerable with each other.”

Learning skills that you enjoy and can use for your whole life is important. We are lucky to have the opportunity to explore it during our school day.

The Hawks' Nest

The student-run newspaper of Champlain Valley Union High School

Published monthly during the academic year

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Upcoming Habitat for Humanity Trip

Fiona Carpenter
Staff Writer

This month, the Nest interviewed **Carol Fox**, who leads the yearly trip for Habitat for Humanity. The Habitat for Humanity program at CVU has been going for sixteen years now, and this year’s trip is to Winston-Salem, North Carolina (NC) in April. This work is especially important this year due to floods throughout the state earlier this fall. The interview was edited for brevity.

HN: Why should students take the program?

CF: There are a number of reasons why anyone would want to go on this trip. I think one of the most important is that you get so much out of it in helping other communities. When students travel to NC, they’re not really sure what to expect when they get there. They know that they’ll be working on homes to help people who are trying to get ahead, who can’t afford to go out and buy a house strictly on their own, but they really don’t know what they’re getting into. Once they’re there and having conversations with

the people who are going to be on site with them– the construction managers and the people who will be training them –and they start doing the work they really get a feel for just how much they are helping these families. It’s so rewarding at the end of the day you feel like ‘Wow, I really made a difference in someone’s life.’

HN: I understand there is a D.C. stop over. What goes on while you’re in D.C.?

CF: I’ve made arrangements with a hotel and students are assigned a room and then we have the evening to explore and get dinner. The whole next day is what anyone wants to do so as long as there’s two or more students in a group they can go off on their own.

HN: What’s your favorite part?

CF: I just love to travel and meeting the students and get[ting] to know them. I love visiting Washington D.C. and every time I learn something new. There are also events going on in D.C. while we are there. I love working with the people in NC.

HN: Do you still have any openings?



Photo credit: Carol Fox
Carol Fox in Washington, D.C. during a prior Habitat for Humanity trip

CF: We do have openings so right now [as of this writing]. We’re about half of the number of students we need to bring on the trip to make it affordable [for everyone]. [As a note, there is a capacity of twenty students. Trip-goers must be sixteen or older by April 21st, 2025 to attend].

For more information on this trip or how to join, email Fox at cfox@cvsdvt.org.

Grace Warrington
Editor-in-chief

Crossword

Answers page 4

Across

- 1. Cowboys' home
- 7. Civil rights org.
- 11. Bird whose name comes from the Latin "aureolus," for "golden"
- 12. SAT test ____
- 13. Radio station identifiers
- 15. Sneaky
- 16. Famous Vermonter, ____ Allen
- 17. Singer-songwriter DiFranco
- 18. Per the previous discussion
- 20. Horse home
- 23. Quaint contraction

- 24. Competitor of Qdoba and Moe's
- 26. Hockey great Bobby
- 27. "Her" pronoun partner
- 28. Bing brand
- 31. Took a foolish risk
- 34. Deep blue-green color
- 35. "Oh, indeed"
- 36. US Gov. IDs
- 37. Goes into

Down

- 1. ER people
- 2. Asian sea that has mostly dried up
- 3. Harry Potter's mother
- 4. "Funny" text?

- 5. "There's no hope left!"
- 6. Oracles
- 7. Appropriate
- 8. Come up with
- 9. George ____, inventor of Mr. Potato Head
- 10. Silver lining
- 14. Ratted out to mom or dad
- 18. The Matterhorn, for example
- 19. Sense of wonder

- 20. Big name in lawn products
- 21. Basketball long shots
- 22. Barnstormer, e.g.

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13						14				
15				16				17		
			18				19			
20	21	22				23				
24					25					
26				27				28	29	30
31			32				33			
34					35					
36					37					

- 25. Nancy Sinatra song "____ Boots Are Made For Walkin'"
- 28. Australian pal
- 29. Recipe directive
- 30. Loch where a relative of Champ lives
- 32. Precursor to "thx"
- 33. In good shape

Arts



Photo credit: Al Frey
The finale from *Footloose*.

Footloose Musical

Continued from page 1

a dedication to the craft was a mark of this brilliant production.

Directed and co-choreographed by **Elisa Van Duyne**, the play had four performances across the weekend of November 15-17: Three evening shows and one matinee. Our very own *CVU Show* interviewed her about this year’s performance, and she shared some of her impressive credentials. “I’ve been singing, dancing, and acting since I was very small. I went to the Boston Conservatory and got my BFA in musical



Photo credit: Al Frey
Molly Silvia '26 and **Kieran Coolidge '27** perform as the two leads, Ariel and Ren.

theater and then went on to do regional theater. [I did] National tours, a European tour and Broadway. I did 42nd street *The Beauty and the Beast* on Broadway and other shows and then I transitioned into being a teacher of Theater Arts, mostly musical theater.” We’re all very excited to have her here and thank her for the excellent play direction, as well as to **Cameron Brownell** for his music direction, **Andrew Miskavage** for band direction, **Nicola Boutin** for her help with the choreography, and **Jamie Stillman** for sound.

The musical isn’t all song and dance, though. Van Duyne remarks on how “...it contains a lot of material that's pretty gritty. **Marin [Walsh, '26]** plays the mother, Vi. Her husband is the Reverend [played by **Nate McNabb**] and they have a very tense relationship because of a tragic experience that happened previous to the musical starting and their relationship is kind of on the rocks as well as [their relationship] with their daughter. [The musical] deals with ... some issues of domestic violence and issues of how we repair from loss [as well as] how as parents we can try to protect our kids but not hinder their freedom of expression. ... The students are doing a marvelous job of embracing this really challenging material as well as the fluff.”

This production could not have occurred

without the immense support of faculty, staff, and parental volunteers. We thank the production team and pit crew for their work behind the scenes.

The closeness of the theater community and the friendships made despite the chaos were a common sentiment. Silvia, who played the lead role of Ariel, said that “My favorite part of the production was getting to play opposite my best friends.”

Raven Dudek '25 stated that “being able to just have fun and crack jokes with each other really makes theater worth it. I have made so many friends and memories I’ll never forget just from being a part of these productions. There’s so, so many great people [who are] a part of CVU theater, and they all leave an imprint on you.”

“You also become closer with others towards the end of the play, especially if

Continued on page 5



Photo credit: Juniper Wildey
Nate McNabb '25 and **Marin Walsh '26** perform as Reverend Moore and Vi Moore, respectively.

Answers from Crossword

From page 3

S	R	E	T	N	E		S	N	S	S	
S	I	T	I	O	S		A	L	E	T	
E	T	A	F	D	E	T	P	M	E	T	
N	S	M		E	H	S		R	R	O	
			E	L	T	O	P	I	H	C	
E	R	E	W			L	L	A	T		
D	E	T	A		S	S	A				
I	N	A		A	R	I		Y	L	S	
S	R	E	T	T	L	L	L	A	L	C	
P	E	R	P	E	L	O	I	R	O		
U	L	C	A		S	A	L	L	A		

Arts

Footloose Musical

Continued from page 4

you're a senior since it's likely your last show. Another part of the production I enjoy the most is the cast parties. If you know, you know," shared **Autumn Miller '25**.

After months of preparing, CVU theater performances all culminate in Tech Week, which consists of frenzied last-minute costume changes and dress rehearsals that leave everyone with very little free time. **Charlie Adams '28** of the lighting and sound crew said of Tech Week: "There is a reason they call Tech Week, 'Hell Week.' It's not fun staying at school until eight every day, but it's worth it in the end."

Miller wrote that “my favorite part of the production has to be Tech Week and the shows. Even though it's hectic and the eating schedule gets thrown off, the most memorable moments always happen during that time.”

Summarizing the experience of being in the musical, **Theo Novak '28**, who played the role of Garvin this year, commented that “Being in Footloose was an amazing experience! I got to meet so many fabulous, talented, funny, hard working people! I am so grateful I got to work with them."



Photo credit: Juniper Wildey
The cast of the musical Footloose, based on the 1984 film. The cast held four performances from Nov. 15-17.

Submissions for New Advice Column

'Dear Amber'

Submitters seeking advice can receive some from CVU’s secret student ‘Amber’
All names will be changed for privacy, please drop in the box at the front desk.

Nothing inappropriate please
Submissions may be edited

Photo Club Contest Winners

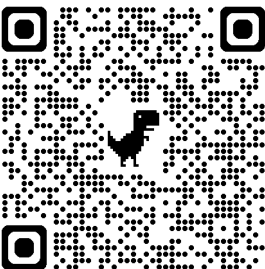
CVU's Photo Club holds contests based on themes and categories throughout the year. The three winning photos for the most recent Photo Club Contest were based on the themes and categories of 'Fire' and

'Candid'. The winners were, clockwise from top, **Sarah Thant** with her entry for 'Fire,' *Deconstructed Cheesecake*, **Maxwell Olinsky-Paul '25** with his entry for 'Candid,' *Woman in Blue*, and **Brian Simkins '25** with his entry for 'Fire,' *That's Fire*.

New Photo Contest

The Photo Club's next contest themes are 'Night', 'Animals,' and 'Abandoned Places.' The deadline for submissions is December 17th.

Submit a photo:



Vote for your favorite:



Cordelia Thomas
Sports Editor

Sports

Fall Sports Championship Round Up

Girls Cross Country

The CVU girls cross country team is not only the best in Vermont, they are the best in New England! On Saturday, November 9th, the girls won the New England Championship for the second year in a row.



Photo credit: CVU Athletics
CVU Girls Varsity Cross Country at the New England Championships

The Hawks had four runners finish in the top 40, including **Lydia Donahue '26**, **Audrey Neilson '26**, **Charlotte Crum '26**, and **Alice Kredell '25**. **Livi Neilson '28** and **Justyna Amblo '27** complete the team's roster.

Leading up to the regional win, this team secured its third state championship victory in a row this past month.

This was the program's eighth New England win in history. As the winners of the New England Championship, the team will next compete at Nationals in Portland, Oregon on Saturday, Dec. 7. This trip is the team's fourth time in program history attending Nationals.

Football

After an undefeated season, the Hawks earned their second state championship in three years. The winning game started out closer than usual, with CVU being ahead by just one touchdown in the first quarter. The Hawks pulled ahead in the second half with touchdowns from **Nolan Walpole '25**, **Jacob Armstrong '25**, and **Dylan Frere '25** from quarterback **Orion Yates '27**. The defense shut down Rutland in the second half with an interception from **Chase Leonard '25**. The final score was 41-14. This senior-heavy team had their minds set on a state win after a semi-final loss last season.

Coach **Rahn Fleming** is quoted saying, "They've brought a culture of both the pursuit of excellence and of caring for one another. They've expressed that culture by showing up in every way we've asked of them. They've given themselves to building a championship experience."

Golf

Boys and girls golf teams dominated their seasons and brought home two more banners for the CVU gym. The boys defeated Rutland in the team competition by just one stroke, helped along by **Cooper Guerriere '26's** score of 74. This was the team's first victory since 2020, and they set a new record for the highest top score with a combined 335. The girls team earned its second consecutive team championship propelled by **Ryan Sleeper '25's** 88 and **Stella Rakochy '26's** 93, defeating runner up Burr and Burton by just 7 strokes.

Soccer



Photo credit: Paul Lamontagne
CVU Girls Varsity Soccer State Championship win
CVU's girls and boys soccer teams made history by tying each other for the most championships in state history (21). The boys secured a 3-0 victory over Colchester, winning the championship for the second year in a row. The Hawks went into the final game with a nine-game winning streak. Within the first twenty minutes, **George Charleston '25** put the ball in the net. With one minute left in the first half, CVU earned a penalty kick, and **Miles Bergeson '25** buried it giving the Hawks a 2-0 lead going into half-time. **Mason Barren '26** scored in the second half securing the win for the Hawks. The girls' final game was against number 10 seed, South Burlington. After 30 minutes of stalemate, the Hawks' **Rieanna Murray '25** scored, and later in the second half **Kate Roberts '25** put another one in. This is CVU girls soccer's second title win in three years. Coach **Stan Williams** said, "This group is just so special. It's really a unique blend of kids who from day one knew that the sum of our parts were greater."



Photo credit: CVU Athletics
CVU Varsity Football's State Championship win



Photo credit: Paul Lamontagne
Ethan Revoir '26 during the CVU Boys Varsity Soccer State Championships



Christmas Traditions Around the World

Sophie Wedereit
Staff Writer



As the holiday season approaches, many look forward to the traditions that make the season special. While some customs may seem universal, each country has its unique way of celebrating this festive time. Christmas traditions vary across nationalities represented by the CVU community. These descriptions are an informal compilation of voices across CVU.

In the USA, Christmas is a vibrant blend of cultural influences. Kicking off with Thanksgiving, the holiday season is a month filled with festive decorations and shopping. Many families adorn Christmas trees with lights and ornaments. Santa Claus plays a central role in American celebration. On December 25th, families gather for a hearty meal that often includes turkey or ham, along with traditional sides like mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce. Gift giving is a significant part of the celebration, with presents exchanged on Christmas morning.

Following the Orthodox Christian calendar, Ukraine's Christmas is celebrated on January 7th. The season begins with a period of fasting leading up to Christmas Eve, known as *Sviat Vechir* (Holy Evening). Families prepare a meal consisting of twelve meatless dishes representing the twelve apostles.

One traditional dish is *kutia*, a sweet grain pudding made with wheat berries, honey, and poppy seeds. After dinner, families attend church services to celebrate Christ's birth. Families set a place at the table for deceased family members as a sign of remembrance.

Well-known for its rich holiday traditions, Germany's Advent season begins four weeks before Christmas and is marked by candle lighting on an Advent wreath and the opening of doors on an Advent calendar. During *Weihnachtsmarkt* (Christmas market), people gather to enjoy festive foods like bratwurst and gingerbread while shopping for handmade gifts. On December 6th, children celebrate St. Nicholas Day by placing their shoes outside for St. Nicholas to fill with treats. On Christmas Eve, families share a meal and exchange gifts.

In Hungary, Christmas is celebrated on *Szenteste* (Holy Evening; December 24). Families may fast and then enjoy a lavish dinner featuring fish soup, stuffed cabbage, and *bejgli* (a sweet pastry filled with poppy seeds or walnuts). After dinner, they decorate their Christmas tree and exchange gifts at midnight. *Jézuska* (Baby Jesus) brings presents instead of Santa Claus. Traditional carols are sung throughout the season.

Beginning December 8th with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Spain's traditions fill the month. On December 25th, families gather for a meal of seafood and

dishes like *turrón* (nougat with almonds). On the Epiphany (January 6; *Día de los Reyes*; Three Kings' Day), children receive gifts from the Three Wise Men. Families enjoy a special cake called *Roscón de Reyes*. Parades with the Three Kings occur in many cities.

In Mexico, celebrations begin on December 16th with *Las Posadas*, a nine-day reenactment of Mary and Joseph's search for shelter. Each night, families gather to sing carols and visit homes in their community. The culmination occurs on *Nochebuena* (Christmas Eve), where families come together for a late-night feast that includes tamales, *bacalao* (salted cod), and *ponche* (warm fruit punch). Many attend midnight Mass. On Christmas Day, families celebrate with more festivities, including piñatas.

From German Advent wreaths to Mexican *Las Posadas* and Ukrainian *Sviat Vechir*, each country brings its own flavor to this beloved holiday. Themes of togetherness, generosity, and joy are found throughout.

So, whether you're hanging stockings by the fireplace, observing the Epiphany, or not celebrating, this is a magical time—one that can connect us all through love, hope, and joy. Happy holidays!

Op-Ed: Hallmark - True Holiday Spirit?

Lily Gruber
Managing Editor

You're in a small town, visiting your parents for the holidays. You haven't been back in years, or, maybe, you just got a new job promotion in the city. You're alone for the holidays, or, perhaps, you have a boyfriend, working in finance. Your boyfriend surprises you with a visit, but only after you rekindle an old flame, or meet a handsome Christmas tree farmer.

This is the scene set for the majority of Hallmark movies. Beginning in the 1950s as a branch of the Hallmark card industry,

Hallmark Holiday films have become a popular seasonal tradition. This company produces as many as forty holiday films each year. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, 'hallmark' is defined as "a mark stamped on articles of gold, silver, or platinum in Britain, certifying their standard of purity."

This is what Hallmark Holiday films aim to embody: a distinct, wholesome environment—or a pure, formulaic movie. These story lines, devoid of real conflict, end with perfection.

While these holiday movies aim to be heartwarming and harmless, their lack of diversity is notable.

This year, the channel features only one LGBTQ+ couple out of roughly forty films. In 2023, six couples of color were shown on screen out of 42 "festive movies."

According to reports on a 2018 Vancouver production site, biracial couples were avoided due to backlash from "unwritten rules that

Continued on page 8

Holidays around the world

Editorial Board

This season brings many celebrations of faith, tradition, family, and fun. A selection of widespread holidays are described in this issue of *The Hawks' Nest*. According to a Religious Landscape Study conducted by the Pew Foundation, 54% of Vermont is Christian, 8% of the state holds Non-Christian Faiths such as Judaism (2%), Buddhist (1%), Hindu (1%) and Muslim (<1%). The remaining are listed as unaffiliated. Accordingly, the Editorial Board is featuring the celebrations of the two most common faiths found in Vermont: Christianity (Christmas) and Judaism (Hanukkah). For more information, see page 7 for Christmases around the world and page 8 for Hanukkah celebrations.

Hanukkah Celebrations

Grace Warrington
Editor-in-chief

Hanukkah, also variously transliterated as ‘Chanukah’ or ‘Hanukah,’ is the Jewish festival of lights, celebrated over eight days in November or December. The name ‘Hanukkah’ means “dedication” in Hebrew, and refers to the recovery of the city of Jerusalem and the dedication of the city’s Second Temple, a symbol of Jewish identity.

CVU's Anti-Semitism Awareness Club (ASAC) focuses on the importance of CVU's Jewish community. Club members talked with The Nest about the history and the relevance of Hanukkah in the modern world. **Sage Peterson '25**, a club founding member, said, “we started the club because people didn’t know a lot about Judaism and Hanukkah and Jewish traditions, so we tried to incorporate a little bit of everything.”

Hanukkah is celebrated with the lighting of a nine-branched candelabrum called the menorah. The central candle of the menorah is used to light the other eight. As Peterson said, a vial of holy oil used originally was

“supposed to be enough to last for one night, but it ended up lasting for eight.”

Hanukkah is a warm holiday tradition that brings families together. **Charlotte Ziter '25**, another member of the club, shared, “it means being with family and eating good food and tradition.” According to Peterson, “We always sing a blessing; I always light the candles” and “we normally have a Hanukkah party every year with latkes and matzo ball soup. We play dreidel (a four-sided top).” Ziter added that they also have chocolate candy coins and decorate around the house.

Students commented on the importance of carrying on these traditions through the generations. Ziter said, “I think it’s important to practice traditions, because it’s a primarily Christian country. There isn’t as much light shed on Jewish tradition.” Peterson added, “we’ll include the traditions we practice to our children and families in the future. We can still keep it going.”

Op-Ed: Hallmark Films

Continued from page 7

must be followed in order to sell content to certain companies,” as stated by John Hua of Global News. Additionally, Hallmark fails to show a balanced selection of holidays, relying heavily on Christmas.

Featuring primarily white, heterosexual, Christian couples creates a lack of relatability, and it seems dated and unnecessary.

As most can relate to the feeling of holiday comfort on some level, and enjoy the occasional, or frequent, simple rom-com, why should only some be able to see themselves on screen? After all... films were created in order to spread warmth throughout the holidays.

Krampus

Fiona Carpenter
Staff writer

Dear child listen good
For if you are not good
And on the Eve of twenty-five
You are not hidden well
He shall come for your soul
With a foul smell
And the sound of chains
With hooves stamping twain
For 'tis *Krampusnacht*
And all who bad conduct
Shall whine no more.

The comic to the right was created by Fiona Carpenter and Lily Gruber.

December Holidays

St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 5 - 6) - This day celebrates Saint Nicholas, the inspiration for Santa Claus. Children put out a shoe on December 5th hoping for a treat the following morning.

Bodhi Day (Dec. 8) - On this day, Sakyamuni Buddha achieved enlightenment (awakened intellect).

Feast of Our Lady Guadalupe (Dec. 12) -A Catholic holiday celebrating the Virgin Mary's appearance before Juan Diego in 1531 in Mexico.

Hanukkah (Dec. 18-26) - See left.

Yule - (Dec. 21 - Jan. 1) - This celebration of Winter Solstice dates back thousands of years, originating in Scandinavia.

Christmas (Dec. 25) - See page 7.

Boxing Day (Dec. 26) - In the United Kingdom, this tradition originated as a day to donate to charitable organizations.

Kwanzaa (Dec. 26 - Jan. 1) - Derived from *matunda ya kwanza* (first fruits), this holiday celebrates African-American culture.

New Year's Eve (Dec. 31) - This day commemorates the passage of 2024 and rings in the new year.

