

Jesus' Birth in Bethlehem . . . Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all ^{the} inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is ^{the} Christ the Lord. "This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men ^{with whom He is pleased."} Luke 2:1-14

The MISSION STATEMENT of HERITAGE SCHOOL

Heritage School provides a distinctive classical Christ-centered education that prepares students for servant leadership and lives that glorify God.

NO CHAPEL: CASUAL DRESS FRIDAY! NORMAL RULES!



HEADlines

by Steve Marshall

"O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree"....

As I youngster growing up in England, Christmas was always a special family time filled with magic, music and traditions. My favorite tradition and memory has always been (and continues to be) the Christmas tree. Coming down the stairs, the twinkling glow of the tree lights, the colorful shadows dancing across the floors and walls just made me happy. As I have grown older I continue to delight in its natural simplicity and have caught myself stopping by the tree and getting lost in the smell and gentle glow.

I have often wondered what possessed the first person to think 'Wow! I think that tree would look good inside my house!'

So as we get ready for Christmas and as most of us will have a 'tree' of sorts, I thought that I would share with you some of the history and traditions surrounding the Christmas tree!

Most of the sources that I have read point me back to Germany and to a man named St. Boniface over 1,000 years ago. It was St. Boniface that was credited with the conversion of the German people to Christianity and thus begun a long a treasured association with the pine tree. The story is told that St. Boniface happened upon a group of pagans worshipping together around an old oak tree (traditionally a symbol of patience, endurance and deities controlling thunder and the elements). Angered, St. Boniface is believed to have cut down the large oak-proving the strength and power of Christ-and lo and behold from the ground, from the very stump up sprung a young fir tree. He and the pagans gathered around saw this as a clear sign of the Christian faith. However, it was not until a little later-the sixteenth Century to be precise-that the tree made it inside!

But further research has revealed that our little Christmas tree-the evergreen may have had an early history. Although King Tutankhamen may have never seen a Christmas tree, he would have been very familiar with the tradition of 'celebrating' with an evergreen and with its use in pagan worship. Mr. David Robson the Extension Educator of Horticulture with the Springfield Extension Center suggest that the Egyptians were part of a long line of cultures that have included evergreens in the worship practices. When the winter solstice (usually occurs on December 21 to 23 each year in the northern hemisphere) arrives, the Egyptians would place sprigs green date palm leaves into their homes to symbolize life's triumph over death. Mr. Robson also noted that the Romans celebrated the winter solstice with a feast called Saturnalia in honor of Saturnus-the god of agriculture. During this time they would decorate their 'houses' with greens, lights and exchanged gifts. The gifts were also symbolic; coins were for prosperity, pastries for happiness and lamps to light one's journey through life.

However, it is generally accepted the tradition of decorating the fir trees as a way of celebrating Christmas belongs to Martin Luther. According to reports it was on one crisp Christmas Eve around 1500 that Martin Luther was walking through some snow-covered woods. As he walked, he was struck with the sight that beheld him-a beautiful group of small evergreens; their branches dusted with snow and shimmering in the moonlight. This so moved him that upon returning home he set up a small fir tree inside and decorated it with candles-which he lit in honor of Christ's birth. In this way, it is said that Martin Luther was able to share the joy and beauty that he had beheld earlier with his children.

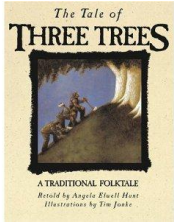
The Christmas tree tradition probably arrived during the American Revolution with the Hessian troops (Germans fighting for the British) along with German immigrants to Pennsylvania and Ohio. However, this custom was slow in spreading across the country. In fact, the Puritans banned Christmas in New England. It is also part of the official records of Cleveland that a minister almost lost his job because of the tree that he placed in his church!

Ironically, in 1851, the Christmas Tree Industry was born as Mark Carr a farmer in the Catskill Mountains hauled two ox-sleds of evergreens into New York City and was able to sell them all! By 1900, nearly one in five American households had a Christmas tree and 20 years later, almost every home had a festive fir!

Today, there rages a fierce battle between the real tree and the artificial one. Families will become heated as the sing the praises of one over the other-but the fact remains, they have a tree!

As for the Marshalls, we grew up with an artificial tree that was pre-lit. It was so easy to set up and take down and that meant a lot to a single mother raising three boys! As a dad, I love the smell and feel of a real tree and have promised my kids that in my house, we will always have a real tree. That of course comes with a price-I am responsible for setting it

up, putting on the lights and decorations while the rest of the family sits around drinking eggnog and watch Phineas and Ferb!



Whatever kind of tree you have or if you have a tree at all, we must always remember that nothing can ever replace our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is He that should occupy the center of all homes.

Here is neat book that we love about trees which we love to read around Christmas time.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
Steve

CONGRATULATIONS ON AN OUTSTANDING SEASON!



**Make plans to attend the Christmas Music
Program Tonight - Thursday, Dec. 15 @ 6:30 pm
@ First Baptist Church - 1407 E. Main**

There will be a cookie reception immediately following the Concert



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FRIEND

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Main Street Mortgage

On Wednesday, December 14, a photographer from Southern Living magazine will be at Eisbahn taking photographs! He needs folks of all ages skating. THE FIRST 25 HERITAGE FAMILIES AT EISBAHN BY 3:30 WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON will be given free skating passes for the day, and a chance to appear in Southern Living magazine! Please dress in appropriate holiday attire (Christmas colors, sweaters, hats and scarves, etc.) and wear your best smiles. This is an amazing opportunity for Eisbahn and we want YOU to be a part of it!

Eisbahn Numbers:

Week 2 (11/26-12/2)

Saturday 11/26 382
Sunday 11/27 106
Monday 11/28 46
Tuesday 11/29 66
Wednesday 11/30 81
Thursday 12/1 65
Friday 12/2 241
987

Week 3 (12/3-12/9)

12/3 407
12/4 92
12/5 32
12/6 25
12/7 10
12/8 35
12/9 187
788

Week 4 (12/10-

12/10 365
12/11 212

ANNUAL FUND FOR EXCELLENCE 2011-2012



THE THERMOMETER IS BACK!! WE ARE OFF TO A STRONG START ON THE ANNUAL FUND; YET MUCH MORE PARTICIPATION WILL BE NEEDED TO GET US TO OUR GOAL. WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN A VERY IMPRESSIVE SHOWING OF SUPPORT FROM OUR BOARD MEMBERS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AS WELL AS MANY PARENTS. GRANDPARENTS, PARENTS, AND SPECIAL DONOR FRIENDS HAVE ALL RECEIVED LETTERS AND SOME GENEROUS GIFTS HAVE BEEN COMING OUR WAY! PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO CONSIDER YOUR ABILITY TO HELP HERITAGE TO REMAIN FISCALLY STRONG IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY GIFT, REGARDLESS OF SIZE, IS A GRANTING OF RESOURCES THAT COULD BE EXPENDED IN MANY OTHER WAYS. WE ASK THAT EACH OF US CONSIDER THE VALUE OF THE HERITAGE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE AND A CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN.

NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO CONSIDER A TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TO HERITAGE SCHOOL OR REFER A DONOR NAME TO DALE COOK IN THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE. THANK YOU!!!

Hot off the press!

Just wanting to keep you in the loop! *I love these American traditions!*

Letterman Sweater has been officially approved as part of the Heritage uniform-same as Letterman Jackets.

Item can be viewed at www.varsitysportsapparel.com - item -LS2010

The sweater is Forest Green with grey and white stripes on the sleeve.

Just like our letterman jackets, there are options to be added in regards to patches.

If you missed the **Madrigal Dinner**

click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9R5MYuBnDE>
for a glimpse of this spectacular evening.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

- **Flap Jacks and Finals**-in attempt to help our Rhetoric students make it through Finals, they will be greeted with a hearty breakfast snack before they begin. Finals run from Monday, December 19th through Wednesday, December 21st.
- **Early Release**-school will be let out early on Wednesday, December 21st as we break for the Christmas Holidays!
- **Students return**-student return to school on Thursday, January 5th.



Grammar School Village

Kindergarten: The kindergarten class is working on a boxed set of ornaments for their families. They are also narrating the story of the birth of Jesus and completing their nativity books.

First: The children will be writing original Frog and Toad stories this week.

Second: The children are making houses like Jesus lived in out of shoe boxes.

Third: We will be studying about our five senses and engaging each of our senses as we learn. Third graders are finishing up The Sign of the Beaver and making Christmas surprises.

Fourth: Lewis & Clark's discoveries in the Louisiana Purchase

Fifth: 5th graders will be writing personas of



STUDENT COUNCIL is once again sponsoring the **COATS**

4 KIDS Drive. Please join us in this effort to provide warmth and comfort to children in our community. Please donate your clean "gently used" or new coats and jackets in all sizes. Coats for all ages are being collected from the community to be distributed by the Needs Council for those who need them. There is a distribution box in the Great Hall.

SCRIP

It's That Easy!!

SCRIP and Coffee was a great success. It was obvious it got people thinking about ordering extra for Christmas gifts. We had several people stop by to place orders and the online activity was amazing.....a little over \$20,000 in orders this week, earning just under \$1000 for Heritage in ONE WEEK!!!!

Awesome! Erika

HEB gas savings extended through Dec 31st. Continue to save 11 cents a gallon through Dec 31 when you purchase your gas at HEB with a gift card. Also, Scripnow! is being offered by 35 companies now! Purchase your scripnow cards, download them and print them for immediate use! Retailers include JCPennys, TGI Fridays, and Starbucks. Do you have family or friends in another town that you'd like to send a little something? You can purchase Scripnow and email the certificate directly to them. They can print it out and use it immediately! Great for college kids! Send a little "I'm thinking of you" to their inbox in the form of Starbucks gift card!

Questions about how to get started? Contact Erika Benfield at 998-5102 or Wendy Hearn at 456-7145.

COLLEGE CORNER:

SAT

2011-12 Test Dates	Test	U.S. Registration Deadlines	
		Regular	Late (a fee applies)
January 28, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	December 30, 2011	January 13, 2012
March 10, 2012	SAT only	February 10, 2012	February 24, 2012
May 5, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	April 6, 2012	April 20, 2012
June 2, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	May 8, 2012	May 22, 2012

ACT

Test Date	Registration Deadline	<i>(Late Fee Required)</i>
February 11, 2012*	January 13, 2012	January 14 – 20, 2012
April 14, 2012	March 9, 2012	March 10 – 23, 2012
June 9, 2012	May 4, 2012	May 5 – 18, 2012



HERITAGE SCHOOL
Parent Association

Thank you to everyone who provided cookies for our Christmas Program Reception.

On December 21st, HSPA hosts Christmas Breakfast for K-5 in the Grammar School Village. All Room Moms have received information regarding the specifics and should have already sent it to all K-5 parents. If you have not heard from your Room Mom, be sure to contact them this weekend.

All parents are members of HSPA and are welcome to attend our meetings. If you are interested in getting involved with HSPA, please call 830.377.8845 or email me at Bledsoe_inc@yahoo.com.

Christmas Blessings, Jennifer Bledsoe, 2011-12 Chair