



# MIDDLE SCHOOL MONTHLY

English Station Middle School  
December 2016

## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 8  
**MS/HS Band Concert,  
English Station Auditorium,  
6:30 p.m.**

December 9  
**Student Council Sponsored  
\$1.00 Jeans or \$2.00  
Sweatpants Day!**

December 13  
**MS Band (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade)  
Concert, English Station  
Auditorium, 6:30 p.m.**

December 16  
**"FREE" Jeans Day. Students  
may wear predominately red  
or green shirts, Christmas  
shirts or sweaters, and/or  
Christmas hats.**

December 16  
**End of Quarter 2**

December 19 – January 2  
**Christmas Break!**

January 3  
**Quarter 3 Begins!**

## CHRISTMAS TIME!

Since 2002, my family and I have visited Gatlinburg the first Friday of December for the "Fantasy of Lights Parade", or as we call it "The Santa Parade". Typically, counting aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents, there are over 20 of us who go. We shop, go to Ripley's (or other attractions), eat at the Pancake Pantry and other things too numerous to mention. One of my favorite traditions is the yearly picture I take with my youngest son on the Gatlinburg Ski Lift. We have framed pictures from the last 14 years of the two of us taking our ride up the mountain. In the first picture, I am holding him...in last year's picture, he is as big as I am.

However, this year was different. Gatlinburg was closed due to the deadly wildfires that have destroyed thousands of areas in the Smokey Mountains and have taken over a dozen lives. The parade was canceled and places we once visited are now gone. Tragic does not seem appropriate enough to describe the devastation.

So...my wife had the brilliant idea of bringing Gatlinburg to Louisville. We had a "staycation"! We visited the Mega-Caverns instead of Ripley's, had the extended family over to the house to reminisce over Gatlinburg pictures instead of the parade and we cooked the largest pancake breakfast in Louisville Saturday morning instead of visiting the Pancake Pantry. We played games, laughed and prayed for the residents of Gatlinburg affected by the fire. Most importantly, we were together.

We made the best of the weekend and we were reminded of something important. It doesn't matter if we are in Gatlinburg or Louisville as long as family is together we are blessed. The moments were a little more special and I have no doubt the memories we created will be just as powerful. I pray your Christmas traditions take on a special meaning this year as well. I encourage you to take a step back this Christmas and really soak in family...capture each moment and praise our Savior whose birth we celebrate. I pray you have a wonderful Christmas.

---Larry A. Wooldridge, HS/MS Principal

## MS STUDENTS BECOMING YOUNG ADULTS

In January when we all return to school after Christmas, something has happened that we all begin to notice. First, we look at earlier pictures and remember Christmas' past. Second, we look down the hall and across the classrooms and we realize skirts and pants are shorter, there are new shoes on several of their feet, and our 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are able to debate in class with more confidence and focus. The students notice it too and they realize they can be given and want more responsibility. As parents and educators, we need to trust, but verify, orient, instruct, and challenge them to go to the next level. It is all about change and helping them and us move through it. Put it another way, it is remembering to continue or even start to teach self-discipline and self-regulation. For us as parents and educators, we need to assess them again and continue to provide new opportunities for them with a little more responsibility, watching them as they welcome it. Nothing is more satisfying to our students, children, their friends and family, our homes and schools, but to see them achieve in this way. Enjoy the season of Christmas and look forward to celebrating the changes that life brings in the New Year!

---Dr. Karen Estep, MS/HS Assistant Principal

## ACADEMIC TIP

[www.Understood.org](http://www.Understood.org) has a helpful resource for locating technology that may fit your child's learning needs. Select technologies, then the skill, grade level, and either all technologies or apps. Online reviews of the apps are available. While searching for a vocabulary app to help increase vocabulary skills for tweens, I came across this helpful tip. Is your child struggling to pass vocabulary tests? This tip could help....

### How Parents Can Help

Challenge your tween to make a set of pictorial flashcards for weekly vocabulary tests. Play a form of Pictionary: draw pictures of vocabulary words for them to guess. Ask your tween to analyze any pictures that don't make sense: What kind of drawing would work better?

---Susan Evans, Academic Support Teacher & Supervisor

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD UPDATE

I praise God for the generosity of our students and you, their families, for the way you gave to the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry. As a middle school, we collected 368 boxes! We reminded our students of 2 Corinthians 9:11 which says, "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God". I'm praying that many children around the world will give thanks to our God because you all were so generous!

---Dallas Vandiver, Spiritual Life Coordinator

## BACK TO MISSION FUGE!

Mark your calendars for our Middle School Mission Trip **June 5-9, 2017!** We will be returning to Barbourville, KY to work in a variety of ministries during the day and worship in a camp-like atmosphere in the evenings. The cost and further details will be given in January's newsletter as a **\$100.00 deposit will be due January 27.** Please pray about your student's participation in this valuable opportunity. Also pray about joining us as a chaperone. We depend on parent drivers who can join us for the week.

Feel free to e-mail me ([dvandiver@caschools.us](mailto:dvandiver@caschools.us)) if you have any questions.

---Dallas Vandiver, Spiritual Life Coordinator



*education with a **Higher** purpose*

*Serving to develop students with a heart for God who grow as Jesus did in wisdom, stature and in favor with God and men.*