



Falcons celebrate traditional holidays

“You have to eat 12 grapes before it’s midnight, so you have good luck for the next year.”

— Claudia Taboada

By Allie Wooton and Sydney Mathis

All around the world, holidays are celebrated in different ways. In fact, there are even holidays you may have never heard of.

Between Nov. 1 and Jan. 15, there are roughly 29 holidays celebrated across the world, ranging from Christmas and New Year's, to Kwanzaa and Hanukkah.

No matter the holiday or tradition, students throughout PM find something to hold onto and celebrate during the winter season.

Claudia Taboada, a foreign exchange student from Spain, shared her New Year's tradition. “You have to eat 12 grapes before it's midnight, so you have good luck for the next year.”

The tradition began in 1895 when a group of Spanish vine growers had an excellent harvest. In order to sell a larger amount of grapes, the growers popularized the tradition.

When the bell strikes midnight on New Years Eve, the grape eating

commences. One grape is supposed to be eaten with every strike of the clock in order to attain good luck for the upcoming year.

Each grape symbolizes one of the twelve months, however, some people take each grape with a wish, instead.

Taboada says that she was surprised that Americans didn't also do this tradition. “I thought everyone did it,” she said.

A foreign exchange student from Brazil also had a different way of celebrating the New Year. Paula

“When the waves come, you have to jump seven waves with one leg.”

— Paula Dresch

Dreusch says that in Brazil, she usually spends New Year's Eve on the beach. However, they don't just party all night long. Instead, they jump waves.

After the clock strikes midnight, many Brazilians make their way down to the beach and into the water. “When the waves come, you have to jump seven waves with one leg,” she said. While doing so, they also make seven wishes and throw flowers into the water.

The sea goddess, Lemanja, is said to make those seven wishes come true in the following year. The belief in the goddess was brought to Brazil by West African slaves. She is usually celebrated through civilians wearing white.

Dreusch also explained that she doesn't leave cookies out for Santa --a typical American tradition. However, one year, while watching an American Christmas movie, she decided she wanted to. “I have a funny story,” she said, “we didn't have any cookies... and everything was closed, so we just left lettuce for the reindeers.”

Giuliano Oscar Stefanelli said that back in Italy, he and his family celebrate with a big dinner on the 24th. After dinner they wait to open presents. “Usually at midnight, Santa Claus comes and then you open your presents and say thank you,” Stefanelli said. Then, they celebrate the 25th with a big lunch that includes the whole family, “even if you don't know them.”

It's not just the foreign exchange students who celebrate a little differently, though. **Beth Par**, an active member of the Chin community, is a junior at PMHS, and celebrates Christmas by going to her church's Christmas service. “The thing that makes it different from Americans would be our service,” she said.

Par says that the service usually lasts about two hours, but what really makes it different are the small elements.

She also pointed out that a lot of Chins don't believe in, or have never heard of Santa Claus. However, Par did mention that “some Chins are starting to accustom themselves to the American holidays like Thanksgiving.”

Blanca Pajares, a foreign exchange student from Spain, celebrates “The

Feast of the Epiphany,” or Three King's Day. This holiday is celebrated on Jan. 6, and marks the twelfth day of Christmas. It celebrates the day of adoration of baby Jesus by the three kings, also known as the Three wise men.

“In my house, I don't have Santa Claus; I just have the Three wise men,” said Pajares. She continued to explain that in the middle of the night on the sixth, the Three Wise Men come and

“She acts like a mother to us and we can pray to her just like we can pray to god.”

— Sophia Ventura

TIMELINE
CELEBRATIONS

HANUKKAH
Dec. 12—Dec. 20

VIRGIN DE GUADALUPE
Dec. 12

CHRISTMAS

leave presents just like Santa Claus.

A common tradition during this holiday is eating “Rosca de Reyes” (King's bread). Many people even hide a small baby Jesus figurine within the bread for the family to find when the time comes to eat.

Sophomore **Sonia Ventura** also celebrates a different holiday on December 12. The holiday is called Day of the Virgin Guadalupe, or La Dia de

la Virgen de Guadalupe. The holiday is mostly celebrated in Mexico by people who are Catholic, she says.

The day is celebrated to commemorate the time when the Virgin of Guadalupe visited San Juan Diego and asked him to ask the bishop to build a church on Tepeyac Hill. After the Bishop told Juan that he wanted proof of Guadalupe's visit, Juan returned to the bishop with roses and a picture of her on

Corporate season, days and beyond

his cloak, and the bishop proceeded to build the church.

Ventura said that she really celebrated the holiday for the first time last year when she went to a church service where they performed a play and dance that portrayed the story.

"It's special to me because she's [Virgin of Guadalupe] an important person for our religion," she said. "She acts like a mother to us and we can pray

Christmas is a holiday that was created to celebrate the birth of Christ, in the religion of Christianity, on Dec. 25. Christians generally celebrate the holiday by participating in a church service or mass. There are traditions that many Christians have tied to Christmas on their own, in regards to the Nativity story, according to [timeanddate.com](#).

According to the same website, the Bible never states what exact day Jesus



to her just like we can pray to God."

was born on, and it is still unknown to this day why Dec. 25 was chosen as the day for the holiday to occur on. In early years of Christianity it was not looked at as a celebratory day, but during the Middle Ages it began to be celebrated by the Europeans.

Although Christmas Eve and Christmas are naturally affiliated with Christianity, according to a poll recorded by [www.pewforum.org](#), only two-thirds of

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Christians view it as a religious holiday. Many view it as a "cultural holiday," rather than a religious occurrence.

New Year's is a holiday that is also celebrated widely. It isn't directly affiliated with any religion in particular; however, different religions celebrate it in their own way. Regardless of how it is celebrated, though, according to [history.com](#), the holiday as a whole is to celebrate one thing: the beginning of a brand new year. according to [history.com](#).

According to the same article, the holiday of New Year's began by being celebrated thousands of years ago by the Babylonians, where they would base the New Year by the new moons, where there was an equal amount of sunlight and darkness.

Julius Caesar later came into the picture, in 46 B.C., and he created the Julian calendar, which is very similar to the calendar that most countries use today. The calendar declared Jan. 1 as the first day of the year from then on out.

There are many well-known traditions celebrated by Americans during the holiday season of Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's, that are not as common

a very popular Christmas tradition celebrated by Americans is Black Friday, which occurs on the Friday following Thanksgiving. This is where many people go out to get their gifts for friends and family at a reduced price, just for that specific night. The whole idea of "Christmas shopping," sprouted in the 19th century, also states the U.S. Embassy.

House and garden lights and decorations, such as lights are also most common in America, as well as decorating Christmas trees and the inside of houses to celebrate the holidays, [statesanddate.com](#).

According to [thespruce.com](#), Christmas movie watching is more popular in the U.S., than anywhere else. Some of the most popular movies enjoyed by Americans are: "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "The Christmas Story," "Home Alone," "Frosty the Snowman," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and "Elf."

The most popular tradition in the U.S. for New Year's is, no matter what state you are in, watching the ball drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve, followed by the firework show. According to "USA Today," the first ball drop celebration in Times Square took place in 1904.

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