

Holmstead
SCHOOL

Holmstead Gazette

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With many things on the schedules of Holmstead students and faculty in this lovely month of February, we surely had our hands full. Valentine's Day was celebrated with many different sales and activities. Sales included; pancakes, chocolate lollipops, and also fun "singing telegrams" where a group of our talented singers sang a love song of your choice to that special someone. Black History Month was observed the whole month of February, celebrating the lives and achievements of black Americans. The highlight of the short month of February, was the wonderful couple who had presented their stories and what they had created to help themselves and others. Their project is called Unbridled Heroes.

Valentine's Day

Ah, Valentine's Day. While Valentine's Day is known as a day for couples to express their love, it is also a day where we should appreciate all those who we love, even if it isn't one particular person. The tradition of Valentine's Day is dated back to around A.D. 270 when the commemoration



of the anniversary of Saint Valentine's burial was marked to be. Saint Valentine was a priest during the third century of Rome who would marry young couples in secret, since marriages with young men were outlawed. This was because Emperor Claudius II had thought that young men without wives or children fought better in battle. Young couples would come to this most well-known priest for their strife and Saint Valentine would marry the two illegally. When he was caught, he was imprisoned, but that didn't stop him. Saint Valentine would marry people through the bars of his jail cell. When Emperor Claudius II had found out, he then sentenced Saint Valentine to death. To celebrate his kindness, we give recognition to loved ones, or even strangers, to show and spread love. There is another Valentine's Day mascot that we all know of, but maybe not about, Cupid. Cupid is the Roman version of the Greek god of love, Eros. Eros was the son of Mars and Venus, god of war and goddess of love. Unlike most weapons of the gods, Cupid was armed with a bow and arrows. The golden arrows were meant to bring up love and admiration, while the lead arrows would bring upon repulsion and hatred. Cupid would strike both mortals and gods with his arrows, mostly using his powers mischievously, striking one with a golden arrow and the other with a lead one. Since he was a god of love, we ignore his pranks and portray him as a small child, to show innocence, who only strikes with the golden arrows.

Holmstead celebrated this lovely day with lots of sales and surprises. Heart-shaped pancakes and chocolate lollipops plus a very thoughtful but embarrassing gift of singing telegrams, where a song would be sung to a special someone with the song of your choice by our super talented singers.

Black History Month

Black History Month celebrates the achievements and lives of black Americans. Black History Month evolved from original "Negro History Week" due to interest and popularity. Carter G. Woodson was an American historian, author, journalist and founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. He was also the one who launched "Negro History Week" which was celebrated on the second week of February and was also the precursor of Black History Month. When "Negro History Week" was first introduced, the main focus was to have the history of Black Americans taught in schools. From there, it had grown in popularity and was endorsed as a holiday by mayors across the United States. Martin Luther King Jr. , Frederick Douglass, President Barack Obama, Spike Lee, Marsha P. Johnson, Ruth E. Carter, 21 Savage, Miss Major, the list goes on and on. Miss Major has been an activist for black lives and for the LGBTQ+ community for over 40 years. Born on the South Side of Chicago, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy saw the police raids of queer bars, and started to stand up and speak out against the oppression. In 1969, Miss Major made a commitment to support the trans family along side Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera. Miss Major worked for the rights of Black Americans as well as the LGBTQ+ community. Major had multiple brief incarcerations in the 1970s, and attributes her largely progressive political beliefs on hot button topics like abolition and Black liberation to her experiences in the prison system. You can donate to Miss Major's retirement fund at: <https://fundly.com/missmajor> or by googling Miss Major's Monthly Fundraising Circle.

Willis, Raquel. "How Miss Major Helped Spark the Modern Trans Movement." *Them.*,

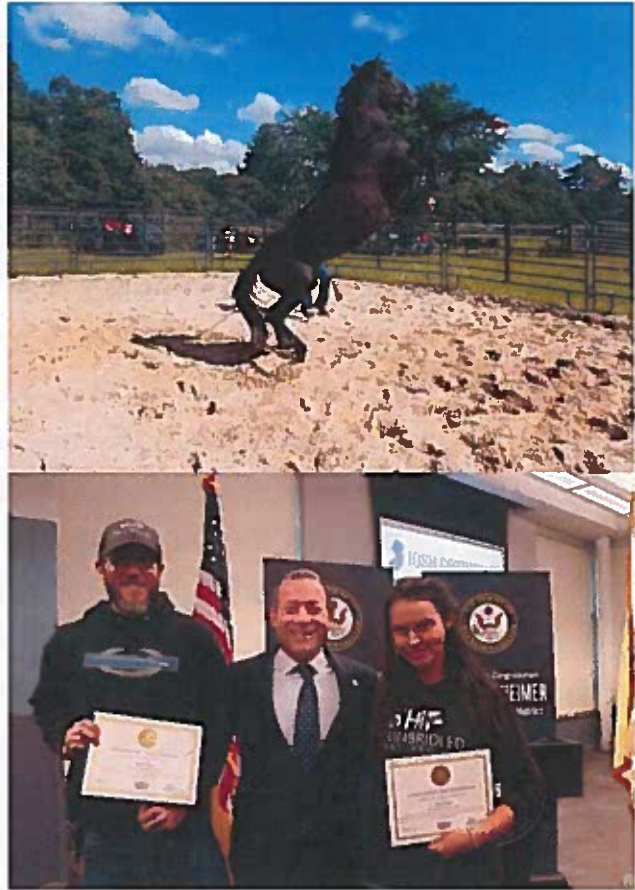
Them., 13 Mar. 2018, www.them.us/story/transvisionaries-miss-major.

Winter/President's Day Break

Sleep, food, family and pets were the main plans for the week-long winter break. Other people traveled anywhere as close as the Camden Aquarium to a longer trip such as Spain, to even further away on a Caribbean Cruise. Many people had an exciting week off, while some weren't as lucky, having conferences, dentists, babysitting, and work. President's Day was first introduced by Congress in 1885 in celebration of the birthday of the founding father and first President of the United States of America, President George Washington. While he was born on February 22nd, 1732, we celebrate this on the third Monday of February, due to the Uniform Monday Holiday Act which was passed in 1968. This act went into effect in 1971, recognizing various holidays to be celebrated on Mondays, giving workers and students a longer weekend.

Unbridled Heroes

Amy and Mark Steppe are a couple who have suffered through the many hardships that life threw at them, and they have decided to dedicate themselves to help others do the same. When Amy Steppe was introduced to a horse that had been abused to a point where no one was able to touch her due to her severe trauma, she decided to help her. With regular visits to the horses both Amy and Mark started to heal, along with the horses. Amy and Mark rent a stable at Rohsler's Farm and nurture abused horses, primarily Mustangs, which they buy from kill auctions. On February 6th, Holmstead had the privilege to have both Amy and Mark Steppe come to the school and share their poignant story, and give lots of great advice. Not only did they share their story, but they helped us realize that we didn't need anyone to heal because you do not need anyone to save you, you can be your own hero. You can learn more about their story, mission and donate at: <https://unbridledheroes.org/> or by googling Unbridled Heroes Project.



Community Service/ Baby Hats

Our projects this month involved collecting non-perishable foods for the local food pantry and knitting caps for the Neonatal Care Unit at Valley Hospital. Sandra gave us a knitting lesson using looms which the school purchased. We partnered with the Craft students and teachers for this project. We will donate them with the help of Vicki, whose sister is a nurse at the hospital. This month some of our Community Service students visited the Felician 21 and Over Program. They had a tour of the program and played a game of volleyball in their gym at The Boys and Girls Club of Lodi.