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# THE WY-NEWS

Roosevelt High School

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## TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING AND RECEIVING

### “I should have just bought my own gift”

### Tomac receives prestigious teaching award

BY SHAWN LYNCH

We all get those gifts that we just really do not like and wish we had gotten something different?

“Two years ago my grandma gave me this gift that was huge and I thought I was moving up in the world, but when I opened it it was the ugliest thing,” said math teacher Krissy Powers.

Powers comes from a big family and when she got the big box she was surprised and excited but when she opened it, she found a large basket with fake flowers.

“It was so bad that my whole family laughed and my husband asked if I was on the naughty list,” said Powers.

Powers was told by her grandmother that it was a house warming gift since she and her husband had just moved into their own house.

“I now keep that basket closest just in case my grandma decides to come over,” said Powers.

Powers recalls another gift that she got from one of her close friends in a white elephant gift exchange. A white elephant gift is a gift that is usually an unlabeled inexpensive gift that is usually meant to be funny. Each person picks a gift and unwraps it after that they display it to everyone and everyone picks a number. The first person has the option to exchange it with other people or to keep it. The whole number system goes on with the option to keep it or exchange it.

“When we do the gift exchanges we usually give a gag gift and then a real sincere gift. Well, when I opened it there was a clay ashtray from the sixth grade and a picture of a friend with half her teeth missing from when she was a young girl,” said Powers.

The gift exchange of that type brings in a whole bunch of gifts that are funny and sometimes

just dumb. There are many people who are told that they will really like the gift they will receive only to find that they completely hate it. This happens often with parents when they try to buy gifts that are “trendy”.

“A couple years ago my mom had told me after a day of Christmas shopping that she had found me the coolest gift and that I would love it,” said junior Adam Piechocki. “It turned out to be a leap frog educational toy.”

Piechocki then said that he really liked it to avoid hurting his mom’s feelings and then never played with it again.

“I envisioned a Game Boy or a Play Station, but no, I got Leapfrog,” said Piechocki.

Each year about 43% of gifts that were given to people were returned for cash or store credit. Around 26% are exchanged for a different model or color. A big example is with iPods and the colors that they are available in.

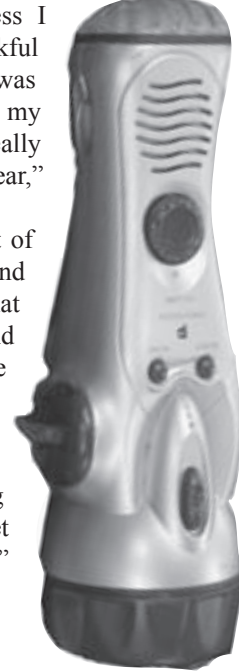
“I guess I should be thankful that my mom was looking out for my education but I really wanted a Play Station that year,” said Piechocki.

In 2006 the average amount of money spent on gifts was around \$950 per person. However, that amount dropped 5% in 2007 and it is expected to drop even more with the failing economy.

“I am also thankful because I got a gift though. Many people in Metro Detroit don’t get anything for Christmas and I was lucky to get presents. Even if its not what I want,” said Piechocki.



Science teacher David Blake shows off his crank operated radio/flashlight (shown below). Photo: Shawn Lynch



BY SARA SKARZYNSKI

Science and agriculture teacher Elizabeth Tomac received an award for Agriculture at the National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE) at the National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

“It’s an outstanding achievement for her and for our program here at Roosevelt High School,” said Principal Mary McFarlane. “She is being honored for her leadership and achievements in agricultural education.”

The award is called the Teachers Turn the Key award. Tomac, who has been the sponsor of the Future Farmers of America organization (FFA) for four years, is the only teacher from Michigan to receive this award. The convention is held once a year and there is one recipient from every state.

“Trying to get teachers to move forward in their professional career, a lot of teachers leave the teaching profession within the first five years so they’re trying to retain them into teaching longer,” Tomac explained why the award is titled Turn the Key.

The convention lasted five days from December 2 to December 6 and was hosted in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE) was also held at the same time.

“It was about a 15 page application that I had to type and write and I had to talk about my teaching philosophies, my goals and the things I have accomplished,” said Tomac.

Other teachers through out the state at a summer conference, nominated Tomac. The award is for teachers who teach agriculture, who have taught for less than five years, and who are a member of the National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE). Tomac cannot apply for this award again.

“I’m very proud of her, it’s wonderful to see hard work and leadership rewarded.” McFarlane said also.

Some of the many events during the convention were a large career expo, there were companies who had teacher related materials, many workshops about teaching, new ideas, and technology. All of the expenses were paid from airline tickets, hotel fairs to the convention registration.

“I was excited, I was very excited to get to go to the convention because I wouldn’t have gone if I had not of won the award,” said Tomac.



Science teacher Elizabeth Tomac poses with her “Turn the Key” award. Photo: Sara Skarzynski

## S.A.D.D. does good deeds for soldiers



S.A.D.D. sponsor Kelly Lomas and members along with members of the VFW package goods at POST 1136 on Dec 2. Photo: Brianna Flynn

BY BRIANNA FLYNN

This holiday season, Students Against Destructive Decisions are doing something special for the soldiers overseas. S.A.D.D. is working with the VFW Post 1136 to collect items for soldiers and send those items over to them.

The Wyandotte VFW Post 1136 was already collecting items for the soldiers, but they were not collecting from the schools, so English teacher and S.A.D.D. advisor Kelly Lomas stepped in and changed all of that.

Lomas is the junior Vice President of the Lady’s Auxiliary for Post 1136, and has been very active with them for the past three years. The Lady’s Auxiliary is for women who cannot join the VFW because they are not veterans and were never in the

military. They do community service for current members of the military and also veterans.

Lomas’ father is a member of the Post because he was in the Vietnam War, and her brother, who has been stationed in North Dakota, England, Kuwait, and Florida with the Air Force, is also a member of the Post.

“I thought, well I’m a teacher, I could ask my students,” said Lomas. “And what better way to collect than through an actual organization.”

S.A.D.D. collected supplies from students during November 4 through 26, and packaged the items at the VFW on December 2.

Through students, S.A.D.D. collected dental supplies, hair care products like shampoo and conditioner, books, magazines, movies, and other

items for a total of nine boxes. There were also cash donations. These boxes are going to be sent to two different soldiers in Iraq to be distributed within their troop.

“Honestly, I think the reason I like helping [the soldiers] is because they are doing a job I know I could never do,” Lomas said. “I could never be away from my daughter during Christmas, my husband, my parents, my community, and be thousands of miles away in such a foreign land.”

Many of the S.A.D.D. students also enjoy helping the soldiers.

“I like knowing that you are actually doing something for someone who is helping your country,” sophomore Aaron Ames said.