



Preschool, kindergarten students present Christmas concert

The elementary gym was full last Tuesday, December 17 as the preschool and kindergarten classes at Clark Elementary presented their Christmas concert. Directed by Stacy Andersen-Mjoun, the students sang some catchy new songs and even 'La Navidad', partially sung in Spanish.

Students took turns telling the jokes that went along with 'A Silly Holiday Song'. Shown at the microphone in front of their music instructor, are left to right, Lincoln Reidburn, Jerome Enboben, Leah Nelson, Logan Seefeldt and Lucas Zemlicka. At the end of the song, the question was: How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizza? Deep and crisp and even.

Dear Santa ...

* Clark Elementary kindergarten students

Continuing this Christmas season in the *Clark County Courier* is a feature of kindergarten letters to Santa.

All children's letters to Santa pretty much say the same thing about the child's behavior this year but when it comes to what little ones want, they are very specific when they write to Santa. The kindergarten classes at Clark Elementary were asked what they wanted from Santa this year and here are their answers.

Dear Santa,
I would like a new phone and that's it. I'd also maybe like a Beyblade. **Michael Severson**

Dear Santa,
Please bring me a race set, some Legos and a tool box with real tools. And I want a real power saw. **Lincoln Reidburn**

Dear Santa,
I want some Legos, Beyblades and a camouflage bed sheet for my room. Could I have some camouflage curtains too? **Tye McGraw**

Dear Santa,
I'd like to have a Splash Masters gun and some Splash Masters bullets. I'd like a bunker for it too and a target doll to put on the bunker that I can shoot at. **Gage Imber**

Dear Santa,
I just got a new dinosaur but I would like another dinosaur and some Legos and a Beyblade. **Beyk Hartse**

Dear Santa,
Could you bring two new phones for my mom and dad? I would like a white cat and I would like an iPad. **Shawna Thonvold**

Dear Santa,
Please bring me a Barbie Doll and some outfits for her. I'd also like some Legos to play with. **Leah Nelson**

Dear Santa,
Could I have an American Doll? I would like some clothes for her and an American Doll house, too. I also want some makeup for her and some grown-up makeup for me. **Tchida Wilkins**

Dear Santa,
I just want some Legos and a Beyblade. **Leonard Wernke**

Dear Santa,
I want a basketball and that's all - just a basketball. **Tryston Epps**

Dear Santa,
Could I have an American Doll and some clothes for her? I want her to have some glasses to wear, too. **Gracie Luvaas**

Dear Santa,
I want some My Little Ponies and some My Little Pony girls to play with. I would like some more toy horses and some other animals like toy cows and toy sheep, too. **Aleisha Naze**

Dear Santa,
I need some new slippers and some more farm toys. I would like some Minecraft toys too if you could bring some of those. **Jarrett Maynard**

Dear Santa,
I would really like a remote control car for Christmas. **Wiatt Reul**

Dear Santa,
I want some Fast shoes and a toy airplane I could play with. **William Hovde**

Dear Santa,
Can I please have a Barbie that is a pretty Barbie? **Yeleiney Ramirez**

Dear Santa,
I would like to have a Princess Barbie and a new tree house. **Delaney Smidt**

Dear Santa,
I'd like to have Angry Bird Star Wars. **Oliver Smith**

Dear Santa,
Please bring me a telepod for An-



gry Birds Star Wars II and a Plants vs. Zombies 3D puzzle. And can you bring us another Christmas tree? Logan Seefeldt

Dear Santa,
I would like a new tractor, a new grain cart and a combine. And I want them to be all John Deere. **Kaden Janisch**

Dear Santa,
Could I have a new backpack? I would also like a new Barbie and a new Barbie house. **Mylee Weets**

Dear Santa,
Can I please have a new flatbed, a V-rake, a pickup that is blue and a gun. **Lucas Zemlicka**

Dear Santa,
Could you bring me a toy dragon, the Angry Bird game, a waterslide and some Fast tennis shoes. **Isaac Julian**

Dear Santa,
Could I please get some pet shops with kitties and puppies and some ponies too. **Zoey Helkenn**

Dear Santa,
I'd like a new jacket, a red car, a monster truck, a choo choo train, a helicopter, a boat, a bus, a semi with a house to park it in and a BB gun. **Lane Prescott**

Dear Santa,
Please bring me a remote control toy helicopter and I want a remote control car with wings cause my other one broke. I also need some boots and I want them to be super Fast boots. **Corbin Wagner**



New sign up on US 212

Nothing says Merry Christmas better than new fluorescent green signage, to help get across US Highway 212. Shirley Brenden looks left, as that's the closest lane, before she embarks to cross the busy highway.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation has been busy at this corner, as besides putting up this new sign, some street work in the cross walk was done as well.

Hunger in the Dakotas hides in plain sight



Frances Heeren, employee of the Interlakes Community Action Program thrift store, and Jeanne Fuller, ICAP county director, fill Christmas bags to be distributed this week.

A story by **Dakotafire**
dakotafire.net

By Heidi Marttila-Losure
Reporting by Doug Card, Britton Journal; Bill Krikac and Kimberly Harrington, Clark County Courier; Melody Owen, Tri-County News; Laura Ptacek, Ispwich Tribune

Are there hungry people in your community?

Yes, the numbers say. One in 13 people in North Dakota, and one in eight in South Dakota, is food insecure—meaning they often wonder where their next meal is going to come from.

Yes, school administrators say. They have seen learning become more difficult because of hunger for children in our own communities.

Yes, the employees at food pantries say. Thousands of people come through their doors each year.

We may not see these hungry people, explains Matt Gassen, executive director of Feeding South Dakota, because they are hidden in plain sight.

If you are wondering what the face of hunger looks like in South Dakota, "all you have to do is look in the mirror," Gassen said. "It looks like you or I."

"It could be that elderly couple you sit next to on church on Sunday, or it could be the child in a neighborhood playground. It could be your neighbors coming home from work," Gassen said. "It's all of those types of people."

Thankfully, a number of programs in our communities are providing food to the hungry. Some are associated with the two statewide food banks, Feeding South Dakota and

Great Plains Food Bank (based out of Fargo), while others gather all their donations locally. Some programs serve children, and others serve senior citizens.

The need, however, is great—and, despite the end of the national recession, it's not going down, and in some communities it's increasing.

Measuring hunger

The Dakotas' hungry are more likely to be found in reservation counties. Of the 11 poorest counties in all of the United States, six are in South Dakota (Buffalo, Shannon, Ziebach, Todd, Corson and Dewey) and one is in North Dakota (Sioux).

Hunger is fairly common in those counties, with between 17 percent and 28 percent wondering where their next meal will come from, according to Map the Meal Gap, a 2011 report published by Feeding America.

In Dakotafire counties, there's a

clear difference between North and South Dakota: Dickey, LaMoure, Logan and Stutsman counties in North Dakota have rates of food insecurity about 5 to 7 percent, while all of the counties that Dakotafire serves have rates of about 10 percent or higher.

People serving the hungry in our communities say the need is either holding steady or increasing.

In Clark County, the number of the hungry served by the Interlakes Community Action Program has been consistent, according to Jeanne Fuller, ICAP director.

"Some of the families have changed, but the overall count is pretty similar," she said. "We're seeing a few more families, but the size of the families has decreased."

Jesse Knittel, who coordinates the Edmunds County Food Pantry,

Hunger

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