

# RIVER HAWK REVIEW

Christmas Chronicle!

Skowhegan Area High School's Best News Source

Twyla Wagg

## Meeting Mattia

“Don’t put pineapple on pizza, and don’t overcook pasta.” - an inspirational Italian boy’s quote. Mattia is living in Norridgewock and feels very welcome in our little community. “ The soccer team made me feel very welcome, and as if I was always on their team.”

Next one of his goals while he is here is to go to a professional NBA game and participate in sports because his country doesn’t have as many opportunities to do so. The biggest difference between his school and our schools is there are more activities held at our school. For example, sports, clubs, fundraisers, and activities.

Then “ Why is lunch so early, and why can’t you get bottled water with your lunch?” He pointed out these problems about our school and also stated some personal problems of his own. For example, “If you don’t have a friend with a car, it can be pretty boring.”

I wonder how our exchange students will do with the incoming snow, and also how will they handle the holidays? American Thanksgiving and Christmas are very overwhelming in general, but for a person who is not an American citizen it might be worse!!!.



Isabel Ozdinec

## Christmas in October



Many of us like celebrating the holiday season for a while before Christmas day. Why wouldn’t we want the fun of Christmas to last a little bit longer than two days?

Many people agree that hearing Christmas music in October is way too early. A lot of businesses will start advertising and selling Christmas items months in advance, and driving home from school just after Halloween, I always see one or two people with their houses already covered in lights with a giant inflatable Santa on their lawn. We already know why some people get annoyed with this, it feels like it’s too early to celebrate Christmas, but why do people defend it and continue to celebrate Christmas as early as Halloween?

Well, we can assume that stores will get Christmas things ready in advance for the money, but why do people buy and put up things this early? Many people are just happier when they’re surrounded by Christmas decorations. Almost everyone likes the holiday season whether it’s because of the holidays or getting off of work or school and being surrounded by things that remind you of the fun during that time we get a boost in our mood. Although it seems annoying for people to celebrate that early, maybe it’s for the best that they do.



Levi Nichols

## All I Want For Christmas is to Stop Hearing This Song!



The song *All I Want for Christmas is You* by Mariah Carey is a yearly atrocity that I am forced to hear every single time I listen to the radio during the Christmas season. I cannot stand this song for a variety of reasons. I must admit, this doesn't sound all bad. It has an ok tune with mediocre music. The problems with the song arise with how over-hyped it is. I must have heard this song over a thousand times. The amount of times I have heard it has slowly driven me to not only just dislike the song, but to actively hate it. Second of all, a Christmas love song is an overdone cliché. For example, we have Santa Baby, I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus, Last Christmas, and a variety of others. The worst part is a lot of them sound the same. Not only do we have one annoying Christmas love song, but we also have several equally popular ones that make each other exponentially worse. The worst atrocity these songs commit is their complete takeover of the radio. All you hear during the

Christmas season are these annoying songs that make your ears bleed, the most played of which is *All I Want for Christmas is You*. Some stations can't even wait until after Thanksgiving before they start these songs. I will never get how people can genuinely listen to the same mediocre love song hundreds of times without hating every fiber of it. One last annoying thing is how the song worms its way into your mind and won't leave. It not only replays on the radio, but in your head! Maybe this Christmas, all I want is a pair of earmuffs to block out this overplayed song

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Isabel Ozdinec

## Student Council Holiday Raffle

This holiday season the SAHS student council gave back to the student body by holding a holiday gift basket raffle. The cost was 2 dollars for a ticket. There were four baskets each loosely based around the holiday season with the themes of snow, hot chocolate, Christmas morning, and movie nights.

The winners were:

Movie Basket-	Melanie Guenette
Snow Day Basket-	Zack White
Hot Chocolate Basket-	Whysper Meranda
Holiday Morning Basket-	Natasha Rairdon

Thank you to all who purchased tickets!

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Levi Nichols

## The Hood Ban: Should it Stay?

After many years of student complaints, the useless hat ban was lifted away from our school. However, we still are not allowed to wear hoods. Why are hoods still banned but not hats? Possibly, the ban has to do with how hoods obscure faces. Faces being obscured by teachers can make it harder for them to do their job. Another possible reason could be that they could be used for cheating. Students could hide notes in the hood to secretly look at answers during a test. There are reasons for the ban, but think of how absurd they are. What is the chance that a student actually hides notes in their hood? What it really comes down to is respect. For some reason, hats and hoods are frowned upon in school as part of old etiquette. Lots of teachers are still upset about the hat ban being removed. So the question still stands: should the hood ban be removed as well? I believe it should. Some students feel more comfortable wearing hoods, and they have been shown to help with social anxiety by separating them from distractions around them. Some people feel more comfortable with a little more privacy. Why should teachers care what we wear as long as it doesn't harm others? I have never heard of hoods being an effective weapon. Some believe hoods to be a gang symbol but that seems to not be much more than a rumor. Are you tired of the first thing you hear when you get to school being "Take off your hoods"?



Joshua Bloom

# A Tale of Shadows

## Chapter two: The Warrior of a dim-lighted origin



(Italic text inside apostrophes means internal thoughts)

Skamos is looking in fear and suspense at the being of dark matter before him, listening to the words of it.

“Tiefling, heed my warning! The multiverse will be plagued with an infection worse than any disease that has ever existed in the material plane, even in the whole multiverse. You are one of the chosen three who will help maintain the balance in the twenty-four planes of existence.” The creature of darkness started with a gravelly voice.

Skamos looked like he was about to faint in horror. However, he could not, as this is a very serious situation.

“W-what?! Me?! I’m afraid of almost everything! How am I one of the chosen? Why not Hailstorm!? Or Stone!? Kin! Say something here!”

The dragonborn remained silent in the presence of the dream-dweller and tiefling.

“Skamos. When the time arises, you will be ready. Whether you wish to believe it or not, you will maintain the balance...” Skamos’s vision begins to fade to black, but very slowly. “My time is running low... You must complete this task... or all is lost...” When Skamos’s vision fades fully to black, one more word is heard. “...Forever...”

\*One Day Earlier\*

*‘Geez, these guys are strong! Calm down, calm down, you’ve dealt with worse... right?’* We now look at an interesting situation, a inky black creature is fighting against three, very well armed warriors, plated in a black material, wielding curved blades called scimitars. The warriors seem to have ink black skin as well, judging by the one missing a helme-wait.

*‘Nevermind that, the one in the middle is missing his helmet! If I get behind it...’* The creature seemingly disappears into his own shadow, confusing the soldiers, and appears behind the one in the middle, jumping up to ready an attack.

*‘...I could take that one out from behind and work my way to the other two!’* The creature delivers a knockout blow to the soldier’s head with a

roundhouse kick, which was indeed vulnerable, then blocks the swing of the blade with his fist by hitting the side of it, getting a bit of a scratch in the process, but is still better than losing an ear... if he even has one.

*‘Ow. Just a scratch, it won’t do much, right? Okay, second thing’s second, I need to disarm the other two.’* After he quickly maps out his plan, he grabs one of the soldier’s arms, the one holding the scimitar, and pulls it towards the other soldier, which causes a collision, stunning them both.

*‘Or I just disorient them and knock them out.’* He finishes his thought with a punch to each of the soldiers, knocking them out, and sending them to the walls.

*‘Finally’* he turns away from the unconscious warriors. “So how did I do? Good? Great? Wait, no, *flawless?*”

The rest of the room suddenly was lit by blue flamed torches mounted on the walls, and a creature with an interesting fashion of robes speaks up.

“Don’t act too prideful! My eyes did not fail to notice the slash on your hand. However, it was necessary for you to avoid the majority of damage from the scimitar... Impressive, my pupil. It seems you have surpassed my expectations. You may even be the one.” The fashionable creature stated.

So for those who don’t understand, this was apparently a test.

This world is known as Shadowfell; a desolate plane of existence, entirely darkness, void of light. To most otherworlders, it is called “The Plane of Misery”, to others, it’s “The World of never-ending darkness”, to the majority of the dwellers of this plane, it’s “The Afterlife of Torture”, except in this monastery, where they call it, “Home”.

This monastery is the only place within hundreds of miles with light, their source being blue flames, where strange shadow creatures dwell.

These creatures are described as smoke-like, their bodies, while having human structure, such as arms and legs, also have ink black skin, and are cloaked in a sort of black aura, like spirit wisps, which is part of them in a way that, wherever they move, a wisp-like smoke trails their movements, and fades upwards when little movement occurs. They seem to be training in the monastery. However, something rare is occurring.

“Really? Thank you, Sensei!” This bright-eyed student’s name is Nightshade.

He completed his basic and advanced training, and has been said to be among the most talented students there. He completed his training quickly, only two years, and is ready. For what? We’ll find out...

“Remember to be respectful, his teachings are sacred and to master them requires patience,” he said. “Of course, it was an honor to learn from you.”



Nightshade bowed, “It was an Honor to teach such a talented student!” the teacher replied.

Shade raised from his bow, smiled at his former teacher, then walked through the halls towards two monks guarding a large door, which was designed to look like black flames painted onto the red wood of the door. They turned their heads to Shade, then to each other, nodded and opened the large door.

Shade nodded back, then walked through the door.



He walked down the blue-blaze-lit hallway and took a look around, his glowing sunshine-yellow eyes darting around as he walked. He noticed the shadow dragon statues on the walls, looking to be carved by one’s own hand from a black, obsidian like substance called skyfire. The eyes of the statues glow with an eerie, purple light.

The test soldier’s armor and weaponry are made of a refined form of skyfire. Skyfire can only be found in Shadowfell, it’s a strong and abundant material, which is why the monastery uses the material in all the armor, weaponry, symbols, etc.

Shade believes that he understands why these statues are here, as throughout the first few years of his life, he has been taught that the strength of a shadow dragon is to be feared, even at a young age. Creating statues to symbolize their awe-inspiring power is absolutely necessary.

At the end of the hallway, which was now meters away, he saw another door, however, this one was made from something different, instead of painted to look like black fire, or a shadow dragon, there was a symbol, seeming to represent a ghost like creature, painted on tannish wood.

The creature represented by the symbol seems to be described to have a blue eye, white hair, and a pitch black body without legs.

*‘The real thing must have more details than this vague representation.’* Shade frowned as he observed the symbolization of a creature.

He decided to knock on the door, expecting a logical reaction. But instead, the door, almost magically, swung open a few seconds after he knocked, revealing a dark staircase leading upwards. Shade couldn’t see too well up the stairs, as his superior darkvision hadn’t fully developed yet, so he hesitantly walked through the door, and up the stairs, thinking about a few things,

*‘Who is the Grandmaster? How did he find this monastery? What more could I learn?’* but above all else, the question that loomed over Nightshade as he walked was...

*‘What is it about him that makes even The Ancient Shadow Dragons fear his name?’*

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Erick Cunliffe

## The Trouble with Egnog: A Christmas Story

Most people would consider misfortune a crucible that must be overcome, but the day I was betrayed by the one I adored, I consciously made an oath with myself to trust no one. It was even worse because the destruction of my faith in others came at my father’s hand on Christmas Eve. That day I woke up with such joy that I felt nothing could bring me down. In fact, I was so elated that I rushed downstairs and began to assist my mother in making breakfast. I didn’t do much other than bring the kitchen supplies back and forth, but at least it let my mother know I cared. After all, she had been through a lot in the last couple of months due to her father’s passing.

Once mom prepared the food, she yelled frustratedly to the rest of the family and said, "If you guy’s ain’t gonna have any of the food I made, I’m never gonna cook again!"

At that instant, my father slowly rolled out of his bed following the freshly brewed aromas down to the kitchen. When he got there, I saw not my father but a shapeless figure who was a fragment of his former self. His eyes were dreary, his back was hunched, there was no smile in sight, and his countenance was one of someone who had committed a great iniquity.

So I asked him solemnly, "What’s wrong, father?"

He replied in a quiet, melancholic voice, "I must return to the ships of the sea which sail from one direction to another, for if I don’t, I will be like a boat used once and never again."

With a confused expression on my face I asked my father, "What do you mean by that?"

He said pitifully, "You will find out soon."

Once my father said that, I deliberately chose to avoid him and the words he spoke, because if I had thought about them, I might have lost a Christmas Eve imbued with the spirit of joy.

Later on, it hit midday, and the cold, snowy, oppressive air started to dissipate further north. This saddened me because something about those glistening, white, iridescent flurries seemed to entrap me in an ineffable state of peace and bliss. So before the snowfall disappeared entirely, I grabbed my winter garments, threw them on and ran outside. When I got out there, I fell on my knees, stared at my gloves, and then looked all around the barren wasteland which was before me. I began to think of my father, and I immediately understood what his analogy meant. He meant that he couldn't stay here anymore because just as boats are meant for sailing, so is he, and if he doesn't, he will be filled with emptiness. Knowing this, I began to weep. I asked myself - how could he leave? So, I got up and ran inside as fast as possible, searching for my mom. Finally, I found her, and I asked her, tearing up, "Where did dad go?"

She said, "He ran to the store to purchase some eggnog. He will be back soon."

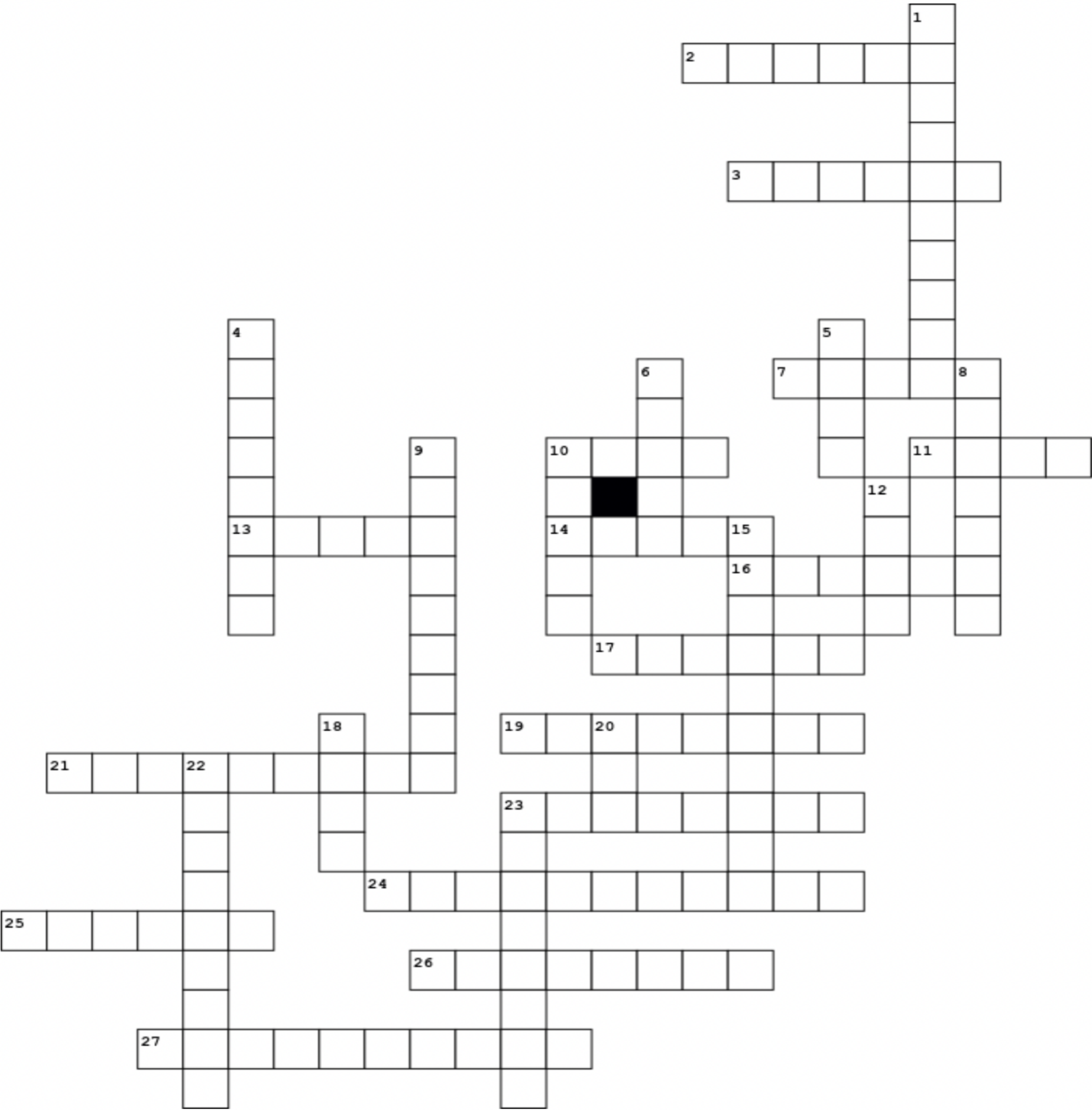
***It's been 10 years since that day - When will he return?!***



Levi Nichols

# Winter Crossword

(Clues on next page)





### Across

2. Spike that your tongue sticks to
3. To do after the snowfall
7. Keeps your feet warm
10. White blanket that covers dirt
11. Worn-over clothes to keep warm
13. Built from snow bricks
14. A common misspelling of a place that is always cold
16. Shimmering lights in the sky
17. Riding an inflated ring down a hill
19. A storm that has an ice cream treat named after it
21. Fingers turn white, then black
23. Downhill
24. Dangerously low body temperature
25. Carve an eight in the ice with these
26. Wooden sled
27. Vehicle for traveling over snow

### Down

1. Red and white swirls
4. Below 32 in America, below 0 in the UK
5. A warm liquid meal in a pot
6. Creeps up windows
8. White lumps with black eyes
9. Tiny ice crystal
10. Wraps around your face
12. Clear the roads
15. A form of economic structure where private owners own businesses
18. Light this to stay toasty
20. Easy to slip on
22. Teeth clicking together
23. Pack together and throw

## Season's Greetings from the Newspaper Team!

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