

Students paint the town in Christmas season cheer

By Hillary Gavan hgavan@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Wednesday, November 27, 2013 10:00 am

“Gingerbread Man” was on the run from the nefarious “Santa Panda” Tuesday morning on the windows of the Beloit Daily News.

Beloit Memorial High School (BMHS) AP art students and Art Club members painted business windows throughout downtown Beloit on Tuesday as they were drumming up clever narratives on their colorful creations.

Students Chance Butler, Mikalia Wood, Keana Santiago, Dietrich Heiss, Ellie Woodman and Gabbi Fusco were at the Daily News and explaining their vision of a very hungry Santa Panda, already munching on the presents under the tree. Chance had put the sinister panda in snakeskin boots and a Gucci belt. The spirited group of artists also made sure to include a copy of a newspaper with a headline of “Santa coming to town” with a threatening picture of the Grinch on the loose.

The budding artists explained how the group wanted a Christmas theme with cute characters, but nothing too cliché. The scene was covered in a snowstorm, candy cane, snowflakes and presents.

After their art was completed at the Daily News, the crew was headed to Suds O’Hanahan’s where they were going to paint Santa sipping red and green eggnog before consulting with a reindeer about his transportation home.

“Santa asks the reindeer, ‘What did I just do?’ Chance said. “Santa maybe we should get a taxi.”

The group of 20 students were also going to be painting at the Beloit Post Office, Bushel & Peck’s and other local businesses.

The students agreed they all loved being involved with art at the high school and hope to incorporate their creativity in their future careers.

“I’ve been doing art for a long time. It’s a passion,” said Keana.

Keana said she hopes to go to cosmetology school in Beloit to study fashion and art and open her own spa downtown some day.

Dietrich Heiss, who was painting candy canes and snowflakes said he hopes to study economics and political science and possibly work at a newspaper. Although he isn't in art, he said Carpenter enlisted him earlier in the day and he thought it would be fun.

Chance said he hopes to become a video game designer.

Gabbi said she joined Art Club as a new student at BMHS, and hoped it would be a way to connect with others. She said her teacher was very welcoming to her.

"It was a good experience when going through the pressures of a new school," Gabbi said.

Mikalia and Keana said Carpenter's teaching methods were anything but orthodox, but noted she always gives them straight forward guidance and advice.

"It's a pretty fun class and we get to express ourselves," Keana said.