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# Students Hold Tribute to Victims in Connecticut

DECEMBER 20TH 2012 BY BETH FARRAH

## Students Hold Tribute to Victims in Connecticut

Written by SMT Writer Beth Farrah, Essex, MO - The Richland High School and Junior High had a busy last day of school before the students were released for Christmas Break. Although everyone was excited for Christmas and the gifts they would give and receive, they all took a good look at the people around them and held a tribute to the students just like them, who were lost in the shooting in Connecticut earlier last week. It's safe to say that it was a heart touching day for the high school students and the staff members.

The day started off with the first ever Reindeer Games, hosted by Music and Band Director, Amber Duley, to get the kids in the Christmas spirit by wearing tacky Christmas sweaters and playing festive games with a Christmassy feel. The students enjoyed many of the games including the Wreath Relay Race, Snowman Bowling, the Candy Cane String Race, and even a giant ping-pong tournament. The students who finished the Minute to Win It games the quickest received prizes and medals.

While the games were going on, a teacher and a few of her students were out in the back hallway blowing up red balloons. They blew up enough balloons so that each high school student and staff member would be able to have one. On the balloons, they wrote the names of the twenty children that were killed, along with the handful of teachers that risked their lives to save them.

When the Reindeer Games were finished, the students met in the

</images/Beth's Pictures/Connecticut Tribute - bay.jpg>

back hallway near the Bullpen, a closed in outside area in the center of the school, and

each took a balloon. The Vice President of FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), Elizabeth Farrah, said a prayer for the hurting families that had lost a loved one. The President of FFA (Future Farmers of America), Baylee Taylor, read a heart touching poem called 'Twas Eleven Days Before Christmas', which is a rewritten version of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas', that was written the day after the tragedy in Connecticut.

The students gathered in the cold wind in a giant circle with a cloud of red balloons above their heads. Baylee Taylor read off the name of each child and teacher that was written on the balloons and began to read another poem called 'The Field Trip', which is also a poem that was dedicated to the children involved on that sad day.

Earlier in the week, on Wednesday, the Richland FCA group went out to the flag pole to return it to its full mass instead of holding their normal meeting in the high school science classroom. The students held a group prayer for the protection of their school and the schools around them and for the families that were hurting in Connecticut. Richland's superintendent, Frank Killian, gave the group of students some wise words as he raised the flag up to the top of the pole.

"The past will always hurt us," Killian had announced as the flag moved into the sky, "But today is a new day and we will make it a great one."

/images/Beth's Pictures/Connecticut Tribute - balloons.jpg

On the count of three, with those wise words in their

minds, the students let go of the strings and watched the balloons float away as many cried again for our nation's great loss. Even though it is important to know that time will heal each and every one of us, we will always remember the tragic day in Connecticut at Sandy Hook Elementary School and to pray for the safety of the students that are still in school all across our country.

*All pictures above are credited to Janie King*

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