

taft times

Winter 2019

Northern Illinois University Lorado Taft Field Campus

Oregon, IL

Welcome Our New Staff Member!!!

This winter we have had the pleasure of welcoming our newest staff member to the team, Alex! Alex is an intern here at Taft and graduated last December from Northern Illinois University with a degree in elementary education. She was kind enough to help us out this past summer with summer camps, so she is not a complete stranger to Lorado Taft. But, to introduce Alex even better, we asked her a few questions...

1) **What was your favorite food as a child?**
homemade lasagna

2) **What is one of your favorite quotes?**
"Be the change you wish to see in the world." ~Mahatma Gandhi

3) **What's your favorite indoor/outdoor activity?**
Indoor - board games; outdoor - swimming

4) **What sound do you love?**
Water running down a creek

5) **What smell do you love?**
Fresh baked cookies

6) **What is your favorite time of day/ day of the week/ month of the year?**
Mornings; Friday; July

7) **If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?**
How to play an instrument



8) **If you could be any fictional character, who would you choose?**
Cat woman

9) **When you have 30 min of free time, how do you pass the time?**
Going on a walk

10) **What would you name the autobiography of your life?**
'The Life of a Rainbow'

New Year, New Resolutions: Simple Steps To A More Eco-Friendly 2019

It's a new year, which means it is time again to review our goals from the previous year and create new goals to make this year even better. For 2019, we would like to challenge you to live more eco-friendly. If we all make small changes, it will help make a much larger, positive impact on the earth. Here are some simple suggestions to make your 2019 more eco-friendly:

1) **Buy less** – And when you do have to buy, try to buy local, organic, fair trade, or even reused.

2) **Reuse** – Before throwing something out, think of possible ways to reuse it. And if you can't, someone else might have an idea. Another alternative to throwing something out is giving it to a thrift store or listing it online at Freecycle.

3) **Recycle** – Besides recycling glass, aluminum, and certain plastics, be sure to find reputable places to dispose of old electronics. Sometimes schools and other local organizations hold electronics recycling events. If that's not an option, check Earth 911 for resources for recycling electronics.

4) **Switch to non-toxic cleaners** – Method and Seventh Generation are two popular brands, but you can also make your own cleaners. Baking soda and white vinegar work as great cleaners!

5) **Buy rechargeable batteries** – Having a recharging station and rechargeable batteries reduces waste and saves you money.

6) **Warm your body, not your house** - Instead of cranking up the heat, put on warmer clothes and open blinds to let the sunlight help warm your house. This is also a great way to save on heating or electricity costs too!
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Winter Adaptations

It's that time again! Time to try and survive the bitter cold and snowy months of winter. While it may seem that animals have a very different method to handling the winter, you may be surprised to find we have many methods in common.

Humans

- * **Hot showers and warm baths** - There's nothing quite like taking a nice, steaming shower or a relaxing, hot bath to help warm you up after a long day out in the cold, especially when you are chilled to the bone.



- * **Snow birds** - What better way to deal with the cold weather than skipping it completely. Many people will travel to warm places like Florida, California, or Arizona and stay there for the entire winter season. We call these people "snow birds."



- * **Snow forts and blankets** - Snow is a great insulator and so are blankets! Some people, like those native to the far north, build shelters out of snow to stay warm for the winter.



While others prefer to bury themselves in their own insulating blankets to help stay warm during the winter.

- * **Grin and bear it** - There are those few special people who somehow seem immune to the cold or know how to grin and bear. Maybe you know of or are one of those people who believe shorts are not meant for just the warm summer months but should also make an appearance in the winter as well.



Animals

- * **Take a warm soak** - The Japanese macaques (also known as the snow monkey) bathe in hot springs. This behavior is more commonly done in the winter than summer, so it's safe to assume that the monkeys are really just using the hot springs to warm up.



- * **Migrate to warmer environments** - Many different types of animals tend to take this route when it comes to surviving the winter.

Though it may seem like the easiest option, it requires a lot of energy to move far enough to reach a warmer area. The gray whale migrates about 12,500 miles, the desert locust travels about 2,800 miles, the monarch migrates up to 2,000 miles, and the caribou travels about 700 miles!



- * **Hide out under the snow** - Snow acts as an insulator which many invertebrates, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and even birds take advantage of. Between the snow and the ground is the subnivean layer, which provides protection and warmth as well as some vegetation on which these animals use to live.



- * **Use antifreeze** - Wood frogs, which are found throughout much of North America, survive the freezing temperatures by producing their own antifreeze that they create through combining their higher levels of sugar, urea (a urine waste product), and an unidentified chemical in their body.



<https://www.sciencenews.org/blog/wild-things/eight-ways-animals-survive-winter>



Humans

- * Winter weight - During the winter time, our bodies tend to naturally crave carbohydrates and fats.



These extra carbohydrates and fats are needed because our bodies need more fuel in order to stay warm. It takes a lot of energy to keep your body warm in the winter. In addition, an increased fat layer will help to keep you warm.

- * Sleepiness - The cold weather can really take a lot out of a person. It is a lot more work moving around with all those extra layers on, and it takes a lot of energy to keep your body warm. In addition, we tend to stay inside more during the winter, which reduces our exposure to the sun and our intake of vitamin D. All of those factors combine to make us feel tired during the winter.



- * Adapt to getting up when it's still dark - Daylight grows shorter during the winter months, which means we have to adjust to waking up when it is still dark out and possibly change our late afternoon and evening activities due to an earlier sunset.



- * Congregating and huddling - To help stay warm during the winter months we tend to want to huddle together and congregate with others. For example, when waiting in line outside or at a hockey game, we tend to sit or stand closer to conserve our body heat. Or, if there is a warming house or fire available, we tend to congregate together around that source of warmth.



Animals

- * Stock up for the winter - Many animals survive the cold by stocking up on food, fat, or both. Squirrels, like many animals, will start fattening up for the winter in the fall, but they also start collecting nuts to store as food for the winter.



- * Slow down - In order to conserve energy, many animals go in to a state of hibernation or torpor. Hibernation is a voluntary state that reduces body temperature, slows breathing, lowers heart rate, reduces metabolic rate, and can last for several days, weeks, or months. Torpor is an involuntary state that lowers body temperature, breathing rate, heart rate, and metabolic rate but only lasts for a short time (i.e. minutes, hours, or a couple of days). Black bears go into torpor to help survive the winter months.



- * Adapt to the darkness - Reindeer that live north of the Arctic Circle survive the dark months of winter by being able to detect ultraviolet light (which helps in dim conditions) and by changing the color of their tapetum lucidum, the part of the eye that reflects light (which increases the eye's sensitivity).



- * Huddle together for warmth - Many animals conserve body heat by sticking close together. But none have mastered this technique like the emperor penguins in Antarctica. These penguins have discovered the optimal distance for huddling, and if this space is compromised, it sets off a wave motion through the huddle, similar to cars moving in a traffic jam.



New Year, Continued...

- 7) Stop using disposable dishes and bring your own bag – Instead of disposable, use real dishes, reusable containers, and reusable lunch bags. Bring your own reusable bags to the store to skip out on the plastic bags.
- 8) Drink more water – Reduce the waste produced from buying bottled beverages. Instead, invest in a reusable bottle and drink more water.

- 9) Wash your clothes in cold water – Most washing machines and detergents do a decent job cleaning your clothes without heated water.

- 10) Get off junk mail lists – Junk mail is annoying and a waste of resources. Opt out of credit card offers through www.optoutprescreen.com and further decrease your junk mail by going to https://www.directmail.com/mail_preference/ and <https://dmchoice.thedma.org/register.php> to decrease direct mail offers.



THE ZERO ORT REPORT!!!

- 16 ♦ Latin
- 12 ♦ Chappell x 3
- 8 ♦ Westmont x 2
- 4 ♦ Daniel Wright—white
- 0 ♦ Daniel Wright—green x 2
- 8 ♦ Warren
- 4 ♦ Orangeville x 2
- 4 ♦ Galena x 3
- 0 ♦ Baker Demonstration

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Congratulations to all of our schools who got zero ort for at least one meal while at Lorado Taft! Many schools were very close, and we know the students worked really hard to achieve their goals. More importantly, we hope that the idea of zero ort is something you and your students will take back with you to share with family and friends.



Winter Highlights
 Follow us on Instagram @loradotaftcampus, Twitter @NIULoradotaft, and Facebook for more updates about what we are up to.

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