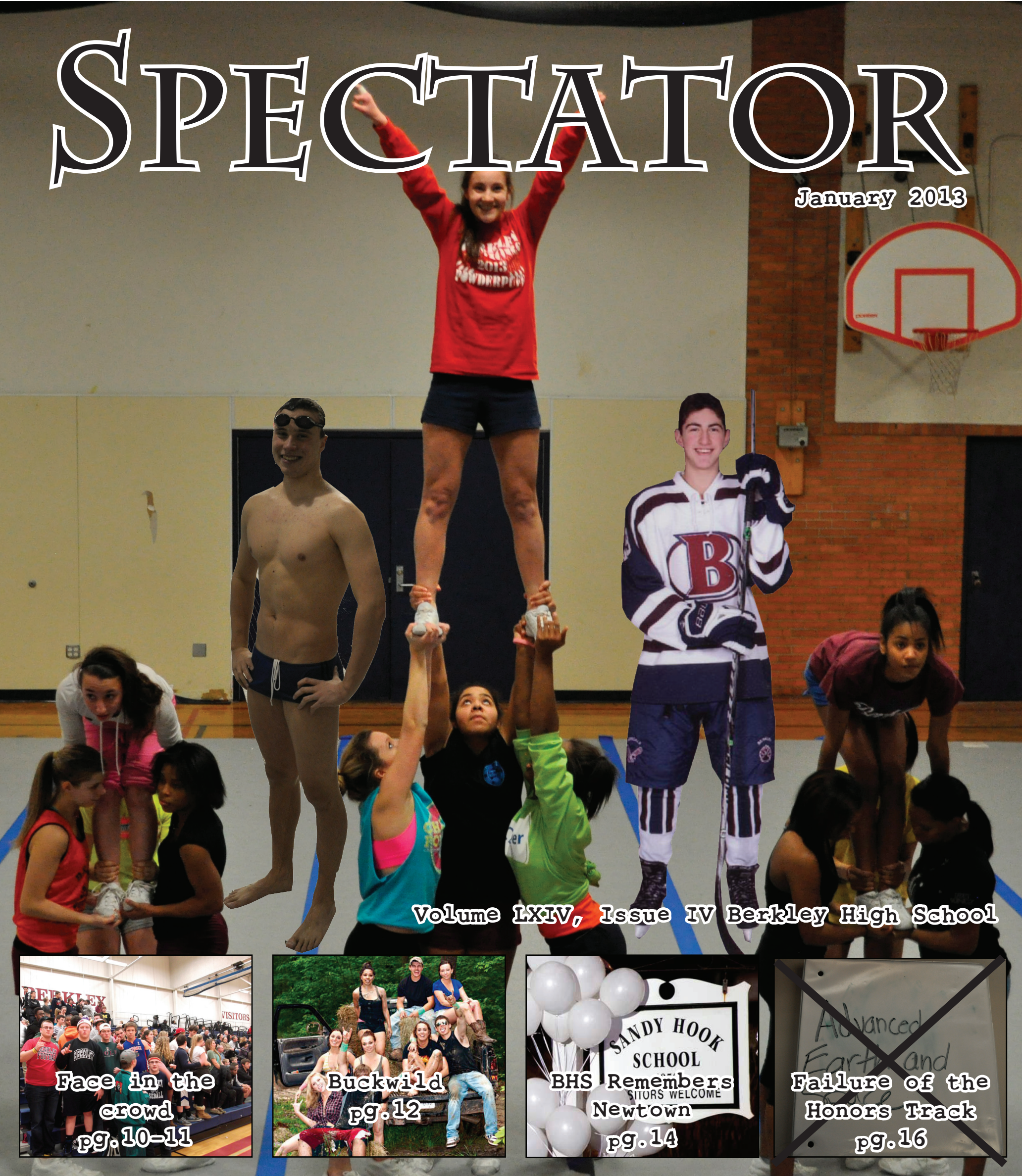


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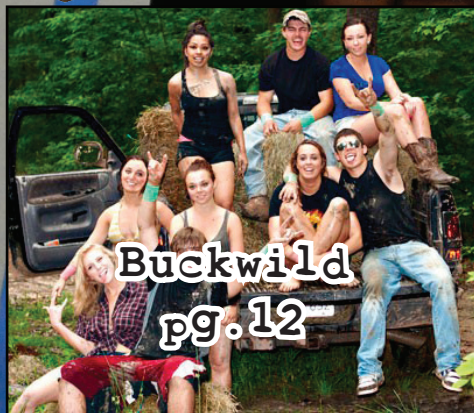
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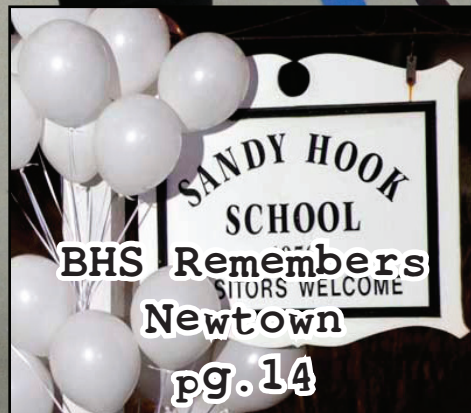
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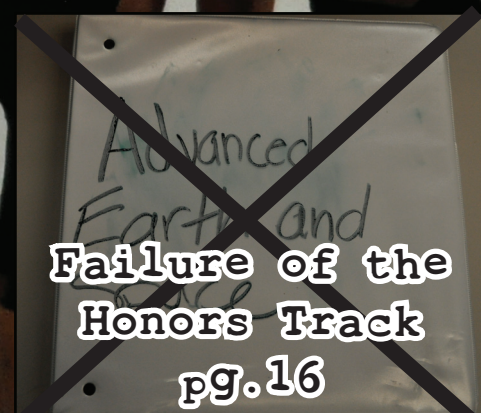
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Newtown
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Failure of the
Honors Track
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Bless you boys

Bennett Hart, '16 Business/Ad Manager

A Euchre tournament was held at BHS in December. Eight teams composed of students and teachers at BHS competed for one great prize: \$45 and a T-shirt. Senior Mitchell Hart and junior Jake Rothman won the tournament.

The tournament started with pool play, which consisted of two groups with four 2-person teams each. Based on the results, the top two then advanced up a bracket. Then, the four remaining teams dueled it out in sudden death semi finals. The winners of the semis were then set up to play in the finals.

Hart and Rothman had an interesting path to the finals. In group play, they won their first game. But later, they did not only lose a game, but also had a mere +4 point differential. When asked why they struggled in group play Hart said, "At the end of the we day didn't give 110 percent, we were a little too confident coming in and we just didn't come out on top." Rothman said, "We were overpowered by Zoë Mendelson and Justin Rogers because they played super aggressive and we did not get good cards." Luckily for Hart and

Rothman, they were able to pull out their a-game in group play in order to clinch a spot in the semi-finals.

During the semi-finals Hart and Rothman played juniors Adam Israel and Curtis Carne. Rothman said, "We already beat them; they were trying to get revenge and get into the finals." He continued to say, "We fell behind early but then we won a lot of games in a row and that allowed us to win".

Going into the finals, Hart and Rothman were on a roll. Unfortunately, Hart fell ill before this match. Rothman was forced to pick up a previously eliminated player, Ian Miller. Rothman and Miller played Mr. Fadoir and junior Alijah Jonah. Fadoir and Jonah also lost a tough game in group play, but were able to overcome it and advance to the finals. Rothman said, "We overpowered them. They only won one game against us." Hart and Rothman (with help from Miller) won the tournament, but more importantly everyone won a good time.

Marching band gets unique opportunity

Emma Weisberger '16, Circulation Manager

On Dec. 22 the BHS Marching Band had the opportunity to play at a University of Michigan women's basketball game. Opportunities were provided to many in marching band such as playing at a college event (and learning the fight song), playing in an arena, and being on TV.

This was the first time playing at a college event and in a large arena for the BHS band. Junior Allie Archambault said, "It was new and exciting to play for a college crowd, in an arena, and with some college students." The band played before and after the game. Although the promised half time performance did not work out, the positive aspects of this experience outweighed the bad.

The Big Ten network showed the game on TV, and with it, the marching band. The fact that many college students were on break led to the attendance of the game not being very high. However, this allowed the marching band to be easily recognized in the seats on TV because they took up a significant amount of space. The experience was exciting for all members for many reasons, but especially because it was the first time many of them had ever been on TV.

Even if it was not a perfect experience, band members were still appreciative and thankful to have this rare chance of playing at a college event. Freshman Abbie Baker said, "It opened our eyes to college marching band and what is like to play at college events." After snatching this rare opportunity, the upcoming achievements and performances of the marching band appear to be unlimited.

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Look for senior Steven Reinholm and junior Jenna Apostol hidden within these pages. Once you find both, bring your paper to Ms. Emily Mullins in room 165. If you are the first to do so, you will be hidden in the next issue.

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2012-2013 BHS PTSA Meeting Dates

March 19, 2013
April 16, 2013
May 21, 2013

BHS Collaborative Center 7:00 p.m.
Hope to see you there

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Driver Education Segment One: Groves High School (Room B-24)

FEB 26-MAR 21, 2013	Feb 26,27,28, Mar 4,6,7,12,13,14,19,20,21, 2013 5:30-7:30 pm	GHS213 seg 1
MAR 26-APR 18, 2013	Mar 26,27,28, Apr 2,3,4,9,10,11,16,17,18, 2013 5:30-7:30 pm	GHS313 seg 1
APR 8-25, 2013	Apr 8,9,10,11,15,16,17,18,22,23,24,25, 2013 5:30-7:30 pm	GHS413 seg 1
MAY 20-JUNE 6, 2013	May 20,21,22,23,28,29,30,31, June 3,4,5,6, 2013 5:30-7:30 pm	GHS513 seg 1

Driver Education Segment Two: Groves High School (Room B-25)

FEB 19,20,21, 2013	T, W, Th	5:30-7:30 pm	GHS213 seg 2
MAR 19,20,21, 2013	T, W, TH	5:30-7:30 pm	GHS313 seg 2

These classes will meet at 6785 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills, Suite 125

SEGMENT ONE CLASSES

SEGMENT TWO CLASSES

FEB 9-MAR 17, 13	Feb 9,10,16,17,23,24, Mar 2,3,9,10,16,17 11:15 a-1:15 pm	JAN 19,20,26, 2013 11:15a-1:15 pm	Sat, Sun, Sat BFH113 seg 2
FEB 15-26, 2013	Feb 15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26 6:30-8:30 pm	FEB 19,20,21, 2013 9-11 am	T, W, Th BFH213 seg 2
MAR 28-APR 10, 13	Mar 28,29,30, Apr 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10 6:30-8:30 pm	APR 2,3,4, 2013 9-11 am	T, W, Th BFH413 seg 2
APR 13-MAY 19, 13	Apr 13,14,20,21,27,28, May 4,5, May 11,12,18,19, 2013 9-11 am	APR 20,21,27, 2013 11:15 a-1:15 pm	Sat, Sun, Sat BFH413SASU s 2
		June 18,19,20, 2013	T, W, Th

*****2 choices for times: 12-2 pm (BFH613 seg 2) or 4-6 pm(BFH613A seg 2)**

Driver Education Segment One: Seaholm High School (Room A105)

JAN 28-FEB 14, 2013	Jan 28,29,30,31, Feb 4,5,6,7,11,12,13,14, 2013 5-7 pm	SEA113A seg 1
MAR 4-21, 2013	Mar 4,6,7,8,11,12,13,14,18,19,20,21, 2013 5-7 pm	SEA313 seg 1
APR 15-MAY 3, 2013	Apr 15,16,17,18,22,23,24,25,29,30, May 1,3, 2013 5-7 pm	SEA413 seg 1
MAY 6-23, 2013	May 6,7,8,9,13,14,15,16,20,21,22,23, 2013 5-7 pm	SEA513 seg 1
MAY 28-JUNE 12, 2013	May 28,29,30,31, June 3,4,5,6,7,10,11,12, 2013 5-7 pm	SEA513A seg 1

Driver Education Segment Two: Seaholm High School (Room A105)

JAN 28,29,30, 2013	M, T, W	7-9 pm	SEA113A seg 2
FEB 11,12,13, 2013	M, T, W	7-9 pm	SEA213 seg 2
FEB 26,27,28, 2013	T, W, Th	7-9 pm	SEA213A seg 2
MAR 11,12,13, 2013	M, T, W	7-9 pm	SEA313 seg 2

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR OTHER DATES AND LOCATIONS

www.appledriving.com

Note: Class dates and times subject to change



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Just keep swimmin'

Veronica Marchese '13, Assitant Editor-in-Chief

In the year 2000, the 24th annual Marathon became the 1st annual Swimathon. The fundraiser, Swimathon, which is all night swimming and diving event, has been gathering money for both the boys and girls swim and dive teams since the 70s.

Swimmers and divers ask their friends and families to pledge money for either per length he or she swims (or dives) or as a flat rate for completing the traditionally all-night event. Participants ask friends to come act as their counters, who sit and fill in bubbles per length swam. Although this could be construed as boring, friends are willing to help because swimmers lengths help the teams receive money for various things such as new starting blocks, timing equipment, lane lines, etc.

This year the Swimathon is an all-day affair, going from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.. This is only the second year this is occurring, other than in 2011 when the event also took place at this time, and for no particular reason other than Head Coach Becka Jenson decided so. This decision has caused uproar among swimmers, divers, and counters alike. As senior and captain of the boys' team Noah Duchan put it, "You realize, 'it's two in the afternoon on a Saturday, why the [heck] am I here?' When in years before you would realize 'I'm at school at two in the morning swimming, this is kinda neat.'" He said, "I swim at two in the afternoon on Saturdays all the time, it's not as fun."

Aside from swimming, participants play games, sports, eat lots of food — most of which is donated by local businesses and families — and just hang out with their friends. The fun of doing all of this at night simply will not happen this year, but something even more special transpires for seniors on both teams during Swimathon. The seniors paint a block on the "Wall of Fame" in the pool area, which dates back to the late 70s, way before the pool was redone to the current state it is in now. In order to guarantee that their blocks are aesthetically pleasing, most seniors, specifically the ones with the best looking blocks, plan what they want theirs to look like ahead of time. Senior and captain of the girls team, Kelsy Murphy attested to this and said, "I have to make sure it's amazing because I'm leaving my mark on Berkley like my sister and mom did; it's a family tradition." Swimathon is not only a family tradition for many, is it also a tradition in Berkley history. For many years the Swimathon has been a way of giving money to the teams as well as a bonding experience for those on the team, especially those freshmen who just joined and maybe are not as close with everyone on the team.



Photos courtesy of BHS swim and dive photo albums, 1970-1989



Photos courtesy of Noah Duchan

Eating disorders: Behind the scenes

Madison Huff '15, Bull's Eye Editor

When referencing eating disorders people often refer to models that either puke or starve themselves to stay skinny, but there is more to having an eating disorder than this stereotypical reasoning. An eating disorder, by definition, is an unhealthy relationship with food and weight that interferes with many areas of a person's life, such as relationships, school, extracurricular activities, and their overall well-being. This may not seem like a major issue or illness due to lack of knowledge, but this is a serious disease that is hard to prevent and even harder to overcome.

The pressure to be skinny is not solely derived from the commonly blamed sources like magazines and television, but it often comes from people's internal and external environments as well. Although the cause of developing an eating disorder depends on the individual, there are a few reasons that are said to be the most common. The biggest cause in today's society seems to be control (or lack thereof). In other words girls, even guys, feel that the only thing that they can control is what goes in and comes out of their bodies. Oddly enough, this gives them a sense of stability, a sense of control, regardless of the chaos that surrounds them in their everyday lives.

Another trigger, besides the need for control, is the fear of becoming 'fat'. However, someone with an eating disorder's version of fat tends to be what most people see as being healthy or even thin in extreme cases. Those who develop anorexia tend to see themselves differently than they actually appear. For instance, a girl who is 5'4 and 115 pounds would appear to weigh 200 pounds in her eyes. This makes them look into the mirror and see themselves as their worst nightmare. In other words, it causes them to perceive themselves in a way that will prevent them from wanting help in fear staying that size. It may not seem like it, but such pressures are even here at BHS.

Having an eating disorder can not only take a toll on you mentally, but physically as well. Especially in severe cases, the disease can cause hospitalization or even death. But to people with said illness, staying skinny is their number one priority, risks aside. "I knew my eating disorder was making me sick, but I couldn't have cared less," an anonymous source said. Then there are the psychological effects that come with having an eating disorder. Becoming so consumed and preoccupied with the illness can cause you to become dependent on it, almost like it is an addiction. The source who would like to remain anonymous said, "After doing it for so long, my disorder, in some weird way, was like a best friend to me because I could always turn to it, and it would be there for me no matter what."

These issues are happening everywhere you look, regardless of if you can see it or not. BHS is no exception, so be mindful of your actions and comments towards others because for all you know that one thing could cause someone to reach their breaking point.

"After doing it for so long, my disorder, in some weird way, was like a best friend to me because I could always turn to it, and it would be there for me no matter what."

– Anonymous

8 THE SPECTATOR

Behind the glass: A look into Berkley's aquatic life

Olivia Wood '14, Freelance Writer

As the school day stretches on and students scuttle from class to class, the spectacular marine aquarium in the hallway adjacent to the T frequently goes unobserved. Oftentimes, students and staff are far too hurried with the day's activities to stop and appreciate the aquarium and all of the hard work that the Zoology class puts into making it such a pristine aquatic environment. As a result of their efforts, the students at BHS are able to enjoy over 50 different species of fish and corals, each one more unique than the last.

Not many people are aware of the maintenance required to provide a sufficient environment to the aquarium's inhabitants. Because it is a 150+ gallon saltwater tank, extra precautions must be taken to ensure the health of the fish and corals. Besides feeding the fish daily, regular water tests must be conducted to maintain proper nitrate and ammonia levels. In addition, the protein skimmer must be

cleaned—a difficult task for most due to the filth. If these responsibilities were neglected, the aquarium's health would be put in jeopardy. The Zoology class, especially teacher Mr. Scott Doty, invests much of their time into ensuring the tank is healthy. Doty, who has been the primary caretaker of the tank since it was brought to BHS in 2001, spends countless hours a week maintaining the health and cleanliness of the tank. Although he spends much of his own time on the aquarium, Doty credits the students of his Zoology class for taking care of the many varieties of fish.

In addition to adding more life to the sometimes lifeless hallways of BHS, the fish tank serves many other educational and enriching purposes. Living in Michigan, many students may have never had the opportunity to see an ocean or ocean life before. In lieu of traveling hundreds of miles, one can experience a little piece of the ocean by visiting the BHS

aquarium. Also, the unspoiled corals in the tank serve as an important reminder of our responsibility to protect the ocean's wildlife, particularly the coral reefs. As of late, the reefs have deteriorated more and more, this being a direct result of both global climate change and overall human carelessness in regards to ecosystem destruction.

Before it was brought to BHS in 2001, the Zoology curriculum did not include the study of aquatic organisms. After it was put in, though, Doty decided to incorporate the tank into the course by requiring students to care of separate tanks in small groups in addition to the large aquarium in the T. At the beginning of the year, students are divided into groups of four-five and are given a biotope, whether it be South America or African Cichlid. Based upon the assigned biotope, each group is then responsible for recreating said biotope by researching fish and all things necessary to keep

the fish alive and healthy. Throughout the year, the groups are required to care for the tanks. Senior Anna Karpinsky, who is a member of the class, reflects that "caring for the fish is fun and hands-on, which makes it much easier to learn about them." Many students agree, saying that the fish add life to the class, both literally and figuratively. During the summer months, while students and staff are out on their break's many adventures, Doty remains local so he is better able to make the bi-weekly summer visits to care for the fish tank.

BHS stands out as being one of the few schools to have a marine aquarium in their building, especially one as vibrant and varied as this one. The tank is an interactive learning tool that has improved many aspects of BHS. So, the next time you are rushing past the tank, take a moment to pause and appreciate all of the hard work and dedication that goes into making it an exceptional addition to these halls.

Photo by Jake Kreinbring

A day in the life: Cold War edition

Rostyslav Yeshchenko '14, Sports Editor and Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

Soveit Union:

5:00 am — Wake up to the USSR's national anthem followed by daily announcements

5:00-5:05 — Pray to the communist gods: Stalin, Lenin, and Marx.

5:05-5:10 — Go to the bathroom, brush my teeth with Victory Paste, and take a shower.

5:10-5:30 — Equality Breakfast: 100 grams of daily eggs ration, 20 grams of chocolate, 200 mL of milk, and 750 mL of vodka

5:31 — Board the Work Bus (the bus that collects workers and transports them to their working destination, often a factory or a coal mines).

6:30 — Arrive at the factory with the comrades.

6:31-6:33 — Collectively engage in the Two Minutes Hate

6:33-6:40 — Drink vodka and prepare for work

6:40 am - 1:00 pm — Work as the Senior Rock Breaking Comrade

1:00 -1:20 — Equality Lunch: 100 grams of vegetables, 1/8th of the 200 grams sandwich, 750mL of vodka.

1:20 -7:00 — More work in the name of Motherland!

7:00 -7:30 — The Work Bus arrives; board the bus.

7:30 -8:00 — Equality Dinner: 50 grams of potatoes, 150 grams of meat, 750 ml of vodka.

8:00 - 9:00 — Volunteer at the local military community center. Side-note: I almost finished building my own nuclear missile.

9:00 - 9:02 — Two More Minutes of Hate

9:02 -10:00 — Drink more vodka

10:00 — Pass out on the couch drunk while listening to a mix tape of Stalin's speeches

United States of 'Murika:

10:00 am — Wake up.

10:30 — Get in car and drive to the diner for a breakfast consisting of three dozen eggs, a bushel of hash browns, one pig worth of ham products, and a 40 oz diet coke (because I'm trying to lose weight).

11:15 — Quick stop at the gun store before prayer group.

11:30 — Prayer group with Pastor Jones.

12:00 pm — After prayer group, a stop at McDonalds for ten supersized Big Mac combos and another supersized diet coke.

1:00 — Off to the racetrack for tonight's NASCAR Nationwide Series race.

3:30 — After consuming a plethora of fried foods and about a Kegs worth of Bud Light the drivers start their engines.

3:45 — A left turn.

3:46 — A left turn.

3:47 — A left turn.

3:48 — An exhilarating left turn.

4:15 — The first crash, three left dead, two cars on fire gotta Instagram and Tweet that s***.

9:00 — Race ends.

11:00 — Finally out of the parking lot.

11:15 — Go to work as a night time greeter at Wal-Mart.

1:00 am — Purchase a Diet Coke from the pop machine in the break room. Too bad they don't have any 2 liters.

5:00 — Work ends.

5:15 — Go home cannot decide whether to watch The Honey Boo Boo marathon or Buckwild.

7:00 — Slip into bed for the night.



Both Captain USSR and Captain America love how their countries' citizens spend their days.

Photo edited by Jake Rothman

Unknown holidays of 2013

Madison Huff '15, Bull's Eye Editor

Every year citizens around the world look forward to celebrating holidays like Halloween or New Year's, but have you ever wondered what other holidays there are? Well, wonder no more. Below are some interesting, yet obscure holidays that should excite you throughout the year.

Peculiar People Day - Jan. 10: Peculiar People Day is a day created to honor unique people. This day is one where people can try to look for the good traits in your peculiar acquaintances. If you have an odd personality, this is your day to be honored and appreciated. Chances are you will find something quite unusual about yourself, if you look hard enough. If you cannot find anything peculiar about yourself then give some recognition and admiration to your quirky friends and family.

Singles Awareness Day - Feb. 15: This holiday is for those who are single and ready to mingle. It is no coincidence that Singles Awareness Day is the after the heavily commercialized celebration of love and romance, known as Valentine's Day. However, if you are in between relationships or single, Valentine's Day can be a pretty sucky day. For you, singles, the day after Valentine's Day is your day. It is a chance to meet other lonely singles and give other random singles gifts. After learning about this holiday only one thing comes to mind, stranger danger!

Public Sleeping Day - Feb. 28: This day is an opportunity to sleep in public; people do not sleep in public all the time or anything. There are a whole lot of places to sleep while in the public eye, and today is the day to do it. You can sleep on a park bench, on a blanket at the beach, or you may opt to sleep on the job, but do so at your own risk. Wherever you choose to sleep, may it be peaceful and in front of tons of people.

Lost Sock Memorial Day - May 9: This holiday recognizes your drawer full of mis-matched socks. We never throw away our unmatched socks. After all, the missing sock may show up someday. On Lost Sock Memorial Day, I suggest you spend a little time (as little as possible) searching for those missing socks. After a brief search, in good "Memorial" spirit have a moment of silence reflecting upon how warm and comforting the missing socks were on your stinky toes. Then, by all means, get on with your life.

The curious case of a deferred student

Aaron Cohen '13, Senior Copy Editor

I knew it was coming. In fact, I was hoping for it. My grades were fine, not exceptional, and a deferral from the University of Michigan meant that I was still in the running towards potential enrollment next year. But it is still hard to explain the feeling in the pit of my stomach as I read the words “You should receive your final decision by mid-April” on my computer screen. For those whose plans are set for next year, the next four and a half months will fly by. For those whose future is not so certain—We sit. We work. We wait.

The thing is, at face value, being deferred isn't so bad. It means there's still hope. But hope comes with a price; the second that email hits your inbox, the importance of school increases exponentially. Suddenly, it's junior year all over again. Your grades—your *current* grades—are what will ultimately make the difference in your admissions decision. That's a lot of pressure.

Every quiz takes on a whole new level of importance. You approach tests with the same mindset as you would

the Zombie Apocalypse. Everything matters. The difference between 89.4 and 89.5 has never been more clear-cut, and you will fight for that .1 percent with every ounce of strength you have.

Of course, it's always more complicated than that. With every hour of hard work poured into your goal of potential admission, you are further committing to a cause that could lead to incredible disappointment. The crappiest of crappy days. Many, including myself, have entertained lifelong aspirations of attending a particular school. If, after working an extra four and a half months, rejection still ensues...Well, I don't even want to think about that.

But like it or not, a lot of us are in that boat. Stay strong, deferred-s. Keep your head up...not too long... and now plunge back into your textbook. This can be a stressful time, but know there's a light at the end of the tunnel. Not everyone wants to wear blue and maize next year, but hopefully by the end of this, we can all hail *ourselves* the victors valiant.

The league of extraordinary gentlemen

Jimmy Demery '13, Entertainment Editor and Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

By now faithful readers you have read three editions of The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, and you may be thinking “Wow, those guys sure seem to be something,” and you then may want to emulate some of the things gentlemen do. If so, try the following:

- Hold the door open for ladies and the elderly.
- Always offer a hanky to a person in need.
- Take a lesson from the English, drink tea (or other mugged beverages) with your pinky out.
- Don't kiss and tell.
- Don't use vulgar or perverse language.
- Be good to the children.
- Work hard to excel in all things you do.
- But don't brag about your success, be humble.

Let's start with the basics. First, gentlemen, don't kiss and tell which is a classic way the chivalrous male can demonstrate his maturity and respect for the other party he is involved with. Another universal example is the holding of doors for females and the elderly. No explanation needed. Now, being in the League of course implies excellence, but we in the League would never flaunt our achievements, you may not think so based on prior articles, but humility is an important virtue for the League.

Something that matters very much to the members of the League is giving back, and one way we do that is through philanthropy. Not only do we volunteer our extremely valuable time, expertise, and skill, but every available penny in our coffers is donated to charitable causes. While all these accomplishments are definitely deserving of some horn tooting, some key aspects of The League are modesty and humility. It is one thing to be an altruistic, giving person, but if you brag and rave about such things the act begins to lose its genuine good naturedness.

So there you have it, a short excerpt of the massive tome that is the guide of The League. This issue we deviated from our normal showcase of a particular gentlemen within our hallowed halls, but next month we will return with the most chivalrous, handsome, and scumtrulescent man possible.



Photos by Jake Kreinbring



Zack Lask demonstrating his gentlemanly tendencies by sipping tea and opening doors.

Restricted license: friend or foe?

Julia Pompilius '14, Freelance Writer

During the time of change, confusion, and oftentimes angst that is adolescence, one yearns most for freedom. This is often the root of all fights with parents, the cause of rebellion, and the reason for slipping grades. Perhaps the most anticipated leap towards freedom is getting one's driver's license. With a driver's license comes the ability to come and go as one pleases, independent of one's parents' schedules. Finally, teenagers can finally enjoy themselves without the constant looming presence of their parents over their shoulders. However, this long awaited freedom has been impeded by the state of Michigan's new restricted license.

The new law, which went into effect only last year, applies to those under 18 who have recently gotten their licenses. It prohibits them from driving between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. without someone 21 or older, and they are not allowed to drive more than one immediate family member, except when accompanied by someone 21 or older. There are some exceptions, which include going to or from work or school. A new driver under the age of 18 must wait until they turn one year older to enjoy full driving rights. Still, new drivers are left with very limited options when driving. After months, sometimes years, of practicing, hundreds of dollars spent on driver's training, a road test, and an increased insurance bill, kids are still not fully granted the right to drive. As is to be expected, this has created many obstacles for new drivers.

Junior Zac Schildcrout is not partial to this law. “Although I do see reason for it and I do abide by it, I feel like it's unfair to responsible drivers,” Schildcrout said. A new driver himself, Schildcrout has followed this law despite the detriment it has caused him. “It's tough, because night is when most people go out. 10 p.m. is a little early, 12 a.m. would be more reasonable,” he said. As Schildcrout suggested, perhaps negotiation is a possible solution.

However, whether or not one obeys this law is an entirely different question. Most new drivers, in fact, completely disregard this law. It is a secondary offense, thus the driver must be pulled over for some other offense, such as speeding. It is only then that the driver could be punished for breaking the regulations of the restricted license. If caught breaking these rules, offenders can have their license further restricted and may have to pay a fine.

Junior Morgan LaBarrie did not see this law as one that needed to be followed. “Sometimes there was a legitimate excuse for being out a little later than 10 p.m., like a movie ran late or you were out to dinner,” she reasoned. LaBarrie raises a good point; many events are unpredictable and could interfere with this law. As one who chose not to abide by this law, LaBarrie is currently in fine condition. No traumatic accidents have occurred, nor any tickets given.

Despite the common disregard of this new law, it may be for good reason. A Centers for Disease Control conducted a study with this law in effect and found a 38 percent drop in 16 and 17-year-old drivers involved in fatal accidents between 2004 and 2008. It is clear that this law has had some impact on the decrease in teenage automobile related deaths.

The truth is, teenagers lack experience needed to navigate the roads, which is why this law went into effect, but is it the age or the individual? Will a driver really lose all risk when they turn 17 or 18? Apparently, the state of Michigan knows the answer, but everyone else is unsure.

Faces in the crowd

Shelby Silver '14, Opinion Editor and Jake Kreinbring '15, Photo Editor

Berkley students, we know that all of you have your own little groups of friends that you usually hangout with. This is an attempt to get you out of your comfort zone and having you meet new people, we have randomly selected students by closing our eyes and flipping to a page. Through this extremely scientific process, we found three students that were asked questions that may or may not make them feel irked. We reached behind their façade and found out who they really are and what their deal truly is. Enjoy.

Jacob Hertzberg:



Junior Jacob Hertzberg, known to many as: Burger, Burgertown, Hershyberg, Herbert, Herb and Hersh is a self-proclaimed sandwich making fiend. This amazing, talented and handsome young man is a hard working sandwich maker at the delicious Potbelly's and "can make a sandwich a mile a minute." Now that you know Mr. Hertzberg a little better, he may not be quite as intimidating as he seemed before.

Meet Treman "Trey" Stuart. He is a short, blond haired kid in his first year of the high school. He has become a part of the marching band, is in drum line and has discovered his love for writing. He is a 14 year old man who loves sitting criss crossed apple sauce and enjoys some nice skiing during the Michigan winter. Treman spends his weekends and Thursday nights shredding up Mt. Holly and can often be seen doing backside misty 1260 Louie Kangs from 9-5 on the days mentioned. If you see him in the hallway, say hello.

Treman Stuart:



Olivia Weiland:



Presenting: Olivia Weiland. This classy junior is a lively waitress at Leo's Coney Island. She is a dynamic woman with blonde streaks in her hair that flow in the wind as she walks down the hallways of BHS. She dreams of one day moving away from Berkley to New York and hopes to wear striped sweaters all the time. What she would love to do most is spend all of her time with the extremely raunchy superhero, Batman. She is a woman that cannot be described in three words but is a woman that everyone should get to know.

From top: photos courtesy of facebook.com and by Jake Kreinbring

Random acts of kindness

When you as a student of Berkley High School walk down the hallway. You pass a whole slew of people you did not know existed, and every other type person who you share this school with. All of them are your family for seven hours a day for the whole school year. They are your family, so treat them as family. Hold the door for them, help pick up their stuff if they happen to drop it, and look after each other. In the wake of the Sandy Hook Shooting, I ask you, the Berkley student body, to perform random acts and help out your family, even if it is just saying hello to someone who you may not know. Embrace the ones around you. Be kind

Below are just some of the random acts of kindness that students and staff have been witness to at BHS and submitted to the *Spectator*.

"Society needs more people who are going to stand up for themselves and do what they believe in and not focus on other people. Society needs more people who are going to follow their own goals and just be their own person."
-Sophomore Leah Frankel

"Society needs more people who are loving and kind like Jodie Weichec."
- Junior Julia Wilkinson

Mr. Miller said a simple "Hello", "How are you?" and "Thank you" are itself small acts of kindness.

On Fri., Jan 11, 2013, Logan Donnelly stopped and helped the Anderson Middle School Crossing Guard who had been struck by a car. Logan remained by the man's side until the police arrived. Logan said his training as a Boy Scout helped him stay calm and cool-headed. Bravo, Logan!

"[A girl] complimented my shirt"
- Junior Austin Glass

"Zack took me to Benihana"
- Junior Jacob Myers

"Someone lent me a dollar"
- Freshman Jordan McGee

"Someone let me borrow their scarf because I was cold."
- Sophomore Eric Braun

"[Senior] Julia Goldsworthy made me chocolate chip cookies, and I LOVE chocolate chip cookies."
- Ms. Natalie Taylor

"Someone opened the door for me"
- Junior Olivia Wood

"The kindest thing anyone has ever done for me was when Clarissa Donnelly came and asked me if I wanted to go to lunch with her after I first came from Spain, it was one of my first times with American people."
- Junior Rocio Jiminez Naranjo

"People who are kind do things for others and not ask for anything in return"
- Freshman Hannah Baker

"Someone told me I'm pretty today"
- Junior Adam Israel

"The kindest thing I have done something for someone lately is bring Lilly a bagel in PA."
- Senior Amy Berry

"Eric Braun held the door open for me this morning."
- Sophomore Adam Edery

"While I was in Downtown Royal Oak, I left my keys in my car with the doors unlocked, and walked away for about an hour. So one of my friends caught out to me and gave me back my keys and told me I left my car unlocked, and they locked the door for me."
- Junior Justin Rogers

"A stranger came up to me when I was upset and told me that I should smile more because it is beautiful."
- Senior Olivia Anthony

"The world needs more people who take others feelings into consideration as well as their own."
- Freshman Alisia Walker

"Corey Lipton gave me a hug."
- Senior Tony Tenaglia

"Griffin gave a dollar."
- Freshman Drake Yolkiewicz

"Stapp made me the Facebook page"
- Junior TJ Bowers

"When someone is kind it means they are caring and people to be happy"
- Junior Jenna Apostol

"Kindness means treating people with respect and following the rule to treat others the way you would like to be treated."
- Freshman Jack Backow

"Marlee Rothman got me new air fresheners for my car."
- Senior Ian Kobernick

"I fell down the stairs at school and dropped my stuff, and my friend helped me pick all my stuff up off the floor."
- Junior Stepp Mayes

"The kindest thing I've done for someone lately is I purchased two Snickers bars for two boys in a class where I had difficulty setting up a documented camera and they've helped."
- Mrs Germaine

"In Royal Oak, my car door was left open but I was in the driver's seat, so I couldn't close it because it was the back door. So a very nice gentleman was walking down the street, opened my door, and slammed it for me so my door was not ajar."
- Junior Zack Segall

Just a "Couple" of Tips on Relationships

Lim-Lim Kobe '13, Freelance Writer

With Valentine's Day coming up, I see more and more couples turning up. Perhaps it happened on New Year's, or maybe it was something that was bound to happen for a while. However, being in high school, relationships aren't easy. The special "love-y-dovey" feeling may hold out for a while, but will it survive the little disagreements and the snarky remarks made by adults who say, "You don't know what love is," and "it's just a phase?" So, in light of Valentine's Day, I decided to ask some teachers, those who may have a bit more experience in the game of love, and ask them for relationship advice, in ten words or less.

Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Have a short memory.

(Maybe out to dinner or something! *wink wink*)

(Relationships with lots of drama tend to hardly ever work out happily.)

Do what will make you happy.

(This is a really important one! If you're not happy, then the relationship won't be productive and it will stress both parties out. With school and all, stress is the last thing we need.)

If it's not meant to be, it's not meant to be.

(Remember to always keep looking forward because we have our whole lives ahead of us!)

Don't forget birthdays!

(Cheesy dollar store party hats are highly recommended!)

Dating in high school is a waste of your time.

(And also makes high school a lot more bearable.)

Don't expect anything (present-wise).

(So surprise them!)

Photos by Jake Kreinbring, Lindsay McFem and Josh Radom

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Should BHS buck it?**Controversy escalates over MTV's BuckWild**

Josh Radom '16, Assistant Opinion Editor

As most of the BHS student community knows, MTV's hit show *Jersey Shore* has come to an end with the coming of Snooki's baby, but MTV, in attempt to keep its top spot on the pop culture ladder of fame, has released a new show titled *BuckWild*. *BuckWild*, like *Jersey Shore* is a reality show, but instead of New Jersey's "guidos" the camera follows a group of young rednecks in West Virginia as they live their lives full of drama, fighting, and ridiculous stunts. Along with its pre-viewing hype and release there has been controversy over the show as a whole and how it depicts the citizens of West Virginia.

BuckWild premiered on Jan. 3 with an audience of close to 2.5 million viewers. In the months before *BuckWild*'s debut, there was much controversy over whether MTV should have aired the show at all. "Activities carried out by the show's nine young cast members in and around Sissonville are repulsive and play to ugly, inaccurate stereotypes about the people of West Virginia," complained U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin in a letter to MTV. Manchin believes that he is doing the right thing for his state by expressing their disappointment towards the actions made by the cast in the show that can reflect poorly on their state.

Manchin however, has failed to consider the possible positive outcomes of the show. The possibility of tourism from *BuckWild* fans and critics could possibly boost the state's economy in small towns in West Virginia, like Sissonville where the show was filmed. Before MTV released the *Jersey Shore* or when TLC released *Cake Boss*, the places where these shows are filmed had a lower tourism rate than today. As West Virginia's government officials are so quick to judge that the show will only bring negative outcomes, they should think more about the economic position of the state of West Virginia and how the show could possibly help them.

Manchin was not the only one making preconceived notions about the show. English teacher Mr. Paul Cierpial said, "It makes viewers believe that they know the people of

West Virginia and depicts a false image of them." Although Cierpial raised some good points most people can detect the difference between a script and real life. Most reality TV is scripted to glorify the realness of the situation. If you are intelligent enough to realize that "reality" TV is fake then you are most likely smart enough to come to the conclusion that not everyone who lives in West Virginia is a stupid redneck.

Students at BHS did not seem to have the same reaction. Freshman Caleb Duchan said, "I was embarrassed to say I liked it." Some were uncomfortable when admitting that they liked it because it was so ridiculous, but others were not afraid to show their true feelings towards it. Junior Valerie Christy said, "It was fun and entertaining, [and] isn't that what you want when watching TV?"

If a show is entertaining and plays to our specific interests then it's going to air and generate a lot of publicity and money. If you have a problem with the show then you have a problem with the values of citizens in today's economy. In today's world we do everything for money, and the way the cast of *BuckWild* is acting on the screen is all for money. Christy went on and said, "I think the show just makes their lifestyle more entertaining to watch; people just need to realize that reality shows are not real life."

When shows are more entertaining they usually contain footage of people doing stupid or unusual activities. The more entertaining a show is, the more money it brings in for the network. Although the show may be misrepresenting West Virginia citizens and setting a bad example, viewers must recognize that it is all for the ratings and the money.

Everyone has their opinion about *BuckWild*. Some might say that it generalizes the citizens of West Virginia, but it is making money. If filming a 22 year old roll down a hill inside a tire, like shown on *BuckWild*, makes MTV money, then roll away.



Photo courtesy of www.zap2it.com

Les Miserables, anything but miserable

Aaron Cohen '13, Senior Copy Editor

This Christmas, *Les Misérables* made its way onto the silver screen and into the hearts of millions nationwide. Featuring a star-studded cast, the film's adaptation of the operatic masterpiece allowed many to experience *Les Mis* for the first time, and for me, in an entirely new way.

The plot of *Les Misérables* is complex to say the least. Based off of the Victor Hugo novel, the scene is set in 19th century France, amidst the beginning of the French Revolution, and follows the life of Jean Valjean, a man desperate to escape his past, and protect those he loves most.

Of course, all of this is expressed through song. Though different than most, *Les Mis*, by definition, is an opera. This means that all dialogue is sung. And while the film occasionally strays from its traditional form, music is played throughout its entirety. Joy and pain. Love and loss. Every emotion on the teenage girl spectrum is amplified through the brilliant music of Claude-Michel Schönberg.

Hollywood actors Hugh Jackman, Russel Crowe, Anne Hathaway, Sacha Baron Cohen, and Helen Mirren teamed up with Broadway giants Aaron Tveit and Samantha Barks to produce, what in my opinion, the best film adaptation of any musical I have ever seen. The actors credit the success to the way the film was made. Traditionally, the music is recorded first, and then matched to lip-syncing actors in hopes of getting the best sound

possible. With *Les Misérables*, every song was recorded live during filming. A live orchestra played along while the actors listened through an earpiece, and performed the same way they would on a Broadway stage. While sacrificing perfection, this allowed the actors to truly become their characters, and to make creative choices that they otherwise would not be able to make.

While there were several standout performances, Jackman as Jean Valjean, and Hathaway as Fantine made the experience. There is not a single girl at this school who would be able to hold back their tears as Anne Hathaway sobs her way through "I Dreamed a Dream."

Russell Crowe played the role of Inspector Javert, the clear antagonist whose one and only mission is to bring down Jean Valjean. While he physically looked the part, I found his character boring and his voice mediocre, but that's what you get when you throw Hollywood actors in front of an orchestra.

Overall, *Les Misérables* exceeded all of my expectations. Having experienced the live performance, I was skeptical that any film adaptation would do the show justice. I could not have asked for more. If you haven't already, find some time to catch the movie. And bring some tissues. You will leave an emotional wreck but enlightened by one of the most spectacular musicals ever made.



Photo courtesy of Universal Studios

HITS AND MISSES OF JANUARY

HIT: Total Blackout

Alison Jones '13, Assistant Editor-in-Chief

When NBC's *Fear Factor* went off the air in 2006, it left a massive hole in the reality television world. The demand for an extreme game show was intensified. Popular science fiction and supernatural channel Syfy came up with the idea of having contestants compete in challenges similar to that of *Fear Factor*, but with one intense twist: everything was done in complete darkness. *Total Blackout*, whose new season premiered on Jan. 15, pits four contestants against each other and their fears while competing for \$5,000. Not only do the contestants compete against one another, but their own worst enemy – themselves. When in the dark, the only thing worse than the stunts themselves is the contestants' imagination. If one is ever looking for a good laugh, check out all new episodes on Syfy at 10/9c. You will not be disappointed.

**MISS: Detroit Lions**

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

After a fantastic performance from the Detroit Lions in 2011, hopes were high in Detroit for the 2012 season. As usual though, the Lions did nothing less than completely disappoint. It could be argued that the increased strength of schedule due to the increase of marquee, prime time games could have something to do with it, but you would be wrong. 2011 was an anomaly to say the least, and even with a long list of very talented young stars, the Lions are just not ready to be perennial members of the NFL playoff picture. This may in fact be a blessing in disguise; a lower draft pick will allow the opportunity to either trade for veterans or draft a young star to fill the many holes in the Lions' depth chart coming into training camp. So it is already time to jump off the Lions band-wagon? I say no. After an off season riddled with many players facing legal troubles, those of which ranked amongst the top of teams in the league (at least we are ranked highly in something) players were obviously distracted. If the majority of players can focus on football during the off season, which Head Coach Jim Schwartz has been very adamant about, maybe (and it's still a long shot) the Lions can replicate the success they had in 2011.


MISS: Conference Realignment

Jake Rothman '14, Feature Editor

Amid the onslaught of collegiate athletic games and the fan frenzy associated with these events, comes an unneeded and greedy distraction to college sport fanatics. It seems that over the past months the conference realignment in the major athletic conferences is regularly changing. Rutgers and Maryland join the Big Ten. Louisville, Syracuse, Notre Dame, and Pittsburgh join the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), while DePaul, Georgetown, Marquette, Villanova, Providence, St. Johns, and Seton Hall leave the Big East. While the adjustments are significant for the conferences' and independent schools' money-making strategies, the constant movement and overall irrationality of the moves has caused much confusion among fans. Also, it seems as if the committee making these realignment changes gives little thought to the geography of each school. How does it make sense that a school like San Diego State, who resides on the far west coast of America, would transfer to the Big East? Yes, the Big EAST, with teams like the University of Connecticut, on the EAST coast. The profit and advanced recruiting capabilities is a great benefit for colleges' changing conferences, but some of the fundamentals of college athletics are being lost in the process.

HIT: Dingus

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

There are many words in a teenager's vocabulary that are not appropriate in certain situations, so a group of students have adopted a word to use instead of such unsavory vocabulary. The word dingus, or any variation, can be used in lieu of any word, for any purpose. This word can be used in almost all situations like "hand me that dingus" or "you're such a dingus." The word may also serve as a way of differentiating the subject of the statement. The word dingus allows people to do away with vulgar language while retaining the meaning of their statement.

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BHS REMEMBERS: SANDY HOOK ELEMENTARY

BULLYING FINALLY REACHES THE PUBLIC EYE

Lindsay McFern '13, Student Life Editor

"How could someone do that?" That question was posed by many mourners on Dec. 14, 2012. The shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School shook the nation and led to questions concerning the sanity of our current society. Bullying and mental illness became the main focus of every news story and political argument.

My family sat at home that weekend glued to the TV watching people describe the shooter as "abnormal," "weird," and "unsociable," including people who mocked his odd style and his signature pocket protector. As I listened to the cruel comments describing the curious life of Adam Lanza, it dawned on me that this may not have been all of his making. Listening to peers' recounted memories of this man made me wonder how many times did he think to himself, "How could someone do that to me?"

Cruelty is a common facet of society, and school is a breeding ground. From a young age there are always kids pegged as the "weird" ones, the ones who simply don't fit in, the ones who walk around the playground alone. These kids grow up struggling to find friends and acceptance, and often become traumatized and scarred for the latter portion of their school careers. Bullying becomes more severe as years progress, and students find ways to taunt others beyond the walls of the school building. The bullied students feel powerless leading them to discover ways in which they can gain back their lost power. In the numerous notorious school shootings in the U.S., bullying appears to be an obvious link: the bullied use the gun's power, the power they have never felt, to fight against the power others always seemed to possess.

Being aware that others are affected by the things we do and say is an important issue. High school students especially need to be conscious of their actions to prevent similar things from happening. Recently, BHS started the Upstander program and its aim is to eliminate bullying in our school. Junior Angelica Pearson, a member of the program, said, "I used to see people being bullied regularly; I could tell it hurt others, and it hurt me. I want to stop this by being a part of Upstander and having others realize this is a real issue." Members try to involve other students by making posters and relating the information they have learned to make others watch what they say, do and how they impact the school. They try to become upstanders not bystanders. Pearson thinks the consequences of this program are already showing and she believes the members and the rest of the school are already putting their newfound knowledge concerning bullying into action.

BHS needs to realize that tragedies like that of Newtown, Connecticut could be in the making anywhere this country. We need to begin to grasp the implications of our actions. Relating and reaching out to others can be the difference between that person hurting or being happy. Bullying is not something one person or one program can change alone; we must all be the change we wish to see in this school.

RISING FROM THE ASHES

Aaron Cohen '13, Senior Copy Editor

You know him. He sat next to you in math last year. You pass each other in the halls every day. Maybe you know his name. Maybe you don't. He doesn't talk much. Never has. In fact, come to think of it, you know nothing about him. But the face is familiar. Imagine turning on CNN and seeing that face next to a headline reading, "26 Dead in Elementary School Massacre."

Words cannot describe the unbearable pain experienced by those who lost loved ones in last month's Newtown shooting. But amidst endless talk of gun control, and policy over caring for the mentally ill, it seems we have forgotten something far more important. Adam Lanza, the 20-year-old shooter, was once a child. A teenager. A high school student. Nothing can be done to bring back the 26 lives lost at Sandy Hook Elementary School Dec. 14, 2012, but what we can do is recognize the fact that three years ago, Adam Lanza was a 17-year-old in high school, whose experiences may have led to his violent actions.

We do not know what was going through Adam Lanza's head that day. But as we all look for someone to point the finger at—to find some rational explanation for something so horrific—we should all instead take a moment to reflect. Adam Lanza was fresh out of high school. The way he was treated by his peers, classmates and even teachers, all could have contributed to his ultimate demise. While we don't know exactly why he did what he did, there is no denying that clearly, Adam Lanza lived with a great deal of pain. As high school students, it is our responsibility to remember that our words and actions carry immense power, and that their effects are often greater than we realize. Be kind to each other. Smile. Give a compliment. In a world where one kid with a gun can destroy the lives of so many, why would we ever do otherwise?

WE NEED A HERO

Jake Rothman '14, Feature Editor

Immediately following the devastating Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, the media made an expected yet deplorable decision when covering the dreadful tragedy. Putting the spotlight on the assailant and death toll was a huge mistake by media that directly influences the world's popular opinion of the devastating massacre. The way our society presents this information to the public does a great disservice to those who lost their lives in this tragedy. They deserve to be remembered, not forgotten.

I got a pit in my stomach when I saw every news station focusing their coverage of the shooting on the perpetrator, Adam Lanza. People in our society love to hear about a psychopath who killed 26 innocent individuals in brutal tragedy. While I for one would rather hear about the valiant staff members who gave their lives for others in the incident, or the inspiring stories from the town and community involved in the horrible shooting, in Newtown, Connecticut.

Sadly, however, that is not the way our rating-craving and tragedy-hungry media works. Our television networks give us the extreme, obscene, and gruesome stories that are so coveted by our society. It is proven that by the time an American child leaves elementary school they will have witnessed 200,000 violent acts and 40,000 murders on television. Young children will continue to crave the excitement and shock associated with these violent actions because they have been implanted into their vulnerable mind by today's television networks. The treasured time discussing a morally despicable man does more than just eat up prized air time, it influences the action of others. Nonstop coverage on the assailant, like the coverage of Lanza, eventually causes more tragedies like this.

Seeing extended news programs about the magnitude of the crime could possibly be the inspiration of another psychopath to strike. Additionally, the notoriety the perpetrator gets for performing a horrifying act of violence may invoke an even more horrific massacre.

For instance, witnessing the great amount of news coverage on James Holmes, the man who killed 12 innocent people in a showing of *The Dark Night Rises*, could have made Lanza think about how he could top this equally devastating tragedy. Coverage on the killers needs to stop before another massacre elevates to a level beyond this unbearable tragedy.

I do appreciate the fact that news stations respected the privacy of the victims' families, as most were children. However, in the following days, some victims' identities were released to the public. People like principal Dawn Hochsprung, teacher Victoria Soto, and psychologist Mary Sherlach all should have had feature news programs dedicated to their real heroic efforts. These brave individuals all lost their lives after trying to save their young students from the gunman. The principal, teacher, and school psychologist deserve a majority of the recognition in this tragedy, not Lanza. These inspirational people are the the real newsworthy citizens in this story.

Every time a tragedy happens, like the one that occurred in Newtown, the public sees the entirely wrong side of the story. Most people have their TV's on during the hours following the massacre, yet all they hear about is how bad this tragedy was, not what anybody has done constructively throughout the hysteria. Highlighting the number dead, and ranking it over and over again only continues to devastate everyone. Giving hope during the nation's shock would be much more helpful. The people of our nation need to see hope and a positive story about real newsworthy people after a tragedy like Sandy Hook.

The reasons media outlets drive this type of coverage into the brains of viewers is evident, but grabbing the attentions of viewers and achieving great ratings do not help citizens move forward after an incident. Sadly, until improved coverage occurs, assailants will continue to be inspired and invigorated by the immense amount of news coverage one person can get for performing such a cruel and violent act on others.

Things that grind our gears

Classwork gone wrong

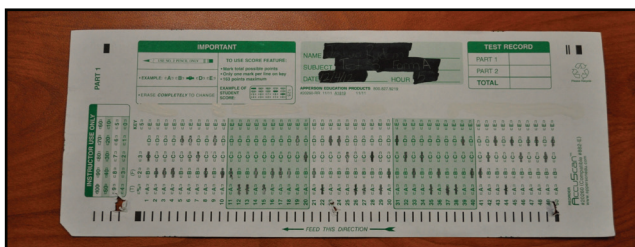
Rosty Yeshchenko '14, Sports Editor

The daily routine of the average BHS student includes many exciting and fundamental school activities including, but not limited to: writing assignments, labs, and mathematical problem sets. However, there are some school activities that are, well, stupid for various reasons. There are handfuls of such needless activities, but for time and length purposes I will focus on the stupidest of them all.

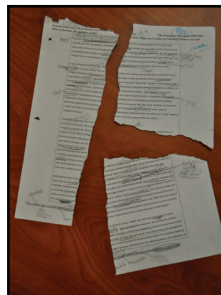
1. "Talk To The Text"

What it is: It is another word for annotating. When you underline, circle, box, draw arrows, summarize, comment or highlight the text, you are participating in what teachers call "talking to the text."

Why it is not needed: First of all, the teachers should stop using such sophomoric terminology by calling it "talk to the text." Second of all, although the process of annotating might be useful for extensive texts, there is no need to use it for small articles and assignments. Furthermore, it should not be mandatory since it is only one of the strategies to understand the text, and some people can do so without "talking to the text."



Certain newly implemented classroom norms like "Talk to the Text", or the classic multiple choice tests for English classes, are making students slightly irritated.



Photos by Josh Radom

2.

What it is: Typical multiple choice tests that students take usually at the end of each unit.

Why it is not needed: The tests usually consist of questions about the plot of a book, its major characters, and subjective questions retaining to analysis and interpretations. What I am referring to are questions that usually ask about symbolism, motifs, as well as the meanings of certain scenes, quotes, and character actions. These kinds of questions have a tendency to have several correct answers, but some, as English teachers like to say, are more correct than others. Other questions are opinionated since interpretations of literature can vary greatly. These questions can be categorized as no-correct-choice questions, meaning many answers can be justified and accepted by different people and one answer can be different from another, yet neither is necessarily right or wrong. With literature being a hard topic for traditional testing, English teachers should seek alternatives to traditional multiple choice questions.

Multiple Choice English Tests

Metacognitive Logs

3.

What it is: Science classes started to use a new system for taking chapter notes called metacognitive logs. On the left margins of the paper, students cite the page numbers from the chapter. In the middle, you summarize the chapter and record the most "important" information. On the right margins, you participate in what teachers call "thinking about thinking." Students are required to write what they are thinking about it as they are writing the summary. It is rather confusing and very awkward to write.

Why it is not needed: The stupid part of this activity is indeed the "thinking about thinking" part. Speaking from experience, it did not help me to understand the material better. I have done metacognitive logs in both biology and chemistry, and it helped me in neither class. The regular note taking is shorter and saves time for other homework.

Changing the ways of BHS

Jimmy Demery '13, Entertainment Editor

Now, faithful readers, you may read this this headline and think, "Why would a school that is listed as one of Newsweek's top high schools possibly have to improve?" Well, friend, the truth is, no educational institution is perfect, and BHS is certainly no exception.

Length of class:

61 minutes, really? They couldn't just make all classes an even 60 and give a few more minutes of blissful sleep in the morning? Most teachers still don't know when classes end.

Mr. Watson, or rather the lack thereof:

The class of 2013 are the last remaining students at BHS who were here for the phenomenal pre-lunch announcements spoken in Mr. Watson's unforgettable deep southern drawl. He and his cowboy hat are still a staple at many sporting events, but the academic side of BHS is suffering without him.

Drug Dogs:

Is this not a place of learning? Maybe it's just me but having Berkley's "finest" and their adorable dogs searching every inch of the school for contraband can be a bit distracting. Hearing our teacher say we can't leave the classroom then having rumors fly around all day about who got caught with what doesn't seem to promote an environment for learning.

Automated Call Home System:

Students at BHS now receive a call around 6:30 (you're welcome skippers) telling parents if a child has an unexcused absence that day, thus causing turmoil and unneeded stress. Sure, students probably shouldn't be skipping class, but every once in a while everybody just needs a mental health day (including you teachers), so do us all a favor and stop this heinous communication. Please, before second semester.

Excessive School Spirit:

I am all for the whole rah rah scene at BHS sporting

events, but sometimes the "Bear Pack" gets a little carried away. I hate to break the student body's collective bubble, but we are a mediocre division II school, so relax. For example, at a recent hockey game multiple shoes and hats were thrown onto the ice. I just don't get it—how exactly does that help our team? Seriously, our crowd got a penalty. Chill out a little bit and understand it is only high school sports. Also, the themes have got to go.

Underclassmen:

I know to have upperclassmen you must have underclassmen, but it still doesn't mean I have to like it. Honestly, these kids are like three feet tall. I'm afraid of accidentally stepping on one of them when I'm walking down the hallway; it's a safety hazard.

So there you have it, my issues with our "wonderful" school. Sure I may be slightly on the cynical side but I think many of my fellow constituents will agree with me. If there are any problems with the aforementioned issues, I'm in room 116 during fourth hour.

16 THE SPECTATOR

Trying to make the best out of a bad situation

Corey Lipton '16, Assistant Copy Editor

Imagine you and your family have been saving up for a family trip. One day you wake up, and find that you have to cut your budget in half. What do you do? Find a new place to go? Travel by car instead of plane? Split the cost with another family? One thing's for sure, the trip you take will not be the same.

In theory, the budget cuts indirectly caused Berkley High School to be in the situation to create the Advanced Science Program for freshmen and future generations. Why you ask? Because Governor Rick Snyder and the Republican-dominated legislature slashed funding for public schools across Michigan, forcing schools to change many things. One of the changes that BHS had to make was eliminating a block schedule. Assistant Principal Michael Ross said, "A block schedule is the most expensive schedule because it requires the most teachers."

In a valiant attempt to free up space for electives for seniors after the class of 2016, the Advanced Science Program was concocted much like the beast that emerged from Dr. Frankenstein's lab. Let's be perfectly clear: this program was made because when BHS changed from a block schedule to a six period schedule, administrators wanted students to have as much elective space as possible. The old advanced science option was to double up in science freshman and sophomore year. However, now students are unable to take an elective freshman year because of the six period schedule, but BHS wanted the new schedule to be as similar as possible to the old one. "The Advanced Earth and Space program is an alternative to try and allow kids to get where they were coming off of a block schedule" added Ross. In order to combat this, BHS created a program that will let students take one science class for two years and get three credits.

The Advanced Science Program is designed to teach students three core science classes through two courses. The outline of the program states, "The Advanced Science Program consists of Advanced Earth and Space Science in ninth grade and Advanced Placement Biology in tenth grade. Students who follow this sequence will be able to earn chemistry credit as well upon the completion of both courses." In a nutshell, this program attempts to teach freshmen the contents of geophysical science, biology, and chemistry in two classes. This is very ineffective because in order to understand these subjects one needs a full year and a basic knowledge of each of the courses. Freshmen are being thrown into this class with no understanding of any of the subjects that this class is attempting to teach.

Freshman Jo Pittman said, "Even if we don't have homework, I review everything that we did in class every day. There is only so much time that I can set aside for other homework because I have to review for this class every night." This class is supposed to be an elective for seniors and the most popular advanced science option for freshmen. Senior Josh Shifman said, "The fact that I took chemistry and physics gives [me] a huge advantage over incoming freshmen that have never seen stuff like this. I would say that 30 percent of what we have learned is review to me."

Another huge problem with the class is the lack of structure. The class has no legitimate textbook; only one class set that is occasionally looked at and is not allowed to be taken home to study. Most of the information comes from packets. The packets often refer to other sections in the book that students cannot refer to because it is in a different section not included in that packet.

Advanced Earth and Space teacher Mr. Andy Bruen is in a very tough predicament teaching this class. If the lesson is slowed down during class because of a discussion, he cannot simply tell his students to finish what they were learning by reading in the textbooks. This creates a problem since the curriculum of the class is so large, Bruen cannot waste a day to review what the class didn't finish yesterday creating a gap in information for students. This gap will affect students because the lessons build on each other and if students miss something, the next lesson will be even more confusing than it already would be.

It is evident that BHS had to scramble to create this program to accommodate for the budget cuts. However, it is most definitely not Berkley's fault. They were thrown into a tough situation and tried to help their students by giving them more electives but if this program is to continue, it needs to be changed. In order to alter it, the class needs more structure the easiest, simplest way to obtain more structure is a textbook to take home. The worst thing about the whole situation is that it *can* get worse. Berkley's budget is and always will be in jeopardy with a Republican dominated house, and if the budget gets cut, who knows what else Berkley Schools will be forced to do. I'll tell you, we'd be planning a family trip using only \$50.

Picture this, or don't

Emma Weisberger '16, Circulation Manager

Admit it. There's an embarrassing picture of you (or several) out there. I know there are a ton of me. Whether it's on your best friend's phone or posted on the internet, you probably wish, as much as I do, that it doesn't exist. Thirty years ago, without the easy connections of cameras to the cyber world, similar pictures stood a chance at staying hidden. In today's world it is almost impossible for said picture not to show up somewhere, namely Twitter or Facebook.

These photos are most likely taken as a joke, but the effects of posting these pictures of friends, acquaintances, etc. could be more harmful than you initially planned and could easily be considered an act of cyber bullying. According to The Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, cyber bullying is defined as the electronic posting of mean-spirited messages [or pictures] about a person often done anonymously. The typical kind of cyber bullying that we initially think of consists of the sending of repetitive messages intended to harm a person. Aside from this formal book definition, there are a multitude of other ways that a person can be bullied online. The posting and sending of embarrassing pictures without the consent of the person who is in the picture can also be viewed as an act of cyber bullying, despite the poster's intentions.

Many people do not take the act of sending and posting embarrassing pictures to be as severe as it really is, but by definition of cyber bullying it is a direct example because it is using electronics with the intended effect to humiliate or even cause person harm. Speaking from personal experiences, I have learned that one bad picture isn't a big deal, but the same cannot be said for everyone. Everyone deals with things in their own way and while you may think that it's funny, it could cause them more embarrassment than you intended.

If you are able to laugh a picture off, like most of us are, what happens if that picture is more than just a funny face? In today's world, when you interview for a job or apply for colleges the employer or board of admissions has the ability to look you up on Google, Facebook, Twitter, etc. in order to gain a more comprehensive and candid background knowledge of you as a person. One small picture could potentially alter your entire future. While the simple solution would be to not make mistakes, that is easier said than done.

Additional negative outcomes of posting embarrassing and negative pictures of a person online are that they create negative images of them. For those who only know people through Facebook and Twitter, people can be judged through one simple, incriminating and unintentional photo. When I want to find information about a person I don't know, I immediately look them up on Facebook to find out what they are like. If something bad of them is posted, I have already gotten the idea that they are the same person that is being portrayed through these negative images, when they could be the complete opposite. Being high school students, everything that we do is critically judged and critiqued by our peers. Without knowing a person and just seeing a few humiliating pictures of them, an opinion of them can be easily and quickly made.

The next time you want to post that hilarious picture of your friend, think twice. It may be harmless right now, but the effects can turn out to be far worse than expected. Having fun and making jokes about your friends is completely normal, but with the additional element of technology, it can be unintentionally taken to a whole new level. While you may not see it, or intend it to be this, you may be cyber bullying a person by posting images of them. Think about their future, and how posting this could possibly affect them before you make the decision to share that picture with the entire cyber world.

THE WINTER SPORTS MOST VALUABLE PLAYERS

Jake Rothman '14, Feature Editor and Shelby Silver '14, Opinion Editor

Basketball:

Sophomore basketball star Jonathan Radner has lit up the court each time he takes the floor for the Bears. Radner's freshman year was spent primarily on the junior varsity squad before he made the step up to the varsity team to finish out the season. In his first full year on the varsity team, Radner has put on a great show for Bears' fans. He is averaging just under 20 points per game in the team's nine games so far. Radner also came out with a stunning 27—point performance against BHS' rival, Royal Oak, in December. Although the team began with a disappointing 2-7 start, Radner maintains his optimism. He thinks the Bears are underachieving because they are plagued by injuries to key players. In fact, Radner himself recently sustained a hamstring injury that will sideline him for the Bears' upcoming games. But once those key players return from injury, Radner believes the team will begin to see the fruits of their labor. Bears fans have put their faith in Radner to pull out some wins for the team, and as long as he is on the floor, the Bears hold a viable chance at victory.

Bowling:

Junior Jesse Wheeler has had an exceptional season for the BHS bowling team. Wheeler received the Performance Award last year for being the most improved on the bowling team which has been justified through Wheeler's great efforts so far this season. According to Wheeler, he has been playing "very well, consistently" with a high scoring game of 236 thus far in this 2012-2013 bowling team season. However, that score does not match up to Wheeler's career high scoring performance of 251. Wheeler said the team this year has been "average; some days we're good, but other days we're bad." Wheeler said he wasn't quite sure what to expect out of this year's bowling squad because they lost so many great seniors, but he is hopeful. Wheeler thinks the team will end up doing well when all is said and done this year.

Girls Basketball:

Junior Maddie Baker has continuously proven to be an exquisite Lady Bear player both on and off the court. Starting off the season with an impressive 7-4, the Lady Bears are well on their way to success with the help of Baker and everyone on the team. As her first year on the varsity girls' basketball team, she has already exemplified leadership skills and continuous improvements in her skills. Last year she was a co-captain for the JV basketball, and hopes to earn her spot as a varsity captain for her senior year. She said, "Although I'm not a captain this year, I still try and do my best to offer advice to other players as well as receive criticism. It all helps in the end and makes everyone better." Being a part of the Lady Bears has given her the opportunity to set examples for the younger players.

Wrestling:

Junior Aaron Parr-Besemer has turned in another impressive season for the BHS wrestling team. Parr-Besemer has started off the 2012-2013 season with a superb 11-4 record, including a fantastic fourth place finish at counties over winter break. He credits his continued success to his constant hard work and effort. Parr-Besemer said, "I practice hard, work my a** off, stay after practice, and work individually." He also attributes his great record in the ring to his planning before each battle. He figures out a plan for whom he will be facing in his upcoming match and then puts together a strategy that will prove victorious for him. This strategy seems to be working out beautifully for Parr-Besemer as he tries to improve his already impressive record.

Hockey:

The Berkley High School hockey team has gone into a season where anything is possible. Getting back on the ice after last year's constant triumphs, junior Zack Segall has proven himself to everyone that he can help keep the successes coming. From their last season, which was one of their best seasons ever, the team came into the season with very high expectations. Hoping to win leagues again, Segall—along with his teammates—are skating in the right direction. He said, "For me the season is going great. I'm going to keep on being a team player on and off the ice and keep working hard." The Berkley Unified Hockey team has earned a 13-3 record.

Cheerleading:

In her third year as a flyer on the BHS competitive cheer team, junior Rachael Rottner has earned her spot as a captain. Working hard during practices and keeping all of her teammates in check, Rottner has come a long way since freshmen year. "It's really cool to have a team that has your back as much as you have theirs. It makes you feel like you're a part of a real team," she said. Rottner is proud to be a part of such a team that has continued to come out strong competition after competition. Rottner hopes to end the season on a high note and continue to train for next year's season.

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CHEER TEAM SUCCEEDS IN INVITATIONAL

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Editor-in-Chief

On Jan. 5 BHS hosted the sixth Annual Berkley Bear Cheer Invitational. As the name implies, the invitational consisted of numerous invited teams including Berkley rivals Royal Oak and West Bloomfield. The teams went through three rounds of scoring in order to determine a winner.

The first round is scored on motions. Motions include the arm movements cheerleaders are normally known for. The second score is derived from the next round, which consists of flexibility, skill, and jumps. The third round, and arguably, the most exciting for the viewer, contains stunts and gymnastics, often called tumbling. A panel of numerous judges, including former cheer coach "Waz," scored the teams and released their decisions after much deliberation.

During this invitational Berkley Varsity scored second overall in Division II, a step up from their third place award last year. Although they placed second, they continue to hold first place in conferences. Relating to this first place, Junior Shelby Roy said "even though we're first, we still strive for better." Junior Akela Thompson said that she, along with the rest of the team, is pleased with their second place award and they hope to continue their upward trend in the coming years.

The money generated from hosting the invitational goes back into funds for the cheer program. Coach Leilani Inthavong stated that the extra funds are helpful and necessary because cheerleading is such an expensive sport. Inthavong also said that next year the team plans to donate some of the proceeds to a charity.

THE DARK SIDE OF WATCHING SPORTS

Corey Lipton '16, Assistant Copy Editor

All sports have their own issues: there are the new stricter rules in football, performance enhancing drugs in baseball, players flopping in basketball and soccer, and the lockout in hockey, but all sports have one common thing that makes watching sports close to unbearable—commercials.

Football is the most prevalent offender of this too-many-commercials-not-enough-action epidemic. The NFL's ratings are and will continue to be very high simply because Americans love football. Some channels have done a great job getting around commercials, like NFL redzone. It shows seven to eight hours of uninterrupted football, however, it usually is only used for players of fantasy football because it doesn't focus on one game, it focuses on touchdowns. The NFL has commercials after every quarter, which is understandable because every sport does between breaks. They have commercials after every drive, which is again understandable because that is an ideal time for a commercial. However, what is terrible about the NFL's system of commercials is that they have the commercials after the score, then come back for the kickoff, and go right back to the commercials. When a team scores in a game, the fan has to sit through two minutes of commercials for 30 seconds of football (assuming the kickoff is returned for a touchdown) or less, and then he or she is forced to sit through another two minutes of commercials. The possible scenarios have a fan sitting for 10 minutes with a total of one minute of football. If that is not absurd, I do not know what is.

Here in Detroit we have a "Wallside Windows pitching change" and the "Call Sam Studios." This is what is ruining sports. Baseball is almost as unbearable as football when it comes to commercials and has become practically unwatchable because there are commercials every half inning. If there were commercials every full inning the games would not be nearly as long, which would draw more viewers for an average game. Is it not enough with the outfield wall full of sponsors, or the announcer's obligation to talk about certain businesses? Obviously not since we have to sit through commercials every half inning.

Commercials in the NBA are not as awful as the previous sports. They are almost predetermined—happening at the first dead ball after six minutes, three minutes in every quarter, and at nine minutes in the second and fourth quarter. When you are watching a national broadcast, a 20-second timeout also leads to a commercial break, which is alright with me. The NBA has the right idea about commercials, which is why fans are attracted to it.

In the NHL's three periods, they have three commercial breaks per period which is by far the best system so far. However, their intermissions between periods are 15.5 minutes long which are too long in my opinion, but the three period format which is only used in hockey makes it almost inevitable. The NHL does exceptionally well in the format of their overtime period. Overtime in the NHL is the best pro overtime by far, because one never has to watch commercials. That's right, in an NHL overtime you

can have up to 20 minutes of nonstop action. If you watch one NHL overtime period, one realizes how amazing sports are without commercials.

I know that professional soccer is not as popular in the United States as it is in other countries, but they have one advantage over every other sport that you will watch. In soccer, there are no commercials. Soccer has two 45-minute halves plus stoppage time at the end of each half. That is usually 47 minutes straight of soccer with a single 15-minute break, in which the time is split between analysts and commercials for halftime. Soccer has used interesting tactics to be able to do this. Most leagues have a small projector on the outside of the field that is constantly switching between ads, which keeps advertising part of the game, but a part that fans can choose to look at. It is not shoved down their throats like in every other sport. Some soccer leagues have put sponsorships on their jerseys which are always in the spectator's line of sight. It is a better tactic than the use of commercials because people tend to tune out during commercials, but spectators always watch the players.

I am not saying that we need to get rid of commercials entirely, I am just saying that advertisers need to be more innovative. When coming up with new places for commercials. Stops in action are bad for the viewers and the sport itself because viewers are more likely to change the channel during a commercial. I think that for rating purposes, professional leagues should start copying soccer's choices in terms of advertising.

FISH OUT OF GERMAN WATER: EXCHANGE STUDENT BRINGS NEW LIFE TO SWIM TEAM

Bennett Hart '16, Business/Ad Manager

The BHS varsity boys' swim team ended last season with just one win. Therefore, the team has been on the lookout for new talent and they lucked out when German exchange student Christian Ulmer came to BHS this year.

Ulmer has been swimming for three years competitively in his hometown of Frankfurt am Main. He was paired with the perfect host family. The Duchans have a rich history of past and current BHS swimmers. Ben and Jacob were on the team during their days at Berkley, and Noah and Caleb are current members of the team. Hard work and perfect surroundings have set Ulmer up for success.

The BHS boys swim team practices about 18.5 hours per week: two 5:30 a.m. practices before school, every day after school till 6 p.m., and Saturday practice from 7-10 a.m. Ulmer has used every second of practice to his advantage. Senior captain Nicholas Dolnicek said, "[Christian] always works hard in practice; he is a good presence."



Photo by Veronica Marchese

After a hard swim practice, Ulmer's smile shines like the morning sun he probably has not yet witnessed.

Ulmer has already been very successful as a Bear. By the first meet he had already met the time required to qualify for the state meet in the 100-meter breaststroke. Ulmer has been the ultimate pleasant surprise, adding a top breast stroker to an already fantastic roster which includes senior co-captains Christian and Nicholas Dolnicek and Noah Duchan.

Although Ulmer has definitely been important to the team because of his skills, he also has been important to the team socially. When asked what his favorite part of being on the team was, he said he liked being part of the team, the people on the team, and that he has had lots of fun with the team. Many team members have enjoyed having Ulmer on the team. Captain Nicholas Dolnicek said, "Besides being fast, [Christian] has brought a senior presence, and even though he isn't a senior, he is a good leader."

Ulmer has been a great addition to the varsity boys' swim team. He is a great competitor who has one of the best times on the team, and he also has helped the team in a variety of ways. The BHS swim team is on their way up with Ulmer and they have a current record of 5-2 as of Jan. 23.

Eighteen: just a line and a snowman

Alison Jones '13, Assistant Editor-in-Chief

Dec. 27, 2012. For, most, if not all of you, this day is completely insignificant, and it is just another day separating one big holiday from the next. But for me, this marked the day I took the sacred leap into adulthood. Due to the fact that I am not of Jewish decent, I did not have the pleasure of participating in a Bat/Bar Mitzvah when I turned 13. I did not have someone come to me on a given day and tell me to start acting like an adult.

Though my birthday celebration was nothing short of my previous 17 birthday celebrations, the implications of finally being an adult far outweighed any amount of balloons and streamers. Yes, I did the cheesy things most 18 year olds do on their special day: buy a lottery ticket (even though I knew I probably wouldn't win any money), bought my first (and last) pack of cigarettes which remain unlit and sealed, and gloated to all my 17-year-old friends on how I can finally vote, even though we all have to wait until 2016, but that's not the point. There was no physical change in myself, no monumental shift in my universe, no switch that told me to start acting like a full-fledged adult. I, in fact, feel no different than I did Dec. 26, 2012.

When we reach that ever powerful year 18 in life, we are not truly adults. We may like to think we are and try to be, but we are still as dependent upon our families for support, we do not live on our own, most do not make a steady enough income to support themselves, and we still have not obtained a high school diploma. Yet we still expect this freedom that adulthood entails without the true adult-like experiences the age is said to bring. We demand the respect the cliché movies have told us we deserve. But respect is earned, not deserved because of a day or age.

Yet, on this joyous day I observed something far beyond how many candles were on my cake. We, as humans, measure our lives in years rather than what we have learned in our years of existence. If you truly think about it, what we have learned catapults us into adulthood, not the length of time we have been on this Earth or a number of years that tells us we are an adult, unless of course, you are Jewish. Those of us that are not, we cannot expect any number of years to tell us that we are anymore of an adult than the day before. There is no adulthood alarm clock that goes off in one's head that tells children to start acting like an adult; that only comes with time.

When recalling one's childhood, one can most likely only remember when events took place, not the specific years in which they occurred. I can recall the first time I rode a two-wheeler, the first tooth I lost, the first all-nighter I pulled, and the first time I saw red and blue flashing lights in my rearview mirror. The events which made my life memorable I can remember, not necessarily the year in which they happened.

We have to look at life as a marathon, not a sprint. We have to remember that, hopefully, not even a mere fifth of our lives has passed us by. We can still make mistakes, as long as we learn from them. We can still be kids, as long as we do not revert to our childlike ways. That is the only way we will grow and mature, by learning and changing.

With that being said, I now only see age as a number and not how far I am in my life. Not so much as how old I am, but how I have been able to overcome obstacles and learn from my mistakes. Because, in all reality, that is what makes you a mature adult, the ability to learn and grow and reach higher and happier points in your life. That, for one, is the reason why they call it growing up, because we grow up and out of our old ways and move on.

The pursuit of happiness

Lindsay McFern '13, Student Life Editor

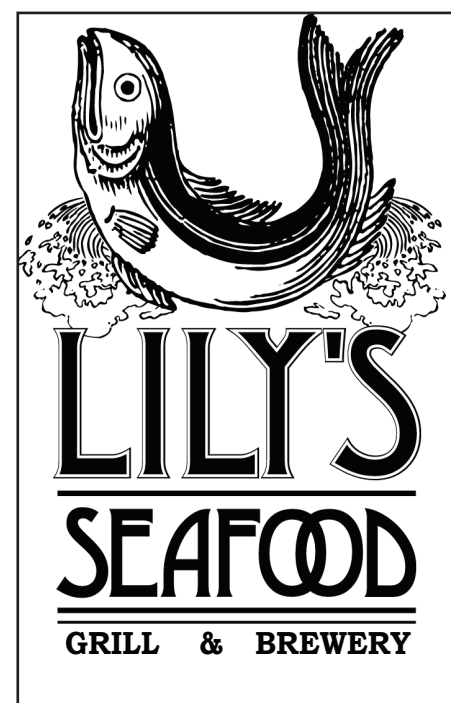
In my experiential education class earlier this semester, we were asked to write a bucket list. Most people took this as a competition to put the most outlandish things in one solitary list that they most likely would never complete in the mere 80 years given to them on this earth. As I pondered through my thoughts of owning Christian Louboutins and parasailing, I simply wrote down "to be happy" as my number one.

By the time my life is over, I hope to be completely, utterly, and undeniably happy. Though it is purely an emotion, one that can come and go, it certainly isn't tangible, however, it's a huge part of life and something I wish to cross off my bucket list over and over again. It's such an impactful emotion; it can determine your day, furthermore all your days—your lifetime. Life is solely what you single-handedly make it out to be. To be dissatisfied is to only do a disservice to yourself.

In high school most of us look to others as a source of our own happiness. We determine our successes by our failures. Our lives are ultimately a competition from the day we enter it: who talks first is the smartest, who gets picked for kick ball first is the most athletic, and who gets a date for prom first is the prettiest. We essentially compete for our self-worth: our source of happiness. If another earns what we want, we lose our confidence, our bliss. We are not happy if we are less than another. Nobody is perfect, yet most of us fail to realize this fact. Walking through the halls I see girls looking like perfection, with flawless make-up, clothes, and hair while my brunette bird's nest and running mascara seems to become the focal point of every passerby. I succumb to the belief that we must live up to everyone else's standards to be satisfied with ourselves.

Looks do not define us, nor do other's opinions. As my grandma always tells me, "pretty is as pretty does." All those outwardly artificial girls epitomizing perfection may not be pretty on the inside, they may not be satisfied with only their looks, they may not be exultant. Comparisons wreck the uplifting thoughts our minds contain of ourselves. We base our emotions on others' opinions. Instead of competing and comparing we must compromise others' approvals for that of our own. We must be selfish and always put ourselves first.

Accepting that each individual has unique strengths and weaknesses may help us achieve happiness. We are not all going to be a star athlete or the valedictorian, but we must always dream and try to be our greatest. To be the best can be easy for some, but to constantly be your own best is hard. To continuously push yourself upward to the new heights of your own success is a stairway to happiness. There are no limitations on the triumphs you can accomplish and the happiness you can achieve when you stop trying to be others' best and just be your own. If you are pleased with your own achievement then happiness is forever at your fingertips.



You can pick your nose, but you can't pick your friends, or their noses

Veronica Marchese '13, Assistant Editor-in-Chief

Take a minute and think about all the little decisions you make in one day. Even during the short school day we decide what to wear, when to laugh, what to say, when to say something, what to eat, when to eat, where to go, how to get there, how to fix your hair, how to sit, or even whether or not you are going to continue reading this article. You could go on for days thinking about every single minute decision you make. It has been estimated that we make approximately 35,000 decisions in one single day, and with all the decisions being made, exactly how do we decide between all of the endless options and possibilities?

We make a majority of decisions subconsciously, without realizing for even a second that there are alternative choices possible. According to the book *Intuition to Judgment and Decision Making* by Henning Plessner, every single decision is a result of the two systems in operation: experimental and rational, which both have different organizational processes. To paraphrase, a final choice is made as a compromise between the rationality of the decision and its relation to the subconscious preferences of the decision maker. To what extent the decision is sensible or intuitive depends on the decision maker's personality and beliefs as well as ones motivation to make a good choice. To simplify all the aforementioned scientific BS, without our knowledge, our brains decide things by determining if they are rational or not, but this ability to make choices depends on our personalities and beliefs. And contrary to what some think, our personalities are not solely our own. We are shaped and molded by those around us. The decisions we make, although our brains perceive them as our own, most certainly are not.

Some may not think they care about what other people think, but in reality, we all, at least a little bit, make decisions with others in mind. Unless of course you are some nefarious nincompoop and do not care about anyone at all.

The famous saying "you can pick your nose, you can pick your friends, but you can't pick your friend's nose" is partially untrue. Most of us do not consciously choose our friends. For me, I had my mom over my metaphorical shoulder every day telling me "that girl isn't a good influence," and no, I do not believe my mother to be overly controlling, but I know that she did in fact influence me to stray from "trouble" and to find girls I am happy to now call my friends. Sure I could've made my own uninfluenced decisions, and although learning from mistakes is important for growing as individuals, I may have turned out completely differently in doing so, from my own judgments.

Now for college, we all, at least for most of us, have that one college we sat and crossed our fingers that we might get accepted into. Maybe we did this because we did an immense amount of research on it and found it was perfect for the major we are pursuing, or maybe, usually the truer of the two, we want to go to said college because we have been pre-conditioned to like it. Perhaps all your natural born life your family has rooted for University of Michigan over Michigan State University, and as a result you want to go there, even if the opposite university has the better program for you. These decisions, since college is so important for our futures, could alter everything for us, and these life-altering choices may not be simply our own.

Since about age four we had something—or in my case about 15 different something—we wanted to be when we grew up. Whether it be a princess, the president, an astronaut, a professional athlete, a rock star, or an actor, we had our hearts set on being that thing, at least for a day. But what do you want to be now? Are you even as certain as you were 12-odd years ago? And why do you want to be what you do? Did someone tell you a surgeon paid well? Or that it had a high employment rate? Without information like that, maybe we would still want to be an astronaut.

The point of this is to bring attention to how not only do we no longer make our own decisions due to the heavy influence of others, we also are extremely dependent on said influence. We, well most of us, are consumed, although maybe only subconsciously, with always wanting people to like us or to accept us. At what point does this happen to us, where we can no longer feel proud of what we do because someone out there did better? It's like obsessing with class rank; we compete against our fellow classmates to get that top spot, and for what reason? Because otherwise you might feel incompetent next to your valedictorian friend — if you aren't as smart as he or she. We have become so obsessed with others' perception of who we are that we lose ourselves along the way. Maybe we need to reevaluate who we are, and I know it is cliché, but if we don't, what kind of people will we become? Cookie-cutter society-approved people, or an individual doin their own thang? You decide.

It's not you, it's your tweets — actually, I take that back, it is you

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Editor-in-Chief

As I conceitedly assume my writing has a following, I'll ask all of you to recall back a few months ago to my column titled, "*When tragedy strikes, tweet about it.*" Then, to the year before, remember "*Digital Detox: Kicking our smartphone habits*" and "*XOXO Gossip Girl: Rumors overtake the lives of highschoolers alike*"? For years now I've expressed my disgust with our ever-advancing technological world and people's proclivities to obsess over it. But what I really haven't gotten to is the root of my disgust. Why does social networking bother me so much? And even when it bothers me so much, why can't I bring myself to delete my own social networks? But, I think I've finally discovered, or at least part of, my underlying problem with technology, social networking and what not, so take a listen.

I've thought myself to be so immensely bothered by Twitter and Facebook because I believe that people misuse the sites. They tweet idiotic things that no one cares about, they set their statuses to topics inappropriate to be communicated over such a medium, but even when people do this, why does it affect me? Can't I just unfollow/delete them? So after this mind-blowing discovery, I did just that. I unfollowed around 40 people on twitter in the hopes that my timeline would no longer be filled with garbage. But after I did that, I felt guilty. But, again, would I feel guilty? It's not like I dislike the people per say, but only that I disliked their tweets. Now that sounds justifiable, but when you think about what a tweet is, that logic seems to contradict itself.

When I was introduced to twitter, I was told that a tweet is just something you're thinking. Going by that logic, Twitter would essentially just be a long list of people's random yet candid thoughts and activities on a given day. And since the tweets are creations of the tweeters thoughts, they can be seen as extensions of the tweeters themselves. But, these extensions of the tweeters prove not to be entirely factual extensions, due to the fact that Twitter and Facebook are no longer places where people can simply say 'what they're doing,' or 'how they feel.' This is because, in all honesty, no one cares about the true mundane details of suburbanites lives. People will often only dedicate their time towards reading when the content is of lives or other assets that are 'interesting.' And because of this, Tweepers and Facebookers often feel that they can no longer just tweet about their lives, so they create adventure filled alter-lives to fill their tweets and attract more attention. Accordingly, people are also often less inhibited when behind a computer screen so their responses are things they might otherwise not say. Consequently, social networking sites have become hosts for people's alter egos.

The alter egos become the lives their real egos wish they had, or the personality they wish they portrayed. These alter egos are then better fulfilled when hidden behind a computer screen, otherwise known at twitter and facebook. These alter egos become a sort of fiction in this seemingly non-fiction area. And according to most, fiction is more intriguing than non-fiction. Because of these new, interesting fictional lives and personalities people create in comparison to their previously boring, non-fiction lives, the social networking version of a person becomes more exciting, more prominent, and ultimately more valued than the real person. Since people then value their twitter friends more than their real friends, a majority of their time becomes dedicated to twitter and the other social sites so they can live out their new, exciting lives. But the world has not converted fully to technology just yet, and people are still forced to see each other in person on occasion. So once a person comes into contact with a real person when these people before had only been communicating before through their online alter egos, there is a discrepancy created between what is the true identity of a person.

Before it seemed clear that the online persona was the alter ego and the physical person was the real ego, but after so much time is spent on the alter ego couldn't that essentially become the identity of the real, physical person? Here is where my problem lies, excuse the cliché, but who are we really? And how is that skewed by social networking sites? Are we actually the real version of our physical self, or are we these fictional characters we create, live through vicariously online, and ultimately spend more time with? I'm bothered by social networking sites because it seems that the truth of who a person is becomes upset by these mediums for communications. There becomes an incurable gap between these two-plus versions of a person. Even though I'm bothered that these social sites upset the truth of who a person is, I cannot escape them because then I would have to chose which truth of myself I want to live by—yes I'm admitting that I have an alter ego, we all do because of the drastic difference in contexts. So no, you guys aren't going to get a definitive answer of who our true self is and where we should find that true self. Does a truth in this instance even exist? Or can it just change every time we, or something about us, change? Sorry I've just brought you guys down into the deep and dark Mariana Trench that is my mind, but at least now we're all confused together.