

# SPECTATOR

February 2012

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## HOROSCOPES

Sam Lubinecky '12, Managing Editor and Layout Director



**Aries: March 21 - April 19**  
Typically you are not influenced by much, but this month all of that will change. People will have you questioning things and you must ask yourself if they are right. Just because it is February does not mean it is too late to set a New Year's Resolution. Set your goals and standards high.



**Taurus: April 20 - May 20**  
You will be more than satisfied with all of your accomplishments this month. Typically, you are very hard on yourself, but you will be able to relax and enjoy all you have done. Also, a pleasant surprise may be on the horizon.



**Gemini: May 21 - June 20**  
Stresses will surface at home. Your family has high expectations for you and sometimes it may put a strain on you. Instead of holding everything in and then exploding, express your feelings by sitting your family down and talking to them.



**Cancer: June 21 - July 22**  
You are a caring and sensitive person, but you need to be less selective when it comes to who you show that side. You may seem "crabby" to others, and it is simply time to show your good side and let people in.



**Leo: July 23 - August 23**  
Exciting events will have your anticipation levels sky rocket. Instead of getting caught up in the moment, slow down and enjoy these adventures as they happen. Just make sure to keep up with other responsibilities.



**Virgo: August 24 - September 23**  
You will have strong and unusual urges to clean and organize things this month. You have a very long to-do list so this will majorly help you this month. With all of these responsibilities, outbursts are more common than usual. Try to understand other's opinions and if you can not respect them and do not get upset.



**Libra: September 24 - October 22**  
This month will be, again, stressful for you. You may feel limited with given circumstances, but push through. You will be able to vent creatively through anything artistic. So pick up a paint brush or simply doodle on some paper.



**Scorpio: October 23 - November 21**  
If you are in a relationship this month will bring very tense situations. Communicate this instead of sticking your head in the sand, and everything will be fine. You will find yourself in many "awkward" situations this month, just laugh them off.



**Sagittarius: November 22 - December 21**  
Being compassionate is not your forte, but this month it is crucial to do just that. Put others first, be kind and help others when they need it. A partner project may be a possibility this month, so work on your communication skills.



**Capricorn: December 22 - January 19**  
You are typically very talented when it comes to forgiving and letting go. This month that dynamic of your personality will be challenged. Just remain calm and remember, it probably is not a big deal. You have set a reputation for being calm, cool, and collected, so why ruin it now?



**Aquarius: January 20 - February 18**  
Your confidence will be astronomical this month. Just make sure you do not come off as arrogant or cocky. You have in a way been putting off your dreams. Visualize them, come up with a plan, and then execute it. Although, it is easier said than done.



**Pisces February 19 - March 20**  
Happy birthday to all Pisces! Just stay humble and remember just because it is your birthday does not mean you will always be number one. Let the little things go and do not fight over petty things, especially with loved ones.

## PATRONS



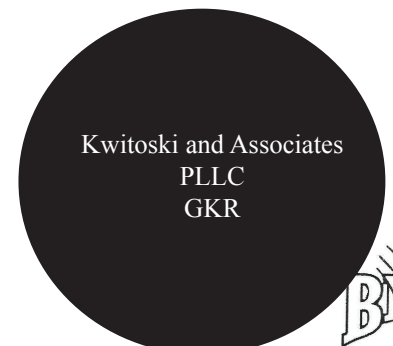
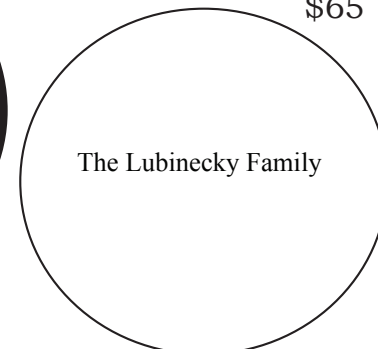
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# Court decision brings church and state discussion to BHS

Lenie Siegel '14, Freelance Writer

On Jan. 11, 2012, 16-year-old Jessica Ahlquist successfully had a prayer removed from the wall of her school in Providence, Rhode Island. After claiming that the long-lasting prayer violated separation between church and state, Ahlquist faced retaliation among her peers and those in her community. Regardless of the strong emotional outpour to keep the prayer in place, a federal judge ultimately ruled that the prayer's posting violated the 1st amendment of the Constitution. Did the court make the appropriate decision?

Separation of church and state, also referred to as government neutrality in religion, has been a long-standing, heated debate in this nation. In the mind of a traditionalist, one should be allowed to practice religion as they please, especially due to the American right to free speech and freedom of religion. An individual with this mindset would favor the preservation of this prayer's showcase.

Some, like sophomore John McNally, believe that there should not even be a separation between church and state. "If you look in the viewpoint at the founding fathers, who ever established the bible as the official school book, why would a separation of church and state have been created?" McNally questioned. He believes that "the court's decision was a wrong one" and that students in Berkley should be allowed to practice prayer in school. "We should have prayers hanging up in Berkley to remind us that God is with us all the time. There is no need to force religion on people and having a prayer hanging in the hallway is acceptable," McNally said.

With Ahlquist's more modern approach to prayer in school, one can claim that exercising religion is not meant to take place in a public establishment. In an effective learning environment, students should not be subjected to certain religious beliefs by their school. "Without separation of church and state, the learning environment becomes hostile. Students who believe what is being perpetuated may come to believe that they are superior to other students," sophomore Jessica Vovk said.

Here at BHS, the staff maintains this separation between church and state effectively. "There is a very accepting environment for all ideas. It feels good to know that our beliefs are not threatened by what we are taught," Vovk added. As an atheist, Ahlquist

did not have that comfort; whenever she saw that prayer hanging in front of her, she felt that she did not belong.

Regarding the issue in schools, the Court noted that "the high school setting in the present case does invoke the highest scrutiny employed by the Supreme Court in Establishment Clause cases. The Supreme Court has traditionally drawn a clear line between government conduct which might be acceptable in some settings and the conduct which is prohibited in public schools." It was a clear decision that the prayer violated the Constitution.

While the Constitution creates a strong separation between church and state, this issue has become a continuous dispute in this country. Based off of this nation's history, it is hard to believe that an agreement regarding this subject will ever be made. In agreement or not, it is clear that the Court's decision has determined that no prayers will be permitted in public schools. Due to this matter of fact, there is no need for disagreement regarding this issue at BHS. Students can learn in a secure and ultimately non-argumentative environment.



Photos by Barret Hotz

Although Berkley High and Cana Lutheran Church stand next to each other they are separate.

# Obama plans to keep college tuition in check

Julia Pompilius '14, Freelance Writer



Adam Israel shows his support of the president's plan.

High tuition poses a huge roadblock to countless high school students looking to receive a college education. Throughout all of high school, one message is repeatedly hammered into students' heads: "Do well in high school and you'll get into college." However, it often goes unsaid that going to college requires more than just the right GPA, an impressive amount of community service hours, and enough extra curricular activities. Going to college requires money, and a lot of it.

College tuition is ever rising here in the United States, preventing many from attending the college they have worked so hard to be accepted into. However, in a

speech given to the University of Michigan, President Obama outlined his plan to curb rising college tuition.

Obama's plan involves rewarding colleges that have reasonable tuition policies and punishing those that do not. Punishment will include the possibility of losing federal aid. Obama's plan also proposes keeping tabs on how colleges spend their federal funds to determine whether or not it is worth continuing government funding.

Obama's plan will also take into consideration how well colleges prepare graduates to repay their student loans and how diligent they are in accepting and graduating low-income students. Those that do a poor job of this will likely lose government funding.

Currently, there is little incentive for a college to lower its tuition rates. High tuition lets potential students know that the college they wish to attend is a high-quality institution, thus encouraging colleges to have high tuition. The plan aims to provide potential students with information gathered by the government about the quality of a given college, instead of allowing tuition to be the main indicator.

However, even if Obama's proposed plan does work, it will not take effect for quite some time, meanwhile the problem prevails here at BHS. Contrary to the belief of many, most people do not have their college tuition paid for in full by their parents. For many BHS students, paying for college is a primary concern. Senior

Anastasia Gedda-Shaheen said that paying for college has been her biggest concern this year.

"[The cost of college tuition] sets me up to have to choose between what I want and what I can afford, which just sucks. I'll definitely have to be working while I'm at school. Before senior year, I guess I lived in the dream world created by counselors' cheerful words and encouraging emails from colleges that told me I could do whatever I wanted and I just figured it would all fall together," Gedda-Shaheen said. "It's actually really tough to find financial aid, especially for students like me who aren't geniuses with a crazy GPA or ACT score, all-star athletes, or award-winning artists. When I actually started the application process, reality came in, and I realized I'm gonna have to work much harder than a lot of my friends to get to go where I want to. I'm [kind of] stuck on the side of the bell curve; it's a tough place to start."

BHS counselor Ms. Catherine Helms said that this problem is not a unique one at BHS. Many Berkley students start their higher education at Oakland Community College in order to work and save money, then transfer to a university when they have the appropriate funds.

Photo by Barret Hotz

TOP 10 COMEDY MOVIES OF ALL TIME

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor and Jake Rothman '14, Business/Ad Manager

Scores were assigned out of 100 to the following comedic movies based on different categories thought to be important characteristics of a great comedy movie. The categories are based on how funny the movie is, how many quotable lines there are, the plot, the cast, and the movie's ability to span the generation gap. We understand that everybody has his or her own favorite move but this is the list of our top ten:

1. **ANIMAL HOUSE**  
96  
Larry "Pinto" Kroger (Tom Hulce) and Kent "Flounder" Dorfman are freshmen entering Faber College. The boys want to join a fraternity but are denied by many houses including the prestigious Omega house. They end up joining the ridiculed fraternity, the Deltas. The always unpredictable Greek life results in many of the most hilarious scenes in comedy history. However, the entire fraternity has to battle against the Dean of the college, and the scheming Omega fraternity who tries to abolish the Deltas altogether, causing what is in our opinion the best comedy movie of all time.
2. **STEBBROTHERS**  
89  
Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly are bitter foes who team up as two 40-year-olds forced to live together when their parents get married. Their hilarious childish behavior leads both stepbrothers to have to find a job in one month or they are kicked out of the house. Ultimately, their disruptions cause the stepbrothers and their parents to split up. The musical talents and childish yet hilarious actions of the brothers are what puts this movie in second place.
3. **CADDYSHACK**  
87  
Danny Noonan is a caddy at Bushwood Country Club. He is determined to go to college by earning a caddy scholarship given to the winner of the Caddy Day gold tournament. Multiple important decisions put Noonan's ability to earn the scholarship in jeopardy. In the end, Noonan has to decide to take the scholarship he always wanted or pursue other risky opportunities.
4. **ANCHORMAN**  
85  
Ron Burgundy (Will Ferrell) is the famous anchorman for a local San Diego news station. When Veronica Comingstone (Christiana Applegate), a new anchorwoman, is hired to co-host the news team, Ron encounters some major problems with his previously spotless career including a comical star-filled battle with many memorable lines.
5. **BLUES BROTHERS**  
84  
*Blues Brothers* is a story of two brothers that try to get their old band together after one of them gets out of jail. In our opinion the humor and the all-star cast consisting of many musical legends including Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, and James Brown makes this musical comedy one of the best comedy movies.
6. **THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN**  
78  
Steve Carrel plays a 40-year-old virgin lacking any type of social life outside of his work at Smart Tech. When his co-workers find out Carrel is still a virgin, they make it their mission to find him "love". Carrel's comical journey to find love is suitable for top ten.
7. **SUPERBAD**  
77  
Evan (Jonah Hill) and Seth (Michael Cera) are on a mission to make it to Seth's crush, Jules' (Emma Stone), party with alcohol Seth promised to bring. Along the way their friend Fogell, or McLovin (Christopher Mintz-Plasse), helps them out. However, as they make the journey to her house something hysterical always seems to sidetrack the trio from reaching their goal.
8. **AIRPLANE**  
76  
This is a movie about how an airplane crew gets sick leaving the lives of the passengers in the hands of an ex-pilot, who has a fear of flying, to land the plane safely. The slapstick comedy and quotable lines from this move is what puts it in the top ten.
9. **OLD SCHOOL**  
75  
Mitch Martin (Luke Wilson), Frank Richard (Will Ferrell) and Beanie Campell (Vince Vaughn) all experience boredom in their everyday lives until Mitch suggests creating a fraternity. Wanting to relive their old college days, the three recruit many eccentric members and experience the fun of their old college days for a second time.
10. **HAPPY GILMORE**  
74  
Happy Gilmore (Adam Sandler) plays a young hockey player who faces a tough situation when his grandmother's home is taken by the IRS and she's forced into a cruel prison-like nursing home. Happy has three months to get enough money to buy the house back at auction. Former golfer Chubbs discovers an unbelievable and uncharacteristic golfer in Happy who faces many challenges on his way to winning the PGA championship and gaining the necessary money to save his grandma's house.

I LOVE THAT BOOK

Meagan Soffin '14, Bull's Eye Editor

The halls of Berkley High are filled with many talented students. Some are musicians, some are artists, and some are writers. The students of Mr. John Duffy's 2011-2012 creative writing class are part of the lucky group of creative-minded people who are exceptional writers. These students from creative writing helped create a book titled *I Love that Cat* by the class's own, J.D. Excellent. "Writing this book was fun. It was a really great experience," sophomore Alex Pierce said. This book features a chapter from each student in the class.

Every student has their own style of writing. Some students utilize Dickensian elements, giving great detail to the characters and places. Other students wrote more like George Orwell, honest and straight to the point. This hodge-podge of styles is what makes the book so special. Each chapter is written by a different student, and because of this, one gets to see many different sides of the characters depending on who the author is.

As a result of having different authors, the chapters leave off in one spot and then the next chapter takes off in a whole other direction making it a little hard to follow. There were some editing issues throughout the book that made it a hard to understand some sentences, but, the authors definitely do a good job painting a picture in the audience's mind. "It was actually really hard to write the one chapter. We had about one month to write and get all of our edits done and there was a certain word requirement we had to meet," sophomore Leah Spink said. Although there are several errors, visually *I Love That Cat* looks like it was actually published.

*I Love that Cat* takes place in Deadpan, Nebraska. Deadpan is a pretty empty town, and there is not much to do there. The main character Bain is there for only one reason: his little sister. Bain is a Harvard graduate and now works at the local Hogburger in Deadpan. Only one thing is wrong with the amazing Hogburger burgers—the meat is not cut evenly. Bain then gets the idea of creating a laser to slice the meat perfectly. For Bain there then arises two problems: someone is trying to kill him and someone is trying to steal his brilliant and beloved laser.

The BHS creative writing class did a fascinating job taking ordinary people and putting odd twists into each of the characters and plot events. It is definitely a one of a kind novel. The future creative writing classes will

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# ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?

## VENUES THAT HELP CREATE ULTIMATE CONCERT EXPERIENCE

Danny Bakst '12, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Experiencing music performed right in front of your face is something that cannot be matched by simply plugging headphones into an iPod. With the few entertaining activities available for a teenager to take part in after school hours, concerts are by far the best option. And although some might argue against the price of tickets or the drive to a venue, the experience is most definitely worth both inconveniences. Here is a list of some venues where our favorite bands share their talents with us, the common folk.

### STADIUM: THE PALACE/JOE LOUIS ARENA

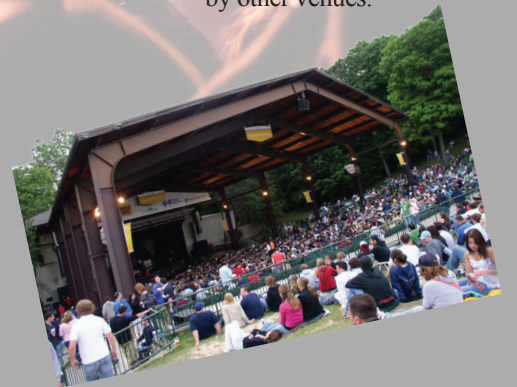
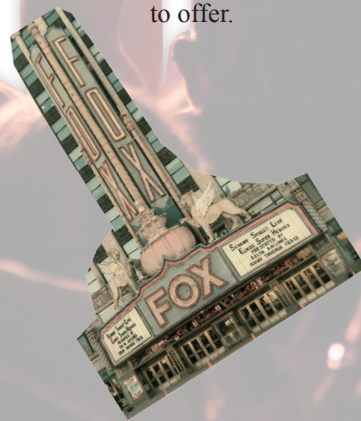
With rumors that the Detroit Pistons might leave the Palace and join the Red Wings in the city of Detroit, people may ask, "What use can be made of The Palace if the Pistons do not play there?" The answer my friend is concerts, and a whole bunch of them to be exact. Even if the Pistons stay, The Palace offers a slew of marquee artists in the industry, simply because stadiums have the ability to seat a very large amount of people. The pros of a stadium venue like The Palace are the quality of artist and the giant jumbotron or screen that will help clearly show the artist on stage. The cons of stadiums are the expensive price of the tickets, long drives to the venue and that most seats only have a blurry, distant view of the show. Overall concerts at stadiums are a positive experience because they usually attract the most popular artists.

### SMALL INDOOR THEATERS: ROYAL OAK MUSIC THEATER, THE FILLMORE, THE FOX, THE CROFOOT

In my humble opinion, small indoor venues are the best option for concerts. Places like the aforementioned inside venues offer personal, intense shows. The indoor venue usually has a general admission floor so arrive early in order to get a good spot. The mosh pits and all around vibe on the floor are most definitely worth the wait. And although there are always a couple handfuls of crazy people in the mix, standing on the floor is worth the risk of being drenched with the sweat of the plump gentleman to one's right or hurting a cornea after being whipped by the hair of the girl standing directly in front. Indoor concerts offer an intense, up close experience that truly shows what the artist has to offer.

### OUTDOOR AMPITHEATERS: DTE

The unique experience these venues offer is the outside environment. They consist of a stage with an area of seating, and then a hill area for more standing space. These outdoor types of venues share similar cons to that of the stadium because unless one splurges for seats up front, the view is limited. Instead of seeing the emotion and expressions shown by the artists in an indoor club, the figures on stage are just fuzzy outlines in the distance. Another negative is the chance of weather stunting the activities. Although this does open the possibility for wet t-shirt contests, nobody likes to be shocked by a lightning bolt just to see Big Sean thrust on stage. However, even with these negative possibilities there are some positive aspects to the outdoor venues. If the weather is pleasant, then the concert turns into a great way to spend an outdoor evening. Also, standing on the hill opens up possibilities for dancing, mosh pits and other fun opportunities. Don't let the weatherman determine whether or not a concert is an evening possibility; these places offer a different experience that cannot be matched by other venues.



Photos courtesy of Ms. Emily Mullins and Google Images

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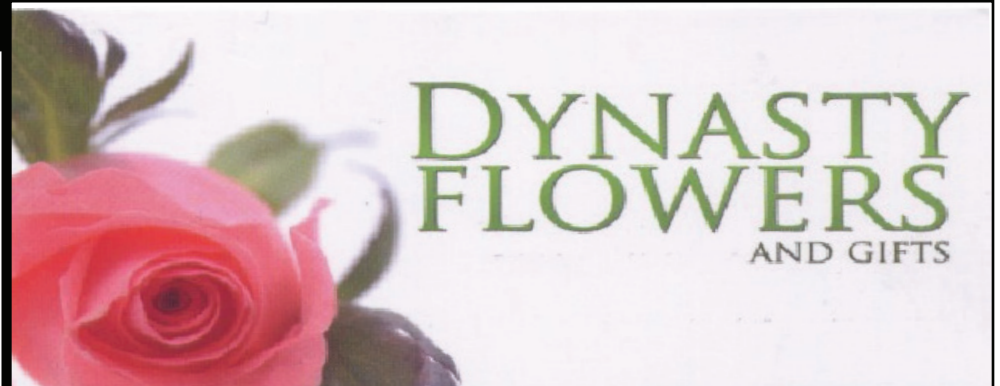
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# Scratch MP3s, vinyl is making a comeback

Aaron Cohen '13, Co-Entertainment Editor

Go into the attic, dig up some old cardboard boxes, and chances are, somewhere, amidst your brother's old clothes and a pile of photo albums, you will find a few dusty, vinyl records that your parents listened to back in the good ole days. They may look like giant CD's, a prehistoric musical medium, but before you dismiss these seemingly ancient artifacts as trash, bust out the old turntable, throw on a 45 and hear what you have been missing.

Up until the late 70s, there was only two ways to listen to music: live or on a vinyl record. As technology advanced, the introduction of the cassette tape, CD, and eventually the mp3 led to records becoming a thing of the past. That is, until now. Vinyl is making a comeback, and many are just beginning to realize how our generation has been deprived of (or resistant to) this classic form of entertainment.

If you are anything like me, you have dealt with what I would like to coin as "a spoiled ear." Music today serves as secondary background filler to other, primary activities. When you are logged into Facebook, doing homework, and texting friends, the music playing in the background is not at the forefront of your conscious. Rather, it is simply accompanying the other activities you are partaking in. It seems as though the only time you do concentrate on the music is when you are changing the song, which is probably a lot. We all have some degree of "song ADD." With vinyl, you are taking an active role in the

music you are listening to. You do not have the option to shuffle every song you are not in the mood for. You can actually begin to appreciate the music for what it really is, and listen to an entire side before you must physically turn over the album and reset the needle.

Although this may seem like an unnecessary hassle, the benefits of listening to music in this way outweigh many of the negative aspects. For one thing, vinyl sounds better. The tone is warmer, fuller, and richer than any mp3 can provide. According to singer-songwriter Neil Young, "CD's contain only 15 percent of the recording information contained on master tracks." Even Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, and a pioneer of the digital music era preferred listening to vinyl. Records are also tangible, objects you can hold and keep. There is something strangely gratifying about taking an album out of its sleeve, placing it on the turntable, setting the needle, and then flipping the record when it is done. These simple actions are guaranteed to increase one's appreciation for what they are listening to.

Listening to vinyl also draws one into a unique community of people who share a similar passion for music. There are still record stores all over the place, including UHF, which is right in downtown Royal Oak.

When

you go to a record store you are immediately engrossed in a world where music is king. And there is no better feeling than buying a brand new LP and putting on the turntable for the first time. Few know this feeling better than English teacher, John Duffy. "When I buy records, I go to a brick-and-mortar storefront and I talk to someone in person, an expert," said Duffy. "We talk about what we know and I get suggestions for other titles to check out. I generally leave with three or four titles I didn't originally intend to buy. I get them home, I unwrap the plastic, I take out the 12x12 insert, and I examine the vinyl (which is probably a color other than black). I put it on and I sit and listen. I don't clean the house. I don't grade papers. I don't call my sister in Colorado. It's a sublimely simple experience that I really enjoy, especially with friends."

So give your iPod a break, head over to a nearby record store, and follow the music (and the wise words of John Duffy). Once you realize what you have been missing, you will never want to go back. Happy listening!



Photo courtesy of Aaron Cohen

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## ALBUMS DROPPING IN

### FEBRUARY

Barret Hotz '13, Photo Editor

#### SILVERSTEIN-SHORT SONGS



*Short Songs* is their sixth album in 12 years. They are a post-hardcore band from Burlington, Ontario, and they started in the lead singer's garage back in 2000. This band's name references the child author Shel Silverstein; they otherwise have nothing to do with the author. This band is one of the most prestigious in the underground rock community. The single off this album is "World On Fire." Pick up this album in stores Feb. 7.

#### OF MONTREAL-PARALYTIC STALKS



Of Montreal is an American alternative rock band from Athens, Georgia. *Paralytic Stalks* is Of Montreal's 11th album in 15 years. They have almost produced an album every year. This band

seems to be able to come back with a new killer sound everytime. They are named after the failed romance with a women "Of Montreal." Of Montreal's new album comes out Feb. 7; the single off this album is "Malefic Dowery." Grab this album at your local store.

#### TYGA- CARELESS WORLD: RISE OF THE LAST KING



*Rise of the Last King* is Tyga's second album in four years. Tyga is a 23-year-old rapper from Compton, California. The acronym of Tyga stands for "Thank You God Always." The

singles on this album are "Far Away," "Rack City," "Still Got It" and "Faded." This is his best album so far, as many have said because it has a mix of club music and hard rap. *Careless World: Rise of the Last King* comes out Feb. 21 Don't forget to pick it up.

# TOO MANY MCS, NOT ENOUGH MICS

Zak Witus '12, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Hate them or love them, they're not going anywhere. An essential aspect of hip-hop culture is insulting other MC's music, so by proxy the haters are here to stay. Hip-hop enthusiasts enjoy listening to rhymes about tech-nines, slapping [expletives] and sipping forties. At BHS, where people are known to pride themselves on their taste of music over their GPA, what pleases students to listen to has unsurprisingly translated into the music and culture created by BHS's growing rap community. Unfortunately, what some of our self-proclaimed rappers have failed to understand is that in the post-"gangsta rap" era, while some lyricists may still rap about blasting people like boomshakalaka, the industry has become overall much less violent and negative. Today, with the emergence of rappers like J. Cole, Big KRIT, Kid Cudi along with reinvented rappers like Jay-Z, Nas, and Kanye West, hip hop has moved toward talking much more about real societal issues, real emotional struggles, and generally topics more substantial and meaningful to real life. Unlike the Biggie Smallz, Snoop Dogg, and Dr. Dre songs of old, which consisted of shotgun shells, slanging crack, and unprotected sex, today's rap, which by all means still includes illicit drug use and subordinating women, tends to focus on becoming a source of insight into the deeper, more intellectual side of its audience. Despite this, the BHS rap culture tends to focus on generating hate.

All around BHS, students are singing his lyrics: "L-o-l-o-l-o, naw f\*\*\* that." The artist known as AVKILLAH, better known as senior Adam Veltri, has gained fame in the BHS rap culture, but for all the wrong reasons. His single, "Gotta Have It (Remix)," has 460 plays and counting on soundcloud.com and he plans on releasing more.

Within hours of student's hearing AVKILLAH's rap, a tsunami of criticism flooded the halls of BHS. "That was whack as hell. The kid should find something better to do," an anonymous junior said. "I thought I was bad [at rapping], but then I heard the 'KILLAH' and realized I'm like Biggie compared to him," an anonymous senior said. Hold up y'all! Everybody just, "pause for a second/ pause for a second."

In response to his track's negative feedback, Veltri said, "I really [could not] care less. It's funny that there's so much criticism in a mile-big city." The ones to critique are not Veltri and the "rappers" like him, rather their audience. "It's one thing to hate on somebody who walks around thinking they're gonna get signed. It's different to hate on a kid who was just messing around," Veltri said.

While Veltri's song generates curiosity like a train wreck and laughter like a fat guy slipping on a banana peel, it requires real courage to open up one's creative side to their peers. Furthermore, there are many more prominent figures in the Berkley rap game worth discussing.

Nick Stone, a.k.a. Stony Montana, is currently the most critically acclaimed rapper in the Class of 2012. Although he no longer attends BHS, his music has caused an impact around the school. Stone's hit track, "Rack City," has over 1900 plays and 78 downloads, surpassing AVKILLAH, Berkley's Big Tone, S.O.F.A. Gang, and all other known rappers at BHS in both categories. Stone has taken rapping much more serious than any other rapper at BHS has cared to so far. His first mix tape, *Formal Introduction*, has received noted online attention, but like Veltri, also a stark amount of animosity around the BHS drinking fountains. To date, he and his group Limitless remain unsigned. And one BHS rapper thinks he might be the reason why.

Somewhere between Veltri and Stone's interest in rapping resides senior Alec Roy. His original lyrical content and production quality has so far out-witted all other self-proclaimed BHS rappers', leaving them in what Roy's describes in his rap "Chuch" as a "Pseudo-Paralysis."

The guy is definitely not the next Eminem or Mac Miller, and he'll admit it. "I'm not trying to go anywhere with rap, it's just something to do. People tell me I'm not bad like most other Berkley kids are." Roy has no stage name, no self-professed expertise in rapping, but he can still manage to compose a rap worth listening to. "If people keep liking my stuff, I'm gonna keep making stuff. It's more of a fun hobby me and [former BHS student] Matt McBrian do," Roy said. McBrian, Roy's primary produces, and Roy himself have teamed up on two tracks released on soundcloud.com and one more entitled, "Room," which is coming soon.

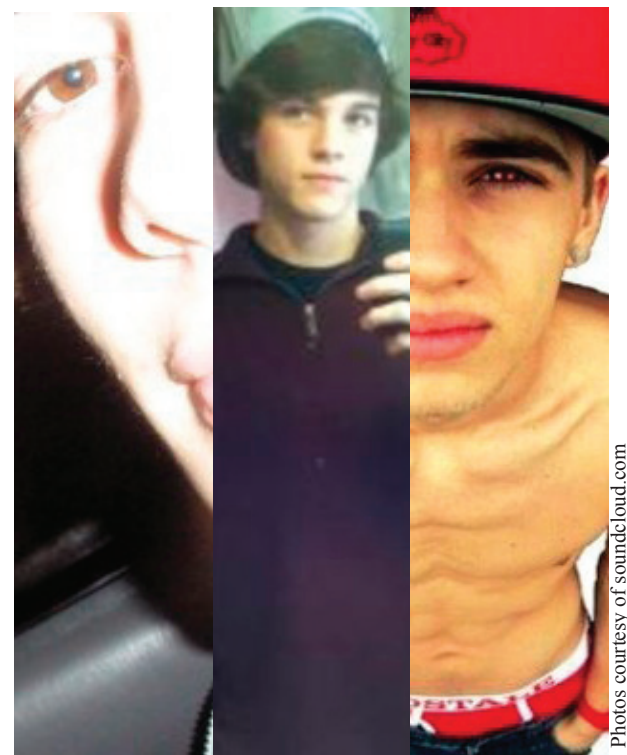
If Roy hates on any of his fellow BHS rapper's, he doesn't make any comment within his lyrics. He saves that for Twitter. "Sometimes people just need to know they're not actually good. I don't think I'm better than them in any way. Some people are just absolutely horrible, and you gotta let them know," Roy said. The rap world is a jungle. It's survival of the dopest, where the fit rappers get money and love, and the wack MCs get hate and jobs at Applebee's.

"I THINK I MIGHT BE WHY LIMITLESS REMAINS UNSIGNED." - ALEC ROY

I appreciate the spirit and confidence it requires to open up one's music and mind to the world, but BHS, please stop publishing your raps. I'm not implying that no one cares to listen, because on the contrary the student body appears obsessed with the new rap pandemic.

Despite how compelling Veltri's track seems to be to students, it doesn't mean we should all point and laugh. The amateur BHS rappers have so far misrepresented our school by spurring petty feuds, creating uninspiring songs, and producing overall poor excuses for hip-hop music; it's a crime against hip-hop, and not the kind worth rapping about. However, you may search "Aroy," "AVKILLAH," and "Stony Montana" on soundcloud.com to hear their latest tracks.

Rapping and messing around with one's friends is just plain fun and harmless; but the problems arise when one shares his or her music with the world, before realizing their actions larger impact. Please BHS, I beg of you: put down the microphone and pick up a book.



Aspiring senior rappers (from left to right) Alec Roy, Adam Veltri, and Nick Stone.

Photos courtesy of soundcloud.com



# The Spanish Cup Part Dos: The Misadventures of James M. Demery

James Demery '13, Opinion Editor

That's right. It's back. The Spanish Cup. Just when it seemed as if it had gone away for good it comes back and smacks you upside the head.

For all my loyal readers out there you are familiar with the tale of the struggle with my Spanish Cup addiction. I freed it from the depths of trophy prison, only to have it snatched away from me moments later and told I could never possess it.

One fateful day, weeks after the events of my last story, I decided to take matters into my own hands. My faithful companion, sophomore Jason Sachse, and I were walking down the hall going to class, when I inquired how he felt when I stole the Spanish Cup, Sachse said, "It was a moment of pure joy." Just then, we saw none other than Spanish Teacher Mrs. Tracy Burroughs walk out of her room, the room where the Spanish Cup resides. We decided on the spot to make our move to recover the infamous trophy. I snuck into the room, while Sachse videotaped the historic event, and successfully got the trophy out of her room even with time to make it to next hour safely. At lunch I inconspicuously took the trophy to my car and hid it in the trunk.



Burroughs and Demery battle during the Spanish War over the Cup.

Photo by Veronica Marchese

Alas, during my fifth hour, Principal Mr. Randall P. Gawel strolled in asking for me. For reasons I am not allowed to say I was not in class, so thus, the saga continues.

The next day in first hour someone asked me if I had taken the Spanish Cup, and I asked them how they knew. They then filled me in on how Gawel had been looking for me. It was then I decided to resign myself to the inevitable and return the beautiful trophy. When asked what he thought about my escapades with the Spanish Cup, Gawel said, "Es muy mal." Whether he was mocking me or not remains unknown, but with great sadness and despair I went to Mr. Ronald Kane's office in a last ditch attempt to convince him to let me keep my prize, but to no avail.

I returned the Cup to Mrs. Burroughs and she basked in her triumph. I walked out with a heavy heart and tremendous sorrow but I swear to you faithful readers, one day before I leave this school forever, I will take the Cup. It will be mine. Until next time.

## La guardia de la Copa responde/The Guardian of the Cup responds

Mrs. Tracy Burroughs, Spanish Teacher

Querido Don Percival/Sr. Demery,

Lei con tristeza que otra vez perdiste la Copa Sagrada por la mala fortuna que te tormenta. Por eso te escribo esta cartita. Hay un dolor en nuestros corredores, un dolor que, como tu tocayo, podrías curar. ¿Sabes cómo hacerlo?

Nuestros sabios dicen que la clave para liberar la Copa de sus sueños se encuentra en nuestros corredores, también. Muchos la han buscado y muchos han fallado, ojalá tú puedas llegar a ser el héroe, pero ¿quién será tu guía? ¿Qué tienes que hacer?

Busca las respuestas en la antigüedad y cuando las sepas, hablaremos.

Tu consejera,  
la sra. Burroughs



Photo by Barrett Holtz

Dear Sir Perciva,  
I read with sadness that once again you lost the Sacred Cup because of the bad fortune that torments you. For that reason, I am writing you this letter. There is pain in our corridors, a pain that, like your namesake, you could cure. Do you know how?  
Our wise people say that the key to liberating the Cup from its dreams can be found in our corridors, as well. Many have searched and many have failed; hopefully you can become the hero, but who will be your guide? What do you have to do?  
Look for the answers in antiquity and when you find them, we'll talk.  
Your advisor,  
Sra. Burroughs



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# SENIOR BEAR AWARDS



Barret Hotz '13, Photo Editor

**Best Laugh**  
Nathan Vertel & Natalie Gerfen

**Most Energetic**  
Trevor Bewley & Jordan Baker

**Most Dramatic**  
Jacob Wilt & Jordyn Mackool

**Most Likely to be a Rockstar**  
Danny Asfar & Molly Straight

**Always Talking**  
Ethan Zavier & Caroline Baron

**Class Clown**  
Nicholas Tenaglia & Samantha Muñoz

**Notorious Napper**  
Jonathon Viner & Gina Fritsch

**Always Laughing**  
Jason Taylor & Megan Wolynski

**Cell Phone Junkie**  
Damon Eldridge & Isabella Leo

**Biggest Flirt**  
Bradely Burke & Jillian Baker

**Class Clutz**  
Samuel Milikhiker & Anastasia Gedda-Shaheen

**Frequent Freeloader**  
Jason Taylor & Anastasia Gedda-Shaheen

**Biggest Gossip**  
Lucas Hammerle & Isabella Leo

**Neat Freak**  
Nicholas Suarez & Molly Rott

The Senior Bear Awards is a night of respect for one's classmates as honoring accomplishments as well as goofy personality quirks. Nominees are happy to just be considered by their classmates. As BHS students, everyone knows the importance of this event for the senior community. The S.B.A's are a big deal to the seniors, considering this is their last year here at high school. Soon enough, it'll be off to college or other life events. This night is about remembering how fun their high school experience has been and what has changed in the years past.

The way that seniors win is by votes from one's peers. Everyone in the senior class has a chance to be nominated and win one of the awards. However, a flaw in the system seems to be that students can be nominated for and can win more than one award. This seems only fair. However, the work that students and Mrs. Matthews did to bring this great night all together is quite unbelievable. The Advanced Video class was able to put on an amazing night of fun and entertainment for all in attendance.

The kids that were involved in the S.B.A are very proud of how the show went and happy about how the crowd reacted. Seniors Meghan Steingold and Melissa Reilley did an amazing job with the production. The categories of the S.B.A's included some funny awards like "Notorious Napper" and "Frequent Freeloader" and some serious such as "Most Involved" and "Mr. and Mrs. Congeniality." They even included an award for "Favorite Teacher" which could be won by a male and female teacher, similar to all the student awards. This year it was taken by Mr. Weingarden and Ms. Taylor. Their big win comes from being great and dedicated teachers to the senior class, as the students must agree with their teaching abilities.

The Senior Bear Awards should be considered one of the best things students put together at Berkley and if you missed it, be sure to be there next year.



## THE HONORABLE ONES

**Most Unforgettable**  
Peter Hoch & Jasmin Turner

**Favorite Teacher**  
Mr. Weingarden & Ms. Taylor

**Favorite Family**  
The Tenaglias & The Mackools

**Most Artistic**  
Bradely Roelandt & Alexandra Hill

**Divine Dancer**  
Daniel Sievers & Jillian Baker

**Most Musical**  
Jacob Wilt & Nitasha Kernen-Fox

**Most Fashionable**  
Ethan Toumey & Chelsea Mazzetti

**Most Athletic**  
Kyle Braun & Karsyn Baker

**Best Physique**  
Markeis Hampton & Veronica Matelic

**Best Smile**  
Daniel Bakst & Jessica Gross

**Best Hair**  
Bradely Burke & Nitasha Kernen-Fox

**Prettiest Eyes**  
Nicholas Suarez & Natalie Boyd

**Most Spirited**  
Nicholas Tenaglia & Erica Fox

**Most Involved**  
Daniel Bakst & Rachel Bornstein

**Mr. & Ms. Congeniality**  
Michael Azar & Mikaila Richardson

**Best Car**  
Jacob Zang & Molly Straight

**Most Likely to be a Millionaire**  
Bradely Zucker & Laura Sachse

**Dynamic Duo**  
Daniel Bakst & Zachary Witus  
Molly Straight & Brooke House

**Most Changed Since Freshman Year**  
Thomas Kubiski & Elana Price

# Snowcoming satisfies students

Shelby Silver '14, Copy Editor

## The dance drives away the winter blues

On Feb. 4, the final dance before prom kicked off at 7 p.m. The down side of the dance was that it was in the Collaborative Center and it ended maybe a little bit too early. The upside of the dance was that it was dark, unlike the Homecoming dance back in September where the gym was bright as day. All the girls dressed in their cute dresses and heels and the boys dressed in (their version of) nice clothing was quite a sight to see. Senior Elana Price said, "It was nice to have one last dance before prom. It was really fun. If I had the chance to go again next year, I would for sure go." The dance exceeded many students' expectations and turned out to be a lot of fun. All of the decorations around the collaborative center were really good and the DJ was not half bad either. Price also said, "The highlight of the night was when this guy was throwing money at people on the dance floor. It was funny." The Snowcoming dance was a big success and everyone danced the night away...until 10:30 pm. Well done, Student Leadership, well done.



Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors show their stuff at the 2012 Snowcoming Dance put on by Student Leadership.

All Photos by Ms. Emily Mullins and Daniel Bakst

# Spirit Week awakens the inner Bear

**Pajama Day**~ The perfect theme to start off Snowcoming Spirit week for a Monday when everyone dreads coming to school after the weekend. Students and teachers both looked festive as they put their Hunter boots aside and their sweater vests back in the closet and replaced them with fuzzy slippers and oversized sweatshirts.

**Neon Day**~ Walking into school and being blinded by the huge amount of walking highlighters definitely was a wake up. Being able to wear ridiculous colors and showing off the American Apparel sparkly leggings was a cool, expressive way to show all the unique personalities that take up the halls of BHS. Neon day is a keeper.

**Western Day**~ Most students did not participate in this particular themed day, but for those who did; well done. As I walked into the girl's bathroom, I found myself pleasantly surprised as I saw girls decked out in cowboy boots, flannel shirts, cowboy hats, plus beards and mustaches that were drawn onto their faces. It was quite the sight to see. Western day was not a complete fail, as not all students were willing to draw on mustaches and wear cowboy hats around school as if it were any other normal day.

**Berkley Apparel Day**~ This day is particularly my favorite. Not only did most of the student body participate, but all of the Berkley apparel is unbelievably comfortable. It was like a second pajama day, except everyone was dressed up in our school colors. As the BHS fight song says, "Hail! maroon and blue!"

**White Out**~ Going into the Friday before the Snowcoming dance and the final pep assembly of the year, everyone was getting hyped. From the students and teachers dressed in all white, to the intense teacher/student dodge ball game, it was a fun way to end spirit week. The basketball game against Ferndale was really exciting even though we did not win, and it did not put a damper on anyone's excitement for the dance on the following day.



Photos by Shelby Silver

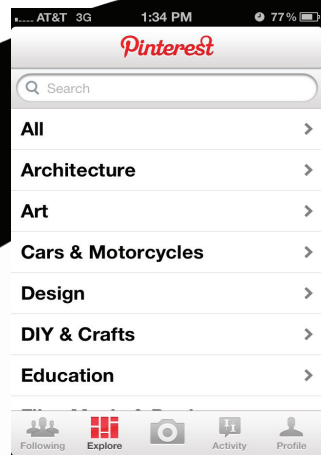
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HITS AND MISSES OF FEBRUARY

HIT: PINTEREST

Veronica Marchese '13, Student Life Editor

Architecture, art, cars, design, crafts, food, beauty, home décor, humor, apparel, photography, travel and weddings; these are among the plethora of things one can pin onto numerous boards one can create. Pinning and boards, terms most people probably do not know the meaning of, are like reposting or posting things you see on the site that you like. Boards are what you create to post your pins to; examples being "in my dream home" or "places I want to visit." Pinterest is an invite only website, where one can request to be a member by the creators or a current member can invite you; if one requests an invite there is a waiting list to be placed on until you are accepted. I urge people to check it out, request an invitation, and follow me and my pins.



A few of the many features of Pinterest.

Photo by Veronica Marchese

MISS: PDA

Lindsay McFern '13, Sports Editor

The hallways are meant for proper school things like getting to class or stopping at one's locker, not to frolic with your significant other. I understand you are "in love" with your boyfriend or girlfriend of two weeks but I do not enjoy seeing you two groping during passing time. You can do whatever you want when no one is watching, but school is a completely inappropriate place to show off your relationship. I have seen way too much awkward love in our hallways. Go ahead and hold hands, maybe a hug or two, but is it really necessary to make out between classes? You will get to see them in 61 minutes. Control yourself, please, if only for my eyes' sake.



Photo by Barrett Hotz

Jack Kyle and Morgan LaBarrie show unappreciated PDA.

HIT: SINGING TELEGRAMS

Alison Jones '13, Feature Editor

Thanks to Tri-M, students at BHS could send singing telegrams to their sweethearts on Valentine's Day. For only two dollars, students have the choice of picking from five different long songs put on Tri-M gifted musicians. From Elton John's "Your Song" to Aladdin's "A Whole New World" students were sure to find a song to be able to "serenade their sweetie." Not only were they available for love-struck couples, but students could also purchase them for teachers, crushes, or just as a joke. For two dollars, I hope that everyone received a telegram from their secret crush from one of the brilliant Tri-M musicians.



Photo by Veronica Marchese

Nick Rifle is finishing his performance of a singing telegram with his accordion.

MISS: BAD SPORTS NICKNAMES

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

Recently, bad sports nicknames have become a major problem. Although nicknames for athletes have been around forever, the ones most remembered are the ones that are quite bad. Some leagues (I'm looking at you XFL) have adopted nicknames onto the backs of jerseys instead of player's actual last names. Nicknames, like the Cuban Centipede for Cuban baseball prospect Yoenis Cespedes, or Shaquille O'Neal's countless nicknames like Shaqutise and the Big Shamrock, are some examples of terrible sports nicknames. Bad nicknames are something that has recently infected BHS, such as with diver Joe "el lobo" Wolfsin and tennis player Gram "Lan" Wise. All in all, the use of terrible sports nicknames are not only confusing to the spectator, but also annoying for everybody.



Photo by Barrett Hotz

Diver Joe "el lobo" Wolfsin.

TJ Bowers shows his Tigers pride.



Photo by Meagan Soffin

HIT: PRINCE FIELDER

Jake Rothman '14, Business/Ad Manager

As the Major League Baseball off-season comes to a close, our very own Detroit Tigers did not want to go to spring training empty handed. Then, virtually out of the blue, the Tigers added a 275-pound hitting monster to their roster. His name is Prince Fielder, and he is causing a major buzz around Tigers nation. The contract means Fielder will receive 214 million dollars in exchange for a nine year commitment to the Tigers. This deal is great for the Tigers because they gain Fielder's unparalleled power; the man could hit a baseball out of Tiger Stadium at the age of 12. The return to Detroit is a homecoming for Fielder because his father, Cecil Fielder, played for the Tigers while Prince was growing up. In the 2011 season, Fielder hit 38 home runs, good for fifth best in all of baseball. With the loss of the Tigers' all star designated hitter Victor Martinez to an ACL injury, the addition of Fielder becomes even more significant for the team. Without the addition of Fielder to Detroit's beloved Tigers, the team could have struggled to make the postseason. However with Fielder's power, Miguel Cabrera's hitting ability, and Justin Verlander's godly arm, Tigers fans are not wondering if they will

# A MAN. AND THE

# HIS MARKET. LOVE



All Photos by Barret Hotz

Zak Witus '12, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Ernie himself shows off his sandwiches.



**D** Deep in the residential rough of Oak Park hides a diamond delicatessen. About four miles from BHS or a quick two-minute ride from CASA resides one of the best-kept secrets in metro-Detroit luncheon history. Approximately half way between Coolidge and Woodward on, just south of 9 Mile Rd., stands the longest running business, operating within the same location, in the city of Oak Park. The block white letters on the building's brick facade reads: Ernie's Market.

To the dismay of CASA students, who have discretely cherished the precious place like they were a bunch of Gollums from Lord of the Rings, the time has arrived for the Berkley High School Community at large to realize the awesomeness that is this humble sandwich establishment and its lovely genius of an owner. Allow me to introduce or reintroduce: Ernie and his market.

Enter the market from the corner of Republic Ave. and Capital St., and Ernie's booming voice can immediately be heard from the threshold. "Hey baby! I'm gonna hook you up, baby! Let's do it, baby! Hell yeah, baby!" Like a lottery winner to their spouse after realizing their good fortune, Ernie hollers out emphatic happiness to his customers, dolling out handfuls of Hershey kisses, spreading the 'Love' to one customer at a time.

The atmosphere inside Ernie's cannot be compared to most of the typical delis in the metro-area with their ten different types of salami hanging from the ceiling, waiters and waitresses roaming around, full staff behind the counter, and their convenient strip mall location. No, Ernie's Market is a sandwich shop where they cut the fluff—and by fluff I largely mean the seating—focusing on the essentials needed to deliver the best product at the best price: hand sliced meats, fresh produce, several dedicated people to keep it all running, and the bottom line baby, "ya gotta have the Love."

Customer service. That is the

key term to describe the appeal of Ernie's Market. Sure, the sandwiches are jam packed with meats, cheeses, and all the other desirable extras until it topples over. Indeed, historically the smell of an Ernie's sandwich has been known to bring saliva to the lips of the most cottonmouth stoner. And of course, the secret "Love Spice" creates a unique taste that no other deli has yet successfully reproduced. But, ultimately, Ernie's willingness and ability to connect with every person who passes through his business's door, keeps his customers coming back for more.

Ernie puts the Love on each and every sandwich (metaphorically speaking, of course) because that is what makes his stuff the best. I could continue by further attempting to explain how exactly Ernie puts the Love into each and every sandwich, but one must make their own pilgrimage there in order to fully understand the experience. I fear butchering the incredible, yet seemingly mundane activity of picking up a sandwich at Ernie's too much to attempt to convey it further. So now, let us stick to the cold, hard facts.

There are three grades of sandwiches one can purchase at Ernie's: a \$3, \$4, or \$5. The \$3 has one meat, \$4 has two meats, \$5 has three meats plus a lucky bonus. All cold cuts are sliced on the spot, to ensue maximum freshness. (Keep in mind Ernie reserves all rights to throw on extra meats and cheeses, because if he can sense your coolness, he will definitely "hook you up.") Personally, I go with the \$5 sandwich and let Ernie take it away on the rest, save the pickles and cucumbers.

The corner store on Republic and Capital has evolved over time, as most businesses tend to do. First it was a

store, then a butcher's shop, then a grocery store (where the building gets its misleading name), and then finally a sandwich store. The boss of Ernie's Market, according to Ernie, has always been the customers. So, despite the fact that the customers do indeed control the demand, and although he himself doesn't seem concerned with the technicalities, the man whose name matches the one on the front of the building, the man who over 50 years ago quit his higher paying job as a corporate troubleshooter in exchange for doing what he loved, the man who has stood grinning big and laughing often, is Ernie. Ernie is the man.

I highly recommend this out of the way lunch stop to everybody. If you happen to be a new breed of stuck-up conservative, who does not enjoy a good sandwich, go any way; the adventure of tracking down this humble, shabby sandwich shop and conversing with the character known as Ernie satisfies in and of itself. Although the long commute may leave a BHS student finishing his or her lunch running through the hallways, it is 100 percent worth the tardy in my mind.



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## DIRTIEST JOBS FOUND EVERYWHERE

Veronica Marchese '13, Student Life Editor

A dirty job, whether it is literally meant as getting ones hands dirty or if it is meant as undesirable or unpleasant, is not a job most people want to do regardless of their personal definition. Here at BHS, dirty jobs are done daily by the unrecognized and behind the scenes staff.

Everyday when the students and staff of BHS are working, and even after the students leave, the custodians are hard at work keeping our school up to code. BHS has seven custodians and they work in shifts of three all throughout the day and night.

The maintenance shift fixes things that the custodian shifts report after they leave, maintains the regulation in the school (such as the heat) and makes sure the school functions well overall. The two custodial shifts clean the classes, the auditorium, the cafeteria, gyms and when our school has events, they help prepare for them. The head custodian, Steve Carson, said, "it's funny how you [the students] walk down the hall and throw trash on the floor and you see us and then go pick it up." And let's face it, everyone here at BHS leaves trash around. It may be absent-mindedly thrown or left around, but when one sees a custodian, you pick up whatever you left, out of courtesy. The job that the custodians do is not one any students would probably enjoy doing; that gross spill that you step over on your way back to class, someone has to clean it up. The long hours, long nights, and summers spent here are worth it because this school would not be as well kept as it is without the custodians.

Staff members, such as Rick and Paula, have an unpleasant job to do as well. They deal with the rambunctious students of BHS. Both Rick and Paula have an immense amount of work they do, for both students and staff. "It's amazing the stuff we have to deliver," commented Paula. They deliver smelly gym shoes, towels, lunches and get-out-of-jail-free passes (more commonly known as Exit Passes). Their patience with the rowdy

troublemakers and wanderers is a job some would consider unpleasant, but what would the halls be without our beloved Rick and Paula?

Other staff members like Principal Mr. Randall Gawel also have the unpleasant job of handling students. Gawel and the assistant principals have to handle suspensions, upset parents and any trouble caused within the walls of BHS. The hardest part of being a principal is that they "Deal with students and those students are someone's kids; many times what we see at school is not what parents see at home, so the way students act here is different than how they act at home," Gawel said. "When the student, parent and I have to have a conversation, we're all coming from a different place, trying to reach an agreement. We all want what's best so we're all trying to arrive at the same place, so it makes it harder to deal with, but when we do, it's rewarding." This is just part of the most unpleasant aspects of their job.

Of all the crazy students at BHS that staff members deal with, juniors have the most dirty and unpleasant of jobs as a class. Simply put, "The ACT sucks, applying for colleges sucks, and all the homework we get sucks," commented junior Tommy Despard. Everyone has probably heard the expression "Junior year is the most important," and that is very true (refer to Alison Jones' article on page 15 for more information on how to make your college application process less difficult), with all the pressure put on the junior class, no one wants to be a third year.

Regardless of the job one has at BHS, whether it be as simple as being a freshman and showing up to school, being a junior and having to deal with the loads of homework teachers pile on, administrators dealing with the trouble makers here, or cleaning up after the students, there is always a dirty job to be done. So with all these dirty jobs at BHS, who is going to call up Mike Roe?

## STOP SAYING STERIODTYPICAL SLURS

Aaron Cohen '13, Co-Entertainment Editor

Gay. Retarded. These words are used every day, in every high school in the United States. Every single high school student has heard or used these slurs at some point in their life. And while it may be considered mildly acceptable by one's peers to refer to something they dislike as gay or retarded, I find it ignorant, offensive and disgusting.

I do not believe that our generation actually intends malice when they use these words. On the contrary, I think as a whole, this generation is the most accepting in American history. The problem is that we have desensitized truly offensive language to the point where it is considered okay to use. Often times, however, we forget what words really mean, and thus the impact on those to whom they actually apply.

When you describe something you dislike as being gay, you imply that homosexuality is in and of itself, bad. Whether you meant it that way or not, that is what others infer, and by using that incorrect description repeatedly, you are paving the way for others to do the same. We cannot allow ourselves to become a society where offensive slurs are an acceptable part of the language.

That is why I implore this generation to make a conscious effort to abolish these phrases from their vocabulary. I challenge each and every student at BHS to stand up for what is right, regardless of what people say. If you overhear someone calling something gay or retarded, explain to them what they are really saying. Explain to them that words can hurt. Explain to them that words like that are the reason gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students are fifteen times more likely to attempt suicide. In the words of the late, great Tupac Shakur, "It's time for us as a people to start makin' some changes. Let's change the way we live and let's change the way we treat each other."

As Mahatma Gandhi would say, "be the change you wish to see in the world."



Sophomores Valerie Christy, Jeff Selmon and junior Dugan Fernandez express their for hatred for the overly used and hurtful slurs.

All photos by Barret Hotz

### *Congratulations to BHS PTA Founders Day Honorees!*

Member of  
the Year:  
**Judy  
Harnois**

Support  
Staff of  
the Year:  
**Jessica  
Johnson**

Educator  
of the  
Year:  
**Tess  
Ferrara**

# Michigan experiences winter withdrawals

Olivia Wood '14, Freelance Writer

Although we teenagers have left the snowman making and snow ball fighting phase of childhood behind, that does not mean we do not enjoy a nice snow day every once in a while. Once December hits, students wait in anticipation for the first snow fall and all of the possibilities it brings, whether it be spending the day snowboarding, ice skating, or simply getting cozy with a cup of hot cocoa and a book. So, after months of waiting, and still no snow. What gives?

One of the most enticing parts of the winter season is the promise of future snow days. Waking up to a thick covering of fluffy, white snow is most definitely a sight for sore eyes, especially when it is enough to warrant a day off. Generally, snow days bring fun for all, whether it be in the form of hitting the slopes or, even, the front lawn. Because Michigan has been experiencing such an anti-climactic winter, though, many students have been forced to cancel winter plans. Junior Brodie Burns said, "This winter has been a little too warm for me to go snowmobiling, which is my usual wintertime activity."

Among others, BHS's Ski Club members have been affected by the rising temperatures. Sophomore Ian Miller said that the weather "makes skiing itself less enjoyable because the snow is fake and too icy, which makes everything not as good." Miller is not the only one who feels this way, though. Junior Nick Ricci, who has been a member of Ski Club since his freshman year, said, "This is only my third time going [this year] because the lack of snow has screwed up all of the slopes so I rarely want to go." Ricci also said that if we had experienced a "normal" Michigan winter, he would have snowboarded much more frequently.

While Michigan's lack of snow has not only hindered some winter plans, it also



brings some serious repercussions, many of which may prove to be detrimental in the months to come. Because we have experienced a significantly warmer winter than most, many things can be thrown off, both in nature and the economy.

Tricked by the warm weather, flowers that bloom yearly come spring may begin to come in early, thinking winter is over. If we were to experience another great snowfall, all of the plant-life that cannot survive such conditions may not live.

In regards to the economy, without snow, many businesses, particularly in areas frequented by winter tourists, are finding it hard to make ends meet and are suffering financially. From normally heavily populated ski slopes, to hotels and restaurants, the effects of the warm winter have clearly hit hard.

On the other end of the winter spectrum are those who are absolutely thrilled with the upper 40s weather we have been experiencing as of late. When asked why she prefers warmer weather, freshman Hailee Halprin said, "I like not having to wear heavy jackets and I like being able to walk to more places. I don't like being cold." Halprin, who "hates" winter, is not the only one who feels this way; many other students at BHS are showing how exultant they are with the recent warmth by shedding some layers and sporting more summer-like clothes to school.

Although many have differing opinions about Michigan's warm winter this year, it is nonetheless a change from what Michiganders are used to. Whether it be an effect of global warming or simply a natural occurrence, make the most of the faux-spring weather while it lasts, which may not be for too much longer.

# Juniors: The most important year of their lives lies ahead

Alison Jones '13, Feature Editor

Since freshmen year, we have all been told that junior year was of the utmost importance to our academic future. It is the year that most colleges see just before they either accept or deny or defer you into their school. Usually, it is the year that students will take the most rigorous schedule possible, stocking up on as many AP and honors classes one can handle, while still managing to have time to participate in a large number of service hours. For those juniors who are just now starting to go through the college application process, here are some tips to help the procedure go a bit smoother.

**1 Select a goal school-** Pick a college that you have learned enough about to know that it might be a place where you could see yourself spending four or more years. Take an online tour of the school, contact an admissions officer, or if close enough geographically to the top ranked school on your list, take an actual tour of the campus and check things out.

**2 Select a career that interests you-** Based on your interests; find a career path that will suit you the best. More importantly, choose a school that has your career path, or a strong program in your desired field. There are an endless amount of options out there; you are bound to find one that will suit you well.

**3 Start taking pre-ACT/SAT tests-** There are tons of places nearby that offer pre-ACT or SAT classes for any age students. Although they might be expensive, they will do nothing but help you be prepared for the real deal. There is, though, a less expensive approach. CollegeBoard.org and actstudent.org offer free online practice tests for those looking to save a few extra bucks. There is even an app you can download that will give you daily ACT questions.

**4 Take the AP tests-** For those of you juniors taking AP classes this year, be sure to take the AP tests in May. If you do well enough, they can carry over and you can earn college credit for those classes. These tests do range in price anywhere from 80-90 dollars per test. But compared to the cost of classes and tuition these days, it is a small price to pay.

Even though it is only junior year, there is no reason why you should not be looking to the future. You are already more than halfway done with your high school career, so make the best of it. I am not saying study all day every day, but take the time to focus on your studies while still maintaining your sanity.



All photos by Alison Jones and courtesy Google Images

I Need



“Can we listen to music while we do our work?” This question is asked multiple times a day in the classrooms of BHS, and although students already know the answer, the hope that the teacher’s response will one day be “yes” is what keeps us asking. Even though it is the administrator’s decision to not allow musical devices in class, many teachers support this decision. Teachers believe listening to certain music distracts the student from absorbing the needed information, but it actually does the opposite in most cases. Not many of us listen to classical or jazz music which are stimulates to the brain, but more genres of music than just these two can help reduce distractions and thus benefit a student with their school work.

According to MUOhio.edu, music has a profound effect on the brain. Depending on what genre of music a student is listening to, music can help reduce stress, lighten the mood and ultimately give the student greater work efficiency which equals good grades and a happy student with happy parents. Junior Matt Koerner voiced his opinion when he said, “I think that classical, alternative, blues and jazz and stuff like that can help a student concentrate, but only in certain subjects. In English, for example, it does not help at all.” If in certain subjects listening to music can help, then teachers and administrators should not prevent them from creating a better

and more productive work environment.

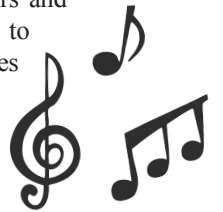
Music is powerful, so powerful in fact that it can induce strong emotions and personality. When teachers tell students to put their ipods, iphones, blackberries and any other high-tech device that can play music away, they are potentially taking the opportunity for the student to get a better grade away from them. Although some genres of music can distract a student from succeeding in work, a lot of music can and will have a positive effect on ones memory and their learning abilities. Ms. Tracy Nadeau shared her own research and said, "I let students listen to music without lyrics when they are working independently because it has a calming effect and drowns out the noises that could distract them." Nadeau said that she lets students listen to songs without lyrics, but why? She said, "From the research that I have read, the lyrics capture the attention of a different part of the brain, dividing a student's concentration." The research that Nadeau has found may not be pertaining to all genres of music, but focusing on one or two types that may have more up beat and fast paced sounds like the tunes teenagers listen to today.

Shelby Silver '14, Copy Editor

Another site, Angelfire.com, reported that the loud bass and the explicit words of rap and pop music do not benefit a student in any way. Genres like folk, classical, acoustic, indie rock, and jazz help calm the mind and help one concentrate. This is even more effective when one actually knows the song they are listening to.

Many students’ here at BHS would argue that listening to rap and pop music while doing work gets them pumped up, and then when they are in the zone they can then drown out the music which then supposedly leads to better studying. This may work for some, but in most cases, like with sophomore Lauren Boyd, it does not help in the least bit. Boyd said, “The calming sounds of the beats that I play and listen to when practicing for band does help me concentrate and it gradually helps my learning abilities. The hype sounds of fast paced music does the opposite.”

Music isn’t just a way to express students’ different personalities, but a way of concentrating and keeping on task. The students of BHS should not be forced to put our musical devices away, but be advised to put them to use during independent work time. Administrators and teachers are both always on students to be quiet and stay focused which does not always work. With music in our headphones and music flowing to our minds, we could possibly do better in school which could lead to a more successful educational future.



More ZZZ's result in more A's

Lindsay McFern '13, Sports Editor

Most students struggle to get the right amount of sleep in order to perform well in classes. Students dread the morning routine, especially the early wake up call, leaving most ready for a nap by 3:00 p.m. The grueling school work is hard to fit into one’s schedule, and even harder is to try and find time for sleep.

Teens are stereotyped as either constantly wanting to sleep, sleeping, or simply being lazy; though now, it seems as if the opposite is occurring, as teens do not even have time for themselves at all. School puts pressure on students forcing them to have to stay up late in order to complete school work while also trying to balance jobs or sports. Sophomore Mackenzie Lam said, “If I don’t get enough sleep I am tired throughout classes and don’t learn as well.” In a 1998 survey, psychologists Amy Wolfson and Mary Carskadon found that students receiving C’s or lower were getting an average of 40 minutes less sleep than those with A’s and B’s. As many students stay up into the wee hours of the night studying, the lack of sleep may be doing more harm.

Students go from elementary school, to middle school and then finally to high school, and each new milestone means classes start earlier. It is a common misconception that young kids need more sleep than teenagers. Starting around puberty, lasting until one’s early 20’s approximately nine and a half hours of sleep are needed a night, compared to eight hours of sleep needed by

adults and children, according to Carskadon. While it is thought that teens simply grow up and are then able to go to bed later than years before, that is untrue. In all actuality a teen’s ability to stay up later is caused by melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep, and its production tapers off later than it did in younger years.

Another study in 1998 by Carskadon showed students who changed their school start times from 8:25 a.m. to 7:20 a.m. were “pathologically sleepy” or “very tired, by 8:30 p.m. The students were falling directly into REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, which is usually the latter of the two types of sleep, after 3.4 minutes- this is a pattern similar to patients with narcolepsy. With the many troubling downsides, why is it that schools still choose to start so early? Lam said, “I wish the school’s start time was later; it would give me more sleep and time to [mentally and physically] prepare for school.”

Moving the start time of high schools would be very beneficial for students. There would be more time for studying and sleep, lending to teens’ success rather than deficient-sleep induced failure.

Students are forced to wake up early five days a week, leaving them yearning for sleep by the weekend. While most choose to hit the snooze button on the weekend letting them stay in bed a few more hours, those extra hours are shown to produce poorer quality sleep overall. So even though one may feel well rested on the weekend,

it hinders sleep in the long-run.

Many people would attest that even if school started later it would cause just as many problems, or more than the current schedule has. Later start times could potentially create issues with transportation to classes and after school activities. Though there could be issues involving how the student gets to school and also with teachers, leaving their families and outside lives lacking, there is no question of the benefits the later start times would create physically. Extending the beginning of classes is a sure fire way to improve students’ grades. The main reason students are forced to attend school everyday is to learn, and without proper sleep, learning does not come easily. Students would show much advancement in their studies if only they had more time to recoup.

With the abundance of disturbing statistics on sleep deprivation, one is to believe that sleep is essential to their success in school, and overall in life. Sleep effects range from our emotional state to our grades. It is vital for every student to get at least 8-9 hours of sleep a night. Solving this issue could be easy if school started at a more reasonable time. Since that is seemingly unreasonable, though, students should get to sleep earlier and wake up at the same time everyday, regulating their body to their sleep schedule. Students would then experience better sleep, and hopefully, as an end result, better grades.

# SCHOOL PUTS LIMITS ON Creativity in students

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Co-Entertainment Editor

From a young age one is taught to think outside the box. What the box is however, is never specified. It is implied though that the box is a very narrow spectrum of ideals that one must always try to avoid by means of his or her own creativity. Yet as we 'mature', the box we were once told to think outside of engulfs the self. The box is soon the only thing we are allowed to think of; any thoughts outside of it are considered ridiculous and shunned quite readily. The refusal of new ideas, hence 'outside the box', is made overt by our school system. Through our constant concentration on accomplishing tasks, to the very way that those tasks must be accomplished, our schools provide almost no headway for creativity, progression or innovation by any.

In order to better evolve our society, it would be inferred that we must always be thinking up new, more efficient ways to execute tasks and new ways to solve overarching problems. Our school system, however, does not seem to abide by that same principle. Schools command us to all follow common principles so that a system of consistency is formed. As seen on assembly lines, all products come out identical to one another, which is essentially what the score of students will amount to if we continue to succumb to the conformity forced upon us by our school system. Restricted are we to the outline form of taking notes, and if that is not followed, well, one might as well just not turn it in, as a zero is in his or her immediate future. Interpretation of an ambiguous question also may not vary from English student to English

student, as the author had that and only that in mind when writing the story. And over all it is taboo to the highest degree for one to do a math problem a different way than taught in the section. If shapers of our society such as Newton and Einstein were discouraged from using new ways to find solutions to upstanding problems, where would our society be? For all one knows the kid sitting next to him or her in a classroom could be the next Mark Zuckerberg, yet he is not allowed the freedom of innovation to create the next most powerful social networking site of all time.

Despite all their efforts, not all people succeed in the standard school environment. Maybe this student is more gifted in arts or music. No fault there, because the world could always use more talent. However, the school system makes all assume that if one is not academically talented, or naturally inclined to succeed in their specific class's format, his or her other talents are of no use. If one is not taking three advanced science classes, there go any chances of that person getting into college. However, this is far from accurate. Some people think better artistically while some think better with logic and reason. Schools appear gilded with the idea that they encourage students to reach their full potential, however the stress of grades in required academics proves just the opposite.

A final obedience placed upon students is the uniformity of the English paper. With 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, one must stick to the sophomoric five-paragraph essay up through Honors English 11. The topic and prompt of these papers is also always included, and in order to achieve a decent grade, one must follow this norming to the T. Many believe

that the 5-paragraph system is beneficial for ninth graders because they are just beginning to write, and it gives them an outline to follow. English teacher Ms. Elizabeth Brent concurs, and believes it is also good practice for the ACT. If students have been practicing this uniform style for three years, when the ACT comes around students are more than prepared. Brent also believes that many 11th grade students could still grow to improve in their writing skills and that the structured system helps more than it hurts.

Although Brent makes a good point, I felt that I had an immaculate grasp on the five-paragraph system and was very unhappy with the strict inalterability forced onto my writing. So, I opted to take AP English Language, assuming that as an AP English class, I'd be allowed more freedom. That held true for a bit; the five-paragraph system was outlawed, and varying interpretation was widely accepted. But, when I looked over the comments on my most recent paper, it read as follows: "Very well organized, good content, interesting interpretation followed by ample evidence. However, your tone was too journalistic and thus informal, not appropriate for this essay." I see the point, too informal, but I have a point too. Would one find it illogical to think that possibly after reading hundreds of formal, dull, and explicit essays that the AP grader would like a chance to laugh for a change? I completely understand my teachers point, yet I feel that the required formal dry tone limits my originality immensely. As one reads different writers' works, one can often tell who wrote which due to the difference in tone. If what an AP grader wants is a sea of papers which all sound the same and are about the same topic, well, I guess to each their

own. The strict English 'rules' are established when one is learning to write, but by the 11th grade it should be presumed that all students have a decent grasp on the language and thus should be allowed more creativity in his or her writing in order to add a variety of new-age writers to our growing society.

The modernization of our society is inevitable, yet the path which it may take is blurred. If the school system continues to praise systematic work as astounding, the bar for our generation will continue to be lowered until any hint of creativity has surely been cleared from our minds. But if as students we are encouraged to reach our own highest potential through visionary means the nations will flourish, lead by innovators of all shapes and sizes with ideas as different as each person is. The latter option appears as our only hope, unless one is feels that sub-par is the new superh.

"To live a **Creative** Life, We **MUST** Lose our fear of being **WRONG**"  
-Joseph Chilton Pearce

## Loss of vending machines creates Arizona withdraws

James Demery '13, Opinion Editor

Berkley High School is a prison. We all the heard the announcement. The vending machines are now on timers that prevent the hungry and thirsty from purchasing delectable treats during classes. Students are no longer able to rejuvenate through food or drink while classes are in session.

The vending machines are now only available before school, at lunch, and after school. Some, especially teachers, administrators, and of course Rick, may look at this as a great idea, as students will not be tardy as much, and they will no longer be able to use the vending machines as an excuse to be out of class. It will also reduce the amount of students wandering the halls aimlessly.

Other schools have already taken measures against the vending machine "problem." Assistant

principal Mr. Michael Ross said, "The principal at Ferndale High School told me they had to remove their vending machines completely because it was such an issue." This idea is not new; the administration had toyed with the thought of removing them for most of the year, but just recently decided to take action. The main reason they put this policy into effect was that students were leaving class for much too long, and coming back with Arizonas and snacks.

I say nay. Everybody needs a break once in a while during the long school day. Sixty-one minutes is a long time to sit in one place, and it can actually be detrimental to one's learning. Students lose focus if they sit in one place for too long, and moving around wakes one up and can reinvigorate their

brain. If someone is hungry or thirsty their thoughts are usually focused on that instead of the material they are learning, and this creates a problem.

On the other hand, an administrator might say that students could just bring food and drink from home thus saving themselves money and the hassle of having to get up and miss classtime just to satisfy one's hunger.

Sometimes though, students just need to escape from the confines of the classroom, and the bathroom just doesn't provide long enough of a break. The school has been known to major problems with kids sleeping in class, and caffeine from the vending machines might be just the right cure. For the sake of students' happiness, bring back the vending machines.



A very solitary vending machine .

Photo by Barret Hotz



# 18 THE SPECTATOR SPORTS UPDATE

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor

## BOYS' BASKETBALL

Coming off an exciting 9-7 winning season last year, this was a disappointing season for the BHS Boys Varsity Basketball team with a record of (2-11). The team was ridden with suspensions and ineligibility for numerous reasons which has drastically changed the outcome of their season.



## HOCKEY

The Hockey team has had a great season, going 17-2-1 which is a school best. Junior Nolan Young said, "We have exceeded all expectations." Young and the rest of the team expects to win both their league and divisional championships.



## BOYS SWIM

After a winless season last year, the swim team came away with two wins in the 2011-2012 season. County swimmer sophomore Gabe Gedda-Shaheen said, "Individually we have been doing well with many big time drops even though we haven't won very much."



## WRESTLING

The team of only eight has a record of 20-7. Junior Austen Brantley said, "[I have] individually, not [done] bad, but with only eight people we have not done as well as a team." Brantley, along with several teammates, has competed successfully in their respective weight classes.



## BOWLING

With a record of 6-1 and the return of many strong bowlers, the team has been doing very well. Unfortunately, the team will take a detrimental hit as many good bowlers will be graduating this spring.



## GIRLS BASKETBALL

The varsity Lady Bears have a record of (8-7) this season. The girls had a 5 game win streak in the middle of the season including many key divisional including a big win against rival Royal Oak.



All photos courtesy of Moe Fernandez & Andrea Kumm

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# MICHIGAN BIG TEN SPORTS FANS TAKE SIDES

Jake Rothman '14, Business Manager

Some college sports fans think that there is no rivalry between the feuding interstate rivals. However, for BHS students there is definitely some tension between the two colleges on and off the field.

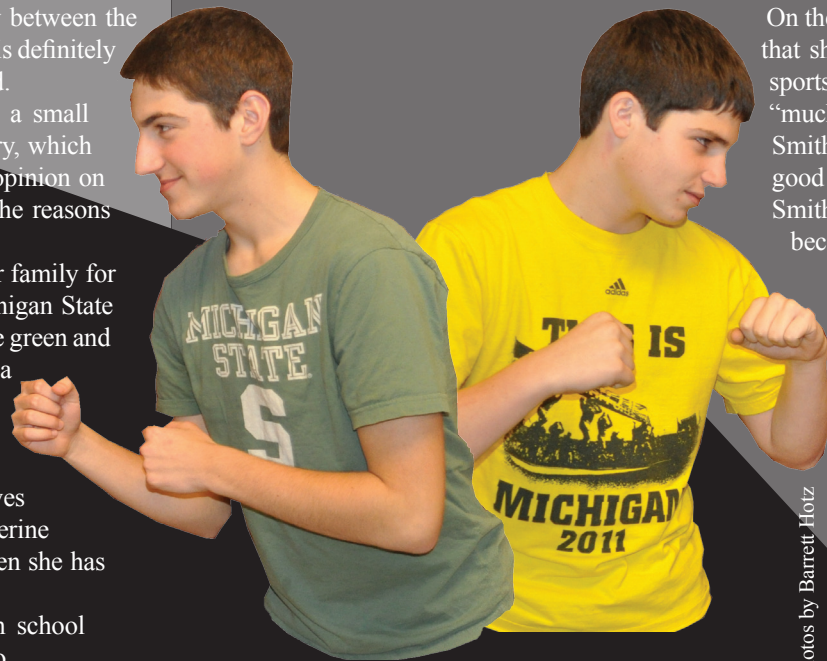
Although current BHS students have only witnessed a small portion of the Michigan vs. Michigan State athletic rivalry, which dates back to 1904, they have no problem voicing their opinion on who is the superior all-around university. But what are the reasons BHS students support either Michigan or Michigan State?

Both Wolverine and Spartan fans credit their parents or family for choosing their respective sides for them. Junior and Michigan State fan Karl Melin had three brothers who have represented the green and white. Melin believes their attendance alone at State was a huge factor in deciding which school he would support.

Sophomores and Michigan fans Adam Israel and Shannon Smith both believe their support for the Wolverines stems from their parents and siblings. Smith gives credit to her family friend who took her to many Wolverine sporting events when she was a young girl. Ever since then she has been a die-hard Michigan fan.

Academics hold a lot of value in determining which school a student will support. For instance, students who show interest in veterinary or agricultural studies cite that Michigan State would most likely appeal to them.

However, for students interested in engineering, medicine or law, the University of Michigan might be the right choice. Science teacher and former Michigan State graduate who attended Michigan for one semester, Adina Rubenstein was drawn to Michigan State's highly regarded education program at MSU. However, Rubenstein does respect the rigorous academic schedule that the students at the University of Michigan face. Israel agrees and thinks the higher standards and famed academic superiority pushed him farther on the Wolverine's side. Athletics plays one of the biggest roles, especially for BHS students, in deciding what school a student will support. Students are probably more aware of who won the last head to head football game than which school has a better business school. Melin credits Michigan States excellent football and basketball teams for drawing and keeping his attention.



Sophomores Adam Israel and Zack Segall defend their teams with pride.

On the other hand, Smith believes a common factor that should be considered in this athletic rivalry is sportsmanship. She says the wolverines have "much better sportsmanship, on and off the field". Smith is drawn to what she said are "pretty damn good sports teams" in Ann Arbor. Both Israel and Smith support the sports programs at Michigan because of their high talent levels and the fact their teams are consistently ranked in the top 25 for their respective sports.

Even the opposing schools fans play a significant role in the decision. Sophomore and Michigan State fan Jenna Apostol uses the so called "Wal-Mart Wolverine" as a reason to not like the University of Michigan. Apostol dislikes the fact that people who never attended the University live and die with the school's every move. Melin added the "fowl odor of Michigan fans caused me to hate them even more." Melin is also sick of the defensive excuses and unnecessary arguments made by Michigan fans after a loss to Michigan State in any sport.

On the other hand, Michigan fans' hatred for Spartans has been quite clear over the years of the rivalry. Smith and Israel, who despise State, both think Michigan State fans' arrogance drives others away. When it comes to athletic knowledge, Israel said he hates Michigan State fans because their "minimal knowledge about athletics." Israel added "How could they [Michigan State fans] think they are better than Michigan?"

Although the rivalry is not nearly as famous as the on the field battle, we can be sure that each and every year fans from both teams will have a serious gripe with their interstate rivals.

Photos by Barrett Hotz

## UNAPPRECIATED SPORTS DESERVE APPRECIATION

Lindsay McFern '13, Sports Editor

We all know the drill: it is football in the fall, basketball in the winter and baseball in the spring. But aren't we forgetting some sports? In the stands at these games there is an endless supply of students nearly losing their voices screaming with their hands waving back and forth with continuous energy cheering their classmates on, but there are many other superb sports teams at this school getting less than their deserved recognition.

Much of the athletic student body participates in sports like golf, tennis, bowling and wrestling, but they are made to feel as though their sport is less important than another. At football games the stands are filled leaving upperclassmen yelling "move back freshman." Yet BHS has yet to see a tennis match with more than three non-familiar spectators. "All sports are equal," athletic director Mr. Cowdrey said. Students are always taught that everything is equal, but the athletics at BHS seems to be showing quite the contrary.

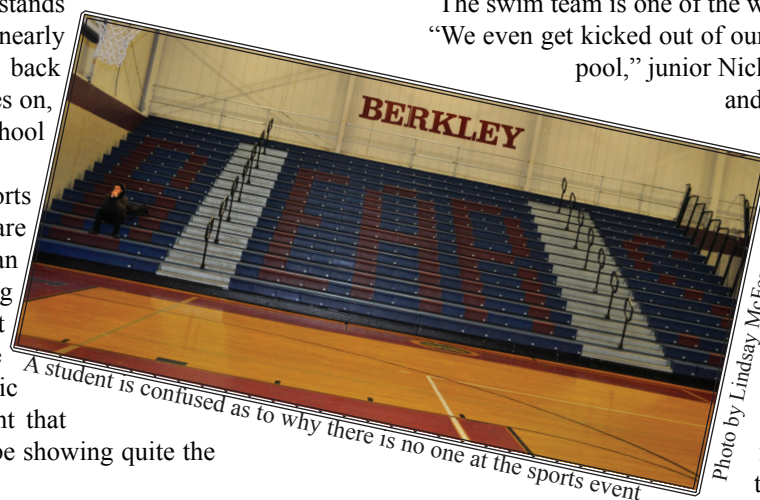
With sparse crowds along with less than perfect facilities, some students even go as far as to call these less popular sports a joke. Junior Kelly Jensen said, "Bowling isn't appreciated; people say it isn't even a sport. But I like the game, it's really fun." The BHS athletic department puts funding into sports decided by what they deserve, citing all sports get what they need, but that still leaves the less admired sports under pressure. The under valued sports think they are worthy of more, as they

believe more prized financially are the ones given opportunities to succeed.

The swim team is one of the winter sports that most feels the need to be taken seriously. "We even get kicked out of our locker room for other sports, and are forced to share the pool," junior Nicholas Dolnicek said. The team finds their facilities lacking and their effort unacknowledged. "People think swimming is easy, but it's hard, if not harder than many other sports" Dolnicek said. At BHS some sports are placed on a pedestal, while others have to try to compete with their notoriety. This issue has dated back to when female sports struggled to even exist, let alone be taken as seriously as male sports. Now in 2012, the issue, gendered or not, still rings true.

Emphasis is placed on more advertised sports, while the other sports are being left behind. Even with more importance put on these sports, though, these students are not necessarily achieving at a higher caliber. A bowling team member, Tyler Tollerfson, is nearly being offered a scholarship from Davenport University.

Students may not dream of being the star of the bowling or wrestling team with some of that being thanks to the administration and students lack of enthusiasm and support. All teams give up countless hours and put in a great deal of effort. Overcoming this issue may not be easy, but BHS can start to respect all sports equally. Each and every sport deserves recognition and support



A student is confused as to why there is no one at the sports event.

Photo by Lindsay McFern

## 20 THE SPECTATOR

**STOP WAITING, START LIVING:  
THE KEY TO ENJOYING LIFE AT BHS**

Danny Bakst '12, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Waiting. It is something that we spend an extremely large portion of our lives suffering through. Waiting in line at Cedar Point, waiting for the cashier at the grocery store or waiting for your Snuggie to come in the mail (even though it has been more than 3-5 business days you lying Snuggie S.O.B.s). It seems like we spend more time waiting than we do actually participating in what we are waiting for. And even though the concept of waiting seems archaic in a society dominated by fast food and instant messaging, it is present in every aspect of our lives.

Waiting is especially present in the public school system. Every step we take from ages 5-18 is accompanied by the desire for the next step. The public school system is like a routine trip to the doctor, filled with a lot of time-consuming, 3-month-old magazine reading, and brain-melting boringness. Through each step on our road to a diploma, the next year looming ahead in the far off distance seems to be light years more enjoyable than our current stage; just like how each step on a trip to the doctor brings anticipation for the upcoming one so you can finally finish the appointment and get on with the rest of your day. I, along with many others, find myself constantly looking forward to the future instead of enjoying what I am currently experiencing.

The first step in our public school journey was the transition from elementary to middle school. After accomplishing all of the trivial times tables and chapter books that we struggled through in elementary school, the lust for the challenge and freedom of middle school was constantly present in our minds. Our desire to leap from the womb of naptime and coloring books into the pre-teen society of changing classes and actually talking to girls is similar to the first step on a trip to the doctor, the long drive to the doctor's office. We have all been in the situation where we are trying to get to our destination as quickly as possible; because we know the sooner the appointment is over with the better. Middle school is an important transitional period but when you reflect on grades 6-8 you realize that it was a whole lotta' nothing. You could do relatively whatever you wanted and enter high school with a clean slate. There were very little expectations, that being said, it is one of the last times where school can be treated as a minor part of one's life. Instead of stressing about hours of homework and tests peering around every corner, we should have enjoyed the relaxed feeling of middle school. However, it is human nature to look past the positives of the present and focus solely on whatever upcoming adventure is on the horizon.

The second transition is the eye-opening step into the world of BHS. This is comparable to the antagonizing time spent in the waiting room filled with coughing strangers who all seem to be ahead of you on the list to finally see the doctor. As an underclassman you are the bottom of the high school totem pole. Nobody likes you, not the teachers, not the upper classmen, and especially not the members of the opposite sex. Due to the dreaded "awkward" stage you are currently still suffering from braces and the fact that you haven't discovered Proactiv yet. Both the doctor's office and high school cause a desire for the future, when the waiting is finally complete. This universal hate that is spewed at the freshmen causes a phenomenon that all underclassmen experience. Underclassmen have a burning desire to reach the peak of the public school system, senior year, where a student no longer has to do any homework and can sleep through 75 percent of the school day.

However, once you have finally reached the plateau of senior year the waiting does not simply disappear, just like how when your name is called by a nurse the waiting period at the doctor is not finished. In the opinion of most of my senior colleagues, we are ready to finish this year so we can enroll in university, or at least no longer have to attend BHS. Just like the worst waiting is in senior year, waiting in the tiny patient room for the doctor is the worst waiting period of them all. The magazines are worse than the ones in the waiting room and there is an awesome rolling stool that you can't play on because of the looming "Do not sit on the doctor's stool" sign plastered on the wall above. Senior year should have an aspect of anticipation, but a portion of excitement for the present is necessary to fully enjoy the journey we are embarking on.

The purpose of this comparison is not to be a negative nelly and throw poison darts at the balloons in the parade, but to be a public service announcement to the students of BHS. No longer should students long for the next step in their educational careers, but enjoy the experiences in the now. The public school experience is like Goku's long journey on the "Snake Way." It seems never ending and brings up feelings of anticipation for its completion, but thinking about the end will not make it come any sooner. In order to fully experience high school life, stop looking towards the future as if it is a glorious wonderland of happiness and enjoy what is currently happening in your life, for instance the fact you have the pleasure of reading the words exploding out of my brain.

**ADDERALL AND ACADEMICS:  
THE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE ENHANCER**

Zak Witus '12, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Education was once coined as "the great equalizer." Today, however, with approximately eight to nine million Americans suffering from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and three million school children using drugs to treat problems with concentration, we now know that education cannot and has not leveled the playing field on its own. For those with AD/HD who want to function normally, or people who wish to artificially enhance their ability to stay focused and pay attention, attention-deficit medications (i.e. Adderall, Ritalin, Daytrana) have shown themselves as a viable means. The question is: how truly great of an equalizer are these drugs?

Throughout high school and collegiate academics, medications used to treat ADs have been long realized as a device (or vice, depending on personal perspective) that has been proven to enhance one's academic performance. "[Attention deficit medication] heightens your ability to pay attention to things, which normally bore a person and allows you to focus for a longer amount of time," Adam Plotnick, a clinical psychologist from Farmington Hills, said. "For some one who legitimately has ADD, it really allows them to function like people who don't have ADHD or ADD." Doctors, teachers, and parents have long praised this family of drugs, called psychostimulants, for their ability to increase a user's ability to concentrate and stay interested beyond their normal capacities; but students who have not been formally diagnosed with either disorder are also seeking them as studying and test-taking aids.

Both groups of users, legal and illicit, have been known to experience higher levels of interest, increased attention span, and generally a boosted academic performance record. "With some people—and I'm not saying this is the right thing to do—will take it in class so they can pay attention better... this can cause a lot of anxiety and sometimes it's really easy to become addicted to it," Plotnick said. While illicit use cannot be advocated—at least not in a high school newspaper—the benefits of taking the drug remain undeniable, yet, so do the documented and notable side effects.

Plotnick believes many of the adverse side effects people experience are "dose dependent," and thus avoidable. For this reason, doctors will typically prescribe the lowest dosage possible. Problems for illicit misusers often arise because they are ignorant as to the dosage they are taking or should be taking. Often they will overdose, increasing their chances of experiencing side effects.

While it is true some people take AD medications for the "high" it can provide, many students attempt to use the drug constructively. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health released a survey revealed that in 2006 and 2007, "6.4 percent of full-time college students age 18 to 22 showed past-year nonmedical use of Adderall." The extreme intensity of competition within academia today pushes students to succeed higher and higher. When boredom and laziness plague a student, as is normal in high school and college, while their professors' great, academic expectations remain constant, they turn to AD medications to spark their interest and enthusiasm. Although it may not be a lasting solution to a student's deficit, it has been known to provide a quick fix.

Besides illegally acquiring the medication, receiving psychostimulants like AD medications from one's pharmacy requires a thorough, calculated examination and assessment. Psychologists like Plotnick test a patient's ability to concentrate, shifts in their focus of attention, and their activity levels (i.e. hyperactivity, fidgeting, etc.), all in comparison to other people their age. If he/she believes a patient could benefit from AD medication, he sends the patient to a physician, where they can receive the actual prescription.

Despite all the hype (no pun intended) over AD medications, a New York Times article entitled "Ritalin Gone Wrong," claimed that, "no study has found any long-term benefit of attention deficit medication on academic performance..." and, "[these medications] don't improve broader learning abilities." This article, written by L. Alan Sroufe, a professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development, received a critical response from psychologists, who believe these drugs are definitely academically helpful. Whether or not one agrees with Sroufe's editorial on the AD medication, he has challenged many doctors' and others' preconceived notions that these drugs are a be-all and end-all treatment for AD/HD, a static belief in the psychological community for almost 30 years.

Plotnick generally agrees with the critical respondents to the aforementioned article, but also believes in alternative treatments and compensating methods for AD/HD. Technology can help keep students organized. Today with everybody's iPhones and Androids, setting reminders to do homework and study for tests is as easy as a touch of a screen. Other simple strategies like sitting in the front of the classroom or creating a studying routine have been known to help any student, but especially those with attention deficits. Exercise can also provide a great help to those with problems concentrating. "There is some evidence that exercise keeps people calmer and helps their ability to focus," Plotnick said. "Mindful meditation like yoga or karate helps train your brain how to focus." So while drugs can usually provide a quick fix, other practical methods of coping exist out there without any of the same adverse side effects.