

SPECTATOR

January 2012



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HOROSCOPES

Sam Lubinecky '12, Managing Editor and Layout Director



Aries: March 21 - April 19
Your priority for this month will be your social life. Money will be present so going out will be a frequent occurrence. You will easily be able to express your opinion, but remember to stay open minded. Challenges will arise so make sure you don't set your bar higher than you can jump.



Taurus: April 20 - May 20
It is time for a deep cleanse of the mind and body. You will have a strong urge to move forward with your life. Whether that be through college, summer, a new job, or any other experience.



Gemini: May 21 - June 20
Your money situation has been quite the struggle lately. Stop with the eating out and excessive spending and soon enough your money situation should go back to normal. Make sure to control your anger and compromise on the little things.



Cancer: June 21 - July 22
Be careful what you say this month, you never know who might be listening. Keep your private life private and only share information that does not have the potential to hurt you.



Leo: July 23 - August 23
Cleaning literally and figuratively will be very important this month. Make sure you are taking care of your body. Choose healthy alternatives to prevent getting sick. Follow your intuition and you should be just fine.



Virgo: August 24 - September 23
Some worrisome events might surface soon. Keep your fighting spirit alive and everything will blow over. Make sure to be careful with money. Budget yourself and refrain from eating out. Pace yourself with school work because it has the potential to overwhelm you. Make this month a good one by remaining calm.



Libra: September 24 - October 22
An excess of family responsibilities will be absolutely exhausting this month. Don't waste your time thinking about petty stuff that will not matter in the long run. You will have lots of decisions to make and do not have any time to wait.



Scorpio: October 23 - November 21
Lots of events will be happening this month. In order to keep up with the hustle and bustle make a list of things that need to be done. It will be challenging and letting people down for you is not an option.



Sagittarius: November 22 - December 21
Money will not be hard to come by this month. Something that needs to improve is your tidiness, clean up! Having a clean room, a clean backpack and clean folders will be a change for the better.



Capricorn: December 22 - January 19
Romance is the name of the game this month. The beauty of it is they will come to you; just sit back and watch as a new special someone will glide into your life. As busy as you are it is important to manage your time and spend an equal amount with friends.



Aquarius: January 20 - February 18
Happy birthday to all Aquarii. This will be an excellent month for you. Beneficial opportunities will come your way this month; the obvious thing to do is take them. Over-working can hinder your health so slow down and turn to family and friends to relax.



Pisces February 19 - March 20
Stop being wishy-washy and only doing things to please others. Be assertive, show your creativity, be honest and direct and most importantly satisfy yourself before others. People will take notice and appreciate you stepping up.

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BULLYING AFFECTS MANY STUDENTS

Meagan Soffin '14, Bull's Eye Editor

Bullying has always been an issue, but no one ever really pays attention to the harmful effect it can have. According to the National Education Association, nearly 160,000 kids skip school in fear of being bullied every year, and 20 kids commit suicide because of some form of bullying. On Jan. 5 and 6, the BHS Diversity Council put on a bullying awareness assembly as a part of the national program *No Place for Hate*. While at the assembly, Principal Randy Gawel told everyone to close their eyes and asked if anyone in the auditorium had been affected by bullying or knew anyone who was affected by bullying. Almost every student raised their hand.

Bullying is an issue many people do not take seriously until something terrible happens. Diversity Council is hoping to create awareness by showing a video as well as testimonials from BHS students. Those three students in the video represent the nearly one million kids in the U.S. who are bullied each week. The only issue is that not all of those kids speak out about the issue.

There are many forms of bullying which include cyber, verbal, and physical. Cyber bullying has become a major problem now that there are social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. Cyber bullying can include things like rude or threatening posts on Facebook, tweeting mean things directly or indirectly to people, or anything else that may be considered rude or hurtful to others online or via cell phone. No matter how the bullying is transmitted, it all hurts the same and has the same effect.

Recently at the Detroit YMCA, kids were forced to fight by older kids. Not only did others witness this embarrassing brawl, they video taped it and posted it online. If you, yourself are being bullied or you see someone else being bullied, it is vital to put a stop to it immediately. If this does happen, then seek a teacher, counselor or administrator right away.

Diversity Counsel Advisor Mrs. Cindy Henderson said, "To prevent bullying, we need to be advocates for each other. When we see something that isn't right, we need to speak up." There is no reason to be afraid to tell someone about witnessing bullying because it can be done anonymously. By telling an adult, you can make a difference in someone's life because they will no longer be victim to bullying. By one simple conversation about witnessing bullying with an adult, you can save a life. BHS Diversity Council has started the conversation; it is the student body's job to continue this discourse.



Photo by Barret Hotz

Freshman Logan Donnelly displays the pain felt from bullying.

VITAL ISSUE AWARENESS
 FEAR **BULLYING** RUDE
 Verbal THREATS CYBER Physical
 SERIOUS STOP TERRIBLE
 Mean SUICIDE HURTS

Congratulations to Mr. John Duffy's 2010-2011 Creative Writing Class on Receiving a Rating of Excellent from the NCTE Program for Recognizing Excellence in Student Literary Magazines for their Lit Mag "Not Nice"

*Congratulations to PTA Reflections Art Contest BHS
 Winners & Participants!!!*

Film Production-
 1st Place: Sophia Bruza
 Honorable Mention (HM):
 Aaron Gross

Photography-
 1st Place: Baleigh England
 HM: Melissa Reiley
Visual Arts-
 1st Place: Rachel Krasnick
 HM: Giuliana Cascardo

Literature-
 1st Place: Chloe Rinkle
 HM: Olivia Wood
Music Composition-
 1st Place: Bailey McMilian

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Glad you asked, Jake Rothman, glad you asked.

Ms. Natalie Taylor, English Teacher

I'd like to respond to your article "English Dept Curriculum Causes Grievances" in which you describe how the books selected by the BHS English Department "do not benefit students" and "do no coincide with the modern language used today."

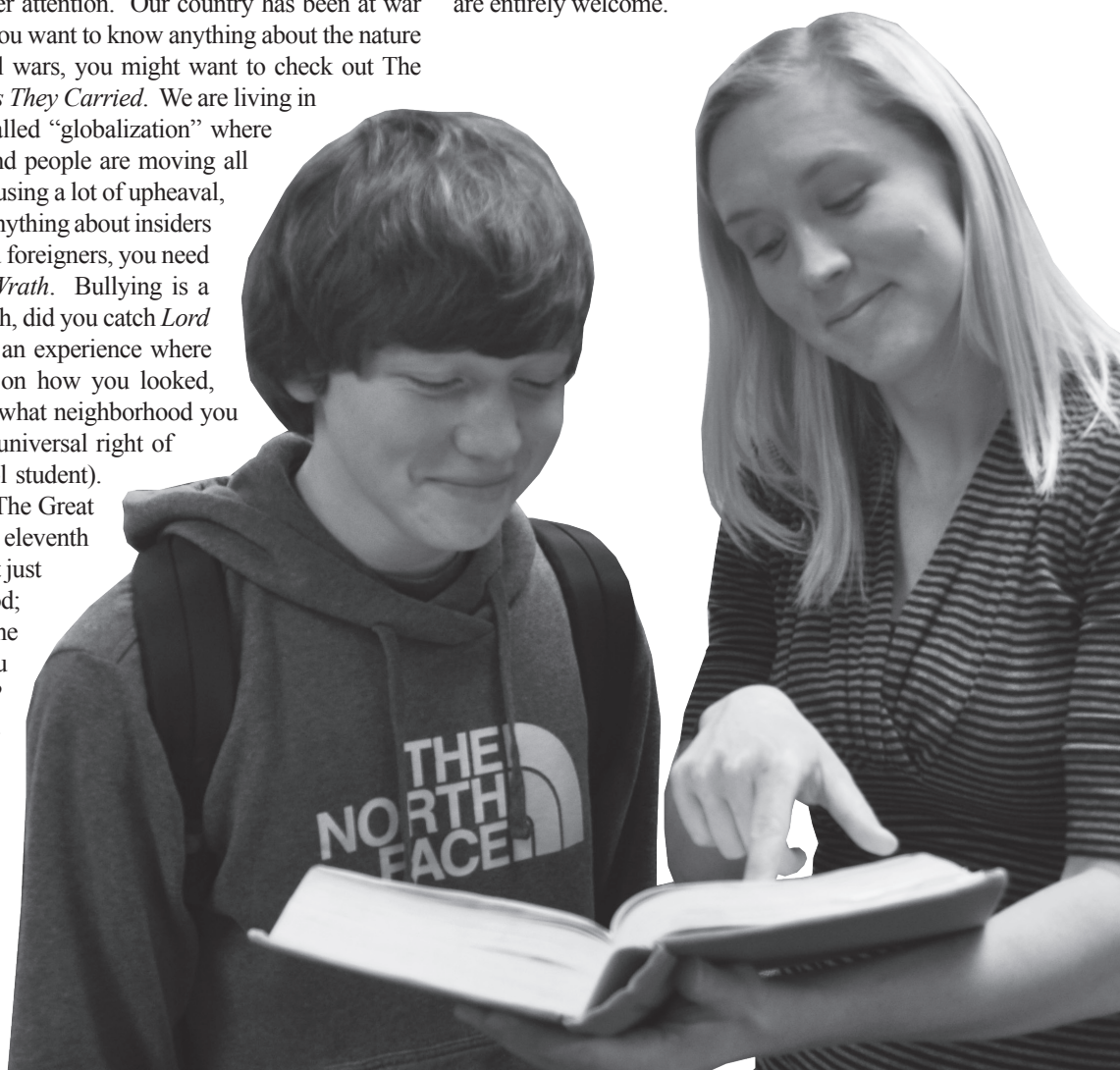
First of all Jake Rothman, I'd like to quell some misconceptions you seem to have about the books in our book room. These are not simply books we've had for decades and every year we just go "sure, these'll do." These are books that every single year, we agonize endlessly over whether they work and how effective they can be in our curriculum. You may think that we are normal people who live normal lives and just show up here every day and do our little song and dance to get paid and that's that, but the reality is, we teach English because we are the biggest nerds on the planet. Do you know what we talk about at the holiday staff party? Do you know what goes on when we have lunch together or chat about our weeks on Friday afternoon? We talk about books, about how students react to books, about how to get students to connect to books, and about how we ourselves connect with books. So please, don't think that we just reach in the grab bag of the dusty book room and throw something at you. In fact, that couldn't be further from the truth.

Secondly, Jake Rothman, we teach these books for two important reasons. Reason #1: This is some of the best stuff ever written. I know you don't agree with me and the good news is, that doesn't bother me in the least. These books are time tested. They draw on themes that are still relevant today and if you can't see that then you need to start paying closer attention. Our country has been at war for over a decade and if you want to know anything about the nature of man and his perpetual wars, you might want to check out *The Iliad*, *1984*, or *The Things They Carried*. We are living in this crazy time period called "globalization" where countries are blending and people are moving all over the place and it is causing a lot of upheaval, but if you want to know anything about insiders and outsiders, natives and foreigners, you need to read *The Grapes of Wrath*. Bullying is a major issue in America, oh, did you catch *Lord of the Flies*? Ever have an experience where you were judged based on how you looked, the clothes you wore, or what neighborhood you were from? (Kind of a universal right of passage for a high school student). You'll find all of that in *The Great Gatsby* and the rest of the eleventh grade curriculum. It's not just that these books are good; they're so good that no one has done them better. You know how we know that? Because all we do is read books.

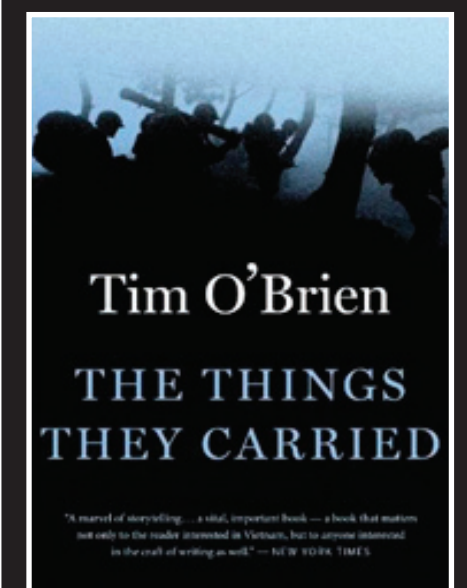
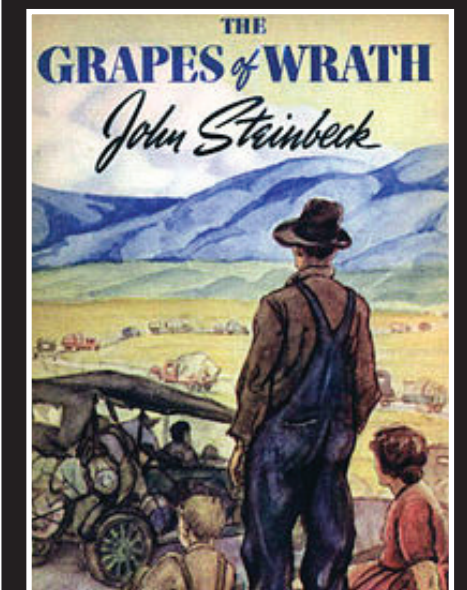
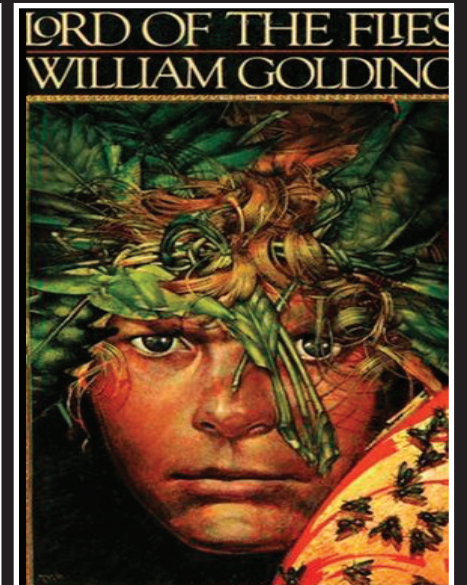
Reason #2: You (our students) are incredibly important to us and you deserve the absolute best. Let's put it this way, if I were coaching a football team, where would I go for my resources? Would I tell my players, "Ya

know, you're all pretty average and I don't expect a lot out of you, so let's go watch some really average football and see what we can take away from a glorified pillow fight." No way. If you were on my team, I'd say, "Hey, I got this guy, his name is Megatron," and you'd start taking notes. We'd practice like the pros, we'd watch the pros, talk about the pros not because we necessarily believe we can someday make it in the NFL, but because we have that much dignity and pride in what we do, because you deserve the best curriculum on the face of the planet, and lucky for you, it's right there in our book room.

So grieve away, Jake Rothman, because to be honest, I don't really care if you like the books I teach. What I do care about is that you are being challenged and being pushed to think, read, and write in ways that are intelligent and sophisticated and will make you a competitive, compassionate person when you walk out of this building. I care about you Jake Rothman, I care so much about you I will not allow you to read anything less than the absolute best. And it's okay that you are ungrateful or perhaps unknowing of all that I do for you. It's okay that I will never get a thank you from even though I spend countless hours trying to figure out how to get you to learn and grow as a student. But while we're on the subject, I'd just like to close by saying, on behalf of the rest of the BHS staff—my colleagues who, like me, dedicate their lives to trying to figure out ways to make you into the best version of yourself, despite your grievances and all of the forms they come in—you're welcome. You are entirely welcome.



Ms. Natalie Taylor forces sophomore Jakey Rothman to read, claiming it is "good for him."



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Hibernation at its finest

Berkley Bears snooze away



All photos by Veronica Marchese and Sam Lubinecky

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Students warm up to new winter clothes

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Entertainment Editor

Girls:

'30s and '40s—From gauchos to colored skinny jeans to capri pants and other trends I fear mentioning, it seems that whatever is “in” only flatters a certain group of people. However the revamping of '30s and '40s fashion finally allows females of all body types to participate in the trend. This era of shoulder length waved hair, knee length skirts,



synched waists, shoulder pads, pleads, ruffles and frills allow all women to accentuate her best assets and appear classy. **Feathers**—It is time to put Jersey Shore and all of the dreadful ideas they brought to the fashion world, aka animal print behind us. Although it became all the rage last year, it never appealed to my keen eye for catching trends. Another portion of the animal kingdom has now been brought to light and appears to be “taking off” more than heinous zebra and cheetah prints. Feathers give clothing the illusion of being light, frilly, and girly while actually consisting of many layers to help one keep warm during the cold months. Simply stated, it is much more flattering than a cheetah print across ones back, and can even give girls the opportunity to fly! Okay maybe not, but anything is better than hot pink and black zebra print mini skirts.

Sheer—Throughout the past few years, the sheer trend has extended from simple blouses to pants, skirts, and dresses. Fully-sheer items of clothing are not the answer; you do



want to be mistaken for a streetwalker. But rather strips of sheer on items of clothes that accentuate, once again, what one perceives to be her best feature. This trend is highly feminine in correspondence with the '30s and '40s theme. The sheer material often gives more of a “nonchalant” relaxed feel to any outfit it is paired with.

Guys:

Coats—Never will I understand the shorts fad that continues to plague all of you throughout the winter, but that is beside the point. Just remember that coats and warm clothing are your friends; wear them. Quilted puffy jackets as well as fitted leather jackets, in opposition to the common oversized jackets worn by most guys, will better suit all this season. That is,



of course, if they remember to put it on.

Blazers—Corduroy is the best fabric for men’s blazers during the winter months, but other fabrics are not expelled. The color may vary from deep oranges to reds to deep grays and blacks. Also, appearing on many of these jackets will be patches. Either a shoulder patch which will, as the name implies, appear over one of the shoulders, while the other, called elbow patches, reside on the elbows. Blazers can be good alternatives to the timeless cardigan, but also dress up almost all clothing combinations.



The Land Down Under: a journey to Australia

Olivia Wood '14, Freelance Writer

Traveling to the Land Down Under allows you to experience an opposite reality. First, find your passport and obtain a visa. Then, hop on a plane for a mere 16 hours and before you know it, you are there in the magical continent known as Australia. The astounding variety of colors found beneath the surface was breathtaking. As I swam through the swaying, vividly colored coral, I was greeted by thousands of different fish and other sea life, each so vibrant and unique. Whilst snorkeling, I “found” Nemo, as well as a sea cucumber, starfish, seahorses, jellyfish,

bites to prove it.

My trip to Port Douglas would not have been complete without one thing, though: being stung by a lethal Box Jellyfish. It was just my luck that one would come washing up on shore to sting me. It was quite disconcerting, really, and thankfully the translucent jellyfish was no bigger than a softball. Afterwards I wondered how something so small could cause so much pain. Fortunately, bottles of vinegar are placed along the beach just for these crises. After soaking my foot in vinegar on the beach,

was time to head to the big city: Sydney. It began with the arrival of the first fleet of convicts from the British colonies in 1788, is now considered one of the top ten favorite cities in the world to visit. Known for its electric world-famous fireworks, Sydney attracts over 2.7 million international tourists per year. From the revolutionary Sydney Opera House to the buttery sands of Bondi and Manly Beach, Sydney has packed an astounding amount of culture into only 5,300 square miles.

Sydney also houses the New Year’s Eve fireworks, which are



among others.

Another day of my 23 day trip, I met with a native Aboriginal guide who took my family and me around the Port Douglas area, sharing Aboriginal survival tips with us and explaining the sad history of the Aboriginal people along the way. The Aboriginal people, native to the land, had a very torrid past indeed, one full of violence, loss, and injustice. Forced to move off their land by English settlers, the Aboriginals have been discriminated against for many years. Regardless of their past, they still hold the knowledge of the rainforest in their hands. From eating tree ants to obtain Vitamin C (I respectfully declined), to making face paint out of rocks and a splash of water, I got my fair share of the rainforest that day and had at least 100 “mozzie,” or mosquito

I paid a visit to the hospital, where I was told I would definitely live. I even have a scar to show for it, which makes the story all the more exciting.

From Port Douglas, I then traveled west to central Australia, known as the Outback. Here in the known Aboriginal place of Uluru, also known as Ayers Rock, I did what every person only naturally dreams of doing: I rode a camel. While some may find this strange, it was actually very similar to riding a horse, except, of course, the camels walk painfully slow, not to mention it was a tad bit uncomfortable. Strangely enough, the Australian Outback is home to over one million wild camels and is the only place in the world where camels run wild.

After venturing way out of my comfort zone in the Outback, it

proudly displayed over the Opera House and the Sydney Bridge and cost over 20 million dollars each year to put on. Although the price seems quite extravagant, they are worth it to both the locals and tourists alike. I can say from firsthand experience that the fireworks were truly unbelievable, with a caliber that far outshone any of the fireworks I have ever seen before. Ringing in the New Year under a sky full of brilliant lights with a couple million of your closest friends brings a completely new meaning to the exclamation, “Happy New Year!”

All of my experiences helped to show me the beauty and wonder Australia has and I hope that one day you are all able to experience the same thing firsthand.

All Pictures by Olivia & Joey Wood

To Study or Not to Study? That is the Question

Jimmy Demery '13, Opinion Editor

Finals are a time full of stress and studying for many, but not for me. I have my lack of studying skills down to a science. I spent my MLK weekend doing whatever I pleased; I watched football, partook in nefarious night-time activities, and basically to quote Will Ferrell, "tore s**t up".

Now I know there are nay sayers to my theory who might beg the question, "How do you expect to do well on exams if you do not study?" My thinking is basically, if you do not know the material well by exam time, spending three hours studying the night before the test will not help. Again one might say, "You can maybe coast through high school but college you will have to hit the books." I, my studious friend, will cross that bridge when I come to it, but for now, my plan for higher learning is trying to emulate John Belushi in the movie *Animal House* as much as possible.

Finals are is without the late studying. you stick to of slacking, relaxed and do better. three day we get a should make the most of it and have fun rather than sitting at home studying.

"High school is essentially pointless."

stressful enough as it additional hours of So my thinking is, if your normal routine and go into exams confident you will Besides how many weekends do year? You

We spend 20 weeks learning the material on the exams, and if you do not know it by the end I highly doubt a couple hours of cramming the night before the test will help. It could actually be more detrimental. It adds even more anxiety to an already anxious time.

High school is essentially pointless. Besides relentlessly trying to attain accolades to impress colleges, why are of the information we remember until we have a few weeks after we You know the classic "Why do we need to know this?" I ever going to behind the *Flies* outside you do not general you then transfer to

So either listen to me, or waste a perfectly good three day weekend pouring over useless information that probably will only help raise your grade a few percentage points. Take my advice and be like Spike Lee, and do the right thing.

Now, I do have proof to back up my theory. The finals I studied for I performed worse on than the finals I did study for. On my AP Physics final I got a 50 percent, and spent about two hours studying. On the other hand for AP Calculus and AP World History I did not study a single second, and I aced both of them.

Now this is just me, maybe it will work for you, maybe not. But if you enjoy having fun versus killing yourself studying when it may not even help, you will listen to this article.

Jake Rothman '14, Business/Ad Manager

With assessments of students' knowledge always looming in the near future for BHS students, many kids do try to stay prepared for their upcoming tests or exams. From cramming the day before to preparing days or even weeks prior, studying is essential for students to pass their tests if they want to reach their academic goals.

It is common sense that studying for a test will most likely result in better scores. So, it is then also logical that zero preparation will probably result in a student doing not as well as they may have hoped.

On test day, there is a good chance that many students will not remember all the material they have learned throughout the semester. During her time at BHS, math teacher Ms. Julie Simpson agrees with the notion that students who study on a regular basis will do "much better" on all of their tests. Simpson also agrees that students who do the opposite, and do not study, do noticeably worse on their tests. She said students shouldn't avoid studying and then only "rely on class time" for their studying. Study guides are made for studying. Students can while filling out use the guide as a preparing for each "everyone should the provided study constructive study student takes in studies for a test, while, then they better opportunity

"If students study consistently then they will be less stressed for major tests."-Math Teacher Ms. Julie Simpson

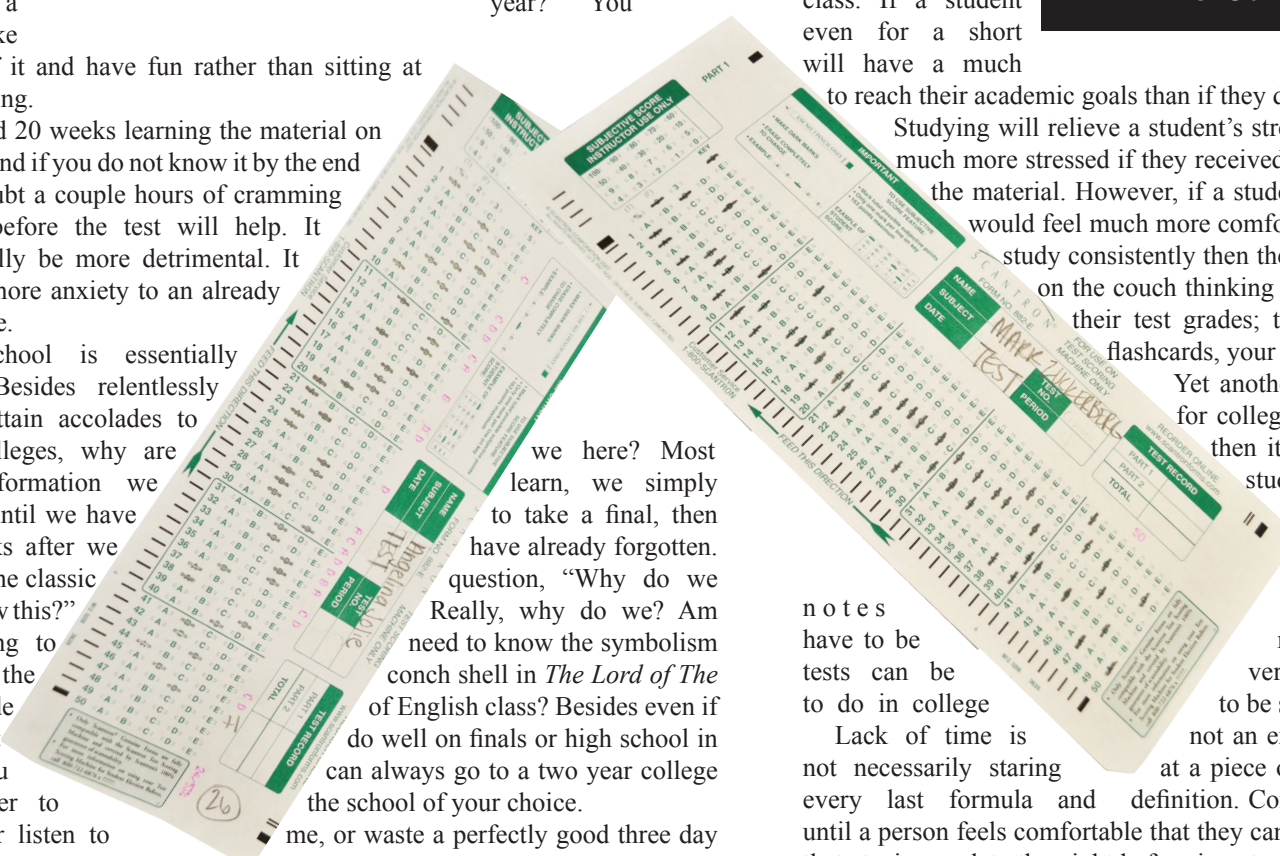
to reach their academic goals than if they did not.

Studying will relieve a student's stress regarding their exams. Students would feel much more stressed if they received a test and realized they knew very little about the material. However, if a student simply reviewed the information then they would feel much more comfortable when testing. Simpson said, "if students study consistently then they will be less stressed for major tests." Sitting on the couch thinking about how they should study will not improve their test grades; taking action and actively studying will. Use flashcards, your friends, or any means that works best for you.

Yet another reason studying is important is preparation for college courses. If students have college aspirations then it is almost certain that they would need to be studying for their high school exams. In addition, in college a large piece of a students grade is based on their tests and final exam scores. In that case, to be successful in college, good have to be taken in lectures and those notes repeatedly studied. Studying for high school very good preparation for what students will need to be successful.

Lack of time is not an excuse to avoid studying for a test. Studying is not necessarily staring at a piece of paper for endless hours trying to memorize every last formula and definition. Constructive studying is focusing on the material until a person feels comfortable that they can receive the grade they desire. Simpson agrees that staying up late the night before is not conducive to excellent study practice. However, she does say that "studying the day before is better than not studying at all."

In the end, students can accomplish what they want with their day while still studying and improving their grades. Therefore, if students begin to or continue to study for their exams then they will get much more than just a clearly better grade. They will also reduce the stress inflicted on themselves and build their confidence. To think that all of this success can come from implementing one simple thing into students' lives: studying. Implementing good study habits now can be very important to students going into any field after high school.



Freedom or free lunches? The conflict facing upperclassmen at BHS

Lindsay McFern '13, Sports Editor

Upon entering my junior year, one thing I looked forward to was the privilege to leave campus for lunch. But as the school year progressed, my love for the open lunch has started to be put into question. Though there are many advantages of being able to leave the school at lunch, there are accompanying downsides.

As an underclassman, the appeal of leaving for lunch is enormous, even with the looming repercussions. I understand that the confines of BHS are not ideal when trying to enjoy the seldom free time we get during the school day, yet there are some upsides to the seemingly unrelenting closed lunch rule. Aside from the less than ideal choices of school lunches, the noisy, messy collaborative center and lack of freedom, some people would attest that staying in for lunch is not as awful as it appears. "Staying in for lunch is easier; I save money and I can get work done," junior Jordan Walters said. An advantage when staying at school for lunch, help from teachers is easily available.

Upperclassmen have come to know that going out to lunch can become a burden. "I spend way too much money every week on food," junior Zach Lask said. As one starts to notice their wallet size decrease when going out to lunch is that there is a major increase in the desire to stay in.

As underclassmen wish for the privilege to leave for lunch, some upperclassmen long for the days where they could sit in the collaborative center surrounded by friends and eat a signature PB&J made by mom. Freshman Madison Taylor-Wingate said, "lunch is boring at school; we should be able to go out." Going out can get boring too, though. In a similar sense, upperclassmen are always doing the same things, going to the same places, with the same people. Adding onto the list of negative factors include the ever present race to get out of the parking lot, and the rush of getting and eating food and getting back in time in our limited 45 minutes. It can become a total chore.

Although we all looked forward to our freedom at lunch time, now looking back, staying here was never so bad at all. We had our whole grade to socialize with, some decent food and school help at our fingertips. School lunch may not be perfect, but it does have its advantages.



Photo by Alison Jones

Little Caesars is one of the many lunch options that students have.

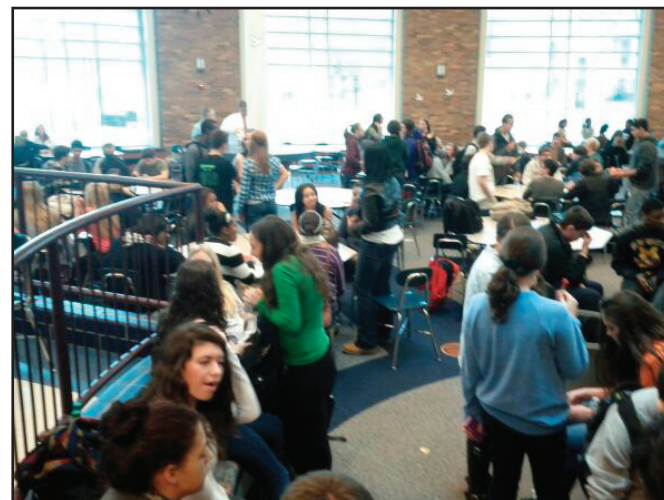


Photo by Barret Hotz

The collaborative center is both a social and tasty option for students to spend their lunch period.

Turning back the Clock: Why students long for the good ole days

Lindsey McFern '13, Sports Editor and Shelby Silver '14, Copy Editor

In our younger years, we strove to be taller, more mature and to be grown up. Now that we are older, we attempt to bring back the times when we played on the playground, were three feet tall and our curfew was no later than nine. Are we now trying to make up for our "lost" childhood moments? Perhaps our desire to be mature at a young age has robbed us of some of our childhood moments, and this may be the reason for our immaturity now.

Some BHS students said that they wanted more freedom when they were younger, while others said that they tried to act older so adults wouldn't look down on them. As we are now more grown-up and have achieved some of our childhood goals, was that time of acting older worth it? High school is supposed to be the prime time of our life, yet we still dream of reliving the past. "I just wanted more freedom when I was younger. It is not what I thought it would be like though," sophomore Hayley DeBene said. Freedom is essential to a high school student, but even when we attain that freedom we had longed for, it does not seem to live up to those previously held high expectations. As we grow older, our needs grow larger and we end up wanting something that contradicts



Counselors and administrators are just like everybody else. Even Mrs. Natalie Perkins, Mrs. Lori Bullis, Mr. Ron Kane, Mrs. Cathy Helms, and Mr. Mike Ross sometimes revert back to their younger days by playing good ole fashioned games of duck, duck goose in the counseling center.

what we thought we wanted in the beginning, like wishing to be younger again. As the saying says, "the grass is always greener on the other side."

When it came to wanting to be older, movies were big influences on us as younger kids in showing us how cool it looked to be grown up. DeBene said, "Yeah, I thought high school was going to be so much more fun like in the movies than it actually is." Movies painted pictures in young people's minds of a place where all the cool girls were cheerleaders, students sang their way out of trouble and cops never showed up at parties. While growing up, we all watched movies like *Grease*, *The Breakfast Club* and *High School Musical*—even if we do not want to admit it—and we all had visions of the perfect high school experience.

We are now on the cusp of adulthood and our desire to become young again is a looming thought. Playing games such as the famous crazy bones, tic-tac-toe or Pokemon brings back memories and makes some wish they had not rushed the process. Growing up comes with responsibilities that we did not have as children which now as teens we dread. We let the luxury of not having to worry about high school work-loads, a job, and the ever present drama slip away, and now all we are left with is the desire to go back and re-do those years of trying to act older.

Cloud cover takes emotional toll on students

Julia Pompilius '14, Freelance Writer

Dark, gloomy days are used everywhere as a symbol for evil and sadness. This symbol is seen in movies, literature, and songs, serving as a melancholy reminder of all that is bad. With this constant reinforcement, it is no wonder that people feel depressed when a thick layer of dismal clouds blocks the sky. However, depression caused by cloud cover is not just a cliché seen everywhere in media, scientific evidence suggests it may be fact. This lack of sunlight and its dreary side effects are affecting students here at BHS.

Sunlight contains vitamin D, which assists the body's production of mood changing hormones. These hormones affect people's brain function, motivation, energy levels, and stress levels, all major contributors to mood fluctuations. Sunlight is also shown to affect brain blood flow, which is a major factor in the level of depression one experiences. With clouds relentlessly blocking the sun here in Michigan, citizens lack this luscious, vitamin D enriched sunlight, which can result in people feeling exhausted and depressed.

Unfortunately, Michiganders have it particularly bad. On average, more than half the days in a Michigan year are overcast. In the month of January, Detroit experiences just 11 days of sunshine, seven of which are only partly sunny. Cloudy states are typically shown to have higher depression rates than those with plentiful sunshine, and sadly, Michigan fits the cloudy state category. Michigan was ranked the sixth most depressed state in the country, with cloud coverage being a significant factor.

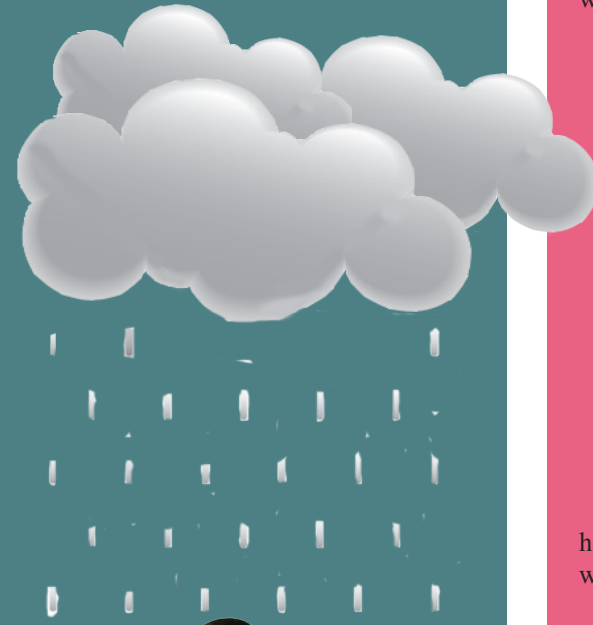
Michigan's cloudy disposition proves to be rather unfortunate for BHS students. Depression and fatigue are not exactly helpful for students' productivity. The complicated lives and constant workload of teenagers often causes teens to experience depression and fatigue, the last thing they need is for these feelings to be intensified by a lack of crucial sunlight.

Senior Vicky Cheung is one BHS student affected by Michigan's lack of sunlight. "I get really depressed when it is cloudy, and it definitely makes me a lot less productive," Cheung said. "I think the worst part is when you have to take a standardized test when it's rainy or cloudy, but all you can do is stare out the window. Then you get nothing done, since all you're thinking [about] is curling up and going to sleep."

Science teacher Ms. Adina Rubenstein shares her knowledge on the topic. She said, "[In the] winter we feel more sluggish, tired, hungry, seeking comfort, and less energetic." She personally suffers from these symptoms. "My appetite/weight and energy levels definitely change depending on the season. I've heard that full spectrum light bulbs (that mimic the sun) help, but usually by the time winter hits, I'm too tired and sluggish to purchase and install them!" she said jokingly.

Rubenstein cites Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD, and ironic) as an additional drawback of cloudy weather. This common disorder can cause a lack of energy, difficulty concentrating on or completing tasks, and withdrawal from friends and family.

A surprising amount of scientific evidence shows how truly adverse a lack of sunlight can be on one's moods. Unfortunately, there is not much Michigan citizens can do during the winter to escape the oppressive cloud cover that lingers over this state. One thing students can do, however, is take advantage of those rare, coveted days of sunlight. Michigan does experience. It is imperative to stock up on sunlight at all opportunities and wait out the dreary winter until spring arrives.



Junior Kevin Bibby is one student affected by the gloomy weather.

Photo by Veronica Marchese

Not your normal Valentine's Day

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Entertainment Editor

When the idea of Valentine's Day comes to mind, ideas of roses, jewelry and heart shaped boxes of chocolate dance through ones brain. And while these classic presents are just romantic and all, as an ever changing and evolving society, they highly accentuate the commercialized aspect of this holiday, and I feel that we need trendier alternatives to these standard gifts.

For the Girls:

1 Instead of too-emotional-and-affectionate-for-a-high-school-relationship-red-roses, opt for a daintier flower like sunflowers or chrysanthemums. All girls love flowers and are lying if they tell you they do not. These buoyant fun-loving flowers give a much more age-appropriate vibe. But, if for some reason it is clear to you that your girl despises flowers, candles are an easy out. They provide a similar, and most of the time, stronger and longer-lasting aroma than flowers.

The typical heart-shaped box containing stale chocolate candies with irregular hit-or-miss (usually miss) fillings need to be erased from people's ideas of a "romantic gift." The idea that females love chocolate holds true, but these conventional mass-produced chocolate boxes depersonalize the act of giving sweets. Instead, take your girlfriend on a date to The Melting Pot, where savory warm chocolate (white, milk, or dark) with fruits and other sweets to dip await your taste buds.

3 I bet Taylor Swift would not "be thinkin that [they didn't] have a song" if her boyfriend made her a CD for Valentine's Day. As I have experienced in my own life, girls tend to have laughable taste in music when compared to guys (not a sexist comment, as anyone who read my last article knows I am all about women empowerment; however, this just a double standard that needs general acceptance). In order to educate your significant other, and make her think of you often, make her a mix of all your favorite songs, and yes, decorate the main printable area of the CD.

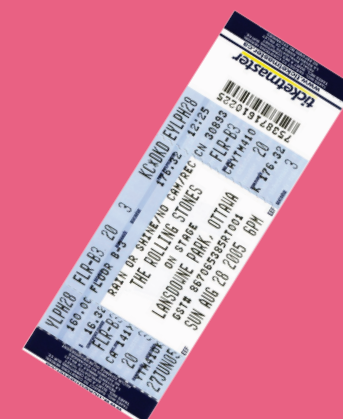
For the Guys:

1 Maybe throughout the years I have not been an active participant in Valentine's Day, but when I think of Valentine's Day a majority of gifts that come to my mind are for the girl. So the question remains: what do you get for a guy? And the answer is simple: food. Baking, cooking, taking them out to dinner, or anything else you can think of pertaining to food. The boy will appreciate it as long as their stomach is full.

As stated earlier, guys tend to have a broader horizon when it comes to music. To show that you actually pay attention when he rambles on about his favorite new artists for hours on end, purchase concert tickets for him and yourself. This allows you to widen your music spectrum while acknowledging to him your desire to use his knowledge as guidance.

3 I would in no way consider myself a sports fanatic, sports enthusiast, or anything else that coincides with the word sports. However, buying tickets to some sort of sporting event is almost a guaranteed successful present for any boy. If you are similar to myself in your lack of knowledge in the genre sports; your significant other will understand the amount of perseverance it will take for you to sit through an entire game, and will indefinitely appreciate it.

The classic Valentine's Day presents are classics for a reason, that being they prevail year after year and decade after decade without fail. But as everything else in the technological world evolves, shouldn't our specialized holiday gifts evolve as well? Disregarding some of my bias towards modernizing the world, there is nothing wrong with a classic Valentine's Day; some however, prefer one with a contemporary twist. In these cases, my trendy Valentine's Day gift guide will become your new best friend. To quote Sadie from *Awkward*, you're welcome.



Live Action Role Perfection

Mitchell Hart '13, News Editor and Veronica Marchese '13, Student Life Editor

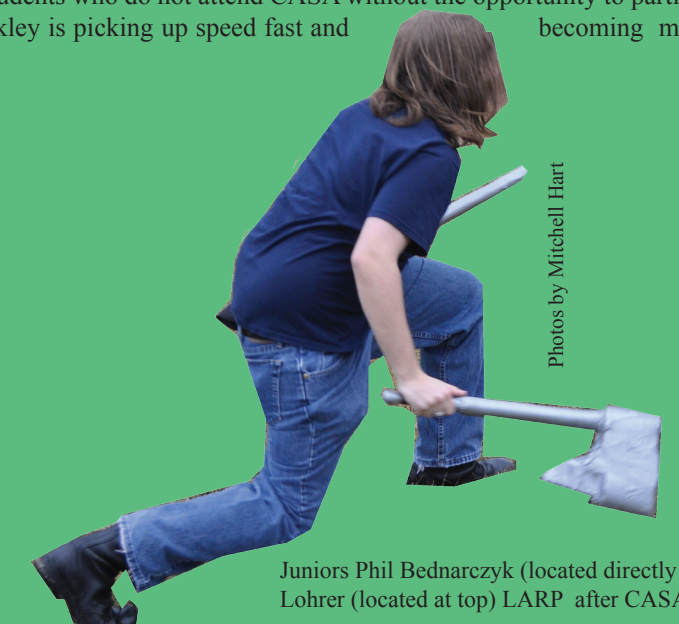
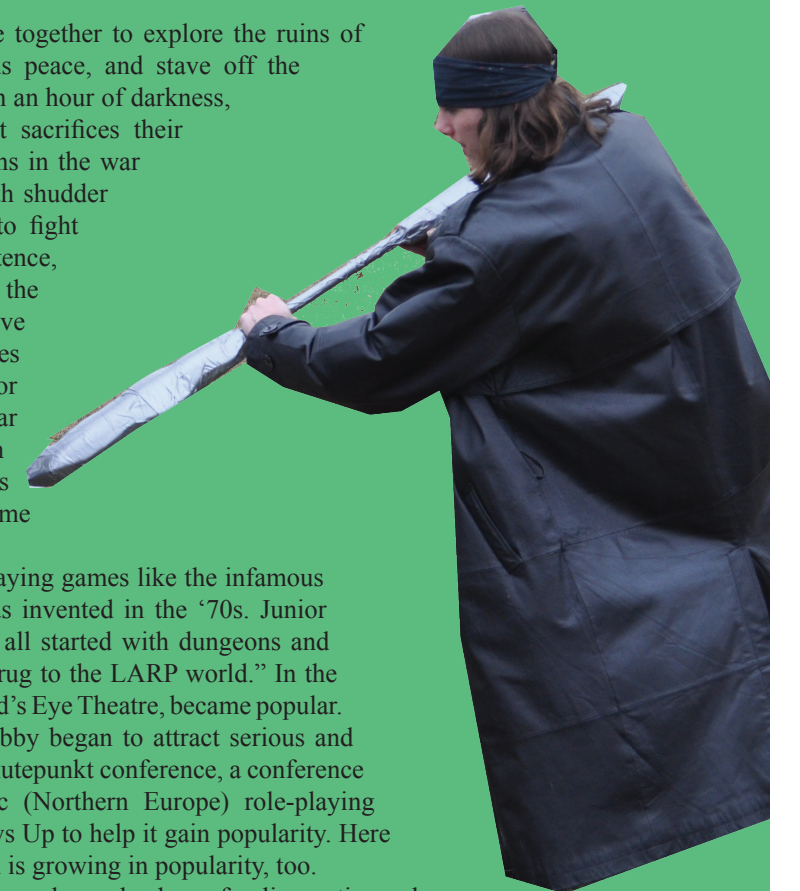
"Humans and homunculi come together to explore the ruins of Marath Suvla, preserve a tenuous peace, and stave off the destruction of all they hold dear. In an hour of darkness, there is hope; the Celestial Host sacrifices their immortal nature to join the humans in the war that is coming. The gates of Death shudder and crack as the Returned rise to fight again." Althou long and a bit intence, this is the reason for LARPing in the game of Dust to Dust, a fantasy Live Action Role Playing game that takes place in Georgia. LARPing, or Live Action Role Play is a popular role-playing game in which, given the situation, the player or players pretend to fight or engage in some sort of fantasy battle.

LARPing evolved from role-playing games like the infamous Dungeon and Dragons; which was invented in the '70s. Junior Aaron Lohrer agrees and said "it all started with dungeons and dragons; [it is] like the gateway drug to the LARP world." In the '90s a real LARP game, called Mind's Eye Theatre, became popular. After that game came out, the hobby began to attract serious and academic analysis. In 2003, the Knutepunkt conference, a conference devoted to establishing a Nordic (Northern Europe) role-playing identity, published *As LARP Grows Up* to help it gain popularity. Here at BHS the LARPing phenomenon is growing in popularity, too.

Juniors Lohrer and Phil Bednarczyk are leaders of a live action role playing group here at BHS. LARPing consists of the playing of roles where one fights another. It can be done one on one (like at BHS) or team on team, in which LARPing students look forward to doing as the sport becomes more and more popular. With strict rules restricting hits to the face or head, and no throwing of projectiles, along with weapons made of pvc piping and a minimum of one inch of foam on the exterior of the piping to reduce injury, students' first priority is safety.

LARPing students at Berkley have a lot of fun with this activity and hope for more to experience that joy. "You get addicted to the fantasy," Lohrer said. "There is no experience like sword fighting another person."

BHS LARPer, like Lohrer, hope that "next year [they will] possibly get some better equipment and start a club at the school." Since they only have time to LARP before CASA starts and on their own free time, this leaves students who do not attend CASA without the opportunity to participate. The LARPing community at Berkley is picking up speed fast and becoming more popular day by day.



Juniors Phil Bednarczyk (located directly above) and Aaron Lohrer (located at top) LARP after CASA.

Photos by Mitchell Hart

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Second Semester: We're rollin' now

Meagan Soffin '14, Bull's Eye Editor

First semester is over, and it is not a moment too soon. For students and teachers, the new schedule change was difficult to adjust to. Now that we have all experienced a whole semester of the six-period day, hopefully everyone has now grown accustomed. We have gone through some major growing pains, but this next semester should prove much easier on everyone.

Congratulations freshmen, you are now done with your first set of finals in high school. Get ready for second semester because the teachers are going to expect more from you now. Freshmen year can be tough with all the other grades picking on you, but there is only one semester left. Sophomores, this year was a challenge. Going from freshmen to sophomore year is a huge leap. You not only had classes that were more difficult, but you had to deal with the new schedule change as well. Luckily, after this semester, you are not underclassmen anymore. Juniors, you not only had to deal with the schedule change, but also had to deal with taking the ACT. Next year, all this hard work will pay off when you apply to colleges. Seniors, senioritis has hit you all, and it has hit hard. Do not let it ruin your college acceptance. Only one last semester of high school and then you are done.

Second semester also means that it is time to do scheduling for next year. Now that we have first semester under our belts, we better understand our capabilities of what we can handle. This will help us make better choices when we plan our schedules for next year. We will have to make many tough choices when choosing our classes. There are less class slots available than what we may want or need to take. Our priorities need to be set in order to plan our schedules. Do you want to go to CASA? Or OTEC? What type of college do we want to go to? What field are you leaning towards? All these choices are more important than ever now that we have limited spaces for our classes. To get more guidance with scheduling, make an appointment with your counselor. They will help you figure out which classes are best for you.

We have made it through a whole semester which means we can do it again. Now that we know what to expect, we can finish this school year off strong. Resolve to make changes in your study habits, your work ethic and your general school attitude. Before we know it, scheduling will be done, second semester finals will be here, and we will finally be off on summer break 2012. The light is at the end of the tunnel. Dim, but it is still there.

The year that was

Alison Jones '13, Feature Editor

Tunes that rocked...

It is safe to say that 2011 was the year of Adele. Her album *21*, was number one on Billboard for 14 weeks in 2011 and counting. *21* and *Rolling in the Deep* were the top album and song throughout all of 2011 with her album getting 5.82 million downloads over the course of the year. According to Billboard.com, the top five albums of 2011 were 1. Adele, *21* 2. Michael Buble, *Christmas* 3. Lady Gaga, *Born This Way* 4. Lil Wayne, *Tha Carter IV* and 5. Jason Aldean, *My Kinda Party*.



The best of

2011

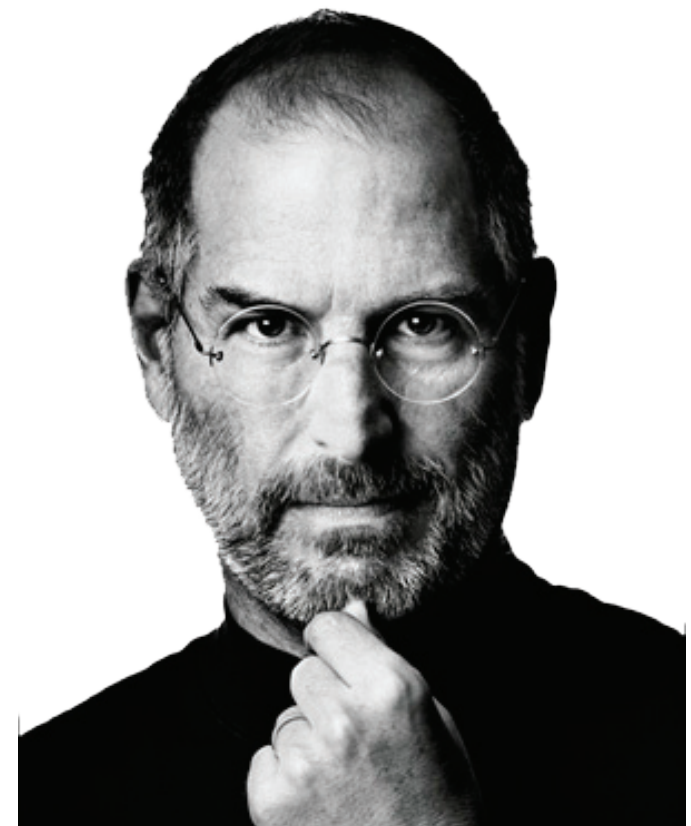
Films we were glued to...

There are some great movies that came out in 2011. The top movies of 2011 included *Bridesmaids*, *The Tree of Life*, *The Descendants*, and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1*. In *Bridesmaids*, Melissa McCarthy starred as the craziest, bravest, most balls-out performance of the year. This movie was a great success in the box office and really had people talking. *The Tree of Life* was set in the 1950s and follows a boy trying to find his way through his adolescent life into adulthood while trying to reconcile with his father. This was a great hit in the theaters and is still a hit well into 2012. *The Descendants*, starring newcomer Shailene Woodley as George Clooney's daughter, is about a father wanting to reconnect with his daughter after his wife suffers a boating accident. *The Descendants* is a heartfelt movie that will have you feeling warm inside. Harry Potter should need no explanation as to why it is the phenomenon it is today; we grew up with watching the Harry Potter films and will continue to love him forever and ever.



Deaths we mourned...

2011 was for sure a year of great loss. Some of the most significant deaths of 2011 included Steve Jobs, co-founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of Apple, Amy Winehouse, the brilliant English singer-songwriter, and Ryan Dunn, Jackass and Viva La Bam daredevil. Jobs died of pancreatic cancer, Winehouse died of alcohol poisoning and Dunn died in an alcohol-related car crash. Although there were more deaths than these listed, these were some of the greatest losses the American pop culture endured throughout 2011.



Pleasing pitches for our last year on the planet

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

Here it is people; I, the savant of music, am here to enlighten you on who is going to release the best music in 2012. You can now finally enter the New Year with some quality tunes gracing the buds that your ears desire. My selections may make it seem like I am longing to live in Harlem or Compton but my iPod does actually have some musical diversity. And although most genres can be found in my library one would not consider the non-rap songs very recent. The reason I am only informing you about hip hop is that I know nothing about the upcoming music of the other genres. When it comes to Rock-n-Roll I am a fan of the old school. I would much rather listen to some Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young than Nickelback or whatever new bands you kids are listening to. But I digress; here are some rap projects that I expect to be bumping for many months to come.

Chip Tha Ripper

Tell Ya Friends:

The much anticipated fralbum (free album) was released Jan. 23. Chip teamed up with some very highly respected rappers in the music industry, something he did not do at all on his last project. Bun B from UGK, Krayzie Bone from Bone-Thugz-N-Harmony both make an appearance on the tape. Also, the well known producer Hi-Tek from Reflection Eternal produced a song where Chip teamed up with fellow Clevelander Kid Cudi. Also, up-and-coming G.O.O.D music artist CyHi Tha Prynce lends his talents to a track. This mixtape is classic Chip tha Ripper; filled with great beats, interesting flows, and simple, yet catchy lyrics.

Big K.R.I.T

4eva & a Day and Live from the Underground:

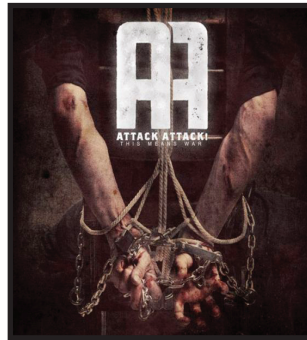
Not only is Krizzle releasing a studio album, *Live from the Underground*, but he has promised to release a mixtape to help us get through the waiting period for the country rapper's album. 4eva & a Day is set to release Feb. 20, and if it follows the footsteps set by *K.R.I.T Wuz Here*, and *Return of 4eva*, then we can expect an instant classic. Along with the hype from the mixtape, K.R.I.T said that there are going to be some features from legends in the rap game, although he would not disclose their names. Get ready for K.R.I.T to spit his southern slang over something so conservative and brace yourself for the legendary music that will be coming out of Mississippi.

Blackstar

Title Unknown:

The legendary duo of Talib Kweli and Mos Def are back and blazing for 2012. They have already performed their new song "Fix Up" on both *The Colbert Report* and *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*. This group hardly needs to provide hip hop fans more reasons to listen to their stuff because it is a tandem of two of the most lyrical MCs of all time. Mos Def changed his performer name to Yassin Bey, and although that is kind of a strange name it should not actually affect his musical talent. This should be another classic from the talented New York MCs who make up Blackstar.

Barret Hotz '13, Photo Editor



Attack Attack!

This Means War

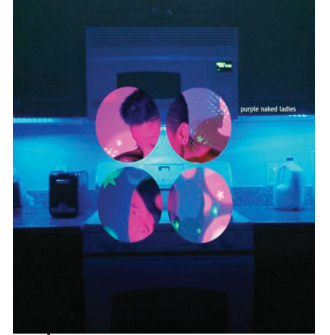
Attack Attack! is a metalcore band from Chesterfield, Ohio. *This Means War* is their fourth album in seven years. This album is the first album where lead singer Caleb Shomo does both screaming and now singing as the guitar player who left last year used to do the singing. This album has gotten so much hype and excitement from the metal community. The single on this album, "The Motivation," has been played on the radio a lot lately. This album dropped on Jan. 17. Head over to your nearest record store and pick it up and listen to the musical genius.



My Ticket Home

To Create a Cure

My Ticket Home is a hardcore band from another city in Ohio, Columbus. The band is a close group of friends who have been doing this since they were kids in high school. They have been in this game a long time. *To Create a Cure* will be their second mainstream album ever released and will be released by Rise Records (one of the greatest record companies of all time). This has a heavier feel compared to My Ticket Home's last album due to the completely different tracks and a completely new sound. The single on the album is "Who is Number 67?" The album is dropping on Jan. 31. Check it out.



Odd Future

Purple Naked Ladies

Odd Future is a rap group whose roots stem from Los Angeles, California. They will be releasing a new album called *Purple Naked Ladies*. Although this album has been released on iTunes already, the actual CD is being released on Jan. 31. Everyone really seems to like Odd Future at Berkley and once you see how many downloads it has world wide, you will be blown away. Support the band and go buy the real album Tuesday.

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BROADWAY

broadens horizons

Lenie Siegel '14, Freelance Writer

In the Broadway musical *Billy Elliot*, young Billy sings, "Electricity sparks inside of me. And I'm free, I'm free." Just like Billy's discovery of freedom in dancing, one can break barriers in the exhilarating experience of Broadway. Broadway will enhance the understanding of music, people, and stepping out of one's comfort zone in performing on stage.

In opening one's eyes to a Broadway production, they can step into a world of new culture; some, however, may be very closed-minded regarding this subject. Sophomore Josh Jones is among those who tend to be more narrow-minded in terms of the opportunity to experience a Broadway production. "Broadway is not exciting. It does not get my attention. If there were more action involved, then maybe I would like it more," Jones said. Those who feel similarly to Jones do not realize that there is a show for every person. While *Mamma Mia* is a show for fans of comedic romances, something like the Broadway production of *Spiderman* will satisfy the minds of those who are hungry for more action.

When people think of music they often gravitate towards people with a common musical interest. They may become blind to a whole different type of music: Broadway. Sophomore Ayumi Perez happens to love the music to *Wicked*. "It's not the kind of music you listen to every day. It's really catchy and gets stuck in my head," Perez said. Listening to this type of music is one thing, but to see it in a live performance brings it to an entirely new level. The random outbursts of song can only put a smile on one's face. Perez said she "could not agree more." It is not every day that you see people break out into song every few minutes, so this experience is truly one of a kind. These songs can also have a much deeper meaning. Music can be a personal subject for some, and Broadway songs can take a very emotional turn in the stories they tell.

The people who tell this story make Broadway an even more eye-opening experience. In school students at BHS learn about different cultures to broaden their horizons and enhance their perspective. Learning about these people and their cultures in a musical theater setting is much more enriching. Almost every production will look into a different group of people, introducing those in attendance to different parts and ideas of the world. While *Memphis* takes place in the southern U.S., *Les Miserables* takes place across the globe in France. After seeing a Broadway production, one may become intrigued about other places. While that person may have had a narrow mind about Broadway, it will heighten his or her knowledge about different types of people and culture. They do exist, somewhere, out there.

In contrast, when people watch movies, the performance from the actors will be the same every single time. With Broadway, however, live performers will make the amazing experience unique with every performance. "I love that each show is different from the last," Perez said. The actors can make each performance better and better from audience feedback and experience.

Most of all, the Broadway experience is at its core, inspiring. Many of the shows introduce different struggles that people endure, but those individuals always find ways to solve their problems. One may see a Broadway show and then come home with a mindset that they can change his or her life.

The actors are even more inspiring in their ability to perform in front of thousands of people. A common fear among many is public speaking. If someone is having trouble with a speech in class, imagine dancing, singing, and acting in front of so many people. Opening one's mind to Broadway will encourage him or her to take risks in front of an audience just like the actors do each night.

Next time one happens to be in New York City or even at the nearby Detroit Opera House, make sure to schedule a Broadway production into the evening's agenda. In passing up this magical experience, one can pass up an opportunity to deepen their prospects.



Les Misérables



BILLY ELLIOT

THE MUSICAL

HITS AND MISSES OF JANUARY

MISS: BURT'S BEES CHAPSTICK

Grace Turner '13, Freelance Writer

Over the holiday break, I finally got to try Burt's Bees chapstick. My excitement at getting to try a 99 percent natural product that is not tested on animals quickly dissolved, however, when I found it to be completely ineffective. The chapstick is overly waxy and just sits on your lips without soaking in. Once it rubs off, you are left with what you started with—lips of sandpaper. With prices set at three to four dollars each, I would expect lips as soft as chinchilla fur. So what if it is all natural if it does not work? High prices and sophisticated labels may trick some consumers, but not me. Thanks for nothing, Burt's Bees.



HIT: STUMBLEUPON

Sam Lubinecky '12, Layout Director/Managing Editor

StumbleUpon is a discovery engine that lets anyone, based on their interests, use the website to find new and exciting things about what intrigues them. It is not like StumbleUpon is a new thing, it has been up and running since 2001, but the beauty of it is that it never gets boring. Over break, for once, I had a spare moment to just relax and what I found myself doing was stumbling. Hours later I was in the same spot still stumbling and still fully intrigued. I had no idea that some of the things I have discovered while stumbling even existed. Just now I have discovered great silhouette photography, the website Polyvore, and even a silly squirrel in a suit of armor. The only way you can enjoy this site is by signing up and I highly recommend you do.

HIT: NHL

Barret Hotz '13, Photo Editor

The National Hockey League is where you can watch the “best of the best” duke it out for three periods of twenty minutes, and if you're lucky, you get to witness some awesome overtime. Hockey started in the late 1800s, when British soldiers and Canadian immigrants adapted a stick and ball game they played to the respectively new icy conditions. The NHL is where North America's finest ice hockey players come together to play the game they love against the teams they hate. The game of hockey is played with six players on each side of center ice including three forwards, two defensemen and a goalie. Hockey is one of the sports we can count on as fans and viewers. The NHL never lets us down. The NHL is where beer (for the adults) and fighting are staples of a good time, and yelling and screaming is encouraged. The NHL is one of the greatest sports leagues in the world, as hockey is one of the most difficult to play. There is a huge difference between running with a ball than skating with a puck. Hockey is seriously one of the greatest sports ever played. Seriously.



HIT: WIZARDS OF WAVERLY PLACE FINALE

Shelby Silver '14, Copy Editor

I got all cuddled up in my snuggie to watch the final epic episode of *Wizards of Waverly Place*. My favorite show among many came to a unique end on Jan. 6 as the Russo siblings competed in the wizard's competition to determine who would become the next family wizard. For those of you who did not watch it, just go home. This final episode blew my mind when not only one, but TWO of the siblings, Alex and Justin, both became wizards, while Max became the new owner of the family sub shop. This show has captivated many over the past five years and will be terribly missed. Thank you, Selena Gomez, thank you.



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Platonic relationships potentially problematic

Veronica Marchese '13, Student Life Editor

Relationships between males and females exist, but the nature of the relationship they have is the important part. Since the dawn of man, reproduction has been an important part of evolution; it is an instinct all organisms have. We are beings with intense feelings and emotions, and as I observe my peers, I am coming to the conclusion that when guys and girls are strictly friends, things have the potential to become difficult for both parties involved. I am not saying that guys and girls cannot be friends at all, but more often than not, the fine line between staying friends and becoming more can become blurred.

Over winter break I was introduced to a YouTube video made by two young independent filmmakers, Jesse Budd and Patrick Romero, who "Set out to simply prove a point." They went around the college campus of Utah State University interviewing both male and female students asking them a very simple question: "Do you think men and women can just be friends?" All the girls said "yes" while all the guys replied "no" or laughed and said "absolutely not." A similar experiment was then performed at BHS and the results were much different. A majority of the girls that were asked said, "yes", as well as the guys. On the exterior, there may appear to be examples of guys and girls who are friends, but get to the center of that relationship and often you will find there are more intimate feelings. Ask yourself, "Would my friend Jack/Jill 'hook up' with me given the opportunity?" The answer: probably.

There are several reasons girls may not be able to hold a platonic relationship with a member of the opposite sex, and why guys may not be able to as well. Men and some women do not just think with their brains, or their hearts for that matter. Females too are at fault for the problem of not being able to maintain a platonic friendship. Females walk around flaunting what they have and usually subconsciously or consciously flirt, leading men to believe they are interested in more. Or it could be a complete reverse situation and perhaps the female is the one with underlying feelings who wishes for more with their male friend.

The filmmakers of the video were given a response from a certain male student who claimed, "We're all men, of course we're going to have those feelings. We can be content and silent but we're going to have them." One student at BHS who disagrees with that statement is junior George Patterson. Patterson believes that "guys and girls can be friends because [the friendship] doesn't always have to be romantic and intimate. I think if two people are both on the same page then it can absolutely work." Patterson has many friendships with the opposite sex, with no romantic attraction. With that said, Patterson has probably done



what everyone should do, and gotten more comfortable with his female friends.

Friendship is the gateway to a closer relationship; it allows one to evolve. There are a few things everyone can do to try and have a platonic relationship, if that is what is wanted. Get on a level of comfort with your opposite gendered friend, burp in front of them, and talk about a guy/girl they could potentially set you up with. Take all of the "wanting more" feelings in those relationships out if you wish to keep it friendly. It is possible to be friends after you take certain steps and after acknowledging or establishing the nature of your relationship. Embrace the co-ed friendship, but always, always be sure of the feelings in the friendship.



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The ACT: an unsubstantiated evaluation of our intelligence

Clarissa Donnelly '13, Entertainment Editor

In order for admittance into a prestigious college to be possible, it is expected of juniors to take a challenging schedule, receive impressive grades in these near-to-impossible classes, and be active in an abundant and varying amount of extra curricular activities. If any spare time remains, students who are aiming for the Harvards and Cambridges of the world use any spare time he or she may have volunteering at soup kitchens and tutoring underprivileged children. However, whether one is aiming for Princeton or Central Michigan, the ACT is a necessity.

Phenomenal grades in challenging classes exhibit a student's dedication to his or her studies and accurately his or her intelligence. Sports and other extra curricular activities show that said student is able to balance other activities with academics. Volunteering shows how one shapes his or her character and improves his or her community. The weight put on the ACT however, is where my conflict with college admissions boards arises. In order to continue our progress into equalizing opportunities in our society, the stress of importance placed on the ACT must be revised.

As we go to countless assemblies this year, our counselors present the ACT with the given impression that all of us have an equal opportunity to do well on it. The wide variety of differences in income throughout the wide demographic of students here at BHS however, proves this idea immensely incorrect. The simple observation that some students are dropped off to school in Mercedes while other students are given food stamps and free lunch is the main indication of this falsehood. The students at this school who are lucky enough to have loads of money, or parents who are willing and able to fork over their hard-earned cash, have an overwhelming advantage when taking this test. Their extra money allows them the opportunity to take the ACT as many times as necessary, and if simple repetition of the test is not enough to raise said student's score, he or she may acquire a private tutor, take a class, use an online program, or buy multiple practice books. Either option that the student chooses requires money, something the students of a lower income family are not able to do and are thus only given the opportunity of the free test given in March.

Although through our public education system we are all given equal learning opportunity, the issue of money still arises. Imagine a student who may have a family income of \$500,000 a year. This student is given the financial capability to take the test five times while also in contact with a private tutor. All of the practice allowed by said student's extra money allows him or her to achieve a score in the 30's.

Now consider a student with a family income skirting \$40,000 a year. This student's family does not have money reserved for ACT practice, so he or she is only allowed the chance to

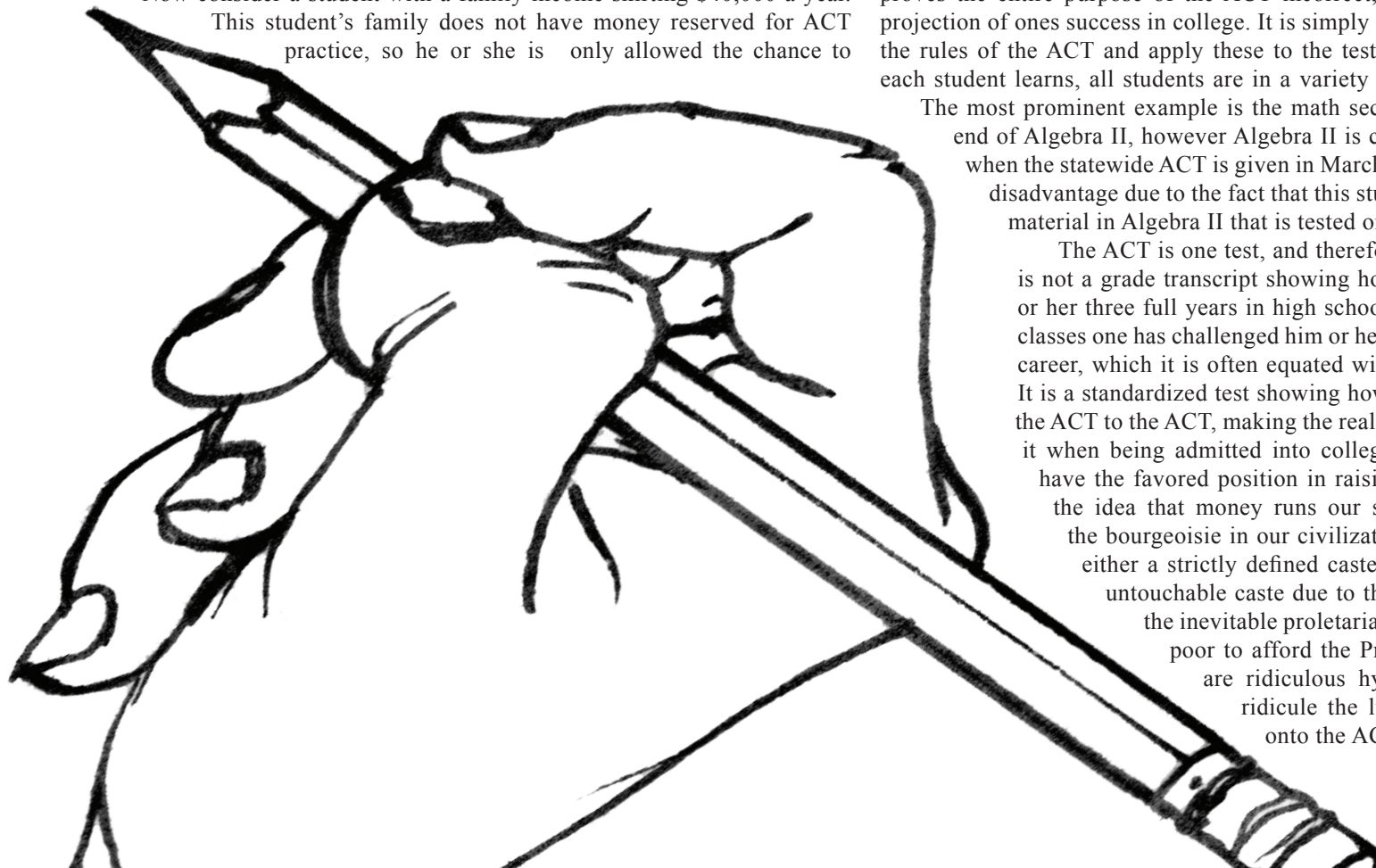
blindly take it once. The lack of extra preparation potentially only allows this student a score in the teens-lower 20's. This student may have the ability to take some free preparation courses offered by his or her school, but made clear in our economy is that nothing that is free is ever that wonderful. The classes available to people of lower incomes are inevitably of lower quality than the classes available to a person with more money due to simple economic principles.

Although its significance is obviously much greater than most other tests, it still is after all, only one test. Arguably the test is composed of five sections, and could be counted as five separate exams. However, all of these scores average into one composite score, and this composite score is the one primarily looked at. Hence: one score, one test. So the question remains, how can so much weight be put on a single exam? Colleges also do not look into each student's classes and examine each student's scores on each test, they only review one's final grades. Even if colleges were to look at one's test scores, this would be a more accurate measure of intelligence. When given tests in class, the student has been covering this material for weeks, and been given the opportunity to learn and study exactly what is necessary for him or her to do well. When taking the ACT, a student must randomly recall information he or she learned up to three years ago. In school, we are taught to learn things for our long-term memory, but when one must answer 75 questions in 45 minutes, recalling long lost memories is easier said than done.

Tutoring has shown to improve a student's score, but as experienced, the tutoring is not learning the material necessary to succeed on the ACT, but rather learning how to take the ACT. If one learns that every time a whole sentence is underlined, and the option B.) DELETE OR OMIT UNDERLINED PORTION is available, it is correct, then obviously this student will do better. They may also be well aware the word "omit" means to leave out or delete. ACT tutors consider their tutoring sessions to not be used to learn the information but rather learn a way to "cheat the system." In the math section, it is not required that one clears his or her calculator. Tutoring programs are well aware of this and give students programs with guaranteed formulas to help the student on the test and put these onto his or her calculator. Throughout our entire existence in school we are taught of the unacceptability of cheating, and how it will ruin our future if we are ever caught doing it. However when it comes to the ACT it is not only encouraged, but people knowingly pay to learn ways to cheat. This idea proves the entire purpose of the ACT incorrect, which being that it is a measured projection of one's success in college. It is simply a measure of how well one can learn the rules of the ACT and apply these to the test. Due to the different pace at which each student learns, all students are in a variety of classes when they take the ACT.

The most prominent example is the math section. The math covered goes to the end of Algebra II, however Algebra II is considered a junior class at BHS. So when the statewide ACT is given in March, students in Algebra II have a grave disadvantage due to the fact that this student may have not learned all of the material in Algebra II that is tested on the ACT.

The ACT is one test, and therefore should be seen as that. The ACT is not a grade transcript showing how much one has improved over his or her three full years in high school, nor is it showing how difficult of classes one has challenged him or herself with over his or her high school career, which it is often equated with when being admitted to colleges. It is a standardized test showing how well one can apply rules of taking the ACT to the ACT, making the reality of how much value is placed onto it when being admitted into colleges frightening. People with money have the favored position in raising their scores, drawing us back to the idea that money runs our society. This continued favoring of the bourgeoisie in our civilization will lead to one of two options: either a strictly defined caste system as in ancient India with an untouchable caste due to their immense failure on the ACT, or the inevitable proletariat revolution by the working class too poor to afford the Princeton review tutoring class. Both are ridiculous hyperbolic situations, which equally ridicule the ludicrousness of the importance put onto the ACT.



Smartphone: A smart new way forward

Aaron Cohen '13, Co-Entertainment Editor

On a recent Saturday evening, my family attended a long-planned event honoring an old friend. The good news was that our friends had planned a very special evening complete with dinner, music, dancing entertainment – the whole nine yards. The bad news was that, to our friends' dismay, the Lions' first playoff appearance in a decade was scheduled for national television viewing the same evening. There was no way my family, and many other expected guests, were going to get out of attending this party. Most hosts would have opted for the obvious solution: deprivation of the game for participation in the party. But not these hosts. They decided that rather than disallowing their guests to watch one of the most critical games in Lions history, they would cover the entire party space with huge projector screens, so that everyone in attendance could enjoy both events simultaneously. So what is the point of this story? Sometimes the solution to a problem is to embrace what we have previously resisted. Maybe it is time that educators begin to apply this theory to technology in the classroom, and in particular, the use of cell phones.

schools can provide for them. Still, educators insist that prohibiting cell phones is the only way to keep students focused on their studies. I say this deserves a second look.

On Jan 3, a staff meeting was held at BHS where a representative from Apple Inc. presented new methods of teaching involving the iPad. Dissecting frogs? There's an app for that. Learning to write in cursive? There's an app for that. Understanding planetary motion? There's an app for that. Paying for hundreds of iPads? There is most certainly not an app for that. However, much of what can be done using the iPad can also be accomplished using a smartphone. The difference? Many students already possess this technology, and within a few years, almost everyone will. With school districts fighting just to stay afloat amidst overwhelming budgetary pressure, incorporating smartphones into public school curriculums could be a win-win for everyone involved.

What's amazing is how much I already use my own iPhone for school – even for this article. Research was done using 3g Internet, interviews were conducted using a voice recording application, and various drafts were emailed and edited using the standard iPhone Mail App. I use my iPhone for other classes too. Last year I downloaded a free interactive periodic table of elements to help me in chemistry, along with a free, make-your-own flashcard app that helped me memorize Spanish vocabulary. Currently, I use my ACT Student App, which allows me instant access to my past scores, along with study tools and notifications about future test-taking opportunities. If schools began incorporating similar concepts into their curriculum, students would not only improve technologically, but also become more efficient, all while saving their district massive sums of money.

In the past, phones have been viewed as a distraction to students. However, the reality is that most students have more technology in their pockets, than their

Here's an example. The tenth grade biology textbook currently in commission costs almost \$90. That same information in the form of a smart phone app costs around \$8, and the updates are free. Imagine all of your textbooks on one small, lightweight electronic device.

It's time for schools to reconsider what they have previously resisted. Smartphones could benefit students and administration alike, and help curb districts' gargantuan deficits. The future of education and technology is uncertain, but I believe that smartphones are the future. School? Maybe one day, there will be an app for that.

Less waste, more money: Help yourself and the earth this year

Grace Turner '13, Freelance Writer

With the holidays over and the new year just beginning, many Americans do their best to keep recently made resolutions. Common resolutions include dieting, exercise, and leading a healthier lifestyle. A simple resolution for students is to be less wasteful—both with their finances and their trash. Saving money and helping the environment can be an easy and effective resolution.

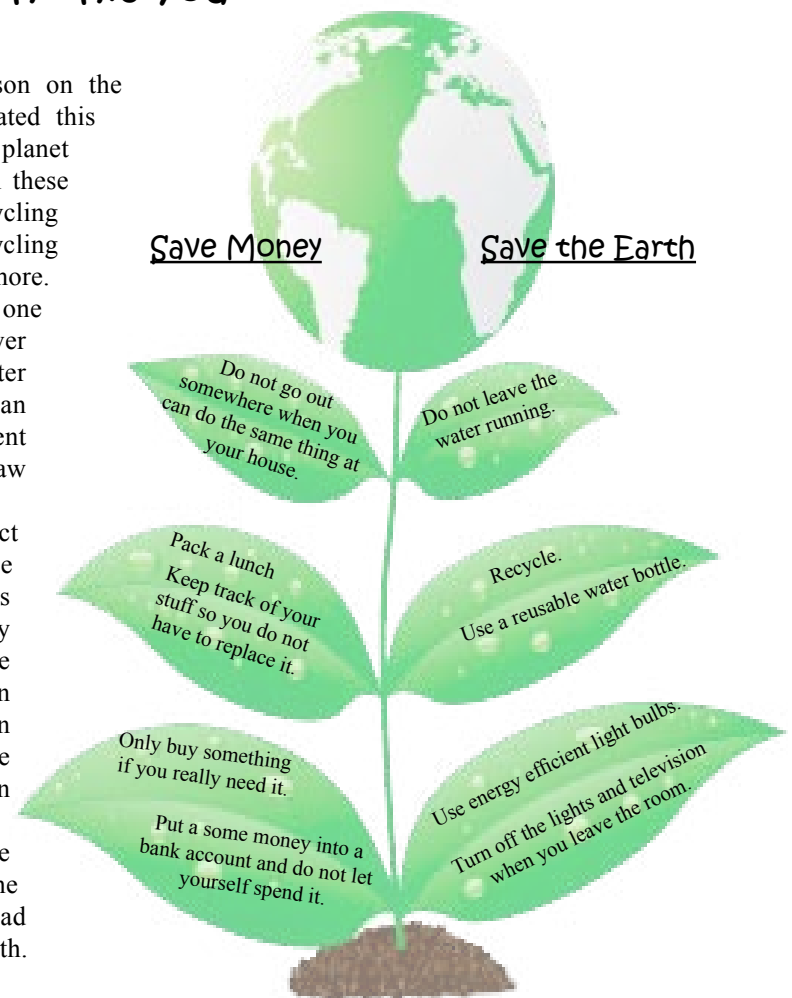
Students seem to be experts when it comes to wasting money. Seemingly inexpensive costs of everyday items can really add up. Many upperclassmen at BHS go off campus to eat lunch. While this is fun, it can eventually break the bank. Junior Lisa Wassenberg said that she goes out to eat "pretty much every day," and that she normally spends 20 to 25 dollars on lunch every week. Buying snacks and drinks from vending machines gets expensive too. An anonymous senior said that she spends approximately six dollars a week on food from the vending machines. Bringing a lunch from home can greatly reduce the cost of lunch, and so can going home for lunch if you just want to get out of the school. Many of the vending machine snacks and drinks can be found at grocery stores for less, and the cafeteria food is also less money than eating out. A simple change like this can keep your finances and digestive system in check.

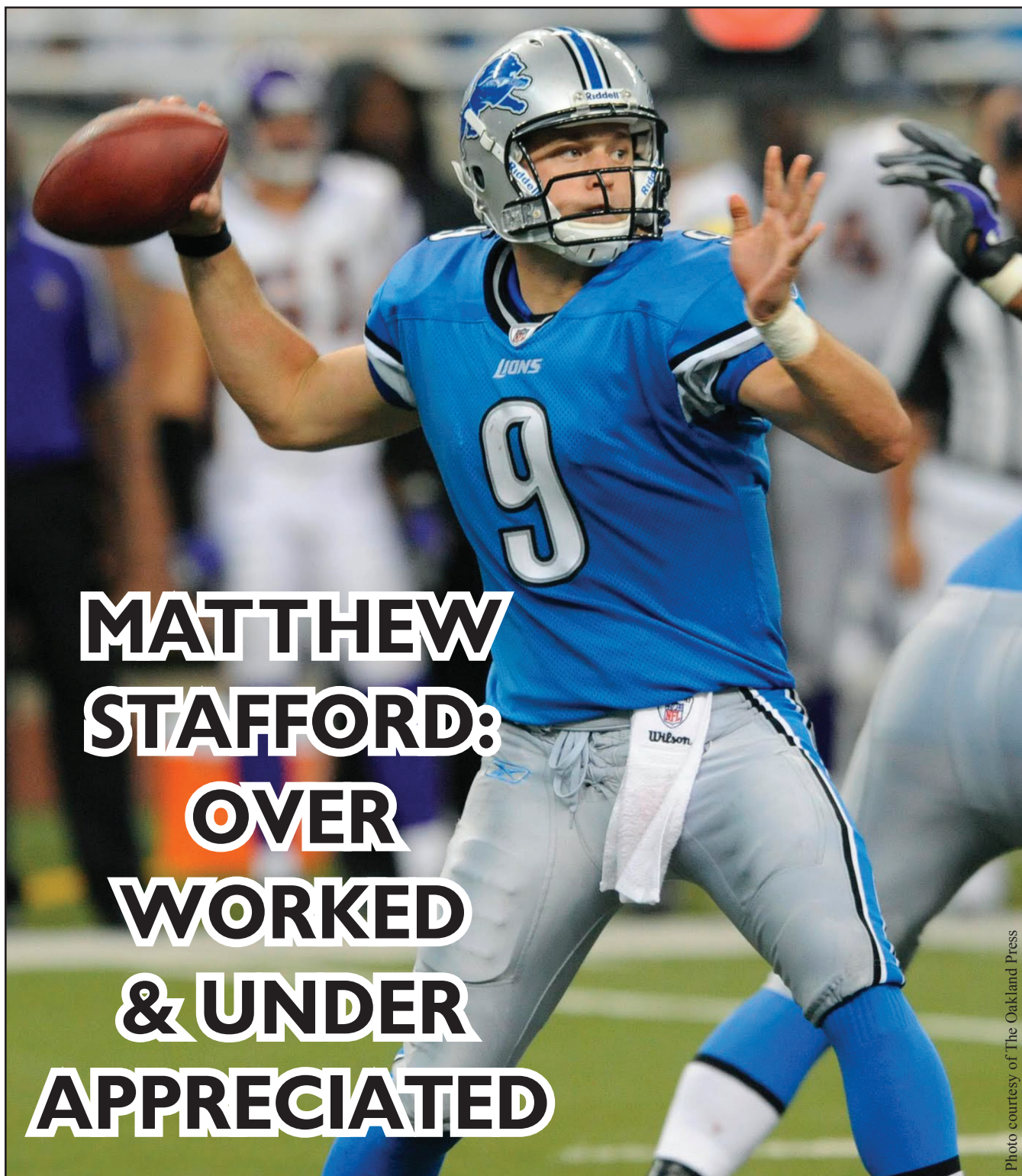
On a larger scale, Americans are notorious for being wasteful with their trash. According to thenewecologist.com, the average American sends 64 tons of waste to landfills in their lifetime. This is an equivalent of 128,000 pounds, or a little less than 12 adult male elephants.

Thenewecologist.com said that if every person on the earth threw out this much garbage and created this much pollution, there would have to be four planet earths to contain it all. Many of the things in these landfills could have been recycled. With recycling being so easy, every American should be recycling just as much as they are throwing out, if not more. Thenewecologist.com also said that recycling one glass bottle can save enough electricity to power a 100-watt light bulb for four hours or a computer for 30 minutes, and that making one aluminum can from a recyclable material uses nearly 95 percent less energy than an aluminum can made from raw materials.

Just recycling a little can have a positive effect on the environment. Simple measures can be taken on an individual level to cut these numbers down. Use a reusable water bottle, energy efficient light bulbs, and recycle. Some garbage can also be turned into something new. A jar can be turned into a pencil holder, or a milk carton with its top half cut off can be hung from a tree to make a bird feeder. Recycling and reusing can greatly reduce the waste in landfills.

Being less wasteful can save money and the planet. This is truly an easy resolution that one can feel good about. Small, simple steps can lead to a better life for all on our beautiful planet earth.





MATTHEW STAFFORD: OVER WORKED & UNDER APPRECIATED

Photo courtesy of The Oakland Press

James Demery '13, Opinion Editor

This season, Matt Stafford achieved what only three other quarterbacks have done in the history of the NFL, he threw over 5,000 yards. This was his third season in the NFL, and the first in which he was able to play a full season. He played only 13 games his first two seasons due to injury.

Stafford's full stat line for this season was 5,038 passing yards, 41 touchdown passes, and 16 interceptions thrown. These are incredible numbers especially for a QB so young and inexperienced. Yet, when it came time for the Pro

Bowl selection, Stafford was not only passed over for a starting position, he is the third alternate, behind Tony Romo and rookie Cam Newton. Not only did Stafford have a better season in almost every statistical category, he also led his team to more wins than both Romo and Newton.

Stafford already is one of the premier Quarterbacks in the NFL and he deserves to be in the MVP discussion with Drew Brees, Aaron Rodgers, and Tom Brady. He should not be waiting behind Eli Manning, Romo, and Newton to possibly get in the Pro Bowl game.

When Stafford passed the 5,000 yard mark in the season finale against Green Bay (in which he threw for 500 yards and 5 TDs) the announcers did not say anything about it, but they were waxing poetic about how a backup QB for the Packers was tearing up the Lions depleted secondary.

To put it plainly, Stafford is underappreciated. One could say he is the Paula Weiser of the NFL. Weiser is arguably one of the best hall monitors to ever live, yet all people can talk about is Rick. While Stafford is also one of the best QB's in the NFL, no one seems to notice.

JV GIRLS BASKETBALL: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Shelby Silver '14, Copy Editor

Going into the 2011-12 JV basketball season, the girls were prepared for rigorous practices, and exciting games. The BHS girls JV basketball team has had their fair share of wins. The massive leap from freshman to JV was a big struggle, but by training and practicing for up to 12 hours a week, their hard work has paid off. With a record of 7-4, the JV team's captains sophomores Maddie Baker, Hayley DeBene and Mckenna Donahue lead their team to victories.

Although jumping from freshman to JV was a bit of a struggle, the girls brought different qualities to the team that they had learned in their previous year on the court. Baker said, "My height is a good asset for me because I do well on defense and I can block my opponent easily." She then said, "I have more confidence now than I did last year, which helps." Fellow teammate, sophomore Reva Mckdowell said, "An asset would be leadership and being there for my team even though I was not appointed captain." By being on the JV team, this means that one is able to put their skills that they have been practicing for so long to the test to see if they have what it takes to make it to varsity. Baker said, "There are no more elementary fundamentals. It lets us put our work ethic that we have been learning to the test during each game."

For most players who are on the team, it becomes a huge burden to have to juggle the enormous work load, practices, games, and sleep. How they all manage to keep their grades up, those outside of the high school sports world may never know. Sophomore Allie Archambault said, "I work on a lot of my homework in school and in my free time when I have it." Sophomore Marlee Rothman said, "I stay up late trying to finish my work. When I have free time, I take advantage." Making time for friends can also be a bit of a struggle. Although the girls may have cell phones so they are able to text, are they missing out on what might be going on? Rothman said, "The only time I can see my friends is during lunch or over the weekend, which can be very frustrating."

Struggling with homework loads, cramming for tests and juggling friends is always really hard when on a sports team, but the JV lady Bears have made the choice to put the time and effort into their beloved sport. They have worked hard for their spot on the team, and soon enough they will be the leading ladies on the varsity team.

20 THE SPECTATOR

SOCIALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE:
A CYBER VIRUS PLAGUEING COMMUNICATION

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

Society can no longer stand by while the art of communication is rapidly dying in front of us. It seems like people lack the ability to even hold a conversation without quickly glancing at a cell phone every twenty seconds. For a good majority of BHS students, more attention is placed on pointless games than the lesson being taught in class. People are constantly checking their Twitter timeline and their Facebook news feed instead of following the actual events of the world around them. Twitter and Facebook are useful social tools that can help distribute news efficiently, but I can not tell you how many times I have been with a group of people where all we end up doing is sitting in the TV room and looking at our respective cellular devices. Some people even resort to begging in order to find a charger so they can save their phone from impending battery death. I am not trying to say that I am above the problem, and to be blunt, I have a serious addiction to my iPhone. I am constantly checking my fantasy teams, scrolling through Twitter, or flinging temperamental birds so I can kill some circular green pigs. This addiction is a virus that has infected the social environment and has made it seem like the virtual world is considered more important than reality.

This affliction of technology addiction has caused a major difference in the human lifestyle. One of the worst effects of the addiction is when people create "threads," which is basically when a friend-group creates a chatroom where they all can text together on the same page. The most infuriating part of this is when people text these threads with friends that they are sitting in the same room with. On many occasions my crew of classy gentleman and I have been hanging out with a group of ladies who take part in the aforementioned threads. The conversation is not only halted by the need to check our phones, or get a new high score on Temple Run, but these girls take the addiction to a whole new level. These girls talked privately to each other about their group conversation. They will randomly say something like "she totally would do that" or "I can't believe she said that." This is followed by a slew of loud, squeaky giggling.

Technology has even implanted virtual phrases into our actual vocabulary. Shortened words have taken over correct grammar for a large percentage of people. People say LOL instead of actually laughing out loud. My generation is trimming words more than a lumberjack at a wood convention. Jealous becomes "jell." Precious transforms into "presh." Ridiculous turns into "ridic." I don't understand why it is so hard for people to finish words. Are the last one or two syllables really that hard to pronounce?

However, this is not a problem solely affecting the teenage generation. Some adults have even been influenced by this cell phone necessity. My family especially has a problem with technology. I once witnessed my dad looking up something on his iPhone, while messing around on his iPad, all while watching TV. My mom updates her Facebook status more than Tim Tebow prays to Jesus. Even when they go to my Berkley Hoops games they spend more time looking at emails and playing Bejeweled than actually looking at the court. There is no judgment being passed because I would be doing the same thing if I had to sit through a bunch of players fail to execute a zone defense. Almost every time we go out to dinner as a family, at some point of the meal we all have our phones out and are looking at something on the web. It is almost as if we have lost the ability to do anything without glancing at our phones, where there is usually not even a notification. My family can not be the only one with this problem. I bet that there are countless other families that consider watching *The Biggest Loser* episodes to be a family experience. Microsoft has even used this technology addiction in their advertisements. They claim, "It is a good time to be a family," because their technology somehow possesses the ability to bring a family closer together. Apparently, in order to be a close family we have to connect our phones to our TVs.

This technology addiction has gone through many stages. First was the flip phone period, where people were constantly flipping their Razors throughout a conversation. Next came the time of sliding phones where people were always sliding out their keyboard and sending a text. After that came the crack-berry era, where people were BBM-ing each other like their lives depended on it. And currently society is experiencing the apple takeover. A large number of people have switched to the iPhone 4s so they can have the assistance of Siri. Society is now so lazy that they even need a robot to Google stuff for them. Soon we are going to be like the fat slobs from Wall-E and start finding an easy solution for even the simplest of tasks. This downward trend needs to be stopped or else our children and our children's children will be fat slobs who depend on a search engine to develop a thought.

TMI: KEEP YOUR CLOTHES ON CYBER-
PEOPLE

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

Our society, my generation especially, no longer values privacy or solitude. As technology has improved over history, we have seen a steady decline of privacy. Inventions like the printing press and telephone were early breakthroughs in publicizing information, but these tools are now like crossbows compared with the automatic firing power of which the Internet uses to annihilate our private lives. At first we implemented software such as antivirus, anti-spyware, and firewall in order to reduce the amount people could hack our digital information. However, these defenses are powerless in defending us from our own determination to expose ourselves, a sacrifice we make for a seemingly more vibrant social life. It appears that not until we stand online as stark naked as Vanessa Hudgens will we learn the dangers of living so candidly in the cyber realm. Unfortunately, most of us are not nearly as good looking.

As we progress, or some may say regress, further into our digitalized social practices, we must learn what is and is not appropriate to post online. Most of the people I am friends with on Facebook and follow on Twitter fail to use these services in a healthy way. Following the social networking boom, people began documenting aspects of their lives, revealing private information, which had previously and rightfully been kept as such. Now dudes feel like their latest bowel movement was so epic that it need be shared with the world. Chicks watching *Gossip Girl* somehow believe they need to tweet about it because the outside world cares so much about the ridiculous plot lines. Nothing satisfies for its own merit anymore. Only once we've properly documented an event or thought by taking pictures, posting tweets, or messaging our friends, will we consider it meaningful.

With the on-going smart phone—more specifically iPhone—takeover, publicizing ourselves has become far too easy. A person used to need to critically review their words or photos before publishing them, but now the process has been expedited and simplified so anybody can post just about anything on sites like Facebook or Twitter. Human beings used to need to speak or pen their words in order to be heard. Now their thumbs do the talking.

Because this already unnaturally quick method of communication does not satisfy us, we use acronyms and shorten words, leading to their introduction into everyday conversation. We can see these pseudo-communication methods destroying the English language everyday. Now instead of laughing we say "LOL" and instead of something being obvious it's "obvi." The art of the conversation is changing.

While we overall disclose too much online and over text messages, we also have divided ourselves between the identity we project through these mediums and the one we do in person. Many messages we send via cellular messengers or post online we would never dream of uttering in person. We have become too accustomed with talking to people through written text instead of spoken words, making us more socially inept in real life situations. Due to today's high school student's early introduction to cyber social networking, we have been particularly afflicted by this epidemic. Why risk asking a girl out in person when you can do it more confidently over Facebook? Who would publicly bully a kid when it can be done so much more discretely over text messages? I fear that if we continue to exist so vicariously through our cellular and online selves, our alternative cyber identities will soon become the real us. But then again, if we spend more time interacting online than in person, who's to say which is the real and which is not?

Don't get me wrong: as a writer and member of several social networking sites, I support people sharing their lives with the world and expressing their opinions. However, the practiced methods of online and texting communication lacks editing and etiquette previously required in letter writing and other published works.

If a tree falls in the forest, and no one's there to tweet about it, did it ever happen? I'm not sure anymore guys, I'm just not sure. When we reach the point where we conversing with people more electronically than verbally, who's to say whether our cyber-self or our physical-self represents our true identity? Obviously our social interactions have drastically changed. Instead of flirting, now we "sext." Instead of bullying, now we cyber-bully. Instead of writing, now we tweet. Instead of laughing, now we say LOL. Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Ultimately, all the different electronic mediums of social exchange have made actually knowing a person extremely difficult. We must begin to more carefully choose the information we disclose electronically, in the hopes of forming a more singular, genuine identity.