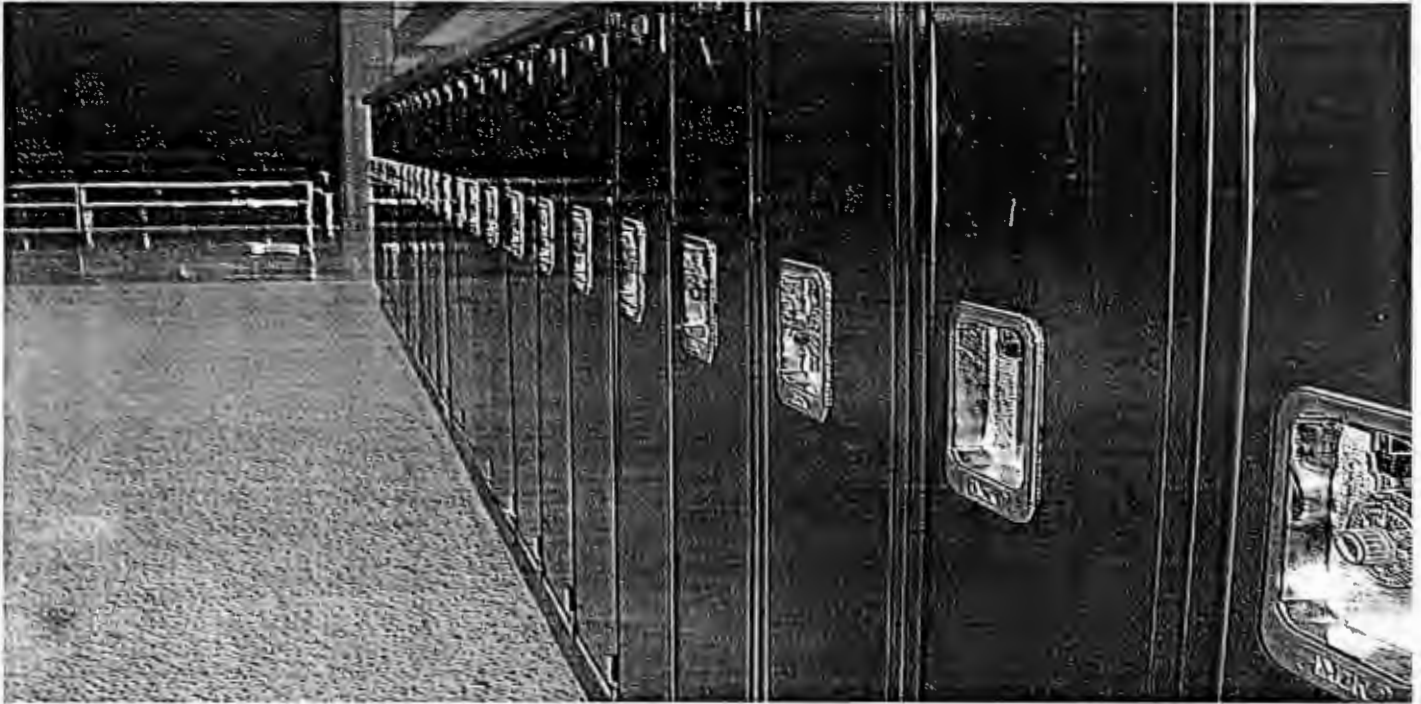


Volume 33 Issue 7

May 2001

bison stampede

A NewsMagazine of Buffalo High School



In This Issue

Dying to Fit In by Brittney Christy

The Pressures on Gay Teens

Dead Run by Reese Mankenberg

Original Fiction

Finding a Way Home by Elmurod S. Haugen

A Memoir

Opening Shot

Time to unleash the pasty limbs—spring has sprung and summer is right around the corner. Three months of freedom. Three months of, “You want fries with that?” Three months away from school. Right now, time away from school sounds unbelievable, but soon the languishing summer will set in and there will be thoughts of school.

Think about it. Everyday we get to spend eight hours with our friends. We get a great lunch for a buck and change. And we get to hang out with dedicated and energetic teachers. Not a bad deal.

BHS is not a bad place to come to school.



Almost everyone is excited to be here, the halls are clean, and the education is unparalleled.

We are sure at some time, when you have driven into school, you have noticed the sign outside the school. At the bottom is the saying, “Education beyond the blackboard.” Setting aside the fact that there is not a blackboard in the entire school, the saying is true. And this is what we are about to do. So as you clean out your locker, turn in your final projects, and take those finals remember that you are getting ready to take something out into the community this summer: your education. Be wise, safe, and curious.

In This Issue

Student Notes	3	12	True Story
Gay Teens	4	14	Safety Audit
Original Fiction	8	15	Male Cheerleaders



Staff

Editorial Board

Shanda Lindell
Heather Milligan
Marie LeVoir

Staff Writers

Rob Hermes
Reese Mankenberg
Brittney Christy
Elmurod S. Haugen
Sarah Lundebrek
Darrin Schroeder

Photography

Jamie Tokkesdal

Advisor

Mr. Wilkes

May I please have a note mommy?

by Rob Hermes

When you turn 18, the United States recognizes you as an adult--free to make your own choices. Here at BHS, the rules state that regardless of age, students must adhere to the same rules and regulations. The question then becomes, why can't you write your own notes if you are 18? "The policy applies to all students--age doesn't matter," says Mrs. Swagert.

When you turn 18 you become your own legal guardian. If your parents tried to sign a contract for you it would be invalid. If that is true, how can it be legal for your parents to sign a permission slip for you to go on a field trip? If an 18-year-old student was injured on a field trip, and their parents had signed the permission slip, the student could

probably still take legal action against the school. The other problem is that as an adult you may decide not to live at home. If this were the case, you would have to call your parents so they could call the school to tell them you are sick. The way I see it, we should just eliminate the middleman and let the students call in for themselves.

"You should be able to write your own note if you don't live with your parents," says senior John Wallace.

I realize that some students will abuse the right but most of the students won't. "If you are old enough to buy cigarettes you should be able to write your own note," says junior Chip DuBois. I agree with Chip and I'll go even farther than that. You are old enough to pick the person that leads our country, but you are not mature enough to know when you're sick or not. If this right was being abused the school would have the power to say they won't excuse them any more, but it's not right to restrict every adult because a few *might* abuse this right.

I feel that at BHS the adult students are mature enough to take on this responsibility and not abuse it. I think that the least the school could do is try it for a while. They can always go back and say that it was too much of a problem. The school should prepare you for the real world. My parents aren't going to call my boss if I'm sick and can't make it to work. We need to be able to exert more in control with our lives.

"The way I see it, we should just eliminate the middle man and let the students call in for themselves"



Dying to fit in: The pressures on gay teens

by Brittney Christy

[Editor's Note—Both of the key sources for this article have been given pseudonyms in order keep the focus on the issues affecting teens, as opposed to the individuals]

Being a young person in our society is not easy. Being young, and homosexual, can be deadly.

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transsexual (LGBT) youth are 2-3 times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual young people. An estimated 30% of suicides are committed by LGBT youth annually.

Gay/bisexual male youth form about 10% of the male population and are about 6-times more at risk for suicide attempts than heterosexual youth. This is a shocking disparity. These youth are under tremendous pressure and risk.

But the pressures don't stop there. LGBT youth are at a high risk of ending up on the streets. As a result of parental rejection and peer rejection, many LGBT youths turn to the

streets as a home. Twenty-six percent of LGBT youth are forced to leave home because of conflicts with family over sexual orientation. Twelve percent of mothers and 18% of fathers reject their children because of their sexuality. LGBT youth constitute up to 25% of all youth living on the streets in the U.S. Eighty-three percent of gay-identified street youth attempted suicide.

LGBT youth are also at high risk for feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and depression. Eighty percent of LGBT youth report severe problems due to social and emotional isolation. Social stigmatization leads to depression, low self-esteem, and powerlessness. (Note: these are problems that often

lead to suicide) Many times, members of the LGBT community feel hated and rejected by almost everyone, including peers, teachers, parents, religious leaders, and even their God.

The most stressful aspect of being LGBT youth is coming out to others or being discovered by others because of classmate's homophobia, and negative reactions from friends. Gay students are a high-risk population.

At our school being gay is not something you would usually talk about. Most kids wouldn't come out while they were in high school out of fear of retaliation. While gay hate crimes are not common at all in our school, gay hate is present. Walking down the hallways or sitting in class one can usually hear some derogatory remark about something being so "gay."

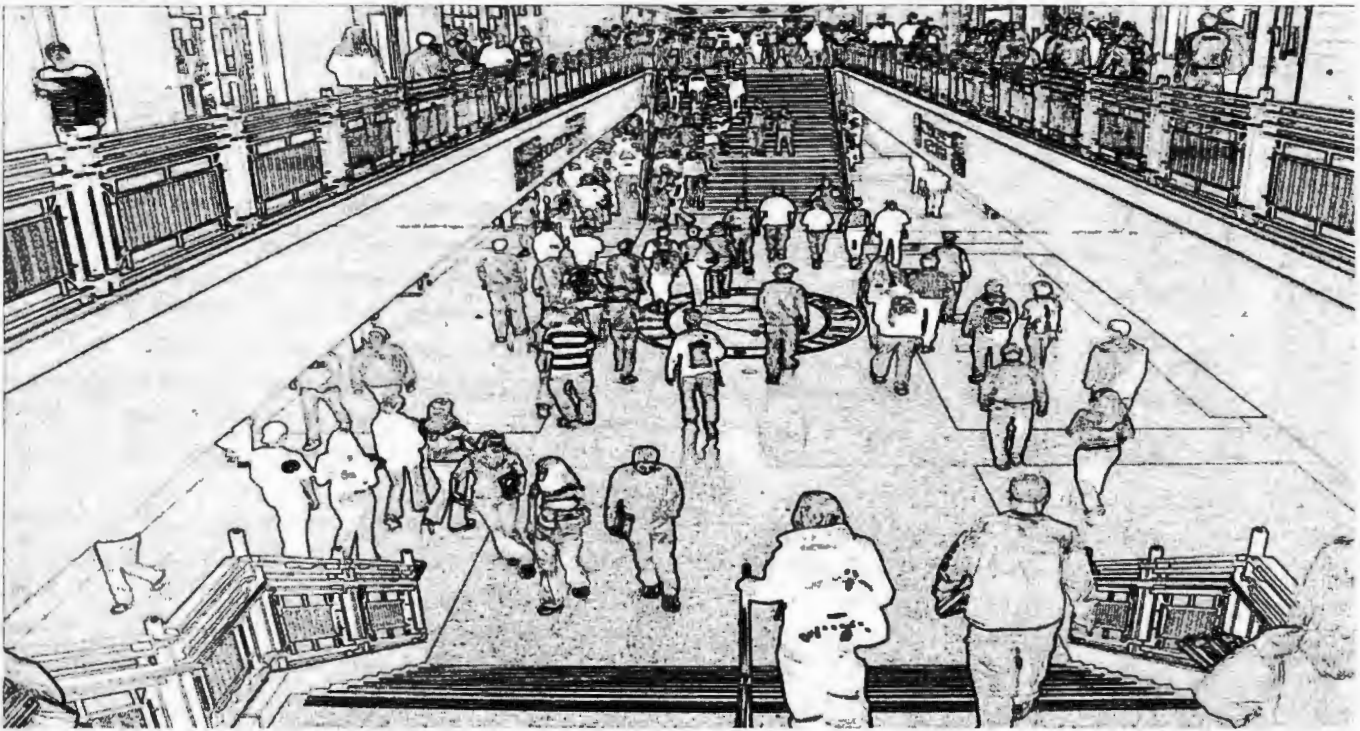
When asked what some BHS students would do if they were gay, the popular response was either "I'd kill myself" or "I just wouldn't tell anybody." When asked what they would do if they found out a friend was gay, the popular response was "I would still be friends with them—if they didn't hit on me."

Another popular response when asked about gay youth in general was, "I don't care if people want to be gay, I'm not prejudiced, just as long as *they* stay away from me." There are two problems with this statement. First, people don't usually want to be gay—they don't wake up and decide to be gay one day. Most struggle with it and fight it. Secondly, if you don't like to be around people based on a stereotype, you are prejudiced.

What can be done? First, we can get to know people who went through this experience. Then, we can develop empathy. No longer are these nameless statistics. Instead, the numbers become very real people who walk the hallways of BHS. The administration has worked diligently to create an envi-

(Continued on page 5)

"[They] feel hated and rejected by almost everyone ... even their God."



(Continued from page 4)

ronment of safety and equality. But this effort can only go so far. To truly empathize, you must know someone. This article is about getting to know two people. What follows is the experience of two former BHS students who agreed to talk to *the stampede* about what it was like to be young and struggling with their sexuality at BHS.

Jill Williams [a pseudonym], who came out her freshman year of high school, didn't always find BHS a welcoming place to go to school. Raised in a Catholic family, when she first had the feeling like she might be gay in the 7th and 8th grade, she hated herself for it. She became very homophobic for a while. Everything was gay, everyone was gay, and she was rebelling and rejecting what she was afraid to be. (Quick thought; studies say that 80% of those who are *extremely* homophobic are usually gay) She didn't want to be who she was.

By her freshman year, Jill accepted her homosexuality a little bit more. When asked by a friend if she was gay, Jill thought she could trust her friend and told her that she was gay. Within a week the whole school was buzzing with the gossip. People she didn't

even know were coming up to her and asking about it.

Then it got a little harder. People started calling her a "dyke" in the hallways. It made life difficult, and she hated being treated differently. She wished that they would at least come up with something a little more original other than dyke.

Jill didn't have to gather her parents to sit them down and tell them she was gay—they came to her on a hunch. She told them that she was, and was a little worried about how they would react because of their Catholic religion, but her father simply got up and said "Whatever floats your boat kid" and her mother didn't have problems with it either. A supportive environment is key to LGBT youth making it through their teen years.

But even with her family's support she

"While gay hate crimes are not common at all in our school, gay hate is present."

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

still spiraled into depression. Attempting suicide four times, and blaming herself for the way people treated her, she fell into a dark hole. "I felt like I was scraping the bottom of the barrel," she remarks.

Jill was treated differently by almost everyone—even teachers—and some kids would switch their classes because they shared it with her. Not all of her friends stuck with her because of retaliation against them, and there were even death threats against Jill and her friends. Many people just assumed that she was a horrible person because she was gay.

Jill was very involved in sports like track, cross country, and softball, but chose to quit because of the difficulty in the locker rooms. She didn't want to make other girls feel uncomfortable, so she gave it all up.

High school is full of groups and cliques. Everyone knows about the hicks, the preps, the nerds, the jocks, the dirties, and so on. Jill fell more into the art/poet group, which wasn't very big and didn't get along with the other cliques. Being gay made it even harder, and she didn't feel like she belonged.

On a lighter side of things, it got better. Jill says that it wasn't all-bad. There were two teachers that she was able to talk to.

They were more like friends to her than teachers. And as the years of high school passed, things gradually got better.

By her senior year, things were great for Jill. She recalls her senior year being "just awesome." She got better at letting the stupid comments roll off her back, and usually

when someone would say something, someone else would jump on them for it even before she could. She says that she worked hard to try to make the school better for other gay kids.

While Jill was the first to totally come out to everyone, she still knew a few people who were closeted or had one foot in the closet. So, in some respects it was a road she traveled



alone. "Being gay is 100 times harder," she says. And she tries to help people understand this by giving lectures and speeches about what it was like to be gay in high school. She says most of the classes she lectured this year were very attentive and asked intelligent questions and not just stupid questions to try to make her feel uncomfortable.

Jill says our school has come a long way. After she graduated she got two apologies from some of the kid's who had taunted her in their younger years. As a closing thought, Jill adds, "People don't forget they're gay, I just wish people would stop reminding them."

Dean Perry [we have given him a pseudonym at his request], who also graduated from BHS, chose to keep his sexuality to himself. In the fall following his graduation, he came out to his prayer group—a group of close knit friends whom he had known since they

(Continued on page 7)

"Being gay is 100 times harder"

(Continued from page 6)

were very young.

Since he didn't come out to everyone, Dean's struggles were mostly internal. For most of high school, he was just trying to figure out if he liked guys or girls. He dated girls until his junior year, and went to prom both years with female friends.

Dean had started to figure out his sexuality his junior year. But he didn't accept his homosexuality until he was a senior. There was a preconceived notion among some of the kids at school that he was gay. His parents, when he told them the first time, thought it was a "phase." They realized a little more the second time he came out to them, that it was for real, but they weren't proud and still didn't totally accept it.

Even though he was happy with himself and his accomplishments, he felt like he had to try twice as hard as everyone else to fit in. During his junior year he became very depressed, his grades fell, and he had to drop a class.

His friends noticed the change and talked to a counselor. He was called down to talk to one of the counselors and he broke down. His parents and a few of his teachers joined them. He told them that he wanted to kill himself and explained the whole thing to them. He was admitted to a suicide ward and had to stay to be evaluated over night.

He was so scared about what would happen, and acted his way through the evaluation. He was released on the lie that he was okay, but that might have been for the better. Even though he was still depressed, he put things back together for himself.

Dean, at times, still felt detached from his peers, and he felt like he was the only one. He had his group of close friends who stuck by him, and he felt like he belonged. But he still wanted to talk about his struggle. He just wished that he could have told someone to see if they approved, or disapproved, or even just to hear someone else's thoughts. The silence and secret was the hardest part.

He says high school would have been

easier, more comfortable if he had not been gay. There was an occasional comment about his sexuality but nothing severe. It was his junior year, when he was first starting to realize he was gay, which was the hardest for him. But he is now an English teacher and he chooses not to tell his students that he is gay. He still mostly keeps it to himself, and isn't even sure if his sister knows.

There is always a moral to the story, this one included. I refuse to out right give it to you though; society doesn't seem to have much for morals these days anyhow. And I wonder, does it have to be that way? Minority groups shouldn't feel isolated, and shouldn't be singled out. Change has to start somewhere.

Even though our school isn't perfect, we can do things to help. The most important factor in stopping hate crimes and stereotypes starts with an education about gay youth. Educate yourself instead of just believing rumors or untruthful gossip. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Join clubs, or at least support them. Do something, because every little bit contributes so much.

Every time you choose to hold back that derogatory remark, you help. Every time you respect those around you, and accept those around you for who they are, you help. Not everyone has to make leaps and bounds to change the world and to open small-minded thinking. But a lot of little steps add up to a mountain of change. Think about what you say, and don't just let things roll off your tongue anymore because you don't know who might be in ear shot and who's life you might be effecting in a negative way.

"High school would have been easier, more comfortable if he had not been gay."



Dead Run

by Reese Mankenberg

"I can't believe this is happening to us!," Rick screamed. "We're gonna' be stuck here for a whole day, and I've only got ten days vacation!"

"Would you shut-up, Rick! We called the tow, and there's nothing we can do but wait. It's no reason to get mad." Rick's wife was sick of him yelling and had for once dared to interfere.

"What!? No reason to get mad!? The car ride is like Hell with you whining in my ear the whole time! We have to pay extra so Ryan's friend can come along! We *hit a flat* in the middle of *nowhere*! I can't believe this! This is impossible!"

The fight raged on, and Ryan and his best friend, Luke, leaned against the hood of the '95 Corolla, listening to the fighting. "Man, I can't believe my parents are pulling this right now," Ryan complained. "Sorry you have to hear it."

"Well," Luke replied sarcastically, "At least I'm used to it."

Ryan snorted out a laugh. "I wish it wasn't true." Both of them sat with painful looks on their faces, listening to the war of words going on. It started to run into topics from fights in the past and Ryan stood up. "Let's go wander around for a while. Our ride won't be here for a few hours." Luke nodded his agreement. He was busy chewing at a hangnail.

The car had stopped in a clearing on the side of the road. It was slightly semi-circle shaped against the gravel, and was filled with knee-high crab grass. The ground was lightly wooded around the clearing, and about a half of a mile away from road the woods gave way to vast fields.

"What? You mean you want me to talk to them now?"

"No, I mean later, after the trip."

"No way. I wouldn't risk that anyway. He'd probably blow my head off," Ryan stated. That pretty much ended the conversation for a



few minutes. Ryan broke the silence again. "I wish we weren't on this stupid camping trip anymore. The ride sucks. There's no room in the back because dad had to bring his guns with him. I hate hunting anyway. It makes me even more scared of him because he knows how to use them."

"Oh, c'mon. Your dad yells a lot but he wouldn't *shoot* you. Look, you're all ticked off right now and you need to get your mind off it. Let's go find something else to do."

"Don't worry, it'll all be settled when we get back." They slowly strolled through the rest of the trees, kicking sticks and talking about random things, trying to stay off the subject of the parents. They reached the end of the woods and took in their surroundings. Ryan noticed a barn in the distance, across the field. "That meadow probably used to be farmland," Ryan thought. "Not cultivated in a few years."

"Luke, let's just go back. There's nothing to do and we've been here about an hour."

"Awright," Luke agreed. "I'm getting

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

hungry anyway." Luke was shortened by a thundering gunshot that echoed through the air. Hundreds of birds in the trees flew out and sped away over the abandoned farmland. The boys exchanged worried glances and both started in a dead run towards the car. Ryan wasn't sure what to think as he ran through the woods. He honestly thought that his dad had shot a bear or another animal. He didn't even dare to think of the alternative. He stumbled a little when the trees started to thin out and he was running in a bent over position. He regained his balance and the sight that he saw made him stop short. His mouth dropped open in shock and tears sprouted to his eyes. His mother was sprawled on the ground with Rich standing over her with her arms and legs spread out like she was making a snow angel. Her head was turned and her face was blank and expressionless, with eyes wide open. Ryan quickly jumped behind a wide Oak tree and flattened his back against the trunk. Luke had already found a tree of his own to hide behind and was crouched down against it, staring in horror at Ryan.

Millions of thoughts were racing through Ryan's head. 'Maybe she isn't dead? Maybe she's...' Two more gunshots cut sharp and clear through the air. Tears flowed openly

down his face as he looked at Luke. Luke pointed towards the field and barn in the direction they came from. Ryan swallowed heavily and gave one quick nod. They stared into each other's eyes for a few more moments and then they were off, sprinting as fast as their legs would take them, hoping to God that Rick hadn't heard them.

Part II

The sun was starting to set and a chill was rising in the air. Tears were frozen to the boys' faces as they charged through the woods. Side by side, they reached the last length of trees and Ryan took a quick glance back to see if Rick had noticed them yet. He didn't see anyone, so a great feeling of relief spread through him. He still didn't slow down in fear that Rick would come after them at any moment. They reached the field and both knew where they were going, to the barn. They had no idea how to get in or what was in it, but they needed somewhere to hide. Fatigue began to set in as the boys neared the middle of the field, and they began to stumble a bit.

They finally reached the rotting building and rested for a little while, to catch their breath. Luke looked over at Ryan. "What are

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 9)

we going to do? You know as soon as your dad finds us, he'll kill us. Is this sticking in your head!?" Ryan didn't hear a word Luke said. He stared at the trees, scared to take his eyes away from them. He knew that at any moment, his father would be coming for them, hunting them down. His breath came shorter as fear engulfed his heart. He just then realized how much danger they were in and what could happen to them. Luke interrupted his thoughts with a punch to the arm. Ryan came to his senses. He wasn't going to let himself or his best friend die. "Yeah, all right. Let's get in the barn, and we'll think of something from there." He went around the corner and found a door. He tried to open it but it was dead-bolted. "No!" he exclaimed and pounded the door with his fist. He looked up with a confused look on his face. His fist had sunk into the wood, leaving an imprint. "Luke, stand back," He commanded. He stepped about ten paces back and ran at the door, throwing his shoulder into it. He broke through the moldy wood easily. Luke stepped ahead of Ryan and started looking around. Ryan, with a grimace, started massaging his shoulder. Before stepping into the building, he decided to have one

last look, to see if his father was coming. As he poked his head out of the door frame, Rick emerged from the woods, holding his rifle.

Ryan's stomach dropped, and he jumped into the barn and tried to close the door, which was hanging from its hinges. With no luck, he turned to Luke and said, "Find somewhere to hide, my dad's coming!" Luke's mouth dropped in horror and he turned and ran into every part of the expansive floor, while Ryan stood in one place, staring straight ahead in a state of shock. Luke couldn't find anywhere to conceal himself and ran back to Ryan. He grabbed him by the shoulders and shook him, screaming, "What are we going to do!?" Ryan tilted his head upwards and saw a ledge about twenty feet above the ground. It was a hayloft. He broke free of Luke and went over to the side of the wall. Hidden in the shadows was a staircase leading upwards. Only a few windows in the barn allowed light to flood in, so the barn was extremely dark and full of shadows.

Ryan started to climb the stairs, and after taking a few steps his left leg punched through the moldy wood. He cried out in surprise as he sunk through, all the way up to his waist. He somehow managed to pull himself

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

up again. "Ryan, you all right?" Luke asked, as he climbed up right behind Ryan. "Yeah," he said back. They made their way to the top of the hayloft, solemn as ever. A small window was directly at the top of the staircase, letting a fan of light through. About ten feet back, the corner was still concealed by shadow. Ryan thought this the best place to hide and jumped into the darkness. "Luke, can you see me?", Ryan whispered.

"No", Luke replied. He saw a large pile of wet hay and sod further down the floor and dove in covering himself with the soggy mess. That exact instant, Rick walked through the door. The boys' breaths caught in their lungs. Neither of them dared to breathe. Ryan tried to snuggle deeper into the corner, and felt something poke him in the leg. It was an old rusted shovel with a wooden handle. He slowly brought it up and clenched it to his chest.

Rick slowly walked across the wooden floor, each loping step echoing through the entire barn. "Ryan, where are you", he called out in a cooing voice. Each moment seemed like an eternity to Ryan. He squeezed his eyes shut, hoping to God his father would leave. Rick reached the first step, and it let out a loud groan. The noise rang in Ryan's ears as Rick climbed step after endless step. 'Why can't he move faster!' he was screaming inside. Rick reached the top of the stairs and Ryan went completely numb. His body started to tremble and a wave of terror spread over him. Rick was staring straight at him. Then he turned to the side and Ryan realized he hadn't been found. Rick was holding the rifle in his left hand, and Ryan realized this may be his only chance.

As Rick started to move, Ryan swung the shovel in a wide downward sloping arc. It cut halfway through Rick's wrist, and a chorled scream escaped his lips. He pulled his arm from the shovel and with his good hand punched Ryan directly in the eye. A huff of air came out of his mouth and he landed face down on his stomach. Pain seared through his face and stars flashed in front of his eyes.



Just then, Luke came flying out of nowhere and thrust his hands into Rick's chest. Rick took three steps back and slammed his back into the window, the glass exploding outwards. Luke clenched his hands together like a club and threw all of his weight into his arms, striking Rick in the jaw. He fell to one knee and cupped his chin in his hand. Ryan stood up and with all of his might, he swung the shovel at waist level, hitting Rick in the side of the head with the flat of the blade. The blow crushed his temple and his eyes rolled up in his head. He fell sideways and toppled down the stairs, falling to the bottom in a twisted heap.

He had been killed instantaneously. Ryan cried out in horror and threw the shovel from his hand. Realizing he just killed his father, he burst out crying. He let out sob after sob, thinking of everything that had happened, and how he was now an orphan.

Hours passed, and using the shovel, they buried Rick outside of the barn. Under the stars, they trudged back through the field and woods to the clearing where police had already arrived. The tow truck driver had found the body of Ryan's mother and immediately called them. Under swarms of questions, the boys made their journey away from the nightmare that would haunt them for the rest of their lives.



Finding a way home: A memoir

by Elmurod S. Haugen

I was born in Uzbekistan, but my nationality is Afghan. When we lived in Dinau, my family had a neighbor who hated us because we were Afghan and because my father used drugs. My neighbor knew the cops and had them come to our house. But the cops became friends with my father and they used drugs together. One day the cops, my father, and some other friends went to gamble. Before the game, my father smoked drugs and he wasn't thinking clearly. He gambled and lost more money than what he had. They told him he had to bring drugs or a woman to pay back what he had lost. When he came home he just slept and didn't go to get the drugs or woman. Seven men came in the middle of the same night. Three were cops and four were other



people. When I woke up, my sisters were crying and my stepmother was screaming. When I heard the screaming, I thought my father was beating her because he had beaten her before. But when I ran to go out I saw two men kicking her. There was another man pulling my father out to the car. When they saw me they said, "There is his son." They ran and tried to catch me. They caught me and started to beat me too. And they asked me where my father had put his drugs. I really didn't know where they were, but I told them

"Then I found out my father had been killed in the mountains. They shot him and then poured gas on him and burned him."

they were in the pocket of

his jacket, hoping they would leave me alone. But when they found the drugs weren't in his pocket, one man held my arms back and another man hit me repeatedly in the stomach. Then they let me go. I went running into another room, and they hit me in the back. I fell

down and don't remember anything else from that night. I was maybe seven or eight. My sisters woke me up the next morning. I had them go up to the window to look for the white car my father was taken away in. My stepmother had climbed out the window when the man had started beating me. I was alone in the house with my three sisters and my baby brother. His head was full of blood, but he was alive. My stepmother came back in the early morning, and my neighbor called a taxi to take me to my father's parents. My stepmother left with her own kids. She left me with my grandparents and didn't tell them what had happened. She just went. My grandparents called for an ambulance that took me to the hospital. When I was there, I had surgery because of the beating. Then I found out my father had been killed in the mountains. They shot him and then poured gas on him and burned him. There was a shepherd in the mountains that saw them do it, and he called the police. They caught the men as they were leaving the mountains in their big truck. I had to testify at their trial and they said they would kill me when they got out of prison. They got out after I left Uz-

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

bekistan.

After this happened to me I was scared of policemen. Now I know they are not the same people as those men who killed my father and broke my family. I now do not agree with people who use drugs.

I was in the hospital for about a year. Then I went to my uncle's home. My uncle had four children, but I was not treated like them. My aunt was very mean. She beat me, made me sleep outside in the winter, and did not like me living at her house. One night she tied me to my uncle's motorcycle because I had run away. If I moved, it would have fallen on me.

One day someone told me where my real mother lived. I went to see her. Someone asked her who I was and she said I was just someone who was asking for bread. So they told me to go away and not come back. I was homeless then. I would live in the parks. Every time the policemen would bring me back to my aunt's, she would beat me and ask why I came back. In front of my uncle, she would ask why I ran away so he did not know what hap-



pened.

One time, one of the policemen helped me. He got my documents and took me to Tashkent, the capitol, to a boarding school. I was probably about tēn. I was still walking then. I learned to read and write. Then my legs no longer had muscles so I used crutches. Then I ended up in a wheelchair. When the school was over, there was no place to stay, so I was sent to the hospital and then to Orphanage Number Two, which was very different. It was an orphanage for multiply handicapped children. They were retarded, epileptic, deformed, etc. There was no school, but there was a nice room filled with things to play with and help kids learn things. But they would never let any children in it. They would show it to people who came to visit. There was very little medical treatment. Every month some of the children would die. The food was so bad I wouldn't even give it to our dogs, but we had to eat some of it at least. When you are 18, they send you away to other places in other cities. If you are bad or not helpful, they change your birth date and say you are 18 and send you away. If I was not adopted, I would have died there from medical complications that were taken care of when I moved to Minneapolis.

On December 5, 1997, I left Internat #2 (Orphanage #2) with my new father and came to America! But how all that happened is another story.

"One day some one told me where my real mother lived...Someone asked her who I was and she said I was just some one who was asking for bread."



Dangerous intersection examined

It was a lovely spring day. Under the matted down prairie grasses, spring life struggled to push itself free from the dead grasses of last year. The morning wind ripped up the ridge, and over the faces of eight men. And the faces of these eight men were focused on one intersection.

On the morning of May 16th, eight members of a Road Safety Audit examined the intersection of Highway 35 and Bison Boulevard—the sight of a recent tragic accident. In the examination, the Audit Team stood in the prairie above the intersection with their trained eyes. They watched the capacity and flow of the road—examining the markings and signage. Of particular interest to the Audit crew were the long queues that formed in the left-turn lane on westbound Highway 35.

Road Safety Audits came about from a pilot project in 1998. A Road Safety Audit is a formal process that is restricted to strictly road safety issues. A typical audit team is made up of 10-12 members from federal, state, and county agencies. A detailed report is usually presented two weeks after the initial survey. The team identifies problems, and solutions are suggested—solutions from short-term ideas to improvements that will require

several years to implement.

The audit came at the request of Wayne Fingalson—Wright County Engineer. This was the sixth Road Safety Audit in MN, and the second at a school.

The scrutiny of this intersection came as a result of an initiative by the Safe Schools Committee following the fatal crash on April 13th. From that meeting, it was decided that students wanted to find a way to control and improve the safety of that intersection. The student group then went to the county to request some action at the intersection. It was decided that that the intersection did not handle enough traffic to warrant the introduction of a traffic light.

"It was decided that that the intersection did not handle enough traffic to warrant the introduction of a traffic light."

At a meeting of the audit team on May 16th, Principal Miller addressed the need of a signal through the use of an analogy. He compared the need for the traffic light to be like a shower. He said that the need for a shower is not constant throughout the day, but it is sure handy to have one when you need one. In fact, a shower, at times, is a necessity.

The student group is determined to find a solution at the intersection—even it means raising the money for the traffic light themselves. They see their action as taking on a grass roots feel. They plan to circulate a petition—and, if necessary, begin raising funds.

But first must come the report from the guys who stood amidst the dead grasses.



The perfect cheer: male cheerleaders at BHS

by Sarah Lundebrek

BHS has many sports and after-school activities. So, why not male cheerleading? Buffalo does have history on its side.

BHS has had some male cheerleaders in the past. Some include Jake Mackey, Jim Halverson, John Ireland, and Tatanka Elementary teacher Mr. Mattson.

Mr. Bob Driver, BHS English Teacher, taught at Richfield High School where they had male cheerleaders. He said that the most popular athletes would lead cheers when their sport was not in season. "They would come out of football season, and then got to cheerleading to keep in shape," says Mr. Driver.

"It takes a lot of guts to get out there and do it, in front of all your buddies, ya know?"

Some guys were serious about this sport. Jake Mackey, a former BHS cheerleader,

says, "Ya know, I was better than this guy in football, but the coach played him more than me, and I just wanted to try something better." Other guys weren't so serious. "Me and my

buddy just did it as a joke," says former cheerleader Hank Mattson. The outfits that the boys wore were white legging-type pants, a polo T-shirt, and a purple sweatshirt. They usually performed cheers and stunts with the ladies at pep rallies.

As for teasing, it didn't really come from our school or their friends; it came when they went to other schools to cheer. "It takes a lot of guts to get out there and do it, in front of all your buddies, ya know?" says Jake Mackey.

Freshmen Eric Wright and Ryan Ebeling said they would consider being cheerleaders when they are seniors. When asked why, they answered with a question, "Why not?"

Earlier this spring, freshman, Chris Gudvangen, said if he did not make varsity football next year, he would try out for cheerleading. Current cheerleader Jamie Tokkesdal laughingly responded with, "If he's in cheerleading, then I quit."

He made the squad, and Tokkesdal's cheering.





bison stampede

A NewsMagazine of Buffalo High School

877 Bison Boulevard
Buffalo, MN 55313

Phone: 763-682-8089

Education Beyond the Blackboard

SOON TO BE ON THE WEB
2001-2002

The *bison stampede* is a public forum published by Buffalo High School, and presented to the community of Buffalo, MN.

Its purpose is to investigate, evaluate, challenge, and inform students of issues which may be of concern to them. The *stampede* also provides an open forum for the diverse views of its readers.—opening its pages to writers outside the staff.

Editorials represent the consensus of the editorial board, but not necessarily the views of the advisor, administrators, or the Buffalo School District.

The *stampede* staff encourages letters to the editorial board. Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must be signed. Letters are kept on file in the *stampede* archives and may be reviewed upon request. The editorial board reserves the right to edit letters due to space restrictions, and to avoid statements which may be construed as libelous, slanderous, or obscene

Final Thought by Darrin Schroeder

What is senioritis? Senioritis is defined as a senior who knows that they will graduate, so they give up on getting good or great grades, and do just enough work to pass. They have the mentality of, "Why work for something that I already have?" But is it possible that kids are getting it before their senior year?

The answer is yes. This whole year I have done great in school. I have never done better. I made the "B" honor roll in the first three quarters. The problem now is that I packed mental book bag about 7 weeks ago. I have been so happy with the first three quarters that I have forgotten about the fourth. I got this idea that it is all right to let off a little and just barely pass, but it turned into a domino effect. But two weeks ago it all changed. It all changed because of one man. This guy explained to me that the most important years of your career are your freshman, sophomore, and junior years. He said that those are the years the colleges look at. This made me realize that this whole high school thing is not just a short ride but a journey and that my journey has just started.

So maybe there is a little bit of senioritis showing up in our grade, but not enough to panic about. Responsibility is the biggest thing about high school, and there are many responsibilities. Kids just need to know how important these responsibilities are before it's too late.

