



**HEROES** AND **VILLAINS**

## Three teachers propose online and hybrid classes

Students may be able to take online classes and work from home next year

**Bailey Hanson & Maddi Yates** - Journalism Writers

Three Buffalo High School teachers have proposed an idea to offer hybrid and online classes for next year, as an alternative learning experience for some of the classes that they teach. **Brenda Deikman, Daryl Boeckers,** and **Jason Karn** are hoping the proposal passes, so students have an option of doing things more independently instead of being in the classroom five days a week. Right now this is just a proposal that still needs to be taken into consideration by the School Board.

Spanish One, and Computer Apps One and Two were proposed as hybrid classes.

"Hybrid is where you would be at school for a certain amount of days in the classroom," said Diekman. "The other days you would be on the computer at home doing the lesson for that day."


The other two classes being proposed are College and Career Prep and Tenth Grade Phy Ed, but these two are being offered as Online Classes. So everything is online, no classroom involved.

"For my gym class you would take home a heart rate monitor and do whatever you need to do to keep your heart rate up for however many minutes are assigned that day," said Karn. "There would also be computer work, like reading out of the book and answering online questions."


Diekman has been planning her hybrid course for two years now. Next year will be her third year, when she hopes to get to watch all her hard work come into play. She, along with Boeckers and Karn are excited to implement it next year. The teachers hope these new classes help meet the needs of a wide variety of students while continuing to provide a positive learning experience.

"It provides a variety of different learning opportunities for students instead of making students fit into Buffalo High School's learning structure of sitting in a classroom for 80 minutes everyday," said Principal Mark Mischke. "This gives students who need variety an opportunity for learning a new way."


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## OVERHERD@BHS

"I'm hungry."

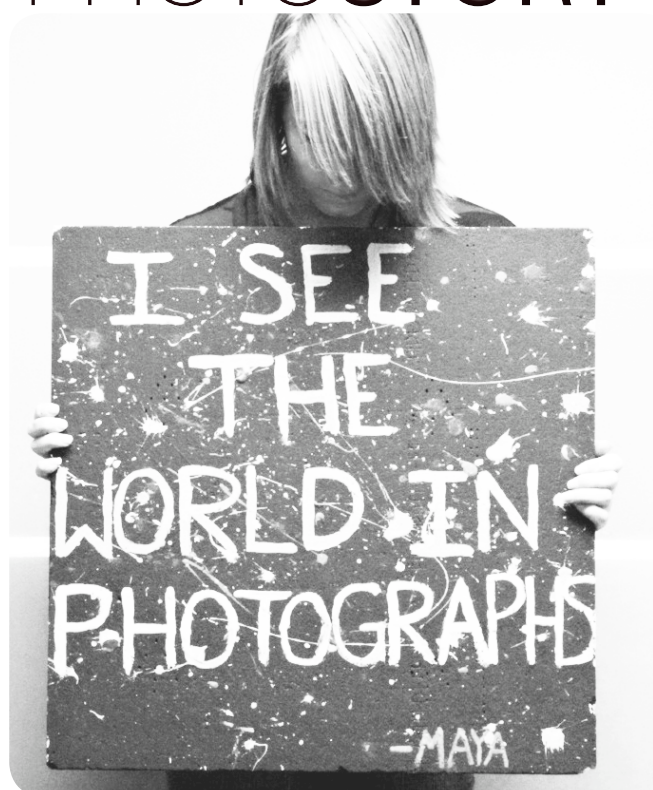
-Senior Michael Burgdorf

"Get used to it because when you're my age you'll be starving and probably going to a soup kitchen."

-Math Teacher Carlton Urdahl

 Let us know the quotation from a student or staff member that should go here next. Go to [facebook.com/bhshoofprint](http://facebook.com/bhshoofprint).

## PHOTOSTORY



Day 80/365: Senior **Maya Bolduan** poses with a sign she made for her photography business. In addition, it doubles as a personal six-word memoir. "One day I had a photo epiphany," said Bolduan, "I knew that if I challenged myself I could do really cool things." Bolduan is currently on Day 129 out of 365.

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# All this Machinery Making Modern Music

*Technology is playing a big role in bringing in the next generation of guitarists*

**Nicholas Swearingen** - Journalism Writer

Throughout the ages, people have looked up to their role models as people that embody a trait or ability they want in themselves. Most people wouldn't think of rock stars as inspiration to excel in learning an instrument, but for Freshman **Brovege-Trossen**, they are just that.

"Jack Johnson and Jason Mraz definitely inspired me," said Brovege-Trossen. "They show that being famous doesn't always include hoarding money and being really immoral. Also, that peace can be interesting and sound good."

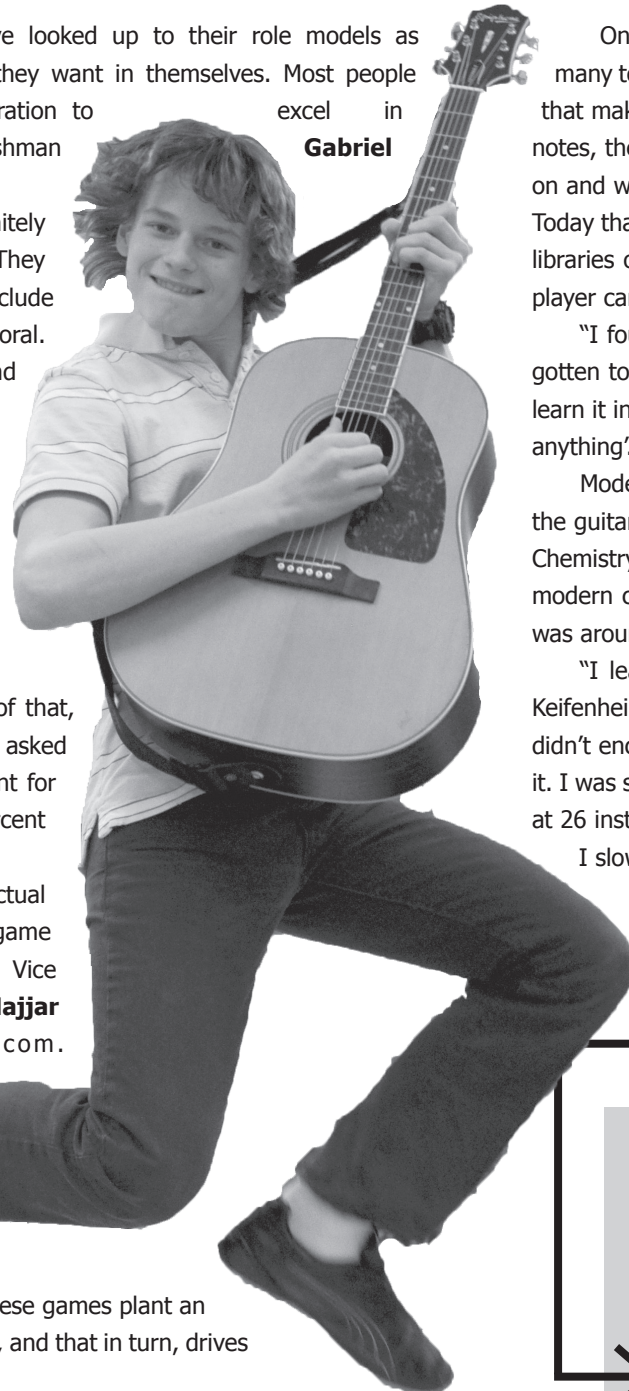
Celebrities are not the only inspirations that make people want to play. According to Guitar Center, one of the most popular guitar stores in America, around 65 percent of people who play Guitar Hero, or Rockband would actually pick up an actual instrument in two years' time. On top of that, around 81 percent of guitar gamers asked their loved ones for an actual instrument for birthdays or holidays, along with a 27 percent increase in sales to first timers.

"This spike of interest in actual instruments stemming from a video game is an unprecedented phenomenon," Vice President of Guitar Centers **Norman Hajjar** told gaming website [1up.com](http://1up.com).

"Most video games sell fantasy, but Guitar Hero and Rock band are selling a dream that can be realized. These games plant an achievable goal in the heart of the player, and that in turn, drives our business."

Famous guitarists such as Slash, Alice Cooper, and Jimi Hendrix, all have appeared on Guitar Hero, helping to inspire estimated 37 million people play guitar in America.

"This might sound cliché, but Slash is one of my inspirations," said Freshman **Matt Simeon**. "I mean just look at the top hat!"



One of the biggest reasons people start playing guitar, is because there are so many tools to help the player teach him/herself. Tablature would be one of those tools, that make life easier for some guitarists. Tablature is a kind of notation that instead of notes, the number of the fret and string are used to show you what fret to push down on and which string to play. That way, there is no music theory involved for beginners. Today thanks to technology, millions of "tabs" are made available through websites with libraries of entered tabs from fellow guitarists, that feature virtually any song that the player can think of that he/she wants to learn--and on top of that, it's free.

"I found it very easy to learn songs by myself," said Senior **Quinn Parks**. "I have gotten to the point where I can listen to the song three times, listen to the guitar and learn it in half an hour. It kind of goes along with 'if you set your mind to it, you can do anything'."

Modern technology has made it easier than ever for someone to just "pick up" the guitar. But what about when there was no tablature, or Rock band or Guitar Hero? Chemistry Teacher **Charlie Keifenheim** knows what it's like to not have all of those modern conveniences, but still learn how to play. Keifenheim started playing when he was around 26 years old, and plays a Martin & Co Acoustic/Electric guitar.

"I learned by ear, and have limited experience when playing with a band," said Keifenheim. "I played with groups with total practice. It's all practice. At first, my friends didn't encourage me to play very much because I was pretty brutal and unnatural with it. I was stuck in a three chord rock and roll stage. It was kind of a disadvantage to start at 26 instead of starting when you're young, because it is like learning a language. But I slowly got better. My goals as a guitarist is not to be good, but to just have fun."

PHOTO&VIDEOBYMICHAELRAITOR



[go.bhs.cc/2b](http://go.bhs.cc/2b)

Scan this QR Code for a free guitar lesson from Nicholas Swearingen

## Feature Hero:

## Leif Nelson

*Voted as the school's #1 Heroic Student, Junior **Leif Nelson** shares his thoughts on heroism, bravery, and how to survive high school.*

**Kaelie Lund** - Arts & Entertainment Editor

Junior **Leif Nelson** doesn't picture himself as a hero ("You mean--like Batman?"). In fact, he blushes when he finds out he was voted the number one heroic student by his peers. Though "hero" isn't listed on his resumé, "artist" certainly is. Nelson's role as an artist depicts him in a more traditional light: heavily involved in Concert Choir, BHS Singers, Orchestra, honor choirs, multiple theatrical productions, and piano lessons, Nelson's finds his niche in the music and theatre department.

"I'm busy doing music stuff a lot," said Nelson, "and I love being in shows. I don't have much free time."

“ I just try to be nice to people and be a good person. If people consider that heroic, then cool. But it's not what I'm going for.

— Junior Leif Nelson

When asked about his new title as a hero of the high school, Nelson laughs. "I just try to be nice to people and be a good person. If people consider that heroic, then cool. But it's not what I'm going for."

Nelson shares that he never had a hero when he first entered the high school. Though his older brother was a large influence on his life, musically and otherwise, Nelson stresses the difference between looking up to someone and having a hero.

"Someone I look up to is someone who I want to be like, but I think there is a bit more to being a hero," said Nelson. "From where I am, I consider heroes to be fighting for common good. I don't consider myself a hero because I don't do a lot to 'better society,' or whatnot. I just try to be a good person."

Nelson also shared his thoughts on coping with high school, what he described as, "something we'll look back on and laugh, but for now, it's tough."

"Friends are important," said Nelson. "I believe that your friends are a good reflection of yourself, and once you find a good group of friends, stick with them. They'll help you through pretty much anything."

Humble and kind, Nelson may come off as a hero, but insists that he doesn't always do the right thing. "I try to [always do the right thing], but sometimes I fail. I'm human--it's just how it is."



PHOTO BY MICHAEL RAITOR

## Photo Poll: Who is the best villain?



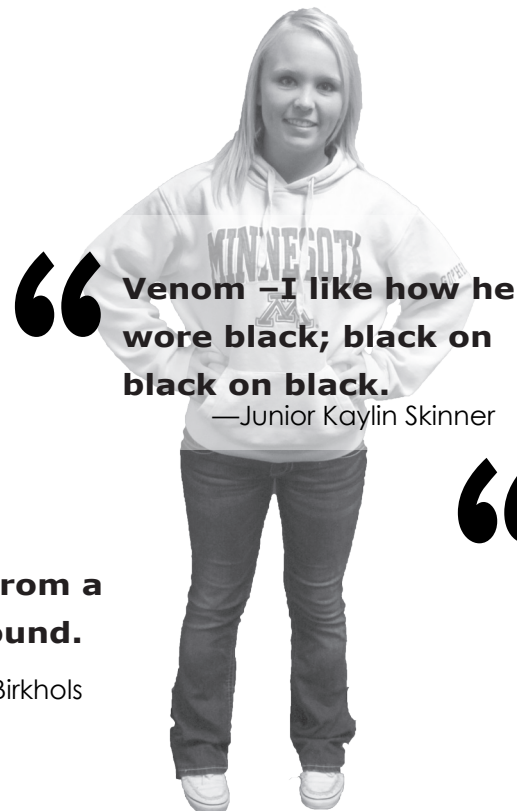
**“ Sandman— because he’s made of sand and it’s awesome.**

—Freshman Ben Kunze



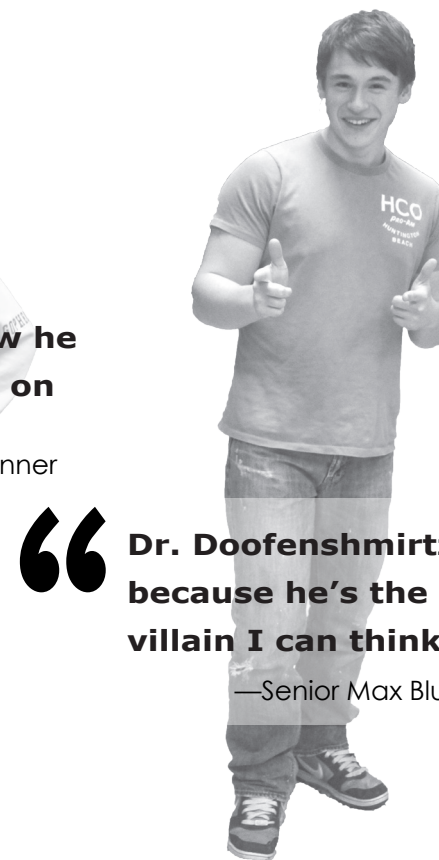
**“ Joker— he came from a different background.**

—Sophomore Haley Birkhols



**“ Venom —I like how he wore black; black on black on black.**

—Junior Kaylin Skinner



**“ Dr. Doofenshmirtz— because he’s the nicest villain I can think of.**

—Senior Max Bluhm

## Under the mask: The True Face of Heroes

By placing creating a typical image of a hero, true heroes go unrecognized for their efforts

What is a hero? According to your typical Webster Dictionary definition it is a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for their brave deeds and noble qualities. The key word here being person. The Hoofprint’s mission this issue was to go out and find the heroes who stalk the halls of BHS, in their own way taking BHS beyond the ordinary and into the extraordinary. Over the course of information gathering for this issue, a survey was taken to find out who the students of BHS thought of as heroes, and an almost disturbing trend began to develop. Very few of those surveyed could name a student or teacher as there hero. We at the Hoofprint believe that it is not because there are no heroes to be found, rather that our notion of heroism is tainted.

The most common responses found on the survey for “who do you look up to as a hero” were not people, but occupations. Police officers, firefighters, those in the armed forces, and teachers were the most common jobs selected.

We have begun to associate a job title with heroism, and that is a problem. There is nothing in itself more heroic in being a police officer then, for example, being a gardener. Now it’s true that a police officers job is magnitudes more important, but it is not the job that makes the hero. We think of these occupations as heroic because they offer more possibility for heroic action then most others (again think gardening), but ultimately it is the men and women who do these jobs who are the heroes. And by generalizing truly

heroic men and women into simple job descriptions the image of what they do suffers.

There are two main problems with this, first we no longer recognize anything outside these occupations as heroic, and the impact of potentially Herculean tasks are diminished. Unless the circumstance is particularly dire (running into a burning building dire) when a student or a teacher does a good act that is all it is, a good act. Even should they do it day in and out, it is very rarely noticed as truly valiant effort on their part. Because we have ingrained in our heads a rigid idea of a hero, these acts cannot be integrated into that definition like they should. Second because we assume that the everyday life of these few occupations is life or death, when actual heroism is done, it is ignored. While there is the possibility of danger everyday most days for an average police officer is not going to be life threatening, but when something does happen we shrug it off saying they deal with that kind of thing day in and day out.

The Hoofprint is not criticizing anyone in any of the careers listed above. To the contrary we are asking students to take a new appreciation to the people of their lives. Do not think of of the people around you as a job description, but as an actual person performing a duty. To recognize the people around you when they do something beyond simply helping themselves. By not recognizing these individuals whose actions elevate them beyond mere students, they feel that what they are doing does not matter, and may stop. Through this students can go from being nobodies hero, to somebody’s hero.

**“ We have begun to associate a job title with heroism, and that is a problem. There is nothing in itself more heroic in being a police officer then, for example, being a gardener.**

Graphic Titles by Joseph Neumann  
Graphic Drawings by Kari LaPlant

# Heroes

{ First impressions have  
lasting effects

**Jessica Peterson**- Staff Writer

"Heroes are the guys who wear costumes and have big muscles," said Sophomore **Jedidiah Wallace**, "Villains are the guys with the darker costumes and bigger muscles."

The border between good and bad is a fine line. If someone gives a hateful first impression, does that mean he or she is a hateful person?

First impressions can leave a bitter after-taste when they go badly. It's a chance for one person to judge others and make unnecessary enemies out of them.

"I've met someone I didn't like. It was like trying a new food that was completely different from what I was used to. If don't like it; I stay away from it," said Sophomore **Sarah Walters**, "I'm sure they're not a horrible person or anything. They're just too different from myself and makes me feel unsafe."

"Different" and "change" are the bad guys for some people, but disliking a person on site is a little harsh. After one meeting, it isn't fair to judge others. Sometimes it can take a lifetime to understand someone completely.

"I don't think I've hated someone on site," said Junior **Cody Theien**, "I try not to judge."

Condemning people before knowing them is a perfect example of making unnecessary enemies. Villains aren't always the villains you think them to be.



Sophomore

**Cassandra Bunkers**

"Emma Rodelius is my hero because of the inspiring photos she takes."

Sophomore

**Emma Rodelius**

"Spencer Chenoweth is my hero because he has good morals. Plus he's a Godly man."

# Villains

{ Villains are heroes from their  
own perspective

**Jessica Peterson**- Staff Writer

Without villains creating mayhem, there would be no heroes to save the day. It's a balancing act. The only complication is specifying what makes a hero and what makes a villain.

People can be villains (Dr. Octopus and the Joker come to mind), but criticism and oppression can also be tinged with meanness.

"Oppression," said Sophomore **Autumn Miller**, "is just an authority of power."

A villain is someone who oppresses others for personal gain. If it can be hurtful, but without oppression and criticism, nobody would get their chance to bloom. A person isn't likely to overcome a problem if there is not one to begin with.

"Criticism is excellent as long as it's used at a minimum," said Sophomore **Sarah Walters**, "Oppression is a little more delicate. The only positive way of using oppression is to carefully help someone learn to stand up for themselves or motivate them."

Imagine a group of people living in a bubble and never being exposed to meanness until high school. Without the earlier criticism and bullying, these people wouldn't be able to defend themselves. Sometimes villains can be heroes. Villains, like criticism and oppression, shape people into who they are today and will be tomorrow.



Senior

**Spencer Chenoweth**

"Caleb Ruter is my hero because of the way he carries himself; he's a leader."

Senior

**Caleb Ruter**

"Joel Peterson is my hero because he's the head coach for FCA."

# Letters to Heroes

Dear Abbi Zabinkski

You became my hero when you picked up my stuff after it fell out of my locker

Love, Clumsy

Dear Buffy,

You are my hero because you run around and give cheer to all.

Love, Fired Up

Dear Stephanie Catton,

you are my hero because you have overcome many struggles, yet you always have a smile on your face.

Love, Inspired

## Responsibility of a True Hero

{ Maznio looks at what defines a hero and their responsibilities

**Shelby Maznio** - Staff Writer

Hero (n): a person who, in the opinion of others, has heroic qualities or has performed a heroic act.

Superheroes must be the most famous heroes our society knows. What's not to like? They go around cities, protecting it from evil and fighting crime, pursuing justice. In a way, they are all the same; the only difference is their superpower and their outfit. I babysit little boys who always want to watch some kind of superhero cartoon, so I've had my fair share of the Avengers, Spiderman, and Batman. Generally, the stories are the same: evil takes over and is threatening the well-being of mankind, so the

compassion, and even bravery. Remember the brave firefighters from 9-11? They are real heroes. They worked to save lives, knowing that there could be a chance that their life may end. They were willing to sacrifice their own life for someone they didn't know; no superhero can compare with what the firefighters sacrificed.

Let's not forget about the men and women serving in the military. Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Army, National Guard: all are heroes. Their responsibility lies mainly in protecting our country and our freedom. They are peacemakers, protecting us from evil that tries to eliminate justice.

In a way, heroes have more of a responsibility after they become a hero. Society holds them to a high standard, so they cannot let the world down. If they succeed, they people see a hero, someone who will never do anything wrong. A hero has the responsibility to be a good example for the world. Where would we be if all heroes, real and cartoon, went about taking advantage of the people's appreciation?

Every day, we have heroes all around us. A hero doesn't have to be someone who saves a life or defeats evil. A hero could simply be someone who goes out of their way to brighten up someone's day. That may not seem hero-worthy to some people, but to someone who feels that no one cares about them, it says a lot.

“A hero has the responsibility to be a good example for the world.

— Sophomore Shelby Maznio

superhero must save the world and bring back justice. That's their responsibility; fight evil, save the world. Since the world recognizes them as a hero, they expect the heroes to always be there for the people, whenever they are need, no exceptions. I know that the superheroes are promoting good and all, but I think the outfits are a little too much. I mean, do they really need a different outfit for themselves just because they are heroes that everyone knows? What if society was to unmask all of the hidden heroes that don't care about recognition, the heroes that don't have an alias or live a double life? If we were to unmask those secret heroes and give them an outfit like Batman or Spiderman, we wouldn't need those outfits anymore. There are so many heroes that we don't recognize; what would be the point of outfits then?

I think heroes are more than fancy names and colorful outfits. A real hero is someone who fights evil quietly, without wanting recognition. After all, isn't it everyone's responsibility to be a hero when possible? Before a person becomes a hero, the public does not hold them to any standards, for a hero's act is a rather spontaneous random act of kindness or



PHOTO BY EMMA RODELIUS

## From Ashes to Action

### BHS coach Mike Curry transfers military experience into practice

*Olivia Laskey- Sports & Activities Editor*

"The smell was the thing that I remember the most." Said Coach Mike Curry "It smelled like jet fuel, it was never ending, that's all it was. The charred burns of the building of materials. Ultimately why you were there was something I will never forget. The reason I was there, and the rest of my peers were there, is because we were looking for remains of people that had died. I didn't find any remains, but you knew that that's why you were there. That will stick with me forever."

Having joined the army at a young age, Curry could never of guessed he would have been searching for remains in the pentagon on 9-11, sifting through history.

"I joined the army in 1998" said Curry, "I honestly had no rhyme or reason for joining the army. It could have joined the marines, the army recruiters were just the first person that I talked to. He didn't really sugar coat anything, he just told me the truth."

After years in service, Curry settled down with his family and took up teaching as well as coaching. He takes his experiences and channels them into something good. He does and continues to demand a lot from his teams (10th grade football, 9th grade basketball and 9th grade baseball).

"You cant be as hard lined or rigorous as it is in the military, but you can learn to be disciplined and do things the right way" said Curry "I like players to do things the right way. It doesn't matter what talent level they are at, they just need to do things the right way, put in the hard work, and go home. In my experiences, if you are choosing to do [a sport], then your going to work hard and do it right. Otherwise, in my opinion as a coach, your just not going to play on my team."

Experiencing tragedy, and destruction, Curry still doesn't consider himself as hero.

"I think very few people are real hero's. I think the term gets used too loosely, and if its used too loosely, then when someone really is a hero its devalued a little bit" said Curry. "A hero to me is someone that's running to the disaster to help others, rather than running away from it."

**“The reason I was there and the reason the rest of my peers were there, is because we were looking for remains of people that had died. I didnt find any remains, but you knew that that’s why you were there. That will stick with me forever**

—Coach Mike Curry

Whether your talking about a personal hero, or hero's in a comic book, the general concept is ever-lingering. Someone who, even though they might claim otherwise, changed someones life for the better.

"Most people don't look at themselves as hero's, even if they are." said Curry "I think a lot of the firefighters in 9/11 would say they were just doing their job. For me, joining the military didn't make me a hero, I just did what I signed up to do. Many others who were doing the same thing that I did wouldn't consider themselves hero's either."



PHOTO BY EMMA RODELIUS

## Arlington National

## Cemetery



**Honoring those who have given their lives in the past, I thought would be a great thing. Your honoring somebody and your honoring their family and your representing all those that can't do that**

— Coach Mike Curry

## Passing on the Legacy

{ The boys basketball team reflects on heroes from the past while focusing on their future

**Megan Ask & Danielle Odeen** - Sports Editor & Staff Writer

Flash back to 2007 and think of the word "basketball." On the day of the Boys' State Championship, the entire town of Buffalo became the Bison. The community either turned on the TV or headed to Minneapolis to watch the boys play one last game—the game that made history.

They had one of the best teams Buffalo has ever had, and they all came together at the right place and right time. Senior **Dom Gilmer** and Senior **Caleb Ruter** were on the 7th grade basketball team that year and cheered on the boys with the rest of the town.

While watching the team, the two were able to pick up on some tricks that have improved their own time playing basketball.

"They knew where everyone was going, and they could all play different positions," said Ruter, "This year we have a very good team so we have a better chance of going to state. We also played with each other for a long time so we know how each other plays."

Ruter believes that the current Varsity players have a lot of the same chemistry as the 2007 team had.

It is evident that a good team is built from hard work. The current varsity team had to prepare themselves and devote many hours to improving their skills in order to get where they are today. Ruter strongly believes that in order for athletes to reach their full potential, they need to work their hardest all year round and play as a team.

"Play a lot in the off season," said Ruter, "create a good bond with your teammates and work hard."

Junior **Peter Cassidy** knew that the 2007 team put a lot of dedication

into their season and that's how they got to the championship.

"At the end of the game, the look on Guida's face described all the work they did and how it all came together in the end," said Cassidy, "An athlete can tell how they are playing from the energy given off by their coach. [Guida] doesn't need to say anything. You can tell by the look on his face what he wants you to do."

The varsity team shares the same three goals: work hard, play hard, and make Guida proud.

**Collin Olmscheid**, a player on the JV team is the younger brother of one of the 2007 starters, **Jordan Olmscheid**. Since growing up playing basketball in the driveway with him, Collin has made a goal to live up to his brother's legacy.

"There [is] definitely added pressure," said [Collin] Olmscheid, "People ask if I'm going to be like my brother some day, and I hope I will be."

Many remember 2007 as the best boys basketball team Buffalo has ever had, but it sounds like there might be a new best team practicing on those same courts now. If they can produce some of the same skills as their hero's did, there just might be a shot of adding another year to the hall of state championships. Olmscheid sums up their potential with a grin, giving Buffalo a heads-up to, "pay attention to the years 2012-14."

“At the end of the game, the look on Guida’s face described all the work they did, and how it all came together in the end.”

— Junior Peter Cassidy



PHOTO BY ADDISON THEIN

## Flash Back: Boys State 2007



PHOTOS BY ELI KRUMHOLTZ

# LOST & FOUND

## English Teacher Katie Kunz helped to rescue a student from sexual abuse by taking time to listen

*Anonymous - Submitted story*

It wasn't until my freshman year of high school that I finally began feeling the remnants of past sexual abuse.

I'd get panic attacks by seeing someone who looked like him. Other times, someone larger, about the same size as him, would bump into my side, and I'd feel my muscles involuntarily tense. If a guy draped his arm over my shoulder, all I could think about was trying not to throw up on him.

My throat would tighten. My heart thundered. The short-lived terror would pass. More than once, I'd wonder if anything had really transpired or if I was crazy for imagining it.

At first, I wasn't particularly bothered by these sudden irritations. I thought they were all a part of being a teenager, and I was shocked to find that I could act completely normal around people when the nausea overtook me.

The unexpected feelings were easy to ignore until they became more frequent. When escalating hot flashes and fear emerged, I realized that these feelings weren't going to go away unless I did something. Because of the little epiphany, I began looking for a confidant.

I needed someone out of my life, someone who didn't know me well enough to judge me. Reluctantly, I thought about telling a teacher. Teachers don't really know their student well. How can they, when a couple hundred pass through their classrooms each year?

My hopes soared, but as I mentally scrolled through my list of teachers, I began to have second thoughts. For months I watched my teachers closely, not knowing what I was looking for, but crossing my fingers anyway. I waited for a telling twitch of an eyebrow, a patient lecture, anything to make me believe they'd be the right person to trust.

The attacks continued. Long forgotten recollections surfaced without my consent. What used to be little footnotes in the back of my mind, turned into upsetting memories attaching themselves to everyday life, no matter how far-fetched the connection.

Finally, a miracle materialized. It came out of the blue when a student interrupted English Teacher **Katie Kunz's** Grammar class. The student knocked on Kunz's door with obvious distress. Miss Kunz immediately strolled out of the room to offer assistance. I froze and stared blankly at my worksheet of gerunds and infinitives . . . not knowing I was about to make one of the biggest decisions of my life.

It took me weeks to plan the right words to say. On some random Friday morning, I finally marched myself up the stairs to her classroom. My feet were two blocks of steel, and my hands wouldn't stop sweating. Only God knows how long I stood outside before I gathered enough courage to pass through the door.

Kunz looked up from whatever she was doing. I took a deep breath and inquired if we could talk about "things" after school on Monday. She quickly agreed and asked if I could truly wait out the weekend. This amused me. I had been waiting for months to let it all

out subconsciously, for years. What could happen in two more days?

Monday came around, and Kunz listened to everything I said and didn't pry when I couldn't bear to talk about some of the perverted details. She cried along with me and offered advice. It's amazing how light a person can feel by just having a listener.

Eventually I told my mom about my confession. She and Kunz emailed each other, and we instantly made an appointment to see a counselor.

After talking to a professional, it's easier for me to live with my memories. I had always blamed myself for what happened, even though that is highly irrational. I was about nine years old when my body was violated, and I never said anything, because if I tattled, he threatened to do more. Once I got a little older, there was really no point to confide in anyone. He was gone from my life, and I figured that since it happened so long ago, nobody would believe me. Then high school happened; guys got a whole

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— Anonymous

lot bigger and a whole lot scarier.

I had been trying to solve my problem by making it disappear entirely, but I now realize that my past is never going to go away. The solution is to get comfortable with the old, accept it, and move on.

I haven't recovered completely, but a few months ago, I would never have been able to write this article I am overcoming sexual abuse, and Kunz helped set that recovery into motion. I don't know if she realizes the significance of what she's done, but I owe her more than words can say. She is my hero.



PHOTOBYEMMARODELIUS

# Delivering Hope

One family goes above and beyond to save others

Samina Pelham - Staff Writer



You can get more info on how to get involved at [www.family-from-afar.blogspot.com](http://www.family-from-afar.blogspot.com) or for more information about Children's Hopechest visit <http://www.hopechest.org/>

Have you ever wanted to make an impact; to do something about the problems you see, or to help the people you meet? Freshman Emme Wistrom saw a need for change in the country Ethiopia, where her adopted brothers came from. She had an opportunity last November to make an impact, all the way across the globe in Ethiopia. Her mom, Karen Wistrom, is a volunteer for an organization called Children's Hopechest there. She had gone on a previous trip last year with her mom, and was excited to return.

"I think the kids that we work with live in just unbelievable poverty and to be able to help provide for them throughout the year and to be able to actually go over there and spend time with them makes such a difference for them and for me," says Wistrom, "I feel a connection with the kids, the country, and the culture."

The trip consisted of 26 volunteers from around the U.S. who volunteered to help out with the organization's two care points in Ethiopia. The first care point that was established was Kindhearts, located on the southern edge of the capital city of Addis Ababa. The care point currently serves 68 orphans and children in need. The other and more recent care point is Trees of Glory. It is located about 2 hours North of Addis Ababa. This care point serves over 80 children. The local government identifies the neediest children within the areas surrounding the care points and the children are available for sponsorship. When a family chooses to sponsor the child, they send \$34 each month to pay for all the necessities the care point is providing for the child. The children attend the school for the day and are provided an education, meals, and they learn about the good news of Jesus Christ.

"These care points change the kids' lives. [Without the care points,] they wouldn't be going to school or learning about the

Gospel message. They would have no medical care, only dirty water to drink, and become extremely malnourished. Sponsorship changes all of that," says Wistrom, "The kids are very excited to get letters and photos from their sponsors in the U.S. and they want to know everything about them. The kids whose sponsor families visit them feel very special."

Sponsorship is an easy way for anyone not able to travel across the globe to make a difference. The money goes directly into the care points and provides for everything the children receive. It really does make an impact. "A lot of people wonder if sponsoring [a child] really changes things," Wistrom says, "but I've been there and I've seen how it changes their lives."

**"I feel a connection with the kids, the country, & the culture."**

— Freshman Emme Wistrom

Emme Wistrom knows that what the organization is doing makes a huge difference in the lives of these children. Being in the U.S, we don't really understand what kind of poverty much of the world is struggling with. It's hard to even imagine life without food, clothing, shelter, or even enough water.

"Whenever I come back, I feel like we have so much and we take it for granted. We tend to focus on things, and they focus on family and relationships. Whenever I go over there I've always noticed that they are some of the friendliest and most content people I've ever met, despite having almost nothing."

"I think it's great for young people to get involved because we can make such a big impact and the kids always love to see other teens or kids working with them. A lot of times teens don't realize how much they can make a difference. There are so many projects we have going on that they could get involved with. To name a couple, we are raising funds for books, making blankets, buying school uniforms, buying chickens for a chicken farm, sponsoring a child for \$34 a month, donating money, or even just spreading the word about child sponsorship."



Wistrom with her two adopted brothers, Jaden and Wesley. Submitted Photo



Wistrom poses with her mom, sister, and girl from Ethiopia. Wistrom's mom created T-shirts for their trip. Submitted Photo