

THE

HOOFPRI

MAY 24 2012

TAKING OVER
THE WORLD



Gmail Replaces Groupwise

BHS switches to a more reliable e-mail provider

Spencer Wilson - Business Editor

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose schools is moving away from GroupWise and Classmail this Spring. Students and staff will now use Gmail for all of their emailing needs. The service is provided by Google, but everyone will have an @bhmschools.org email address.

Many students seem to be frustrated with the school's former email system.

"Simply logging in was a problem with our school's email," said Junior **Jeffrey Knack**.

Many students and staff have complained about the unreliability of the current school email, run through a program called Groupwise. The Gmail system offers a promise of a higher percentage of up-time.

"Our old e-mail was impossible to access unless you went through the whole school website," said Freshman **Caleb Robinson**.

“Our old email was impossible to access unless you went through the whole school website.

Freshman Caleb Robinson

One month ago, BHS decided to make the official switch to Gmail due to the unpredictability of the Groupwise e-mail program.

For the past year, Technology Director **Josh Swanson** and the Technology Information Services department have worked together to carefully decide on an appropriate substitute for the current e-mail. After much studying, testing, and debating, the department decided that Gmail seemed to be the perfect solution to the problem.

There are many new features that will come with Gmail, such as reliability and spam filtering, and it will also work on mobile devices. The switch to Gmail will not only benefit the student body, but will save the school thousands of dollars each year.

If you want to learn more about what this new switch means, read the full story on Hoofprint.net

now on hoofprint.net



Med School, Uganda, and Creativity in a Hospital

Journalism class gets perspectives from a former student
For full story, go to <http://go.bhs.cc/2x>



Hanna Hermanson Accepted Into Top State Band

Sophomore is only student at BHS to receive honor this year
For full story, go to <http://go.bhs.cc/2y>



Hospitality Foods Class Lends a Helping Hand


Class makes meals and baked goods for family in need
For full story, go to <http://go.bhs.cc/2z>

OVERHERD@BHS

What do you get if you cross an elephant and a rhino?

Elephino

Substitute Scott Thayer

 Let us know the staff or student quote that should go here next. Go to facebook.com/bhshoofprint.

PHOTOSTORY



Photo By Michael Raitor

On top of being a straight A student, Junior **Michael Raitor** loves to take pictures. "I want people to see what I see," said Raitor, "I want people to see beauty in my eyes."

In the past couple of years, Raitor's eyesight has deteriorated but that hasn't slowed him down. "I see things in way that literally no one else in the world can see them," laughed Raitor. "Sometimes though, I take pictures so I can see them again later. I like to look back and re-create those memories with my photos."

The Hoofprint is the official student-run newspaper of Buffalo High School in Buffalo, Minnesota. Our mission is to be authoritative, aggressive, essential, caring, and creative as a leading source of news and information for the students and staff of Buffalo High School. All of the views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not represent the opinions of anyone else, including the staff and administration of Buffalo High School.

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Awards inspire students to strive for greatness

BHS students receive top honors for their artwork at the annual Mississippi 8 Art Show



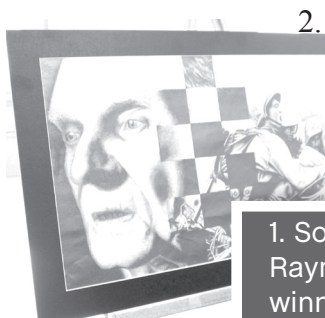
1. **Taylor Holt** - Staff Writer

BHS hosted the 2012 Mississippi 8 Art Show on Friday, May 11. Students from the Mississippi 8 conference were given the opportunity to enter their artworks into 13 different categories. These artworks were judged according to category by a panel of judges. BHS had several students receive top awards including Senior **Taylor Nelson** and Sophomore **Kody Raymond**. For Nelson, this year's Art Show far exceeded his expectations.

"I entered three pieces, and ended up winning People's Choice and first and second in pencil drawings. I felt really honored because I didn't feel I was that great. I definitely didn't think I

would do as well as I did," said

Nelson. "There was a lot of art there, and a lot of really cool ones. It would be hard to choose a favorite because there was so much good stuff to see. However, I really liked the piece titled, 'Eye of the Zebra', from the 'Adapted' category. It was really neat."



1. Sophomore Kody Raymond with his winning painting
2. One of Senior Taylor Nelson's winning drawings

"I haven't been involved in art my whole life so I was surprised when I found out I won third place for my painting called the 'loner'."

-Sophomore Kody Raymond

Walking around the Art Show, students can find a variety of art. Splashes of brightly painted canvases all the way to greyscale pencil drawings are displayed. Every piece is unique and holds a different story behind it. However, they all share a common link; a lot of effort, determination, and hard work.

"The Art Show makes me proud of my students because I know how hard they work. Taylor was in my Drawing class and Kody was in my Art 1 class," said Art Teacher **Ciann Jackson**. "I have a great appreciation for what my students do. I know what goes into it."

For the first time ever, this year's Art Show had an "Adapted" category. BHS had a total of three students place entries into this category. Raymond

entered his painting and received a third place award for it.

"I haven't been involved in art my whole life, so I was surprised when I found out I won third place for my painting called, 'The Loner'. It makes me want to enter one next year and take a drawing class," said Raymond. "I think the purpose of the Art Show is to bring schools together. It's a great way to socialize and show off the student's talents."

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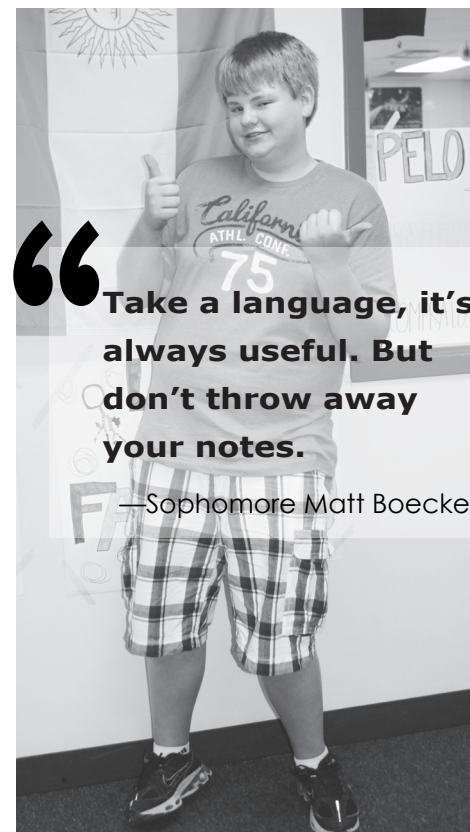
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Photo Poll: What is some advice you have to incoming freshmen?



PHOTOS BY SAM SANSEVERE

Attention Buffalo: We Have Assumed Control

The Hoofprint examines the aspects and people who are defining our culture today

The students who walk through the halls of BHS today have lived through three decades, two centuries, two millennia, and not even reached the age of twenty yet. It is a reflection of the direction of world; in this blip of time our entire culture is being redefined. Our generation is adapting to the new technologies, ideas, and concepts rapidly, and assimilating to a new lifestyle. The Hoofprint is taking a look at the trends that have been taking over in our culture, how they affect us, and more importantly, how we in turn are using it to make our own impact on our green Earth. Static as life can sometimes seem, constant change is here to stay.

Being aware of the world, and its innumerable problems, on a global scale is not a new thing, but how we interact has changed drastically. Look no further than the Stop Kony, Stop PIPA, or Occupy Wallstreet movements to see how our culture identifies and deals with problems. There is still protest in the streets (especially in the Occupy example), but unlike before, these movements spread virally online.

The initial response and organization for these movements were born from social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. It has become much easier to connect and interact with like-minded individuals.

In fact, the connectivity we've become accustomed too has changed the very thinking of our culture. Employers are looking for something beyond the rugged

individual who gets things done (not to say that many businesses ever liked a complete maverick). It's even changed from teamwork, to collaboration. The distinction is subtle, but distinct. Teamwork implies working together throughout a project and being involved in every stage. Collaboration is the meshing of the individual with the team. Students today need to be able to perform for themselves, and at the same time be able to blend their works with others without necessarily being expert on the others' topic. It's about going in as a group to engage and create the ideas, and leaving as an individual to work with said ideas.

What it really comes down to, though, is the people. The seniors who are leaving this year are set to be the ones who will be going out to "take over the world." Our school especially sends out thinkers into the world, whose creativity will be able to keep the engine of the world moving with their wild kinetic dreams. In a just a few

years, the juniors, sophomores, and freshmen will also join the ranks of the changers, their places being filled by a new generation. The ideas we leave upon the world will influence the generation after us, and in turn they will leave some features of their own upon the planet we call home. And so we see that though changes aren't permanent, change is.

“The seniors who are leaving this year are set to be the ones who will be going out to 'take over the world' [...] The ideas we leave upon the world will influence the generation to proceed us, and in turn they will leave some features of their own upon the planet we call home.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

“

You see, we can't change what has already happened, but we need to get passed that and look toward to the future[...]

— Senior Matt Mosolf

To Whom It May Concern,

Over the last few years, I've been hearing a lot about this Race that I've been a part of ever since I was born. Ever since then I've been wondering one simple question: Where's the finish line?

To me, it seems as if we live in a society where going for gold is the only thing we should strive for. Everyone almost always seems to be rushing for something, too busy to even care about the needs of others. This, my friends, displeases me greatly.

But where do we begin? How can we find this magic finish line to which we as humans have been ignoring since the beginning of this so called Race? The answer, readers, as cliché and simple as it really is, is in all of us who how are growing up in the world.

You see, we can't change what has already happened, but we need to get passed that and look toward to the future, hopefully, giving the best present we can to the children of the world; a place where everyone is actually there for another, no matter who they are.

So I challenge you, Buffalo High school, to find four people whom you've never met before today and introduce yourself. Ask them questions, get to know them, and, most importantly, listen. If you can do this, then we as the soon-to-be protectors of the world will be just one step closer to that Finish line.

Sincerely,
Matt Mosolf

“Wow, this is it!”

Senior Lydia Wagner finds meaning in her experience at Buffalo High School

Lydia Wagner - Staff Writer

When I walked into the school on the first day of my senior year, I thought, “Wow. This is it!” Isn't that what we all thought, seniors? This is our time! This is it! Since elementary school, I have memorized the year 2012 as the year that I would graduate high school. It always seemed so distant, some days I thought it would never arrive, and yet here it is. 2012. For all of the seniors, it has been a year of “lasts” and good-byes, but I think it is more than that. For me it has been a year of discovery.

Let's get real, we haven't gone to high school everyday for the past 4 years just to learn facts about the Civil War and trigonometry. So, what is high school really for? It's an outlet, isn't it? It's a place for us to grow as people and to discover (and sometimes rediscover) who we are.

When I came to this school I was exactly the person I preach against; I only came to school every day so that I could get out of here as fast as possible. But pretty soon, that all changed. After joining a few clubs and groups like theatre and the Arts Magnet program, I found out that school can teach you a lot more than what you find in the text books. I started to build relationships with people and soon, I began to realize that school is a lot more important than I ever imagined.

Going to a high school like Buffalo High School is something special that not

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Going to a high school like Buffalo High School is something special that not many people get the opportunity of having.

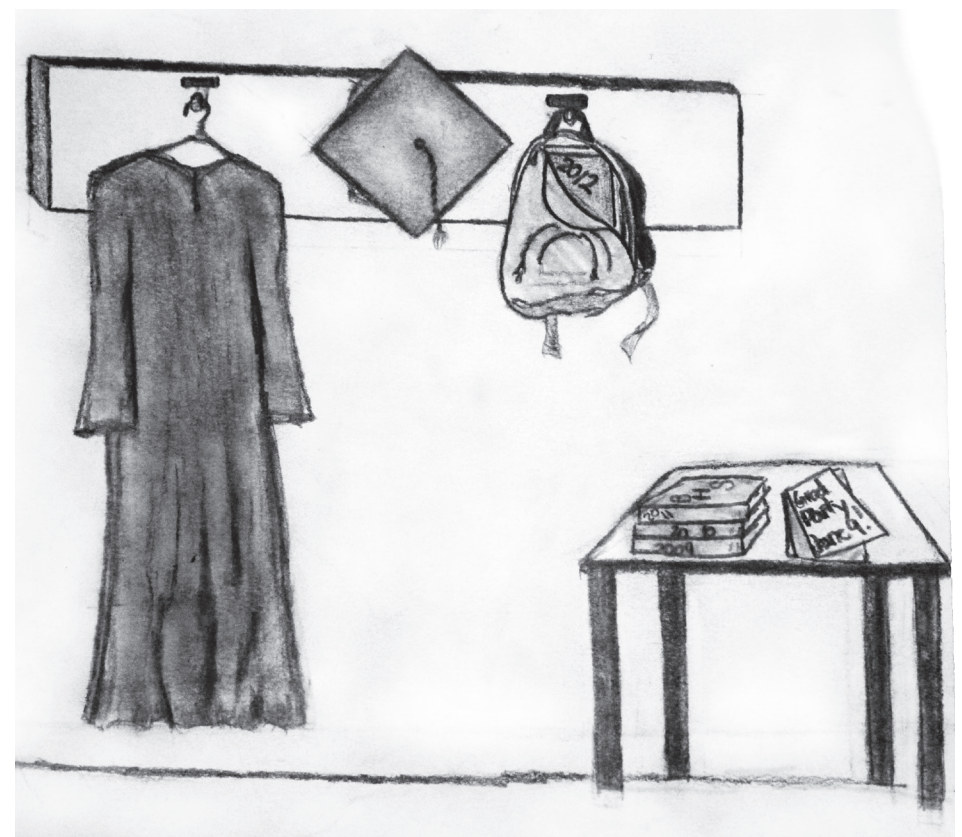
— Senior Lydia Wagner

many people get the opportunity of having. What makes BHS so extraordinary is the combination of learning about standard school topics and learning about yourself. It is through our relationships with friends and with teachers that we discover what we believe in and why we believe it. However, it would not be possible for me to be the person that I am without the positive environment that BHS has provided for me and all of its students throughout the years. Not only do the faculty want me to succeed academically, but they also encourage students to achieve outside of school. Without that, I don't think that I

would have been able to flourish in high school and as a person.

Even in my senior year, I've learned more about myself than in my entire life. From my experiences this year, I've learned how to strive to be better, I've figured out my values, and I've created the person I am today.

So seniors, when you are counting all of the “last times” remember what you've gained this year rather than what you're losing. Think about what high school really taught you. Think about what you learned that didn't come out of a text book. And when you walk into school for these last weeks think, “Wow! This is it!”



GRAPHIC BY KARI LAPLANT

KONY

Movement to capture world's most wanted attracts attention, not all positive.

Lydia Wagner - Staff Writer

On March 5, 2011, the KONY 2012 video was first posted on YouTube. The informative video was sponsored by Invisible Children to help stop warlord Joseph Kony. Within three days of its release, it received over 35 million views. Initially, the video had very positive responses and got big names like Oprah Winfrey and President Obama to endorse the cause. However, when the video reached Uganda, locals became outraged with inaccuracies in the film: Joseph Kony was not in Uganda, like the video claimed, and hadn't been for over six years.

Meanwhile, many rumors started to surface that Ben Keesey, founder of Invisible Children, was not spending his money on what the video claimed. Stories arose that most of the donated money was spent on marketing and staff salaries. In response to these allegations, Invisible Children released their expense reports to the public and according to their website, around 37 percent of their funds go towards programs in central Africa, 16 percent maintains business operations, while only seven percent is used for marketing. While Invisible Children's KONY 2012 project has

"I don't know how people didn't know about Kony sooner, but it's cool how just one guy could make it so well known with one video."
-Senior McKenzie Ross



READ MORE
ABOUT KONY:
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25%

of BHS students have seen
the KONY 2012 video

Photo by Addison Theirn



sparked both positive and negative attention, there is no doubt that they have helped raise awareness and, who knows, maybe they will reach their goal of capturing Joseph Kony by December 2012.

Most Beautiful Teen Contest

Teenagers post their most "beautiful" photos of themselves on Facebook.

Molly Kwakenat - Staff Writer

"I think the 'Most Beautiful Teen' contest was all for attention and the most likes on their photo. Half of the pictures weren't even of themselves," said Freshman **Kedrin Rumsch**. "The 'Cutest Couple' was for attention too. I just don't get why people have to be so attention craved these days."

The "Most Beautiful Teen" and "Cutest Couple" were two of many contests created on Facebook that showcased people all over the world. Anyone could post a picture, and others who participated could vote by liking their favorite pictures.

"I honestly thought that it was a waste of time and really paid no attention to it - although I saw many people posting in it and it was all over my news feed and annoying me," said Junior **Nathaniel Aiyawar**.

"I personally think the 'Most Beautiful Teen Contest' got annoying, going all over my newsfeed, and I felt like people did it just to get attention."
-Sophomore Baily Veches

92%

of BHS students think the
Most Beautiful Teen Contest
was a **BAD** idea



twitter { Students compare the roles of Twitter in their lives, and the way they share information.

2 out of 7
BHS Students
use twitter **DAILY**

Starships were meant to fly, hands up and touch the sky #remindsmeofprom
Tweeted by Freshman **Anna Demgen**



Erika Voeller - Spotlight Editor

It would take over 31 years to read the amount of text that is tweeted every day. Over two million tweets are sent by 140 million active users everyday; equivalent to 8,163 copies of Leo Tolstoy's *War & Peace*.

Twitter hit the web in July of 2006, and today it is one of the most talked about websites at BHS. But the talk is not always positive.

"I think Twitter's kinda dumb," said Junior **Jackson Elliott**. "I don't have an account, but I still don't like it. People just narrate their lives."

For other students, though, Twitter is a creative space to say what's on their minds.

"I love being able to update whenever I want, unlike Facebook where I always feel like I'm bombarding people with statuses," said Junior **Bailey Braatz**. "I like having that freedom."



Awkward moment when you see a teacher at the grocery store, and you both make eye contact, but look away like you don't know each other.
Tweeted by Junior **Gabe de Sousa**

Photos by Addison Thein

Love the sound of rain coming down on the atrium #rainydays
Tweeted by Senior **Shanlee Braun**



North Carolina

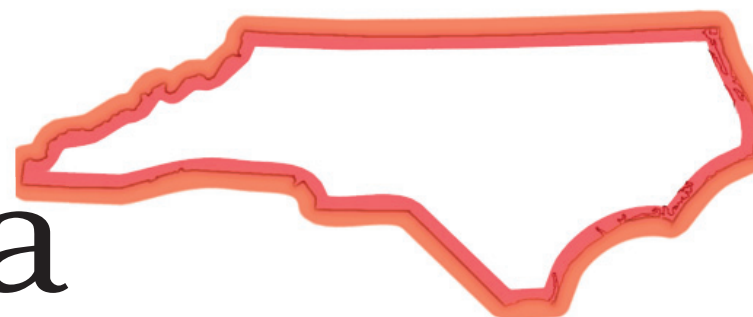
{ "Fix marriage, not gays" vs. "Protect the sanctity of marriage"

Liza Davis - Assignment Editor

North Carolina recently enacted an amendment to the state constitution, officially prohibiting same-sex marriage. This means that unless the amendment is someday repealed, gay couples will never be allowed to marry. The results of that vote have a possibility of being reenacted here: Minnesota is putting an identical amendment up for vote this November.

Obama recently revealed his support for same-sex marriage, an act which has sparked differing opinions. Some believe that this statement is just what he needs to sway more voters; others claim that he has just signed himself up to become a one-term president.

"Personally, my support for Obama has definitely increased," Senior **Michael Burgdorf** said. "I don't know how much I agree with other decisions he has made, but I respect him a lot more now and I think a lot of others do, too."



2 out of 3
BHS Students **DISAGREE**
with North Carolina's ban on
GAY MARRIAGE*

"I believe in the sanctity of marriage as one man and one woman, but I believe that civil unions between same-sex couples should be allowed outside of a religious setting.

-Senior Michael Holmstrom

*170 BHS students were surveyed for each statistic

Answering to a Higher Calling

While some students have yet to decide a major, others have accepted the duty to put their life on the line

Jay Mason - *Hoofprint.net* Editor

College tuition increases by as much as 8% per year. Back in the 1980s, tuition for a private four-year college was just \$7,000. Today, it can cost upwards of \$50,000 per year. It's no secret that a common problem for high school students is paying for college. An uncommon solution is to join the military. According to Military.com, a veteran of the United States Army can get up to \$65,000 for student loans. Organizations such as the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) help students pay for college education, provided they commit themselves to post-graduation military service.

"I'm joining the Army for at least eight years to help make money for college," said Senior **Jackson Engnell**. "My main job is driving big fuel trucks until I get 30 credits. After that I go into ROTC."

ROTC has helped thousands of high school students pay for college through scholarships that they offer. ROTC can help pay for up to a full four-year degree program, including textbook fees and monthly stipends. All one needs to do is sign up for a commitment to service. ROTC Army requires four years of full-time service and four years in the Individual Ready Reserve. ROTC Navy requires five years of active service, and ROTC Air Force requires up to ten years of service if pilot training is completed. Four

to ten years of one's life seems like forever, but it is worth it to get a college education - something that has become increasingly important in the work sphere.

ROTC scholarship applicants must meet minimum GPA and ACT requirements, as well as pass a physical fitness test. Push-ups, curl-ups, and endurance running are all factored into whether or not a scholarship is awarded. Physical as well as mental agility is valued for those dedicated students seeking higher education through the help of ROTC.

Other students join the military because they have family members who also served, in addition to it being a way to pay for college.

"I decided to join the Army Reserves about a year ago," said Senior **Taya Odeen**.

“My mom was in the military, so it’s kind of my way of saying, “I can beat you.”

— Senior Taya Odeen

"My mom was in the military so it's kind of my way of saying, 'I can beat you!'"

The decision to enter the armed forces is never an easy one. It ensures many years of full-time commitment and is not without risk. However, students find that their families are with them all the way.

"My family has been very supportive and proud of me," Engnell said. "I've had this decision made since September of 2011, so having my family support me has been great."



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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

May 24 2012

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Feature Artist: Charles Aldrich

A paragon of his kind, Aldrich is involved in numerous musical and theater programs, in and out of BHS.

Sam Sansevere - Staff Writer

The school year is coming to a close, and it won't be long before this senior class will graduate and move on to greater things. By next year, many names and identities that are widely known throughout BHS will have been forgotten. There is one name, however, that may last a little longer than the others in the memories of BHS students.

Enter Senior **Charlie Aldrich**: singer, actor, pianist, and probably one of the most well-known guys in the senior class. He has done community theater and Prairie Fire Theater, in addition to his work in the High School theatre department. His first appearance in a high school play was in sixth grade, when he received his first lead role as Dodger in *Oliver Twist*.

Aldrich is a successful performer in several different venues. While he is known at BHS for participating in the theater program, Concert Choir, Tri-M, BHS Singers, Concert Band, Marching Band, and Jazz Band, he doesn't limit himself to only taking part in school functions. Aldrich takes private voice lessons and piano lessons, has been involved in All-State Choir, and is a part of a program called Prelude, a class for singer-actor performers.

"[Prelude] takes place at MacPhail Center for Music in Minneapolis," Charlie said. "It's a class that meets every Saturday. It's an audition-only class and we get together and work on ensemble pieces - usually from musicals and operas. There are around 40 people, and when we get together, our instructors stage our performances, but it's like a workshop—always changing."

Prelude has three performances a year: two in the

winter and one in the spring.

"For one in the winter, we do bunch of ensemble pieces. Usually there's a guys piece and a girls piece and then we do piece together," Charlie said. "The Spring show is called 'Just Duet', and it's everybody's favorite. You get your duet partner and you work on your duet the entire spring semester. We still do the large group pieces, but the focus is on duets. They always have a theme to the whole show; it's kind of cool."

In addition to performing at Prelude, Aldrich is also an accompanist. He began taking piano lessons in first grade, and he has continued ever since.

"I'm a collaborative pianist intern," Charlie said. "It's similar to an internship and I get

scholarships to attend Prelude because I play piano for people when they sing. I also like to play classical music, but I mostly like playing for people. It's fun for me to see people collaborate and perform well when I accompany them."

Aldrich also prefers singing with a small group over than singing solo. He began taking voice lessons in 4th grade, but took a break in middle school when his voice was changing. He started taking voice lessons again at MacPhail during his eight-grade year, when he first got involved in the program.

"I've just kind of been doing it for a very long time," Charlie said. "You don't really think about how it starts. It kind of just starts and you're in it."

“All State choir is so fun, because everyone is there to do the same thing: sing.”

-Senior Charles Aldrich

PHOTOS BY MAYA BOLDUAN



Breaking it down...

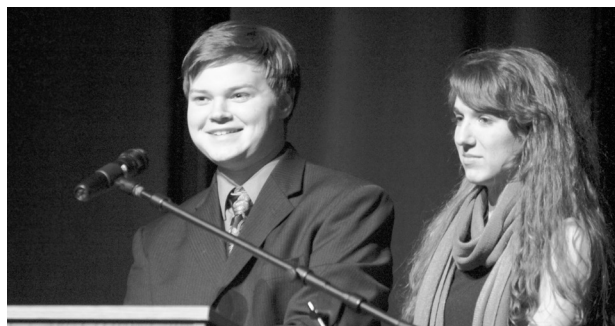
17 Plays and Musicals

12 Years of Private Piano Lessons

6 Years of Private Voice Lessons

5 Years performing at Prelude at MacPhail Center for Music

2 Years of BHS Singers & Concert Choir



Left: Aldrich plays a Billy Joel song at the Tri-M Variety Show. Right: Aldrich and Senior Liza Davis emcee the Variety Show with silly jokes between each acts. "My favorite part was working with Davis," said Aldrich.

Straining the Limits of Board & Man

To Senior Brandon Schmit Skateboarding is more than a game

Taylor Susa - Staff Writer

"What got me hooked is that, in skateboarding, it's all you do - nothing else. If you fall, get back up and try it again. The feeling you get when you land a trick or are just cruising is absolutely amazing. People who ride get to that exact feeling. Like, when you get home from school and there's your board, you're just like, 'Yes, I'm going to ride it.' All day you're just thinking, 'I can't wait to skate,'" said Senior **Brandon Schmit**.

As a young boy he was involved in many sports. After being in high school sports for a year, his perspective forever changed on sports and hobbies. It's not like a game where you beat it and it's over, Skateboarding just keeps going.

Riding on rails, banks, and ledges is a day to day thing for Schmit, and it has been since he was 11 years old. A good friend got him hooked and ever since, it's been a love for him and the board.

"The reason I like it so much is because you can be free and it's just you and your board. The thing is that, someone can never be too good at it because the amount of tricks you can do is endless, that is what I love about it," said Schmit.

"I'm not going to lie, I bring my skateboard everywhere. Absolutely everywhere. I will bring it if I'm going on a family trip, school, work, and yup, I even brought it with to prom. I mean, who wouldn't want to land a few tricks in a tux?"

-Senior Brandon Schmit

Schmit also likes to do many different tricks using his Skateboard. In the skateboarder's world, they're endless.

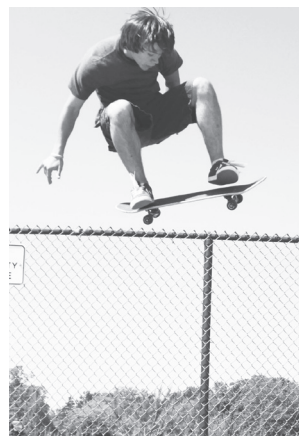
"I can do a trick that is basically 3 complex tricks combined into one. Let's just say I know quite a lot of tricks but I still have a whole bunch more to learn," said Schmit.

Throughout the years, Schmit has also competed in skateboarding competitions in St. Cloud and Plymouth. He also has done a few showcases at the skate park in Rogers.

"I was never really into competitions. I mean, they are very exciting and fun, but I would rather play a game of skate with my friends. It's basically like PIG in basketball, but instead it's skateboarding," said Schmit.

Not every sport or hobby is going to let you carry your equipment with you everywhere. Since a skateboard is so much smaller and on wheels, people can bring them everywhere, even to prom.

"I have experienced so many great things and it's just so fulfilling. It's kind of sad, but I'm not going to lie. I bring my skateboard everywhere, absolutely everywhere. I will bring it if I'm going on a family trip, school, work and yup, I even brought it with to prom. I mean come on, who wouldn't want to land a few tricks in a tux?"



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Dancing for a Pot of Gold { Freshman Alyssah O'Neill prepares for the trip of a lifetime and the opportunity to dance in Ireland

Taylor Holt - Staff Writer

Flecks of shimmering light dance around the stage as she emerges from behind the silk curtain. Her eyes sweep across the many faces fixed on her as she takes in the enormity of the audience. Every face is just as intrigued by her as she is by them. As the music starts, she begins to move her feet the way she had been taught so long ago. By now, this dance is as familiar to her as breathing, and with every twirl of her intricately patterned dress, she becomes more apart of it.

"The best thing about Irish dancing would have to be the rush you get as you step on stage," said Freshman **Alyssah O'Neill**. "Suddenly you're capable of anything and the rest of the world seems to disappear."

O'Neill will be one of four hundred Irish dancers from all over the world competing in Ireland this month. Her dance career started four

years ago after being inspired by Irish dancers at a fair. Since then, she has competed in five competitions and has reached the second highest level a dancer is capable of in Irish dancing. This, along with beating everyone at her current level, has qualified O'Neill to go to the Worlds Competition in Ireland. To get to the next and very highest level, O'Neill must do extremely well in Ireland.

"Usually we're judged on technique, timing, difficulty, form, and how you carry yourself," said O'Neill. "I've put a lot of planning and effort

into this competition. I got choreography from a choreographer in Arizona, and it's completely fresh. My mom also made me a new dress. Usually the dresses are very modest and the skirts are poofy. Mine is yellow and decked out with rhinestones and crystals. I also have to wear a wig or hairpiece."

For O'Neill, inspiration plays a huge part in her talent. **Michael Flatley**, a famous Irish dancer, is one of those inspirations. O'Neill also says that she never would have gotten as far as she has without the influence of her dance teacher.

"My dance teacher has definitely inspired me and pushed me to become a better dancer," said O'Neill. "My biggest goal is to win Worlds. If you

win, you get a sash and a huge thousand dollar traveling trophy. It's a huge honor. I'm also planning on going to a school in Ireland after high school. I want

— Freshman Alyssa O'Neill

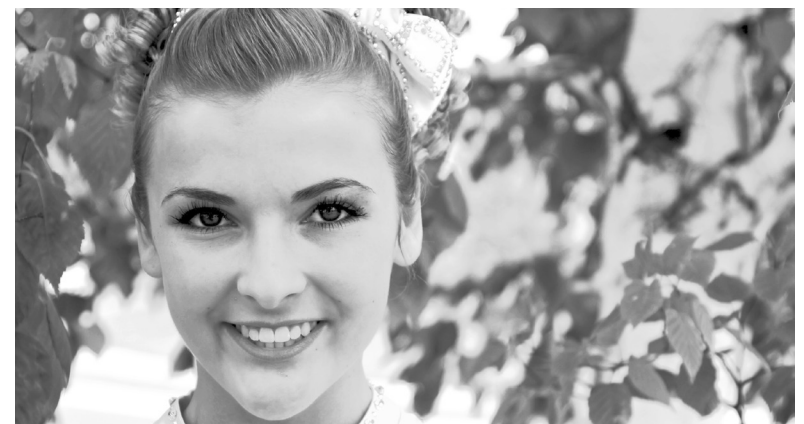
to be an Irish dance teacher and eventually own my own dance school."

While visiting Ireland, O'Neill will be traveling to Dublin and several small islands. She plans on going sight-seeing, shopping, and watching the other dancers. However, she is looking forward to performing the most.

"I just can't wait to get on stage and perform," said O'Neill. "It's going to be an awesome experience and a great way to show what I'm capable of."

“The best thing about Irish dancing would have to be the rush you get as you step on stage. All of a sudden you're capable of anything and the rest of the world seems to disappear.”

PHOTOS BY WHITNEY NYHOLM



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The Pursuit of Happiness

A 365 day adventure with a happy ending.

Kala Czanstkowski - *Spotlight Editor*

As I sat in the empty school hallway, struggling to summarize my year-long happiness project, I was pleasantly interrupted by our janitor, Sharon Myers. She asked me about my future plans, and I explained my situation. What she said next really touched my heart, and helped me sum up my experience better than she could know. "Follow your heart, because if you don't, you're always going to regret what you didn't do."

My happiness project began April 18th, 2011. Prior to the start of the project, I found myself falling into a depression. I didn't know what I needed to change, but I knew I had to do something. I lived my life like closed book, and I knew that it wasn't going to get me far. I opened up to those around me, filling them in on my life's journeys, telling them the good stories and the bad. I met students and staff at BHS that I could laugh and cry with. I felt lucky.

I looked closer at what I was doing. I quickly realized that it wasn't necessarily the act of telling my stories that made me feel better, but the feeling of being less alone - knowing that I had someone who I could hold a casual conversation with. This feeling that I felt was gratitude. I don't know if I could call my project complete if I had never learned this lesson. When you are grateful, you are appreciative, and when you are appreciative, you see the good in every situation. When you are only seeing the good, there is nothing to be sad about. Therefore, gratitude is the first step on the path to joy.

My initial intention was to become a person who was always happy, but I realized that was nearly

impossible. I'd have to change my entire life and possibly become a robot if I never wanted to be upset. The first lesson I learned was to accept my life as it is.

Months into my project, I found myself leaning on finding happiness in the things around me, and so the projects began. The projects were spontaneous acts done solely to watch those around me smile at least once. If I could see one person smirk, I had accomplished my mission. I found myself in the front office multiple times each month due to the administration's lack of appreciation

for my spontaneity. Oddly, I was ok with this because I knew I was making an impact. I was taking my own path and not those paved by others. My goal was to make others around me

happier, because if those around you are happy, so are you. These projects took up most of my time throughout the project, but I quickly learned this wasn't a good way to maintain true happiness. These projects caused me to completely forget that happiness isn't only found around you. I looked to the people who would be teaching me my next important lessons.

It took me a long time to believe it, but I was told that I am enough, I am a valuable person. I needed to look for happiness within, because that was truly where it came from. I was given the analogy that I am like a twenty dollar bill. Even if I was wrinkled from past experiences, had gone through the washing machine, or was left at the bottom of a purse, I was still worth the same amount. I needed to stop looking around for happiness and realize that I had everything I needed right inside.

Finally, as my project was coming to an end,

I reflected. I put together lessons, and wrote down any advice that really stood out to me. I realized that the one simple phrase that summed up everything I endured was, "Keep moving forward." This phrase got me through times tougher than one would imagine and I know that it will always be with me. It's my mantra, and with it, I feel as though I could take on the world.

My advice to you is to not look back and dwell, but simply reflect on your life and decide the phrase that always got you through. Write it down. Write it everywhere, actually, and never lose sight of it. There's a reason it's stuck in your head - don't let it go of it until you know why. Also, don't worry about a bad day. "The soul would have no rainbow, had the eyes no tears." You need to just keep moving forward, because it gets better, I promise you that.



WATCH HER VIDEO HERE:
HAPPINESS PROJECT DAY 365

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PHOTO BY ADDISON THEIN

Top Ten Ways to Happiness

- 1 Be grateful for everything.
- 2 Love yourself, you're a gift.
- 3 Happiness comes from within.
- 4 To be happy, you must understand sadness.
- 5 Keep moving forward.
- 6 Extract joy from everything.
- 7 Be patient.
- 8 Tell yourself, "It gets better."
- 9 Let others in.
- 10 If it doesn't make you happy, move forward.