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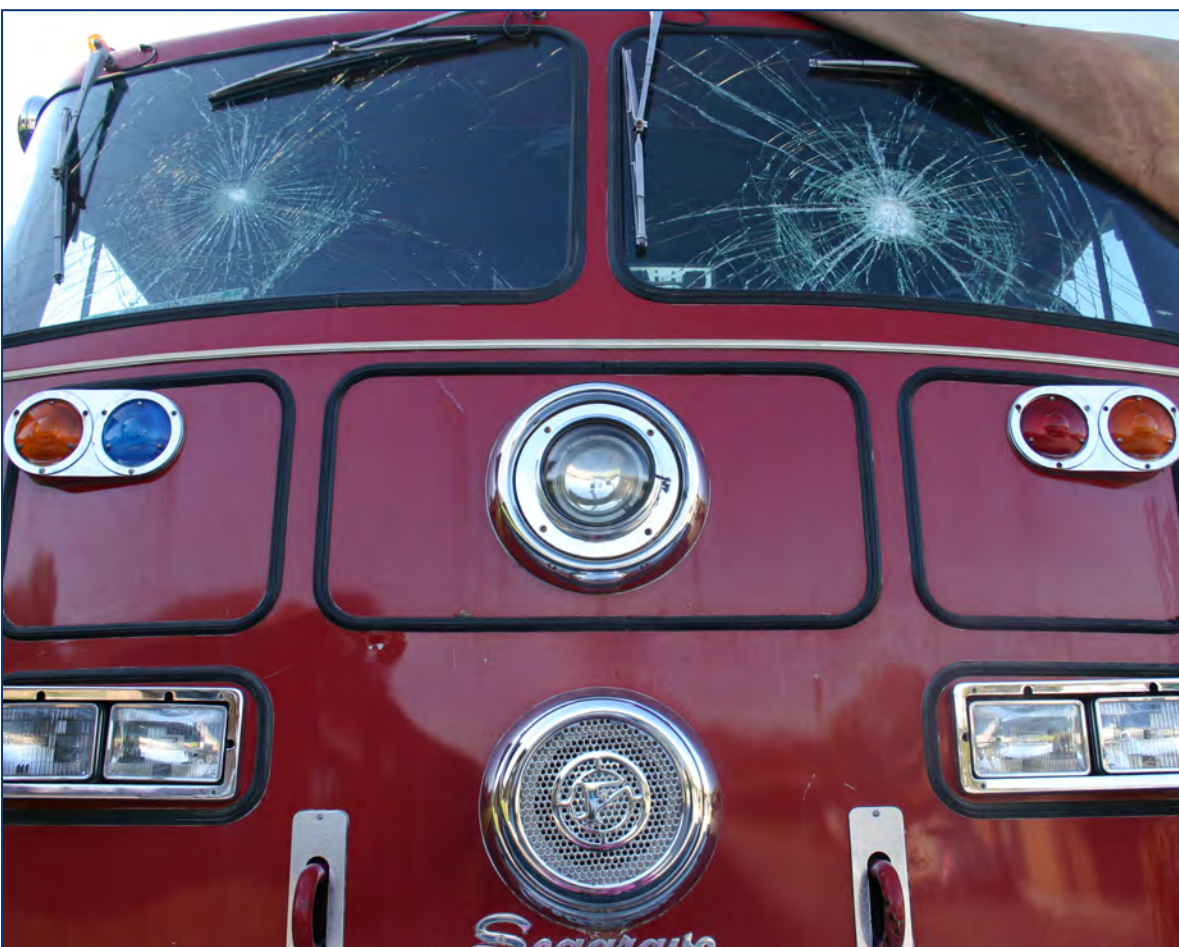
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BELLEVUE EAST TOM TOM

BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL 1401 HIGH SCHOOL DR. BELLEVUE, NE (402)-293-4150 OCTOBER 2011 ISSUE 2 VOLUME 61

Retired fire truck vandalized East students asked to help find suspects



A 1980 Seagrave fire engine was purchased last January at the city auction. Mia Martin, owner of Dicobe Media, purchased the fire truck and parked it outside her store off Lincoln Road. The truck sustained \$1500 worth of damage. *Photo by Morgan Barrett*

KATIE KEEFER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Last January, the city of Bellevue held an auction. Things

up for bid included a large lot of vehicles, equipment, and other miscellaneous items. Mia Martin, owner of Dicobe Media, attended

the auction and purchased Engine 15, a 1980 Seagrave fire engine. Martin took interest in the truck for sentimental reasons.

“This truck was purchased new by the Bellevue Volunteer Fire Department and as a former volunteer member, I wanted to see it stay in the community,” Martin said.

The fire engine has been parked outside Martin’s business at 1020 Lincoln Road, since she purchased it. On Friday, Sept. 23 or early Saturday, Sept. 24, the truck was vandalized.

After working over night as an emergency medical technician, Martin was notified Saturday morning by another nearby business owner that the truck’s windshield had been smashed in.

Both front windshields were broken out. It appears as though the vandal(s) used a bat or something other than a rock or brick to bust the windshield, Martin said. The damages are estimated at \$1500 and are even more costly because they are special ordered from the manufacturer.

“Not only is this an unforeseen personal expense,” Martin says, “the lack of respect shown for any public safety equipment, in use or retired, is truly offensive.”

Police told Martin that if someone comes forward she could prosecute them for a felony because of the dollar amount of the damage.

According to criminalprop-

ertydamage.com, in the state of Nebraska, a Class IV felony is when a person intentionally or maliciously cause loss of \$1,500 or more or causes a substantial interruption or impairment of public transportation, communication, or utilities. This offense is punishable by up to five years in prison and fines up to \$10,000.

However, Martin is not interested in prosecution if restitution is made.

“I would be willing to [accept] payments over time towards the actual expense of replacement and repair of the windshields,” Martin said.

At this point, there are no leads and Martin just wants the individual(s) to come clean.

“I hope that the people responsible have a change of heart and come forward,” Martin said. “A lifelong lesson is to be learned should they decide to make amends. People make bad decisions, but they can be rectified and you walk away a better person.”

Anyone with any information regarding the truck vandalism is asked to call Martin at 402-306-6141 or information can be reported to the Bellevue Police Department at 402-293-3100. Martin is offering a reward up to \$250 for any information.

Mold cleanup closes upper, lower south gym

ZOEY BRENNAN
NEWS EDITOR

Mold started to develop in the south gym beginning this summer. The chiller, which is what powers the air conditioning units, was not working properly.

As the temperature in the building rose, moisture left over from cleaning the carpets and floor did not cool or evaporate and resulted in mold growth.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA:) “Inhaling mold most often causes an allergic reaction. In addition, mold exposure can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, throat, and lungs of both mold-allergic and non-allergic people.”

East Activities Director Greg Lamberty is responsible for building maintenance to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.

“We did have it tested in terms of mold in [the south gym] and it was not to the point to where it was a health concern,” Lamberty said.

The mold found was a low concentration of non-toxic mold. Although it was not necessarily a great concern, it still had to be cleaned so that the mold does not become a problem.

The Institute for Environmental Assessment (IEA) is the company that tested for the mold, and is now cleaning the gym to remove it.

“Basically, what they’re doing is scrubbing the outside of the vents

and inspecting the inside to determine if there’s an abnormal amount of growth,” Lamberty said.

IEA is using bleach to clean everything out.

The time frame for clean up is about three weeks. Classes normally in the south gym and upper gym have been moved to different parts of the school. Dance and aerobics classes are now in the wrestling room, and gym classes are now in the north gym.

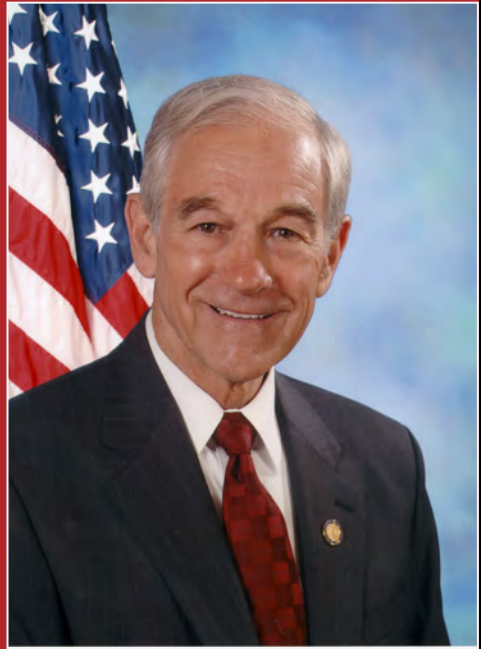
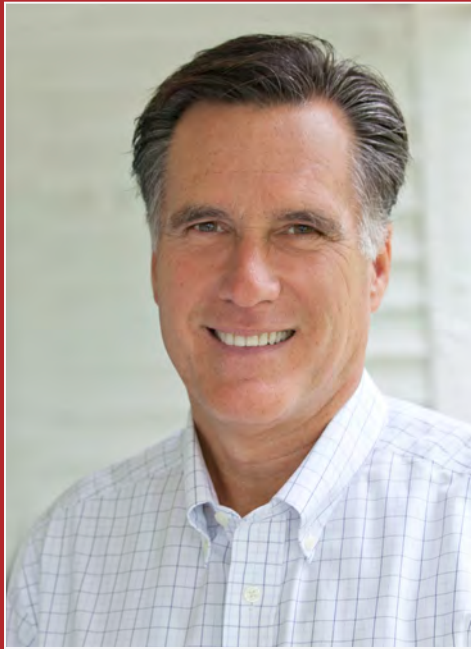
In regards to any other mold around the school, Lamberty does not deny the possibility of mold elsewhere.

“They’ve inspected various parts of the building,” Lamberty said. “There’s not a level where it’s toxic.”



While the south gym is being cleaned, students and teachers must use this temporary tunnel. The gym should be reopened in the next couple of weeks. *Photo by Morgan Barrett*

The race for the 2012 presidential election



Photos courtesy of www.whitehouse.gov, bachman.house.gov, [Romney Press Shop](http://RomneyPressShop), paul.house.gov. Pictured are a few of the candidates running for office.

Barrack Obama

- ~ Current President of the United States (44th president)
- ~ Former senator of Illinois
- ~ 1st African American president
- ~ Won against Hilary Clinton and John McCain
- ~ Supports health care, higher unemployment pay, and the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)
- ~ Democrat

Michele Bachman

- ~ U.S. representative for Minnesota
- ~ Wants to the economy and create millions of new jobs
- ~ Wants to repeal Obamacare and its mandates
- ~ Wants to achieve deep cuts in spending to reduce America's debt
- ~ Won the Ames Straw Poll
- ~ Wants to rebuild respect for America
- ~ Republican

Mitt Romney

- ~ Former Governor of Massachusetts
- ~ Released his newest book "No Apology: The Case for American Greatness"
- ~ Graduated from Harvard
- ~ Believes he is the most qualified candidate to take on the struggling economy
- ~ Republican

Ron Paul

- ~ U.S. Representative from the State of Texas
- ~ Believes in small government, non-expansionist foreign policy, gold-backed currency, personal liberty and abolishing federal income taxes
- ~ Holds the most conservative voting record in Congress, and is the biggest advocate for the dismantling of the Federal Reserve
- ~ Republican

MCKENNAH OTT REPORTER

Every four years, a new president is elected to office. Republicans, democrats, libertarians, and many other parties run against each one another in an attempt to be the front-runner.

Their views on life, laws, and major issues in the United States are different. Soon voters will be seeing commercials, signs, buttons and bumper stickers with a candidate's name and customized slogan. Depending on the results, the Nov. 2012 election could be a time of change.

When considering whom to vote for, many people may only think of major candidates such as Michele Bachman and

current president, Barrack Obama. Some people don't like either of those candidates, though, and want to vote for someone who has very similar views to their own.

But some candidates are not as well publicized as others, so voters really don't get a chance to see who all of the candidates really are.

The Republicans running for office are Michele Bachman, Herman Cain, Newt Gingrich, Fred Karger, Andy Martin, Tom Miller, Ron Paul, Rick Perry, Buddy Roemer, Mitt Romney, Rick Santorum, and Vern Wuensche.

The democrat running is Barack Obama; as Obama is currently president, he is the only democrat who can run in the

election because he is the incumbent.

Libertarian runners, who believe in minimum government and maximum freedom, are R. Lee Wrights, Carl Person, Gary Johnson, Jon Huntsman, and Roger Gary.

One controversy over the 2012 election was if Sarah Palin was going to become a candidate.

Many of Palin's followers, also referred to as "Palinistas," were wondering why Palin hadn't put her name in for the candidacy.

Palin officially stated that she would not be running in the 2012 election. She said that her devotions are God, family and country and will remain in that order.

Some of the candidates will be chosen

as a primary candidate. To become a primary, the candidate's political party must favor them.

The parties conduct a house vote to pick the number one candidate that they want to win the presidential election for their party. Primaries for the 2012 election have yet to be decided.

Since the election is quickly approaching, students old enough to vote have only a small amount of time to read up on the candidates. Many 18-year-olds will be voting for the first time this year.

"It's important for new voters to vote because statistics show that less youth vote than older people so young voters' voice isn't heard," American government instructor Bryce Brunswig said.

Which test to take: ACT, SAT, ASVAB, or ASSET?

ZOEY BRENNAN NEWS EDITOR

High school is meant to prepare students for the real world. It should teach them how to use the knowledge, skills, and abilities they gain throughout four years to get through college and the rest of their lives.

That being said, toward the end of junior year and at the end of senior year, students begin to seriously think about college or other post-secondary plans.

At the Bellevue East career, instructor Patty Cambell and paraprofessional Roblyn Stiverson are dedicated to helping students select future career plans and set goals.

From freshman to senior year these women help guide students on what plans to take in order to assure a good future.

Some of the preparation for the future involves taking different standardized tests for entrance into college or the military.

Campbell said that most students in the school are only aware of taking the ACT since that is the test that most colleges require.

However, Campbell said that she encourages students to research which schools they are interested in and find out what the requirements are for each particular school.

"Each test has its place [purpose]. The student needs to know which one is a good fit for them. If they are not planning on going to a university then they don't need to take the ACT, they should take the ASSET or if they are going to go right into the military after high school then the ASVAB," Campbell said.

The ASSET test is a placement test that most community colleges accept. Colleges use it to place a student in the proper classes.

The ASVAB test is for students interested in entering the military. The higher score a student gets on this test (usually a 70 or 80) the better job they can be assigned in the military.

Other important tests include the ACT and SAT. On the ACT an good score is a 25 or higher. A perfect score is a 36. Most universities accept this test, and the higher the score the more scholarship opportunities there are for a student.

Schools on the East and West coasts mainly use the SAT. A perfect score on the SAT is 2400. An average score for most colleges is around a 950. In order to be considered for most scholarships, students would need a score around 1170-1230.

Accoding to counselor Tory Juarez, after the SAT is taken, most colleges have their

students take a subject test in a certain area in reagards to what they might be majoring in.

"The subject test reinforces certain subjects; it's more traditional," Juarez said.

Campbell said that being informed about

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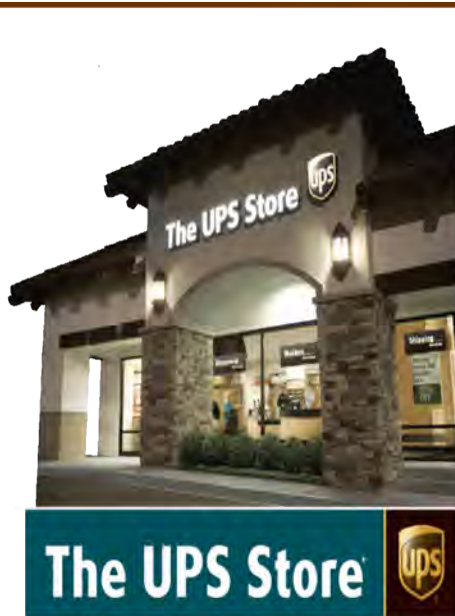
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Palestine seeks to join U.N. for recognition

ANDREA VELLANI
REPORTER

Palestine is vying for U.N. recognition. The U.N. is debating the application of Palestine as a member state in the U.N. council.

Palestine is primarily Muslim and has been in conflict with Israel for many years. The Arab-Israeli Conflict began after the Holocaust in World War II. On May 14, 1948, the U.N. set up Israel, where Palestine once was. This action displaced Palestinians, Muslim people who lived in the region where Israel was set up.

The differences in religion and land disputes led to many conflicts over the region; The Six-Day War in 1967, Yom Kippur War 1973, and extended violence on

both sides from the 1980's forward.

Now Palestine is trying to reclaim the land they lost in the wars to make a country independent from Israel.

Palestine is now trying to become a sovereign country in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and east Jerusalem, areas that were captured by Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967. Israel is building in these areas, even though Palestine strongly objects to Jewish settlement.

Being accepted into U.N. statehood would make Palestine its own country. It would also mean Israel would stop building in Gaza strip, West bank, and east Jerusalem.

President Obama's view of the Palestinian statehood bid is unsupported.

"The administration believes, as you know, that the Palestinians cannot achieve statehood through a U.N. mandate. The only way to do that is through direct negotiations. And the administration has continued to urge both sides to negotiate a peace that will lead to Palestinian statehood." White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said Sept. 4 on Foxnews.com.

American-Palestinian groups, such as the American Task Force in Palestine, said that Palestine should be a "fully sovereign member state of the United Nations." They also said Palestine should be a "haven for Palestinian refugees from around the Middle East and the rest of the world."

The reason the U.S. does not support Palestinian statehood is straightforward.

Historically, the U.S. supported the creation of a nation for the Jewish people in reparations for what the Jews suffered in World War II.

Israel has been attacked by Muslim extremist countries over past the century. The U.S. has stepped in to discuss peace agreements multiple times, mostly supporting Israel's side.

Because Palestine has both attacked Israel and is an Islamic state, the United States has difficulty accepting Palestine as a state.

As of now, the goal of the U.N. is to have a compromise both sides can agree to by the end of 2012. Until then, the Palestinians and Israelis alike await the U.N. decision.

Bellevue changes from volunteer to paid fire department

KATIE KEEFER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Bellevue had the long-standing tradition of a volunteer fire department for decades, but a year and a half ago in April 2010, the city made the switch to a paid department.

One of the primary reasons the Bellevue Volunteer Fire Department became a paid department was to improve response time. With a vast majority of Bellevue's calls being medical emergencies, it is essential that responders get on the scene to treat the patient as soon as possible. According to Bellevue.net, the department averages over 3,400 emergency calls a year and more than half of those calls require emergency medical services (EMS), but regardless of the type of call, response times are important anytime life is involved.

"Historically, with volunteer departments, response times can range anywhere from seven to eight, even up to ten minutes," Vice President of Bellevue Professional Firefighters' Association Dustin Talacko said. "Since going paid, we are in-house 24/7 and we get there in five minutes or less."

With four stations covering 41.3 miles of territory, the department's goal is getting to the scene with an optimal response time of less than five minutes, while ensuring that the maximum number of responders are on the scene each time.

"Goals of this department going paid are response time and just getting the maximum number of apparatuses out the door," President of the association Ben Heller said. "When it was a volunteer [department], you never knew how many rigs were coming at one time. With having each station staffed, you know for sure that you have four rigs, or three additional rigs plus your own, coming to the scene."

Bellevue currently has roughly 130 people on the department. There is one fire chief, 1 assistant chief, and four battalion chiefs. All of these management jobs and three captains are full-time, but the rest of the fire department positions are only part-time.

"We work a maximum of 160 hours in a 28-day period," Heller said. "A firefighter's job is based off 28 days, not a regular 40 hour work week."

These hours allow the part-time workers



After years of being a volunteer fire department, Bellevue finally made the switch to a paid department. The department covers about 40 miles, and now with each station staffed 24/7, their response time has been cut down to less than five minutes. *Photo by Cameron Sada*

to hold full-time jobs elsewhere.

"Everybody here [working part-time] has a full-time job, so it depends on their schedule at their regular job [as to what shifts they work, either 12 or 24 hours]," Heller said. "It's not uncommon to see a person work a full-time job all day long and then come to the fire station all night and then go back to their full-time job the next day."

It seems that a lot of the public does not know what is going on with Bellevue Fire. Heller and Talacko said they noticed the public commenting on faster response times, but the public still does not necessarily realize Bellevue is paid.

"There's really an identity crisis with Bellevue Fire," Talacko said. "People around here sometimes refuse to see that. Some people think we are part-time, some think we are full-time, and some people think we're still volunteer."

In search of a voice and a clearer identity, the Bellevue Fire Department is looking to unionize. So far, members of the association including Heller and Talacko (the president and v.p.) have presented the idea of a union to the body of the department just to get an idea of who would be interested and support the idea of organizing a union.

"In order to even file a petition to organize you have to have 31 percent of the body [support it]. We had that so we went ahead and filed a petition with the state and now we're at the stage where we are conducting a ballot vote now, to officially be recognized by the city," Heller said.

If the organizers get 51 percent of the body to support it, the association would then

sit down and develop bylaws for the organization, which would be the do's and don'ts of the working order. The next thing would then be a contract.

The main focus of the union and the contract is safety, wages, and benefits.

"We're not pushing for anything other than those three things; we're not asking for full-time, and we're not asking for the moon," Talacko said. "We just want to make things safe around here. We want people to be trained properly. There's just such a rich tradition here at Bellevue and they are doing a great job; we just need to keep upping the

ante. We feel like this association's going to help us put our brand and our stamp on the city and educate the public."

The firefighters have not met with any resistance from the administration yet and the final voting results for the union are being counted this week. If the department moves on in the process of unionizing, they hope to be able to strengthen the department and build alliances with the city and administration.

"[Unionizing] gives us a voice, basically," Talacko said. "It gives us a back bone and sense of direction."



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Juniors versus seniors: The ultimate competition



Junior Robert Meyers and senior Cassarah Kennedy model the tension between the junior and senior classes this school year. The conflict began over the reading of the announcements. *Photo by Cameron Sada*

KATIE KEEFER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

It can be said that seniors usually feel like they are the top dogs. They feel they have a sense of entitlement because they are the elders of the school.

As the upperclassmen, they enjoy having power and control. This year, the juniors questioned traditional senior power.

The 2011-2012 school year started off with a bit of tension between the juniors and seniors.

The upperclassmen of Bellevue East

were pitted against each other and thrown into a bitter rivalry because of a break in tradition.

The animosity between the two classes can be traced back to the beginning of the year when juniors took over the duty of reading the daily announcements.

For the past few years, seniors have read the announcements, but this year the juniors stepped in.

“Nobody really stepped up so I just jumped in and did what needed to be done,” junior Hunter Amoruso said. “It’s kind of nice to see that [the junior class]

has the initiative to step up and get things done.”

Amoruso, along with fellow juniors Jake Sachs and Callen Hedglen, read the daily announcements for the first couple of weeks, but it was not long before some members of the senior class became annoyed that juniors were reading the announcements.

At first senior Sam Ervin was upset that juniors were reading the announcements just because they were juniors and that he said that the duty should fall upon the elders of the school.

Then Ervin’s anger turned into something more because of the manner in which the announcements were being read.

“What continued to bother me was what I perceived as a lack of professionalism on the part of the speakers,” Ervin said.

Ervin said that there was too much joking around and that the announcements were not the time or place for that.

Even though the juniors appeared to be having fun with the announcements, they were still getting read.

“It’s the announcements,” Amoruso said. “Nobody really cares as long as they get read. Callen, Jake, and I just tried to make them fun and entertaining enough to listen to versus being boring and bland.”

Similar to Hedglen, Amoruso said that the announcements should not be boring because no one will listen.

“I wanted to get involved because I have a lot of school spirit and want Bellevue East to be a fun place for people to go to school at,” Hedglen said. “I liked reading the announcements because we added things that made people want to listen to the announcements.”

What irks most seniors is that juniors stepped up first to take on the announcements.

“Overall, the seniors are a good class,” Amoruso said. “It just seems like some of them want things handed down to them [rather than] them just going out and doing it.”

However, Amoruso is able to see both sides.

“I personally think that the senior class is overreacting a tad, but in the same sense, I can see where they’re coming from with them wanting to run the show,” Amoruso said. “It’s their turn to run it.”

Ervin said in an ideal world, every student would be proactive and participate in school activities, but older classes would still develop traditions and guide the younger classes.

“In a sense, yes, seniors ought to ‘run things,’” Ervin said. “It’s not, by any means, supposed to be a dictatorship.”

But in the eyes of some juniors, like Amoruso and Hedglen, the seniors have not really done anything to make them respectable.

“I feel this year’s senior class is different from the past years due to involvement in school activities,” Hedglen said. “This is a generalization for sure because there are some spirited seniors, but I do feel that in comparison, the junior class has more involvement.”

The year is still young though, so the seniors have time to redeem themselves.

“The sense of togetherness, and pride in self and school, has been lost somewhat with the class of 2012, though nothing is irrevocable,” Ervin said.

Learning Community allows students to option into BPS

DUSTIN FITZPATRICK
FEATURES EDITOR

Walking, taking the bus, having parents drive, driving, skateboarding are ways that students get to school in the morning.

However, what is uncommon is coming from a different district to attend Bellevue Public Schools (BPS).

“First, I get up around 6:45 in the morning to go to the bus stop. I take a bus to the Lied Center. Then from the Lied Center, I take a bus to come to East. It usually takes around 30 to 45 minutes,” junior Jonathan Melvin said.

Another student that commutes to Bellevue is sophomore Alexis Alback.

“My mom takes me from where we live on the borderline of South Omaha and Bellevue,” Alback said.

Usually, when living in another district, students attend their neighborhood schools; however, with the new “open enrollment” policy taking place in the 2010-2011 school year, better known as the Learning Community, students are now allowed to go to schools in another district if they want. However, there are some requirements.

“You have to fill out a form. If you have been to the school a year prior, you have a better chance of coming back. There is limited space,” Melvin said.

On the buses Melvin takes to school, there are about 25-30 other students.

“It stops where normal busses stop. In the housing area of students,” Melvin said.

Unlike normal buses that are meant for the BPS district, these buses from Omaha have to go through a bit of a different process in order to get students there.

“They have to have special permission from BPS in order to bus kids here,” Melvin

said.

Though it might seem like a long process, Melvin stressed that he did not want to go to school in the Papillion district because he had a lot of friends here and he did not like changing schools after having a previous experience doing so.

“I have changed schools before and it is hard to adjust and to know everyone’s likes and dislikes. Here, I know everyone,” Melvin said.

Alback, on the other hand, had her own reason for wanting to attend school in the BPS district.

“It is a way better education and a positive feeling from the people. I would not be learning anything at North. I would mess around and not have that good of a future. I have changed so much coming here,” Alback said.

One person who understands why Alback and Melvin did not want to switch schools is guidance counselor Sara Powell, who sometimes deals with the new transfers.

“The biggest thing I have with them is getting them acquainted with the school and accustomed to the school environment,” Powell said. “It is always hard to make new friends and it takes time to establish that sense of belonging.”

However, Powell has mixed feelings about the Learning Community and students opting in.

“I think there are good pieces of it, but there are pieces that do not work. I think sometimes students use it as an excuse to get away from their home schools,” Powell said. “What I like about it is that if a certain high school has a program, kids can go to different schools and receive different opportunities that are not offered at their home school.”

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Custodian fondly remembered by East



East custodian Al Smith passed away Sept. 26. Smith worked at East since 2007. He will be greatly missed.

BREANNA HOLLIS
REPORTER

East mourns the loss of custodian Allen Smith who passed away on Sept. 26 due to a massive heart attack, leaving behind his wife, three daughters, and a granddaughter. Activities Director Greg Lamberty explained how much Smith was an important part of the East community.

“I think the death affects everybody differently. He was a very positive guy,” Lamberty said. “He would bend over backwards for anybody that needed anything. I’ll miss the Saturday mornings. Al was the only custodian here, and was one step ahead of the game.”

Smith developed strong friendships with his fellow custodians. Head custodian Dennis Mills said that Smith always had plenty of stories to share with everyone.

“I liked the stories he told, he told a lot of stories. Everyday he had a new one, it seemed. He told stories about his service days and when he would do the scratch tickets. One time he told us about how he won \$800 from a bunch of those scratch [tickets],” Mills said.

All of his friends miss him deeply. His work is greatly appreciated and he has left an impression in the heart of Bellevue East.

Custodian Glen Ryles was also close to Smith. He and Smith’s family spent a lot of time together.

“He was one of my best friends. He was the first person I met when I moved down here in 1999. We worked together at Dollar General for about eight years. Later we worked together here. We were real close. My wife and his wife are close. When he passed we went over there to help with things. I’m going to miss him. I still keep in touch with his daughters and granddaughter,” Ryles said.

In honor of Smith a memorial collection fund is being established by the staff members at Bellevue East.

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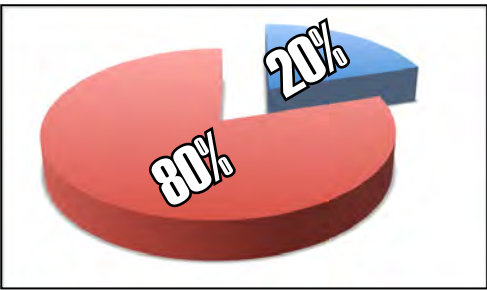
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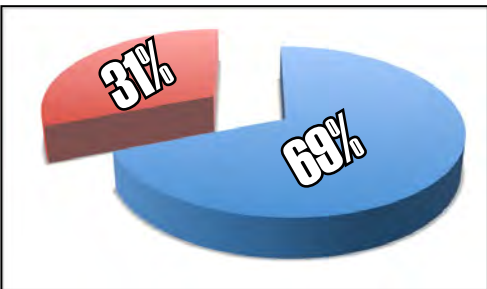
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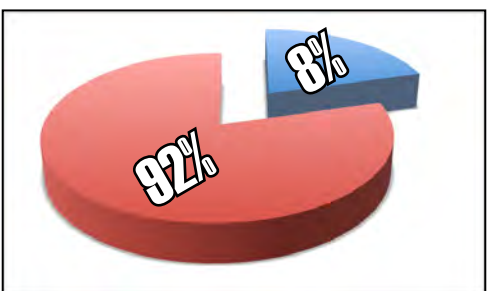
STUDENTS PUT TO THE TEST



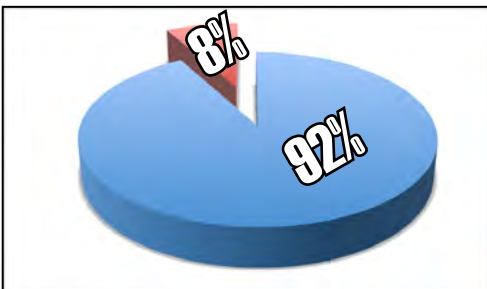
Twenty percent of East teachers polled believe that standardized testing accurately reflects the abilities of the district and students, while 80 percent do not.



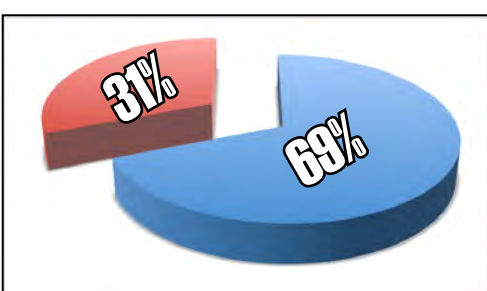
Sixty-nine percent of East teachers polled believe that standardized testing takes up too much class time, while 31 percent of the teachers do not.



Eight percent of East teachers polled support the No Child Left Behind Act, while 92 percent do not support it.



Ninety-two percent of East teachers polled feel some students are at a disadvantage during standardized testing, while 8 percent do not.



Sixty-nine percent of East teachers polled think that students who are above proficiency are not focused on as much as those who are below proficiency and 31 percent do not.

600 A.D.

Standardized tests are first used in China.

1914

Tests were used to assign U.S. servicemen jobs during World War I.

2001

Every public school child in grades four, eight and eleven is tested in writing statewide in Nebraska.

1800's

School-age children were being taken off farms and out of factories and put behind desks to be tested during the Industrial Revolution.

1965

First time standardized tests are required to evaluate America's schools.

2010



First year for state reading test. State math test used as a part of a pilot program.

No Child Left Behind Act restricts educational process

CHRISTINE BLAIR
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Congress released a draft bill to revamp the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2008, and in March of 2010 the Obama administration issued a proposed new draft for the act. Since the beginning of the fall semester, the Senate has been meeting to rewrite certain parts of the law.

Since it's passage in 2002, the NCLB Act has put strains on the educational system. These policies have left schools struggling to get their entire student population to pass state tests with proficiency, while hindering the teachers' abilities to instruct students.

A majority of teachers at East are not supporters of NCLB, including English instructor Laura Flahive and social studies instructor Bryce Brunswig.

"While we do anything and everything we can to help students, they ultimately have the right to fail," Flahive said. "[NCLB] is unreasonable and all that will result will be lowered standards and standardized testing en masse."

Brunswig feels the NCLB act holds no real results and has placed unrealistic expectations on teachers, schools and districts.

"The NCLB act penalizes schools for not meeting these unrealistic expectations which further contributes to a spiral of failure," Brunswig said.

Though some teachers have disagreed

with the act in the past, others have seen some positives such as English instructor Rebecca Rabick.

"The one definite positive is that [NCLB] sheds a bright light on adolescent literacy," Rabick said. "However, [NCLB] takes control away from the states and that historically has been detrimental to students' learning."

Despite students still failing standardized testing, the Obama administration has stated that the focus of NCLB has dumbed down learning and has labeled even strong academic schools as failing.

The obvious drawbacks of the act have led teachers to look at students who exceed the standards and those who do not and question whether the students who exceed the standards are receiving less attention in the classroom.

Brunswig and social studies instructor Sara Fjell said that students who exceed the standards are challenged, despite NCLB.

"We offer more advanced placement classes now for those students to take; there are still many HAL activities and clubs," Fjell said.

Flahive, on the other hand, said the exact opposite from Fjell and Brunswig when it comes to students who are above the proficient mark.

"AP courses just are not enough," Flahive said. "You can have high ability learners that aren't HAL, that aren't in AP. But because they haven't been taught or identified as 'smart' and placed in average classes, they

may prove to be little more than mediocre simply because they are in classes that teachers have to focus more on behavioral issues, rather than getting as deeply into critical thinking as teachers would like."

Flahive has plenty of students she considered advanced and said that she sees how misplaced they are.

"Not enough measures are taken to make sure they're being challenged on a district wide-level because they're under the radar; they're doing 'just fine'" Flahive said. "On the other hand, underachieving students become the priority while the higher level kids are left to fend for themselves."

Flahive's own son is in the third grade and has been subjected to standardized tests since the beginning and end of each school year since kindergarten.

"My son's scores were nowhere near what they needed to be," Flahive said. "The teacher explained that it doesn't even begin to reflect what he really knows and that he actually does very well in class."

Flahive has even seen the results of standardized testing show little validity outside of the BPS shool district.

"Another teacher [not in BPS] explained that her special education students had one of the best scores because he was a 'good clicker'" Flahive said. "[The teacher] laughed, but that proves how little values these tests truly have."

TEACHERS SPEAK ABOUT EDUCATION



"I think standardized tests give us an idea of how to measure students' progress and their learning; but it can't be the only measure. Teachers and schools do more than just teach to these tests."

social studies instructor Sara Fjell said.



"The real measure of a teacher and a school and a district is how much the student improves throughout their time there. Setting an end goal without knowing where we are starting from is foolish."

social studies instructor Bryce Brunswig said.

Effects of Standardized Testing in the classroom

NICOLE BARLETT
OPINION EDITOR

Standardized testing has taken over classrooms in Bellevue Public Schools and other districts across the nation. Students are being tested regularly throughout the school year, beginning as early as elementary school. Tests like the state reading, writing, math and science tests, and others are a concern to students and teachers alike not only because of quantity, but also because of the value being placed on the test results.

Teachers have to take time out of their class to explain the rules for the tests and teach ways of how to prepare. They also have to assign which day the students will be taking each test and where they will be tested. In addition to dealing with the students actually taking the test, teachers also have to figure out what the other students who are not taking the test will be doing. These tests can be a huge problem for teachers.

"They put pressure on students to test well, but they can also showcase what students are capable of at that point in time. All students are taking that same test, so it is good for comparing some things in education," instructor Sara Fjell said.

Some students get stressed out trying to prepare for the tests while trying to balance homework and tests in other classes and other things outside of the classroom. The students

also get stressed out trying to do well on the tests because the scores are a reflection of them.

Other students, however, do not appear to take the tests seriously and do not try to do their best. Their apathy then negatively reflects on their teachers and their school and does not show a true picture of what the students know.

Because of Bellevue East's performance on the state math test, students who have not yet taken algebra II and are juniors are receiving instruction on Mondays and Wednesdays during GPS, even if they do not want it. Aside from the burden that standardized testing places on students and teachers, there is also controversy over whether or not the tests are doing more harm than good.

"Student achievement suffers because these once-a-year tests are incapable of providing teachers with the moment-to-moment and day-to-day information about student achievement that they need to make crucial instructional decisions. Teachers must rely on classroom assessment to do this," Richard J. Stiggins said, president of Assessment Training Institute, Inc., Portland, Ore. "Our current assessment systems are harming huge numbers of students for reasons that few understand. And that harm arises directly from our failure to balance our use of standardized tests and classroom assessments in the service of school improvement."



Image courtesy of hhs.gov

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND POLICIES

George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on January 8, 2002. The goal of NCLB, according to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige "is to see every child in America - regardless of ethnicity, income or background - achieve high standards."

1. Schools must ensure that all students learn the essential skills and knowledge defined by the state using grade-level standards and benchmarks.
2. Data reporting must describe the learning journey of each student and the effectiveness of every school.
3. States should build assessment systems that track the achievement of all students against a common set of high instructional standards.
4. States will be required to assess third through eighth grade students annually in reading and mathematics.

5. All states will be required to submit plans that describe their achievement standards, aligned assessments, reporting procedures, and accountability systems.

6. Schools are encouraged to use funds for teacher retention, professional development, and technology training that best suit their needs without having to obtain separate federal approval.

7. This act will support and encourage schools to identify and use instructional programs that work.

8. This act's regulations provide options, such as transfer to another school and tutoring, for parents of children in under-performing or unsafe schools.

9. This act's regulations will provide states with far-reaching flexibility and control over how they use federal funds.

Watch out: athletes to follow winter 2011-12

MCKENNAH OTT
REPORTER



Girls Basketball
Taylor Silva

"I manage basketball and school by making sure I have at least one study hall during the season. My day consists of school, basketball, homework, then bed," junior Taylor Silva said.

"She's extremely hardworking. She's a dedicated player and teammate, and works very hard to improve herself," Coach Scott Jensen said.



Diving Team
Taylor Stevens

"I think I'm a good role model because I try to work hard and try to show others what it takes to do their best. I'm very self motivated and I push everybody to do their best," senior Taylor Stevens said.

"It's not very often a coach gets to work with someone as talented as Taylor and some coaches never get that chance," Coach Eric Sprague said.



Boys Basketball
Kyle Connor

"The reason I love basketball is because it's fun and I've been playing since I was four," senior Kyle Connor said.

"He's demonstrated willingness to work hard to be a great athlete. I expected leadership on and off the court to show he's a positive role model, and, so far, he's doing a decent job of that," Coach Tola Dada said.



Wrestling
Justin Nawrocki

"I've been wrestling since I was in second grade. My brother's wrestled, so I always looked up to them," senior Justin Nawrocki said.

"...He is a good kid, and has been [on] Varsity every year in high school, going to state every year, and has a good chance to medal in state this year," Coach Todd Porter said.

SPORTS UPDATES

JEREMY CASSIDAY
SPORTS EDITOR

FOOTBALL

The Chieftains faced one of their toughest opponents last week at Millard North. Unfortunately, the Chieftains could not get the job done and finished their season at 2-7 with no shot at playoffs.

The 2-7 season was about the best a 2-7 season can be. The record does not show how much improvement the Chieftains achieved and ultimately they became a team that could compete with anyone.

They look forward to next year where the expectations are high and the hopes are higher.



Junior Tanner Reese prepares for another down. *Photo courtesy of Bellevue East Yearbook*

GIRLS AND BOYS X-COUNTRY



Senior Jackie Mezick prepares after school for state cross country. Mezick is the only state qualifier this year. *Photo by Anna Talbott*

The Cross Country season came to a close for everyone except senior Jackie Mezick.

As the only state qualifier, Mezick had her own practices in order to prepare herself for state.

The week before state, Mezick ran eight hundred and three hundred meter runs.

Mezick believes that cross country is not for everyone.

"You have to be mentally tough and prepared to run cross country," Mezick said.

After all the hard work throughout the season, she did not do as well as she had hoped. Mezick placed 55 out of 99 runners with a time of 16:46.0. She is looking forward to making up for it in track season.

The East boys cross country team ended the year with 15 top 50 finishes among its racers.

The girls cross country team rounded the year out with 26 top 50 finishes.

SOFTBALL

Bellevue East softball is looking to improve on their season next year after a hard 5-21 2011 season.

Although the year was hard, there were a lot of good things to consider. The team consisted of a lot of freshmen who will have a chance to step up in the next few years and take the team to another level.

2011 was also head coach Tom Horton's second year coaching the Chieftains. He will have more time at East under his belt in the next few years and will have plenty of opportunity to build and maintain the program. Right now as a coach he is in the beginning phases of getting the program together.

Expect big things from East softball in the future.



Junior Kaelynn Been makes the play at second as Millard North tries to steal. Bellevue East lost to Millard North in the first round of districts. *Photo courtesy of Tim Keefer*

UPCOMING SPORTS



Winter sports are quickly approaching - November 17 to be exact. Look forward to seeing boys and girls basketball, swimming and diving, and wrestling to represent East this season.

Girls basketball is looking for a state title repeat from last year, after beating out Bellevue West for the championship game.

Junior Jayla Hobza is back for another season, and all eyes will be on her. Last year, she led the Chieftains to the state championship and the expectations are just as high this year.

Boys basketball head coach Tola Dada said his team can be very competitive if the players can accept and run with the coaching that's given.

After a 9-14 season, the Chieftains have a solid foundation to work with and improve upon. As always, a state title

The swim team is looking to make it to Metros for a shot at state again this year. The only state qualifier from last year graduated, so it's time for a new athlete to step up to the plate. Ultimately, the swim team is looking to improve as a program and as individuals.

Finally, wrestling, who finished at their highest place yet last year in the metro tournament, is facing the possibility of finishing even better. East always has a strong wrestling team under the coaching of Todd Porter and this year could potentially be their best yet.

Spring conditioning begins this winter as well. Anyone competing in spring sports should see their coach for details.

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Pelzers face off in football, have each others' backs



Sophomore Brady Pelzer and Senior Jared Pelzer attempt to hug out their rivalry. They both had a major impact on varsity football. *Photo by Morgan Barrett*

JOSCELYN RAGONE
WEB EDITOR

Those that have brothers and sisters should be aware of the term “sibling rivalry.” Rivalry is created either by trying to gain control of something, or is created by the drive to be better than their sibling in an activity like sports. A very common sport siblings play at the same time at East is football.

Senior Jared Pelzer and his brother, sophomore Brady Pelzer, are both on the varsity football team.

They both have about the same amount of playing time on the field, and they recognize the sibling rivalry that sometimes occurs between the two of them, but they enjoy the atmosphere the rivalry creates.

“Rivalries are part of sports, and sibling rivalries make people better,” Jared said.

With the age difference between the two, the opinions on a rivalry vary. Brady recognizes the fact that Jared is a great player and is a significant player on the team. But, he still strives to be better than Jared.

Jared, however, has a commitment to make sure Brady does not reach that particular goal.

“I am the eldest, so I have to show him what’s up,” Jared said.

Regardless of who has to show the other up, the rivalry is different on the field for practice versus during a game, according to Brady.

“In practice, my brother and I push each other more than our other teammates, and we make each other better. But in games, we look out for one another and we can kind of communicate with one another by just looking at each other. Also, because he starts on offense and I start on defense, he helps me understand what varsity receivers will try to do to get open,” Brady said.

Whether the two brothers are in practice or in a game, in the end, they came to the conclusion that they support one another. Even when they talk a lot of “smack” to each other in practices, and at home try to get in each other’s head, they are always there for each other in the end.

“Overall, it makes us a lot better,” said Jared.

Powderpuff football: Different experiences from being a fan, player, coach

JEREMY CASSIDAY
SPORTS EDITOR

The world of football is an intricate, complicated and sometimes confusing one. As a fan I have had ten years to learn the game. As a player, I have had five seasons to learn it firsthand. And still there are intricacies that I have a hard time grasping.

Now put yourself in the cleats of a female athlete. Although you have had significant experience in other sports and you’ve watched as a fan, you may have never set foot on a football field in a competitive situation. And you are doing it to represent your entire class.

I was presented the opportunity to coach the junior girls team this year and I am so glad I took it.

As a player, the transition to coach is a whole new ball game. I saw the game in a way I had never seen before and I saw our girls working harder than I thought anyone would be to learn the game.

Just one example of this is Junior Zee Jurado. In a single practice one Thursday, she had three different intercepts as a saftey. That only happens with hard work and a knowledge of the defense that comes with practice.

What can often happen as a player is you

get so caught up in doing your own assignments and worrying about everything that you personally have to do, you lose track of the flow of the defense that you are only one-eleventh of.

As a coach, you really need to understand the entire scheme of the defense in order to effectively teach the girls what their assignments are. It is also easy as a player to get distracted and worry about one aspect of play while disregarding another, when ultimately the entire thing has to come together in one fluid action.

When you coach you have to be aware of everything a player is doing and be sure to explain how one facet of an action plays into the whole. It is also important to work up to putting all of these parts together and not just dive into whatever single responsibility a player has before explaining it.

Probably most important, however, is to ultimately have fun. While coaching, it is really easy to get so focused on teaching or showing or practicing that you lose track of the fact that in the end powder puff football is about having a good time and representing your class. It has been an amazing experience and I will definitely want to coach next year with these girls. Get ready class of 2014, it’s coming.



Junior Jeremy Cassiday high fives Junior Frani Zyla after an outstanding play during practice. Zyla had just gotten a flag pull on defense. *Photo by Morgan Barrett*

NBA LOCKOUT: Pro season could be canceled

CHRISTINE BLAIR
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The National Basketball Association (NBA) has reached a deadlock in its negotiations between the basketball players and the league owners. This lockout started back early in July 2011, and will continue until the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) and the NBA owners reach a deal.

The NBA claims to have lost \$300 million a year and the owners have proposed to reduce 40 percent of the players’ salary and institute a hard salary cap at \$45 million per team each year. The players on the other hand feel like their pay should be kept where it is at.

At the end of Sept., the NBA began cancelling league activities. The training camp, which was to begin Oct. 3, and the pre-season games from Oct. 9 through the 15

have already been canceled along with the first two weeks of the regular season

“Players remain very, very far apart on virtually all issues,” NBA commissioner David Stern said. “We just have a gulf that separates us. We are so far apart ... we can’t close the gap.”

If an agreement cannot be reached between the NBPA and the NBA owners, the 2011-2012 basketball season may be canceled for good.

The players union has begun to encourage players to find work overseas, and already 60 players have decided to sign with foreign teams during the lockout, including All-Star Deron Williams and former first overall draft pick Kenyon Martin while several other foreign players have decided to stay in their home countries until the lockout ends. Until then, players might have to live on meager salaries overseas.

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True respect is earned, not given

STAFF EDITORIAL

Respect is showing consideration and a certain amount of reverence toward other people and things. Whether it is living organisms or inanimate objects, people need to respect it all.

Some people may disagree. They may not respect everything the way that they should, but that’s where the question of whether or not respect is given or earned comes into play.

The answer is quite simple. Basic respect is given, but real respect is earned.

Bellevue East students should show basic respect toward one another. It comes back to the golden rule learned in elementary school, “treat others the way you want to be treated.”

In a school of 1,500 students, there is no way for a person to know everyone, but he or she doesn’t have to know everyone personally to show them respect.

Students should respect their peers by treating them with consideration. Bullying is one of the cruelest, most disrespectful things students can participate in. No one deserves to be treated like scum.

There’s also a minimum standard of respect that should be shown toward people. Adults, teachers, administrators, and anyone holding a higher position than oneself, should always be shown respect.

When teachers have to leave, one of their biggest concerns is their students’ behavior. How are students going to treat the sub? In reality, teachers shouldn’t even have to think twice about having a sub be respected.

It shouldn’t be an issue because students need to respect the sub because the subs are adults and are left in charge. It’s hard for a sub to step into a classroom full of judgmental teenagers, so make it a little easier on him or her by showing

respect.

While everyone should be shown basic respect, it takes more for someone to be shown earned respect. Being honest, trustworthy, and hardworking earn people true respect. True respect is shown to admirable leaders and role models, people that others should aspire to be.

Earned respect cannot be shown to just anyone. Without knowing someone, it’s hard to show them the utmost respect. They have to earn respect and prove themselves in some way. They must prove that they are trustworthy and admirable before someone can show them true, venerated respect.

Respect is both given and earned, not just one or the other. As human beings, everyone deserves to be shown basic respect, but there are some people in each individual’s life that have proven themselves worthy of true, earned respect.

Family Relationships



NICOLE BARTLETT
OPINION EDITOR

When I was younger I looked up to my parents a lot. I thought they were the best thing ever, they bought my clothes, painted my room any color I wanted it, made the best cookies ever (peanut butter). They gave me pretty much anything I wanted or asked for.

We were not rich by any means, my parents did not attend college, but they did work their tail ends off to try and provide for me the best life that they could. However, as a teenager our relationship became less loving and more strained. I am not saying that I do not love my parents anymore because I will always love them unconditionally.

As I grew older though, I became more rebellious, as my mother repeatedly likes to say, as a result of my actions. As I got older, I began doing bad things such as skipping class, or lying about going somewhere, or even sneaking out of my house at night while my parents were sound asleep in their room. I tried harder to be more independent, our relationship got even more complicated. My mom and I would always fight, no matter what it was about - even a dirty t-shirt on my bed or not putting my shoes in the closet.

As time progressed, these issues became a lot more serious and things got even more difficult. We would scream and yell very degrading and hurtful things at each other. I would yell that I wanted to move out or that I wanted to get emancipated as soon as I could.

Since these problems began happening so often and I know that

I am not the only one with these problems, I researched why such conflict happens. Kira Birditt, a researcher at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research (ISR) said, “The parent-child relationship is one of the longest lasting social ties human beings establish. This tie is often highly positive and supportive, but it also commonly includes feelings of irritation, tension and ambivalence.”

In my opinion, the angry feelings occur because so much frustration builds up after many arguments and they keep reoccurring, which then causes conflict to escalate. I strongly believe that the roots of most family problems are because that the student is trying to become independent. Some parents believe that with independence and freedom comes responsibility. If you are responsible, then your freedom grows. The parent, however, seems to try to keep the control they had of the child to ensure safety and out of love.

Many solutions can help these issues. Counseling is a positive solution that many families around the country turn to when things get bad. Just because a person is in counseling does not mean that they are crazy; they are just in search of help. For my family, this is what we have turned to. We went to multiple sessions in desperate need of help. The counselor does not fix our problems, but helps us come to an understanding about how to change in a positive way.

Another way to help ease the tension is by better communication. With my family, we sometimes fight because my parents forget what I’ve told them about my schedule. Investing in a calendar and everyone writing their schedule for every day could help. Also, parents worry about us, so to make it easier, send your parents a text letting them know where you are and what you are doing.

For a better family relationship, everyone needs to work as hard as they can to heal. Family is forever. “The parent-child relationship is one of the longest lasting social ties human beings establish,” Birditt said.

East students speak out about GPS



Zachary Newman - 9

“For some [GPS] is a waste of time, for some it’s not. Because I’m involved in other activities, it gives me time to get things done.”



Brittney Younk - 11

“I think [GPS] is pointless. If someone needs a study hall they can take it. Not everyone needs the extra time.”



Sharesha Mapp - 12

“GPS can be a great investment of your time if students will open their mind to the fact that the more you get done at school, the less you have to do at home.”

TOM TOM STAFF

CHRISTINE BLAIR
EDITOR IN CHIEF

KATIE KEEFER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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NEWS EDITOR

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OPINION EDITOR

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The role of the Tom Tom is not only to promote the accomplishments and highlights of the school, but also to inform the Bellevue East community of events and issues that will affect the students, faculty, staff, administration, and community. Its primary focus is to serve Bellevue East High School and cover issues that affect teenagers today. The Tom Tom does not necessarily represent views of the Bellevue Public Schools and strives to support itself through advertising. In order to achieve the optimum learning situation, as well as serve its audience to the best of its ability, the staff believes that the decisions should rest primarily with the adviser and editor, according to standards of journalism. Material judged to cause significant psychological harm, or that violates the privacy of a person, or that is libelous will not be printed. Obscenity or profanity will not be printed in the Tom Tom. Stories in the Tom Tom will be based on substantial facts with quotes clearly attributed to named sources whenever possible. The Tom Tom will not run gossip or stories or columns founded on rumor without facts. Any student appearing at a public event such as a sports event or music concert may be photographed, and that photo may be published without violating the privacy of that individual.

Concert adventure: Of Mice and Men

JAYME WYBLE
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

“Omaha, if you’re not head-banging you’re not having a good time,” Austin Charlile, lead screamer/vocalist for Of Mice and Men yelled to the crowd.

Close to Home, Texas In July, Of Mice and Men, Miss May I, and We Came As Romans were all the bands on the “I’m Alive,” tour which came to Omaha on Oct. 8.

Having been to my fair share of hardcore shows, it was a no-brainer that I would be attending this one as well; especially since I had never seen Of Mice And Men or We Came As Romans.

Now it’s safe to say that we can go ahead and add that night to my “top ten sketchy decisions.” Though I tried, I could not find

anyone who wanted to go with me, so I went solo. Now this does not seem so bad, until you take everything into consideration. I went alone to a hardcore show at The Sokol Underground.

Though I was conflicted about the decision, I brushed off the worries, got my hand stamped and stood in back for the first two bands.

Close to Home and Texas In July put on a good show, but my heart was set on was seeing We Came As Romans.

Now, if you have never been to The Sokol Underground, you are not missing much. It is a basement. I counted a total of four windows, I am pretty sure if I jumped too high I could touch the ceiling and when the bands come out all the lights in the room go off except for the stage

lights.

Of Mice and Men held true to peoples’ predictions. They put on one of the best shows I have been too. Sounding just like they do on their CD, which is not always the case with hardcore shows. Typically, they are not as good live. Of Mice and Men was now added to my list of bands that break that mold.

I do have to say I was disappointed to not hear their cover of Lady Gaga’s “Pokerface,” but they played a flawless set nonetheless.

Now some readers might disagree, but Miss May I is not my cup of tea. I walked across the street to Burger King where my mother was instead.

This turned out to be the best decision of my night. I was sitting there enjoying a quality Snapple

when I turn to see a group of guys sitting down at a table close to mine.

Of Mice and Men was sitting three steps away from me. After a few more minutes I started walking back, and we all ended up waiting to cross the same street. Striking up conversation, but trying to hide my excitement, we ended up talking about their music.

Only moments later I found myself in the mosh-pit, still with Of Mice and Men, enjoying one of my favorite bands: We Came As Romans.

They in no way were a disappointment either. They played a stunning half hour set, including my favorite song, “Roads that don’t end and views that never cease.”

Ultimately, it was worth feeling a little uncomfortable, almost

passing out of heat stroke, slightly spraining my ankle in the mosh-pit and having a girl try to give me her phone number.

Every small set back was wiped out when I found myself in the crowd listening to We Came As Romans and rocking out with Of Mice and Men.

The truth is, in the end that is just what comes with the hardcore lifestyle, and I would recommend that any day.

Sometimes, you have to make a sketchy decision to end up in a mosh-pit with the guys of Of Mice and Men.

Next time We Came As Romans and Of Mice and Men play in Omaha I would recommend seeing them if you have the chance, but be prepared for a crazy night.

Charity products that benefit others

ANNA TALBOTT
PHOTOGRAPHER

Reaching out in the international community may seem too far fetched and improbable for most high school students to do. Recently, however, products whose efforts better the international community by providing basic necessities such as: education, clothing, food, and even conflict free lifestyles have become a trend. Students are now capable of helping out in other nations without the expense of airfare, passports, or visas. Instead, they buy a product here, and in turn help someone in need.

One popular product that has begun to trend is the well-known TOMS shoes. “I like TOMS because they’re comfortable and it’s such a good cause,” Junior and TOMS fan, Paige Kurtz said. “It’s awesome we buy shoes and are helping someone in return.”

With every pair purchased, TOMS will give a pair of new shoes to a child in need. Many may wonder how giving shoes could be so important. According to toms.com, children are at risk in developing nations. Many diseases in these countries are soil transmitted. Also, children without shoes are unable to attend school, because it is a required part of their uniform.

“I know I wouldn’t want to walk around high school without shoes, so help someone in need. Buy TOMS,” Kurtz said.

Another product that has been floating around the Bellevue community are the YUDA bands sold by the Bellevue East

Key Club, and made by Guatemalan students and their parents.

Bulletin Editor for the Nebraska-Iowa District of Key Club and Bellevue East Key Club president, Senior Emma Betz, explained that the bracelets are \$7 each, out of which \$3 goes towards basic necessities of students in Guatemala, whom the Bellevue East Key Club has chosen to sponsor, and \$2 goes toward their education, and the other \$2 goes toward material costs.

“It not only brings the school and community together, but it opens our eyes to see what’s in the world and how well off we are here,” Betz said.

Junior Chayce Kenny bought a LUDA band for a friend, and said that he found the cause of these bracelets to be very empowering and uplifting.

“I would encourage people to buy these types of products because in our society so many people are only concerned with themselves, not worrying about others. So this is a way for them to reach out to others, while getting something for themselves,” Kenny said.

There are many other products trending around the world whose sale better the international community through providing basic necessities such as: education, clothing, food, and even conflict-free lifestyles.

For example, Falling Whistles is an organization devoted to seeing an end to the wars in the Congo which use child soldiers. Falling Whistles sells fashionable clothing as well as whistles, because in some militias, the children who are too small to carry



Junior Shyann Guerra wears her TOMS shoes not only for style but to help the TOMs foundation give shoes to needy children. *Photo by Cameron Sada.*

guns, so they stand on the front lines of battle carrying nothing but a whistle to warn their opposition, and literally use their bodies as a human shield. One hundred percent of these proceeds go toward bringing a conflict free lifestyle to child soldiers. The products may be found online at www.fallingwhistles.com.

Krochet Kids International is another

empowering organization who employs women in developing nations around the world. They sell an array of crocheted accessories as well as clothing, made by women who have overcome poverty. Their products can also be found online at: www.krochetkids.org.

These products are changing lives around the world while still adhering to the western world’s way of consumerism.



Senior Shawn Farley sporting a LUDA band, which is not only cute and eco-friendly designed, but helps Guatemalan children attend school. *Photo by Cameron Sada.*





When are you too old? Defining the acceptable age for trick-or-treating

DUSTIN FITZPATRICK
FEATURES EDITOR

With Halloween approaching, there is something that runs through the minds of students in high school: is trick-or-treating still acceptable at their age?

“No, buy your own candy because trick-or-treating is a holiday for kids and you are no longer a kid in high school. It is time to grow up,” instructor Jason Waller said.

Waller is looking at the growing-up aspect of things, but junior Jeana Mosley could not disagree with Waller’s view more.

“Yes it is. Of course it is. There is no age limit on having fun. Everyone needs to have their child moment at times and it is free candy,” Mosley said.

Another student also shares the same view with Mosley.

“It is a form of an outlet for teens and it allows teens to be creative and have fun with groups. It is the one time when cross-dressing is acceptable,” junior Ryan Jones said.

Along with Mosley and Jones, a senior also expressed his view on trick-or-treating in high school.

“It is acceptable, especially if you have younger brothers and sisters,” senior Roosevelt Boyland said.

Though Waller has a strictly adult view on Halloween now, he remembers partaking in some activities on that day when he was younger.

“The only Halloween prank we ever pulled was tee-peeing houses and it was a mainly a contest between the students to see who could get who the worst. Usually,

I’d get together with my friends and watch scary movies all night,” Waller said.

Jones also has experience in the “Halloween pranks” department as well.

“I stood still in my yard while in costume and jump at trick-or-treaters to scare them. I have scared little children and trick-or-treat in the Fontenelle Hills area,” Jones said.

In the past for Halloween, Mosley has done different things from Waller and Jones.

“I went with a friend and we dressed up with whatever we found in the closet and walked around base housing and people just started giving us candy, so we took it. I either help out at my church or hang out with friends on Halloween,” Mosley said.

Other things that Mosley heard

that others were doing for Halloween was haunted house hunting, hanging out at graveyards, costume parties, working at churches, and making their own haunted house.

How Boyland celebrates Halloween now is by getting candy from his parents.

But since Waller has grown up, he tends to do other things on the kids’ holiday now.

“I take my children out trick-or-treating for a small fee of splitting some of their candy,” Waller said.

What Waller loves most about Halloween is his kids’ excitement. According to Waller, it is just a fun time and he gets to relive some of his childhood moments through his kids.

Mosley, still being somewhat young, loves completely different things than Waller when it comes

to Halloween.

“My favorite thing about Halloween is the costumes because I love dressing up. It is so much fun. Also, the candy that Halloween brings,” Mosley said.

For those people who find that they really cannot get into the holiday, Mosley has advice in order to make things fun for them.

“People should throw parties because you and your friends are comfortable around each other so dressing crazy and having fun is not weird. Plus, you can access your cocky side and show off,” Mosley said.

Waller has one thing to say to those teens that still trick-or-treat: “Find something more age appropriate for you to do. Leave the trick or treating alone and go hang out with friends.”

Mystery Manor still scares

JOSCELYN RAGONE
WEB EDITOR

I don’t like clowns. In fact, you could say that I despise them with the passion of a million fiery suns. Seriously, they freak me out. Maybe it was because when I was little, my mom would take me to the Shrine Circus and force me to hug every single clown that we would come across.

Who knows; the reasons as to why I want them all to disappear off the planet are endless. So when I was walking up to Mystery Manor with my friends, and saw a clown prancing around like he owned the place, I was little skeptical about going any further.

But, wait. It got even better; the clown was smiling like a maniac, had blood dripping everywhere on his body, and he was in the process of scaring a group of girls. I tried to turn back, but one of my friends grabbed my arm and pushed me forward.

We waited in line for about 15 minutes, and the entire time I was on guard. The self-titled “creepers,” were characters from Mystery Manor who walked among the people standing in line, hissing in their ears, making loud noises from behind, and using other various scare tactics to cause fear.

I almost fell prey to one of the



Mystery Manor, built in 1887, is said to be haunted by its former owner William Hall. Hall chopped up his wife Greta with an ax and buried her in the front yard. *Photo courtesy of mysterymanor-maha.org*

creepers, but thankfully noticed that he was behind me before he could do anything to cause me to jump.

By then I honestly was ready to punch someone, adrenaline coursing through my veins as we inched closer to the entrance of the house.

Then, the time came for us to go inside. I noticed that the hallway leading inside was lit up, so my tension eased up a bit.

Well, I shouldn’t have made the mistake of letting that happen. Within the first few steps of walking inside, I screamed. The rest of the journey through the house, I

was hidden behind someone, never letting go, with my eyes closed. By the time that we were done, I was on the brink of hitting someone (again), and just booking it to my car.

So, if you’re interested in going to a haunted house that will scare you, I’d recommend Mystery Manor. For what it’s worth, I was scared before we had even gone inside, but that could just be my insane fear of clowns acting up.

It’s not necessarily one of the best haunted houses that I’ve been in, but it definitely gets the job done.

List for fall

Go to the pumpkin patch.

Carve a silly face into a pumpkin.

Go to a haunted house.

Pick a costume and go trick-or-treating.

Enjoy some pumpkin pie, caramel apples and other treats.

Jump into a pile of leaves.

Have a bonfire with some friends and roast a marshmallow.

Watch a scary movie or two.

Drink some hot chocolate and apple cider.