

October 31 2012
Volume: 36 Issue: 2



bellevue west high school

1501 Thurston ave, bellevue, ne 68123
bw.newspaper@gmail.com
www.thethunderbeat.org
402-293-4068



Photos by Annalesha Schneider

(Left) Students who are eligible for open campus lunch have specially-made school ID cards. (Right) A West senior leaves for open campus lunch. Students with open campus lunch can drive to nearby restaurants during lunch time.

West campus opens for outside lunch

Ashley Quintela
Features Editor

Each year students look forward to the moment when sitting in the school cafeteria for lunch is not their only option, but students had to earn the privilege.

In past years, students were considered for open-campus lunch only by their GPA.

This year, in order for seniors to be eligible for open-campus lunch, students must have passed all of their NeSA tests as juniors. The tests include math, reading, writing, and science. If students do not meet or exceed the passing scores, they do not qualify for open-campus lunch. In some cases though, teachers are able to recommend students they believe should have passed.

Not only have the requirements changed, but so has the time frame. This year, open-campus lunch was issued first semester. Last year, students were not allowed to leave the building for lunch during the first semester.

Seniors that did qualify are thrilled about their open-campus

lunch arrangements.

"I like it because I don't have to be around anyone that annoys me," senior Nick Guida said.

Though there are upsides to having lunch outside the building, there are downsides as well. Students only have thirty minutes to leave, eat lunch, and return in time for their fifth or sixth hour class.

For some, the time limit was no problem. Luckily for students, the school is surrounded by several food chains. This is helpful so students can get to their next class on time.

"I try to go to the fastest and the cheapest, which is normally Burger King or McDonalds," senior Kyle Ofc said.

Even though the amount of time given might be enough for certain restaurants, concerns were given about others.

"I'm concerned about Chick-Fil-A when that opens. It's going to be so busy," principal Kevin Rohlf said.

Though the opening of Chick-Fil-A is right around the corner, other fast food chain earned high ranks on Guida's scale.

"I always go to Arby's because you get a lot of food for a good price. The DECA card has a really good deal," Guida said.

Aside from being on time for class, other rules can keep students from open-campus lunch. The open-campus lunch process consists of several rules.

Some rules include: students will be respectful of the restaurants, students cannot spend their lunch period in the parking lot, students cannot bring food back into the building for themselves or others, and open-campus lunch may be cancelled due to inclement weather.

If students break any of the rules presented to them in the open-campus lunch form, the privilege may be revoked.

This year the NeSA test scores became a big deal to students because it either allowed them to go out for lunch or remain dining in for their senior year. As long as students follow the rules, open-campus lunch will not be taken away.

"I hope this will inspire students to do well on the NeSA tests," Rohlf said.



Graphic by Logan Wisniewski

Bellevue West High School is a certified voting location.

Voters in Precinct 20 located between Giles road and 25th Street can vote at Bellevue West.

Government teachers Tara Patomson and Lou Harrison registered over 50 students to vote in the past few years.

Bellevue West falls in Congressional District 2. Nebraska tends to support Republican candidates.*

*Information provided by realclearpolitics.com

Band: marching to success

Stephanie Henry
Reporter

On October 20, the Bellevue West Marching Band won the Nebraska State Bandmaster's Association competition for the third year in a row.

"It's been a gradual growth, but we've accomplished things this year that we've never accomplished before," band director Kyle Haugen said.

On Saturday, Sept. 22, the Bellevue West Marching Band competed in the Pursuit of Excellence competition in Marshall, Minn.

"This year we did win a competition in Marshall, Minnesota that we don't usually win so there's been more successes this year than in past years," Haugen said.

"The Marshall competition is easy but fun," senior Stephen Lawrence said.

Senior Libby Grenon agrees.

"It's not really that hard. We've won in our class every year and this year we won grand champion because we moved up a class," Grenon said.

A "class" is usually dependent on the size of the band. The marching band competes against other bands within their class. What competition they're competing in and where the competition is determines who they compete against.

"This year especially, we've competed against some really good bands, and some larger bands as well. And in the world of band, it's always better," Lawrence said. "[It means] bigger sound so it's easier to project the themes of the show."

According to Lawrence, they've won a few other competitions that they don't usually win.

"Two weeks ago we won against Valleyfest in Valley, Iowa. That's the first time we've ever won it. Same with Blue Springs, Missouri," Lawrence said.

In each competition, the bands are judged on a number of things.

"Usually we are judged on music, general effect, visual, brass, woodwind, color guard and percussion," senior Jeremy Morton said.

So far the marching band has had a successful season, earning first in each of their competitions.

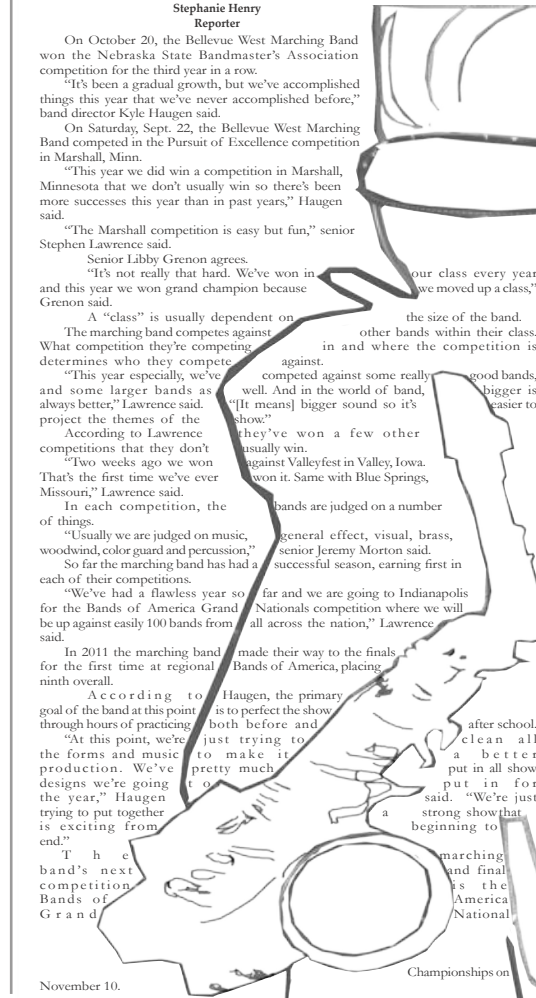
"We've had a flawless year so far and we are going to Indianapolis for the Bands of America Grand Nationals competition where we will be up against easily 100 bands from all across the nation," Lawrence said.

In 2011 the marching band made their way to the finals for the first time at regional Bands of America, placing ninth overall.

According to Haugen, the primary goal of the band at this point is to perfect the show through hours of practicing both before and after school.

"At this point, we're just trying to clean all the forms and music to make it a better put in all show production. We've pretty much put in for the year," Haugen said. "We're just trying to put together a strong show that beginning to end."

The band's next competition is the Bands of America Grand Championships on November 10.



Graphic by Candi Bolden and Kyle Malone

All-State Choir

Hannah Biggs
Brooke Lewis
Hannah Stoyrich
Amanda Wright
Morgan Liedke
Marcel Daly
Chris Beeman
Thomas Stoyrich
Alec Koukol
Katy Boone
Caleb Hager
Jeremy Morton

All-State Band

Emily Vokal
Libby Grenon
Brooke Stelly
Jacob Bos
Sam Hildalgo
Drew Shifter
Lauren Hanson
Quintin Bittick
Gelli Gonzalez
Chandler Smith

For more see All State helps Band and Choir improve on page 5.



Photo by Kyle Malone

(Left to Right) Junior Jacques Pecha, senior Erica Dalen, senior Toby Brooks, senior Taylor Kuhlman, junior Mikayla Zimmerman, senior Kellie Testa, senior Abby Sorenson, senior Taylor Hess, senior Nacarra Eona-Conrad, junior Breanna Carter, sophomore Annie Norman, junior Jennis Castello, sophomore Emily Digheans pose before performing for Bellevue West-Burke football game. West guard received Best Guard at Nebraska State Bandmasters Association (NSBA).

Index

news 2
entertainment 3
features 4-5
commentary 6-7
sports 8

news

Students lined up for Apple's latest creation. page 2

entertainment

The drawbacks of Gangnam Style. page 3

features

A West junior wears whistle for peace. page 4

commentary

The two sides of the friendzone. page 6

sports

450 miles pays off: Cross County goes to State. page 8

Anyway you slice it, Apple comes out on top

Hailey Stolz
Commentary Editor

For the Wisniewski family, the premier of the iPhone 5 was an all-day event. The family spent Sept. 22 standing in line for 14 hours to be the first to get their hands on the phones.

"I'm a really big Apple fan, so anything Apple I like to get. I was using an Android phone—an old version of it—so I really wanted an update," senior Logan Wisniewski said.

The Wisniewskis brought lawn chairs and computers to entertain themselves. At 7:00 p.m. the day before the phone was released, Logan said the only people in line were him, his sister sophomore Kristen Wisniewski and their mother. By the time the doors opened Logan said the line increased to around 28 people.

"It was a little cold but a good experience," Kristen said.

Logan says he didn't skip school the day he started camping out, but the day after he did.

Sophomore Courtney Rippey also skipped out on her usual activities to pick up the phone. She says the day it came out she got out of volleyball practice early to get the iPhone 5.

Advanced graphics and a new design are features that have drawn these iPhone users in. Junior Jack Glover said the graphics are a lot sharper, both because the phone's content has improved and the thin screen makes the resolution pop.

The camera has also received a lot of positive feedback.

"My favorite thing is probably the camera because I like taking pictures and it has a really good camera," junior Alexa Burmeister said.

Rippey feels the camera is an improvement. She also likes the iPhone messaging system. She says she likes that she can see when people open their messages.

The battery life is what Kirsten found was a reliable touch the iPhone 5 has to offer.

"I use my phone constantly and it still lasts me the whole day. It's way better than my old phone that lasted half a day," Kirsten said.

Despite these helpful features, not everything about the phone was impressive. Rippey says she wishes it was thinner.

The previous iPhone, the 4S, hadn't even been out for a year before the 5 was released. Though the changes between the phones were evident, Logan said they were also minimal.

"Between the iPhone 5 and the 4S, software-wise it doesn't do anything more," Logan said.

Glover had the iPhone 4S before, then sold it to purchase the 5. Unlike Logan, he does notice changes between the phones. He said it's a lot better, thinner and faster.

The cost of the iPhone has received mixed reviews.

"I'm pretty happy with the cost because they keep getting better and the prices aren't raising. They must be doing something right," Logan said.

His sister, however, feels differently.

"It is too high of a cost. If I didn't have an upgrade I wouldn't have bought it," Kirsten said.

Rippey also feels Apple charged too much for the iPhones. Rippey stated that the phone is overpriced, considering Apple used less expensive material to make it than they had with previous iPhones.

Logan, Kirsten, Glover, Rippey and Burmeister were all pleased with the phone as a whole.

At the end of the day, Logan says standing in line for 14 hours was worth the wait.

"I love it," Logan said. "No regrets."

Photo by Nolan Bald and Logan Wisniewski

Poetry club prepares to slam

Stephanie Henry
Reporter

After the final bell rings Thursday afternoons, a small group of aspiring poets make their way from across the school to room 124 for the weekly poetry club meeting.

This year the club has a new coach—Andrew Ek.

"I've only been to two meetings with [Andrew]. Last year we had Gage Wallace. Gage was a great coach and we'll miss him a lot," junior Lizzy Hines said.

In Nov. 2007, Ek was going to school to become an English teacher. But by 2008, Ek was on a slam team that placed 9th in the world.

"Since then I've been teaching, writing, and performing poetry all over the state," Ek said.

Ek is part of the organization that puts together the local Louder than a Bomb competitions and events.

"So when Gage Wallace ended up moving, [the director] said there was free space here and I had free time on the day that the club met," Ek said. "I also used to be a substitute here too."

The members, especially the returning members, are excited about their new coach.

"He's a great poet. We got to see some of his work last year at other slams. We're excited," junior Clayton Shellgren said.

Members anticipate few changes in the club despite its change of leadership.

"I think the meetings in general will be a little different. Having two different coaches with two different styles will make it different but it's still about the poetry and it will still be fun," Hines said.

Shellgren agrees. "I think the style of writing and the style of poetry will be different now," Shellgren said.

The club itself is considered a safe place to share thoughts, feelings, and ideas conveyed through the art of poetry.

"The poetry club gives students a place to be open, share ideas, and be comfortable with their ideas. It's a place for writers of any kind to share what they're working on and make it even better," Hines said. "I think what I like best is it gives you a chance to say what you want to say. You don't have to hold back."

West's chapter of Louder than a Bomb debuted last winter.

Louder than a Bomb is a statewide youth poetry slam competition and festival in which schools put together teams of between four to eight students who perform individual work in front of audiences of several hundred people. The competitions start at the end of March and run through the beginning of April. Until then, the members will write and prepare.

"Initially, we'll be doing a lot of writing, sharing, and workshoping a lot of new pieces with the ultimate goal of putting together a team of eight for the local Louder

than a Bomb slam festival," Ek said.

According to Ek, the club members will start to perform their pieces for the public in upcoming months, prior to the local Louder than a Bomb competitions.

"I'm really looking forward to here in another month or two starting to put together public performances and scrimmages with other schools and putting together lots of group pieces," Ek said. "There will be lots of lots of performance opportunities. [We'll be] putting on some really good shows."

After writing and practicing, the members get the opportunity to share in front of audiences that appreciate the work that they put in.

"We write poetry," Shellgren said. "But also it's a group, so when we write poetry we help each other and we get to go to the youth Louder than a Bomb slam and compete in poetry. I like the creativity you can have with poetry to express yourself. Louder than a Bomb is a place to express it where people will appreciate it."

Both Hines and Shellgren are excited to get to know the new members.

"I last year we got really close and learned each other's styles and this year there's new people so we get to learn their styles," Shellgren said.

The poetry club earned second place in the finals last year, with Spirit of the Slams award.

Out of state, out of money

Candi Bolden
Editor-in-Chief

Last year of the 295 seniors that applied to college, 220 applied to Nebraska schools. Each year around November seniors start applying to schools, though Nebraska schools aren't often their top choice. Some students start high school with out of state aspirations but later change their mind.

Junior Lorian Harkey wants to attend an Ivy League after she graduates.

"Since I've been young I've heard that they have a good reputation and that a lot of people strive to go there. So I think if I have the potential to I should try my best to get to the best school I can possibly get to," Harkey said.

So far out of the 34 schools students in the class of 2013 have applied to, two are Ivy League while twelve are located in Nebraska.

Seniors Chris Crockrom and Preston Lauterbach both have chosen Nebraska after considering out-of-state schools.

Lauterbach is applying to UNK.

"The [wrestling] coach recruited me and it costs way less," Lauterbach said.

Lauterbach considered going to University of Wyoming, but decided in-state was better for him. Crockrom also considered an out of state school but is now applying in-state to UNO and Creighton.

"It's closer to family and it's cheaper," Crockrom said.

Career Development facilitator Julie Sorenson helps students with after high school plans in the career center all four years, but it's more intensive the fall of their junior year through their senior year. One issue she informs students about is student loan debt and the price of colleges.

"They need to know that maybe it's better to pay in-state

tuition than to go out of state for their undergraduate work especially if they can get some of that paid for through scholarships," Sorenson said.

Harvard has tuition that costs \$153,920 for four years. If a student received student loans it would cost \$173,511 after graduation, according to collegeanswers.com. UNO, UNK and UNL all cost under \$78,144 for four years.

"Student loan debt has exceeded consumer debt at this time and I think kids need to know that," Sorenson said.

Sorenson does say that the choice depends on the student whether they want an in-state college, out-of-state, or neither.

"Schooling is not for everybody; the military is a great route, for some kids apprenticeships are good. We always have kids that go both routes. Another thing I talked about this year is the gap year where kids take a year off to improve themselves," Sorenson said.

The gap year is a year for students to take off from school before moving on to college.

For some students the drawback from out-of-state schools is money. Senior Aggie Query never really thought about attending anything other than an in-state school. "[I] consider out of state if I won the lottery," Query said.

Query plans to be a special education teacher and thinks in-state will be more cost efficient for her.

A newer drawback from out of state schools, specifically the Ivy League and top tier schools, are binding applications.

5.9% of college's that west student applied to have a binding application. Binding applications have two categories: early decision and single choice. According to collegeboard.com "if a student

applies to a college early decision that student is agreeing to attend if accepted." They also cannot apply to other schools with a binding application.

Single choice makes it so students can only apply to the one school early but can apply to others afterwards.

Harkey has heard of binding applications and dislikes the idea of them.

"I think that it's hard for kids to decide that early because they may think they want to go to one school but then they change their mind and there stuck there," Harkey.

Senior Emily Vokal has applied to the academically competitive college Northwestern in Chicago. Northwestern's early application is a binding application.

"I don't want to make it in [Northwestern] and be forced to pay \$40,000 a year when I get into one for free," Vokal said.

Early decision is often confused with early action.

"If a student applies to a college early action, those plans are non-binding. They receive usually an early response to their application but they do not have to commit to that college until the normal reply date, which is usually around May 1," counselor Melissa Minahan said.

According to Minahan one of the deterrances from applying to the Ivy League is cost.

"For a lot of our students they are taking into consideration financial need, how much money they are going to get from different schools so typically our students will apply to two or three schools and see which school gives them the best deal and then decide which school to attend," Minahan said.

LEARN MORE.
DO MORE.
Experience Nebraska Wesleyan University.

admissions.nebrwesleyan.edu

Pinterest: inspires some, pressures others

Bri Thomas
News Editor

As soon as the Pinterest webpage loads, clever crafts, witty quotes, and workout plans with promises to become a lean machine fill the page.

I should probably mention the mouth watering recipes and fluffy puppies as well. Basically, Pinterest has everything.

With Pinterest being full of so many ideas, opposition is not hard to find.

Some would say Pinterest pressures women to be picture perfect with quotes such as "Nothing tastes as good as skinny feels." Others would disagree by saying "Whoever said that has obviously never had Ben and Jerry's ice cream."

Junior Kailee Wills is a frequent Pinterest user.

When women see all of that stuff on sites like Pinterest and Facebook it does make them feel like they have to have a perfect image," Wills said.

Pictures pushing for women

to be proud of their curves are also shared, such as one of a voluptuous woman holding a sign that says "If a size '2' is beautiful then my size '22' must be glorious!"

"I think women look at the workout plans and motivational quotes and gain confidence that they can do it, but in the end they don't really know how much hard work it takes," senior Elizabeth Gau said.

Don't get me wrong, I love Pinterest and all of the varying opinions on subjects it brings. What other site can keep me scrolling for 3 hours?

Users (myself especially), feel a spark of creativity and great accomplishment when able to recreate an idea off of Pinterest.

But instead of taking all of the glory, it seems as though users aren't afraid to credit the creative pinboard.

"I made a hair piece out of melted plastic spoons and it looks



Graphic by Logan Wisniewski

really good, and with my friends I've made two different kinds of puppy chow and other desserts," Wills said.

Gau has also successfully completed some craft ideas from Pinterest.

"I tried a lot of ideas when I first started and they actually turned out pretty cool and better than I thought they would," Gau said. "But if it wasn't for Pinterest a lot of people wouldn't try half of the crafty things they do."

In addition to the artsy ideas, the recipes, the adorable animals and landscapes, teachers are diving into Pinterest to share educational tips.

Bellevue Public School's online courses for teachers even now offer Pinterest 101 and Pinterest 201. In this class they learn to use Pinterest boards, collect ideas that will ultimately help them in the classrooms, and link their accounts to blogs and other websites.

'Paranormal Activity 4' fails to live up the lofty footsteps of its predecessors

Jason Wisenbaker
Entertainment Editor

"Paranormal Activity 4" is completely devoid of any suspense, scares, or thrills and falls completely flat on its face resulting in the one of the most horrifically yawn-inducing theater experiences I've ever had.

The plot, or what flimsy reasoning the script conjures up in order to have another movie in the ever-profitable movie series, concerns fifteen year-old Alex (Kathryn Newton) and the unexplainable events that happen when her family is forced to look after the creepy kid who lives across the street, Robbie (Brady Allen), when his mother is taken to the hospital for a couple days. Alex and her boyfriend, Ben (Matt Shively), set up cameras around the house in order to record the spooky happenings and general chaos ensues.

It's the same thing we've seen before but this time without any of the original scare factor of the previous films.

The main problem with the film is that for so much of the movie nothing ever happens and just when the film starts to

get interesting it abruptly ends. I wholeheartedly agreed with the two teenage girls in the theater who loudly exclaimed "That's it?" when the end credits rolled.

The movie is in the style of found footage and the abrupt ending is supposed to lend to this style, but honestly who cares. The fact that the main character is still holding a camera in her hand, still recording at the end, when she's being chased by demons intent on killing her is ludicrous to begin with.

The scares in the film are not surprising or shocking. Paranormal Activity 3 featured some truly surprising and scary scenes, but the attempts at scares in this film include items randomly falling from seemingly nowhere, characters popping into frame, and attempts at what I can only imagine are supposed to be sinister and mysterious whispers, but they just don't work.

I was truly bored throughout the entire length of the film, sans the end, and was beginning to look around me at the other people in the theater for they were far more interesting than what was happening onscreen.

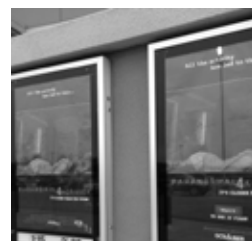


Photo by Jason Wisenbaker

Paranormal Activity 4 grossed \$30 million on its opening weekend. It currently plays at Twin Creek Cinema.

The film's final 10 minutes are actually scary and begin to deliver what I expected all along, but 10 minutes are not worth sitting through 85 minutes of schlock.

The actors all perform their parts admirably and are easily the best of the movie.

Newton makes Alex likable and believable. She's a rootable heroine and the young kid: in the movie each give good performances for children of such a young age. Shively portrays Ben as earnest and likable and ever manages to get in a laugh or two. However, they are good characters in a bad movie.

Good performances and a good ending can't save this film from being the unsavory mess that is though. I have no problem with studios attempting to milk the proverbial cash cow until it is dry but the product should actually warrant the general public giving it its money.

"Paranormal Activity 4" falls far short of its predecessors however a \$30 million opening insured that Paramount greenlit Paranormal Activity 5 due to its theaters next October.

What a joy.

Imagine Dragons not a one-hit wonder

Bri Thomas
News Editor

If Neon Trees, One Republic, and Fun, had a music baby, you'd get Imagine Dragons.

Imagine Dragons has had a grass-roots beginning, playing gigs in Las Vegas, San Diego, Utah, even stopping in Omaha.

Their latest album "Night Visions" was released in early September. Each song differs from from another, yet the band was able to keep a steady flow from track to track.



Photo by Julie Rowse

Imagine Dragons performs in April at The Waiting Room in Benson. The band's first album was released Sept. 5 and is currently wrapping up the U.S. leg of their tour.

"It's Time" seems to be the most popular song on the album and has seen quite a bit of recognition. Glee covered the song, and it is also heard in previews for the new movie "The Perks of Being a Wallflower."

With lyrics like "It's time to begin, isn't it?/I get a little bit bigger but then I'll admit/I'm just the same as I was/Now don't you understand?/I'm never changing who I am," Imagine Dragons aim to be inspirational.

The positive message is heard throughout the album, especially in "On Top of the World."

It's a tie for my favorite song on the album. "Demons" pulls listeners in with lead singer Dan Reynolds' silky voice accompanied by some enchanting keyboard action. Slowly some guitar is introduced, the bass drops, the chorus plays, and you can't help but get lost in the song. The lyrics that most appeal to me in this track are "When the curtain's call/Is the last of all/When the lights fade out/All the sinners crawl."

"It's Time" is beloved by many, and has also gained my approval.

The catchy piano and clapping has quite a charming tone. I feel like I'm in second grade running out to recess when humming along with the tune, but focusing on the lyrics brings out the deeper meaning of climbing from the bottom to the top, and staying true to one's self in doing that.

Imagine Dragons' music is anything but boring. Their ability to be upbeat and catchy in some tracks, yet more mellow in others is stupefying.

Unlike other artists who put out one catchy single and a horrible album, this band follows through.

Gangnam lacks true style

Ashley Quintela
Features Editor

Listening to music while driving down the road is a good feeling, but when "Gangnam Style" comes on, the radio can't be turned down fast enough. The point of a song is to be able to sing along and really grasp the concept of the lyrics, but that is a little hard to do when it is all in Korean. Though it is hard to follow, that has not stopped students from liking it.

Though the lyrics are in fact in Korean, radio DJs do not hesitate to play it several times a day on the radio. The song is already annoying. Don't make it worse by playing it every five seconds. Even though the song is not understandable, some students still find it fun and entertaining.

"The video makes me laugh. I like that this chubby, goofy, little guy can get up there and sing and dance with such confidence. It gives us losers hope," journalism teacher Aaron Stueve said.

When a catchy new song is introduced, it becomes a YouTube

sensation and goes viral. At press time, the original music video has more than 406 million views. The song originated in Korea. The song is in the genres of K-pop, electro house, hip hop, and Korean hip hop.

"I love the song, it kind of makes me want to get up dance," senior Rebecca Sis said.

On July 15, 2012 the song was released and somehow became popular around the US. Some people just can't understand why a song that only says two words in English can be so popular.

"It's annoying. I hate that song so much - you can't even understand what it says. You can write a song and have the lyrics say 'Blah blah blah,' and it would go viral in no time," junior Brian Orellana said.

Besides the actual song, there is a dance. The dance is known as "The Horse Dance."

The dance includes both the upper and lower body. The wrists are crossed and perform a smooth up and down movement. As your arms are in motion, your

legs execute a certain galloping style switching off between feet. After a while of the repeated dance moves, you raise your arm above your head as if lassoing a horse. Eventually the dances fade out, and hopefully this song and dance will too.

"I think it is overrated because the song is not good and it just has a dance," junior Katie Quasas said.

Gangnam style is taking over the radio stations and is making its way to the top of the charts. Apparently, in order to have a song go viral, understanding the lyrics is not important at all. The only words in English are "Ayyyayy, Sexy Lady."

The bottom line is that this song is pure nonsense. What is better than a song you can't sing along to? Everything! There is no point of a song is you can't understand the words. Though I look forward to the day when this song is no longer played on the radio every five minutes, others disagree.

"Haters gonna hate," Stueve said.

AMAZING QUEST

Laser Tag

NOW OPEN!

\$1 OFF!

Get \$1 off a single game of Laser Tag. Good Monday thru Friday.

6238

Buffet purchase required for admission. Offer expires December 21, 2012

The Amazing

pizza Machine

Cook out the Food & Fun

139th & Millard Ave • Omaha, NE • 402.829.1777

AmazingPizzaMachine.com

New style, and place have given West a new face

Nick Wilkinson
Sports editor

Throughout the years Bellevue West has changed. From attitudes, clothing, and modifications, West is a whole new school. Three staff members who have seen it all reflect on the past 35 years.

"Behavior was different a long time ago. first, students used to be very friendly, and polite. Now, it's much different,"

-custodian Donna Schlicker

"You would never see skirts, or short shorts, or spaghetti straps,"

- Schlicker

"Trends have gone full circle, big teased hair was popular, as was long hair for the boys,"

-secretary Ginny Binder

"Mr. Givens and I made a great team. He was the principal from 1983-1997; his passing was very emotional for me,"

-Binder

"I taught my first nine years using a chalkboard. Dry erase boards weren't put in the school until the very late 1990's and early 2000's. I would come home with chalk all over my clothes and hands, it was so messy,"

"Another great improvement I remember was the construction of our own football stadium. We had to play all our home football games at Bellevue East, This didn't feel like a home field to me,"

-Julie Sorensen-- Career Development Facilitator



Falling Whistles

Chloe Brim
Reporter

Imagine being forced to leave your family against your will, just to be put on the frontline of a war between your country and another, armed with only a whistle.

Over six million people have died, and 1,500 people continue to lose their lives daily due to the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Out of those six million deaths, many of those people are children.

Sean Carasso, the founder of Falling Whistles, recognized the importance of this issue, and started the organization to raise money for these children. Their symbol is merely a whistle, which has spread a meaningful message. Junior Caitie Kieser spreads that message by wearing her own personalized whistle every day, sharing the story of Falling Whistles to anyone who asks.

"The whistle represents the young children that are put on the battlefield, and it represents the fact that they are taken advantage of," Kieser said.

Falling Whistles is a foundation that was developed in 2007 after a trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The main goal is to take the young children that are on the battlefield and put them in school. This is no ordinary foundation, however. Unlike most charities, Falling Whistles doesn't take any money for themselves. One hundred percent of the money Falling Whistles receives is given to the children, in hopes to create a better life for them.

"Everyone may remember last year when the Kony 2012 and the Lords Resistance Army became a big deal. Falling Whistles is an organization that focuses on Congo specifically," Kieser said. Kony 2012 and the Lords Resistance focus on the same issues, but around different parts of the world.

Becoming a "whistleblower for peace in Congo" is one of the goals the creators of this foundation have set, and a priority for the people who buy a whistle. Spreading the message for the children in Congo is a struggle for Falling Whistles. Kieser became involved with this issue in many different ways.

"I have friends that work for the organization and have traveled all around the world telling people the story. My cousins also came to me and talked to me about it," Kieser said.

Kieser has been a supporter of Falling Whistles for four years, and has only kept the whistle at home a couple times. Every time she wears it out in public or at school, she gets multiple questions from many different people.

"The most commonly asked question is whether it's a rape whistle or not. When I say no, people ask if it's a train whistle. When I say no again, people ask if it is a dog whistle. Finally they ask what the whistle is for, and I get the privilege to tell them what it is and what Falling Whistles does," Kieser said.

Although Kieser has spread the Falling Whistles message thousands of times, not many people in our school have bought the whistles or visited the website. When someone buys a whistle 100% of their money goes to helping the children, but the whistles are expensive.

"I have tried so hard, and have told the story many times, as well as encouraged people to support Falling Whistles, but these whistles are expensive, ranging from \$34 to \$54 dollars, so it is a big decision and I understand why teens haven't bought them," Kieser said.

Falling Whistles not only changes the lives of the many children suffering in Congo, but also affects the people who support and donate to the organization. All of the proceeds go towards making the whistles and to the Congolese visionaries trying to make their community a better place.

The fact that Kieser continues to get recognized for wearing this means that the Falling Whistles foundation's hard work is paying off.

"This is the best feeling ever. Every time I tell the story to someone I feel re-energized and even more excited about what Falling Whistles is accomplishing every single day," Kieser said.



Photo by Logan Wisniewski

Junior Caitie Kieser holds up her whistle to show people what she stands for. Though the whistles were expensive, that did not stop Kieser from helping the child soldier. Kieser traveled from state to state speaking about her experiences with the whistle. To learn more about this foundation, you can visit their website at www.fallingwhistles.com

The life of a Bellevue West secretary

Chloe Brim
Reporter

Many students believe they have super busy schedules during the school day, but they would reconsider if they spent a day in the main office watching the secretaries Doris McCann and Grace Whiteman at work.

Working as a secretary at Bellevue West consists of constant parent phone calls, students signing out and leaving, and administrators and teachers communicating with the office on an hourly basis.

The life of a student may be stressful, but the life of a secretary entails a lot of responsibility and constant work.

Each secretary shows up at school at seven in the morning, and begins working right away. McCann fills out admits until the first bell rings, and Whiteman answers phone calls from parents usually regarding their sick children. These two secretaries have been working together as a team for many years.

"I have been working here with Doris for 14 years now," Whiteman said.

McCann started working at Bellevue West a year before Whiteman did, but they have been working together every single year. Not only do they constantly work with each other, they work with many students, parents, and administrators as well.

"We work with hundreds and hundreds of students a day," Whiteman said.

Both women described their jobs as being very busy, but they also mentioned that it is a lot of fun as well. Any student can see how much

they love their jobs through the constant cheerfulness in their voices, and smile on their faces.

"My favorite part about my job is working with people," McCann said.

Any job comes with problems and hardships to deal with, but the secretaries handle them with a smile.

"The only thing that is sometimes hard to deal with are the impolite people on the phone and at the front counter. There hasn't been any this year, knock on wood," Whiteman said.

The secretaries have many duties that most students don't even think about. Not only do they keep track of attendance and write admits, these women do reports for the principals and organize records. "We also answer the phones, do the daily announcements, send messages to students and teachers, order supplies, work the [parent-teacher] conferences, and look up students," Whiteman said.

Whenever a parent or student walks into the office needing something, there is usually a secretary available. That is because they get an hour break a day.

"I go to lunch from 11:30-12:30 that includes a thirty minute lunch and two fifteen minute breaks so we just made an hour of it," McCann said.

The one thing teachers and students look forward to all year is summer vacation. Part of being a secretary is keeping the school updated and ready for the next year. This means the secretaries are here at the school every day during the summer, only getting two weeks for vacation time.



Secretaries Doris McCann and Grace Whiteman run the front office at Bellevue West. They are always busy answering phones, filing paperwork and helping students and the faculty.

All-state helps band and choir improve

Megan Yanders
Reporter

Oct. 13 was a day looked forward to with both nervousness and anticipation. The day of the All State tryouts can either end in devastation or exhilaration for both choir and band students.

Weeks before the tryouts, these musicians were already hard at work, whether it's practicing their instrument or learning a new song. Every day during GPS, the choir students try out for All State Choir prepared for the all important audition day.

Megan Hanna said that she practiced both during GPS and at home.

Band students like sophomore Abby Ferrante also prepared for the auditions by constantly practicing the songs until perfected.

"I have a clarinet teacher that I see for an hour lesson each week. I go to [Assistant Band Director A.J.] Bowen for help, and 5 days a week I have a one hour practice," Ferrante said.

But nerves are the biggest challenge.

"I get nervous. I haven't auditioned yet, but I've been told it's going well. I think I have a better chance than I would have a few months ago, because of how much I've improved," Ferrante said.

A challenge that Bowen believes comes with All State is pressure. "The pressure [is a big challenge] because the students are wondering if any mistake they make could be the one that costs them, that's why they have to try to gain consistency and play the same whether it's raining outside or the power goes out."

These students have various different reasons for choosing to compete in the auditions.

"I'm planning on becoming a music major, so it's good experience for the future," Ferrante said.

Many challenges that come with competing in All State, but the contenders still believe it's completely worth it.

"I'm glad that I did All State; it really helped me improve as a clarinet player," Ferrante said.

Coming soon: Fall One-Acts

Megan Yanders
Reporter

The Fall One Act play festival is an event dedicated to showcase the talent of high school thespians. West After School Drama (W.A.S.T.) and, in some cases, students that do not even take theatre. From Nov. 1-3, these Thespians will perform in the festival that shows their talent as actors and actresses.

The tryout process for the Fall One Acts is unique to each performance. For some of the tryouts, the students were required to do a cold read, and in others, improv.

"I went through auditions, where you said a few short lines, and then callbacks where you read through a page of the play. Then you get an email saying you got a part in the play," sophomore Cristian Perdomo said.

In the festival, four acts are to be performed in all. Students can expect to see several different kinds of acts at the play festival.

"It [the play festival] has a student written play, and just a wide variety, from comedy to serious," director and theatre teacher Marya Lucca-Thyberg said. "There is one longer piece and three shorter. 'This is a Test,' 'The Audience Saves the Day,' 'Rumors of Polar Bears,' and 'I'm a Teenager, Get Me Out of this Family.'"

The festival begins with 'The Audience Saves the Day,' a student written play by senior Amanda Dunlap, that teaches the audience some of the basics of theatre using a superhero who saves the day during a play.

Then it moves on to a more comedic style of theatre, 'I'm a Teenager, Get Me Out of this Family', which is the story of a girl named Julie, whose mother sarcastically suggests she advertises for new parents. When she actually does, her mother and father begin to advertise for new kids.

The more advanced theatre and performance students perform "Rumors of Polar Bears," which is about the Earth after the water and oil wars, adding a more serious piece to the festival.

To top off the play festival, there's a performance of "This is a Test," which explores Alan's thoughts as he prepares for his midterms, and his test anxiety.

Before the festival begins, students practice day in and day out to perfect their performances for the festival. These performances may seem effortless once they're on stage, but the truth is that the partici-

pants put in a countless hours of work both on the stage and behind the scenes, so when the day of their performance comes they can walk out on stage with complete confidence.

"The biggest challenge is preparing yourself mentally, so when you get on stage you don't get stage fright," Perdomo said.

Their rehearsals start at a little after school and can go until p.m., and as they get closer to the festival, rehearsals end near 8 p.m. or 9 p.m.

Both the thespians and Lucca expect to have a successful festival. "It's always a mystery, but I'm sure it will be a wonderful evening filled with great performances," Lucca said.



Photo by Marya Lucca-Thyberg

Sophomore Nick Hall, senior Josh Christie, and junior Katy Boone, perform a play for the fall one acts. Students came together to showcase their talents in acting. The performances are November first through the third. Students got excited for their upcoming acts.

EVOLUTION OF VINTAGE STYLE

By: Chloe Brim and Stephanie Purcell

Top, Top Right, Middle Right: Normal is Boring - The vintage, or hipster, style is all about self-expression and showing originality. People began seeing high waisted shorts, crop tops, puffy shirts, colorful jeans, wide flat heeled boots, and crazy big hair, in the 60's. "Old" was out and "vintage" was in.

Bottom Left: Einstein of Fashion - All hipsters played at being the inventors of novelties, their pride comes from deciding what is cool in advance to the rest of the world. After the 60's, vintage disappeared and didn't return until the past couple years.

Below: Vintage Hot Spot - The Flying Worm is the main vintage hot spot in downtown Omaha. Some of their products seemed outrageous at first, until vintage became world wide.

Come investigate the
BRUIN Experience.

- Small classes with professors that know your name
- Classes are offered on campus, day or night
- Scholarships available - several specifically for freshmen
- Eight championship caliber athletic teams
- No class on Fridays

Contact us today
Bellevue.edu
402-293-2000

BELLEVUE UNIVERSITY
Real Learning for Real Life

Pro vs Con: Friendzone

From sidekicks to sweethearts

Friendzone doesn't mean end-zone



Nick Wilkinson
Sports Editor

It does exist. Jacob is insanely in love with Bella. He would do "anything" for her. However, Bella wants nothing to do with Jacob because she is head over heels for this dark, mysterious guy named Edward.

There is nothing Jacob can do to earn Bella's heart. He takes his shirt off and sweet-talks her but she just won't budge.

Jacob is in the friend zone.

In popular culture, the "Friend Zone" is a platonic relationship where one person wishes to enter a relationship but the other does not.

Edward is boring, he acts too cool for Bella, and is super pale.

Yet, Jacob can't find a reason why she chooses Edward over himself.

The "Friend Zone" is a dark hole that sucks you in and keeps you for the rest of eternity. There's no getting out once you're stuck. It's a force between two people, that separates them do to relationships already formed. If you friends with someone their maybe a possibility they can't see you being more than a friend. Exactly how Bella feels.

Bella doesn't "see Jacob that way."

So why is there a friend zone and why is it such a predominant factor in young people's lives?

If one person likes another but they don't feel the same way for them then they have to give up.

Yet Jacob can't give up. This girl Bella is absolutely amazing in his eyes. Jacob doesn't notice the obvious signs Bella throws at him, trying to show him she isn't interested.

It doesn't matter whether or not Bella and Edward are in a relationship. No matter what, if Jacob likes her and she doesn't like him then he's in the friend zone.

Here are some tips for some of you "Jacob's" out there:

Just taking off your shirt to impress a girl isn't going to work out fellas. You're going to have to do a lot more to impress the one you like. Buy her stuff, write her a letter, if Jacob knew that he would have been married by now.

Don't give up! Girls love attention and that's the best way to win their heart. Ask them how their days going and tell them how great they look.

One thing you must not do, ever, is hit a girl on the arm whether it's playfully not, it's a bad idea in any case.

Don't call her dude, bro, or buddy. Those are all one way tickets to the friend zone.

Leave the house every morning to impress your "Bella." Use some gel, use deodorant.

In Jacob's case, he may have needed some mouth wash to tame that dog breath, but by the time he freshened up it was too late to win Bella over.

Don't talk to her negatively about the guy she likes, like Jacob did.

"There's always a risk for humans to be around the cold ones, even if they're civilized like this clan was. You never know when they might get too hungry to resist."

What was he thinking? You may not like the guy she is into and that's okay, you don't have to but you must respect him for her sake, if not she'll think you're a jerk.

It might be painfully obvious to you that you have an enormous crush on someone in your friend group, but trust me, there's a good chance he or she has no idea. People who frequently get stuck in the Friend Zone are often very subtle flirts, but unfortunately, eye contact and "a good connection" does not make a flirtatious exchange.

Everyone wants Goofy friends, but people want funny dates. Goofy is friendly and self-deprecating, funny is charming, Jacob never tried either of those.

One mistake Jacob really made was seeming to "Available" to the world.

When someone looks to available it can easily turn into desperation. Edward, the total opposite of Jacob, acted calm, cool, and collected around Bella.

You "Jacob's" out there may need to take it down a notch. "Bella" don't want a goofy, energetic guy, they want a calm, funny, respectful guy.

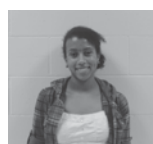
If you're a "Jacob" and you've given up, STOP.

Even though it seems impossible, getting out of the friend zone is just as easy as getting into it.

Realize what's going on. She doesn't like you. But you could easily change that if you spend a little time away. Find yourself and try something new, eat healthier, read a new book. Getting "Bella" off your mind will get you on hers. Don't beg or plead for her to like you, she made a decision to be no more than friends with you, but once she sees the new and improved you, your back in the game.

Ask her on a non-date, and have other people tag along. Own the group and be funny, not goofy. She'll notice you then. Even invite "Edward"-she'll see that you're acting mature and if you're the ringleader of the group you may just emasculate him, if there's anything left in him to emasculate.

Add on more dates with fewer people each time and there it is. "Jacob" and "Bella."



Candi Bolden
Editor-in-Chief

"To burn with desire and keep quiet about it is the greatest punishment we can bring on ourselves."

-Federico Garcia Lorca.

Lorca had a point. Wanting to be with someone but not pursuing them is masochistic. What's even more masochistic is refusing to pursue them but being close enough to the person that you know about most of their relationships aka the friendzone.

Urban Dictionary defines the friendzone as "When a person develops romantic feelings for someone, but the other person only sees the relationship as just being friends. Because the two are around each other a lot, the one in love will harbor his/her feelings for the others. Only to become completely consumed by this person. This leads to the one in love to complain to all his/her friends about the situation, and to become 'whipped' by the other."

Overall the friendzone is sad for those stuck there but to anyone else it's pathetic.

In layman's terms the friendzone is nothing to be proud of. It is a choice. The friend zone is created under the premise that love/relationships are a purchase. You put in time and kind deeds eventually a happy relationship comes out. Unfortunately if your relationship is quid pro quo you don't have a girlfriend you have a romantic escort.

For the purposes of this article, we'll examine the fictional relationship between Jack and Rose (any resemblance to real-life persons is coincidental). Jack and Rose have been best friends since middle school. Jack started to like Rose as more than a friend their junior year.

No one knows besides Jack but instead of telling Rose or asking her out Jack keeps it a secret and hints at it. He also does things just to make Rose happy but is too afraid to tell her. Meanwhile seemingly oblivious Rose dates Merle. His hobbies are SWAG and being insensitive. Jack hates him.

Yes it is unfair for to put all of his focus and kindness towards Rose who picks to date a jerk. What would make it even more lamentable is if the person picking the jerk was aware of it.

If you are desperately in love with the other person but afraid to admit it, congratulations you have normal human feelings. If Jack is convinced

that if he's nice to Kate she will eventually figure out that they are perfect for each other because Jack thinks rejection is the worse thing that can happen to him; he doesn't need a relationship. He needs better self esteem.

According to Breaking Hearts: the Two Sides of Unrequited Love by Roy Baumeister the fear of rejection when platonic love switches to romantic interest is common. Sometimes what blocks people from moving out of the friendzone to relationship city is that the people harboring a crush, "fear that they could not sustain the other's interest or make a successful relationship."

The friendzone thrives on the fear of rejection. Romantic relationships can't be made without the chance of rejection. To escape the friendzone Jack needs to go past the fear and tell Rose how he feels which is a sure fire way to escape. Therefore the friendzone is a choice.

A choice that can destroy friendships.

According to the New York Times article "Pain of Unrequited Love Afflicts the Rejected, Too" by Daniel Goleman, the rejecter is affected by the revelation of the rejected one's crush. If they are never told they experience "initial flattery that soon gave way to bewilderment, guilt and anger at an intrusive, relentless pursuer."

Choosing to keep a crush secret while being a close friend to them is painful for everyone involved. In essence Rose is picking up on Jack's feelings but is getting angry that he's never going to do something about it.

If Jack is upfront about how he feels and tries to work towards a relationship but Rose rejects him, he isn't in the friendzone. But he's actually on the edge of it where he is either defining himself as separate entry from the crush or building up a relationship. Now the next question is what if you actually put yourself out there and they don't like you back?

To start off, escaping the friendzone does not equate being in a relationship. It means no longer crushing on your BFF while they gush about their lover. In the story's case it details Jack getting over Rose with the help of Rose who no longer accidentally seduces Jack. This ends an era of complaining or bragging about her boyfriend the aforementioned Merle and Rose accidentally taking advantage of his crush.

Jack is no longer "whipped" since Rose is his friend who is not interested in him. She wants him to move on. This does not mean Jack's feelings will immediately go away but he won't have to be constantly sucking up to Rose and wondering what if.

Now Rose does want Jack to get over her and Rose does have some single friends that think Jack is cute. And even though Jack used to think that he was in love with Rose, Jack realized he's in high school and he doesn't want to waste his school year pining after his best friend.

Gym credits and school linked sports: A fair combination



Holly Clauson
Reporter

Many students here at Bellevue West dedicate countless hours after school to be involved in extracurricular activities. Most of these students are in a school sponsored sport or club. The question has often been circulating through the school, "If we are involved in sports, why do we take PE?"

I think about that question every time I'm sweating at cheer practice, or doing endless crunches at dance team practice.

The Nebraska Department of Education requires each student to get two credits of Physical Education in their high school career. I agree that every student needs to exercise daily because obesity is a growing problem throughout America, but the Board of Education needs to take into consideration that many students meet the requirements outside

of the school day through school related activities.

If getting PE credits for being in after-school sports was allowed, more students would try new sports or join a new sports club such as football, golf, tennis, cheer, marching band or many other sports/activities Bellevue West offers. Plus, a study from the Institute of Education Sciences shows that the more a student is involved in their school, the better their grades are and the better their attendance record is.

Kids would also have more room in their schedules to fill with classes that actually interest them, or even a study hall to catch up on homework thus improving grades, making the students, parents and teachers happy.

The school board should go watch football practice, basketball conditioning, a cross country meet, or any sports practice for that matter and maybe their opinion will change. PE classes should still be part of the curriculum for students that aren't getting the correct amount of physical activity, but not the students that get more than they need.

If some students who are involved in sports still feel like taking a PE class, more power to them. But for those who need to catch up on homework, better their grades, make their parents happy, take classes that interest them, and are involved in school-sponsored sports, no more PE for them.

WHO ARE YOU PLANNING TO VOTE FOR?

 Obama "I feel he's a better candidate for the position. Obama is trying to create jobs and I like his welfare."	 Romney "I'd vote for Mitt Romney because he wouldn't cut military funding and I like his values."
---	---

Go get your own candy



Holly Clauson
Reporter

"TRICK-OR-TREAT"

Words pulled right out of the mouths of thousands of little kids on one of the most anticipated nights of the year, Halloween. Children look forward to this day mainly because they can use their imagination to live their fantasies through costumes and gorge their sweet tooth.

What is the age limit on trick or treating? Some say 10, and others say to stop after you get into high school. Then you have those people that say it's acceptable for teens to go trick or treating. Halloween can be celebrated by all, but trick or treating is for children, not teens. The social norm sets standards. Standards that make it unusual for high school students to go trick or treating.

It would be quite eerie if an old man was on the doorstep asking for candy and very unlikely as well. That scenario is extreme, but some adults ac-

tually see teenagers trick or treating just as extreme and unusual.

That being said, teenagers still go around door to door. If you're going to involve yourself in the event, the least you can do is dress up. If you think strangers are going to give you candy while you're dressed up in everyday clothes, think again.

Don't fret! Halloween isn't just about trick or treating. There are plenty of other festivities you can be a part of.

For example, if you love excitement and thrills, there are plenty of haunted houses in the metro. The prices usually range from \$8 to \$25 which is fairly cheap if you're a high school student looking for something fun to do.

For those students who aren't really looking for the thrill and would rather do something more comforting, throw a party. We're not talking about a big raging party, just call up a few of your close friends, rent a couple of movies, tell everyone to bring a dessert, and get together. It turns a boring evening into a fun get together.

Also, for you people out there that want to take an even different approach on how to spend Halloween, just buy your own candy, take it home, and eat it. Problem solved. You can pick out exactly what you want, and have lots of it.

Just remember to have fun! It's a holiday and it's meant to be enjoyable. You don't have to go trick or treating to have fun; trust me, you have plenty of other options.

hitting the runway

ASHLEY QUINTELA'S BLOG, HITTING THE RUNWAY, BRINGS YOU THE TRENDS AND ADVICE TO BE A FASHIONABLE T-BIRD. IT IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY ON

THETHUNDERBEAT.ORG



October 31, 2012
Volume: 36 Issue: 2

Twitter should be a one-way street



Social networking has become an addiction for adults and teenagers everywhere, and has become a worldwide phenomenon. In 2003 Myspace launched. Shortly after, in 2006 Facebook expanded to high school students, and that same year in 2006 Twitter was launched and began to grow instantly, according to the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Twitter is a way for teenagers to vent and express themselves in a simple way through sharing photos, posting tweets, and trending topics. Some of those posts may come off as "inappropriate" to parents, when in reality they are what teens talk about every day with their friends.

Since this generation of teenagers is more protected than past generations, social networking is a way for teenagers to have a sense of freedom.

A survey last July showed that 16 percent of young people, ages 12 to 17, said they used Twitter. Two years earlier, that percentage was just 8 percent, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project.

Twitter is growing on teenagers, and is becoming one of their most used social media platforms.

According to the adults that have discussed this openly in our area, many different parent opinions have evolved over the years. Some parents have wanted to join Twitter and get "in the loop" with social networking. No teenager cares about whether their parent feels left out or not. Either way, most teenager's main priority is to keep their parents off of Twitter.

Parents might expect to be openly welcomed on Twitter just like they welcomed their teenagers on Facebook. In reality, that is never going to happen. Teenagers need an escape, a way to openly express their ideas without their parents breathing down their necks. Living in the same household as someone can cause enough problems; just imagine the conflicts that would arise if parents joined Twitter and followed their children.

Three problems would erupt if all parents on Facebook were to switch to Twitter. First, teenagers would have to teach parents how to use Twitter when they don't want them in the social media platform in the first place. The next problem would be the conflicts about what topics teens post about on Twitter and when they post them, for example in school or late at night. Finally, a new website would come out and every teenager would move to that social network, therefore creating a new cycle and a different conflict with parents.

Twitter gave teenagers the chance to escape their parents in a safe and innocent way. Parents need to understand that teenagers don't want them on Twitter only because it's a way for them to express themselves to their friends and followers only. Once parents join Twitter a new website will come out that teens will switch over to just to avoid their parents. This will be a never ending cycle, until the parents realize that teenagers need space and a place to vent to their friends without constant supervision.



Parents, put your thinking caps on.
#You'reTooOldForTwitter

Send the Electoral College back to school: Our Founding Fathers' flaw



They say every vote counts. That is, unless you're voting for the president and vice president of the United States.

As children, we're introduced to the idea that the majority wins.

When we are as young as three, or four years-old our parents had us vote on simple matters such as which juice our family would drink for snack time or whether we played outside or inside. In elementary school we'd vote for student council representatives.

The majority always won. Through throughout our entire childhood we've been taught that the majority winning is moral and just, for presidential elections Americans' votes do not necessarily go directly towards whomever we are voting for.

The Electoral College is the method America uses to decide who is the president and vice president of our country. Each state receives the combined

number of votes of their state's Senators and representatives in the House.

Under this system that is protected by the 12th Amendment, we are not viewed as individuals, but rather as states. Our country's future instead rests in the hands of other—hopefully reliable—voters. They are then expected to vote for whoever the majority of the citizens within that state voted (with the exception of Nebraska and Maine having a split Electoral College).

Through this ancient and overly complicated process, the outcome can and has resulted in our country having a president that the bulk of Americans didn't want.

On several occasions, the Electoral College has contradicted the point of voting. Four different elections haven't worked out to be popular vote. This means, in total, 16 years Americans had a president that the majority of the country didn't vote for.

The most recent incident was in 2000. George W. Bush lost the popular vote to Al Gore. While the difference between Bush (47.87% of the popular vote) and Gore (48.38% of the popular vote), may seem small and insignificant, in reality 543,816 votes were practically thrown in the trash uncounted.

The Electoral College was initially implemented with the

idea that highly populated states could not dominate the presidential election. This voting method makes every state, big or small, have a say; however, not every citizen always does.

States do not brainwash their residents to all have the same opinion. Regardless of where Americans are located, they're still citizens and should have a say in who's president. It affects everyone.

Choosing our president is choosing our country's future. America has so much on the line right now. How will we successfully tackle the unemployment rate? Should gay marriage be legal in all states? Should the upper class be taxed more? All Americans want a say in who's in charge of the direction our country goes in.

Voting is the closest that everyday-Americans get to participating in our government. The Electoral College circumvents that participation.

This method may have seemed logical when the Founding Fathers first considered it in the 1780s, but given its flaws, it doesn't fit in today's society. A candidate should not lose popular vote by over half a million people and still become president.

Times have called for change, yet this amendment seems to be engraved in stone. It is time for America to make the logical decision of switching to popular vote.

2012 – 2013 West Wind Staff

Adviser
Julie Rowse

Editors-in-Chief
Candi Bolden
James Teutschmann

Website News Editor/
Commentary Editor
Hailey Stolze

News Editor
Bri Thomas

Sports Editor
Nick Wilkinson

Features Editor/
Hitting the Runway Blogger
Ashley Quintela

Entertainment Editor
Jason Wisenbaker

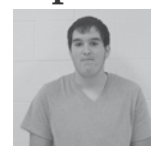
Business Manager
Nolan Bald

Reporters
Chloe Brim,
Holly Clauson,
Stephanie Henry,
Nayeli Hernandez,
Sidney Marks,
Megan Yanders

Website Photo Editor
Linzy Heim

Photographer
Annaliesa Schneider

Make the pink powerful



You see it in the MLB with pink bats, gloves and cleats. You see it in the NFL with pink towels, armbands, and sleeves. Breast Cancer Awareness is the only type of cancer you see fundraising for.

The MLB and NFL give a portion of money made by the sales of the Breast Cancer Awareness gear to raise money for research. Pink is also worn in high schools across the country in athletics. Bellevue West has pink-outs once a year in October for the football games and then all October some members of the team wear pink apparel. Why do high school athletes wear the pink apparel without a cause?

Michael Vick's jersey worn on Oct. 7 is being auctioned off, as is most worn NFL pink gear, to raise money "for the cure." Vick's jersey is currently at \$5,000 with 28 bids.

According to Tara Parker-Pope, a blogger at The New York Times, Breast Cancer research spends twice the amount as the second funded cancer, which is prostate cancer.

In 2011, \$631 million was spent on Breast Cancer research.

According to the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month website, "although October is designated as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, NBCAM is dedicated to raising awareness and educating individuals about breast cancer throughout the year."

We must do something more to make the pink more powerful.

According to choosehope.com, Eleven cancers are recognized in September and October to raise awareness, seven more cancers during winter, and ten cancers during spring and summer months. Athletic events happen year-round that could be raising awareness for these other cancers.

Yet pink is the only color worn besides the team colors themselves.

Why aren't other cancers recognized and why aren't athletes warning the fans of potential risk factors?

What can we do as high school students to make a difference rather than look like a bunch of people that just like wearing pink?

How we can get involved:
Have fans create posters to be displayed at the game to show support for a different cancer each week.

Add \$1 or \$2 to the admission fee, if there is charge, to watch games. (All or a portion of the fee could be donated to the American Cancer Society.)
Donation of concession sales.

Pass the bucket or collect donations from the crowd.

Honor survivors on the field during the national anthem or at half time.

There is more we can do as students, athletes, and community members to raise the awareness of all cancers and warn others about the dangers all cancers may bring.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Got something to say?

Write it down and bring it to the Publications Lab in room 426

Letters to the West Wind editor are welcome, but because of space limitations the staff reserves the right to edit letters for length, grammar and punctuation. All such letters must be signed; they will not be printed anonymously. If one feels strongly enough to write a letter, one should feel strongly enough to sign one's name.

Letters or guest editorials for the West Wind will not be printed if they contain libelous, obscene or profane statements. The West Wind is under no obligation to print all letters.

The faster you run, the faster you're done

Linzy Heim
Reporter

On Oct. 12 the cross country team qualified for the State meet in Kearney. The Thunderbirds took home the District Runner-up trophy for both girls and boys teams—the first time doing so since 2003.

"Pack running was key," Varsity cross country coach Craig Christians said.

Pack running is a strategy teams use to intimidate their opponents. The top runner leads the team of seven. The second runner then tries to keep up with the first, then the third with the second and so on.

"We use it mostly to push each other," senior Rebecca Sis said.

The girls' team used the pack tactic to run away with a season-best average time of 16:41. Along with the team production of a season best, some individuals improved their times to personal records. Among them was Freshman Regan Hefner who finished 9th, sophomore Madeline Hall in 10th place, followed by junior Madi Braun,

freshman Bryn Estlund, and junior Claudia Cortes finishing 16, 17 and 18th.

"I feel I did really well at districts. I got my personal best time," Braun said.

The boys also found success at districts, setting records and beating personal bests. The 12th place medal was awarded to Justin Thorstad. Thorstad also set a personal record with a time, above 17 minutes. Seniors Derryk Stiner, Bobby Russell and Daniel Moses followed placing 17, 19 and 21st.

"I was tired but we did our best," senior Daniel Moses said.

Freshman Justin Liedke was the top runner at districts for the boys. He placed fifth out of 75 runners with a time of 16:47.4.

Runners had just one week to prepare for the meet they had been preparing for. State was held Friday, Oct. 19 in Kearney. Out of 26 teams the boys finished seventh and the girls finished 11th.

"I have competed at state since my freshman year but the competition keeps getting harder and harder," Braun said.

Freshmen Hefner and Liedke were the top finishers for Bellevue West in the State meet.



Photo by Angie Daughtrey

Junior Madi Braun finished 16th at the State meet in Kearney on Oct. 12.



Photo by Kevin Brown

Juniors Cory & Bobby Russell hoist the District Runner-up plaque. The Russell brothers ran every day, all summer.

X-Country runs X-tra over summer months

Sidney Marks
Reporter

Over the summer the seniors of the boys cross country team ran 450 miles. All of them have been running with the Bellevue West cross country team since they were freshmen.

"The more miles you run, the easier the races will be," senior Bobby Russell said.

Russell ran seven days a week all summer.

"I like how you can see your times and see them get better," Russell said. He also stated he likes setting goals and meeting them.

"I wanted to be the best I can be," Russell said.

Bobby runs with his brother Cory Russell on the cross country team.

"My teammates are like my brothers," Russell said.

According to boys cross country coach Craig Christians, Bobby is just one

of five seniors who share the same passion for running. One of the runners is literally his brother, Cory Russell.

"I like it," senior Cory Russell said, "It's fun and calming."

The brothers ran together over the summer.

"During a run, it hurts but after it feels good," senior Derryk Stiner said, "It's a great community to be a part of and I enjoy it."

He ran 400 miles this summer.

"That group, consisting of Bobby and his brother Cory, Derryk Stiner, Daniel Moses, and Justin Thorstad, showed up as freshmen who could hardly get around the block and turned themselves into accomplished distance runners for whom a ten mile run is just another run," Christians said.

"It is obvious from the time that I have spent running with them that they share a passion for the sport," Christians said. "They truly love running and that is what I am most proud of."

Girls Softball: District Champions, State qualifiers

Nayeli Hernandez
Reporter

For the second time in Bellevue West softball history, the T-Birds made it to Nebraska State playoffs after dominating at districts.

Districts are set up by a points system. Each game played, depending on the opponent, results in a certain amount of points.

Beating a team that is a higher seed yields more points; losing to a team with fewer points results in point losses. Only the top 6 teams earn the privilege of hosting districts. From there the lower seedings are placed in the host districts.

"In the past we have played the teams who go on to win state, freshman year was Papio South, sophomore year it was Papio, junior year was Millard South, and this year to get into North Platte's district we had to beat Benson," senior pitcher Linzy Heim said.

The T-Birds ended up the #2 seed in North Platte's district, and defeated Omaha Central 9-1 to advance to the quarter-finals.

West then beat #1 North Platte 7-0, and then again 12-1 to be crowned district champs.

Heim went into the state tournament with the lowest ERA out of all the teams.

At state, Bellevue West lost to Millard

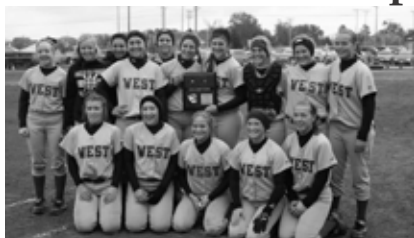


Photo by Rachelle Pechacek

Girls Softball celebrates their district championship win at North Platte High School.
Row 1: Hannah Stoyisch, Kelsey Mitera, Sarah Haake, Kierigan Flynn, Jen Mitera.
Row 2: Carlye Arndt, Sydney Wallin, Kall Seager, Kenzie Prusha, Baylee Antsey, Emilie Pechacek, Linzy Heim, Lauren Crouch, Courtney Swift, Grace Glothoff.

South 3-0, and then went 12-2 in four innings against Papio-La Vista South (25-0), knocking the T-Birds out of title contention on Oct. 10.

Both Millard South and Papio South ended up in the state final, where Millard South won 12-1 in four innings.

Head coach Casie Onken was very proud of how the team handled the crowd and how well they played.

"The girls played well. Some hits didn't fall," Onken said.

The weather for state was cold and the teams stayed outside after each game.

"It would've been nice if we would've had somewhere to get out of the cold between games," Onken said.

Before every game Onken always gives a pep talk to the team.

"I always tell them to stay focused and use routine plays," Onken said.

Routine plays are continuously reviewed in practice, like ground balls and pop flies. Hitting was also reviewed in practice and it seems to have helped according to Onken.

She tells them to play the whole game seven full, because every game is seven innings.

To prepare for state, the team did things to improve how they play and to tighten bonds throughout the team.

The T-Birds practiced everyday, did hitting and fielding drills, and studied their next opponent to better prepare them for hitting and how to defend.

"We practiced really hard and talked about it a lot," sophomore Bailey Antsey said.

The team would have dinners together. Which was a way to keep their bonds strong.

"We would have team dinners to stay connected and as a family," junior Hanna Stoyisch said.

Now that Antsey has a better idea of state she knows how to prepare for next year.

"Personally I think we should try and do more preparing for people to hit better and expect to win," Antsey said.

Antsey enjoyed the experience at state with the team.

"It was amazing," Antsey said. "It was so fun especially all of us together, we got so close," Antsey said.

"It was such a blast, it was an amazing time with the team," Stoyisch said. "I bonded with them so well. We had a really good time."

Stoyisch said there's nothing that she would change or would have done differently.

"We worked hard as a team," Stoyisch said.

Next year the team will no longer have Heim, as she will be graduating this year.

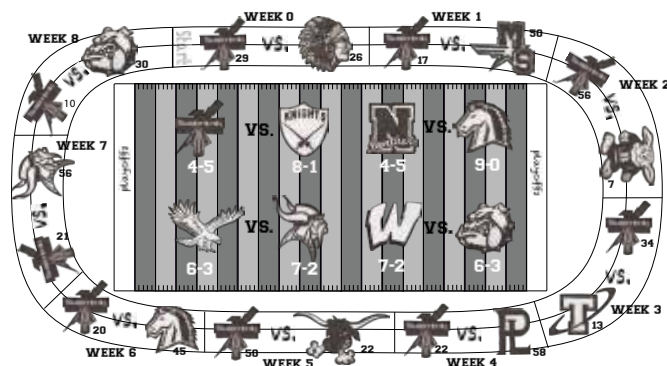
"It's gonna be really tough because we're losing Linzy [Heim]," Stoyisch said. "We will have to be a really good on defense."

The only other time Bellevue West had been in the State playoffs was in 2006, where they had back to back losses to Omaha Westside 12-2 in six innings, and Lincoln East 4-0.

The last time the T-Birds went to state, Courtney Heim, Linzy's sister, pitched for the T-Birds, six years ago.

Getting to the playoffs leaves high expectations in place for next year's team.

"The girls will know what to expect more as well as I will," Onken said.



Graphic by Linzy Heim

UPCOMING

sports

IN NOVEMBER

Since we aren't printing in November, here are the first winter athletic events:

Girls and Boys Basketball:
(Greater Nebraska Shootout)
November 30th @ Lincoln East High School

Swimming: Burke Invitational
December 1st @ Burke High School

Wrestling: Kearney Invitational
December 1st @ Kearney High School

T-birds wrap up season with State Tennis

Holly Clauson
Reporter

The unranked T-bird tennis team ended their season with the 2012 state tennis tournament that took place on Thursday and Friday Oct. 11-12.

"We had a good team this year, and since there were no districts, the whole team was able to play at state," said coach Steve Lennon.

Before the state tournament, the team prepared themselves so they could be ready for the matches by stretching and practicing with their partner.

"We practice the event that we play in for the tournament. For example, my partner and I play doubles, so that's what we drilled over and over during practices," junior Cole Stenger said.

Going to state isn't given to just anyone. Players have to be chosen through a district competition. But this year unlike every year in the past, there were no district matches.

"If your records are good, or usually if you're on varsity, you will be chosen to go to state," said Crockrom.

The state team consisted of senior Andy McDill playing No. 1 singles; senior Alex Garcia playing No. 2 singles; junior Cole Stenger and sophomore Nick Munoz playing No. 1 doubles; senior Chris Crockrom and junior Shawn Schellerer playing No. 2 doubles. They ended the state tournament with a team total of 1 win coming from Garcia's match.

Garcia won the first set of his match, but overall lost the entire match 6-1.

Crockrom and Schellerer lost their match 6-1; Stenger and Munoz lost their match 6-1. The rest of the T-bird team lost their first matches as well, quickly removing themselves from the state.

Coach Lennon was optimistic about the tournament, saying that even though they didn't come out with a win, it wasn't a total loss.

"It's still a good experience for the players to have, especially the younger players who got to go this year," said Lennon.

The players remained optimistic throughout the season up to the very end.

"We competed very well this year, and we had a really good team," says Stenger summing up the year.



Photo by Kyle Malone

Senior Alex Garcia-Hudson returns the ball during practice. Garcia-Hudson played No. 2 singles.