

THE BANNER

November 2013

North Brunswick Township High School
98 Raider Road North Brunswick, NJ 08902

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Anime Club

Mark Loshak, Staff Writer

Yes, the rumors are true. There is now an Anime Club for all those who love to watch anime, read manga, and generally most things about Japanese media that has to do with the such. Meetings are every Wednesday right after school until 4:00 p.m. in room 855.

For the time being the Anime Club, or known as the Genshiken (Gen-she-ken, which is short for Gendai Shikaku BunkaKenkyūkai, or “The Society for the Study of Modern Visual Culture”)/Anime Club by members that are already in it, is not officially viewed by NBTHS as a club. Kiana Best, President of Anime Club explains in an interview, “Since we can’t fundraise due to the budget meeting

taking place before we were able to establish it [the club].”

weeks, it promises the club will become official.

like an English class but way more entertaining), and create goals for themselves. One goal already set is, because there are so many talented writers and artists, to create the club’s very own, full comic book (manga).

The supervisor of the club, Mrs. McCarthy sheds light on why she wanted to be a part of the club and supports, “There’s a lot of students interested in anime and the subjects that surround it. They deserve a place to get together and it fits me.”

To promote the Genshiken/Anime Club, they have come to an agreement with *The Banner* to collaborate by creating short newspaper

comics that can be added as a whole new section. These comics should be added very soon so stay updated on what the school paper has to offer.

Photo Courtesy of Mark Loshak



Once the school notices there are a lot of interests in the club, which is already accounting the fact that there are over 40 members that have joined already in the past three

What the club does is not only watch anime together and share stories, but also learn different cultural references, write stories together, analyze (almost

Jersey Boardwalk in Ruins After Seaside Fire

Ashley Garcia, Staff Writer

Just a little under a year after superstorm Sandy, the Jersey Shore was hit with yet another obstacle to overcome. On September 12 at 2 p.m., a fire ripped across the boardwalk, destroying dozens of businesses. The fire, which was caused by aged and weather-worn electrical wiring began in Kohr’s Frozen Custard Shop. With the help of winds raging at over 30 mph, the fire continued to burn down four blocks of the boardwalk.

This electrical fire, which raged out of control within 15 minutes of starting, was battled by over 400 firefighters. They struggled with the water supply, which had been damaged by superstorm Sandy. They began to pump water from Barnegat Bay, the ocean being too rough.

The firefighters finally got the fire under control at 10 p.m., making it a nearly 8 hour fire. When the fire was gone, nearly 50 destroyed businesses were left in ruins.

inspection, which included the reviewing of photos and videos, as well as the questioning of witnesses. Trained dogs were brought in to identify a possible accelerant in the

payout. However, the cause was finally verified, and investigators concluded that it had begun in the custard shop.

Many business owners found themselves in a state of bewilderment as they watched the buildings they had just rebuilt be burnt to ashes. Leonardo Graci, a carpenter, had spent months of his life reconstructing parts of the Jersey Shore’s boardwalk after Sandy. “I just got done rebuilding this and I can’t believe it. I’m in shock. It was my proudest moment as a carpenter,” he said, standing in the aftermath of the fire’s destruction.

On October 7, the demolition and cleanup of destroyed businesses began. Seaside Heights and Seaside Park officials agreed to pay Eagle Paving Corporation \$4.7 million to handle the job. It is estimated to be completed in roughly 2 months.

Although devastated by now two major disasters, the residents of the Jersey Shore remain hopeful. Governor Chris Christie continues to be optimistic, saying, “I will not permit all the work we’ve done over the last 10 months to be diminished or destroyed by what happened.”

Courtesy of Google Images



Quickly after the fire, investigators were brought in to find the cause, which was at that time unknown. Ocean County Prosecutor Joseph Coronato oversaw this

charred debris. The backgrounds and financial standings of the business owners in the area were checked to make sure no one was looking to gain from an insurance

New Jersey Legalizes Medical Marijuana for Children

Isha Chavva, Staff Writer

When most Americans hear the word “marijuana”, the images their minds conjure up aren’t pretty. Marijuana is seen as a harmful, destructive drug that alters one’s memory, judgment and perception, as well as feeding the well-known “stoner” stereotype. The majority of America would not want their children to go anywhere near this drug--and yet, recent new developments in New Jersey show that many Americans today are fighting for the right for their children to use marijuana... in order to keep them alive.

On September 10, a new measure was signed into New Jersey law by governor Chris Christie to make it easier for severely ill children to participate in a medical marijuana program. Christie is allowing marijuana farmers to raise three different kinds of edible marijuana that children would be able to consume.

Christie said, “I believe that parents, and not government regulators, are best suited to decide how to care for their children.” However, the process to get one’s child into the program is not as easy as it may seem. An added provision said that both a child’s pediatrician that was registered in the program would have to approve of their

inclusion, as well as a psychiatrist. If the child’s pediatrician is not registered in the marijuana program, approval from a third doctor would also be required.

This new measure was inspired by the plight of Vivian Wilson, a two year-old with a rare form of chronic epilepsy that first manifested itself during her infancy. A rare marijuana strain on Colorado would help to reduce her symptoms.

Chris Christie now says, “Protection of our children remains my utmost concern, and my heart goes out to those children and their families who are suffering with serious illnesses.” Despite this, he did not always agree with this bill, even criticizing it for what he believed to not be full analysis of all of its effects on children. He also believed that it would encourage “recreational use”.

Fortunately, now, Christie has had a change of heart. New Jersey, is and, hopefully, other states, will follow suit in, making it possible for children with severe illnesses to benefit from this otherwise dangerous drug and helpful new measure. While marijuana is more well-known for changing lives in a negative way, our state is moving it forward in what it hopes will save the lives of its next generation.

The War with Syria

Tama Moni, Staff Writer

Headlines have been surfacing recently in the news about the chaos in Syria and reports on how the public is reacting. The United States government is debating whether they should intervene and push for military strike or allow the country to work out its problems on its own.

No decision has been made between the groups of officials and the people are in discord. Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, Syrian rebels, President Barack Obama, Congress, and the American people have differing views on the Syrian conflict.

News of Syria’s chemical attacks were reported on August 21st, 2013, in Ein Tarma and Zamalka. Videos of the attacks show dozens of bodies.

These actions influenced the UN to take action. The UN estimates

that warheads on the 330 millimeter rockets could have held between 50 and 62 liters of chemical agent.

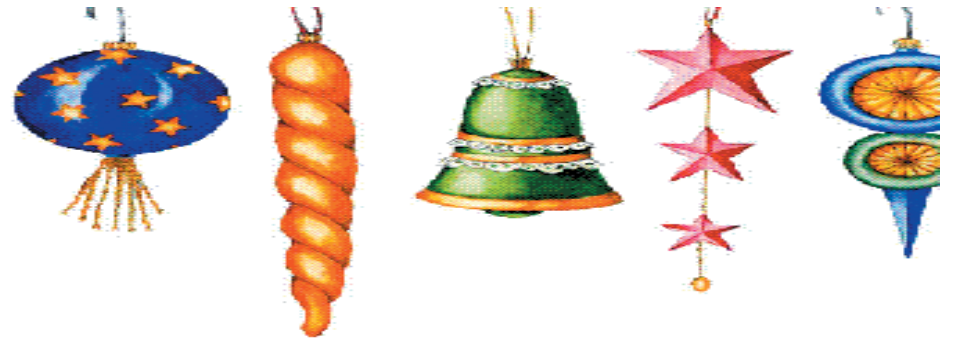
The rockets used by the Syrian government were estimated to be able to contain 2.2 kilograms of sarin, a highly toxic chemical.

The Obama administration is pushing for military strike against Syria and Assad, though none of it is possible without

congressional approval. When the aforementioned approval was requested, Congress denied President Obama’s plan for militant action against the Middle Eastern nation. Russia, the US’s ally in this crisis, also denied the Syrian rebels military support. Although the rebels are severely agitated with each country’s failure to make good on their promises, the American people are thankful no military strike was approved in hopes of avoiding another war.



Photo Courtesy of Google Images



13th ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT SHOW

NORTH BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

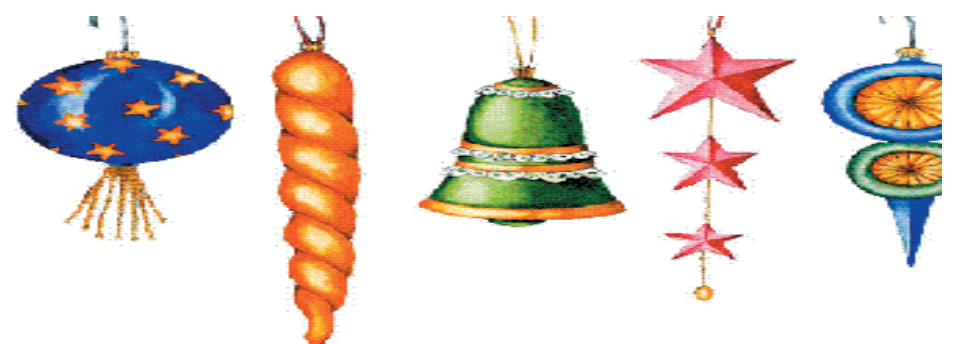
Sunday, December 8, 2013
9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

North Brunswick Twp. High School
Raider Rd. & Rt. 130 South
North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Please Contact Kathie Malik
for more info

Kathie Malik
Phone – (732) 289-3700 x3035
E-mail- kmalik@nbtschools.org

Refreshments will be served



A New Addition to North Brunswick

Ronald Minott and Ami Patel, Staff Writers

North Brunswick recently instituted a new class for autistic (as well as other disabled) kids. Run by Mrs. VanLangen, Mrs. Noonan, and aides, this program aims to teach basic skills to autistic and mentally impaired teenagers. By teaching them these skills, the students gain a better understanding of basic actions, like shopping, which are needed in the real world. In order to gain an understanding of what goes on in the program, The Banner sent two reporters to interview Mrs. Noonan, one of the teachers responsible for teaching these teens. With eight years in experience of teaching others like this group of students, Mrs. Noonan was able to give The Banner a better insight into the new addition to our school.

The day starts off almost like any other student's morning; the teens arrive at school, usually by bus. When they enter the classroom, they have a checklist of tasks to complete. Some are given the task of getting breakfast for themselves, which teaches them the basic life skill of getting things for themselves. However, they do not attend homeroom like other students.

Instead, they hang out and interact with each other in the classroom until first period begins. These teens do not just talk within themselves.

Regular-ed students usually volunteer a few times a week to have lunch with them. That gives them the ability to learn how to converse with other people. This also benefits the regular-ed volunteers, for they learn how to be sensitive to other people's abilities and disabilities. When not learning how to talk with others or do basic tasks, these teenagers also take classes, almost like their regular-ed counterparts. However, they have occupational and speech therapy, as well as career classes, that are provided by the district. These classes allow the students to

further develop their grasp on high school, as well as real life. Like other kids, they have a gym class, with Ms. Kastner. These students

may not be like those in regular-ed classes, but like them, these students have their challenges. Dealing with changes to their normal routine is one of them. Sometimes the littlest changes can affect them more than it would affect

others. Therefore, Ms. Noonan and the aides try to mix up the schedules constantly so the students will not get overly attached to a set routine.

With these classes, these teenagers will learn a lot about life skills, with the proper tutoring they need. Even if they are different from everyone else, these teens are happy to meet other people. According to

Ms. Noonan, adjusting to the high school was not a big problem for them. In fact, they seemed to know the way to their classes better than their aides! The autistic and disabled are not the only ones benefited; regular-ed kids get a chance to meet with different kinds of people and become sensitive to the disabilities that others may have. So while the special-ed kids learn basic actions needed to live a normal lifestyle, the regular-ed kids learn how to treat such individuals should they come across any in their life after high school.

This new class has proven itself a useful improvement for autistic teens coming into high school. They are taught skills needed for when they are on their own, and regular-ed students get exposure to different people who interact differently. It is most certainly a very welcome change in our school environment!

Ms. Latchaw

Grace Chu, Staff Writer

Ms. Latchaw, formerly a Health and Physical Education teacher, now acts as a guidance counselor in the place of Ms. Fleming. After the second semester, Ms. Fleming will return, and Ms. Latchaw will resume her teaching position. In her eleventh year at NBTHS, Ms. Latchaw seeks to support her students.

Before graduating from NBTHS in 1999, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer, in her sophomore years. She passed away in the beginning of summer. As a result, Ms. Latchaw received lots of emotional support from her teachers and guidance counselor, which helped her stay focused on her academics. As she became a Physical Education teacher, many of her students approached her with lots of issues. Unable to help, the most she could do was to direct them to the counselor.

Ms. Fleming announced her maternity leave last year, Ms. Latchaw began her internship for school counseling. This year marks her first year as a certified school counselor, and she is welcome to any student in dire need.

Ms. Latchaw graciously wishes all the students good luck. "High School can be a time of great change emotionally, physically, socially, and academically. It is important to know that there are teachers, counselors, and students that are there to help and support you. Take life on day at a time and always find the bright side of life."

"Fresh" Start

Jennifer Seitis, Staff Writer

High school is an enormous chapter in everyone's lives and for the freshmen of NBTHS, this chapter is just getting started.

From the older faces of the juniors and seniors to the lengthier walks between classes, the freshmen are starting to get used to this new and overwhelming environment. Upon having a discussion with Michael Kovach, 14, Michael Kovacs, 14, and Michael Mann, 14, the opportunity was given to see the high school from the class of 2017's point of view.

The hardships of NBTHS that they have been experiencing so far were revealed as Kovacs spoke his mind, "...getting around the school [was hard]" but after speaking with Cristina Torres, 14, a little later on in the day, she provided a simple solution to Kovacs's problem. "I used the maps to navigate around the school," Torres said. Though some freshmen are having more difficulty than others, many have learned to cope with the labyrinth that is known as NBTHS.

Despite these complications within the school, all three Michaels

agree that they favor NBTHS over Linwood Middle School. One of the biggest differences they discussed was the 4-day rotational schedule.

"[The rotational schedule] gives

from dropping two classes everyday as a result of the rotational schedule provide the class of 2017 with a new but positive adjusting experience.

When asked about what they're looking forward to in their next four years in high school, Kovach, Kovacs, and Mann all gave their input. Their answers all varied from proms, to the plethora of different electives, and to the school's athletic program. Mann is especially excited for the world of high school sports. "They [the sports teams] look really talented this year," he says.

The sophomores, juniors, and seniors have all been in the shoes of this year's freshmen and know

exactly what they are going through. Although freshmen have all had their struggles transitioning from Linwood to NBTHS, Kovach, Kovacs, Mann, and Torres represent all of the freshmen when they agree that they have adjusted (and are still adjusting) to the life of high school pretty well. Good luck to the class of 2017!



Photo Courtesy of Maria Sanchez



Photo Courtesy of Geoffry McFall

BYOPET Positives

Claudia Torres, Staff Writer

It is seven something on a weekday morning and students pile into the building and prepare for a new school day. Headphones plugged into ears and eyes glued to screens, these technologically savvy teens stash their headphones into a pocket or backpack, but this year, keeps their phones on and out in the classrooms. Why? BYOPET.

Shortened to BYOPET, Bring Your Own Personal Electronic Tool is a new rule allowing students to use technology during class. In such a technologically advanced era, this move by administration should be applauded as a step to better prepare the students of North Brunswick for their futures. By using technology in classes, students will have access to new research and exploration opportunities that will further apply the Common Core State Standards and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. In classes, there will never be a question to which the answer is “I don’t know” or “I’m not sure”. Students with difficulties learning will also have a new tool to better understand what they are learning in class. There are some students that learn better visually or auditory, and with a phone in hand they can record a teacher’s lecture or take a picture of notes for studying purposes. Access to the Internet will not only allow students to research questions for clarification, but will also open up a new world for teachers to explore. With technology allowed in school,

teachers can now come with up with more interactive, creative and enjoyable ways to cover the year’s curriculum. BYOPET also allows students access to more accurate information, as sometimes information from textbooks may be outdated or sparse on a certain topic.

Besides furthering education in North Brunswick, BYOPET is also a safety precaution. With technology playing an active part in the school, students will be able to contact the police, parents or other authorities should an emergency arise in the school. When students have easy access to the authorities, a quicker, more efficient response can be made to protect the students and staff of North Brunswick High School. In addition, this move by North Brunswick also cuts down on any cyber bullying, as the school monitors what can and cannot be accessed via their Wi-Fi. Students are responsibly using their electronic devices for educational purposes instead of bullying each other on Facebook or some other media site. Consequently, this creates a safer and more positive environment for both students and teachers alike.

What is also commendable about BYOPET is the regulations set in place to ensure the safety and education of students while utilizing technology. Instead of giving an open invitation to students to whip out their devices and start using them, North Brunswick has

instituted rules so that safety and education is ensured. For example, students can only use electronic devices with the permission of teachers and must ask to take any pictures, video or audio. As always, the utilization of technology is banned during any assessment of any kind. What this does, is not only allows students to use technology in a safe and controlled environment, but also causes students to take responsibility. In the beginning of the year, contracts were passed out to students that listed the rules for BYOPET and both the students and their parents had to sign off on the contracts in order for the students to utilize their electronics during school. This move informs students of the rules, what they can and cannot do, and of the responsibilities they take upon themselves. As such, the students take responsibility for their actions because they know what the rules are, and even signed off on them in September.

Overall, BYOPET is a fantastic move made by administration this year. Giving the students of North Brunswick High School the best possible education is an evident goal with this new policy. Not only does BYOPET give students more educational opportunities, but provides them with a safer environment; more opportunities to exert responsibility and accountability; and new ways to learn how to safely navigate through this technology savvy society.

BYOPET Negatives

Anthony Kovach, Staff Writer

Most of the technology savvy students of NBTHS have an overwhelming desire to whip out their phones, iPods, and (in some cases) iPads during the hours of the school day, which was deemed a felony by the school in years past. However, starting this very year we adopted a new policy.

BYOPET (Bring Your Own Personal Electronic Tool) was instated at the commencing of the 2013-2014 school year. Though this revamped policy may appeal to the majority of NBTHS at first, its potential consequences may outweigh any positive gains in the long haul.

In a school-wide survey, the staff was asked to address their concerns in regards to the statute. The increased probability of theft arose as a primary issue. With more students bringing in their valuable electronic items, it can be determined that thefts will be on the rise, whether it be a student’s way of earning a quick buck, the necessity of a functioning device, or simply the thrill of the prospect of larceny.

Frequent use of these high value items will tempt others without the luxury to deprive the privileged student of the device. We, as the philanthropic community we are, would never suspect a virtuous student of our district to rob another, though even the naïveté of the students must have its limits. Something is bound to get stolen; it’s inevitable in our new electronic-friendly environment.

Another major concern of the instructors at NBTHS in regards to the BYOPET policy is that of charging the devices. Although some teachers are quite fine with a student (or a myriad typically) charging his or her phone in class, others find it a distracting and a blatantly pesky concern of the student and not suited for the classroom. Under BYOPET, students can use the claim that they must charge their item for utilization in a subsequent class and yet, a teacher may still deny the student, most will feel obligated to allow the student the use of the outlet, subtracting time from

class and lesson instruction.

Finally, and most importantly, teachers recognize the major dilemma prevalent in the new BYOPET policy—cheating. In prior years, cheating has been facilitated by the introduction of smart phones in school districts worldwide.

In our very school, several students choose to collude with their internet devices to sneak answers onto tests anywhere from Honors English, Biology, and to Math Lab.

For teens, it is too unconventional and unorthodox to peek at other potentially correct answers on paper when they could get justifiably correct answers at light speed from an omniscient source utilizing their handheld device.

With the institution of BYOPET, students have easier access to their phones and may desire to get that badly needed grade through a smart phone.

BYOPET, though a promising prospect, may only succeed in being more trouble than it is worth for both the staff and students.

iPhone 5c and 5s

Grace Chu, Staff Writer

Not long after the release of Apple’s new iPhones, they were deconstructed in no time. After testing out the features, thousands of customers were left with varying opinions, mostly negative. Despite Apple’s promises of new features and upgrades, many consumers were left with a taste of bitterness. Others, mostly avid fans, were self-satisfied.

Design-wise, the 5s comes off as more sophisticated, with its sleek metal surface, that comes in silver, space-gray, and the stunning gold finish. The device is thinner and lighter. On the other hand, the 5c comes in five colors: white, yellow, blue, green, and pink. While the outer-shell is plastic, it is attached to a steel-reinforced frame so that it doesn’t feel like a flimsy plastic phone. Unlike the 5s, the 5c is more portable and lighter. The 5s design is made to look elegant and classy to the eye while 5c is made with look cute and colorful.

The use of iPhone 5s’ newest feature, the Touch ID fingerprint sensor, is largely debatable. While the concept sounds neat (it can also detect one’s toe and even a cat’s paw!), the security is nothing to boast about. One can easily get in by sneaking in their sleep and using their finger. So the fingerprint sensor is mostly rendered useless. It is no surprise that many preferred the 4-digit passcode.

Apple also strongly boasts about 5s’ cameras. New features include the ability to capture 120 frames per second, a slow-mo video, dual-flash for realistic colors, and a burst-mode that can capture up to 10 frames per second. The practicality of these advanced upgrades are, once again, questionable. Others prefer the 5c camera, which is impressive enough already.

Last of all, the 5s is much more expensive, with the difference of \$100. Thus, the 5c is much for preferable, as it isn’t as impractical and costly as the 5s.

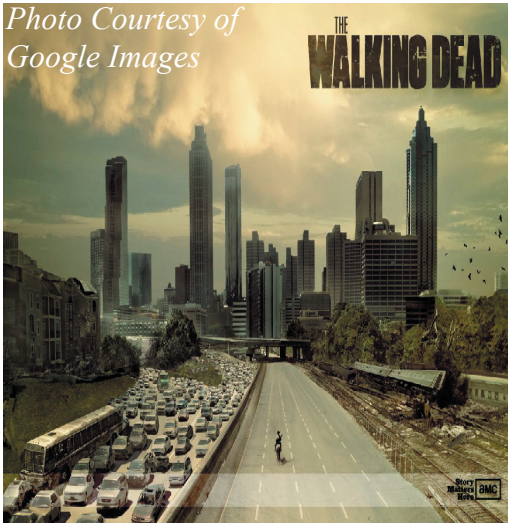
Both phones fail to live up to expectations as Apple had promised. It was a rehash of the previous phones, and many would rather stick to their old ones. Some liked the 5s for its sophisticated and advanced look. Others liked the 5c for its cheapness, yet sufficient quality. Whether it be disappointment or enthusiasm, each phone is different for everyone.

AMC's Fall Extravaganza

Anthony Kovach, Staff Writer

Sunday, September 29th and Sunday, October 13th are enormous days for television network AMC. This station has provided for us magnificent dramas like *Breaking Bad*, *The Walking Dead*, *Mad Men*, and *Hell on Wheels*. Only two of the said shows are being featured here as they are kicking off the fall season: *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead*.

Photo Courtesy of Google Images



The 29th of September marks the end of an era for all fans of the astounding series that has graced the network AMC and the televisions of millions at home for the past five years. The series has quickly become an AMC staple since its pilot debuted in 2008 and with proper justification as the television show makes haste enthralling its viewers and is one of the networks top grossing shows. No drama can transform a character from a harmless man into a demented mastermind quite like *Breaking Bad*.

For those that have never witnessed or watched the groundbreaking series, *Breaking Bad* follows the events and happenings of a high school chemistry teacher over a span of two years of his life. Walter White (Bryan Cranston) is

a dissatisfied chemist, husband, and father, earning a meager wage on a white-collar job as a teacher and part time as a clerk at a car wash. Horrific complications ensue when Walter is diagnosed with lung cancer. In an attempt to earn a quick buck and provide for his pregnant wife Skyler (Anna Gunn) and handicapped son Walt Jr. (RJ Mitte) before his imminent demise, Walt reconciles with former student Jesse Pinkman (Aaron Paul) and enters the drug trade, cooking crystal meth. Jesse soon notices Walter's natural affinity for cooking as he is a brilliant chemist and to his dismay, Walter notices it as well.

Avarice shortly advances on Walter and he begins to live a double life, keeping a second cell phone and not confiding in Skyler about any of his recent escapades. The irony of Walt's situation stems from the fact that his brother-in law, Hank Schrader (Dean Norris), is a DEA agent. These factors and more add up to formulate a slew of issues and dilemmas for Walt and Jesse to solve systematically, thus creating the basis for the show many of us love.

Breaking Bad is the epitome of a detailed dynamic character.

Walt's transformation throughout the series is a drastic one and best described by the show's executive producer, Vince Gilligan. "...Mr. Chips into Scarface," states Gilligan. It portrays the extent a dead man walking will go to and the risks he will take. *Breaking Bad* has won many awards and most recently, several Emmys for its outstanding performance and actors. Anna Gunn who plays Skyler White won Best Supporting Female Actress in a Drama Series and the show itself stole the Emmy Awards by winning Best Drama Series. *Breaking Bad* has amassed a myriad of accolades throughout its run, but all bad things must come to an end.

It is the time to say goodbye to *Breaking Bad* as it is in its final episodes. The series finale airs September 29th at 9pm. Missing the end to the epic saga of a man hell-

AMC's juggernaut of a series that has broken several viewer records time and time again is returning the 13th of October and the anticipation is palpable. After taking a few months' break in the wake of the season three finale, *The Walking Dead* is staggering back onto the network quite proudly for a show where its characters' adversaries are decomposing carcasses and a (slight spoiler) one-eyed psychopath.

Never before has a drama series had the reception *The Walking Dead* had. Its episodes consecutively broke viewing records for its category as a drama series. *The Walking Dead* centers its story on a group of survivors that have become a family in the midst of an endangering zombie apocalypse. Relationships are made and broken by the ensuing events. The story touches upon the themes of morality vs. survival, leadership in times of crises, and the prosperity and affects on children in such a predicament.

Both *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead* comprise AMC's golden club with a plethora of awards between the shows, actors, and executives. Each is having a huge night with *Breaking Bad*'s series finale airing Sunday night and *The Walking Dead*'s season four premiere a mere two weeks later.



Photo Courtesy of Google Images

bent on eliminating his enemies and ensuring his family's survival would be an unfortunate loss...and that would be simply bad. However, with death comes new life.

Love and War

Tj Braxton, Staff Writer

Tamar Braxton-Herbert is a singer/ songwriter, actress, dancer, talk show host, and has a reality television personality.

Tamar Braxton-Herbert is the youngest out of 4 sisters. Tamar Braxton-Herbert released her album "Love and War" on September 3, 2013 and ever since then, the album has done great in stores.

She has 3 singles on her album, "Love and War," "The One," which we are all familiar with and finally there's "All The Way Home," which makes her album even hotter! Tamar has a lot of beautiful songs on her album that are very catchy.

In my opinion, all the songs on Tamar's album tells a story, about her life and the obstacles she's been through. I think a lot of women in our society can relate to her music for the simple fact that she's not just telling her story but, she is telling a story for the women out there who are going through the same with their men.

Tamar's album is awesome and I strongly feel that you should buy her album. I highly doubt that you would dislike what you're going to hear because this woman has great songs you should listen to.



Photo Courtesy of Google Images

Under the Dome: Are You under Its Spell?

Ami Patel, Staff Writer

The end of the first season of this TV show has its 14 million viewers under its own spell---Under the Dome! A sci-fi horror TV show, based off the novel by Stephen King, has fans raving for a second season. It was started in June 2013 and aired every Monday until the season finale, which was aired September 16th, 2013.

The show takes place in a small fictional town in the United States, Chester's Mill. All is quiet in this town, until a huge dome suddenly appears and traps the town (and its inhabitants), cutting it off from outside civilization. As more episodes are watched, the stories of several people are revealed, ranging from visitors who were at the wrong place at the wrong time, to the townspeople and the deputies as they maintain martial law within the dome's limits. The dome maintains a reign of terror among the people, for any vehicle who tries to get into Chester's Mill ends up crashing into the dome. Electrical devices malfunction and, in some cases, explode upon getting too close to

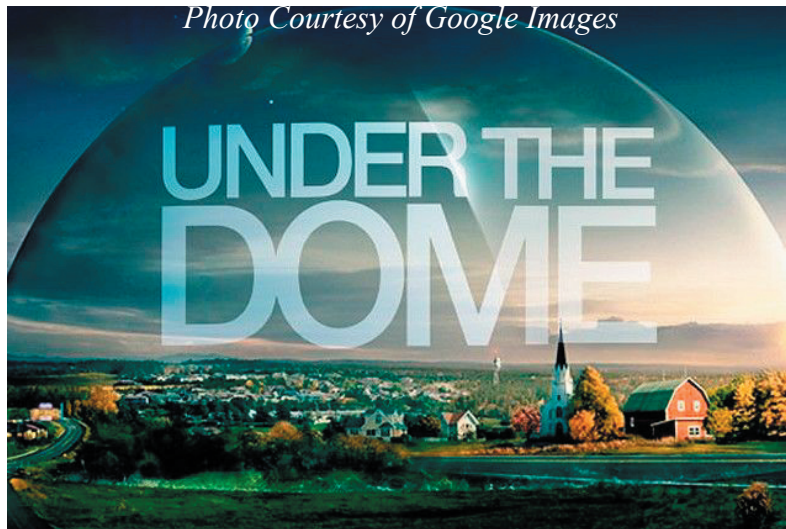
it. The dome is also soundproof, so it is impossible to hear anyone on the other end. The town has no choice but to survive off what they can access within the dome's boundaries.

survive in the dome. James "Big Jim" Rennie, owner of Jim Rennie's Used Cars, is also a politician, seized power over the people after the death of the police chief (his pacemaker exploded when he came to close to

mother Alice Calvert, along with her domestic partner, Carolyn Hill. All of these people are stuck within the dome, and without help from the outside, the townspeople try to find out the source of the dome's power.

During this search, the kids of the town find an egg, which is believed to be the source of the dome's power. Julia, a reporter who was also trapped in Chester's Mill, ends up throwing the egg into a pond to ensure Big Jim never gets his hands on it. The egg is destroyed, and the season is ended with the dome suddenly turning a white color.

Under the Dome is a truly thrilling TV series, with sudden twists every episode. Viewers are eager for the next season to come out, which is scheduled for summer 2014. Where did the dome come from? Who created it, and why, of all towns on Earth, was Chester Mills picked? Season two is going to be a welcomed event for the summer. Are you part of the dome of fans?



Within the dome are all different types of characters. Some are visitors. There's Dale "Barbie" Barbara, an army veteran whose reason for being in Chester's Mill is unknown. Others are town inhabitants whose true characters are revealed as they attempt to

the dome). His psychopathic son, Junior Rennie, was strangling a girl when the dome came about. Joe McAlister and his sister, Angie, are in the dome without their parents, for they were out of town when the dome suddenly appeared. Also in the dome are Norrie, and her

Guilty Little Secret

Mr. Santa Maria, Contributing writer

I know it's only a stupid cable TV show. You don't have to tell me -- I am aware of this already. It does not matter. I'm hooked and somewhat ashamed to admit it. I am a fan of *Pretty Little Liars*.

This from someone who often looks down his nose at respectable and popular art. Someone who prides himself on having read both Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. In the same summer.

So, what gives? Excellent question, and this is my attempt to answer it.

It started innocently enough. About a year and a half ago, when my daughter Katie was finishing her junior year at Brick Memorial High School, she was watching a program on a Tuesday evening. I thought I heard a song I liked on the soundtrack, just barely audible, so I stopped and sat down on the couch next to Katie. Was it the character Hanna who was on screen at that moment who intrigued me? Maybe, I do not

recall. But something caught my eye like something had caught my ear. Katie filled me in a little, and I watched until 9 PM.

The following Tuesday afternoon when I got home from NBTHS, as a kind of joke, Katie

know that Hanna dates Caleb (my favorite couple), Aria used to date Ezra (and also, creepily, Ezra used to be Aria's English teacher), and that Spencer dates Toby, when he's alive. Perhaps most surprisingly, the fourth pretty little liar, Emily,

does not date any boy. She loves a girl named Paige (and is still trying to forget p e r h a p s the love of her life, Maya, who died during the season before last).

The show, like any TV soap opera, has its faults. The plot has become so convoluted

that I doubt even the writers know exactly where they are headed. Questions that I asked when I watched it the first time (like "So, is Ally still alive, maybe?") are still frustratingly unanswered. Sometimes the dialogue is cliché-ridden, and sometimes the jokes are not all that funny. Unlike real life, all

classes in their high school last a maximum of 30 seconds.

But the show has its good points, too. First of all, even though I should not care at all about the four main characters, I can't help but like them, and I credit that to the capable acting of each lead girl. Second, have you ever realized how few narratives have FOUR equal protagonists? I can think only of the Beatles and the Marx Bros., and when I mention those guys in the same paragraph with ANYTHING, well, that's high praise. Third, I think it took a tremendous amount of courage, on a program on ABC Family no less, to have one of the girls be a lesbian, and seemingly everyone in town knows and is OK with it. I'd like to live somewhere so tolerant. Last, I admit it, I can't quit watching now until I have some answers.

There you have it. I don't know about you, but on Tuesday evening, I know exactly what I will be doing. At 7:55 or so, I'll fill a bowl with ice cream, get comfortable on the couch, turn to my left, ask my daughter Katie if she's ready, and keep my mouth shut for the next hour, except during commercials.

Don't call or text me. I'm busy. MSM's status? Watching *Pretty Little Liars*.



Photo Courtesy of Google Images

asked me if I was going to watch *Pretty Little Liars* with her again. Why not right? It was a way for us to bond, and I knew I could not take the program seriously or anything.

Oh, no? Try quizzing me. I know what Radley is. Mona and Ce Ce, secondary characters at best, have seared themselves on my psyche. I

Sidewalk Survey

What do you think of the new BYOPET policy?



Eliza Chen, '17

"It's good because it's better for the students to be able to access the internet without having to get to a computer"



Tyler Bryant, '16

"Of course I love it because I'm all for having electronics in school. Period."



Rebecca Schnier '15

"I don't really use it at all."



Bobby Pallein, '14

"It doesn't work for me, so I can't use it."



**Mr. Chesler,
History**

"As long as it's with teacher discretion and the students don't tweet or what-ever it is."

Justin Bieber: Musician or Aspiring Actor?

Cristina Torres, Staff Writer

On September 14th, teenage musician Justin Bieber took to twitter to announce that he had gotten himself a part in the "Man of Steel," sequel, "Batman vs. Superman." He posted an authentic looking photograph of a script with "Bieber" watermarked on the front cover page, and quickly after that posted "#Robin?". This announcement was made right after loyal fans had been sent in a frenzy with the confirmation that actor Ben Affleck would be playing Batman. Just like it's intended purpose, Bieber's tweet sent media into another uproar, with many Batman and Superman fans bashing Justin for "not fitting the role" of the well-known sidekick Robin. Many of the dedicated fans of the Batman and Superman franchises claimed "Bieber would ruin the movie," and that the role should be given to an actor that would accurately fit the character of Robin. Some fans even went

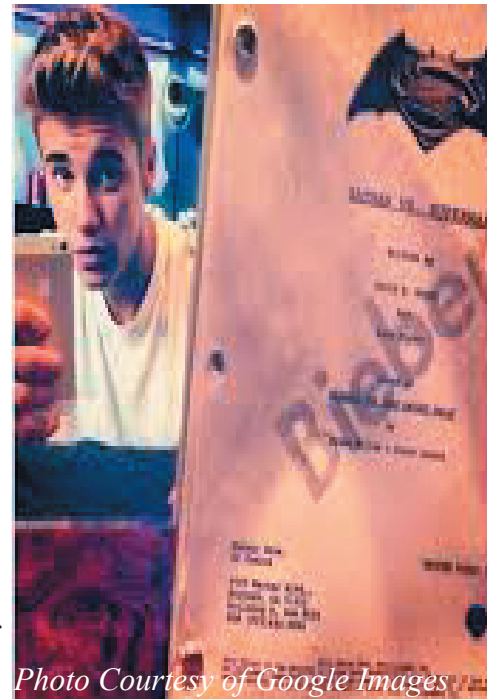


Photo Courtesy of Google Images

far enough to say that if Justin Bieber indeed was playing any role at all in the upcoming movie, that they would refuse to see the film or be affiliated with it.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, a majority of Justin's fans became extremely excited at the thought of their idol playing a part in "Batman vs. Superman." They said he would be a good addition to the already famous cast, and that he would help make the movie a success. The public was not cohesive on their opinion on Justin Bieber's casting. Yet, right when the public was still reeling from Bieber's announcement, he sent out another quick tweet to his millions of followers, stating, "Off to go to something funny...or die :)" making reference to the Will Ferrell-backed website "Funny or Die." This led to the general public believing Justin Bieber's casting was nonexistent, and his script was a fake. However, this still makes you think, what would it really have been like to

have musician Justin Bieber play a serious acting role?

This whole acting incident makes the public consider the circumstances of if Justin Bieber really wanted to pursue an acting career alongside his reputation as a musician. If he were to act in a television show or movie, it would bring immense popularity and attention to the program. Wherever Justin is, there's always going to be either fans or disapproving members of the public analyzing his every move. This amount of extensive public interest and media attention is definitely something that movie directors are looking for, and so it wouldn't be all that difficult for Justin to land some kind of role if he wished for one.

Additionally, Justin Bieber has had experience in the acting field. In his CSI role, he was a main character for two episodes, and the public had a positive response to his acting. Even some of

his fellow actors and actresses on set had good reviews on his acting skills and professionalism on set. With Justin Bieber's experience and exceptional work ethic it wouldn't be hard to visualize him as an actor. Being a good actor is not about what the public thinks however, but it does involve an intense and dedicated work ethic- and that is something that Justin obtains. This is something that is crucial to actors and actresses, and with the desire and passion to work and be successful, that is definitely something that would help Justin Bieber become a famous and favorable actor. But in the end, Justin Bieber has had no real desire to become a serious actor, and his music career is definitely the most prominent thing in his life. Nonetheless, if he were to ever decide to pursue an acting career, it'd be a heavily criticized decision, and would most definitely be something talked about by the media for a while.

A Magical, Modern Masterpiece

Claudia Torres, Staff Writer

City of Bones tells the story of one sixteen year old girl by the name of Clary who discovers the world she knows is not the world that is out there. In Cassandra Clare's first installment of the *Immortal Instruments*, Clary's life is forever changed when she witnesses the murder of a boy in a nightclub. The only one who could see the murderer and the victim, Clary soon discovers that she is a Shadowhunter. Born to protect the world from demons, Clary meets other Shadowhunters, including the arrogant Jace. When her mother disappears, Clary must embrace her new calling and fight the demons roaming New York City, her best friend Simon and the sarcastic Jace by her side. All

the while she searches not only for her mother, but for herself as she struggles with what she wants, and what she is destined to do.

Quite a large book, readers will race through this one in no time as Clare includes a little bit of everything to keep it interesting. Vivid detail paints a colorful world parallel to that of the trademark New York City. Meanwhile, the realistic and suspenseful fight scenes make the reader want to pick up a sword and jump right in to fight alongside Jace and Clary. Even when the reader knows how *City of Bones* will end, Clare loops in one more surprise that will have any reader running to the library for the second book.

In addition, Clare not only takes the reader for a ride, but embeds a profound message in the reader's mind. While learning to become a Shadowhunter, Clary struggles with who she is. Thrust into a world of danger and intrigue, Clary is torn between living a life of normalcy with her best friend Simon, or leaving everything behind in favor of the life Jace offers.

Clare's characters are multifaceted people with a depth one would expect to find in an actual person. While some of their dilemmas are supernatural and fictional (like wondering if going to a vampire warehouse is a good idea), others are so realistic, readers will have no problem connecting with

the characters. Common coming of age problems such as first love, family, and loyalty are hidden gems as Clare seamlessly incorporates them into her mystical and ever so magical world.

In a novel such as this, a reader is highly likely to fall in love with these characters while desperately wishing to be part of their world. Action, romance, mystery and suspense; this coming of age novel gives the reader a new perspective of what it means to grow up, and that deciding one's destiny is the ultimate power. Ultimately, *City of Bones* is a fantastic read for any teen who just wants to read something new and be thrust into a world never seen before.

Bat Affleck ...?

Mark Loshak, Staff Writer

Lately, there has been much nerd backlash, of course mostly on the internet, over the casting of Ben Affleck as the new Batman. Ben Affleck is to star in the *Man of Steel* sequel *Batman vs. Superman* directed by Zack Snyder as announced by Warner Bros. Personally I believe Ben Affleck would not do too bad even though there has been a great deal of negative feedback.

Not only fans, but many fellow celebrities had some interesting reactions as seen through their tweets. For example, Chase Mitchell (@ChaseMit) tweeted "In the Ben Affleck version, Batman's parents kill themselves.", and a parody account @BaneTheBOSS tweets "Ben Affleck already

butchered the Daredevil movie and now he's been cast as Batman???" Some men just want to watch the world burn."

Of course these are all strong feelings but many use the 2003 movie *Daredevil* flop as an example why Ben Affleck would not be a good Batman, but in reality that movie was ten years ago and in these past ten years, even though I thought his acting was pretty good it was the movie effects and plot that was bad, Affleck has become a better actor, even directing his own movies such as *Argo*. For those that do not know much about the similarities of *Daredevil* and *Batman* and are curious, both are brooding heroes in the dark,

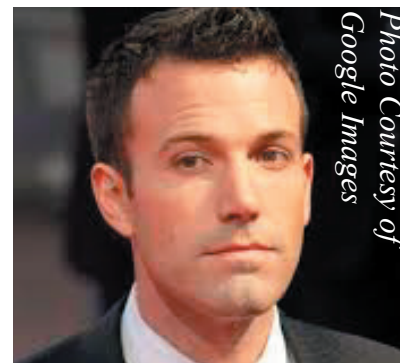
orphans, expert detectives, master martial artists, and are both known as the "Knight" of their universes. *Daredevil* is known as The Marvel Knight and *Batman* as The Dark Knight.

But of course Ben Affleck has been dealing with the whole internet backlash pretty well, "They said, 'Don't use the Internet for a couple days,'" he joked. "I'm very tough. So I saw the announcement, I look at the thing, I look down the first comment ... and the first one just goes, 'Noooooo!' " Ben Affleck says on Jimmy Fallon's talk show laughing it off.

During the casting of *Joker* from the previous trilogy, many believed Heath Ledger would do a

horrible job but were later proved wrong and his performance turned out to be a very memorable Joker.

Greg Silverman comments, "His outstanding career is a testament to his talent and we know he and Zack will bring new dimension to the duality of this character."



About

The Banner

As a news publication of North Brunswick Township High School, The Banner serves to provide students with interesting, timely and important information about the school and community. Its staff covers events and stories that are pertinent to the student body at NBTHS.

While honoring the provisions the school has established to maintain a safe environment for its students, the staff upholds freedom of speech as ruled in *Tinker vs. Des Moines*.

The Banner runs in black and white. Throughout the year, the staff maintains a circulation of both a print and electronic publication among NBTHS, the Board of Education and other areas in the community.

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