

THE BANNER

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North Brunswick Township High School
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Bristol Myers Squibb: Fighting Cancer and Saving Lives!

Ami Patel, Staff Writer

Recently, Bristol-Myers Squibb, a global pharmaceutical company, managed to get approval for the release of their newest cancer drug, Opdivo (Nivolumab). Bristol-Myers Squibb has released medicines for various illnesses, but Opdivo is a drug unlike any other. In fact, the release of the drug may well be the next giant step towards curing cancer.

Opdivo is a human programmed “death receptor” antibody meant for the treatment for patients with metastatic or unresectable melanoma. For those that do not know, metastatic melanoma is an advanced stage of skin cancer in which the cancer cells have spread from their local origin to other parts of the body. Most of the time, patients with cancer cells that have metastasized are beyond saving, because the cancer will have most likely reached vital organs. However, when Opdivo was introduced to these cancer cells (in randomly chosen patients), the drug quickly exposed them, allowing the immune system to naturally fight and dispose of the abnormal cells.

Opdivo does not only work on patients with metastatic melanoma. It has also proven, in clinical trials, to be effective in treating advanced lung cancer. Survival rates for those being treated with Opdivo were significantly higher than those of patients being treated with other medicines. In fact, the drug worked so well, that the clinical tests were stopped early. The reason for its sudden halt was due to the fact that the study had already reached its conclusion, which was to prove that the drug worked on patients with advanced lung cancer.

With such a high level of effectiveness, many people are wondering what is it that makes the drug so effective in cancer patients. The answer lies in the drug’s ability to expose cancer cells, like those in tumors, before they can become lethal. Cancer cells, most of the time, disguise themselves using a key mechanism called PD-1. This mechanism allows the cancer cells to avoid detection by the immune system. Opdivo contains an antibody that binds to that mechanism and blocks PD-

Photo Courtesy of Shailendra Patel



The sign outside of a Bristol-Myers Squibb building.

1 from working. This exposes the cancer cells to the immune system, thus allowing the immune system to get rid of the cancer cells and therefore save the patient.

Possessing a very effective performance and ability to treat different types of cancer, Opdivo has proven to be one of Bristol-Myers Squibb’s most innovative drugs. It

can treat metastatic melanoma and even lung cancer, which is a leading cause of death in the United States. Bristol-Myers Squibb has truly outdone itself in the release of this new drug, and hopefully, even more medical advances will occur in the future.

Basket Auction

Kevin Robayo, Staff Writer

Work started around 2:10 PM, as all baskets located in the house of volunteer parent Claudia Robayo were being transported to the High School as all other volunteer parents began filling their cars to the point where the only free space was the drivers seat. After the five minute drive, students volunteers began unloading the cars and put the baskets on carts to be brought in the Commons for placement.

Class advisers Ms. Miller and Ms. Lawrence, with the help of Ms. Goggin, Mrs. Jennings, Mrs. Marone, the other volunteer parents, and the student volunteers began the tedious set-up of all the baskets. The next few hours were filled with constant altering as mistakes and miscounts were made, resulting in a plethora of moving baskets, shifting tables, and reached a period where it was assumed that baskets were “missing” having all the parents ask question and berate a student for the missing baskets, which turned out to be certificates, relieving everyone.

Everything was set before 5:00 PM, afternoon shift volunteers left, night shift volunteers came in, and both shift volunteers had another 5 hours left to go. Entrance for auctioneers opened before 6:00 PM, coming in groups of two, five, or ten, claiming tables and putting tickets on baskets that caught their eye.

The Commons was filled by 7:00 PM with more than a thousand auctioneers prepared with food for the long night. The next few hours were the announcement of the individual winners of the baskets having all student volunteers carry one basket after another around the Commons. 10:00 PM all the baskets and prizes were given and the end of the basket auction had been reached.

The Commons emptied and class advisers Ms. Miller and Ms. Lawrence announced to that the Class of 2017 raised \$24,000 for their senior prom fund.

Anime Club presents...

Mini-Con!!!

Date: May 8th

Time: 7 pm

Tickets are \$5 and will be sold during lunches

For more information,
Contact:
Justin Kyle or Kiana Best

Is Tumblr Racist?

Jem Bernard, Contributing Writer

According to the popular site's About page, Tumblr hosts 221.6 million blogs and 102.7 billion posts on its social blogging platform. The website is also well-known for its 'social justice' aspect, as many users are known to defend minorities in oppressive situations and use their blogs to inform others on current events.

With such huge and varied demographics, it would be scandalous if the Tumblr staff was to be deemed "racist". However, that is what just happened.

On November 24, 2014, the grand jury of St. Louis chose not to indict Darren Wilson after the infamous shooting of teenager Michael Brown. Instantly, social media erupted. Many pointed out the presence of the KKK in Missouri in support of Wilson, questioning the tolerance for such an organization in the U.S.

In response, a few Tumblr users were able to discover the identities of some of the KKK members present on the 24th and began "doxxing" the individuals, or posting the members' personal information. Tumblr staff took down such posts immediately, sparking outrage. To quote Davia Baker-Whitelaw, writer for The Daily Dot, "Tumblr's real reason for removing the posts [was] that they're a clear violation of the site's terms of service...Still, it doesn't help that Tumblr's abuse team has sometimes been slow to protect victims of [doxxing] and harassment in the past." There have been multiple cases where anonymous users have targeted vulnerable individuals, usually teenagers, messaging them encouragement to commit suicide over a period of time with no response from Tumblr staff. The KKK posts were tracked and taken

down within a day.

Tumblr staff blatantly insulted black users in January and February 2015. The website has been known to change the banner at the top of its homepage for occasions, including National Donut Day, UFO Day, and even the fictional holiday "Festivus" from Seinfeld, going so far as to have the Seinfeld theme playing on loop as users scrolled down their dashboards.

However, when Martin Luther King Day came on January 19, no banner was to be seen. Moving into February, Black History Month, there was still no acknowledgement by staff of the achievements that black individuals reached when others could not.

Some argue that different organizations sponsored those banners (such as Dunkin Donuts during Donut Day). However, this calls to remember that Tumblr is not

a struggling independent website; it has been owned by Yahoo! since May 20, 2013. Tumblr is not strapped for money. So why won't the site recognize the days that matter?

Tumblr staff's actions are a controversial topic, and are definitely affecting its user base. Tumblr blogger and person of color Kimani Johnson, age 17, spoke out, saying "I've lost some of my desire to be on Tumblr, which is a big part of how I stay in contact with friends and stay involved in my interests. Seeing what seems to be bias on behalf of the Tumblr staff against my people, I don't enjoy the website as much anymore." If feelings such as Kimani's spread and become more prominent in the online community, the site could gain even more negative attention and lose many of its users. At this point, it's your move, Tumblr.

New Generation of Cinderella

Aja Walker, Contributing Writer

Cinderella has been a Disney classic for decades--but in about a month, Disney is coming out with a updated version of the classic. The original version was created by French author Charles Perrault. The movie is dedicated to preserving the main ideas and uses the same names as the original *Cinderella* from the 1950's.

Emma Watson was going to play the leading role of *Cinderella*, but a deal could not be worked out because of scheduling. Instead, Lily James plays the star role of Cinderella while Richard Madden is Prince Charming.

The main ideas of the film will revolve around the same events as the original, but this version has more fast-paced action than its predecessor.

The movie started filming on September 23, 2013. *Cinderella* is being filmed at Pinewood Studios in England, the same studio that filmed *Maleficent* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*.

The movie will take place in several parks in England, such as the Windsor Castle, Black Park and the Blenheim Palace.

Cinderella will also have a short film before the showing, named "Frozen Fever", which will star characters from the movie *Frozen*.



Hey Cassie Luken,

Will you go to prom
with me?

-Brian Cha



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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Chomping Popcorn with Chavva: *Boyhood*

Isha Chavva, Staff Writer

Next time you complain about your project taking too long to finish, remember Richard Linklater. His latest project, the Oscar-nominated *Boyhood*, took twelve years to film.

Linklater takes the classic coming-of-age film to a new level by actually following the eponymous boy, Mason Evans (Ellar Coltrane), from his sunny elementary-school days to his first time getting high on psychedelic mushrooms in college. The audience actually sees Coltrane age over the course of these twelve years, morphing from a skinny six year-old to a gangly, mustachioed college student in a mere three hours.

There is something undeniably wonderful about watching

an entire childhood in one sitting at the movie theater. In some ways, we relive our own childhoods--we cheer with our fathers at the baseball game, we go to the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* midnight release with our sisters--and in others, we see a life different from our own, intimately viewing the same world through new eyes.

However, a childhood is a childhood, as we all know, most of them, unless your last name is Potter, Baudelaire, or Longstocking, are not very interesting. That's not to say that an excellent film cannot be made out of something ordinary. There is poetry in life that most modern blockbusters, with their slick cars and fast-paced action scenes, ignore--the creak of grocery-shop-

ping cart wheels, toys scattered over a sunny floor, untouched homework waiting to be done.

This is where the film sags: while Linklater wants it to be a celebration of ordinariness, he rarely allows any ordinary things to happen, confusing them with cliché. If you can name it, it's in *Boyhood*: Evil stepfather? Check. Rebellious high schooler with long hair and a bad attitude? Check. Stoned teenagers talking about, you know, like, life and stuff? Check. Even more befuddling is a last-minute "subplot" in which Mason's mother, Olivia, briefly mentions to a young Mexican laborer that he should go to college. Nothing quite prepares the audience for when, years later, he approaches her, gushing gratitude-

- "You changed my life!"--one afternoon during lunch. Perhaps, after experiencing every growing-up-white-and-middle-class-in-America cliché in the book, we shouldn't be surprised. White savior subplot? Check.

Boyhood is a film made with love, talent, and creativity. There are parts of Mason's childhood that every member of the audience will be able to relate to, and laugh along with--but *Boyhood* fails when it abandons realism, true realism, and tries too hard to be relatable by foisting standard-issue coming-of-age scenes on the audience. Is this what our lives as American teenagers are? For a film that has been venerated for its honesty, it ends up not feeling much like reality at all.

Unfriended: A True Story

Niha Manubolu, Contributing Writer

While bullying has been around for all time, its cyberbullying its relatively new evolution. Teens are targeted through social media websites and are harassed. Many movies were made to publicize that cyberbullying is wrong, but *Unfriended* brings a new twist to the previous movies on the topic.

Unfriended is based on a true story of a girl who killed herself because her friends leaked an inappropriate video of her, resulting in cruel cyberbullying. The director of the film adds a twist to this real story in the movie by adding horror elements. In the film, exactly a year later, the girl's friends are on a group video chat and receive a

request call from the girl who killed herself. Terrifying events ensue.

The message of the movie is that cyberbullying is a real problem, not simply a joke. The horror portion of the movie is to represent that there are consequences for everything.

So before one posts something online, it is important to think about what it might do someone. *Unfriended* shares its message of cyberbullying through a movie and using a true story of a cyberbullied victim. Cyberbullying is bullying. Hiding behind a pretty screen, doesn't make it less hurtful. Written words have power.

Taking Over Social Media: FYUSE

Troy Asare, Contributing Writer

Fyuse is a new "spatial photography" app that utilizes 3D technology. You can capture a dynamic photo by moving your phone around during capture, and viewers will be able to explore your 3D photo by tilting their phone in their hands. In addition to capturing these special 3D photos, users will have access to a personal gallery and social network through the service.

There are also options for sharing your spatial snaps directly through Facebook, Twitter, and the Web. There are filters too.

Co-founder and CEO Radu Rusu says that he realized years ago that there needed to be something more than simple photos and videos: "I realized something was missing. A photo is a moment in time. A video captures time. But what about a moment in space?"

A New Calling for Call of Duty

Avery Blue, Contributing Writer

Call of Duty, a highly popular series which displays mid-war action in a variety of places, has come out with a stunning new addition to their legacy. *Call of Duty Advanced Warfare* delves even deeper into the simulation of Military battle.

The loyals to the series held their expectations high, because of the previous succession and popularity, and because the game itself would be released on the revolutionary ps4, so large fortifications and improvements were expected.

The base of the game itself begins with the warfare as usual, followed by stunning use of technologies and weapons to hunt and kill your enemies. As a

war game, it often leads other non followers to believe that it has ill intent, and is molding the minds of those who play it into "Murderers".

However the loyalists of the game obviously disagree. The disagreement with the game and it's reason impedes its progression and growth to the public, but in the end it keeps its view of simple entertainment through the argument.

The game itself supports complete immersion for the players into the world of the *Call of Duty*, with new technology and options for gameplay such as optional aim assist, and hit markers, the mark that appears when you aim at an enemy.

Overall, the game introduces a new world of gaming, and it shows an evolution of gaming over the years. Despite the arguments about

grant private access to. You can also send a Fyuse as part of a message.

As you can see, Fyuse has new and more advanced technology as well as the traditional layout of any other app. This is a pretty important app because many kids from this generation love social media and new things as well; this will be a great leap for photography and social media.

There are many new advantages that aid the takeover, such as its ability to capture your surroundings and features of your photo using a 3D spectrum, as well as its capability to capture all three dimensions of an object too large for a normal picture to capture.

Last but not least, you can use Fyuse to publish privately. Private Fyuses can only be seen by you and other users who you

Senior Spotlight: Sabeen Rokerya

Liela Piracha, Staff Writer

Photo Courtesy of Sabeen Rokerya



Sabeen Rokerya, a senior at NBTHS, has truly made her mark in high school. Over the years as an NBTHS raider, Sabeen involved herself in an enormous list of activities. She is currently involved in NBTHS's Model UN, SGO, and National Honor Society. She has also been a part of our marching band, track team, and Key Club.

When asked to talk about what or who inspires her, Sabeen says that, "I have lot of inspirations. Of course my parents--two of the hardest working people I know. My older siblings, too. I've watched them both go through college and beyond and they've taught me so much about adulthood and the transition into it."

Sabeen's teachers also play an important role in inspiring Sabeen. "My teachers are also always my inspirations. Each one I've had is somehow programmed with the desire to see others

succeed. I know that not everyone has this attribute, and it can be hard to attain. But every teacher somehow has it. They all do really care whether I as a student see it or not. My teachers are the ones who inspire me to be motivated in class on the hardest of days."

Sabeen also credits her teachers in shaping her. "Your teachers are there to help you. They've been hired and physically been placed in that classroom to help you achieve something later on. One of the biggest struggles many teachers face is when they know that have to be strict. When teachers are strict, we think they're against us. But if they're not strict, how will we improve?"

When reminiscing about her time at NBTHS, Sabeen explains that her favorite moments come from her time in the NBTHS marching band. She clarifies that-- "Playing music and marching was always fun, but the best moments were always with the family. Us band kids, we spend so much time together during our season. 5 days out of the week for hours and hours at a time. Our Friday nights and Saturday afternoons, the loud bus rides when everyone's happy and singing--those were all great moments."

Sabeen is definitely leaving NBTHS as a stronger and more intelligent girl than she was four years ago. She has continued to strive towards success over the passing years and will continue to do so in the years to come.

The Man Behind the Mac: Dr. Ford

Kena Chavva, Staff Writer

Though it has only been about two months since he arrived, Dr. Ford is already carving out his own niche in the high school. After Mr. Cokeley, North Brunswick Township High School's former biology teacher, retired, Dr. Ford has filled his place as an Honors and AP Biology teacher.

Dr. Ford has spent several years conducting research at universities like Stanford and Rutgers. He then moved to the pharmaceutical industry, where he performed research to find treatments for diseases such as arthritis. His switch to teaching occurred only a few years ago, when he decided to pursue a career interest in education.

When asked about his career change, he says, "I always liked working with young people when I was doing research and I

really wanted to give back to the community by teaching."

His nearly fifteen years of biology research aren't just a relic of the past. He draws on his experience to create a unique classroom experience using his trusty Mac, focused on experiments and labs.

"...what I try to do in my teaching is bring some of my experience into a classroom so kids know what it's like to be a scientist," he explains. "I also enjoy developing lessons that involve technology."

Dr. Ford isn't solely focused on helping his students achieve high test scores either, (though he does intend for both his Honors and AP classes to ace the NJ Biology Exam and AP Biology Exam respectively)-real learning and critical thinking

Class of 2016 Spotlight: Samantha Mehalick

Anthony Kovach, Staff Writer

Photo Courtesy of Samantha Mehalick



Samantha Mehalick is a fun-loving junior with a hard passion for the pursuit of greatness. In her three years at NBTHS so far, she has accomplished much and keeps adding to her already impressive list of achievements.

Samantha is not only a formidable athlete on the field, but also a scholarly student in the classroom. She credits Mr. Strouse as her favorite teacher and math as her favorite subject.

After school, Samantha dedicates countless hours to lacrosse and basketball. Samantha recently got accepted to Marist College for Division 1 lacrosse,

an unprecedented achievement for a Junior. She comments that the recruitment process has provided her with a grueling year, but finally getting accepted is a great joy. Though overly pleased, Mehalick admits that, "there is always room for improvement."

In reference to the lacrosse season as a whole, Samantha expressed high hopes for the girls she has learned to call sisters and expects much hard work and pay off from their efforts and an unforgettable season.

When asked to recall the fondest memory from her career at NBTHS, Samantha wastes no time in praising her lacrosse teammates for their GMC Championship win last year. She cites her loving parents, tireless coaches, and incredible teammates as her inspiration to carry on and continuously perform at the top of her ability. In a message to the rest of the student body, Samantha gives an advice to students of all ages.

"Keep working for what you want and never give up. Giving up will only hurt yourself."

are the major goals in his classroom.

"I want to force students to think and explore science, and not just hear about science, but actually experience it."

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Ford remains connected to science, though in less overt ways. He draws inspiration from President Barack Obama for a number of reasons, citing "how [much] he cares about things like climate change, education..." and "how he respects scientific points of view on the climate."

Of his time in the district so far, Dr. Ford says, "[North Brunswick] seems like a really friendly place. I like the vibe and the atmosphere, and I have some really great students."

Photo Courtesy of Justin Kyle



To all students, he advises, "...enjoy your work and enjoy learning, and enjoy the challenges that learning presents." Wise words from a man who has clearly enjoyed his own learning and work throughout the years.