

THE REDCOAT REVIEW

BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL

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WINTER 2013

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Anti-Defamation League Sponsors A School Wide Assembly To Address Bullying



ADL's coordinator, Diane, stands with students while they hold up posters to display their support against bullying



Photo Credit: Emily Dymczyk
Students participating in ADL activities

Emma Morelli, Arts & Entertainment Editor

On December 13th and 14th, BHS was involved in an assembly called "Names Can Really Hurt Us" and the name was certainly reflected in the brave souls who shared their experiences. During a pre-set open mic time, a number of our own students chose to stand up and take the mic to share their experiences in BHS. This act showed real courage and deserves to be respected. However, whether or not a particular student shared his or her story, everyone who attended experienced a feeling of togetherness and empowerment.

As a school, this day affected us all and the lessons we learned will continue. From this day on, we should all look closely at what is happening in our school and remember this assembly so that we can all act as allies to change the Berlin High School Community for the better.

Finally, a big thank you goes out to all of the students who volunteered their time to partake in this event, all of the teachers who spoke and performed in skits to support us and to all of the students who shared their stories--you inspire us.



Photo Credit: Emma Morelli
Mr. Arnold, Ms. Gagnon, and a group of students perform a skit which shows an example of bullying

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Eight Students Participating in Northern Region Honor Band

Dan Fasciano, Staff Writer

Auditioning for Region Honor Band is one of the most testing musical ordeals for high school musicians. There are several different CMEA honor bands spreading out across the state, and Berlin is part of the Northern Region in Connecticut, which is known to be one of the most difficult honor bands to be involved in, simply because of the sheer amount of incredibly talented high school musicians in this area. The Berlin High School Music Program has had many amazing young musicians enter this group over the years, and this year is no exception. Eight students of Berlin High School have auditioned and been accepted into this prestigious conglomeration of musicians. Six of these were from the band, Thomas deRito, a BHS Senior, Alto Saxophone; Jodie DiCiccio, a BHS Freshman, Flute; Chris Hauptfeld, a BHS Freshman, Trombone; Logan Kissane, a BHS Sophomore, Oboist; Alec Rich, a BHS Freshman, Tuba; and Ian Tamburini, a BHS Senior, Clarinet. However, the band will not be the only BHS musical society that will be represented, as the two students from the Choral program have been accepted as well: Natalie Souza, a BHS Junior, Alto, and Chris Von Achen, a BHS Senior, Tenor. All eight of these musicians have both proven their musical prowess in getting accepted into the Northern Region Honor Band. They will play in a concert with some of the best high school musicians in the state, an impressive accomplishment that has resulted from hours practicing and rehearsing. They also have the opportunity to try out again to become a part of an even more exclusive group of musicians. The All-State Region Honor Band consists of the best musicians in the state, and is probably the most esteemed concert band in the state. The competition will be intense but the resilient band students at Berlin High are more than up to the challenge.

Meet Berlin High's World Language Teachers: Ms. Berube & Ms. Herrera!

Ms. Berube, Spanish Teacher



Photo Credit: Emily Dymczyk

Ms. Herrera, Spanish Teacher



Photo Credit: Olivia Jablonski

1. What brought you to Berlin High School?

I grew up in Berlin and attended Berlin Public Schools, so I already knew that Berlin has a great school system, so when I saw an opening for a Spanish position I had to jump at the opportunity!

2. What made you want to become a teacher?

I always knew that I wanted to become a teacher, but it wasn't until I came to Berlin High as a student that I decided I wanted to become a Spanish teacher. I really enjoyed my Spanish classes throughout high school and all of my Spanish teachers encouraged me to pursue a career in teaching Spanish. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to come back to Berlin High School and work alongside with my former teachers now as colleagues.

3. What were you involved in when you were in high school?

I was pretty involved with activities in high school. I was a member of the National Honor Society and I tutored afterschool. I also was an editor on the yearbook staff and my class was the first graduating class to have a yearbook all in color, which was pretty exciting. Along with yearbook, I was an editor on the Redcoat Review. I also participated in UpBeat all four years and served as a house leader for Willard my senior year. I also was involved in the chorus and a few of the musicals/plays.

4. What do you like to do in your free time?

I have always loved to read, so when I have the time I love to get into a good book. I also enjoy spending time with my friends and traveling whenever possible. During the summer I go to the beach at least once a week and during the winter I really enjoy snowboarding.

5. Are you involved in any school clubs, activities, or athletics? What made you choose these activities?

I decided that since this is my first year at Berlin High School, I want to focus on teaching, preparing lessons, and being readily available for my students. I am hoping that next year I will be able to get more involved with school clubs and activities. I do plan on volunteering for certain events such as chaperoning for homecoming/prom this year.

6. Where are students most likely to find you after-school?

I am pretty much always here after school until three o'clock or later. If I am not in my classroom, I will be in Ms. Herrera's classroom doing work.

1. What brought you to Berlin High?

I have worked in Berlin for 9 years as a dance teacher for the parks and recreation center so after many years of getting to know the students and parents from Berlin I knew it was a community I wanted to continue to be involved in. As soon as I saw an opening for BHS, I got so excited and I could not be happier that everything worked out as well as it did!

2. What made you become a teacher?

I always knew I wanted to become a teacher since I was a little kid playing school with imaginary students, and as I got older the idea of becoming a teacher still seemed incredibly appealing to me. I have always loved everything about my high school teachers from the way they would help students in class to the way they expressed their willingness to go above and beyond for their students. I love the idea of helping students learn new material and the fact that I can contribute to their knowledge is really inspiring to me and something I have always wanted to be a part of.

3. What were you involved in when you were in high school?

When I was in high school I was in the band, I played the clarinet for a few years. I was also extremely involved in a competitive dance company for all four years of high school. Dance has always been a passion of mine and it is an experience that I will always hold very close to my heart.

4. What do you do in your free time? Any hobbies?

What I enjoy doing during my free time is dancing, of course, shopping, reading a good book with a cup of coffee, and bonding time with my family and friends whether it's going to see a movie or going to the beach on a hot summer day.

5. Are you involved in any school clubs, activities, or athletics? What made you choose these activities?

Since this is my first year teaching, I wanted to make sure I stay as focused as possible which is why I am not involved in any school activities this year. However, I do plan on volunteering to help out at sporting events whenever it is possible this year. I do plan on helping out next year with school clubs or activities.

6. Where are students most likely to find you after school?

Students can find me in room 202 everyday after school!

Berlin High Soccer: Senior Captain Ryan Marquis' a look on the team and himself.

Reid Hilbie, Contributing Writer

Ryan likes to recall the night in which the Redcoats took down the undefeated Plainville team. "Going into that game we were struggling," says Ryan. The team had lost 2 in a row so they needed this game to boost their confidence. Twenty minutes into the game Alex Bednarek got that chance when he defeated a defender and had a breakaway and scored 1-0. After that the team held on defense and won the game 1-0.

Ryan Marquis is a senior captain of the boys' soccer team and is very active in the school. Along with soccer, he is an active member of Upbeat, swimming, and golf. I had the pleasure of interviewing him on his experiences as a player and and BHS soccer team.

Ryan started playing soccer when he was five at the recreation program. This sport has provided him with freindships and gives him a place to be competitive. Soccer has also provided him with a place where he can just play and forget everything else that is going on in school and in life. "Most importantly, soccer has given me a place to have fun," he says.

He has played many sports in his past like baseball, and basketball and plays golf and swims for the high school. I could tell that he was a very busy person and he had a lot of work outside of soccer.

"Representing Berlin as a soccer player is more than just on field performance," he says. The players on the other team will not remember how well he played, but will remember the attitude with which he played and how he carried himself as a professional on and off the field. Therefore, he wants to conduct himself with integrity on and off the field. All of the coaches he has had have influenced him in one way or another. Each of them has given him one asset to help him improve his soccer style and game.

Ryan likes to think back on that one night his team defeated Plainville. He states that it is a great accomplishment for him and the team. "Plainville is just one of many great wins" Ryan says. We wish Ryan all the success he deserve after he graduates from BHS this spring.

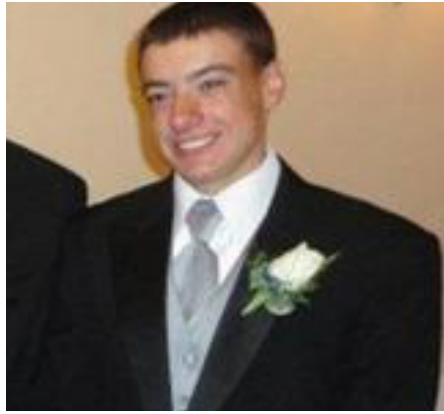


Photo Credit: Facebook.com
Ryan Marquis, senior soccer captain, at junior prom.

Inside the Facemask of Justin Gombotz Connor Bennet, Contributing Writer

Gombotz to the ten, to the five, touchdown! By now, Berlin fans are probably quite used to hearing this as it happens on average two times a game.

I was privileged to sit down with the senior star out in the courtyard at BHS. With leaves falling, the wind howling and the sun shining, a smile lit up the senior's face as he said it was his favorite time of the year. The superstar made it very clear that he wasn't only a football player, but a regular student as well.

As the superstar enjoyed his daily protein shake, we first talked about football. While Gombotz may not seem it initially, teams like Rockville, Weaver, and Tolland learn the hard way that he is a force to be reckoned with on the field. His rare combination of agility and strength continues to differentiate him from other running backs around the state. In fact, some have said his style of play resembles former NFL runner back, Emmitt Smith. Gombotz acknowledged that he has received these comparisons before, and although he doesn't fully agree, he appreciates being compared to an athlete like Emmitt.

Another comparison Gombotz has frequently received is much closer to home. Brian Gombotz, also a former Berlin High School runner back and Justin's father, is said to have had the same style as Justin. Their careers seem to mirror each other, as both are known for finding open space quickly with an indescribable amount of tenacity. Although he acknowledged his Dad's greatness, Gombotz stated that he wants to be his own player with his own legacy, separate from his father. From Peyton, to Eli, to Archie, the Mannings' and the Gombotz' can both attest that sometimes, talent runs in the family!

Less about him and more on the football team as a whole: When I asked who the biggest test to date had been he took a breath and sighed with relief before

saying "Northwest Catholic" with a grin. He then went on to quickly mention his optimism "We have a great senior leadership with role model captains."

However, what many people don't know about the star back is his busy life off the Gridiron. On the field he seems to come off as a bulldog, but sitting down with Justin, I concluded he is one of the most down-to-earth, gentle kids in the school. One of his major passions is the "Red Sea", a fan based organization that supports the school basketball team. When asked about the upcoming season, he mentioned the potential he saw in certain players. He talked about Tyler Stritch, a sharp, shooting small forward, who has worked hard on improving his body strength this off season. He also touched on senior point guard Darren Gilbert, who Gombotz expects to be one of the most explosive players in the state.

The journey doesn't end for Gombotz on the day of graduation either. While he is undecided on where he will take his talents next year, he hopes a college somewhere in the country will have a spot for him. When I asked what his number one school was he responds with, "It depends what schools accept me..." As evident from his response, he is clearly his own harshest critic, a characteristic that will surely serve him well moving forward. Whether he is crossing the goal line on the field or off, it seems inevitable that the star running back will encounter success wherever he may land.



Photo Credit: Courant.com
Gombotz carries the ball in the BHS vs. Platt Game at Sage

An Inside Look at the Berlin High School Swim Team

Marybeth Simone, Contributing Writer



Photo Credit: Hssn-media.advance.net

Berlin High School swim team senior, Morgan Picard, wasn't exactly drowning in her tears about finally leaving the team in her last year. Picard has been faithfully swimming for her school for the past four years, and shared with us a few pros and cons to the swim team that don't always appear to outsiders.

Simmons: *What made you decide to join the swim team at Berlin High?*

Picard: Originally I joined because I thought it would be a good way to get into good shape. Then I started making a lot of good friends so I decided to stick with it. It's also important to have four years of a sport on a college resume.

Simmons: *Could you say that you have come a long way since you first started freshman year? If so, how?*

Picard: Yes, I definitely improved over the years. Listening to Coach McCarthy and having the support of my teammates motivated me to do better. Having non-stop practicing Monday through Saturday really paid off.

Simmons: *It is understood that the swim team must commute to practice. How do you and other members feel about this?*

Picard: It's kind of ridiculous. Then again, swim team always gets the short end of the stick as far as fall sports go. Sports like football, soccer, volleyball and cheerleading not only have more support but they don't have to travel too far. It makes the overall practice time take a long time because we have to drive all the way to Meriden. By the time we get home, we don't have much time for studying or spending time with family.

Simmons: *Describe the relationships you have made with some of your teammates? The coaches?*

Picard: Specifically, I have gotten really close with Holly Chirico, Marybeth Simone, and Natasha Nixon, but overall the swim team is like a big family, I love everybody. My relationship with the coaches is more on a professional level but I am close with them all the same.

Simmons: *Would you recommend this sport to incoming freshmen? Why or why not?*

Picard: Yes, I would because you don't have to be amazing at swimming to join, and you grow as the years go on. It's a really great way to make friends, especially if you're starting out as a freshman.

Simmons: *Will you miss the swim team? Why or why not?*

Picard: I will miss the girls on the team and how close I got with everybody. The thing about the swim team that I won't miss is the competition part because sometimes it got too competitive for me. To be honest, I kind of look forward to the end of the season. I have a lot more free time.

It is very interesting to learn that not all sports teams at Berlin High School are treated with equality. However, it is clear to see that the football team receives more attention and credibility as opposed to the swim team who most of the time, has a very empty fan section. Picard told me that almost all of the swim team members share this anguish towards the lack of support from the town and school system.

Anyone who has ever participated in any sort of after school commitment (sports, clubs, jobs, etc) knows how difficult it can be to balance everything out. Morgan stated that she is looking forward to "having her life back." However at times, when recalling a fond memory, she did look a bit sad to know that in just a short time she would be saying goodbye to the team forever. I find it compelling that this group of girls have become so close over the years.



Photo Credit: Ashley Malloy

The Life of a Cheerleader: BHS Graduate, Taylor Jefferson

Ashley Malloy, Contributing Writer

The one thing in my life that makes me happy is cheerleading and no one will ever take that away from me whether it is cheering or coaching," shared former student Taylor Jefferson who joined me in a delightful interview about her experience as a cheerleader. Taylor attended Berlin High School and graduated two years ago. Although she never cheered for the school, Taylor was part of Central Valley Panthers All-Star Cheerleading. Being part of this team, she became a national Champion and formed a close relationship with the other girls. Before anyone judges cheerleading, they should try it

themselves and see if they have the emotional and physical strength of a cheerleader. Despite not having a good understanding or ever really watching this sport, after spending time with Taylor, I had a great chance to learn and watch routines that kept me speechless.

AM: *What does cheerleading mean to you?*

TJ: When I started to cheerlead I loved it because I was good at it and people got to see my talents. Over the years, it has grown to be a part of me that will never leave my mind. Cheering has brought so much happiness in my life and I had such great supporters by my side through the good and bad times. I feel like everyone should do what they love because it is your getaway from reality.

AM: *How do you react to people who say cheerleading isn't a sport?*

TJ: There are always people saying it isn't a sport just because they mostly only know about the cheerleaders at high school football, basketball, or soccer games. I stick up for what I believe in. When people tell me they don't think it is a sport, I just want them to try to do what we do and if they can handle it, then I will let them keep their opinions. Most of the time, I let people say what they want because I know how hard it is and most people will never be able to do what cheerleaders do.

AM: *What does it mean to you knowing that cheerleading will be in the next Olympics?*

TJ: To be able to watch cheerleading in one of the biggest event in history is an honor for all cheerleaders. We are all getting recognized, not just the best in the world, but every single girl that cheers will earn recognition for all the hard work and dedication put into competitions and practices. A lot more people are finally seeing how hard and perfect you have to be because of the dangerous stunts. Also, you have to have a great amount of stamina to do all of this.

AM: *What don't people get about this sport?*

TJ: When people think of cheerleading they think it's just yelling and pom-poms. People don't realize how much strength is involved and how focused you have to be so that you're on time with your stunts, tumbles, back handsprings etc. While cheering you have to be so precise and on point. One mistake can cause danger to a teammate. You also have to be emotionally fit to do this because if your head isn't in the competition then you won't be ready to help the team, and you can bring them down with you.

AM: *When you're cheering what is going through your mind?*

TJ: Everything leaves my mind. I am in a different world that is my own happiness. I will always know that no one will be able to take that away from me. It is the most amazing feeling because everything just comes together for me and I don't overthink, I just do it. I have no worries or doubts about my team and I know they will always have my back, so I just let everything leave my mind and do what I do best.. CHEER!

Cheerleading take so much time, effort, focus, and strength. If you are someone who doubted cheerleading, you should go back and rethink it.

Betrayed by a Beloved Disney Star

Nikki Harris, Contributing Writer

“The Suite Life of Zack and Cody” was a Disney Channel show that was a favorite to many kids in this generation. Although some loved the humorous nature of Zack Martin, played by Dylan Sprouse, it is the brilliant mind of his on-screen and real-life brother, Cole Sprouse, that captured the attention of the Tumblr society. Tumblr is a very creative and expressive network; therefore it creates many close bonds with people all over the world. No matter where you are, you can always find someone with similar interests as you, and you’d be surprised at how many lifelong friendships have evolved because of this freethinking website.

Despite the creative edge that Tumblr has, it is always exciting to find the blog of a celebrity since many of these celebrity blogs are not publicly revealed. When Cole Sprouse’s Tumblr URL was leaked on dashboards of all the Tumblr members, it started a frenzy. People were anxious to see where this child star had gone and what he was doing with his life. However, unlike the majority of celebrity blogs, Cole’s blog was deep. It was discovered he and his brother had enrolled in NYU and Cole had gone into archeology, anthropology, journalism, and photography. He had broadened his spectrum of education and parted ways with his acting career.

“Classified us like animals.”

A lot of people were very confused. Some people followed Cole simply because of his social status. However, there were the curious few who actually took interest in the thoughts and theories of this adult Cole. In his blog description he ended with a line reading, “Let’s try and find greatness in absence.” Right off the bat you could tell Cole had changed. A picture of him with long blonde hair in a ponytail looking out in the sky confirmed that this boy had found himself and what he loved to do.

People looked up to him and admired his work, and would wait eagerly for his next post. Then one day it was all gone. His blog was deactivated. That’s when he tweeted about his social experiment he had conducted on Tumblr. He had had an idea about how people would react and that it would all just be a game to them; people wouldn’t take him seriously. And a lot of people did not. But for those who did it felt like a betrayal. They had really looked up to this guy and all of a sudden it seemed as if he had pulled a fast one.

Some members of Tumblr reached out to me when they heard I was doing an article on this topic. A user who wishes to remain anonymous says, “I really loved reading Cole’s posts because it made me realize I wasn’t the only person using Tumblr as a thought outlet. Because so many people just reblog photos of food or expensive things. I feel bad that he deleted his Tumblr but I get why; it’s who he is. He even told us that he wants us to respect the blog for

the blog itself and not just because of him. I was offended by his tweets though... he grouped us all together and classified us like animals.” On the opposite side of the spectrum, another anonymous commentator states, “Why do you even care? It was one blog by one ‘where-are-they-now’ celebrities. Whatever.”

But is it a simple “whatever?” That is exactly the point of Cole’s blog. He wanted us to question every move we made, however now we are all questioning his. Should he have done this? Was there any real purpose to it? Or was it all just for laughs? He earned the trust of a group of people and then it all went away.

Whether or not Sprouse actually meant it to be an experiment for a written thesis paper, or just an amusing test on the effects of how people would react to the thought of being observed, which he said was his reasoning for all of this, it still left the Tumblr community feeling stung and betrayed. An audio post with 300,914 plays and counting was made with a caption of “To Cole Sprouse, who only came on Tumblr for a Sociology project.” If the play button is pressed you hear a very ticked off Tyra Bank giving a piece of her mind to one of her Next Top Models, only the names were cut out and in context it applies to Cole.

Maybe this grown-up child star has learned his lesson, or maybe it was all about him teaching everyone else a lesson. For whatever reason, this controversial experiment occurred, however, there is one thing that should be noted before all said and done; hell hath no fury like a blogger scorned.

“How most of Tumblr feels about Cole Sprouse.”

Photo Credit: tumblr.com/tagged/king-of-the-trolls



Cole Sprouse posing for a picture taken by a friend.

Photo Credit: Coletureconceptarchive.tumblr.com

Exploring Extracurricular Activities Easier in College

Emily Charbonneau, Contributing Writer



Photo Credit: College Profiles

Salve Regina University

College campuses are not only home to premium education, but numerous unique clubs and activities centered on many varied interests as well. At Salve Regina University, it isn’t uncommon for Meaghan Trzasko, a freshman, to walk by the psychology club quizzing each other in the library together or an intramural sport practicing on the green or even a sign language club communicating with their hands in a common room all over campus every day. There has to be a good amount of clubs at a school of 3,000 to accommodate all of the diverse personalities it harbors.

The students have diverse backgrounds, personalities, and interests, so a handful of a dozen or so clubs aren’t going to satisfy everyone like a high school’s extracurricular roster does. There are many more clubs at Salve Regina University, and Meaghan was very willing to share her experiences with school organizations so far this year.



Cole M. Sprouse @TheOleKingCole

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Before claiming that someone has betrayed you, have you ever asked yourself: "how have I betrayed them?"

Expand

A Tweet posted by Cole on Nov. 22, a week after his blog was deleted

Photo Credit: Twitter.com/TheOleKingCole

Book Recommendations from BHS Students

Extracurricular Activities Contd. From Page 5

“There really is something for everyone's interest. I think we have over 50 clubs on campus,” she told me. Salve's online list is quite impressive; with exactly fifty clubs everyone's interests are thoroughly supplemented. “Almost every major has offered some type of club or activity associated to it. For example, premed club for those interested in the medical field, art guild for those majoring in art, psychology club [etc]. There are also fun clubs like equestrian, gymnastics and student activities.” Meaghan herself is involved in six clubs, including premed club currently and is looking to involve herself in more before her time at Salve comes to an end.

Out of the six clubs Meaghan is involved in, three are based around helping others. “One of the things I love is that the clubs do a lot to give back to the community. There are so many different ways to help both children and adults which is very important to me,” she responded enthusiastically, mirroring how she feels about her activities. As a student at Berlin High School, Meaghan was also involved in the UpBeat Peer Leadership Program which is largely based around community service. Although there is no UpBeat Program in college, there are community service clubs that Meaghan can continue in. However, Premed Club, Equestrian and American Sign Language Club were clubs she had no involvement in prior to her freshman year at Salve. When I asked why she wasn't involved in any of these programs previously she responded, “I am not involved in any of the same clubs that I was in high school mainly because none of these opportunities were offered.” It is certainly true that there are plenty more opportunities for extracurricular involvement in college.

Even though she is incredibly involved, Meaghan regretfully said, “I... wish I joined Protect our Wildlife because we get to help rescue animals.” But there are three more years until graduation! College is a time when you can try new things and see what you are really interested in. Meaghan was taking part in Equestrian Riding briefly but ended up terminating her involvement. In Equestrian club the students “learned to ride horses.” This is something that Meaghan hadn't thought to get involved in while in high school then tried this past semester. “It just didn't work out,” she told me. And that is perfectly fine because in the process Meaghan learned something about herself; horseback riding didn't click.

Meaghan found a large selection of clubs in college that she didn't even think about beforehand, but now are part of her everyday life. There are so many different clubs that will help students figure out who they are while exploring life through their college years. In a few short months, the current senior class will venture off into the world of college, and wherever they find themselves, they will be making up those diverse crowds of people searching for their fit in the right clubs and organizations just like Meaghan.

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien Book Review by Dan Fasciano, Staff Writer

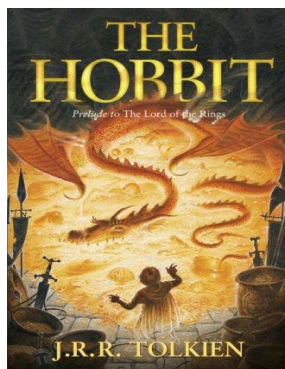


Photo Credit: Wfedan.wordpress.com

While by no means recent, published in 1937, *The Hobbit* has long been recognized as classic. For good reason, too, as the book is quite good, despite being largely considered a children's book. While this book has never really garnered as much success as its successor, *The Lord of the Rings*, it has stood the test of time and has never been out of print since its first publishing. Also, its being made into a movie trilogy (you might have heard). Anyway, the long and the short is, this book is good, and one of my personal favorites, so I would totally recommend it.

Share your recommendations with us by email: kbfumi@berlinschools.org, or by seeing any staff member

Is the Redcoat Review For You?

Deana Sobilo, Staff Writer

A teenage girl walks into the room. She is tall for her age. She has long blond hair that makes her noticeable across the room. From a distance her clothes represent her interest in reporting, or maybe it is her notebook in her left hand that gives her aspiration away. She sits down on a couch, a little shy and all. It is the smile that spreads across her face, that lets me know she, Olivia Jablonski, is ready for the first question.

Why did you join the Redcoat Review?

“I joined the redcoat review because I love to write and I want to pursue a career in journalism.”

Do you enjoy being in the Redcoat Review?

“Yes, I do enjoy being in the Redcoat Review because I enjoy writing for the paper and I like to write entertaining stories.”

If you could change one thing about the Redcoat Review, what would it be?

“What I would probably change is how we could find another way to distribute the papers-perhaps online!”

Would you recommend a friend to join the Redcoat Review?

“I would only recommend a friend if they have an interest in writing- half of my friends do not like to write as much as I do.”

What types of stories have you written about in the Redcoat Review?

“I wrote a lot of stories that have to do with entertainment: live shows, album reviews and movie reviews. I also interviewed a foreign exchange --

The Sign For Drowning by Rachel Stolzman Book Review by Olivia Jablonski, Editor in Chief

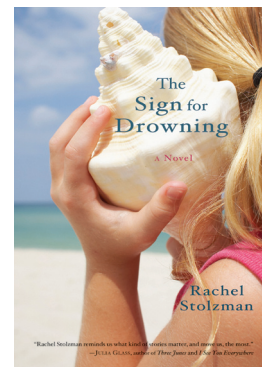
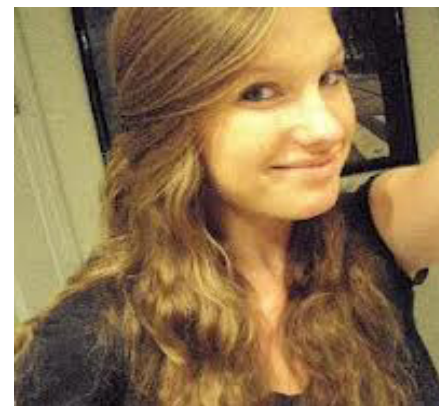


Photo Credit: Rachelstolzman.com

In this bittersweet story, Anna lives with a horrid memory of losing her younger sister, Megan. After witnessing her death, she grew up learning sign language for the comfort and hope of communicating with her dead sister. This influence made her settle comfortably into a career as a teacher for hearing-impaired children. Anna decides to become a mother and adopt a little girl named Adrea, who happens to be deaf and can only use sign language to communicate with others. As her mother, she enjoys her company and realizes all the love Adrea can give her takes away the emotional pain that has been buried inside of her for all these years. Although this heartfelt story may seem sad, there are many sweet and endearing moments with both characters as they learn to reconnect with the world again.



Olivia Jablonski - Redcoat Review Editor
Photo credit: Olivia Jablonski

student and two band members of the All-American Rejects!”

What does your job consist of in the Redcoat Review?

“Currently, I am responsible for the entire newspaper. I used to be a staff writer, but now I am the Editor of the entire paper. I think it is a lot different from being a staff writer because I have a lot more responsibilities.”

Throughout my interview with Olivia Jablonski, a vibe projected off of her due to her passion for journalism. You can tell that she takes her job seriously and she puts a lot of time and effort to make things work. If I could change one thing about this interview, I would have allowed more time for me to freely ask her questions to some of her responses. To some, the Redcoat Review is definitely more than just a paper.

Dying Over Application Deadlines, or Finding Essays Excruciating?

Ian Tamburini, Staff Writer

Are you currently a senior in the process of applying to colleges? Are you at all frustrated or confused by deadlines that need to be met? Are you stressing out over numerous application essays? If you meet any of these criteria then keep reading, and we'll break things down for you.

DEADLINES

Many of you have already figured out that there are several college application deadlines. At this point you should be aware of your college's individual application due dates. If you are not aware, general dates are listed [below]. Be sure to verify your college's specific application deadlines for general and early action.

Please note that guidance needs to see your application before it is actually submitted. Two weeks prior to an application's deadline, students need to bring one "BHS Transcript Request Form" per college to their counselor. After guidance receives this form, counselors will review all online materials and send them out electronically together. There still may be time to apply early action to some schools if you hand in your information to guidance ASAP.



Photo Credit: Sjcc.edu/education/Deadlines.html

Application Due Date	Guidance Due Date
Friday, Feb. 1	Friday, Jan. 18
Friday, Feb. 15	Friday, Feb. 1
Friday, March. 1	Friday, Feb. 15th

WRITING YOUR ESSAYS

There are two types of essays that you should already be aware of: your common application essay, and any supplemental essays that your school requires in addition. Some of you may not have started your essays yet. My advice is to begin immediately, so you have as much time as possible to fine tune and revise your work of writing into something college-ready.

If you have yet to choose a topic for the Common App essay, or are uncertain about your current topic, a good idea would be to tell a story. Stay clear of overused topics, such as those about a family member or another individual. These essays should emphasize your greatness, not your grandmother's. Think of an experience in your life that you remember well. It doesn't have to be an extremely serious story. It could be a comical one, so long as you describe what you gained or learned from that experience in your own voice. This brings me to my next point...

When writing your college essays do remember that these are not meant to be especially formal pieces. Let your voice come through, because this essay is one of the few places in the application where you can show some expression and insight to your character. Let your personal tone and voice come through! Dialogue between individuals in your essay is acceptable. Remember that your essays are meant to be creative pieces, and therefore should stylistically be very different from what you typically will write in school.

PROOFREADING

Proofreading is extremely important. An essay with mistakes and typos looks very unprofessional to an admissions officer. To ensure that you catch everything, try reading your essay aloud, or have someone read your essay to you. Reading backwards can also help pinpoint spelling errors that auto-correct missed.

Overall, your essay should convey what your selected topic shows about you as a person and how you plan to use those traits to be successful. Also, remember that application essays are important but are not the only components considered in your admission.

After finally writing an essay to your satisfaction, find a few people who can provide you with criticisms to further improve them. Choose people who know about you as a person and about writing in general. A favorite English teacher, a parent, or even a writing center tutor would all be good candidates.

Listen to all criticisms with an open mind but remember that this is in the end your essay. You do not need to make every change that is suggested.

QUICK TIPS

- Write informally (but not poorly)
- Let your voice come through
- Present personal characteristics
- Use dialogue
- Use personal pronouns
- Tell a story
- Be honest. (Admission officers can easily detect plagiarism. They have read thousands of essays.)

Advice Column:

Dear Redcoat Review,

I have some worries about the school tragedy that happened on the 14th of December. This affects us here at Berlin High School because there are a lot of safety precautions that have started here as a result of this tragedy. I agree with the administration on a need to make sure their students are safe, but I am concerned about how extreme the safety measures will be against our civil rights and/or rights to privacy. Being a senior, many of us are worried that our privileges will be taken away. After waiting four years it would be a big disappointment to all of us if it were taken from us. How could we make the school a better place without letting the seniors down or going to extreme measures that could affect our right to privacy?

Sincerely,
Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned Senior,

No one can deny that the tragedy in Newtown has shaken the foundations of all of our lives. The precautions put in place are put there to prevent such a tragedy and to ensure the safety of all of Berlin High School. However, you have raised some very good questions. My advice for you is to bring these questions up in a scheduled meeting with the administration or with your guidance counselor. If you personally do not feel comfortable arranging this meeting, then I suggest going to the one of the senior class officers and expressing your concerns so that they can go as representatives of the senior class to discuss these concerns with the administration.

Sincerely,
Pennie

Dear Redcoat Review,

Ever since the presidential election took place, I have been debating with myself over politics. In this specific election, I was an Obama fan. This wasn't because I'm a fan of what he has done and I didn't really know the issues. However, based on debates and interviews he just seemed like an overall better person than Romney. My question for you is how can I form an unbiased opinion? How can I learn about the Democratic and Republican parties and their issues? I need to be prepared for the next election; I'll be able to vote then.

Thanks,
Politically Confused

Dear Politically Confused,

In this day and age with the constant media, it is almost impossible to find an unbiased opinion on politics. My advice to you would be to look at both sides. When you hear of an issue that you want more detail on, look at the opinions of both parties to see their views. This can be done by looking at the different TV networks that are swayed such as CNN for Democrats and Fox News for Republicans. Then you can also look at the websites of the individual parties so that you can find the real stances and not those of the individual politicians. If comparing these does not give you the ability to form your own unbiased opinion, then I suggest you address the source directly. Every once in a while find out when a big bill is being debated in Congress and watch coverage on CSPAN. Also, look on the Congressional website and find the details of upcoming bills and the details that are released. It will take effort to form an unbiased opinion but by learning from these different sources it will not be impossible.

Sincerely,
Pennie



Photo Credit: Flickeringmyth.com

The Hobbit - An Unexpected Movie Review

Dan Faciano, Staff Writer

When I first heard *The Hobbit* being made into a movie, I was pleasantly surprised. When I heard that it was going to be directed by Peter Jackson, the director of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and movies based on other of J.R.R. Tolkien's novels, I was thrilled. When I discovered that it was being made into three movies, I stopped. Wait a minute, what? *The Hobbit* was a moderately short kids book. Making three books into three long movies...viola! *Lord of the Rings* made sense. Making three long movies based off one short book made no sense to me. How in the world could that possibly work? This was going to horrible.

So with my expectations slightly lowered, and with some trepidation, I went into the movie theater on the Sunday after its release on December 14. I watched the movie in 24fps and not 3D, so judgments on the 48fps and 3D will not be made here. When the lights lowered, and the half hour of trailers for upcoming apocalyptic alien movies ended, the movie began.

Let's just say that I was happy to be proved wrong. *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* far exceeded my expectations. What started as a lackadaisical children's story became a gritty and action packed adventure, infused with sporadic comedy. For those unaware of the plotline, Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit. If you do not know what a hobbit is, please do me a favor and watch this movie, or the *Lord of the Rings* movies, or read the books. Anywho, Bilbo is a hobbit who is happy with his life, but secretly, unbeknownst to himself, yearns to go on an adventure. When Gandalf the Grey, a wizard, comes to see him and asks him to go on an adventure, Bilbo not so tactfully refuses. However, that night a dozen dwarves and Gandalf come to his home asking him to go on a quest with them to reclaim the kingdom of Erebor, which has been taken over by a dragon, Smaug. Bilbo refuses at first, but later relents. So as not to spoil too much more, I'll just say that Bilbo's quest takes him far from the Shire, his erstwhile home.

Of course, there are several nods and references to the "Lord of the Rings," with cameos from Saruman, Frodo, Elrond and several other characters from the trilogy. The sense of humor can really be a riot at times and the characters are really well portrayed. It's such a good movie. The long and short of it is that I would recommend it. To comment on a couple other parts of it, the score is fantastic, the CGI effects are really good, and so is basically everything about it. While some parts of it may be a little over embellished, it's a great experience overall.

Unfortunately, there is one major problem with *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*: the twelve months of waiting for part two to come out in December 2013 have now begun.

Tre: Album Review

Emma Morelli, Arts and Entertainment Editor



Billboard.com

The final installment of this trilogy, *Tre*, is the calmer edition to the previous two albums released by Green Day. Where *Uno* seems to be themed with youth and love, and *Dos* seems to be themed with fun and fame- *Tre* seems to be themed with reminiscing and a little anger. If I had to guess which song would be the remembered hit from the three, I would say that *Tre* contained it in the song "The Forgotten". Some of you may know it from the *Breaking Dawn Part 2* movie previews, but *Twilight* fan or not, no one can deny that "The Forgotten" is a beautiful song. Alongside this song, the entire album has a calmer feel. The album still has a meaning but it is less in your face about it than the other two. Since this is the last in a trilogy of albums- I expected to see an underlying theme highlighted. This did not happen and I was sorely disappointed. When I heard about the albums I thought that this would be a great installment with a message much like all there others.

In reflection now I see that these albums were made seemingly simply out of a surplus of songs to record. Now, I wish that the trio had not done the trilogy and simply cut down the albums so that all the great songs were put together to make one great album. If all the good in the three were made into one, then the one would become great.

Album Review: Owl City - The Midsummer Station

Olivia Jablonski, Editor in Chief

He's known for creating music based on his whimsical ideas and concepts from his own headspace, and of course, all his life he grew up listening to dance music and intended on creating a dance album. Adam Young, the founder of Owl City, went back into his studio after touring in the summer of 2011 to work on his new album, 'The Midsummer Station', released on August 21st, 2012. Adam was popularly known for his single, "Fireflies" from his first full-length album, 'Ocean Eyes' in 2009.

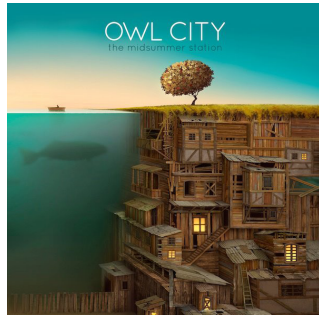


Photo Credit: Viperial.com

He's now back and ripping up his famous synthpop electronica sound in 'The Midsummer Station,' and he courageously tries a lot of new stuff which will surprise some of those Owl City fans out there.

The album's noticeable single, "Good Time" featuring "Call Me Maybe" singer Carly Rae Jepsen, has been last summer's anthem and it surprisingly received positive reviews from most music critics. In my opinion, I think the song isn't just one of those party hard songs you get down with; it reveals a message that sometimes you just need to have fun and be free from all your problems ---just doing it in more of an audacious way. "Dementia" is another song off the album which definitely surprised and impressed me when singer Mark Hoppus of Blink-182 was featured in it. When listening to this song, you may have crazy thoughts and feelings about it, as Young stated. Hoppus' vocals are filled with so much energy that he makes the song sound rock-reliant, and because he blends in with Young so well it suddenly becomes a song everyone gets easily addicted to. Adam claims that making this record was much more challenging than creating the rest of his albums; he says that

over the past several years he became fascinated with trying to capture magic in a jar through simple, concise pop songs. "I saw it as a great challenge to try to come up with catchy, unique, and memorable songs because it was a new method of song writing I'd never approached before," he says. Young made his first two albums without any outside help, and for 'The Midsummer Station' it was his first time collaborating with other outsider artists' and producers such as Matt Thiessen from the band Relient K, and Stargate who worked with Rihanna and Wiz Khalifa's albums.

This all goes to show that 'The Midsummer Station' is not to be compared to his previous work. Young puts a lot of effort and meaning into his songs so people can have a better connection to what he writes about. "I wanted to paint with bigger and broader brush-strokes so people could better understand and relate to the kind of things I'm singing about," he says. "The point is to inspire people. I want my music to be the first thing people reach for when they get home after a good or bad day." Pick up 'The Midsummer Station' now in stores today!

Album Review: Green Day - Dos!

Emma Morelli, Arts & Entertainment Editor

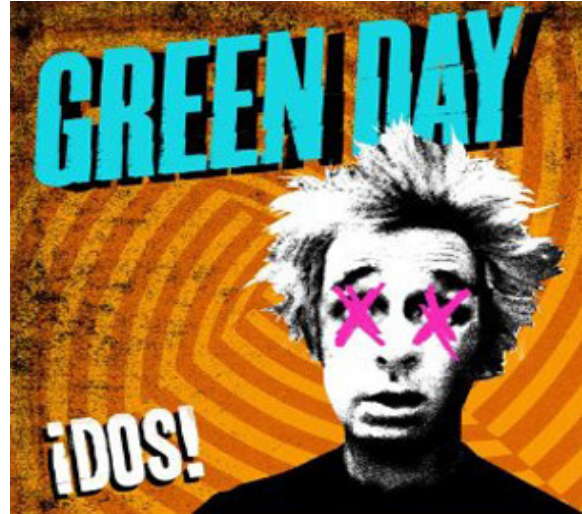


Photo Credit: Diffuser.fm

This album is the second installment in the trilogy of Green Day albums called Uno, Dos, Tre. Compared to Uno, Dos is a lot perkier and light hearted. While its songs seem to be grouped solely based on energy, they are all worth a listen. Some of my personal favorites are "Stray Heart" and "Amy". However, each song is good in its own right. There are certainly none of your typical throw away songs on this album. They all deserve to be on a Green Day album; however, they don't necessarily have a theme that makes them have to be on the same Green Day album.

While I listen to these albums, however, I can not get over the fact that these are aging men. Rock stars they may be, but they are forty years old, so maybe it is inappropriate to be singing about sneaking out and turning sixteen. I know that this band has so much talent that they have proved, but it would be expected to change from punk rock teenage angst to mature music. This has yet to happen and when comparing American Idiot to Uno and Dos you would swear that American Idiot would have come later on in the career. This music is good, but it's not pushing the band into greatness.

Despite its lack of ground breaking music, this album has a needed energy that makes up for any let downs felt from Uno. The entire album just hums with excitement, and I strongly recommend that you listen to it, maybe even repeatedly.

Book Reviews: Continued From Page 5

A Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin

Book Review by Emma Morelli, Arts and Entertainment Editor

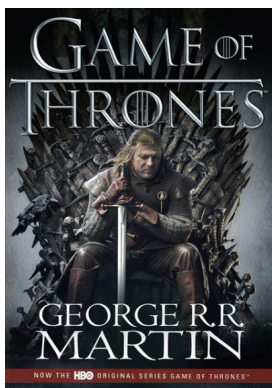


Photo Credit: Angusrobertson.com.au

Like many others, I am a big fan of the series "Game of Thrones" on HBO. So, I decided to read the book version. At first, its one thousand pages were intimidating, but the book is so engrossing that I just kept looking down and seeing page one hundred, then two hundred, then three hundred and so on. It really did not disappoint me, as it was all of the great things from the series and more. I even felt like more was explained.

If you have not seen the series, "A Game of Thrones," it is a fantasy. It is a book for a grown up Harry Potter fan and is mixed with actual historic references that give a grounding factor to the fantasy elements. This book is full of deceit and adventure and the pages just fly by as you get absorbed into the world of King's Landing.

A Casual Vacancy by J.K. Rowling

Book Review by Dan Fasciano, Staff Writer

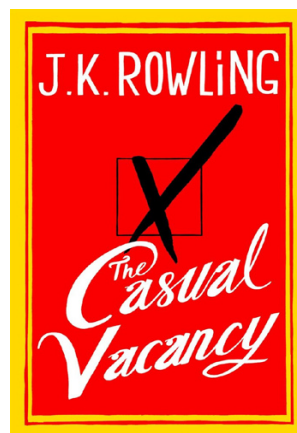


Photo Credit: Telegraph.co.uk

Several years after the conclusion of the immensely popular Harry Potter series, J.K. Rowling has finally released another, very different book. "A Casual Vacancy" is not a children's book by any stretch of the imagination. It is very gritty, very real, and very good. This story chronicles the happenings in a small, rural English town after the death of one of the members of the Parish Council, and what happens is hardly expected. Politics and emotions run rampant, leading up to the thrilling and tragic conclusion. I would definitely recommend this book.

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