The Badger Pause

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Color those winter blues... purple

by Samantha Hargis, BP Staff Writer

We all look forward to winter break, right? The funny thing is, after a few days boredom sets in. Most of us have grown up in these snowy, cold, bleak Ohio winters, but we struggle with beating the winter blues. Are you in need of fun things to do over the winter break? Here are some ideas:

Many of us love sleeping and eating excessively during the break, but spending so much time alone can get monotonous. Change it up by curling up with a friend and watching all kinds of movies. Bad, good, sad, funny – start a movie marathon! If you can't pick, go with the classics. Everyone loves at least one Disney movie, right? What about a comedy classic, Tommy Boy? Baking and cooking could be another satisfying option. Take a look at what's in the cabinet and make up a new recipe, or bake some holiday cookies. For those who love video games, play your favorite game and beat the story again or build a new world! Search the craft stash and make ornaments for people on your gift list or for your own tree! Take a quick trip to your local craft store, find wooden or ceramic ornaments you can paint, and make them personal. Read a great book. Explore a genre you don't usually read and let your mind be temporarily transported into another world. Build a gingerbread house, and then eat it! There are many things to do while staying warm.

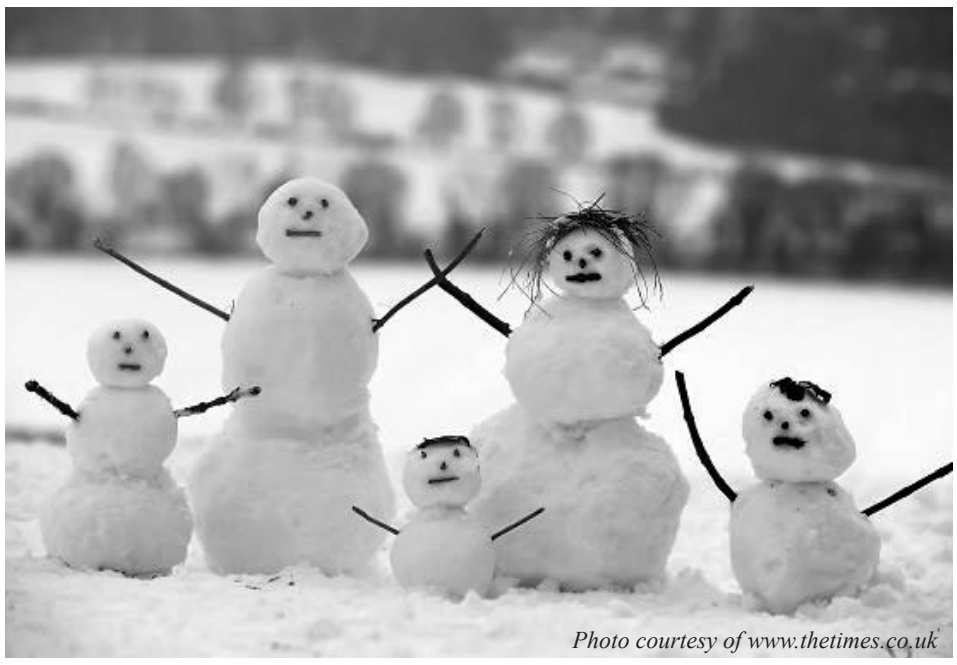


Photo courtesy of www.thetimes.co.uk

Beat the winter time blues and make yourself a snow buddy!

Are you sick of your bedroom walls and up for a snowy adventure? Staying warm and cozy inside is nice, but a winter break excursion can be just as exciting! Grab some friends and go out and make snowmen. Have a snowball fight. Go to a nearby snow hill and spend a day on the slopes sledding, skiing or snowboarding. Some local places to try are Alpine Valley, Punderson State Park in Newbury, Chapin Forest in Kirtland, Orchard Hills Park in Chester Township. The Metroparks Toboggan Chutes would be bold group activity. It may be cold, but snow sure can be exhilarating.

If snow isn't your favorite, head up to the school, and support one of our Badgers teams at a sports event. The boys varsity basketball team is hosting the Berkshire Basketball Holiday Tournament on Saturday, December 20. They also play at home on Tuesday, December 23, at 7:30. The girls varsity basketball team plays at home against West Geauga on Tuesday, December 30, at 7:30. Our athletes love a home crowd! Our wrestling team will be at Kenston High School on December 27 and 28 also.

Of course, you can always grab your gift cards and hit the mall for some after Christmas shopping. Find exactly what you wanted but didn't get! Take an evening drive and check out all the sparkly Christmas lights before they disappear for another year. Take the RTA Rapid Transit trains to Tower City and see the beautiful holiday decorations lighting up Playhouse Square, or take the train all the way to the West Side Market. The Christmas Story House in the Tremont area is a favorite place to visit for fans of the movie, A Christmas Story. Cleveland is a beautiful city and has many sights worth seeing, despite the snow and cold.

Don't waste our few days of freedom from classes. Use this winter break to bust out of your normal routine. Happy Holidays and have an adventurous break!

Segregating Sexes in Schools

by Erin Wiggins, BP Staff Writer



Photo courtesy of blogs.telegraph.co.uk

Is gender-oriented education the way to go?

What if I told you that schools across the country, over the last ten years, have been segregating their classrooms based on gender? You would probably think that we hopped in a time traveling machine and landed in the 1950s, but you'd be wrong. Surprisingly, this is 2014.

But before we all grab our torches and start screaming about gender equality, we must ask some very important questions: Is there a science behind this? Can there possibly be some kind of neuroscience that proves gender-based education is the way to go? Do boys and girls biologically learn differently?

Numerous experiments and studies have shown that boys generally tend to like a more competitive, darker learning environment. Girls tend to like chatty, warmer learning environments. This means the majority of boys and girls react better to different environments when they learn.

Although there has been some research to support this movement, many think this may just be a quick fix for failing school systems across the United States. Instead of tackling greater problems at hand like grading scales and core curriculum, someone decided to separate the classrooms between boys and girls and call it a fix. The truth is the workplace is not segregated by gender; the world is not segregated by gender. Eventually, these boys and girls are going to have to work together at universities, in offices, and even in the grocery store.

Over the past century, a large amount of progress has been made toward blurring the lines between men and women in the workplace, working towards equality. Reissuing this divide between genders in this new generation will take back all of that progress. These kids are going to be the heads of this country someday, but they won't know how to conduct themselves around the opposite gender.

And what about transgender or genderqueer children? How will they fit into the equation? Biologically, these individuals are born a certain gender, but that doesn't mean they fit gender learning stereotypes. If anything, segregation will just build up intolerance for people who don't fit the stereotypical gender norms.

All in all, more harm than good can be expected from segregating children in a learning environment. This is just another quick-fix for America's failing public school, and I suggest the men in suits find a better one because this is just not going to cut it. We have to ask: separate but equal education? Sound familiar?

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Consumerism + Credit Cards = A Carlson Family Rant page 7

How was your year? See highlights from 2014 on page 8

Learn how to dodge those awkward questions asked by family on page 3

Did cavemen eat ham and go to Grandma's?

by Gwen Losasso, BP Staff Writer

Holiday traditions range from hanging stockings, to going to Grandma's, or to eating ham. Every family has their own way of celebrating the holidays, or a gift that has become tradition to receive. Some family traditions have developed out of ease, taste, or preference while others have come from generations before us, such as receiving an apple or orange in stockings. This gesture began in the Great Depression when fruit was an infrequent treasure, and money was scarce. Now it has become a tradition in many families, and serves as a reminder of what generations before us have gone through and the hardships they've faced. It also teaches us to be grateful for what we have, because maybe an orange isn't Apple's new iPhone but it was once treasured too, and can still be appreciated just the same. This holiday season some of Berkshire High School's students and staff were asked traditions their families hold, and here are their answers:

"Everyone in my family receives pajamas on Christmas Eve and then we wear them all day on Christmas."

"My Grandma buys me a diva robe every year for Christmas."

"My family is of Swedish descent—we like to have Swedish meatballs, herring, and potato sausage for Christmas dinner, but my aunt didn't like any of those so now we also have mac & cheese and red Jell-O."

"I get lottery tickets in my stocking every year!"

"We always have Swedish Sausage."

"Every year my Dad gives me a Dr. Seuss shirt."

"Is eating too much a tradition?"

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A bruise to the brain

by Anna Carlson, BP Staff Editor


Photo courtesy of espn.go.com

She's running down the soccer field. She plays defense so she's cutting at an angle to intercept a forward who's driving towards the goal. She's calculated right, meeting the offensive forward at the sideline but this is where it goes wrong. Their legs become tangled and she trips. For some reason she spins in the air and lands on her back, the back of her skull thudding against the hard turf of the soccer field. Instantaneous pain. She shouts. Her arms wrap around her head and she rolls against the ground crying. There is no sound. No sight.

Suddenly it comes rushing back. Too loud. Too bright. Her coach is kneeling beside her, the trainer too. They're saying something. The words are fuzzy. She tries to focus on their faces but she can't. Her head is thudding. They pull her to her feet and the world spins. She can't focus her eyes on anything. She comprehends only one word from the trainer who is grasping her elbow "… concussion…" She spends the next two weeks on the soccer bench. Unable to run. Unable to look at graph paper. Unable to use a computer. Unable to think straight. She is one of the 29,000 female high school soccer players to receive a concussion each year, one of 400,000 high school athletes to suffer a traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Richard Smayda, an osteopathic physician from Scientific American, explains that "a concussion is an immediate but reversible traumatic paralysis of the nervous function of the brain." When the head is subjected to blunt trauma, the brain experiences rotational movement within the skull. The effects of torque lead to a typical loss of consciousness, causing the brain to bump against the interior of the skull at the point of impact as well as the opposite side.

Basically, the brain ricochets within the cranium. Due to this, contusions (bruises) form on the two damaged sites of the brain known as coup and contercoup injuries. In the hours and days following the injury secondary injuries can emerge which are often the cause of dangerous, long term effects including brain damage, loss of thinking skills, psychological, behavioral, and emotional changes, as well as bodily damage and biochemical changes.

Among other well-known symptoms of concussions such as headaches, dizziness and lightheadedness, sensitivity to light and noise, blurred vision, and loss of balance, researchers have found that blunt force trauma to the head can also result in anxiety and irritability, depression, fatigue, and insomnia.

It is the secondary injuries resulting in the more serious symptoms that are at the roots of the news stories saturating the media about NFL, college, and high school athletes who turn to violence and suicide after having suffered numerous concussions.

In fact, the Center for Advancing Health (CFAH) reported that "teens with a history of concussions are more than three times as likely to suffer from depression as teens who have never had a concussion" and Jeffery Max, a psychiatrist at the University of California specializing in the psychiatric effects of TBI in children and adolescents, claims "children who have a history of concussion are more likely to develop attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and have difficulties controlling their moods, especially anger."

Although unsettling, the fact that a TBI can result in such extraordinary alterations within an individual is not an entirely illogical concept to wrap one's mind around. In all reality, a concussion is just like smacking your brain around. It's a delicate, vulnerable organ that controls every aspect of human life: physically, emotionally, and mentally. Causing damage to such a vital part of the body would leave lasting effects.

Yet although awareness of the causes and effects of concussions are becoming more widespread, according to the organization Cleared To Play, "concussion rates more than doubled among students age 8-19 participating in sports like basketball, soccer and football between 1997-2007, even as participation in those sports declined." These statistics don't even take into account the numerous concussions suffered by college and professional athletes. Currently there are lawsuits pending in the NFL as retired players are finally recognizing the lasting effects of their past concussions. Just recently an Ohio State football player is believed to have committed suicide as a result of having suffered through serious concussions.

The numbers don't lie. Even though we are more informed than ever, concussions are on the rise and we have to ask ourselves, "why?". Perhaps it is because our seven year old sons tackle each other on the peewee football field. Perhaps it is because we encourage our daughters who play basketball to become more and more aggressive on the court. Perhaps it is because we glorify physicality in sports and our bodies have reached a breaking point. Literally.

Talk your parents into travelling

by Kaitlyn Moses, BP Staff Writer



Travel is a wonderful action to pursue as it is good for your health, mentality, and education. People everywhere say they wish they could visit Paris, London, or Japan; the wanderlust, the feeling or need to travel, in society is healthy and should be indulged in. Those who travel often find that they feel more worldly and aware or educated. Our lovely little town of Burton is marvelous as is, but it would be an even better place to come home to after a trip to breathtaking cities like New York or LA.

Many trips include a lot of walking and other forms of physical activity: hiking, swimming, skiing, snowboarding, surfing, zip-lining included. This helps to uphold physical health in addition to the mental break. Travel is found to lower stress levels, and taking a step away from everyday life is always benefiting. According to Travel Affect, a multimillion dollar company focused on studying the benefits of travel, "Workers who take time off are more productive, have higher morale and are less likely to mentally 'check out' on the job. They also report less stress and burnout."

On the common eighth grade trip to Washington D.C., students are taught about the places visited and what had happened there, or the significance of whatever it was that had been viewed. Students are able to experience firsthand how travel can be educational as well as enjoyable on trips such as these. When visiting a new place, new country, or somewhere with a different culture than your own, you will no doubt learn from the experience .U.S. Travel Association finds that of the eight out of the ten vacationers who think travel is important to their wellbeing, 50 percent report feeling more relaxed and at rest after a vacation; about the same amount find that they end up sleeping in later while on vacation, which is always a plus for stressed out and exhausted adults as well as teens.

Maybe you haven't traveled often or far, but hopefully you understand why it's important to do so. Your health, mindset, and intellect will profit from travel. It's important to make the most out of everything, especially if that's a place you've traveled to; learn about the history and culture there, eat their traditional foods and enjoy the time you spend traveling. There is so much out there to see and, now, reasons for you to go and see them.

Epic rap battles make history

by Carolyn Mayer, BP Staff Editor

YouTube has become a major source of entertainment for many young people. There are all sorts of channels on the website: video blogs, video game tutorials, cute cat videos, music, educational, and many more.

One increasingly popular channel on YouTube is Epic Rap Battles of History (ERB for short). It is one of the most popular shows on YouTube, with 11 million subscribers and 1.3 billion views on over 50 videos since its debut in September 2010.

Each episode is a rap battle between real or fictional characters from history. Some of the battles include "Cat in the Hat vs Shakespeare", "Edgar Allan Poe vs Stephen King", and even "Barack Obama vs Mitt Romney". Their most famous battles include two super-villains, Darth Vadar and Adolf Hitler, battling it out to see who's the greatest villain ever.

These unconventional battles were the brain-child of Lloyd Ahlquist and Pete Shukoff, a comedy duo who met in Chicago, and now are more commonly known by their YouTube usernames NicePeter and EPICLloyd. They made their first video, "John Lennon vs Bill O'Reilly", on only $50, and now they have an entire production crew and are able to recruit some huge stars for their battles, including "Weird Al" Yankovic, YouTuber Jenna Marbles, Snoop Lion, and comedy duo key and Peele, among others.

Pete and Lloyd may be very successful on YouTube, but they still receive comments and suggestions for their show and really care about what their fans want. The strange combinations for the battles are almost always suggestions from fans.

Though the battles may be silly, they are always historically accurate, so if you ever want to know about Sir Isaac Newton, just tune into the battle "Isaac Newton vs Bill Nye" and you'll get a foundation of who Newton was and what he did. Or if you have to know about Zeus for your mythology class, just watch "Zeus vs Thor."

ERB is not only a fan favorite, but the critics love it, too. In the past two years, *Epic Rap Battles of History* won seven *Streamy Awards*, which is an online video award similar to *The Oscars*.

Holiday interrogations:
Fun for everyone?

by Gwen Losasso, BP Staff Writer &
Christin Dornback, BP Staff Editor

With the yuletide and holiday season already under way, invitations to spirit and family filled get togethers are magnet-ed to the fridge and a sense of dread arises as the days and nights which call for your socializing come closer and closer. Family is great; who doesn't love being poked and prodded and interrogated by people you see once or twice a year? But answering hundreds of similar life-based questions over and over is what takes the fun out of family functions. Interactions with wineglass yielding relatives are getting redundant, but with a few quirky answers, you can spice up your holiday party or parties and get the fam off your back.

"Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?"

If you do, gush all about your significant other. If you don't, don't let the lack of one ruin the evening's fun.

"Actually, yeah. Unfortunately, he/she is spending time with his/her spouse and children, so he/she respectfully declined the invite for tonight."

Break down in tears.

"I held a Hunger Games like competition, and the victor and I were supposed to ride off into the sunset. However, a Katniss and Peeta situation occurred and, well…they ate the berries." Clutch your throat. Let out a whimper.

"I'm pretty lumbersexual. I've been hanging around the woods lately. Unfortunately, the only potential suitor I stumbled upon was actually a homeless manMom said I couldn't keep him." Pause. Look into the distance. Whisper. "Till next time, Lumberjacky name, till next time."

Turn the tables. Set your beady eyes to stare into the asker's soul. Poke them in the chest. "Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend, Uncle Paul? Do you?"

"Wow! Have you gotten taller?"

Clearly you haven't gotten taller.

You've been this height since the last time they say you and probably the three times before that too.

Look them straight in the eyes and say, "No, but I'm getting more dense. I went to my doctor to see what was happening, and he said that I had ADD, Atomic Density Disorder." Ignore the strange looks, and keep on talking. The weirder you are the less likely they are to ask the same question the next time they see you. "The doctor was really concerned because if I keep getting more dense at this rate I'll be my own black hole by the age of thirty-seven. I am on a special diet now of fluff food to decrease my density. It mainly consists of popcorn, marshmallows, cotton candy, and pork rinds."

You could also make up other interesting, (and more than slightly weird) stories to pass around the family gathering. This way you won't get bored saying the same thing over and over.

At this point they're probably utterly shocked. You can now just smile and move on to the next family member.

"That shirt is…interesting."

You never know if this is meant to be a compliment or an insult, and chances are whosever asking doesn't know either. Instead of either saying thank you or being offended try making up a ridiculous story up about the shirt.

Impress them.

Say something like "Yeah, actually it's just of the runway in Milan. It's purely high fashion and made from silk of the highest echelon. It's made by the last living silk making caterpillar of its kind. That's not even the most amazing part! It's colored with boar mucus. Apparently the mucus of the boar is extremely come across, because the boar must be alive when it's mucus is harvested. It smells a little bit funky, but it's totally worth it!"

Or try: "Yeah, actually my parents don't by me clothes anymore so I've resorted to making them all. Actually, can I have that shirt when you're done with it? Then of course, just smile and go on your way."

"What do you want to study in college? Anything catch your eye?"

When faced with the almighty, loaded education-based question, choose a few. Use them throughout the night, giving different answers to each who asks.

Be firm. "Gynecology." Wink.

"Auctioneering." Say it quickly.

"Canadian Studies." When they give you an incredulous look, raise an eyebrow. Say "Canadian Studies, eh?" as if this answers all of their questions.

Stare into their eyes. "Poultry Science. I dig chicks."

"Puppetry." Tell them you've already made a puppet that looks like them after getting inspiration from a book on Voodoo dolls. Once you get into college, you plan on devoting your time to create a puppetry skit. Smile a closed-mouth smile. Walk away.

"You've turned out to be quite the young man/lady."

Condescending and/or insincere compliments are the trap of family gatherings. Take a stand. Stick it to the man, or in this case, Aunt Susie. You don't need their annual reassurance or speculation.

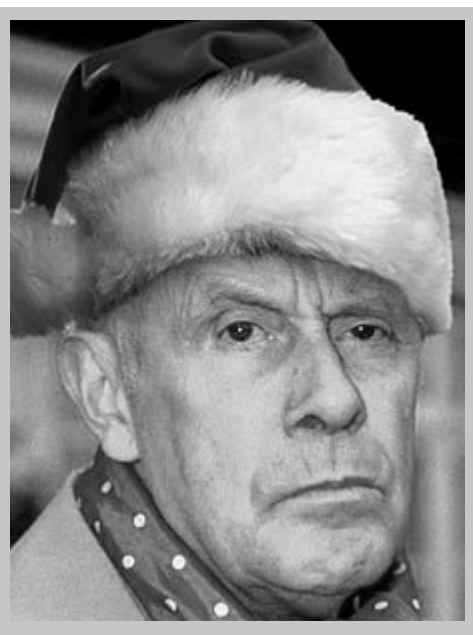
"Darn it!" Let out a shriek. "I was hoping I'd turn into a green mollusk. My plans are ruined."



Look them up and down. "I can't say the same for you."

Start to cry. Between gulps of air, try to talk. "That's," gasp. "Not," gasp. "What," gasp. "The," gasp. "Prison," gasp. "Warden," gasp. "Said," gasp.

Take a mouthful of the nearest drink. Gargle it. Take off your shoe. Spit it into your shoe. Wipe your mouth. Dump gargled drink back into its original cup. Put on your shoe. Let out a satisfying "ah." Ask, "sorry, what was that again?"



In recognition of holiday grumps

by Clare Lynn, BP Staff Writer

'Tis the season to hang mistletoe, drink eggnog, sing carols, and be jolly. However, whilst most people are eating, drinking, and generally being merry, no one during their festive splendor seems to stop and think about the grinches in the world. I myself am personally not a holiday downer as I enjoy my time as anyone else would during the holidays by eating and enjoying the company of friends and family.

Holiday grumps are simply people who don't get swept into the festivities and joy of the season. Whether it's criticizing the commercialism of the holidays or the inability to express seasonal glee, the crabapples should be remembered during these trying times. But why, oh why, should these debbie downers be recognized? Well, imagine that you're at a party, and while everyone is laughing and conversing with one another, you look on with dread, unable to partake in the fun. These sulkers experience this situation for an entire month each year.

Easy to spot and hard to please, seasonal sourpusses are often forced to recede into their non-decorated abodes each December. Certain symptoms of these curmudgeons are refusal to decorate for the holidays, distaste in all culinary delicacies associated with this time of year, lengthy rants about the materialism associated with Christmas and Hanukkah, and non-stop complaining. The complaining is really what drives people away from these whiners but anyone else would be guaranteed do the same thing in their shoes. At actual Christmas parties and Hanukkah get-togethers, the holiday killjoys will likely keep to themselves or fall asleep in a recliner until the happy ordeal has subsided.

Seasonal recluses are not exclusively crabby grandpas or drunken uncles, but rather grumpitude can affect any age group. Perhaps when someone was young, their mother died during the holiday season so it appears that the world celebrates her death every December. Or maybe someone's grandmother fell into the holiday exhibit at the zoo, and was trampled to death by reindeer. These could easily form a distressed holiday cranky-pants. The point is that while some people feel so excited about the holidays that they only listen to Christmas carols and refuse to eat anything not laced with peppermint, it's important to keep in mind and respect those who feel as equally unexcited.

So remember to think of those who hate the festivity you adore this year and have a happy holiday season, unless of course you're a merry mope. In which case, keep grumping it up!

Christmas Traditions continued from front page.


Photo courtesy of pnc.edu

Finding the family Christmas tree is often a holiday tradition.

"We have to do a Christmas service before we celebrate. My Grandma's always in charge of it, and every year she has each of us write down something on a little slip of paper. She keeps all the papers from all the years in tins around her house."

"We go to Grandma's every year."

"My aunt's church has a pageant where they bring in animals and stuff. Then after the service we go into the church's basement and eat Jesus's birthday cake and pet the animals."

"We always bake cookies and make gingerbread houses."

"The whole family puts on a Christmas play."

"Sometimes, instead of a tree, we decorate a branch. It's really artsy!"

"My Dad always gives us boxes of cereal."

"We go to my aunt's every year for Christmas breakfast, and we watch my cousins open their gifts."

"Each year we have bacon wrapped water chestnuts… They're so good!"

"I give my little brother a potato every year."

"We always have prime rib for dinner."

"We go to Chardon every year and take pictures with the lights."

"We all open one present on Christmas Eve, and the rest we save for Christmas day."

"We always make a gingerbread house and Rice Krispy snowmen."

"Family comes over to my house Christmas morning."

"My family, on Christmas Eve, we watch the Christmas Story until its Christmas Day."

"We get matching pajamas every year and take pictures in them."

"The presents from Santa are always written in cursive, and all the rest in print."

"We hide a pickle every year because we're Polish!"

"We have to wait until noon to open presents."

"Everyone decorates the tree together."

"We go to the last movie on Christmas Eve. It started when the kids were little and we couldn't get them to go to bed because they were too excited. We would bundle them up and load them into the car, and go to the last movie of the night. Then, on the way home they would all fall asleep. Then it became a tradition; my kids are grown but we still do it today."

Every family has some sort of holiday tradition, however broad the spectrum may be. This holiday season ask others about what they do to celebrate the holidays. But also be sure to embrace your own family's holiday traditions, as they will surely serve as something for you to look back and smile on.

Stop, drop, and shop

by Lauren Peterson, BP Staff Writer

If you missed Black Friday, didn't have time to do all of your holiday shopping, simply forgot, or just procrastinated and you're left with not knowing what to do. Every year, you tell yourself that you won't wait until the last minute to do your holiday shopping, but here you are, a week before Christmas with nothing but a cute top you originally bought for your friend, (but decided to keep for yourself) so nothing. You have nothing. But you can relax; the Badger Pause Staff is here to help! Last minute holiday shopping doesn't have to be a hassle. Here are some helpful tips and apps/websites for easy holiday shopping. And the best part is no one will know you procrastinated (again).

First, **make a list**. Since you procrastinated you don't have time to forget anything. So take a moment to organize a list of gifts you want to buy for each person. Next, it is helpful to **set a time limit**. It is super easy to get caught up in all the holiday fun at the store. Retailers set traps of holiday goodness to distract you so you linger in the store and buy more than you need to. Be sure to stay on track.

When it comes to the actual gifts, stay simple. **Gift cards** are awesome. A lot of people hate to give gift cards as gifts, especially during the holidays, usually because they don't think its "special" enough. But if we are being honest here, who doesn't love money? Money is a great gift because it's limitless; the recipient can now get whatever he or she wants, and you don't have to worry about if they like it or not. Furthermore, **food never fails**. Food is similar to money; you just can't go wrong. Remember, the stomach is the way to anyone's heart. If you're a whiz of a baker, whip up a batch of cookies or fudge. If you're not, that's okay too; just buy something from the grocery store and place it on a nice platter. Simple as that! If you want something more personal, **get creative**. The choices are endless when you want to make a unique gift. The gift can vary from pottery, paintings, and photography, to much more. The recipient will love the thought you put into this gift, and you will be the stud of the holiday season.


Photo courtesy of globalforwarding.com

Holiday shopping often turns into a hectic event.

Last minute shopping can end up being frenzied and frantic, but it doesn't need to be. Since you are running short on time, **try to avoid internet shopping** for the sake of mistakes, mishaps, and catastrophes. But next year, remember shopping online does have its perks. Great shopping apps for the holidays are Wanelo, Etsy, Pinterest, Wish, Groupon, and 11 Main Shopping, among others. If you must internet shop, though, consider paying the extra for express shipping so you're not caught in an awkward position at the family holiday party.

Lastly, **know when to stop**. Once you have bought for everyone on your list, stop shopping. The urge to find the perfect gift is hard to fight, but go with your first choice. Just because your gift is last minute does not make it inadequate.

Take these tips into consideration to save yourself from holiday humiliation.

The familiar faces of your childhood Christmas

An Editorial by Abbie Maschek, BP Staff Writer

As the joyous Christmas season draws near, the common Christmas characters are making their much awaited appearances. For most, without the image of Santa Claus appearing on coke bottles nationwide, Christmas simply wouldn't be the same. Without Frosty look-alikes forming in the front yards of homes seasoned with glistening Christmas lights, Christmas simply wouldn't be the same. Without the common Christmas songs proclaiming the popularity of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer playing in the background, while children everywhere mix together the perfect blend of reindeer mix to scatter in their front yards; specifically to attract Santa's magical reindeer on Christmas Eve, Christmas simply wouldn't be the same.

The world of Christmas characters as well as cartoons was changed forever in 1950. Walter Rollins as well as Steve Nelson set Frosty, a magical snowman who has the power to come to life, into the world when they released their song titled "Frosty the Snowman." After Frosty set foot into the world and the hearts of many Christmas lovers, writer Romeo Muller knew he had something to do. Muller knew that he had been keeping a form of Frosty locked inside his brain for far too long. To set Frosty completely free, Muller met up with Jules Bass and Arthur Rankin Jr. of Rankin-Bass Company. With three brains stuck in the mindset of bringing Frosty the Snowman to the big screen, they finally came up with the plan to introduce this character with the help of a newly popularized form of animation. Children of all ages enjoyed as well as fell in love with Frosty during his thirty minute long debut. For those who expected him to just be a onetime deal, or just a popularized phase, they stand corrected. Frosty is still well loved and we can be sure to expect him in future Christmas seasons.

You see him everywhere during the Christmas season. His jolly face has been plastered on posters, all over malls, movies and his famous Christmas time Coke bottle picture temporally takes over the soft drink industry. Children stand in long lines waiting to tell him what they want for Christmas and pose for a photo leaving his cozy lap with a candy cane in hand and a large smile forming on their face. If you have yet to guess who I am speaking about, I am referencing Saint Nicholas, or as most people call him, Santa Claus. Birthed out of the 1823 poem titled: "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," Santa quickly stole the hearts of many while taking over the Christmas season and becoming its new poster boy. Children as well as parents everywhere adore the idea of a jolly man bringing their children Christmas presents on Christmas Eve. Nothing could ever be found wrong with Santa; he was and still is the ideal character to be the center of the Christmas season. The need for more attention to be pushed Santa's way came in the form of a new hit song. In November of 1943 John Frederick Coots and Haven Gillespie visited Eddie Cantor's radio show and let the world hear "Santa Claus is coming to Town" for the first time. That song has been played and will continue to be played over and over again. People simply cannot get enough of Santa Claus.

While it may appear that we have all grown up with these classic Christmas characters and cartoons, there is one major event that seems to always be fighting a war to receive the recognition it deserves. A little over 2,000 years ago, the real meaning of Christmas as well as the real character of Christmas was born. However, His birth wasn't a normal, traditional birth. Mary didn't get admitted to a hospital, and she didn't receive any drugs that would make the child-birthing process tolerable. The king of kings was born in a dirty animal-feeding manger. His mother Mary, along with his father Joseph traveled with the help of a donkey to Bethlehem. When they arrived, it soon became evident that there was no room available to them to stay. Finally, one shopkeeper took pity on the young couple and offered them his outdoor animal barn as a place to stay. Mary and Joseph humbly accepted. There, with farm animals actively present, Mary gave birth to a baby boy who she named Jesus. With the exciting news of God's son entering the world, those who had been waiting for his appearance quickly made their traveling arrangements, which means they most likely jumped on their camels. People traveled from far distances to partake in this special occasion. There were three wise men who brought gifts specially designed for a king. These gifts consisted of gold, frankincense as well as myrrh. There in the coldness of night the actual Christmas characters, the ones that we should be celebrating, took part in events that would eventually become the real Christmas story, as well as the real reason for the season.

As we quickly enter this upcoming Christmas season, as all the decorations begin to pile all around us, let's take our facts into consideration. Yes, Frosty, Santa Claus and Rudolph are fun, but they aren't the ones who were born in the manger. We aren't celebrating their entrance into the world. All the credit to that can only go to the baby named Jesus. So as you and your family bring the Christmas decorations, dust off your old manger scene and put that out for decoration. After all, Jesus is the one who you should be celebrating.

The New Years comes with new resolutions

by Melissa Braun & Alex Sanda, BP Staff Writers

The only thing harder than getting through the holiday season is enduring the couple of months following the New Years, struggling to keep up with the promises you made to yourself. People typically stick with their resolution for a month or so at which point they just lose interest and the change becomes a drag. What is the purpose of making a resolution if you give up on it just a short time later?

Most find it a hassle to even bother making a resolution anymore. You lose motivation because you forget the entire reason behind what you're doing, or rather, trying to improve. You will most likely be back to your old ways by the time April comes back around; the whole resolution has been ineffective . People come snowballing into the new year with a complete change of attitude and recharged stamina, but then end the year with the same depleted and angry attitude as before. However, it is possible to grin and bare it then feel accomplished with your achievements once the year has passed.

There are innumerable ways to stick with your resolution. The first steps to the process are as follows: set a goal, make a plan, grab a buddy! If you believe in yourself, you can do anything.

Setting goals is the easiest step of the process. Thinking of ways to enhance your outlook and life in general can be simple if you know what you want to change. Writing down the goal helps you stick with it. Place it somewhere you can look at it daily and remind yourself what you want to achieve. The constant enforcement of the statement will allow you to pursue your objective.

Take charge of your aims. If you make a plan, you will feel obligated to follow through with it. Plans help to maintain organization , ambition, and hope. These are the key factors in any successful resolutions. You're a lot more likely to succeed if you have a plan.

One way to stay on track with your goals is to make a resolution with your buddies. If you want to work out or go to the gym more, join the gym with a friend. In order to get better grades, create a study group with your pals. It's easier to eat healthy when you have someone that encourages you to not eat fattening and greasy foods. Having friends join you in your transformation process helps you keep on track in order to be successful. Positive influences and role models will help motivate you to keep on trekking through.



Photo courtesy of messiahlifeways.org

Writing down goals makes them easier to stick to.

Albeit lots of people don't believe that sticking to resolutions is realistic, but many are still hopeful that they can change themselves for the better. Some Berkshire students shared their plans to change with the incoming year. Senior Emily Shantery's goal is to earn enough money to replace the amount she spent on Christmas presents for others. Sophomore Kody West wants "to be the very best I possibly can and to achieve supreme greatness in Mr. Higgs' government class." Take a hint from Shantery and West and set your own goals this year, folks. If you believe change is possible, you can achieve a glorious transformation.

O' Christmas Tree, O' Christmas Tree

by Abby Carlson, BP Staff Writer

The street lights cast a warm golden hue on merry passersby, joyous smiles stretch across the rosy cheeks of cheerful children, and the intertwined scents of warm cookies and homey pine waft into the streets. When you think of Christmas, it is more than just an image; it is a memory, a feeling from years past. Many of those memories took place next to, and because of, the beautifully lit Christmas tree. As little kids, how many of you remember going to a tree lot with your parents and siblings, bundled from head to toe in layers upon layers of snow gear, looking up into the dark starry night, waiting for a snowflake to land softly on your tongue, then magically disappear while searching for the perfect tree?

Sadly, many children today are missing out on this opportunity of choosing a tree because so many households now celebrate the holiday with artificial evergreens. However, there are many pros and cons when it comes to deciding which type of tree to buy and decorate.

According to Earth911, when you buy a real tree, you can "treecycle", which is a creative method for recycling trees. When you "treecycle", the tree can be turned into mulch for hiking trails, paths and walkways, or playground materials. Left whole, the trees themselves can be used for beachfront erosion prevention. If you don't want to drive the distance to a "treecycling" company, you can help out your furry little friends by tossing it outside the house, creating a new home for them. However, on a more negative note, the evergreens may have been raised with pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers, unless of course they were raised organically.


Photo courtesy of blog...ture.org

Kids love searching for that perfect tree.

Many people decide to purchase an artificial Christmas tree because of the low cost and easy clean-up. If you're worried about easy clean up with a live tree, all you need to make the job efficient is a tree bag and tree skirt. You can usually buy a tree bag anywhere you purchase a tree, and all you have to do is place the bag under the tree stand and put the skirt over the bag to make it look festive. Then, when you're ready to clean up, remove your ornaments, pull the bag up over the tree, and take it to a "treecycling" factory. Easy as that! As for the cost, yes, a live tree can be up towards forty-fifty dollars, but isn't that better than buying a tree that is made of metal and Polyvinyl Chloride (a non-biodegradable, petroleum derived plastic)? Plus, some of the older artificial trees may even contain lead! Although many people use the environment as an excuse to buy fake trees (they don't want to cut down a tree each year), the plastic trees actually cause the most harm by sitting in a landfill for years on end. Also, eighty-five percent of fake Christmas trees are imported from China… and last time I checked, not too many live trees were being shipped across the Atlantic. They are all 100 percent American grown!

Although there may be some downfalls to buying live trees, the positives definitely out-weigh them. For instance, the Christmas tree industry employs nearly 100,000 people, and for every acre of trees, there is enough oxygen produced for eighteen people to survive daily.

On a less environmentally conscientious level, who doesn't love the smell of pine during the Christmas season? With an artificial tree, there is no pine smell, only the smell of plastic and metal. So as an overall verdict, real trees win! They are safer, more memorable, fresher scented, provide more jobs, and they can be recycled into something useful instead of sitting in a landfill for years on end.

Stocking stuffers to make ya smile

by Zak Martinjako & Clare Lynn, BP Staff Writers

Christmas is right around the corner, and it's time to think about what to cram inside those festive stockings you hang above the fireplace. Sometimes the best gifts come in the smallest packages, so those stocking stuffers really count! We've got some delightful gifts to brighten your family's holiday season.

Shower Squids

Do your shampoo bottles, and bars of soap keep slipping in your shower? Well slip no more because with these adorable shower squids you can suspend and grip your belongings using any of their nine tentacles. You can find these cute squids at uncommongoods.com for about thirty-five dollars.


Photo courtesy of dodoburd.com

Shower squids, cute and functional!

Fuzzy Socks

Who doesn't love a pair of warm, fuzzy socks? For the special women (or men, we don't judge!) in your life, this is a great way to give them something festive and functional. You can find these at many stores and for relatively cheap. (Target normally has them for around a dollar!)

Astronaut Ice Cream

Did you or someone you know dream of going to space when they were young? Or maybe they still dream of it now? Well astronaut ice cream just might be the gift for them. In classic space food fashion, astronaut ice cream is dehydrated joy. Eat it as it comes. It tastes good, really! Find it for three dollars at thinkgeek.com!

If you'd prefer to give some cool homemade gifts (they're cheaper!), other ideas included:

Scrabble Coasters

Just get some corkboard and some scrabble pieces (you can buy scrabble pieces loose online, so no need to waste all that money on the board game), then glue the scrabble pieces onto the corkboard as you see fit. Cut them into squares, and you're done.

Mix Tape (well, a Mix CD, probably)

Get a bunch of songs that the future receiver likes, and burn them onto a blank CD (most computers with a disc drive should be able to do this). Then you can decorate the top of the CD and the case however you want.

Mug Warmer

A mug warmer is a gift that your friends and family are sure to use. This will make sure their coffee stays cozy and warm on those cold winter mornings. You can get yours for 25 dollars at brookstone.com.

Sparkles in a Bottle

Like a glittery snowglobe, but in a bottle or jar, and without anything else inside! (It's cooler than it sounds.) Take some distilled water and some glycerol (get it at the drugstore, and probably Wal-Mart), put equal amounts into a clear bottle or jar (be sure that you can close it somehow), add glitter and sparkly materials of your choice, then seal it.

Of course, if actual presents in the stocking isn't your thing, you can always go low key with candy and gift cards as well. Or, if you're feeling funny, try putting some coal or an orange in the stocking. It's sure to get a laugh (or tears, depending). Happy holidays!

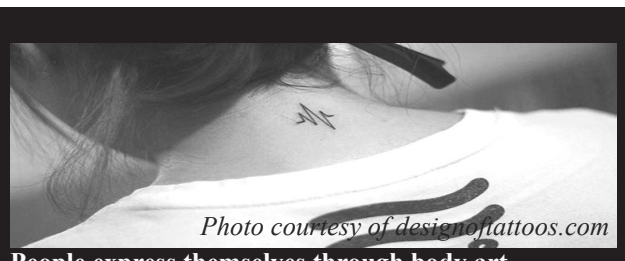


Photo courtesy of designoftattoos.com

People express themselves through body art.

Painted People and Jewels of Self-expression

Lexi Sell and Kaitlyn Moses, BP Staff Writers

Tattoos and piercings are considered the teen generation's form of art and self-expression. It's normal to see a Berkshire classmate with a nose piercing, tattooed arm or even an extravagant ear piercing, but for parents these attributes can be shocking and new. Amongst young adults, these commodities are a daily visual reminder that body art is becoming widely accepted in society. As time has progressed, the ideas behind tattoos and piercings have evolved, as well as their meanings.



Lauren Peterson shows off her many ear piercings.

Tattoos first originated over ten thousand years ago, as a means of depicting beliefs, groups associations, and a way to communicate. Piercings originated as tribal and background differentiations, but now, piercings appear on the bodies of people all over the world, for a multitude of reasons.

Although Berkshire is a small school, we house many different individuals willing to express their confidence through their own unique tattoos and piercings. Senior Lauren Peterson has twelve piercings and counting as she is planning on her next creative modification. Initially, as a young woman, she faced her parents' apprehension, but they relaxed when they realized their daughter was only expressing a more mature form of self-image.

For many students, it's difficult to persuade their parents into letting them pierce or tattoo their bodies due to their generation's opinions on body modifications learned through their parents' upbringing. One student, who wishes to remain anonymous, went to extreme and stealthy measures to obtain the tattooed look by carrying out the stick-and-poke method, which is when a needle is dipped in ink and poked into the skin to tattoo it. A star now dots their right ankle, kept hidden away from their parents and family. This student, this star, and their secret are only known by their closest friends. The person with the star tattoo resorted to this technique because "it was cheap, easy, and [they] are not eighteen yet." Because parents have discouraged their children from illustrating their current feelings through piercings or tattoos, they are often driven to deception.

Peterson explains that her "hope for the future is that tattoos and piercings will be just perceived as a form of self-expression, that you won't be considered lesser or not as educated as others just because you have tattoos and piercings. I hope that once our generation becomes the managers and bosses, you can reveal your tattoos, and you won't have to hide them."

More eye-opening statements like this embody the idealistic future for our peers. As a new world generation, our ideas are limitless because we believe in the power of individuality and the acceptance of new concepts. Once we live in a world where we are no longer judged there no will longer be anything to hold us back from furthering our confidence through creative means.

Even though tattoos and piercings have been previously scorned, it's members of our generation who are slowly, but surely, altering these ideas. While beliefs can't be simply transformed at the snap of your fingers, acceptance can be learnt with time. If the body is a book, tattoos are its illustrations; with every person there is a story and with every tattoo, the same.

Cellphone slaves; A convienient truth

Zak Martinjako, BP Staff Writer

Ah, the information age, home to the Internet, computers, video games, and, of course, cell phones. Though they started off as means of more convenient and portable communication, cell phones have gone on to become a major part of our lives with the invention of the smart phone, combining the use of a phone with some (and increasingly more) of the functionality of a computer. Nowadays, it seems as though everyone and their dog owns one of these tiny (well, not so much anymore, which kind of defeats the original purpose...) devices.



Yet, do we really own these phones? What if, maybe, the phones actually own us? Take a look around. Chances are good that you'll see someone using a phone for something: texting, gaming, surfing the web, or using one of the zillions of apps available (though, strangely, you don't see that many actual phone calls anymore). Whether it be iPhones or Androids, or one of the other less popular brands (sorry Windows, maybe you'll get there someday!), you can safely bet that nearly everyone you meet has one of these things (unless they're still rocking one of those flip or slide phones from the old days of yore).

Yes indeed, phones are about as common as tennis shoes, and most people take them wherever they go. Seriously, wherever they go. Like, to the bathroom, to bed, to dinner, on a date, on vacation, to school, to the library, to concerts, to movies, so on and so forth. They don't leave the house without them, and of course they always have them at home too.

So naturally, if you take a phone with you, you're probably going to use it. And since you take it everywhere, you use it all the time. Which ultimately means you've always got an Internet connection and means of communication. Therein lies the issue.

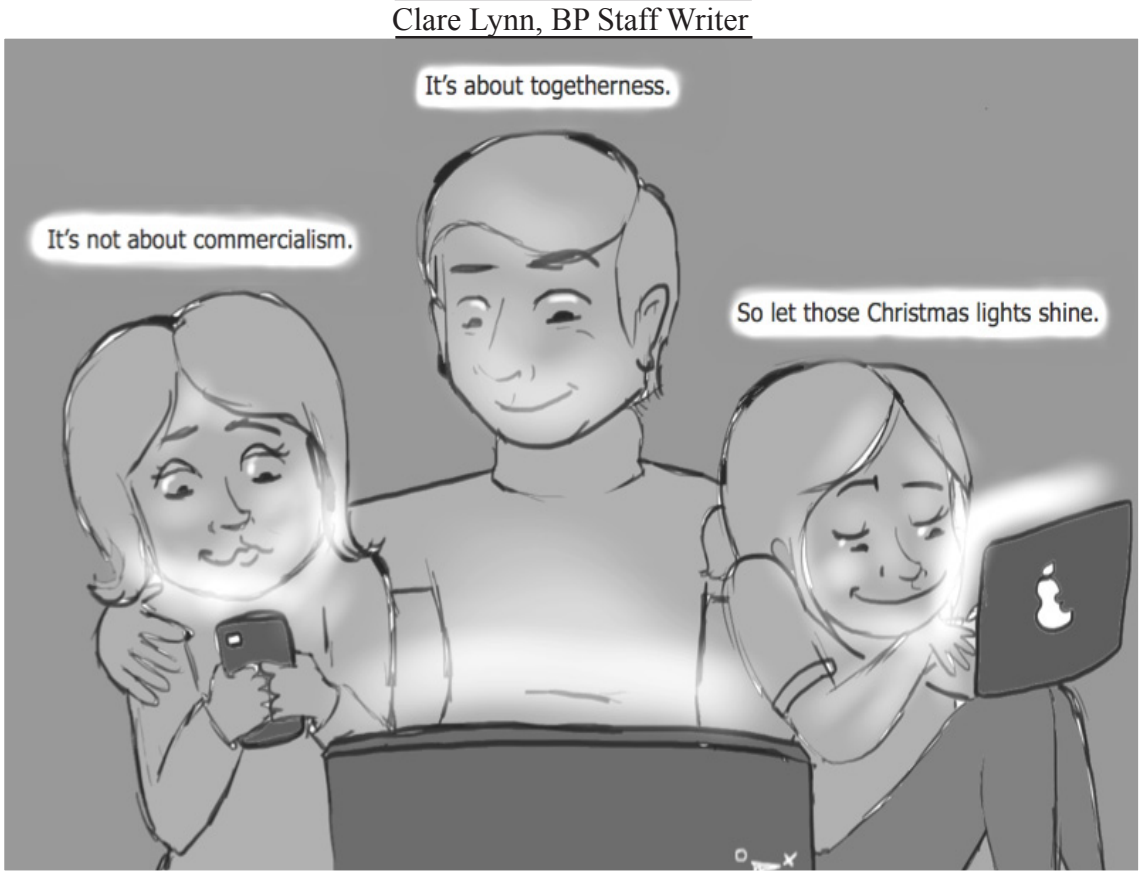
We humans are social creatures by nature, it's essential to our survival and well being. So it makes sense that inventions such as cell phones and the Internet would have widespread appeal. And we all love to be entertained, so games are unsurprisingly popular as well, but too much of anything is bad, which is the case here. Oddly enough, it seems that smart phones, meant to enable increased interaction between people, actually decreases it.

Rather than talk to the people around them, many would rather have a conversation via texting with someone else (or, sometimes, they'll actually just text the people next to them). Millions of people utilize services like Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat (all of which are immensely dumbed down means of communication) excessively, to the point that they prefer it to actual conversation. Or, sometimes people will just play games or use apps rather than communicating all together (shout out to my lunch table). Those games themselves have their own problems, such as the increasing commonly free-to-play model, where the game may be free, but it's filled with a bunch of ways to spend your money through micro-transactions.

What's the end result of all this? Flat out addiction. Phones have gone from being tools for expanding human interaction, to communicational road blocks. They're ever present, and provide distraction from everything, including important stuff like eating, working, and driving. There's no doubt about it, phones control the lives of thousands. We are slaves, and most of are too busy tweeting, sending Snapchats, and playing Candy Crush to care.

Clare's comic corner

Clare Lynn, BP Staff Writer



I pledge allegiance to the credit card

by Anna & Abby Carlson, BP Editor and BP Staff Writer

Santa pulls the little boy up to sit on his lap and hands him a candy cane. "Have you been good?" he asks. The little boy smiles and nods shyly. "What would you like for Christmas?" After a deep breath, the youngster squares his shoulders and asks for a truck. Santa smiles. And then the boy continues. Listing toy after toy after toy. Santa gives him an endearing smile, nodding along to all the boy's requests.

This is normal.

But then his mom steps on up to take her place on Santa's knee. She begins listing off all the items on her Christmas list. Santa's cheery cheeks lose their glow, and his whitened jaw drops to the floor.

This isn't normal.

Or at least it shouldn't be. Sadly, it's becoming quite common in these good ol' United States. We are a nation of consumers, constantly looking for the next deal to devour, the next buy to satiate our hunger for the brand new shiny goods that rest so beautifully on store shelves. We have television stations, magazines, websites, all dedicated to one simple goal. Buying.

We are a people desperate for, as Sophie Kinsella of Confessions of a Shopaholic would say, "That moment. That instant when your fingers curl 'round the handles of a shiny, uncreased bag – and all the gorgeous new things inside it become yours. What's it like? It's like going hungry for days, then cramming your mouth full of warm buttered toast. It's like waking up and realizing it's the weekend…It's pure, selfish pleasure."

It's a high that, according to the New York Times, caused nearly twenty-two million shoppers to set out to buy, buy, buy this Thanksgiving, on what has become known as Gray Thursday.

Why? Because we just can't wait those few extra hours until Black Friday to dig our claws deep into cheap sixty inch televisions, ninety-nine cent phones, and outrageously low priced laptops. We're impatient. We're demanding. And we'll fight for what we want (throwing elbows, tackling others, camping outside the doors of BestBuy for days on end, among other battle techniques). In fact, we're so vicious, stores have to request a police presence for protection against the seething mobs of people clutching their glorious finds.

All because we all want the newest, hottest trend. Forget fixing what's been broken, just get us a new one. We don't care how much it costs, or how simple it would be to repair what's been damaged. We want what's new; what's chic and sleek. Just toss the old into the landfill. Out of sight, out of mind. Because we want to be at the top. How can we be at the top with aging possessions, things that aren't shiny and brand new?

In order to be the best, we have to have the best! Which means a constant demand on our own monetary funds to support this desire. We have to go to work to make money, which we then spend, only in time to go home and see the next biggest thing on television, resulting in us again returning to work to fund our next shopping spree. It's a cycle that never ends. A cycle that fuels the American Dream, the belief that anyone can succeed. And what does every success story have? A sixty inch flat screen. So if anyone can be a success, then anyone can own such a magnificent television. Yes, we mean anyone! Say hello to my little friend, the credit card who can make all your dreams come true. Can't pay for that new car in cash? No big deal. Your credit card has your back! Those new boots a bit out of your price range? It'll be okay, your credit card is here to save the day!

But that little friend of yours will stab you in the back come the day your bill arrives in the mail. Suddenly it's time to pay up for those cute little boots, and that shiny new car. Where's your little friend the credit card now? Nowhere to be found. He's a coward. He's left you, and you're on your own. Uh oh.

Upset and confronted with a bill you can't pay, whatever shall you do now?

That's easy. Go buy yourself something pretty to take your mind off all your money woes. It'll help. We promise…

Black lives matter

Alex Sanda, BP Staff Writer

As conflicts between the police and African Americans have been the heart of news reports, protests are erupting all over the country. Tragedies like the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri and Eric Garner's death in New York, both caused by policemen, have resulted in outcries nationwide. Cleveland was not an exception to this discord by any means, which is exemplified in the case of Tamir Rice.

On November 23, a twelve year-old boy was shot by a Cleveland police officer. Tamir Rice, the young black boy, was seen by nearby residents waving around what looked to be a gun in a public park. Although the neighbors indicated that it was possible that the gun was fake, according to theguardian.com, 911 was contacted and officer Timothy Loehmann was dispatched to the area. Loehmann, 26, shot Rice after the boy pulled out an air gun that looked like a real firearm and the officer gave no first aid while waiting for the paramedics. Rice later died at the hospital.



Photo courtesy of cleveland.com

Protesters express their disgust towards the police force.

Many questions regarding this case have surfaced, as many believe that the death of the young boy was preventable and tragic. The public strongly believes that the violence used in the case was a miscarriage of justice. The competence of Loehmann as a policeman is uncertain and under speculation. Previous records show that Loehmann was unfit for duty. CNN explains that he was only hired by the Cleveland Police Department in March of 2014, after resigning from the Independence Police Department in December 2012. While working at Independence, he was not able to follow instructions and personal problems with his off-again, on-again girlfriend caused Loehmann to be emotionally unstable.

I find it unfathomable how a preventable accident like this could happen to an innocent child by a figure of authority. It makes me angry that ill-prepared people can become officers and gain a certain level of power in such a short period of time, even despite their prior performance. People were aware that Loehmann had emotional problems, yet still allowed him to carry a gun on the police force. The death of Rice will be commemorated as an inexcusable action and sadly be an example of police misconduct and brutality. It is completely understandable why others have been outraged by the case and the outcome of it. Deaths of minorities and black children and adults such as this have become an all too widespread reality. The death of Rice is such a deplorable incident that a young boy's life was taken so soon and because of such dreadful circumstances. Also, this has awoken many people to the injustice in the police force. Many of us rural town dwellers thrive and remain detached as Burton is a quiet town in which nothing happens. With an event like this occurring in Cleveland, people realize that we are not in our own little bubble: lives matter. Black lives matter, whether they be thirty miles or two thousand miles away. These types of situations affect all of us.

The controversial case of Rice's death will continue to receive coverage because of its significance, especially during these recent times, with similar deaths of African Americans having happened throughout America within the past few months. An event like this happening in Cleveland, a city not so far away from Burton, is astonishing. People that grew up in small towns may not think much of these cases, but that doesn't lessen the effect. No matter where you're from or where you grew up, violent situations can happen everywhere in society and can claim victims from every walk of life. Ordeals like Rice's, Brown's, and Garner's call into question how well the police academies are preparing officers before they join the force, especially concerning the use of power. As critics question and try to make sense of tragedies like these-the use of unnecessary force and blatant, institutionalized racism-it looks like the battle between black people and the white police force has come center stage.

Why education is important

In case you haven't figured that out by now

by Christin Dornback, BP Editor

What do Matt Damon, Bill Nye, Emma Watson, John Walsh, Tom Hanks, Natalie Portman, John Legend, Elon Musk, Tory Burch, Donald Trump, and Elizabeth Banks have in common? Education.



Experience and education goes hand in hand.

Some celebrities are a sliver of Ivy League alum examples, while others attended modest community colleges. And the funny thing is, looking at the names above, you can't differentiate who went where. Yet the celebrities mentioned previously have gone on to become household names, and their education is a large part of it. Although, there are the oddities, the outliers, the people who gained fame and success without a typical education. Abe Lincoln, Bill Gates, Coco Chanel and various CEOs, entrepreneurs didn't receive college degrees. Lincoln became a self taught lawyer, while Gates dropped out of college. Chanel started her fashion brand, and Dov Charny of American Apparel started his company in high school.

Comparing the Ivy Leaguers to the less-than-formally-educated doesn't serve as an excuse to daydream in class or lazily disregard your schoolwork. They are named to explain that education doesn't always have to be the typical kind of education, but instead, finding a passion and chasing it. These people may not have finished formal schooling, but they were educated in a different way. In the world of today, there's no question that we exemplify meritocracy, and crazy success stories like these are becoming rarer and rarer as diplomas and degrees take center stage, edging charisma and personality out. To stress education is not to lecture, but to reiterate the importance of learning. Which is why, instead of dropping out of this "soul-draining institution" and selling a million dollar idea or your bomb mixtape to the first guy that offers you twenty dollars, you should educate yourself and learn how to make the best deal possible, or if it's possible.

Whether you're planning to be a neurosurgeon or waiting for that one chance at fame, one thing is for sure, education matters.

Continued on back page

Beards, buns, and flanneled men, oh my!

by Lexi Sell, BP Staff Writer

Throughout the latter half of 2014, the widely admired metrosexuals are becoming less and less popular and the lumbersexuals are taking over. While the uptown boys are carrying out Gym, Tan, and Laundry, a new, more masculine approach has taken over social media and celebrity styles. Big rugged beards, tattoos, and plaid/denim button downs are stylishly worn by these modern lumbersexuals.



Brock O'Hurn has taken social media by storm with his gruff beard and well-executed man bun.

The term metrosexual was coined in 1994 describing a heterosexual man who is especially meticulous about his grooming and appearance, typically spending a significant amount of time and money shopping and grooming. (see David Beckham)

So, if you find yourself taking more time in the bathroom than your sister, buying more new kicks than there are days in the week, and you can't live without your favorite hair gel,you might be a metrosexual. Some of the most famous actors are fitted in the metrosexual category with their clean cut hair styles, perfected tailored button downs, and embodies the newest slang SNAG: Sensitive New Age Guy, which means you can be man and still have a emotional side. Simon Baker, Jake Gyllenhaal, and Brad Pitt are some of the leading metrosexuals; they are caring and family oriented, yet still steal girls' hearts for their cutting edges looks and orderly sense of style.



David Beckam is a prime example of what it means to be a metrosexual man as he is always cleanly groomed.

In time for the upcoming year, the lumbersexuals are crawling out of the woods and into the metropolitan cities, out of the cabins and into something a little more chic.

Cosmopolitan explains how this kind of man—the Lumbersexual, with the calculated look of "ruggedness" and hetero-normative "manliness"—might be just the thing to make the world go round. Senior Lauren Peterson describes a lumbersexual as "a real manly man, with muscles, a beard, and a plaid shirt, and a mun." A mun, or a man bun, is an additional new trend taking over; throwing that wild handful of man hair into a hair tie is definitely an aesthetic that will hopefully stay around.

Another year, another review

Y'all knew it was coming

by Lauren Peterson & Erin Wiggins, BP Staff Writers

As 2015 draws closer, we are reminded of the impending doom of future student loans and the fragility of life itself (while rocking in the corner in the midst of an existential crisis). This is when it may be a good time to look back on the year. A time to reflect on the progress humanity has made as a whole and face-palm at the twerk teams sweeping the nation. I guess you can call it a review, if you will.

2014 as a whole was a pretty productive year. For example Google Glass, an innovative high tech piece of eye-wear, was released to the public. Also, 35 out of 50 states in the US have legalized same-sex marriage. India had it's first mission to Mars (Welcome to the club!).

The music industry was on fire this year; from breakout artists to over-played songs. One of the most streamed songs of the year was "Happy" written and performed by Pharrell Williams. Closely following Williams' hit on the charts is the reggae smash "Rude" by the breakout band, Magic! 2014 was also a huge year for artists Ariana Grande, Iggy Azalea, Sam Smith, Taylor Swift, Kenny Chesney, and many more. Each of these artists released several hit singles this year, such as "Problem", "Stay With Me", and "American Kids", as well as releasing new albums.

Film production was equally efficacious with new and returning television series' and motion pictures. Popular flicks of 2014 include The Hunger Games: Mocking Jay, Gone Girl, The Fault In Our Stars, 12 Years A Slave, and American Hustle. A number of these pictures received Oscars as well as other awards. The widely-known television series Walking Dead returned this fall for its fifth season, and the popular Netflix series Orange Is The New Black returned early this year for its second season. But as always one door open as another closes. The long-admired CBS series How I Met Your Mother came to an end March 2014 breaking the hearts of countless devotees. Oscar award winning actor, Matthew McConaughey starred in the first season of the up-and-coming HBO drama, True Detective, which will return for second season in 2015.

In other news, 2014 was a busy year for the sports world. The Winter Olympics were held this year in Sochi, Russia. Also, Brazil hosted the 2014 FIFA World Cup in which Germany came out victorious. The Seattle Seahawks were the 2014 Super Bowl champions for the first time in Seahawk history. Furthermore, the San Francisco Giants earned their third championship in the last five seasons in a best-of-seven playoff against the Kansas City Royals at the 2014 World Series. Further upsetting the baseball community, Derek "The Captain" Jeter retired this year.

In addition, several other events took the media by storm this year. Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, aka Kimye, tied the knot this year at their lavish wedding in Florence, Italy (The good news is they have broken Kim's previous record by being married for more than 73 days. Congrats!) Along with this power couple comes another - Beyonce and Jay-Z blew up the internet with their famous love ballads and award show performances.

Speaking of the internet, the Ice Bucket Challenge did a much better job at breaking the internet than Kim K ever would have. Millions of buckets of ice water were thrown over the heads of millions of people, including celebrities, to raise awareness for ALS.

Though 2014 is drawing to an end, there is no need to fret. There are plenty of awesome things to look forward to in 2015.



#Oscars2k14

Education continued from page 7

Perhaps not everyone is "Ivy League material", or even college material, but striving for further education (further learning opportunities) is, or at least should be, a priority in all people. Your brain doesn't switch off when you walk across a stage or turn a certain age; you learn until you breathe your last breath and hope that your family will pick nice flowers for your funeral.

Education and a college degree shouldn't be synonymous, and we should fight to discourage substituting "well-schooled" for successful. School institutions provide education and socialization, grooming us to be well-mannered, and well-rounded women and men, but sitting in a desk facing a chalkboard isn't the only way to learn. Education's connotation has sadly been limited to institutionalized education, making it almost as dreadful of a word as chilllllllll or Mondays or moist, soppy socks. Education has many dictionary defined meanings, the first of which usually refers to institution-based education, like school, while the second refers to experience.

Here's the thing, kids. Education is an experience. Experience is education. Don't let anyone tell you which is better, but rather, decide for yourself. For some, plopping a butt down in a plastic chair, flipping open to a book on the correct page, and taking copious notes is a joy they love often. On the other hand, some like experimenting to find out how much seasoning is too much seasoning in a recipe, or what's the most efficient way to build something. For others, losing track of the time and sitting in bed, on a laptop, reading worldly news articles or watching spoken word poetry videos on Youtube is what gets them fired up. And yet others like to travel, to visit different cultures, and to try the delicacies from places they explore. Some people like watching TV shows about plants. Others like scouring fashion magazines and websites to check out the newest or wackiest trends in order to incorporate them into their wardrobe. And guess what – all of these people are learning; they are being educated, and isn't that the neatest thing?

Passion is what makes or breaks an education. It's what solidifies material in your brain. That's how you learn. Learning isn't exclusive for a school, just as growing up into a different person doesn't happen solely outside of a high school or college. True education is important because it exposes you to infinite paths to travel down, and doesn't rush you to choose one or choose any. It leaves you with choice, free will, and ample skills. True education is important because it can't be taken away; you can be stripped of degrees, certifications, titles, even your life's work, but you can't be stripped of your brain matter. True education gives you the opportunity to do great things, but you must be mindful enough to pursue it.

It's one of the few things in life that is genuinely unlimited, and should be treated as such. If you have unlimited texting, you don't stop yourself from texting all your friends when you want to get a hold of them at odd hours of the night after binge watching forty-two episodes of a show. If there was an unlimited amount of Chipotle or your favorite granola bar or smoothies in your kitchen, you wouldn't stop yourself from eating if you were hungry. If there were unlimited weekends, you would most likely not stop yourself from doing everything you've wanted to do. So why would you stop yourself from everything out there, all of the experiences and truths, wanting (or waiting) to teach you?