

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY: VICTORIA BANDEROB

Hi everyone! This is my first newspaper of Gr.12! Last semester I was at the U of W getting a couple courses under my belt (see article *Staring High School...Again*), so I wasn't around to help with SMH Edition. But, I'm back! I'm so excited to be back and helping out with the amazing group of people that make this paper happen. We had so many people write articles this month, so thank you to everyone who was a part of it!

We are constantly looking for **new members for SMH Edition!** If you are interested in writing, or even in just sharing your opinion, come out to our meetings on Wednesday mornings! You have the choice to write about something you are passionate about, or something you want to share your opinion on, or you can be a part of the themed issues and explore and learn some new things yourself! We are also looking for **photographers** who are interested in sharing their work! If you have any photographs you want to share, we are happy to feature them. We would also be interested in someone taking pictures of our school community and the events taking place around the school! New ideas, new perspectives and new people are ALWAYS welcome!

I look forward to the next semester of mind-boggling articles, thought-provoking pieces and raving reviews!



SMH Edition is now on Facebook! Join the group and keep up to date on your favourite school newspaper! Find out how you can get involved and find links to the newest issues!



We want to hear from you! Email smhedition@hotmail.com and share your questions, comments and opinions!

Answer to riddle: **Echo**

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THE ORIGIN OF VALENTINE'S DAY

BY: MARGARET PRZYBYLOWSKI

Millions of people worldwide express their love yearly on the fourteenth day of February. On this day, known as Valentine's Day, love is celebrated between parents and children, friends, and couples. In today's society this presentation of love has become very materialistic and the true meaning has seemed to fade. Although most of us celebrate this day, we are unaware of its origins. There are various legends which tell the story of the origin of Valentine's Day. One of the most well-known legends tells the tale of Valentine, a Christian priest, who had been thrown in prison for his teachings. It is said that Valentine performed a miracle by curing the jailer's daughter of her blindness. The Roman emperors still demanded that everyone must believe in the Roman gods. However, Valentine was a Christian who not only practiced his faith but also preached that he had performed a miracle. Therefore, on February 14th, Valentine was beheaded. The night before he was executed, he wrote the jailer's daughter a farewell letter, signing it "From Your Valentine". So next year, on Valentine's Day, when you are signing "From Your Valentine" on a card for your friend or for your loved one remember the tale of Valentine, the Christian priest.



Riddle!

**You heard me before,
Yet you hear me again,
Then I die,
'Till you call me again.**
(Answer on last page!)

Inside This Issue

- Need some stress relief?
- Express yourself and win!
- Strip the Streets
- Vampires before the craze

...and much more!

STRESSED OUT!

BY: JAY TORRES

Sports, clubs, homework, friends, parties. As fun as High School is, it can also become really overwhelming at times. Maybe you left an assignment for last minute, or maybe you're struggling to balance hanging out with your friends and getting your work done. All these things can make you feel like you're not in control, and they can make you feel stressed. Although a little stress is normal, too much can leave you feeling completely frustrated. Here are some ways to avoid stress and feel more relaxed:

- 1.) **Eat right**—A healthy diet will help you feel better and give you energy. It's important to have breakfast every morning, since it really is the most important meal of the day. How can you go to school and do your best on an empty stomach? Also, try to cut back on junk. I know from experience that this is easier said than done, but eating things that are good for your body will make you feel healthier and more balanced.
- 2.) **Get enough sleep**—Lack of sleep is one of the biggest causes of stress. In order to feel rested, we need at least 8 hours of sleep each night. Go to bed a few hours earlier in order to get those hours. If you didn't get enough sleep, take a 30 minute nap the next day. However, if you sleep more than that it can ruin your next night's sleep.
- 3.) **Make a schedule**—Although it's impossible to predict each and every event, make a schedule of the things you do on a regular basis. Set aside some time each day for homework, and figure out the best days to hang out with friends. If you have too many activities going on, you may want to drop one so you don't have too much on your plate.
- 4.) **Set realistic goals**—We all have our strengths and weaknesses. If you try really hard in science and have a 70, don't make it your goal to get a 90. A more realistic goal would be a 75. This is something I struggle with too, since I'm constantly worrying about my marks. But trying to achieve something as difficult and almost impossible as getting your mark up by 20% is only going to stress you out more. Sure, marks can be important but make sure you keep it in perspective.
- 5.) **Pamper yourself**—So, you just finished exams, what do you do? Go shopping, get a massage, and go to the movies. You just spent the week using your brain nonstop, so at this point you deserve a break. Try to relax and just have a good time!



PICTURE THIS

BY: ASHARA MEIDELL

You wake up in the morning, curled up under your warm, cozy blankets. You press snooze on your alarm clock a few times, and eventually manage to drag yourself out of bed. You put on your slippers and walk to the kitchen, where you have a bowl of cereal and a glass of orange juice waiting for you at the table. Your mom gives you a good morning hug, and you sit and listen to the radio, ears open for bus cancellations. It's really snowing outside and with any luck you'll get a day off school. Sadly, no cancellations. You get ready for school and catch the bus, ready to start your day. Your day goes by fairly quickly. Good lunch, easy classes, not much homework. You take the bus back home, to a warm meal, family, and even more luck! Your favourite TV show is on. Later that night, you curl up in your bed, happy and excited, as you dream about where you will go in your future. Today was a typical day. Now, Picture This.

You wake up in the morning, curled up beside a large garbage bin. You shiver uncontrollably until you eventually manage to get onto your feet. You stuff some newspapers into your jacket. You lean over the garbage bin where you find and consume, a nearly finished apple, frost bitten from the cold. The people walking down the street give you dirty looks. You begin to walk towards the shelter; ears open for any sign that perhaps today, they may not be full. It's really snowing outside and with any luck you'll get at least a few minutes in the warmth. Sadly, no room in the shelter. The line-up is out the door so you begin to walk away, dreading the day to come. Your day feels as though it is lasting decades. No lunch, frostbitten lips and skin, and not much money made from begging on the corner. You walk for miles down the city streets, towards another shelter that may not be full. Finally some luck! They let you into the shelter. That night you curl up on the fold out cot, sad and alone, as you think about tomorrow, trying to figure out where you will go to survive. Today was a typical day.

Have you ever tried to put yourself in someone else's shoes? How about in the shoes of a homeless person? If you were able to simply picture these scenarios you were able to picture the life that some people have no other choice but to live. It may not be everyone, but it is someone. There are different degrees of homelessness and this scenario is the extreme. However, that does not erase the fact that there are many people who live on the streets. The thing people need to realize is that there are many reasons for homelessness other than just drugs and alcohol. Sure those are some reasons, but every person's situation is unique, just as every person's life is unique. People lose their jobs, people get abused at home, some people don't have the education to be able get a proper job, and some have a mental or physical illness. People must also realize that it is not only adults and drug-addicted teens that live on the streets. There are a great number of teenagers living on the streets in the KW region for other reasons. This is unacceptable.

If you would like to help fight against youth homelessness, this month you have the chance. Friday, February, 24th is the annual Strip the Streets event that will take place at Kitchener City Hall. Strip The Streets promotes youth helping youth. It gives teenagers the opportunity to have a brief glimpse of what it feels like to sleep on the streets for a night in the winter. Raising awareness is the first step to stopping youth homelessness. If you would like more information on Strip The Streets, talk Mr. Morris or go to www.stripthestreets.ca . Join the cause and help fight for every teen to live a happy, healthy and safe life in a home.

Picture that.

NOTE: Strip the Streets was cancelled on Feb 24, so, if you are still interested in participating, it is not too late! The event is rescheduled for **March 30, 2012. Contact Mrs. Drummond if you are interested in participating.*



BELIEVE

BY: SHAINE SCREPNEK

All we need
Is to believe
In what life has to offer
And what we can achieve.

Push away all the thoughts
That clouded your mind yesterday.
Because today,
Is a new day.

It's never too late to start again
The world can't hurt you now.
Stand tall and proud
And no one will try to knock you down.

Be who you want to be
And forget about what they think.
You are amazing
And only liars would tell you otherwise.

What's done is done
But we can learn from our mistakes
And learn to forgive and forget.

Always stay true to yourself
And never stop believing in what you can do.



THE CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST



BY: JOEY ULMER

There are a multitude of students in the St. Mary's community with a natural drive towards creativity that spans multiple fields. Some of us will write our own stories in our head, bringing imaginary characters to life in surreal worlds. Others will have a love of rhythm that inspires them to write their own poems or song lyrics. If you have this brilliant sort of mindset, then perhaps it's time you put your ideas to writing, and consider entering the school's annual Creative Writing Contest.

The contest is open to all students who wish to take part and accepts all types of entries, from lyrics and poetry, to short stories and personal narratives, to one act plays, and even children's literature. All submissions must be original. There are cash prizes, and the opportunity to advance to a regional competition, but perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the contest is sharing your own creative mind with others.

As a student who has always had a creative mind and strong writing skills, I know how nervous a person may be about sharing their thoughts and ideas for the world to see. But if you have a story in your mind or a song in your heart, share it. Last year, when my English teacher decided to submit a personal narrative I wrote, I felt nervous about having other people read what I wrote. However, after thinking on it for a while and receiving strong positive reinforcement from her, I felt much happier that my creative mind was finally being shared with others, and building confidence within myself. And even though I didn't win, I felt much better for finally stepping out of my shell.

There are all sorts of things to write about. You can write about a life experience, a call to awareness about a world issue, or just something you feel others might enjoy. The entry deadline is March 1st. If you have something you want to submit, but are unsure about doing so, I strongly urge that you take that chance, because it is so rewarding, and I look forward to doing it again this year. Who knows, it may just be the thing that starts you on the path to your future.

MILITARY: A SINKING SHIP

BY: MEGAN MURRAY

I have history during fifth period this semester and a little while ago we were learning about World War I. This made me wonder how the Canadian military is standing up in comparison to the rest of the world today. I decided to compare the navies of a few major countries that participated in WWI:

United states: 11 aircraft carrier ships, 60 destroyer ships, 30 frigate ships, 100 patrol boats, 53 attack submarines.

Russia: 1 aircraft carrier ship, 16 destroyer ships, 10 frigate ships, 68 patrol boats, 32 attack submarines.

United Kingdom: 1 aircraft carrier ship, 8 destroyer ships, 13 frigate ships, 25 patrol boats, 8 attack submarines.

France: 1 aircraft carrier ship, 4 destroyer ships, 19 frigate ships, 15 patrol boats, 6 attack submarines.

Canada: 0 aircraft carrier ships, 3 destroyer ships, 12 frigate ships, 12 patrol boats, 4 attack submarines.

These are just a few of the vehicles that are available to navies, however I didn't want to compare too many vehicles that Canada doesn't have. According to records, the list above is the extent of Canada's Navy.

The national defense budget in Canada is \$20.5 billion compared to \$1.3 trillion in the U.S. There are a few justifications to be made for the comparatively low budget (one of them being the fact that Canada is pulling out of Afghanistan) but in my personal opinion, Canada could afford to put a little more attention towards our military.

HISTORY BYTES: EDWARD EXPOSED

BY: JULIA O'LEARY

The world's fascination with the concept of vampires has increased dramatically with the creation of the Twilight franchise. The romanticized notion of "the vampire" has been around for thousands of years, and in this instalment of History Bytes, the actual story of vampires throughout history will be brought to light. This information was obtained through a program the History Channel did on the subject at hand.

As far back as the 1600's, people have been accused of being vampires and were unaccepted by society because of it. However, in ancient myths from all around the world, there is mention of beasts who are immortal, feed on the living, and rise from the dead. Scientists believe that there is a logical explanation for these "vampires" to appear to be rising from the dead, because they could have either been buried alive or not decomposed in the normal way.

Elizabeth Battery, a Transylvanian countess in 1604, remembered for her horrifyingly fascinating life, was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of young girls and bathing in their blood because she believed it was good for her skin, before someone finally caught on. She is believed by some to have been the origin of society's tales of vampirism, due to her brutal serial killer lifestyle.

Stories have continued to progress with the passing of time, and vampires have been blamed on events such as the plague known as the Black Death, or epidemics of tuberculosis. Eventually, the fear developed into fascination, with the writing of novels such as Dracula by Bram Stoker, and hundreds of movies being made on the subject.

STARTING HIGH SCHOOL...AGAIN

BY: VICTORIA BANDEROB

I never thought I'd say it twice, but at the beginning of second semester, I had to start high school...again. As a grade 12 student, I participated in the University Co-operative Education Program (UCEP) along with a few other students from SMH and other schools in the WCDSB. I spent the whole first semester at the University of Waterloo, submersing myself in the life of a university student. They say going to university after high school is culture-shock...well for me, coming back to high school after being at university is going to need some getting used to.

UCEP allows you to spend the first semester at the University of Waterloo or Wilfred Laurier taking two of your high school courses, a university course and complete 190 hours of co-op with a professor at one of the universities. I took the university course Health 101 at the U of W and I did my co-op in a biology lab. I worked in the developmental biology department looking at identifying the molecular mechanisms underlying polarity in the migration of cells, especially in the frog species *Xenopus*. Working with tissue culture and frog embryos, I looked at the participation of a protein and it's constructs in the cell's migration. I never imagined being able to have this experience as a grade 12 student, as this is work students don't start until their 4th year of university. Even as I began my co-op, I didn't expect the prof and grad student to teach me the amount they did and allow me to do as much work as I did. It is definitely an experience I won't forget anytime soon.

My routine at the university was a whole lot different than high school...and, of course, I only experienced a small part of it. I just got a taste of the independence and relationships you make with people at university, and it got me craving for a bigger piece. Grabbing a coffee before class, heading to the SLC after a lecture to do work, late night group study sessions for midterms and the surprise of free breakfast or lunch in the great hall...it's all something I miss already. I think it's the independence: the freedom to know when and where you have to be, and getting done all you need to while having fun at the same time. In a class of 280, I had to know what my bi-weekly quiz was on, and the requirements for my bi-weekly essay were, because getting a hold of a busy prof is not the easiest thing. But something I recommend is getting to know your prof; by the end of the semester, my prof knew me to the point where he disrupted me during my exam to ask me how it was going, and offer me a reference letter for university applications.

Saying it was hard to come back to high school is an understatement. Don't get me wrong; it is truly amazing to be with all my friends again, but the first couple days were really hard. The second day back, I had such a bad day and I'm not sure why, but my friends were all there and it reminded me why this semester is still going to be amazing! I want to end my high school experience with a bang, doing all the things I've wanted to do and soaking in prom and grad. UCEP showed me what's to come after high school...but for now, it's time I finish high school so I can conclude this chapter in my book, so I can look back for the lessons I learned and with the fondest of memories.



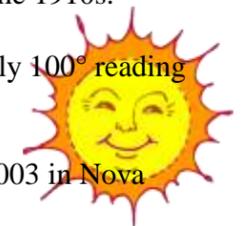
STRANGE CANADIAN WEATHER



BY: SAVANNAH VOLL

Think our Canadian weather is strange now? Take a look at these facts about even weirder Canadian weather:

- The lowest temperature recorded in Canada was -63°C at Snag, Yukon on February 3, 1947.
- On November 10, 1986, a 32 hour storm left Winnipeg with 35.8 cm of snow!
- Between December 31, 1993 and January 19, 1994, Yellowknife endured a record 20 consecutive days when the minimum temperature was less than or equal to -37°C.
- On December 15th, 1964, the Great Blizzard struck parts of the Prairie Provinces with heavy snow, sustained winds of 50 to 90 km/h, and - 34°C temperatures. Over 1,000 livestock were lost, and 3 people froze to death.
- Based on a 52-year-period of record, the warmest year was 1998 at 2.5° C above normal, and the second warmest was 1981 at 2° C above normal.
- 1910 was the driest year, complete with dust storms and plagues of grasshoppers.
- The wettest decade for southern Canada was the 1970s and the driest was the 1910s.
- The year 1936 saw 101°F at Norway House, Manitoba — the most northerly 100° reading ever recorded.
- The most recent hurricane to hit Canada occurred on the 29th September 2003 in Nova Scotia.
- Canada's longest lasting heat wave persisted for 10 days in August, 1953. The heat wave began on 25th August and ended on the 3rd September.
- Canada's most powerful tornado hit the community of Elic, Manitoba, on the 22nd June 2007. This tornado was Canada's first officially recorded F5 tornado. It was filmed on amateur video, which was reviewed by meteorologists at Environment Canada, who estimated the wind speed was in excess of 400 km/hr (250mph).
- The driest region in Canada is located at Eureka on Ellesmere Island, which is located only about 960 kilometres south of the North Pole. This region normally has only 50 millimetres of precipitation annually. Most of it falls in the form of snow.



*adapted from World-Weather-Travellers-Guide.com and *Weather Facts and Trivia*, an article from the CBC News Canada website
