

Indiana law making headlines

Giving amnesty to Hoosier youth

Indiana state senator Jim Merritt and Attorney General Greg Zoeller have been visiting university and high school campuses throughout Indiana for many months. Why? To promote the Indiana Lifeline Law that protects all individuals



KATIE McDONNEL
PLUGGED IN STAFF

under the age of 21 from alcohol-related arrests when they seek out medical attention.

"I have kids, I know kids make mistakes," said Merritt.

ritt who authored the original bill. "I felt like we needed a gray spot in the law."

The law gives immunity for certain alcohol-related offenses. The law does not allow police officers to take minors into custody for a crime of public intoxication or minor possession, consumption, or transportation of an alcoholic beverage. If the officer decides that the individual does need medical attention, and that the caller is cooperating, he cannot arrest them.

"I was against the bill, because I felt as though we were incentivizing the idea of binge drinking," Merritt said. "That's why we made it so that the person who is ill or almost comatose will have to deal with the authorities, but it gives amnesty or immunity to the caller and people who are cooperating. That was a key part for me."

The law went into effect this past July and is still getting mixed reviews from Hoosiers statewide. "I think, on the

one hand, it sounds like a good idea to get people medical attention when they need it, even though in this case they committed a crime," SHS teacher Robert Lindhorn said. "I don't like the idea of officer discretion. I think there are too many officers that would deal with the situation differently."

"What really was the catalyst were the university student presidents coming to me talking about their agreements at IU and Purdue with the law enforcement that they believe we need statewide," Merritt divulged.

"They want every university to have this opportunity. Their diligence, their efficiency, their creativity, and their thoroughness were terrific. It is a controversial topic, because it is underage drinking, but the real catalyst was the students."

Teens across Indiana are affected by underage drinking, whether it is themselves or their friends and family.



Senator Jim Merritt and Reporter Katie McDonnell pose for a picture after an informative interview. Photo courtesy of McDonnell.

The Finbloom family of Carmel lost their 18 year old son to alcohol poisoning this past August when he went off to celebrate his upcoming freshman year of college. The family has gone to countless high schools talking about the dangers of drinking and the new law that people should utilize.

"I party probably every weekend," said one SHS sophomore who requested to remain anonymous. "We could have used this law because I had a friend who was getting really sick and somebody told him to lie down and to handle it in the morning. He didn't make it to the morning because he ended up choking on his vomit and dying."

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Issue 4
December 21, 2012



**The Official newspaper of the
"World Famous" Speedway Sparkplugs**

A new reality

Balanced calendar to be adopted in Speedway for the 2013-2014 school year



KACEY ROSS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A balanced calendar is not something new for the schools of Indiana. For this school year, schools such as Wayne Township Schools, IPS, Brownsburg, Avon, and Mooresville have adopted the calendar. By the looks of it, Speedway will be right along with these schools next year.

The misconception that the balanced calendar means "year-long school" is plentiful. A balanced calendar would mean that students would start school on August 1st, get one week for fall and

Thanksgiving breaks, and two weeks for Christmas and spring breaks, along with students being released from school June 4th. This, in turn, shortens the summer break but gives students more break time during the school year. Speedway residents were allowed to vote on the Speedway High School web page in favor of or against the balanced calendar. "The key change from last year," Superintendent Ken Hull said, "was when we surveyed our people, many, many more people responded. We think we have a better picture of what our community would like."

The results themselves were interesting, also. "About 74% of our students were represented by responses," said Hull. "Over 77% of those responders said they were

August						
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19	20	21	22	23		
26	27	28	29	30		

September						
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November						
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2014

January

February

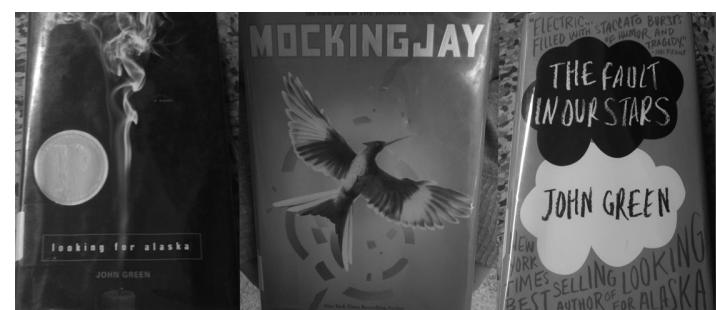
March

April

May

June

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READING ROCKS! Book covers of *The Hunger Games*, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, and *Looking for Alaska*. Photo courtesy of Maddie Kenny, books courtesy of the SHS Library.

With the holidays right around the corner, why not give those people on your gift list a new book? And since technology is ever-expanding, you don't even need to leave the comfort of your own home.

Or, you could treat yourself to a new book. The Association of American Publishers said the publishing category that is expanding the most rapidly is the Children's/Young Adult category. However, it's difficult to find a list that focuses on solely on young adult reads. *The New York Times* bestseller list has a Children's section, but don't let the name fool you: it combines children's books with young adult fiction. As of December 9th, the highest books of young adult status are *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green (#3 for Children's Chapter Books), *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (#1 for Children's Paperback Books), *Looking for Alaska* (#4 for Children's Paperback Books), and *The Hunger Games* series (#2 for Children's Series Books.)

Being an avid reader, I have read all of these books and highly recommend all four, although *The Fault in Our Stars* is my favorite. But how do these books stack up here at Speedway? Out of 19 students surveyed, 7 of them have read one or more of these books. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and *Looking for Alaska* have been read by five students each, *The Hunger Games* has been read by 3 students, and *The Fault in Our Stars* has, surprisingly, only been read by two of the 19 students surveyed.

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MADDIE KENNY
PLUGGED IN COLUMNIST

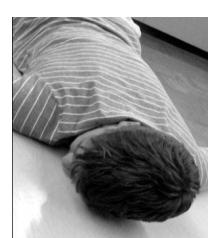


OPINION

Counseling the consoles

How the static market is failing to match an evolving consumer

Comrades, we live in the Golden Age of Video Games. The beautifully rendered sun is shining in the magnificently textured sky. The expertly NavMeshed landscape gives


way to a gleaming city in the distance, powered by an incredibly powerful game engine. Not a pixel is out of place in the modern-day Utopia of video games at present.

Though, for the console industry, paradise may all too soon be lost to the wind. The console industry, dear comrades, is suffering to the point of death. Recent sales figures show a tremendous drop in Xbox 360 unit sales, as much as 22%, when compared to this point in 2011. Now in all fairness, topping the incredible sales of this past year would be incredibly impressive, but a decline of almost a quarter of the sales is not something that goes unnoticed.

Though, the pain is not exclusively felt on Microsoft's end of the spectrum. The Xbox rival, and all around competition, Sony has been struck excruciating blows as well in their Playstation 3 (or PS3 if you feel like getting hip with the lingo). Playstation 3 sales are experiencing near identical sales drops, coming as close as 23%, which still keeps both of them above Nintendo's recently pathetic introduction of their WiiU handheld/console hybrid which to many gamers appeared not only more expensive but far less inviting and a fair bit confusing to operate. But this is no time to fret. The hour is at hand, for the console industry to truly make something great out of its current downfall. To do this, though, they must first stop squabbling amongst each other and realize their true enemy: The PC gaming industry. Both PC and console games have their fair share of pros and cons, but it seems that the PC sector has the upper hand in a few places it really matters. The ability to maintain a frequent flow of not only free developer-made content and updates, but accessibly player-made content. Ease of access to the games themselves as well as often times a far cheaper price for a digital copy of the game. Finally, the all encompassing media associated with the computer itself. While the first two major issues could be solved with relative ease, it is the final blow that really hurts them.

Don't get me wrong they've made a solid effort to introduce media into their consoles; Xbox with its

new array of apps, Xbox Live Netflix, Facebook, and Twitter, and Playstation with its browser and Playstation

Network, though I can assure you this is not enough. In order to survive it will require a drastic change for the industry as a whole. These machines need to be made to function primarily as a gaming device, but not be exclusively aimed at the gamer demographic. If they could, and they should, change these devices into an all around media-blasting treasure trove of mental stimulation and procrastination, they could single-handedly reverse the tides of war.

An Xbox with not only gaming capabilities, but cable access, internet

browsing, easily downloadable (and cheap) digital game licenses, for god's sake a DVR, would not only stabilize their sales but improve them. All in all, the video game industry, nay, the entertainment industry is evolving to suit a progressing consumer, and any

developer who cannot or will not adapt is as good as dead. It's survival of the fittest in a market that scavenges the corpses of the fallen, and at this point, it is simply irresponsible of any producer to fall behind.



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DEVOURING THE COMPETITION. The consoles suffer another blow in this battle to the death. Photo courtesy of Kotaku.com.au

Pre-Christmas scramble

An article tailored for all those last minute gift-getters



HUNTER SMITH
PLUGGED IN FEATURES

With Christmas just a few short days away, someone reading this article must have inevitably spaced picking up a gift for a certain someone. Well no worries, this article

was put together with those last minute shoppers in mind. Despite the gravity of the situation, waiting so long and seeming so forgetful, last minute gifts have the potential to also be some of the sweetest gifts a person could receive.

First off, cards are pretty standard regardless. Cards can come with gifts but you can even stop right there without so much a second thought. If you have the time and resources, you can even leave a gift card, heartfelt note, and/or maybe an IOU for a later date: possibly a dinner date or movie night redeemable upon the recipient's request. But if you



MR. WILLS IS PREPARED SO WHY AREN'T YOU? If you are a procrastinator, read the article above. Photo by Katie McDonnel.

put off picking up a present so much that you don't even have the time to pick up a gift card or write a note, only then would I recommend leaving cold hard cash. It's called cold hard cash for a reason: it's pretty thoughtless.

Another idea is a mix CD or two, if you are so technologically inclined. CDs are incredibly thoughtful and provide

an excellent gift. Even hastily thrown together, the thought that goes into one is still very much heartfelt and greatly appreciated by the recipient. Framed pictures are nice, with only a frame to go out and buy, these make easy gifts. You could also look up on the internet some special holiday treat recipes if you are an avid cook/baker. But if you'd

Championship or death

Penn State's penalty is grossly unfair

On December 1st 2012 Wisconsin dominated Nebraska in the BIG TEN Championship game. While this is great for Wisconsin, their win doesn't make them the champions in my eyes. The two superior teams in league are currently ineligible for a championship or bowl game. Not to say that it wasn't a good game, but rather that the outcome would have been much different if Ohio State and Penn State. Unfortunately not only were fans robbed of an honest championship, but players robbed of a once in a life time chance to be champions. The worst part is that Penn State lost the privilege because of an EX-coach.

The death penalty is an awful choice of punishment for Penn State. First of all, there is a small group of people who were actually involved in the abusive behaviors exhibited by Coach Sandusky. The coaching staff and administrators were the people responsible for allowing Sandusky's actions to continue. Any advantage to this punishment would be minimal at best. Honestly, the main effects of the death penalty would alienate anyone involved with Penn State.

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WILL HARRIS
PLUGGED IN COLUMNIST

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OPINION

A lover's quarrel

What Mommy didn't tell you about the Fiscal Cliff

"I am not for raising taxes on the American people in a soft economy," says House Speaker John Boehner, and read his lips: he'd cut them all if he could. But now that the Bush tax cuts have principally expired, and Barack Obama has been reelected; he can't. The Republican Party is singing the lamentations of a dying era, and when the chorus ends-- they'll have to move.

In 2008, Senator John McCain campaigned on the ticket of austerity, more tax cuts and a spending freeze (what had made the Depression in the 30's "great"). After our current President was elected, the Republican Party put on the brakes and used its majority in the House of Representatives to halt progress at every turn, declaring that making Obama a one-term President and overturning health care reform was their

ultimate goal. But after stimulating investment in our economy, ending the war in Iraq, and the Supreme Court upholding the Affordable Care

Act's constitutionality, they've learned four years of obstructing progress fails in a democracy like our own. Their majority in the House waning, the party of Lincoln sails on a Democrat's sea, hijacked by pundits and religious fundamentalists.

But where to now, St. Peter? Boehner already backed away from the



QUENTIN ELETT
PLUGGED IN COLUMNIST

"grand bargain" in 2011, but the odds are now stacked in the President's favor. Clamoring for a way millionaires can pay smaller shares of their income in taxes than middle-class families, the House speaker has asked President Obama to postpone talks over the fiscal cliff further. With any luck, he won't get his way. Renewed and reelected, with the people behind him, these negotiations will end in favor of the President, and the Democratic Party.

However, those with a mind for history ask 'is this really progress?' As sympathetic as progressives and liberals are to President Obama, it must be hard to imagine his tax plan as "progress" of the same kind as Obamacare. After all, we are simply returning to what used to be the rule of law. When Dwight D. Eisenhower (along with John F. Kennedy) was President, marginal tax rates on regular income over \$400,000 was 92% - 91% and the capital gains tax was 25%. After Richard Nixon took office, the rate on regular income over \$200,000 was as high as 77% and the maximum rate on long-term capital gains was raised as high as 36.5%. In capital gains, Obama's plan increases

the maximum capital gains rate to 20% for those earning more than \$200,000 (\$250,000 for married couples). Imagine Nixon and Obama: America's great socialist leaders!

Next time you hear a right-wing pamphleteer jeer at you for not supporting the trickle-down theory



Speaker of the House John Boehner looks on as U.S. President Barack Obama meets with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on November 16, 2012 in Washington, DC. (Olivier Douliery/Abaca Press/MCT)

of economics that sold our country overseas, remind them of the past Republican leaders that are on your side.

"Should any political party attempt to abolish social security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again in our political history. There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes that you can do these things. Among them are a few Texas oil millionaires, and an occasional politician or businessman from other areas. Their number is negligible and they are stupid."

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1952

Your face, I like it

How people take compliments

As some of my peers may already know, I don't take many things personally. You can say almost anything to me, and I'll shrug it off and go along on my merry way.

Well, most people aren't like that. Most people are civil, but there are a few people who you can hardly say hello to without being berated. *Why is this?*

When I began my search for negative compliment takers, my mind took me to people in different relationships, like couples and platonic friends.

I figured the couples would just have cutesy dialogue. And I was right. "If

he complimented me on my clothes, I would say 'thank you', but if he said something to me like, 'You're cute,' I would just tell him that he was cute too," said senior Kelsi Nicholson of her boyfriend sophomore Logan Austin.

His response? "I would disagree with her and tell her she was wrong if she gave me a compliment," said Austin. Hmm. There was some progress there, but not much. So I moved on to my next subject: siblings.

I was becoming desperate at this point. Why can't I find the answer to this question? Alright, final group of people, platonic friends. So I pull seniors Caulin McGraw and Jake Miller from class, hoping maybe one of them can give me the reaction I'm looking for.

"What would you do if Jake came up to you randomly and gave you a complement?" I asked McGraw.

"Well, I would wonder why Jake

was giving me a compliment," began McGraw.

Maybe I had finally found what I was looking for. Caulin's saucy lady; maybe she was one of those people who took compliments ridiculously.

"How would you react?" I asked, hopefully.

"I would just return the complement, even if it wasn't true."

Well, that was mundane and normal, just like every other response. Maybe Jake would help me out.

"Well, I would think that I had to look really good for Caulin to compliment me," said Miller. "Then I would return the compliment...."

I sent both of them back to class and went back to the drawing board. If anyone knows someone who takes compliments negatively, please, find out why and tell me, for I will valiantly continue my search alone.

An amnesty plan

Indiana State Senate gives help to students in need

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"People in government need to understand that people, kids in particular, make mistakes and those mistakes shouldn't follow them around for the rest of their lifetime," Merritt explained. "Whenever I talk about this on Twitter, it's called hashtag make good decisions (#makegooddecisions). It is just so important to get the word out to parents and teens alike. We never want to feel like we are allowing binge drinking or drinking of alcohol under 21, that's the key. It would be naïve to think that it doesn't happen though."



FEATURE

'Tis the season to be spending

What goes into the decision-making for holiday purchases?

It's that time of year again – holiday music, decorations, Santa Claus, and snow (well, there's supposed to be snow, anyway)! The Christmas season is upon us! Amidst the celebrating, caroling, and cherishing that always goes with this time of year, one can't deny the fact that it's one of the biggest seasons of spending as well, no matter how you look at it.



AMELIA BERRY
PLUGGED IN FEATURES

According to the American Research Group, Inc., who has given out an annual survey for Christmas gift spending for the past twenty-seven years, its reports

show that shoppers around the country have relayed that they are planning on spending an average of \$854 on gifts for the holiday season this year. That's up over 32% from just last year's reported average, despite a fear of finally jumping off the dreaded fiscal cliff that is continuing to have an off-putting effect on the economy and ever-soaring retail prices that are constantly hitting stores and their merchandise.

How are Speedway students contributing to the 32% spending increase this holiday season, especially amidst attempts to dodge the fiscal cliff? Speedway students are still contributing to the cause, but still feeling the pinch from the recent economic standings. In results from a recent survey of 66 select Speedway students, 57% of students surveyed felt it would be more difficult to give gifts this year because of higher retail prices. And it's not just higher

prices either: many students said they were also expecting (or already had run into) purchase glitches like desired items being out of stock and parents losing jobs resulting in less income for spending, and a general lack of time to get gifts, as well.

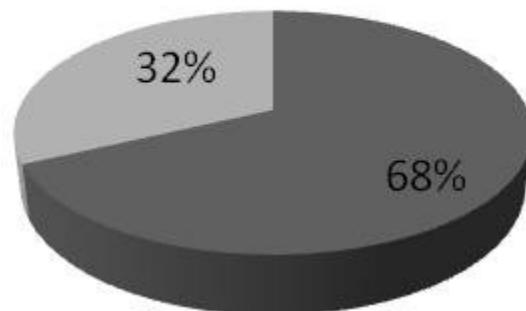
But no worries. If shoppers continue on their current purchasing path, 2012 will still be a big year for holiday spending in the United States. Once again, Speedway students are right on track with the rest of the country in this aspect: another 57% of surveyed students said that despite high prices and economic disadvantages, they will not be changing their gift-giving plans for this holiday season.

But that doesn't mean that shoppers won't be looking for the best deal and the best values! As one may have learned in Mr. Pelley's Economics class, no matter what the cost of the product is, the average consumer will literally pay the price for the item that is most valuable and will have the best quality.

Many economists consider the Christmas season "inelastic," an economic term that means that the demand of a good or product usually won't change in response to changes in prices or competition. So despite the obstacles that most holiday shoppers will be facing, like high costs and demands, the bottom line is that Christmas presents must still be purchased! Thankfully, the fiscal cliff and its inconveniences don't have the power to stop Christmas.

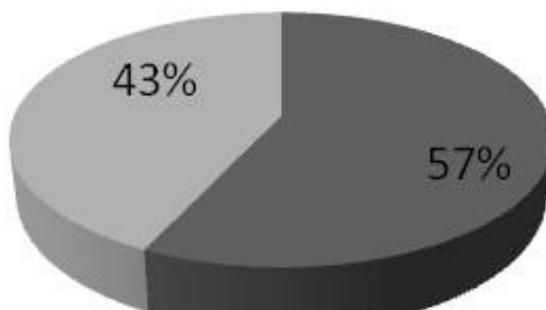
Have higher retail prices affected the amount you spent on gifts this year?

■ yes ■ no



Do you have difficulties finding gifts because of high retail costs?

■ yes ■ no



Calendar change for next year

2013-2014 Speedway schedule to reflect programming at other Indiana schools

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Hull's data continues to favor a balanced calendar. "We started by saying 'Would you like a traditional calendar?' and the answer was pretty overwhelmingly 'no'."

Now that an overwhelming majority of Speedway residents favor a balanced calendar, the pros and cons must be looked at. Enrichment classes for those who are in need would be available during the breaks. Cheaper travel rates for vacations in the fall and spring breaks would also be a plus to the balanced calendar idea, allowing for two weeks of vacation instead of the previous two days and one week, respectively. A balanced calendar will allow a "breathing period" for students during the school year to unwind and release their stresses.

"Having a balanced calendar that is most similar to Marion County was an overwhelming 'yes' in the poll," Hull noted. "The parents live here in Speedway but must work around Marion County's schedule for work purposes."

Some cons are prevalent, also. The summer will be shortened. It will be more costly for the school to provide air conditioning in the warm August months. For elementary students, working parents will need to provide childcare during the extended vacations. Some residents believe that the balanced calendar would affect the sports schedules of some students, but with many schools changing over to a balanced calendar, that will most likely not be the case.

"There are going to be 183 school days no matter what," said Hull. "I would tell you that there aren't going to be huge benefits, but neither are there going to be huge losses. What this really is about is lifestyle."

"What we do in Speedway is not indicative by what everybody else does. We tend to be a little different," said Hull. "If we're different and stay on a traditional calendar or switch to balanced, either/or, we're going to be okay."

An abundance of books

What will you read this month?

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When asked about The Hunger Games, junior Lea Cox says "The books were amazing. It's something you've never seen before."

"It's not cheesy. I read it in a day," says junior Sabrina Eversole in regards to The Fault in Our Stars. Says Cox, "It helps you understand how cancer patients feel about cancer." When asked about his novel The Fault in Our Stars in *Kirkus Review*, John Green said, "The sick people I've known are every bit alive and funny and fully human as anyone else, and I wanted to reflect that in the novel. I wanted them to be teenagers who happen to be living with illness and disability, rather than objects one stares at and pities and learns from."

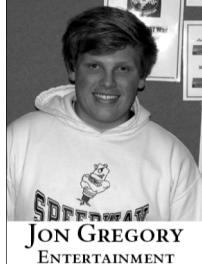
It is somewhat worrisome that 28% of the students surveyed circled the "Only for school" choice when asked how much they read. There are so many different book options out there, from sci-fi to romance and everything in between.

School forces us to read, but there are a plethora of book options out there to suit every reader. George R.R. Martin, a *New York Times* bestselling author, once said, "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies... The man who never reads lives only one."

FEATURE

Happy holidays

Fun at the Indy Zoo



You may not know how fortunate you are to be living in such a great town. Name one place, anywhere, that offers a zoo experience with Christmas lights combined. You can't. Right here in Indianapolis, the Indianapolis Zoo is the only zoo that combines the two.

Other zoos around the US may decorate their zoo with few lights and other fun decorations, but the Indianapolis Zoo goes the extra mile. Since 1968, the Indianapolis Zoo has been the first zoo in the United States to hold a holiday lights event. Christmas at the zoo runs from November 23- December 30. The zoo is open from 5-9 Wednesday- Sunday.

Not only does the Indianapolis Zoo offer just an amazing light display; they offer many fun activities for families to do that all tie into the Holiday themes. Some of these activities include a Holiday themed dolphin show, meeting Santa's reindeer, meeting Mr. and Mrs. Claus,



Santa's reindeer are here! Kids finally get to meet the power behind Santa's Sleigh! Photo Courtesy of Jason Wright and the Indianapolis Zoo.



ENJOYING THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS! The Indianapolis Zoo offers an amazing light show for all ages to enjoy! Photo courtesy of Kim Harms.

and sleigh photos for those who are too old to sit on Santa's lap.

One of the big attractions for the zoo this year is "find the mistletoe". This event is going throughout the zoo and finding 10 different mistletoes hidden throughout the zoo. Two lucky winners will receive a free Dolphin In-Water Adventure.

During the adventure with Hanna, we were taken on a tour by Kelli Agnew. She took us around the zoo and pointed out all of the fun and exciting things that the zoo offers during this time of year. "I want to reiterate how exciting Christmas at the Zoo is for people of all ages!" said Agnew.

If this Christmas excitement is still not enough for you, go down and visit their new walrus. The Indianapolis zoo rescued a new walrus friend named Pakak who made his public debut Wednesday. He was rescued from Barrow, Alaska after he was split from his own pack. Come and give him a visit! Kelli tells us that he is a talker and that he loves humans!!

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas

The Children's Museum has become Santa's wonderland

We're all kids at heart even though we've grown way past the times of riding in a Hot Wheels tricycle or playing with Barbies. But with the Furbies coming back in and Christmas just around the corner, why not bring out some toys from the past or enjoy some holiday traditions of snowball fights and hot chocolate? And did I mention you can also find these activities at the Children's Museum?

When you go to the Children's Museum, Bumblebee from Transformers, a permanent attraction, will be there to greet you in his "holiday attire." If you walk a bit farther you will run into the Top 20 iconic toys voted by the public. You can see G.I Joe (ranked 1st), Transformers (2nd), Monopoly (10th), Raggedy Ann (11th), and Mr. Potato Head (20th). After a walk down Candy Cane Lane, check into the Snowball fight where you can have a war with friends at the lobby surrounded by the slides, giant globe, and jolly land.

The museum is open Tuesdays through Sunday from 10-5. One day admission for Youth (ages 2-7) is \$12.50, adult \$17.50, and senior \$16.50. The first Thursday of every month is Target Free Family Night where the museum is open for free from 4-8 p.m. Also, the museum will be open on the 24th and 31st! Free parking is available in the museum's parking garage on the west side of Illinois Street.

Want a gift to commemorate the memories there? Head into the gift shop or if it's too busy, just go online where the museum has now added an online store for shoppers.

Did you have such a great time that you want to be there all day? Don't worry! There are unpaid internships for high school students. Applications are being accepted until February 1, 2013 for the Summer internship (May-August).



VONGPRASEUTH
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR



RACING SANTA TO THE FINISH LINE A tremendous line forms at the popular slide for all ages. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Harms.

ENTERTAINMENT

Drumming and dwindling

She is one of the select few that has a pair of sticks

I don't know if you're aware of this, but there is a small, semi-secret group of people out in the world today, taking their anger and emotions out in a very unconventional way.

No, I'm not talking about Ramona Flower's "League of Evil Exes" from Scott Pilgrim vs. the World. I am talking about the select few, the weirdos, the hard to come by... chick drummers.

When you think of famous drummers you probably think of Travis Barker and that one guy from Def Leopard with one arm. You might be able to think of some other dudes. But, chances are, most of you couldn't name more



Ivie and Sabrina in the 'Drum Dungeon'. They're part of the SHS drumline. Photo courtesy of Katie McDonnel.

than one female drummer. Yeah, I know, Meg White. She's a girl and a drummer. But give me another one. Chances are you probably can't.

Did you know that, according to Drum Magazine, 98.5% of all drummers in the music industry are male? That leaves just 1.5% of drummingness to the girls, which is probably why you can't think of very many girls rocking out on a set.

And today, there is a growing concern in the secret league of female drummers. The 1.5% is slowly on the decline. Girls just aren't pursuing percussion instruments as much as they used to. This is no good, because there weren't very many lasses pursuing drums in the first place. But why is this happening? How can we insure the future of this secret league?

Drum instructor Rick Walker, believes the number is dwindling because females believe that drumming involves a lot of strength that they don't biologically have. Granted, drumming does involve some strength, but for the most

part, drumming involves coordination and flexibility.

Rick also said that, on a bigger scale, sexism in the music industry may play a role. Girls just aren't seen as drummers. In the industry today, I could only name a couple bands with a female drummer. However, I couldn't tell you their names because they're not as publicized as their male counterparts. That's quite sad because two of these bands, The Summer Set and Neon Trees, are fairly popular. Not only are female drummers discouraged from pursuing a career with drum sticks, if they make it, they're not going to get very much publicity.

Hannah Hendricks, a former Speedway Junior High School percussionist and drummer, said that she believes there aren't as many female drummers today because, "It's more of a man thing, people assume. There are a couple of girls who have the courage to try it but for the most part, girls feel like they're not capable." Without even real-

izing it, Hendricks only affirmed what Mr. Walker said. Girls just don't feel like they can do it. It's a man's world, the world of drumming.

In order to make sure the league survives, there needs to be a push to introduce girls to the world of percussion. And girls with a passion for drumming need to not be afraid of what people will say. The only way the stereotype is going to change is to prove it wrong. Girls can do anything boys can do, and we can do it better.



MEG OCHS
ENTERTAINMENT

Google CEO offers students advice

An hour without communication devices is beneficial



We love chocolate, cookies, and brownies. International industries exist to allow us to indulge in these unhealthy treats. Businesses thrive on our weaknesses. Doctors constantly preach the hazards of eating such foods.

We know we're being taken advantage of, we know it's not nutritious, and we know ultimately eating these foods isn't best for us. Yet we do it anyway.

The same idea applies to all our electronic communication devices. We love them and feel too connected to let go for even an hour. However, Google CEO Eric Schmidt spoke at Boston University's 2012 commencement and urged students in attendance to designate one of their waking hours to being completely free of any communication device.

I think this is a legitimate suggestion. The interconnectedness can be overwhelming and can flood our brains with too much useless information. Just like our arteries, if the brain gets too clogged, it becomes less functional. Allowing the brain to rest by divorcing cell phones, internet, and social media sites can be beneficial to one's physical, mental, and emotional health.

A lack of connection to the nonsense of the outside world fosters clarity of thought. This clarity encourages faster decision-making and more healthy emotional responses. Being at peace with yourself can reduce stress and improve your overall outlook on life. Just as surrounding yourself with positive people makes a more positive person, surrounding yourself with positive, original thoughts can induce a more positive attitude.

Granted, eliminating such an influential aspect of life would take some getting used to, but the long term effects outweigh the short term pains. While taking your mental break, you could miss an episode from a favorite television show or a dramatic tweet. However, no matter how enjoyable that episode or cookie was, you will forget about it.

I decided to take Mr. Schmidt's encouragement and spent an hour alone in my room with my phone and computer off. Believe me, motivating myself to do this was difficult. I grabbed a notebook because I know they're great listeners and began uncluttering my mind. I started making bulleted lists:

annoyances, general pros and cons, and my major stress factors. The bullets converted into continuous sentences as the lists transformed into a written stream of consciousness.



BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

Google CEO Eric Schmidt offers words of advice in his commencement address to the 2012 graduates of Boston University. Photo courtesy of BostonInno.com

As I slowly organized my mind, I could feel my mental calmness spread; I felt more relaxed, and my mind drifted. I found myself picturing life a year from now. It included a little dorm room that felt like home, daily walks down Commonwealth Avenue (one of the main roads on the Boston University campus), occasional trips to Newbury Street (a commercial and shopping center in downtown Boston), and a college freshman very content with her life.

I made the most of this hour. It made me remember that the only opinion of you that should matter is your own. As I thought about why society feels it's so essential to always be online, I realized we are a curious and lonely people. We communicate to connect with others. The quasi-companionship offered to us by social media, books, movies, and video games is appealing.

However, in a world that constantly pressures everyone to be socially acceptable, it's necessary to discount the opinions of those who don't matter and take time to be who we really are: happily and healthily curious.

Disclaimer: If you can't tell, Boston University is my number one college choice, thus explaining my Bostonian references.

ENTERTAINMENT

The Sprawling world that is Les Mis'

Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise



JOHN MINNIEAR
FRENCH ASSAILANT

The world of *Les Misérables* is quite a landscape of wrenching and gratuitous statements. For me to go in depth would be a waste of time.

If you don't, then I insist you read the classic Victor Hugo novel which describes in great detail the very aspect of struggle and redemption.

The plot is, within the grand scope of things, an incredibly detailed and authentic piece of literature adapted various times by Hollywood. Surprisingly, my favorite adaption of the story is the 1995 version which updates the setting from 1832 Paris to 1940's France during World War II.

People are extremely excited to see what will become of this uncertain musical taking away the stage underneath them to the very auteur setting that is the film industry. What may come is a mystery that you will have to answer on your own: Will this succeed with gusto and triumph? Or, will it deteriorate into something more unsettling and despicable?

As always the choice is up to you, and when the time comes, interpret the necessary degrees of separation. This is a masterpiece in all areas and

respected for the pleasure for your private viewing. The trailers have already swept me away with their realistic aspects of France and the sheer audacity of the actor's immense amount of singing talent (especially Anne Hathaway with her grim appearance and grisly views).

In conclusion, the society of Speedway is excited to their very core, but we should leave some room for pity just in case it doesn't succeed into cult status. This is brief but I know from my vast experience of film critiquing that it should achieve the attention it so deservedly craves. And with this as always, enjoy this grand and one in a lifetime chance of exploring more of the world of *Les Misérables*, and good night and good luck.

Les Misérables is an upcoming British musical drama film which tells the story of Jean Valjean, a former prisoner who becomes mayor of a town in France. Valjean agrees to take care of Cosette, the illegitimate daughter of Fantine, and must avoid being captured again by Javert, a police inspector. The film is based on the musical of the same name which is in turn based on the 1862 French novel by Victor Hugo.



The majesty that is freedom. A haunting photo of the new film. Photo courtesy of IMDB.com

.... and I feel fine It's the end of the world and the Sun is shining

According to many historians, scientists, and others, December 21st is the end of the world. We've all heard it. I'm sure we've all had at least some bit of fear towards. It is Armageddon: the time to end times, the day that ends days. Whatever you want to call it, many people believe it has come. Just what people believe will happen, well that varies with the individual.

A popular, plausible theory is that somehow the sun will act as it did at the end of the ice age. This drastic global warming event had a massive impact on

the Earth the first time it occurred. The ground moved as Goliath-sized glaciers melted and shifted, creating the Earth that we are familiar with.

Why did it occur? According to most scientific theories, the sun was more active and intense than it ever had been. It had reached the top of a cycle which it goes through of ups and downs in intensity and activity. Why do people think it will happen on December 21st? At the end of the ice age when the event happened the first time, the planets of our solar system were aligned.

This could have a multitude of effects on the sun, causing it to be more active, but the important thing is that it is expected to happen a second time. On December 21st, 2012. Would this be the end of the world? It would not necessarily, although possible, be the end of the world and human race. It could cause something like a solar flare which would destroy all operating power plants. This would, however, be disastrous to many as without power

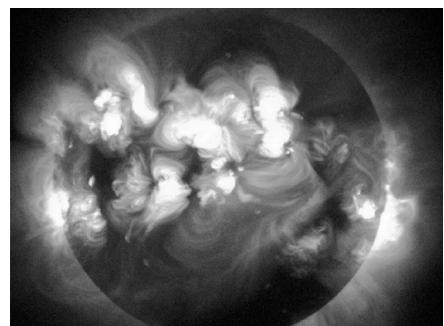
plants, we would be without power and electricity. It would most likely take somewhere around three years to rebuild a single power plant.

Not only is there going to be funky planetary arrangement, but scientists also expect a large solar flare within the next 5 years at the very most. It isn't something preventable. However, the planetary alignment could completely tear up the planet and be a real scenario of the apocalypse.

Another plausible, yet less impending, scenario would be an asteroid hitting our planet. Any bit of stray rock debris floating around space could easily get caught in Earth's gravitational pull, essentially rocketing it straight to Earth. Say a rock just a mere kilometer long hit Los Angeles. It would obliterate the whole city, creating a crater at least a mile in width. After the initial impact, "shrapnel" from the asteroid would shoot back up into the atmosphere, eventually coming back down to Earth in a rain of fiery debris.

A larger asteroid, like the one that killed the dinosaurs, could essentially wipe out the entire surface of the Earth. Do people think it will happen on December 21st? No, not necessarily. If there was in fact an asteroid heading towards Earth, we would know about it days before it reached our atmosphere, giving us time to divert the situation.

So, in summary, instead of building bomb shelters and stocking up on canned foods, we should all just sit back and most likely watch absolutely nothing happen on this anticipated day. If the world's going to end, we won't be able to stop it.



A Devastating Solar Flare



SAM SCOTT
PLUGGED IN COLUMNIST



SPORTS

Local teams topping the nation in performance

Fighting Irish football and Hoosiers hoopers ranked first



IU junior Victor Oladipo moves the ball up the court for the fast-paced Hoosier squad. Photo courtesy of IU athletics.

IU Basketball and Notre Dame Football; that is the talk of the nation right now as Indiana is home to both number 1 ranked schools in the nation. After the dramatic win over USC that carried the Fighting Irish to the BCS Championship game, Notre Dame fans from across the nation are showing their true colors.

There's a reason why IU was ranked number one. Prior to last week's overtime loss to Butler, the Hoosiers were undefeated, leading the nation scoring 89 points per game. IU is a rather young team with just three seniors. Leading the team is young sophomore Cody Zeller with a whopping average of 15.4 points per game. Indianapolis' own Yogi Ferrell, is making a dramatic impact on the Hoosiers' reign over the nation. After the first two games, junior Victor Oladipo scored no less than 12 points in every game, totaling 102 points in just 7 games.

In South Bend, the Fighting Irish are just now settling in after their remarkable win over USC. That win got them a ticket to play at Sun Life Stadium in Florida in January for the national championship against Alabama. Sophomore quarterback Everett Golson has some of the most impressive stats this year as the Irish ran over the nation during their undefeated season. He completed 166 passes for 2,135 yards and only threw five interceptions the whole season. Now if that doesn't sound like a national champion quarterback, then I don't know what does.

Luck of the Irish or Roll Tide?

Home state football powerhouse to face defending national champs

What the college football world expected for about two weeks now has finally come true. With a win over Southern Cal, undefeated and top ranked Notre Dame punched their ticket to play in Miami, Florida at Sun Life Stadium against an unknown opponent. Who would that opponent be? Well only time would tell.

At the beginning of the season, if you asked any college football analyst, they would have told you Southern Cal was a sure pick to take home the trophy by the end of the year. Wrong. After losing to Stanford in only the third game of the season, all the attention went to the three teams that usually receive all the hype: Alabama, LSU, and Oregon. Notre Dame sat around the seventh spot in the national rankings.

While all this was occurring, there was a school climbing the rankings week by week, Kansas State joined the BCS title conversation. The depth of the SEC caused LSU, Florida, and South Carolina to be casualties. Then came the drama of week ten.

Texas A&M pulled off a 29-24 upset at home against #1 Alabama, causing the defending national champions to fall to the fourth spot. This placed Kansas State in the number one spot, Oregon second, and Notre Dame third.

With what may be the luck of the Irish on their side, both Oregon and Kansas State were upset the following week, placing the Irish at number one and moving Alabama back into national championship contention. The Oregon Ducks had been defeated 17-14 in overtime by a very good Stanford team who had beaten a very good Southern Cal team earlier in the season. And Kansas State was manhandled 52-24 by the Baylor Bears.

This destroyed what could have been the national championship matchup everyone predicted between Oregon and Kansas

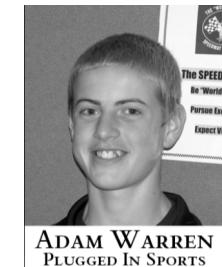


JUSTIN BRENT
SPORTS COLUMNIST

State, but thanks to the bowl selection committee, you'll still get to witness the match up. During the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl, #4 Oregon will face off against #5 Kansas State, giving us the game we were so sure we had on a bigger stage. But speaking of that bigger stage, teams were continuing to rise in the rankings, especially Georgia.

The next set of rankings came out with Notre Dame in first, Alabama in second, Georgia at third and Florida in fourth. At this point Notre Dame had played its last game having defeated Southern Cal and wouldn't play again until their national championship opponent was announced. Thanks to the conference championship games, the decision on who the

opponent would be was determined when #2 Alabama and #3 Georgia faced off. And because of a last second red zone stop for the win, the



ADAM WARREN
PLUGGED IN SPORTS

Fair or foul

NCAA punishments don't pass smell test

continued from page 2

Realistically speaking, the best way to have dealt with the situation was for the NCAA to demand that Penn State cleaned house. While the foundations of the football program were shaken by the ousting of the coaches, this isn't enough. They should have twisted their arm until the athletic director and administrators were fired. Rather the wrong people are being punished; the penalty means that some of these players will never win a bowl game. The alumni aren't given an alma mater to celebrate with praise. The students have nothing to be proud of in their college. Football means a lot at Penn State; but taking away privileges won't fix any problems.

In 2006, coach Kelvin Sampson earned the great accolade of recruiting Eric Gordon. During the season, it was found that Sampson was guilty of making a three way phone call with Gordon, which is a recruiting violation. The NCAA fired an assistant coach, which is truly unfair. They also took away a scholarship; and by doing so took a chance of a better life away from a poor athlete.

In 2008 a \$750,000 buyout was given to Sampson to resign. This was all yet another example of misdirected punishment by the NCAA. The program was scarred, a coach was out of a job, and a shred of hope was taken away; but the offender got \$750,000.

Hopefully, justice will soon be brought to the NCAA. May students no longer be punished for the actions of their coaches; and the greatest and most elite be



Alabama running back Eddie Lacy runs through Georgia defenders Sanders Cummings (19), Shawn Williams (36) and Javis Jones (29) in the SEC championship game at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, Georgia, on Saturday, December 1, 2012. Alabama won, 32-28. (Curtis Compton/Atlanta Journal-Constitution/MCT)

world was given its national championship matchup: Notre Dame vs. Alabama.

This game should be one for the ages simply because two teams with so much tradition will be facing off. Alabama will be seeking its third national championship and Notre Dame has won a total of eleven national championships, but will be looking to get their first since 1988.

In the all time matchup between these two teams, Alabama is 1-5, only winning the matchup in 1986. Notre Dame won the two bowl games that matter as well in 1973 (Sugar Bowl), and 1975 (Orange Bowl). With these facts fans can argue that even though Notre Dame has won the series of matchups, Alabama is still the defending national champions.

Considering two powerhouses will be once again going at it on the biggest stage, getting a ticket to attend will be extremely expensive, with the cheapest ticket being \$1,400 a person. What's the highest price? \$17,050 a person, and that's without even comparing the suite seats. Parking will be \$150 a spot and hotels are only granting a four day stay. If you're planning on going to Florida for the game January 7th, let's just say you are in for an expensive weekend.