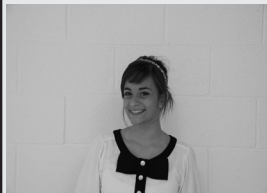


Frankly Speaking

Students must become informed to make change



FRANCESCA PELUSI
Writer

A significant history making presidential election is just a few weeks away. If we were of the legal voting age, would we be capable of making an intelligent and informed choice? Being politically aware is not just for those 18 years of age, it takes years to build opinions and gather the facts.

The choices at hand are choices that will impact our future as well as future generations. There is no doubt that we live in a much different world than our parents. We are the post 9/11 teens, global issues literally hit home and have changed our lives forever. We have new arising issues that give us a chance to make new choices. To name a few; many cannot afford medical insurance, national security is at risk, gas prices have hit a record high, global warming and unemployment rates have skyrocketed.

Although the majority of students at BHS are not yet old enough to vote, we should begin taking initiative and educating ourselves on the issues of today and what is to come. In his acceptance speech, Barack Obama simply said, "I get it." Regarding today's issues and how they are affecting us. The point is; do we get it? Do we understand our responsibility in this country? Our activism and choices may be as simple as "getting it".

It is time for us to form our own opinions, learn the facts, and even question long held family traditions of voting for a certain party. As students of a new and ever-changing generation, we have the opportunity to challenge ourselves and others to view issues of today from different perspectives. Let us be certain that when it comes time for us to vote, we will make compassionate and informed choices that will better our lives and the lives of generations to come.

Many students may not know ways to become educated, other than asking their parents what they think. Although, this can change. Websites, un-biased news channels, and hands-on organizations do exist, and for the sole purpose of educating teenagers on voting. Of course, it would be very easy for teenagers to sit back and not question ideas and simply rely on our parents to tell us who to vote for. But, we can do better than that.

Instead of allowing others to make a decision that affects our future, we can make the decision for ourselves. Our generation's time is now. It is today's teenagers that have the opportunity to change the future, all it takes is to make a movement.

To start getting educated and involved visit the website Dosomething.org, which is directed towards involving and informing teenagers on the politics and events of today.

BHS receives misinformed reputation



LAUREN LAPINSKI
Editor-in-Chief

Every time I tell someone that I attended Bloomington High School, the first question they ask is always the same. "Is it really as bad as people say it is?"

A majority of the people who do not attend BHS have all these preconceived notions that are school is full of delinquency, rampant drug use, and violence at every turn. And who could blame them?

The Pantagraph is constantly pointing out all of our faults even when we do something right. In the Sept. 6 issue of The Pantagraph there was an article about how BHS beat Normal Community at the Inter-city game. But, instead of just covering the actual game and the events that took place they had to point out that we were playing without four starters due to suspensions which they have mentioned numerous times before: in a previous article about the BHS vs. Danville game and in a story all of its own. While, yes, it is true that the football team was playing without four of its players, is it really something that needs to be brought up in every article written about the team? The players that night deserved to have the whole article devoted to how they played not about the punishment of few of their teammates.

And this is not the first time that this has happened. Who can forget how much coverage the food fights received two years ago? It must have been a pretty boring day when a local publication had nothing better to use as front page news than some ridiculous food fight that was blown way out of proportion.

Most of the time when BHS makes the news it is either because we were involved in some petty "scan-

dal" or we are receiving back handed compliments. It is no wonder why so many people have these misconceptions about BHS. So let me set the record straight and tell people what BHS is really like, as told by someone who actually goes there.

First of all, BHS is not just some "inner city" school.

It is really sad that people are ignorant enough to confuse diversity with delinquency.

There are many things, here, at BHS that students could and should be proud of.

Because if we are just some inner city school then why do we offer more advanced placement courses than any other school in our area? Or why do we have one of the best special education programs in our area?

And why is it that our "inner city" scholastic teams are continually competing at state, and the "inner city" chess club went to state last year.

And as for our athletics: we have won the Big 12 Championship eight out of the past 13 years. We won three alone last year: Justin Wolfe in swimming, Ashley Verplank and Tyler Sipes in track. Not to mention that last year 10 seniors received athletic scholarships.

And if BHS is such an inner city school why is the school board constantly making upgrades to the building. In the past three years, alone, BHS has received new hallways, new student center and new classrooms.

While it is true that events, that are nothing to be proud of, do happen at BHS, they also happen at other schools. And we currently have an administration that is taking the school a step in the right direction by constantly coming up with new programs that rewards and encourages good behavior.

As for those people outside of our school who still continue to believe the negative stigma attached to BHS, I invite you to come down to our school one day and, please, point out to me one of these so called delinquency, because in my past three years here I have yet to see one.



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