

## Frankly Speaking

*GLBT History Month honors individuals, celebrates progress*



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*Writer*

October is Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) History Month. It is modeled after Black and Women History Months. GLBT History Month was created to honor gay icons and also honor progress of gay civil rights. For the 31 days of October, a different icon is honored each day. The decision to make October a GLBT History Month came about in the 1990s, after being discussed by students and teachers. October also includes National Coming Out Day, which is the 11.

Some of the people chosen include Rachel Maddow from CNBC, John Cage, John Amaechi, and Tammy Baldwin. These people were chosen not simply because they are gay, but because they have influenced the gay community in a positive way through their work and success.

John Cage was a 20th century composer who greatly influenced music. He once said, "I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones." In order to make permanent positive changes, we must be frightened of the old ideas.

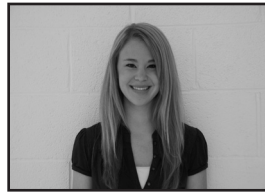
John Amaechi once said, "I am gay, black British... and I am now asserting my activism." He was the first NBA basketball player to publicly speak about being gay. He struggled with being a closeted athlete. Through his public speaking, Amaechi is serving as an example for young men who struggle to come out.

Tammy Baldwin was the first "out" woman to be elected to the House of Representatives and the first openly gay woman to be elected to Congress.

The accomplishments of these people speak for themselves. Although these icons are gay, they aren't recognized for just that.

Gay people of influence are recognized because people of the gay community are still struggling for civil rights. Fighting for equality is not a past time, and civil rights should not be selective. Gay or straight, black or white, brown eyes, blue eyes, tall or thin- it's all the same. The point is, it shouldn't matter whether someone is gay, straight or bisexual. GLBT History Month is the time to honor individuals and celebrate progress. These icons give the gay community and their allies hope.

## Seniors feel pressure of future plans



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Senior year is the time when students feel the pressure to decide their future. Some may get a job right out of high school and may stay in that job the rest of their lives, some may decide to join the military and risk their lives, and some may decide to go to college and major in a subject that may determine their career.

The pressure students feel about making these decisions can be overwhelming and almost too much for a 17 or 18 year old to handle. How are we going to know what we will be like in the future? How can we tell at this young age what we want for our future?

Some students know the answer to that question and some don't. Students who do

know seem confident and ready to take on whatever life throws at them. Students who do not know, like me, may be confused and stressed about the magnitude of the decision they have to make by the end of their senior year.

It is hard to see the students who are so confident and who have chosen the school or the path they know is going to be right when you have no idea what is right for you. It is stressful to think that your decision needs to be made so soon.

Am I applying to the right colleges? What else is out there? Is this the job for me? Should I go into the military? These are all questions that I am sure many of you are asking yourselves. You are not alone in making your decisions, because every senior is making some sort of decision for after high school. Its just that some students have already made a decision. All we can do is choose the path that we think is the best for us right now.

## Our Views:

### Halloween can be a time for giving

Like most holidays, Halloween has been transformed from one meaning to another. In our society, Halloween is a selfish holiday, recognized by orange and black, monsters, jack-o-lanterns, candy, and parties.

Teenagers rely on Halloween for freedom, while younger children expect candy and rewards for walking around in costumes. While trick-or-treating is an enjoyable experience for so many, Halloween presents many opportunities for students to make a positive impact and help others.

In hopes of finding new, safe ways to spend the holiday, many students participate in pumpkin decorating contests and pack baskets of food for the homeless, while teens at Eastview Church of Christ create a maze for their younger members.

Each year, families go out and spend money on costumes, candy, and decorations, while many people can't afford to pay for clothes or meals. Instead of going door to door for candy and treats, students should ask for donations, canned foods, or other items which can help the less fortunate.

As high schoolers, we have the skills and opportunities to change the future, and we can start with one day: Halloween.

With so many things going on during Halloween, many parents are concerned with the safety of their children and what will happen. It is up to us to find safe, helpful ways to celebrate and create new traditions.