

Knowledge is Power— But Not to Everyone

By: Jenna Stafford
Opinion's Co-Editor

Along the side of a wide dirt road in Pakistan, a young girl starts her walk to school.

It is not complete without constant over-the-shoulder looks and a subconscious voice warning her that around every corner and in every shadow she may be faced with an attacker.

The hair on the back of her neck stands when she hears a twig snap. She thinks of the stories of acid thrown in girls' faces. She imagines all the girls who have been shot.

She walks a bit faster.
Her weariness does not fade when she reaches the school.

She is fully aware that at any moment, the door might be broken down. While the front of her brain may be focusing on the math problems under her pencil, the reality that she and her classmates might face a tragic ending sits in the back of her mind, a permanent weight of a crushing reality.

The fear does not end on the walk home. She is still hyper-aware to every motion in the corner of her eyes and every sound that seems slightly out of place.

All this, for what?
Something as simple as attempting to go to school.

7,000 miles away, an alarm clock buzzes. A teenage girl rolls out of bed, sighs, brushes her teeth, and tweets about how she'd do anything to not have to go to school ever again.

An astounding difference in the perspectives of youth on education.

As an American girl myself, I can admit to my fair share of complaints about going to school. However, when I look at the bigger picture, I would not have it any other way.

Let's put this into perspective.
According to dayofthegirl.org:

- Worldwide, girls constitute over half the children out of school
- Only 30% of girls are enrolled in secondary school

In many countries, less than one-third of the students are women

The average sub-Saharan African girl from a low-income, rural household gets less than two years of schooling and never learns to read and write, to add and subtract, as opposed to the average sub-Saharan African boy who fully completes primary education

Isn't it amazing how most of those who are given an education don't want it?

One particularly disheartening image has been floating around social media lately, reflecting Western teens' views on school. It is a screen-

shot of a Google search with the phrase "School makes me..." and shows Google's suggestions, based on phrases most searched, completing the sentence with words like "depressed", "suicidal", and "anxious".

This comes as drastic difference in views compared to those girls who would give anything just to learn how to read and write.

Malala Yousafzai is an example of these girls who won't stop fighting for their right to education. Malala is a teen girl who was shot in the head by the Taliban at 15-years-old for going to school. Malala, after making a full recovery, now lives in England with her family and is an advocate for girl's right to education.

In 2014, Malala was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her unwavering stance in the face of this violence. In the past year, she has done various speeches and continues to relentlessly campaign for girls in her home region.

In an interview for BBC News, Malala said, "The teenager here in the UK wouldn't speak for education because they go to school daily. It's just a part of their life. It's nothing special."

When asked about a difference in attitudes toward education between her home of Swat versus that of her current residence in the UK, Malala was quick to address the importance of this dilemma.

She said, "In Pakistan, if a girl gets the opportunity, the chance, to go to school, it's like a good news for her." She continued, "But here in the UK, it's not taken as serious."

She added, "Because we know that education is important and we know that the terrorists were afraid of the power of education, and that's why they've stopped us from going to school... We have seen this and I don't want the students of the UK to see this, and then realize it. I want to tell them that it's very precious and it's very prestigious. Go to school."

Malala hits the nail on the head with this answer.

Too often, people don't realize what they have until it's too late. A lot of teenagers in first-world countries don't even consider the fact that getting an education is not a given in all places of the world.

Yes, school, at times, has had me stressed-out, irritated, pressured, angry, sleep-deprived, anxious and overall annoyed.

I'm sure the rest of my peers have felt the same way.

However, I would take these feelings 1,000 times over an inability to even get an education.

If more people understand that education is a gift, they will start to treat it as so.

Learning is important. Education is precious. And learning to treat education as a gift—that's a new kind of knowledge in itself.

This screenshot, showing a Google search that suggests the most frequent terms following the phrase "School makes me...", is a somber reality reflecting the majority of first-world teens' opinions on their schools. This is a stark contrast to Malala's views, who places education as something most valuable.

Brockett

Continued from page 3

Mentions were his two writings

"Undertow" which was about the vivid emotions a musician experiences when playing an instrument they love.

And "Let Them Eat Cake!" which was a critical essay about Trans fats.

"I was just as excited about getting Honorable Mentions as I was when I got the Silver Keys, because I didn't think that any of my articles would place."

Every writer has a beginning, of where they were, when they were first inspired to pick up a

pencil. To when they wanted to utilize their imagination. And why they wanted to share it. But what gave them the idea to do those things in the first place? Who or what was their Muse?

Beau gave the story of his muse and how this manifestation led to his later Scholastics achievements.

As a child, creating stories was something Beau had always taken interest in. Often his mind would wonder, taking him to a solace place. A cornucopia of fantasy and Science fiction based ideas would send him into a temporary comatose.

"I really loved star wars at the time. And I always imagined Jedi themed situations and because of that I started to write about space and fantasy."

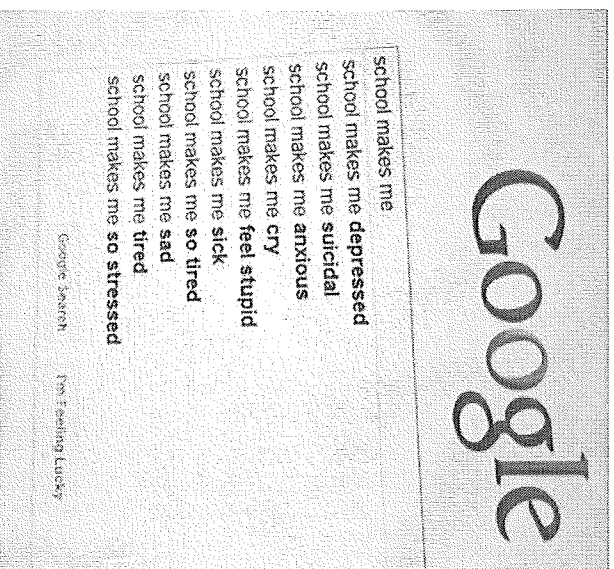
Beau's skill of free imagination hinted at his later passion; but he was unaware of what that passion was. Until, his second year in middle school.

It was in 6th grade that Beau was introduced to his grand passion: Writing. His 6th grade teacher Mr. Jarsma would always have the class write stories for an assignment. These assignments are what showed Beau that he can put his stories into words, and share it with the world.

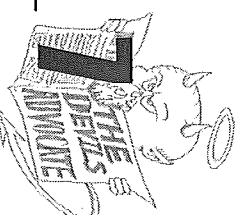
"Mr. Jarsma was a great teacher. He introduced me to so many of my passions. Writing is definitely one of them. If it wasn't for him, I might have not enjoyed writing as much as I do now."

"To place that utensil in my hand again... to clasp it, and let my thoughts flow through it like the pen's black ink running onto the paper... feels free."

- Beau Brockett



In Our Opinion



Question of the Week

What's your favorite movie?

~*~

Staff Editorial

Senior

"The Dark Knight Rises" — Melissa Leduc



Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Remember those words, on posters taped to the elementary halls and stapled to bulletin boards in the halls? Or from our mothers and fathers?

It was the holiest of commandments, a gospel sung by our teachers and parents. But through teenage angst, forgetfulness or worry of seeming soft, many of us have shied away from the Golden Rule.

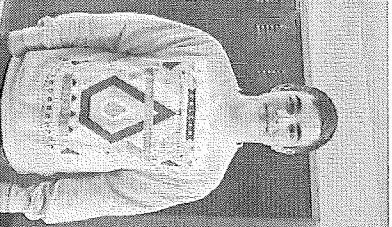
But it is golden for a reason. It brings happiness to others and ourselves. It brings understanding. It is priceless. Some call it compassion. Others, altruism. Is a name needed? Should it not be our nature?

may be too loud for it to seem that way. But everyone's lips can quiver with embarrassment or anger. A little kindness goes a long way. Hold open doors. Move for others. Put down phones to talk. Give compliments. Stand up for those who cower. Reassure. Sympathize. Empathize. Be humble, be polite.

Consider the circumstances. Look before leaping. Respect opinions and lifestyles. Keep in mind everyone is different, amazing and beautiful. Everyone makes mistakes. Be assertive, never aggressive. Patience is a virtue. And if nothing else, listen, always listen.

Junior

"22 Jump Street" — Matt Howard

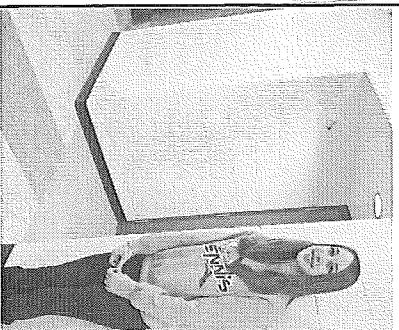


“Through teenage angst, forgetfulness or worry of seeming soft, many of us have shied away from the Golden Rule.”

And remember: Words stain like ink on paper and actions like bruises on skin. You can get angry, but give all your will not to fire that feeling at the target or any prying ears. And if you do, sympathize, apologize and move on.

Sophomore

"The Maze Runner" — Olivia Iskra



Remember: Be anyone's friend. Be a shoulder to cry on. Be sensitive, responsive. Accept help and give help even if not asked. Always encourage and always give hope. Be cheery even when gloomy — it will help. Plant a seed of kindness anywhere and watch it blossom in yourself and others into a forest. Spread the pollen. And always remember the Golden Rule. Treat others the way you would like to be treated.

Freshman

"Dukes of Hazard" — Brandan Christiansen



Remember that everyone has feelings and insecurities; often, they are the same as our own. Some will not show them. Some mouths

Blue Devil's Advocate

Adviser: Mr. Murphy
News Editor: Alexa Dentai
 Hailey Dziegelewski
 Nick Thomas
Editorial Editor: Cecily McPherson
 Jenna Stafford
Sports Editors: Trevor Barrett
 Brendan Hart
Features Editors: Beau Brockett
 Paige Koehn
Advertising Manager: Joe Bergen
Coordinating Editor: Jaquelyn Loria
 Connor Hill

Staff Writers: Haleigh Beedon
 Kate Brown
 Lauren Duché
 Hayley Fortuna
 Emma Gillen
 Brendon Jacques
 Max Leesch
 Kaitlyn Milliken
 Brandon Stein
 Christina Thomas
 Brandon VanGorp

Mission Statement

Richmond High School's student newspaper, The Blue Devil's Advocate, strives to serve the student body and provide a public forum to make their ideas heard to the school and community. Our goal is to provide both accurate and balanced stories in order to heighten understanding, entertain, and inform.

Letters

We invite readers to share their thoughts with us by writing to the Editor. See the drop off box in the library or you may email us at: mmurphy@richmond.k12.mi.us. Include your name, address, and grade level.