

# BLOCKBUSTER

April 1, 2016

Volume 46/Issue 7 Burroughs High School, Ridgecrest, CA 93555

## Modernization construction effort gets shaken up a bit

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

The fencing is up and the machinery has arrived on campus, but it looks like the modernization effort has hit an unexpected snag.

Working on M-Hall, the modernization contractors have discovered structural issues that may impact the scope and sequence of the project. The problems seem to have been caused decades ago by a very rare but highly destructive Mojave spotted beetle infestation.

While the issues are relatively minor and should be able to be fixed, officials fear that they will be present throughout all of the older buildings on campus.

If so, the situation will be costly in terms of time and money.

Perhaps most worrisome, the grant money previously allocated to the project will have to be used to correct these issues rather than support the much-needed updates and renovations that were originally

planned. The library's lime-green carpet, for example, will be here to stay.

Alerted to the news, Freshman Julie Marsh voiced her frustration at the setback.

"Now we have to wait even longer for the renovations to be implemented," she complained. "I really want to graduate from a new and improved Burroughs!"

Despite such sentiments, school district officials refuse to ignore the issue.

According to Assistant Superintendent of Construction Doug A. Ditch, the structural issues have to be fixed.

"Given the likelihood that the majority of the buildings at Burroughs have these same issues, the cost will extend beyond the budget available," Ditch warned.

Modernization contractor Ben Wirken is not pleased with the situation, but he ensures that the

problems will be fixed.

"Of course it is disappointing that something like this has happened," said Wirken. "However, it is more important to fix these issues to ensure the safety of the staff and students using the buildings here on campus."

Members of the school board are working to receive more money from the state to pay for these structural issues; however, this could be difficult. As one might expect, the school district is asking for the community's support through a crowd-funding effort on gofundme.com.

It is projected that these structural fixes will continue to be pursued throughout the 2016-2017 school year. To help raise money for the renovation portion of the project, visit [www.gofundme.com/burroughsmodernization](http://www.gofundme.com/burroughsmodernization) to place a

donation and further the progress on our campus modernization.

Any further suggestions regard-

ing this financial issue may be brought to any of the upcoming school board meetings.



Assistant Principal Carrie Cope intently discusses the modernization plans with patient Principal Bryan Auld.  
photo by Julia Ernst

## Burroughs plans for closed-campus policy

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

Say goodbye to your open-campus privileges. Due to the addition of the new Murray Middle School campus near Burroughs, the school board has decided to enact a closed campus policy onto Burroughs, in order to ensure that students of the new school are not distracted or threatened by Burroughs students during lunch or free periods.

While safety considerations may have forced the closure, high school students are reacting as one might expect.

"I can't believe that this is happening!" said Sophomore Rachel Michelson. "Burroughs has been an open campus since I have been here, and it is one thing that has made it great. This is unfair and the reasoning is absurd!"

In order to address the concerns of people like Michelson, Director of Campus Policies Bryan Morrison explained the facts behind the decision.

"We are doing this so that the students at Murray Middle School

will not be distracted during class time by Burroughs students," said Michelson. "We can't enforce a policy that disallows Burroughs students on the new campus during school hours; therefore, our only alternative is to enact a closed campus policy."

Michelson dismissed the board's concerns.

"Why would a Burroughs student even want to go over to the Murray campus?" demanded Michelson. "There is no incentive! There is nothing that a Burroughs student would want to do during their free time at Murray."

So what does this mean for free periods? Burroughs Counselor Shari Rosenberg reported, "Students will not be allowed to take free periods during the school day, and consequently will have to fill all six periods throughout the day."

The school board and Burroughs High School officials said they appreciate the cooperation of students, parents, and staff throughout this process.

## AP exams lose status with UC/CSU system

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

Perspective plays a large role in interpreting whether this latest update is good or bad news.

Despite its long-standing status, the fact is, AP scores are no longer a priority for public California colleges and universities, according to UC and CSU officials.

Due to the stress felt by students taking AP courses and the rise in SBAC testing, public California colleges and universities have been directed to no longer consider the number of AP courses completed during an applicant's high school career; instead, they are being told to redirect their focus towards success in SBAC testing. This is part of a new state legislation to increase focus towards the SBAC testing, and hopefully increase test scores among high school students.

Junior Subber Dhillon reflected on the recent news,

ferently. AP is stressful on many students, and parents of these students see the toll that AP takes on students' lives.

Parent of Dhillon, Neenu Dhillon said, "I think this is good for the students. They no longer have to stress out about AP courses playing such a significant role in their college careers, and now students who truly want to challenge themselves will take them, rather than a lot of students who just feel it is a necessity to get into college."

Counselor Shari Rosenberg offered her perspective on the devaluing of AP.

"Unfortunately, this limits the academically outstanding students in their college admission, but only, at this point, at public schools in California," said Rosenberg. "For students planning to go out of state, or to a private university, AP will still be largely considered."

AP is a controversial topic. Is it worth the stress, or not?

To the state of California, that question no longer matters, as SBAC testing takes center stage in all public California college and university admissions.

However, some adults feel dif-

## Intelligent trash cans open new doors for SSUSD campuses

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

As most people know, this year's robotics team has been extremely successful and has even made it through to the competition as far as the national level; however, beginning next year, the robotics team is redirecting its focus towards a more practical, campus-impacting project: a smart trash can.

A major problem for Burroughs students seems to be determining whether a waste item is trash or if it can be recycled. Thankfully, the bright minds behind the robotics team has found a way to dispose of the dilemma.

When students accidentally or lazily deposit items into the wrong receptacle, the system will alert them and give them an opportunity to retrieve their mistake. Students who fail to abide by the procedure will have their photo taken and be

subject to the electronic issuing of demerits. Demerits issued via the iCan may only be worked off by completing a campus cleanup.

Robotics team advisor Damien Jacotin is excited to put his team to the test.

"This will allow us keep busy, include innovation on campus, and support the good cause of recycling, all at the same time," reflected Jacotin.

Jacotin anticipates other applications for this device as well. Sierra Sands' legal counsel is working with the robotics team to determine potential licensing deals along with declaring a patent on the product and its respective technologies.

"We are excited that a business opportunity like this has come along," said Atticus Finch, SSUSD's top legal advisor. "This will allow SSUSD and the Burroughs robotics team to get their name out there."

While iCan production and implementation may eventually expand far beyond the campus fence-line, for now SSUSD is focusing on the domestic implications.

SSUSD Director of Campus Infrastructure Ira Thompson would like the smart trash can to be used in all Sierra Sands schools before it is sent out of the district.

"While I want the rest of the world to be able to experience this technological innovation, it deserves to see the homes of all of our local schools first."



Senior Kevin Seaman meticulously measures the dimensions of a campus trash can as he and the robotics crew begin their work on bettering the district campuses--one can at a time.  
photo by Tara Blackwell

## Grade requirements take a drastic shift

BY MAELEA GACETA

A big change may be on its way to all school districts in California.

Assembly Bill 4012016, drafted by Assemblywoman April Fuller (R-Mojave), states that students within grades eight through twelve must pass any and all classes with an A or B to earn the credits that are used toward promotion and/or graduation.

Proponents of the bill claim that it will create a balanced amount of stress and motivation for all students in California school districts.

"If this bill passes, all districts

will have to evolve with this change and cannot really do much about it," said Board President Owella Wattever. "If it is a state requirement, we will comply."

School officials and counselors have been meeting to strategize an action plan for if the bill passes. How will the school ensure that students can pass their classes at such a high rate? What will they do if students do not pass?

Although they are still working out a specific plan, counselors are encouraging students to prepare themselves in the event that this

bill does pass. Educators are doing the same.

"Although this is a huge change, it should not affect a majority of the students graduating," said one school official who requested to go nameless.

"It is a student's responsibility to set up their future and try to get the most out of education. The districts can take responsibility for not enforcing a requirement like this or not motivating students enough. But again, it should be a student's responsibility depending on their future."

## Environmentally-friendly ATM keeps Burroughs students "green"

BY ALEX HAMILTON

Thanks to a recently-awarded grant, students will soon have easy access to their bank funds with the addition of a solar-operated ATM outside the Sherman Shack.

School officials are hoping the ATM will make it easier for students to stay on top of such items as book fines, dance tickets, and AP test fees – all at no cost to the school or student.

"Now there's no excuse," said School Accountant Michael Midas. "This is a win-win situation for everybody."

The ATM is owned and operated by Pennywise, Inc., a non-profit organization that places ATMs and other financial services into schools.

Unlike many other ATMS, the Pennywise money dispensers do not charge a fee for use; instead, they run free of charge, requiring only solar energy.

Printed on each ATM receipt will be a code that students can

use to access a short online survey. Depending on how many students complete the survey after their withdrawals, Burroughs will receive additional prorated funds each quarter.

"This has the potential to be a huge fundraiser for ASB!" said Advisor Eileen Poole.

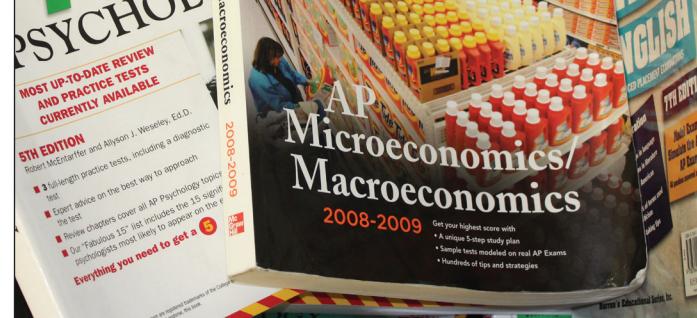
Teachers are also looking forward to the easy access.

"I spend so much time here at school, I don't always have time to run to the bank," said English Teacher Ernestina Wilson.

Not everyone is pleased, however. A group of students recently organized a protest against the ATM installation and is circulating a petition to stop the process.

"Easy money teaches the wrong lesson!" stated one sign carried at the protest. "Report cards not ATM cards!" said another.

Officials hope the tension goes away once the ATM is fully operational.



AP test prep books are landing in recycling bins as students learn their scores may no longer matter.  
photo by Ainsley Adams

# Trump emerges as political hydra

## Controversial politician shows his soft side...

BY BO HAAS

As the primaries are slowly wrapping up, Republican candidate Donald Trump has often blasted and embarrassed many other candidates about their physical appearance, gender, and his interpretation of their intelligence. Trump's roars have stirred up a moment of American history that will not be soon forgotten.

Many political analysts and health professionals alike have been warning that this election year is bringing an unprecedented sense of chaos and disruption, leaving many Americans confused and afraid.

During a recent interview with CNN, however, the small-handed candidate turned down his rhetoric and blossomed into a respectable and compassionate Republican leader.

CNN Correspondent Megan Falsewood captured the innocence and beauty conveyed in the words of Donald Trump in the recent interview.

During the taped recording, Trump revealed a beautiful, heroic story about his real upbringings. One impactful claim that Trump made was the fact that he was actually adopted. The fortune, the fame, the price of small mittens have all been a façade for the deeper, real Trump.

Three minutes into the interview, he shared the tale of a lost kitten in the tree, when at age four-and-a-half, the young Donald rose to stardom in his little town of Fallacyville by rescuing a small furry feline from a burning branch.

Trump continued to relate his tale by describing the scene and the emotional overload that he experienced after the rescue.

The heartwarming story sparked

a clear connection between Trump and Falsewood, as well as with every American watching, based on polls conducted after the show aired.

The kitten story was not the end of his remarks. Perhaps inspired by his own emotion-heavy story, Trump launched into a surprisingly touching analysis of the human spirit and the condition of our nation.

Never at a loss for words, Trump quoted a line that embraces his platforms for his campaign: "Behind those smiling faces, you can never know what someone is going through."

These tender sentiments caught many viewers unaware. In fact, the Blockbuster's top-notch research team discovered that he was actually quoting a seven-year-old girl from Idaho via the social media app Instagram.

The young woman requested that her real name not be revealed but she has allowed us to shout her out. Follow @Fairygirl01.

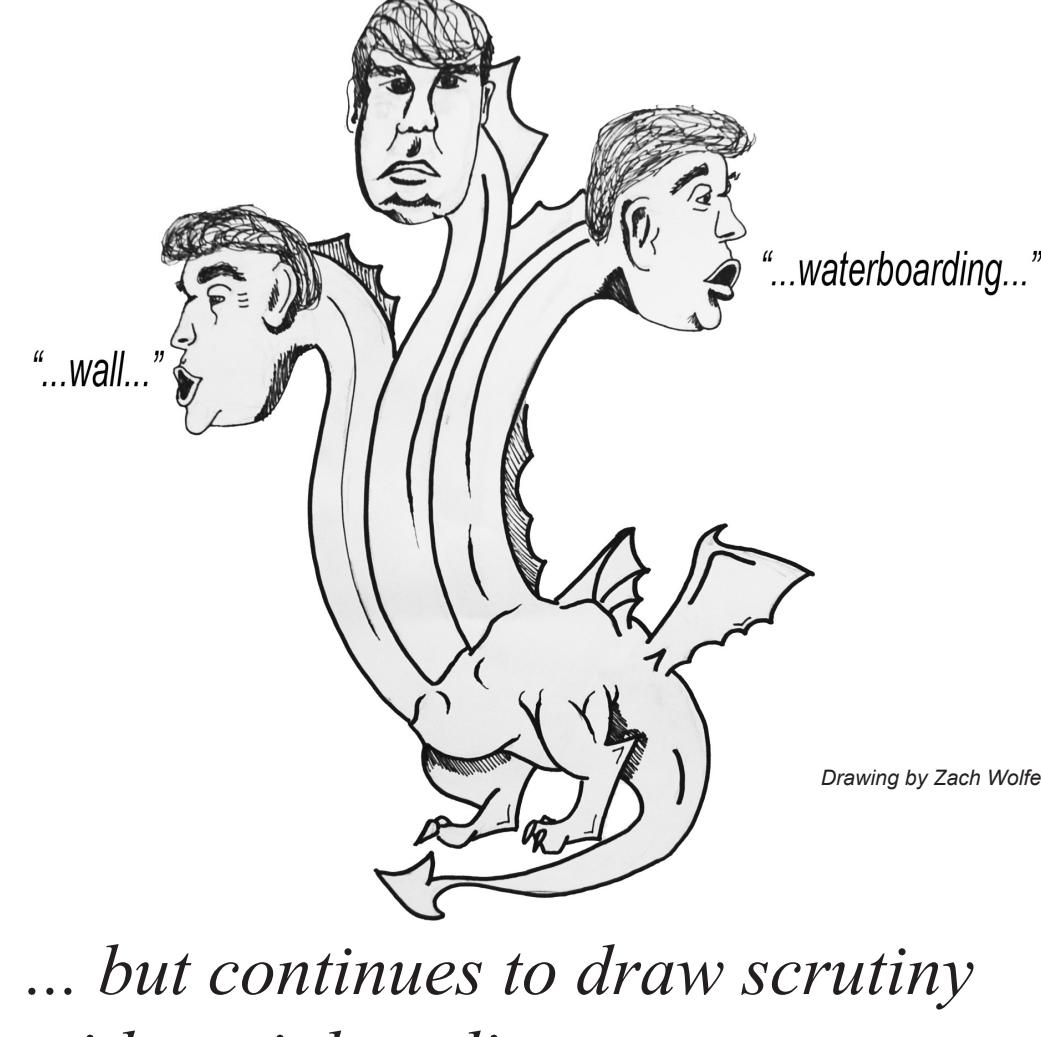
Trump later shared that he has since gone on to visit Fairygirl01 and her parents.

According to Trump's physical fitness trainer, the candidate was disappointed when he realized that Fairygirl01 is a Bernie Sanders supporter.

Despite Fairygirl's favor toward Sanders, Trump gave equal-lengthened high-fives to Fairygirl and her mother. Fairygirl's father received a petite but firm handshake.

From the truth about Trump to the dinner with Fairygirl01, Trump's behavior and beliefs have seemingly evolved from a rock to a beautiful flower in a majestic field of yellow tops and butterflies.

Voters must wonder -- can it last?



Drawing by Zach Wolfe

## ... but continues to draw scrutiny with social media presence

BY COLE JOHNSON

A Burroughs Senior is learning the hard way that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Despite recent reports about the Republican Presidential candidate's supposed "softer side," Donald Trump has drawn criticism from local voters after he apparently began a Twitter feud with the student, who wishes to remain anonymous.

The feud began when the student called out Trump over his tweets regarding his attitude toward the media. The feud happened on Friday, March 25.

The incident began as the student commented on Trump's tweet,

"Just because you think you rule the world doesn't mean you should," wrote the student.

Not one to hold back his words, Trump quickly responded to the comment, attacking the student for "not knowing anything" because "they aren't even old enough to be in office."

Trump's responses were aimed at shaming the student for speaking out against him. Trump's subsequent tweets were quickly

**Donald J. Trump**  
@realDonaldTrump

[Follow](#)

You can't blame the poor student for not knowing anything. They're not even old enough to be in office.

Reply
45,645
15,639
More

3/29/16, 7:34 PM · ...

removed from the social media hub only minutes later.

While the tweet that sparked the comment was meant to condemn the bias he sees in media coverage of his campaign, Trump's exchanges have stirred up even more media attention.

He frequently obsessively tweets about media, especially Fox News.

Student responses to Trump's social media posts have been largely negative.

Senior Adison Blubaugh exclaimed, "Trump acts childish and should not even be considered for a political office!"

Other candidates have spoken out against Trump for being disrespectful to the youth. It is

expected that other Republican nominees will bring up this latest scandal at the new final GOP debate.

Burroughs Administration has stated that they are dealing with appropriate authorities to ensure the student's safety. "All the steps are being taken to ensure the student is not harassed."

Still, not everyone is supporting the student.

Some people have suggested that the student faked the Tweet using the easy-to-use software program Simulator.com.

The *Blockbuster* will continue to monitor the situation and keep its readers informed of any developments.

## Sanders embarks on "Teen Tour"

BY SAWYER CHRISMAN

In latest election news, Democratic hopeful Bernie Sanders has decided to take a detour on the campaign trail and get out his message in a novel way.

Capitalizing on his appeal with young voters, Sanders intends to visit high schools around the country and give speeches to today's youth -- for free.

To earn a visit from Sanders, schools must submit an application and short video showcasing its en-

thusiasm for the political process.

Fortunately, Burroughs High School's ASB class received administrative approval to apply to be one of the 700 high schools to be given this opportunity.

Junior Xander Burney was the force behind the effort to bring Sanders to Burroughs.

A self-proclaimed Bernie Bro, Burney gathered up all his fellow Bernie Bros. and started a petition to allow Sanders to come. The administrators looked over their petition and authorized ASB to do their thing to bring Sanders to the school.

"I want to have Sanders come to Burroughs to give students the view of an actual candidate and his ideas of what the future holds for them," said Burney. "Regardless of your politics, this will be something you remember forever. Also, having a famous politician come to our school will help shape our image as a school. We will be famous!"

Sophomore Elisha Bellington is eager for the visit.

"I am so excited for the idea of

having Bernie Sanders come to Burroughs High School and give us a speech for the future," she said. "Giving support and inspiration to the youth makes me happy because many kids nowadays need all the inspiration we can get to succeed."

Senior Daisy Dallas is against the idea of bringing in any of the presidential candidates.

"The idea of having someone polluting your mind with their opinion on how America is going to turn out is overly idealistic," said Dallas. "Besides, why should it be Sanders? Having one of the oldest men in the election come and speak to us teenagers makes no sense."

When asked her view about the election, Dallas admitted that she had not yet registered to vote, had no intention of ever doing so.

"What does all that nonsense have to do with me?" she demanded.

Students who do wish to vote may do so using the link on the Burroughs front page -- and that's no joke.

## LaBeouf's words offer winning inspiration

BY SAWYER CHRISMAN

In the preceding years, we've had many famous people who have made inspirational speeches and quotes that make most of Americans remember them. The two figures who are adding their voices to this phenomenon are Shia LaBeouf and DJ Khaled.

Shia LaBeouf did a inspirational video about how you shouldn't give up on your dreams and how "nothing is impossible." His most famous quote is the profoundly stated "Just do it." On the other hand, DJ Khaled did an inspirational video highlighting the good qualities of what people have and arguing that they should also follow their dreams. At the end he continuously says, "Another one."

Junior Alex Bonn disagrees with DJ Khaled, and agrees with Shia LaBeouf.

"Shia LaBeouf has the idea about how nothing is impossible, which can tell people all around the world that you can succeed in what you do," said Bonn. "DJ Khaled just tells you how important you are and you can continue your dreams."

Senior Link Bread follows the advice of DJ Khaled, continuing his ambitions and dreams. "I believe that DJ Khaled believes in everyone and how nothing you can do is impossible. He also makes people go farther in their dreams and goals by continuing their own path."

In the opinion of this writer, the person who can out inspire people would have to be Shia LaBeouf, because he can inspire outside the sphere of influence and can affect more lives. The "inspirator" of this generation is clearly Shia LaBeouf.

## Trump rallies begin charging admission

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

Given the abundance of violence at most of the recent Donald Trump campaign rallies, the largely successful businessman has once again directed his interests towards capital gain. He has announced that he will begin charging an admission fee to enter his rallies because of the world class boxing and MMA action taking place at them.

Senior Ayah Gree applauded Trump's capitalistic stance and ability to seize control over the potential blow up in his campaign.

"It's a good idea to try and make some money," said Gree. "After all, he is self-funding his campaign."

If this move doesn't make you think that Trump is supporting the violence at his rallies, this next detail might: his campaign effort is now selling "Trump 2016" boxing gloves.

"At least he is protecting the fists of the supporters and protesters

alike," said Trump supporter Daniel White. "I think it is nice of him to look out for the safety of the people involved in these riots. Without these gloves, these fighters would have bloody fists, but now they will only have bloody faces."

However, Burroughs Freshman Anne Gree, sister of Ayah, has a different opinion regarding Trump's capitalistic focus.

"I think this is ridiculous. He has not been focused during this whole campaign, and this just further proves that point," she said. "Things are really getting out of hand -- with or without boxing gloves on them!"

If you happen to be a rally rioter, a violent Trump supporter, or just a genuine boxing glove collector, you can find your Trump 2016 boxing gloves on [www.donaldjtrump.com/merch/gloves](http://www.donaldjtrump.com/merch/gloves). Also remember to bring a wad of cash to your next Trump campaign rally to cover your admission fee.

Presidential Limitations Act lands on Congressional floor

BY MICHAEL SKIPWORTH

Are candidates dropping out of the race? Who will be left to run?

Within the last few presidential campaigns, many of the candidates have had one or more scandals floating around or have embraced platforms or groups that undermine their potential strength as a candidate or president.

Based upon those past hiccups during the past and current election

seasons, California Congressman Mike Thompson has pushed Congress to pass the Presidential Limitation Law, which sets the regulations required within a presidential campaign to a higher standard.

Slated for potential enactment in June 2016, the legislation could conceivably put a damper on many of the candidates for this year's election.

More importantly, supporters

hope, it would force the largely controversial candidates to drop out of the race completely.

The Presidential Limitation Law restricts candidates from running if they exceed a threshold limit of negativity on social media or traditional media outlets.

The threshold is computed using an algorithm that calculates the "positive strength" of a candidate's campaign, using not only the candidates' own words, but those directed to them.

Political analyst Jakob Ashton foresees a tremendous upset if the law does actually take effect.

"With this new law, Trump and Hilary can both be taken out of this campaign, leaving only the Bern to swoop in for the presidency."

Critics of the law expressed concern about the potential abuse of the algorithm.

"This will have a chilling effect on our political system," said Georgina Orwell. "Our candidates have to be allowed to speak their own minds, and our voters have to be allowed to judge them for what they say."

System Designer Billie Gaites disagrees.

"While this is not ideal, it is necessary," said Gaites. "We have to do something to stop the flood of negativity. It is the only way our country, and world, will ever heal."

The *Blockbuster* is published by the Newswriting class of Burroughs High School. Aside from staff editorials, opinions expressed are those of individual writers and not necessarily of staff, or district. Students may submit articles to the newspaper. They must be signed, but the name may be withheld under certain circumstances. The editors reserve the right to edit submitted materials. Submissions should be brought to J-3 or placed in Susan Burgess' mailbox in the front office. You may write the *Blockbuster* at 500 E. French Ave., Ridgecrest, CA.

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# Ridgecrest scheduled to receive free WiFi umbrella

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

In the twenty-first-century, a wireless connection is a necessity whether you are playing your favorite online game or doing research for an essay you are writing.

Unfortunately, however, sometimes it can be hard to find a reliable network to connect to. Coffee shop WiFi is nice and convenient, but it is just so slow, and the same problem arises occasionally when using a 4G LTE connection. Fortunately for Ridgecrestonians, a free, readily available WiFi solution is going to be available all across town.

The new network stems from the recent contract that internet providers in Ridgecrest signed, allowing them to place open routers throughout the town to provide a consistent signal

wherever consumers happen to be.

English teacher Eileen Poole believes this will allow for many opportunities for her classes.

"I am looking forward to being able to take a trip to the park and have my students indulge in the luxurious world of Shakespearean sonnet analysis while breathing in the fresh air," said Poole.

The applications and opportunities are endless. You can now be anywhere and have a free, reliable connection to the internet.

Junior Sophie Hoffmann is excited to do her homework during her spare time at the pool.

"I am very busy with the swim team, and this will allow me to complete more of my homework, and still get in my necessary practice," Hoffmann explained.

Appreciative Ridgecrestonian and hardcore gamer George

Johnson is happy that he can now game anywhere.

"Sometimes when I am out running errands I get the urge to log on and play. Now that Ridgecrest has free WiFi everywhere I can finally do this," Johnson said.

According to information available about the project, many

networks will be available for joining, depending on location.

A word of caution, however: none of the networks are password protected; users are advised to avoid shopping, banking, and other websites that might allow hackers to compromise personal information.

Ridgecrest hopes to continue to offer this twenty-first-century staple for free; however, a small fee may be present in the future, so take advantage of free WiFi while you have it. Assuming the current beta testing process is a success, the system will become operational this summer vacation.



Senior John Ernst beta tests the wireless coverage at LeRoy Jackson Park. The Inyokern resident is looking forward to having a reliable connection close to campus.

*photo by Julia Ernst*

## IMAX pushes aside local movie theater

BY JOE OSORIO

Out with the old, and in with the new: Ridgecrest Cinemas is being turned into an IMAX theater.

The new and improved theater will be open later this year.

Moviegoers can still catch the latest films at the current cinemas while the new theater is under construction.

The IMAX theater is being brought to Ridgecrest by local entrepreneur Steven Spielberg (no relation).

"I'm excited for the IMAX," said Spielberg. "Ridgecrest deserves something innovative and high tech! This IMAX theater is going to be very successful in this town."

Construction for the new theater will start shortly.

"As a movie fanatic I will be thrilled to watch their favorite movies in an amazing theater," said Junior Madison Lilly.

"When it comes to movies I become the biggest nerd!" said Lilly.

Perhaps most important aside from movie fans' excitement is Spielberg's reassurance that all of the current workers will be offered jobs at the new theater.

Employee Kevin Burgess is skeptical about opening an IMAX in such a limited market.

"This is such a small town," said Burgess. "There may not be enough people for this big theater."

All we can do is hope at this point."

Even though the new theater is replacing the Ridgecrest Cinemas, the IMAX will actually be moved

across town and adjacent to the new Super Walmart.

Spielberg wants people to know that the change is worth it.

"I know I'm destroying a landmark and that many of your parents and even grandparents had their first dates within our walls," said Spielberg. "But with brand new features, this theater will be something magnificent! The chairs will be recliners, and all theaters will hold a capacity of hundred people. Now that's a great place for a date!"

To add to the enjoyment, servers will be waiting on all of the movie watchers in the Cinemas. On weekends, chefs will be contracted to prepare food for the guests.

Spielberg said he is thrilled for these new advantages.

"I'm excited to see the response from customers about all the new features," he said.

Flocks of people from Lone Pine, Trona, Johannesburg, and Randsburg are expected to come watch their favorite films in the IMAX theater. The theater will have a Grand Midnight Showing to reveal its technology.

Such upgrades are not without a downside. Due to the large size of the theater and cost of running such a large operation, ticket prices will be raised to \$16 dollars. No matinee pricing will be available, and senior/military discounts will be a thing of the past.

Mark your calendars, because the official date of the opening will be released in the Daily Independent.

## Forever 21 plans expansion into emptied Walmart warehouse

*School considers return of ROP Retail Design to train workers for clothing store.*  
BY COLE JOHNSON

Forever 21 recently announced that it will begin to expand into Ridgecrest, specifically the space soon to be emptied by Walmart. Forever 21 plans to fill the clothing gap in Ridgecrest late this fall.

Forever 21 management stated in a press release that Ridgecrest is "an excellent fit" in their criteria for a new location. The outlet store would like to be able to open before the start of 2017.

Students and faculty are excited to receive the store. Senior Bo Haas

expressed his support of the idea.

"It would be super cool if I didn't have to wear the same clothes from middle school."

"I'm happy to see more business coming to Ridgecrest," said Vice Principal Carrie Cope.

Overall, the public reaction is positive regarding Forever 21.

"Space left by the empty Walmart warehouse will likely be rented out to local business," said Forever 21.

More information about the store will be available in the coming months.

In related news, school officials are looking to resuscitate the long-dormant ROP Retail Design course.

Always on the alert for helpful elective courses, administrators and district officials believe now is the

time to bring back the class.

The course, which was last taught roughly ten years ago, included coursework in marketing, accounting, and creating floor and window displays.

The revised elective will also include training in customer service and basic accounting principles.

The biggest change, though, may be the units on e-commerce.

"Developing and maintaining an internet and social media presence is essential for businesses today," said Teacher Clark Muckleberg, who will likely teach the course.

"No business can expect to be a success if they are not willing to risk it online."

For more information about the ROP class, see your counselor.



The Sign of Things to Come: Local shoppers will no longer have to drive to Lancaster to get their Forever 21 fix. The retail giant is expected to open its doors next year in the former Wal-Mart location. Social media is already full of teenagers who are excited about the store's pending arrival.

*photo by Cole Johnson*



Senior John Ernst beta tests the wireless coverage at LeRoy Jackson Park. The Inyokern resident is looking forward to having a reliable connection close to campus.

*photo by Julia Ernst*

## Restaurant Careers makes plans to purchase John's Pizza for hands-on learning experience

BY JULIA ERNST

Burroughs' ROP Restaurant Careers class is a unique and enriching component of the Burroughs class catalogue that is not only enjoyable, but also serves as a great opportunity for students to learn and apply their culinary skills.

However, due to the increasing numbers of students enrolling in Restaurant Careers over the past several years, space has been cramped and materials spread too thin throughout the classroom.

Luckily, Sierra Sands has whipped up a solution to remedy these inadequacies.

Restaurant Careers students can expect exciting reform this upcoming fall with the class being held in the newly purchased, adequately equipped, former John's Pizza restaurant.

Instead of working from the previous classroom in C-Hall, ROP Restaurant Careers will now be held in the former John's Pizza restaurant, which will be able to accommodate the growing class

size and provide an equal opportunity for students when working in the kitchen.

Class instructor Lisa Cosner has played a key role in moving the cooking class to a better suited, off campus location.

"When I saw that John's Pizza had closed down, I immediately thought of Restaurant Careers and how cool it would be if Burroughs students could work out of a real-life restaurant," said Cosner. "What better practice for pursuing a career in the culinary field?"

Cosner proposed her plans to move the overcrowded class to the old John's Pizza building to the school board. After much debate, Sierra Sands decided to purchase the building.

After the school board's approval, Burroughs has now been given the go ahead to begin holding culinary classes there beginning this next school year. The timing is perfect, since the class was likely going to be impacted by the modernization effort.

Board member Joann Tomlinson was in favor of Cosner's proposition from the instant it was proposed.

"I'm in support of purchasing the former John's Pizza building for cooking classes for Burroughs because not only is it preserving a

piece of Ridgecrest's history, but it is also allowing our children more opportunities in school. If the board has the ability to prevent students from receiving a lesser education due to overcrowding, then actions must be taken promptly."

As word of the move has spread across social media, most students who have enrolled in ROP Restaurant Careers for the 2016-2017 school year have been pleasantly surprised.

Some, however, have shown some hesitation towards the changes. Junior Isabella Carson has mixed feelings regarding the class being held in a building off campus.

"Restaurant Careers sounds like a really neat class, and I'm excited for it. However, I'm concerned with [it being held] off campus," she said. "I don't have my drivers' license yet, so I'm not sure how I will be getting to class."

In order to combat the issue of available rides, the school district has worked out a bussing schedule with the elementary schools so that ROP students will have transportation provided for them.

For those interested in signing up for Restaurant Careers next year: it is not too late! Thanks to the enlarged class size from moving the class location, more students than ever before can join in on the fun!

## New fast-food restaurant on the menu for Ridgecrest

BY TIMOTHY NEIPP

The golden arches are stretching their reach across Ridgecrest.

Due to the vast space available in the up and coming Super Walmart, the store plans include a food court-style area, which will be including the famous American chain.

The news has been as warmly received by Burroughs students as an order of salty French fries. Casey Matlock is looking forward to getting a double whammy when she shops.

"I'd like to see a McDonald's in Walmart because then I could eat dinner after shopping and hang out with my friends," said Matlock.

Harry Carter is a little lukewarm on the topic -- like those hamburgers that sit a little too long under the heating lamp.

"I like McDonalds, and I like Walmart, but I feel like one of them is going to take advantage of the other's proximity and overcharge on items."

Though the students of Burroughs praise Walmart for their enterprising, the PE teachers are less enthralled about the idea as they feel that this is just going to make for more 'whiners' in their PE classes.

Coach Dale Bendant, for example, doesn't take to the idea.

"If I have even one more student walk in with a stupid frappe or cheeseburger, everybody is going to run a mile!" promised Bendant.

Actually, the PE teachers are considering working the new locale into their physical fitness curriculum.

"We are looking into a special aversion therapy," said Bendant. "If we make students run to the new McDonalds, eat 2,000 calories of food, and then run back, they will hopefully associate their sick stomachs with the fast food."

The Blockbuster will alert readers of other changes as news becomes available.

*Save the Date!*

**Ridgecrest Zombie Walk 2016**  
**Sherman E. Burroughs Field**

**Friday, May 27, 2016**

**7:00 p.m.**

# Spirit days come under attack with new emphasis on student academic achievement; students rally in response

BY MONICA FLOYD

The BHS spirit thermometers may need a lot of painting in the next few months.

Make that *painting over*.

If school officials and a group of well-meaning teachers and parents have their way, spirit days may soon be a thing of the past.

Increasingly, teachers and others have been complaining about the negative effect spirit days have on the classroom. In a surprise move and in response to the pressure, administrators are finally taking action and are considering taking this high school tradition away from Burroughs.

As today's rally week makes clear, Burroughs spirit shines through with participation. Whether for a big event like a prom or even simple spirit days, Burroughs students know how to show their school spirit. However, spirit days may be becoming a liability, according to some educators.

Teachers have noticed that on spirit days students lack the attention span because of the distraction from other students' attire. From silly socks to full on ridiculous costumes, the dress-up days are causing school officials to fear their impact on students. Their concern, it seems, is that spirit days are causing a distraction by shifting the focus away from all-important class instruction.

"On Decades Day I noticed that students were not focused," said Sophomore History Teacher Steve Smith. "Their only attention was on people's costumes. I could barely get through one slide."

Other teachers have noticed that students frequently spend the nights before spirit days wandering the aisles at Wal-Mart and JoAnn, putting together the perfect costume. One teacher, who asked to remain anonymous, worried about the brain cells that were threatened by exposure to too many spray-painting fumes during custom t-shirt design.

## Timely "Political truth" course planned for 2016-2017

BY BRENDAN ALLEN

A course is being proposed that could benefit every American student -- and Burroughs may get it first.

*Political Truth: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction* is slated to be offered in the upcoming 2016-2017 school year. This course will allow students to search for truth, if any, in the speeches and promises of all of the "trustworthy" politicians posing to run our country.

*Political Truth: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction* came about through the suggestion of government teachers at Burroughs who recognized a need to teach high school students the methods and duties of determining the authenticity in a politician's speeches and promises.

Junior Robert Smith explained his interest in the proposed course.

"I am quite excited to be a part of the first class to take Political Truth. It will allow me to be better prepared in this upcoming election and any future elections."

Smith's mother Jody is pleased with her son's choice.

"I think this is great for students," she said. "This will finally allow America to produce an efficient and not entirely stupid voting community."

One of the new teachers coming to Burroughs to teach the class, Instructor Lisa Moore said she is excited to enrich the lives of students with political understanding.

"I just want our students to be as educated as they need to be to make proper decisions," said Moore.

Any student striving to be somewhat educated in this upcoming election and in future elections might enjoy this class.

This class is available to all students; no prerequisites are necessary.

To sign up, just talk to your counselor during your registration period.

The course is undergoing review by the UC and College Board to determine whether it meets a-g or AP credit requirements. It is expected to be offered as a CP elective.

The only way to combat this problem is to diminish spirit days all together, suggest critics. Administrators hands appear to be tied in the face of such vocal complaints. Nevertheless, administrators are hoping to reach a compromise.

Assistant Principal Carrie Cope, whose duties include activities, has been working hard to resolve the issue.

"As former ASB advisor, I understand that spirit days are essen-

tial to the high school experience, but the learning aspect of school always comes first," said Cope. "With so much pressure on teachers to prepare students for testing, we have to look carefully at the ways we spend our days."

Cope is suggesting that spirit days be held only on the same day as the Pep Rallies because students are already riled up and there is not much to lose. Another compromise is to use the spirit days as a kind

of "marketing tool" for education. Rather than "What in the World Day" or "Super Hero Day," ASB would hold educational spirit days such as "School Supplies Day" or "History Day" so that students are learning as they dig deep to create their creative costumes.

ASB is very disappointed about the pending cancellation or limiting of spirit days, but, like the positive people they are, they understand the issue and will now focus on

planning events and activities for the students of Burroughs that will make up for the loss of spirit days.

Of course, some students are retaliating and have begun to petition against the administrative decision.

Spearheaded by Junior Sawyer Chrisman, a petition effort has been created for "Pro-Spirit Days."

He has slotted a few minutes in today's rally to inform students of the 350 signatures needed to protest.



*Spirit Points Add Up to Student Success": The ASB Class is hoping to send a powerful message to those who are attempting to squash the dress-up rituals.*

*photo by Monica Floyd*

## Burroughs digs deep to offer boys volleyball team

BY COLE JOHNSON

After many years and many requests, Burroughs has finally added Boy's Volleyball to the list of sports available. Many male students have requested administration to make this possible.

The decision was finally made

late last Thursday after receiving funding from the Men's Volleyball Association.

Burroughs Athletics Director Robert Campbell applauded the decision.

"I'm pleased to finally open the sport to our excellent male

athletes," said Campbell.

To get the team up to speed quickly, the girls volleyball coaches will be coaching the boy's team.

"We are excited to have two seasons of coaching," said Campbell.

Student reactions are also



*Burroughs athletes Bo Haas and Jacob Haw are ready to take on the competition in the school's latest competitive opportunity. The duo, shown here during a tournament final at a volleyball training camp, are among several young men who hope to make BHS' inaugural volleyball appearance an impressive one.*

*photo by Cole Johnson*

## Break dancers show off their skills

BY MICHAEL SKIPWORTH

Inspired by the entertaining exploits of the Burroughs breakdancing teens by the Parker Performing Arts Center, one student made the bold move to ask administration about adding a new type of team to Burroughs: competitive breakdance.

After considerable discussion and reassurances about coaches, fees, and insurance requirements, school officials allowed students to begin the process of gathering signatures to evaluate student interest in the program.

The signatures were quickly procured by eager students who wish to compete in this forum.

"It was a no-brainer for me! I have a passion for dancing," said Senior Andrew Doe.

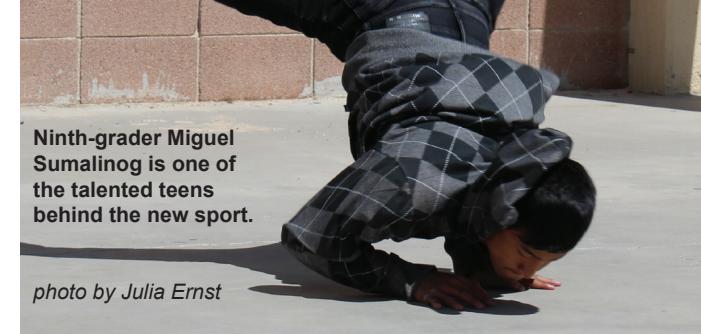
After weeks of deliberation, which included reviewing the impressive choreography of the PPAC performers, the administration has chosen to approve the idea and the team is seeking members.

Starting the upcoming year, Burroughs High School will have an official varsity and junior varsity breakdancing team.

Future Varsity Captain Mike Fukunaga is absolutely ecstatic about the new year with new breakdancing possibilities.

"The next year will be so bomb! All of the new and experienced members that could join will be amazing. I'm so excited," said Fukunaga.

The "dance-letes" will be competing regionally and at the national CIF dance competitions. To perfect and showcase their skills, they will also join the Burroughs cheerleaders in performing at every rally.



*Ninth-grader Miguel Sumalinog is one of the talented teens behind the new sport.*

*photo by Julia Ernst*

Each player is given a noodle equipped with a plastic handle to allow players the ability to shred on their opponents. Each match lasts around 10 minutes, with a half-time break in the middle. Each player must try and strike their opponent

before they can counter their attack. Coach Brian Williams, former swim team coach and a past gold medalist for noodle fencing, will give his excellent tips and tricks to succeed in the game of noodle fencing.

"Noodle fencing builds character and morals that other sports just don't," said Williams.

With all craze going around about noodle fencing, students are eager and ready to dive into the world of the fast-paced, heart-pounding competition.

"Redoing senior year is a must but only if I get to be captain," said Senior Jacob Haw.

As anticipation builds, young, motivated noodle fencers are ready to lunge into the new sport.

positive. Student Ian Paulsen has shown his interest in the opportunity.

"Finally!" he enthused. "I've been waiting to play men's volleyball for years!"

Paulsen is only one of many students interested in the sport.

Boy's Volleyball will be open to all male students who are interested. According to Campbell, tryouts will have to happen if there are too many students for one team. Sign-ups will be available in the Activities Office.

In related news, the school has opted not to offer a competitive archery team or ski team.

"It's a question of funding and liability," said Campbell. "We can't afford the bus rides, and we can't afford the risk of student injury."

Would-be skiers and archers will try to make their case again next year.

## Mandatory nap period awakens students' enthusiasm

BY MACKENZIE SMALL

Have you ever wanted to sleep at school? Well, now you not only can, you must.

A new policy coming out next school year requires schools all around the country to have a mandatory "restoration" or nap period.

"We believe that students are not getting equivalent rest," said Congressman Mike Coffin. "This period will allow students to rest and relax, so they can perform better during the school day."

Many students are excited about this policy change and cannot wait until it is implemented.

"I am always so tired during the day," said Sophomore Brielle Barnes. "With a mandatory period, I feel like I will be able to perform better during school."

A mandatory nap period has proven to be very effective for schools. Teenagers require more sleep than other age groups; eight to nine hours per night is the target..

Other schools have piloted the program.

"We tried the nap period during last school year and our school has seen higher test scores and attendance records as a result," said Rancho High School Principal Reba Van Winkle.

Sierra Sands is hoping to see similar improvements.

"The students and teachers are very ready for this change," said Assistant Superintendent Sharonica Hardin, with a yawn.

The mandatory nap period will be put in place of students' fifth period in the coming 17-18 school year.

Classrooms will be equipped with a class set of pillows and blankets to support the effort.

## Noodle fencing added to CIF sports line-up

BY BO HAAS

before they can counter their attack.

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