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art that is very similar to Karate, involving methods of defeating someone armed or armored without using weapons. One of Lewis' reasons for starting Karate was his parents.



Photo Courtesy of Taylor Naber

Nora at her home in Ghana .

"I was a very energetic kid and my parents signed me up for Karate," Lewis said. "I really loved it."

Taylor Naber's topic of choice comes from her interest in Women's Rights and poverty. This senior girl hopes that she will help her peers understand what women in third world countries go through and their struggles in life. She also will talk about her relations with a woman named Nora.

"I've always been interested in Women's issues," Naber said. "After doing an essay on this in English, I wanted to learn more."

Nora was discovered by Taylor through a visiting speaker at her church from World Voice and K.I.V.A.

"I went to a leadership summit a learned a lot," Naber said. "I also did an online search essay involving my micro-business and I found Nora."

Naber learned about Nora, a 22-year-old woman with 3 children in the country of Ghana and how she could help Nora succeed with her own Grocery store.

"I get updates from Nora and her store is doing great," said Naber. "I'm very happy for her."



Photo Courtesy of Taylor Naber

Nora at her grocery store in Ghana.

Whether you think senior projects are educational and appropriate or just a waste of time, these seniors hope to reach to their senior class and teach them understand what interests them most in life. Like Berard said, you can find creativity in anything.

A new edition with great success

By Rachel Robinson
Staff Writer

This year, the high school welcomed a new week to the calendar: Court Warming. This week consisted of dress-up days, a D-team basketball tournament, a bonfire, and best of all, the Winter Semi-formal.

The theme for the week was "Through the Ages" with dress-up days such as Cave-man Day and Middle Ages Day.

The D-team tourna-

ment was extremely fun for those who participated as well, with crazy costumes for some and an all-around good time. The winners of the tournament were the Big Sexys (juniors



Photo courtesy of Pia Longinotti

Senior class takes time at the dance to capture a picture.

Josh Richardson, Kris Norman, Alex Quinnett, Jess Wingett, and Mackenzie Deruyter) with a last minute victory over the Flint Tropics (juniors Mary Zakheim and Rachel Robinson, senior Casey Strothman, and sophomores Quinn Robinson and Ben Zakheim).

Though the students were skeptical of the new edition to the dances this year, Winter Formal was a success. With a



Photo Courtesy of Pia Longinotti

Students participate in a game of smashing eggs with dead fish during spirit week at an assembly

masquerade theme, the dance was filled with over-sized masks, an old black-and-white movie playing on the wall, and girls with brightly colored dresses, who danced the night away with their dates and friends.

The week was successful—thanks to the ASB for planning it all. With this success, only a few alterations from the student body should be made for next year: more participation from the students! Though we are locked up in these portables, spirit is necessary to get us through the days.



Photo Courtesy of Pia Longinotti

Seniors Royce Robinson and Patric Spence pose for a quick picture.

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Obama's health care plan – good or bad?

By: Mica Paulicheck
Staff Writer

I'm sure a lot of people are asking themselves whether they are for or against President Obama's health care reform plan. The problem is not everyone knows the facts from the fiction.

Not all of the myths about this new health care plan are being spread by opposing parties and anti-Obama networks. The president himself is responsible for making things look better than they really are.

In an article on factcheck.org, Lori Robertson, Jess Henig, and Brooks Jackson wrote "Obama promised once again that a health care overhaul 'will be paid for.' But congressional budget experts say the bills they've seen so far would add hundreds of billions of dollars to the deficit over the next decade."

He has also claimed that his budget would reduce federal spending over the next 10 years by \$2.2 trillion; however, the Congressional Budget Office predicts a \$2.7 trillion increase. Obama

should probably listen to his own budget experts before he starts talking numbers.

"What happens if private insurance starts offering better rates than national insurance? It benefits the consumer, but the universal national health care policy falls by the wayside," wrote an anonymous author (www.healthinsurancerates.com).

Even if the national health care is passed, the chances of it succeeding are very slim. Obama says it's universal; however, this new health care plan isn't as united as it's advertised to be. Private insurance companies will still be around, and there would be nothing stopping them from lowering their rates to benefit the consumer, earning them more business because who wants to pay more for something just because it's government-run?

Is this health care plan good for the average American? The president plans to tax the wealthier residents of our country in order to fund his plan;

however, eventually that's going to affect the middle-class Americans as well. Taxes on wealthy Americans mean taxes on big businesses, and we've already seen how the government handles failure there. The way our economy is going, we won't have enough money to afford this program. Like with Social Security, we could run out of money before we

know it.

Another thing Obama intends on doing to pay for his health care is taking each state's emergency funds that are currently set aside to fund emergency uninsured medical coverage. Without this money, uninsured people will be forced into getting health insurance, even if they are unwilling or unable to afford it. Obama also plans to cut spending, much of which will be in Medicare.

According to Robertson, Henig, and Jackson, "Obama proposes introducing a com-



Obama promoting health care plan.

Picture courtesy of google images

petitive bidding process for Medicare Advantage, a program through which private insurers offer Medicare coverage and get higher payments from the government than standard Medicare reimbursements."

The president said this would save over \$100 billion of unwarranted subsidies that go to insurance companies, although earlier he said it would save \$177 billion over ten years, and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated it to be \$159 billion over ten years, in the same time period.

As for employers, if they don't help their employees with a contribution towards health coverage, they will have to contribute a percentage of their payroll towards the national plan. This will help pay for the plan; however, smaller businesses will be exempt from this.

All in all, Obama's health care reform plan is a costly project that our country will be in debt for for many years, and it has a high chance of failure.

"V-Day...more like D-Day"

By Rachel Robinson
Staff Writer

Most everyone looks forward to that one special day filled with red and pink hearts, chocolates, and flowers: Valentine's Day. It's such a magnificent day, where you are given ample opportunity to show those you care about that, in fact, you do care, in spite of what they may have thought otherwise.

As the month of January fades into February, the excitement for this momentous holiday heightens, the anticipation builds, and the anxiety of whether you'll have a valentine crashes down on you so heavily and so quickly, that you don't even know what's hit you.

Absolutely no one wants to be alone on Valentine's Day, and the funny thing is... most are. The day is supposed to be for couples to share their love and enjoy each other's company. Well, congratulations to those who are in a relationship and can enjoy their February 14th, but what about the rest of us? Must we suffer all day while girls are receiving flowers and chocolates with notes of a dinner surprise later? Whatever self-esteem we promised to keep up as a New Year's resolution is gone, leaving us to sulk for who knows how long.

Don't get me wrong, if I had a boyfriend, it'd be wonderful to have a specific day where I knew I would be shown that I'm cared about; but does that mean those without a valentine aren't cared about? If not, then we'll feel like it anyway. And really, do we need a designated holiday to force people to show that they care about someone else? Shouldn't every day be a day of showing you care?

People's views on subjects such as this have been altered too greatly from that of what it used to be. These days, people only give gifts when they have to: birthdays, Christmas, baby showers. What happened to just giving a gift without a reason? This is modern America, and we don't need an old-fashioned holiday to mark when we show how we feel about someone. It's just another way for individuals to feel that they must conform to a ridiculous holiday.

Not only that, but it's just flat out a waste of time, and a lot of time at that. Starting at the ripe age of 13-years-old, you'll spend a total of 65 days on this holiday in a lifetime—65 days that you could have could have been spending in Africa saving

the lives of orphans and people inflicted with AIDS.

There are plenty of people out there who make those paper, pink and red chains to count down until Valentine's Day, but isn't all the hype and excitement just another scam for our money? The amount of money flower companies and chocolate factories make off of this holiday is extremely outrageous. As a total for all chocolate, flower, and gift sales, retailers will be taking \$17.02 billion from our pockets...for one day!

If you fall in the category of celebrating for that special someone, let's think about how much it's going to cost you. Let's say you want to send your girl some pink long stem roses: hello, \$34.95 straight from your pocket. Want to take

your girl to a nice dinner? Let's say the Melting Pot; for the two of you it may add up to over a \$100 bill. For one day, that's at least \$150. For adults, with paying jobs, that may

seem like nothing, but for a high school student, that's a pretty large chunk of change. I'm not saying that buying things for someone won't make them feel good, but there are



other ways to show how much you care than through money. I'd rather someone express their feelings for me while at home with a dinner for two, than at a fancy-schmancy place that I know is expensive.

If your hopes and dreams are to shower your special someone with gifts and dinner on Valentine's Day, you might want to think about the amount of money it's going to cost you in a lifetime. Let's say you spend an average of \$200 (dinner, a movie, flowers, jewelry, etc.) on your valentine each year. By the end of your life, that's \$13,000 gone that you could have used to buy a new car, a down payment on a house, or donated to those orphans in Africa that you couldn't find the time to help.

The fact of the matter is with or without a valentine, you will feel as if you are stranded on the beaches of Normandy with cupids parachuting down, ignoring you and shooting everyone else with love arrows—your hope shattered, your morale crumbled, leaving you to reconstruct what little rubble is left to your whole-being. If that sounds like an extreme description to you, you may think twice when you are alone on this fateful day.