

# What do you mean I have to go to school?

by Abby Burton

By the end of the third week between the stretch from Thanksgiving to Christmas break, the students of New Trier oddly resemble the cast from The Walking Dead.

From their baggy eyes to their sluggish trudges through the halls, I wouldn't be surprised if the student body was mistaken for a zombie apocalypse.

I don't go a day at this school without hearing the phrases, "Wow, I'm exhausted. I only got four hours of sleep last night" or "yikes I can't believe it's only Monday" or even "this week is going by tremendously slow, don't you think?"

To be honest, these phrases annoy me. Everyone has to stop acting like babies, and suck up a week that lasts a full five days.

I think the New Trier schedule is at fault for the student's lack of ability to adapt to a full week schedule.

Especially near the beginning of the year, I can't pick out more than two weeks on the calendar where we have multiple full weeks of school in a row. Whether we don't have school because of parent teacher conferences, or the late start - early release schedule, a full week is a rare sight to see.

After a while, students are

getting used to the relaxed weeks, and excess time for getting homework done. And after a longer while this becomes the norm.

Unfortunately, because of this negative adaptation that the students have acquired, I've noticed school attendance and focus dropping at a concerning rate. You would think that with more days off the students would be more rested, right? Wrong.

We got so used to our relaxed schedules that the normal week comes as a huge and horrible surprise. This is when we whine and cry.

The fact that our schedules are so scattered has caused students to have unmanageable amounts of homework during these very short weeks. This only leads to students having panic attacks at night and begging parents to let them stay home to "catch up" or pretend they are doing homework while they actually watch Netflix.

If the answer is "no" from their parents, they end up coming to school so stressed to the point where they can't even listen to the lectures being taught in their classes.

I have to admit, I'm not even sure if a single girl in my advisory has made it through a full week at school. I know that my advisory isn't alone on this one either. This might be an exaggeration, but haven't you noticed how many people show up late to

school or sign out in the middle of the day?

Trust me on this one, not everyone is missing school because of a doctor's appointment or their "weekly orthodontic checkup." As students of New Trier, we feel that we have the right to miss school during full weeks because going to school Monday through Friday isn't what we are used to.

When the dreaded school months of February to March come around, students are barely able to make it out of the school year alive. By this time, full school weeks become a normal routine, but students never find a way to adjust.

I heard that we are not going to have any days off of school next year because the construction team wants to complete the renovations to the school as quickly as possible.

According to the new calendar, all those days off in the fall we expect will be no more, this year AND we will be starting the school year a week earlier. Start preparing now, kids. It's going to be a jam-packed year.

For the students still attending New Trier next year during the referendum where all their days off have been removed: GOOD LUCK.

Mad props to whoever can survive that one.



# The digital age of college admissions

by Leah Pearlman

To those big social-media enthusiasts, many of you may have seen the recent posts on Facebook about college admissions. It's almost as if future college attendees chose, the second they receive the acceptance e-mail to report their acceptance in a status for the world to see.

I am not a big facebook-er, and I am continuously surprised that every time I log into the site (I refuse to get the app on my phone) my newsfeed is completely crowded with congratulations and excitement. As I scroll, I'd like to be happy for my peers.

However, this feeling of wanting to feel happy for others is usually taken over with pangs of jealousy. "That person is going to U. of Illinois!" "Oh wow, they got into [some other school that, all of a sudden, sounds monstrously more awesome than any of the ones I got into]."

Scroll after scroll. My heart sinks deeper and deeper. If only Cymbalta could help me now. I start to reminisce about freshman year afternoons when I would fail to correctly study for my biology test, or sophomore year when I took Geometry and laughed at proofs until tests came back. That's when I cried because of proofs.

And suddenly, I'm stuck in a classic 1940's film set in late spring. The rain streams down the window that I stare out, thinking about life and how much mint chocolate chip ice cream I need.

Then I remember that I didn't even apply to these schools and am only slightly relieved.

Luckily, I can pull myself out of self-pity, so let me tell you why I think posting acceptances on Facebook is actually an awesome thing.

The common student works hard throughout their entire high school career for this exact moment. Even as freshmen, we were thinking about it.

This admittance has been the end goal. Although college counselors disagree, (and so do I, I think this is a sad sentence, #IGSS) you have been working for your dream college, so being realistic, enjoy the occasion. It makes sense to show off.

However, this isn't even a show off-y thing to do. It's more like participating in a senior tradition. With the amount of statuses I have seen, it seems as if a majority of the class posts. Posting your acceptance is like joining in the party of big-sighs-of-relief and second-semester-senior madness.

It is sharing with your community where you are heading for the next four years of your life. Beyond my envy, pit-of-despair

problems, I love seeing where my classmates are going. At the root of the matter, I am so happy for my fellow classmates' accomplishments and destinations.

The one thing that I fear with this entire social media sharing is the feelings of those who did apply to a school and didn't get in. My annoyance stems from an irrational place, as I had no chance of getting into certain colleges because I didn't apply to them. With others, the case is different.

For many schools, a large portion of the applicants from New Trier are highly qualified. Some are more sensitive than others to their rejection letters, but it's always smart to be conscious of what you are posting.

If you are going to celebrate your acceptance via media, make sure you are enthusiastic, but not gloating. We are all glad you are excited, but keep in mind the other students sulking in their room, disappointed.

After you've gone through the torturous task that is logging into your school's admission site to then screw up typing in your password four times and then finally getting the news, the only thing I would want to do is scream it from the rooftops.

Good thing we have Facebook because I'm too lazy to climb on my roof.

# Staff editorial: The holiday season is losing its luster

Before Thanksgiving had even passed, stores like Target were selling holiday decorations, Christmas themed commercials already appeared on T.V., and radio stations were playing "Let It Snow" before temperatures had even fallen below freezing.

For many, these seasonal benchmarks simply feed their anticipation and excitement for the upcoming holiday season. In reality, this boost in artificial holiday cheer is replacing the traditional season with a more commercialized one.

At their most basic level, Christmas, Hanukkah, and all other holidays which occur at this time of the year are simply holy days where those celebrating are intended to spend time praying and celebrating their faith.

These days are meant to be spent with family and loved ones. Traditions of a large dinner with family or visiting older relatives are common.

Nowhere in the definition of these holidays is there a mention of shopping for discounted gifts on the night after Thanksgiving or listening to holiday themed music two months before the actual holiday occurs.

Children no longer look forward to the holiday because they are excited to take a break from school and spend time with family.

Many of the newly invented traditions, such as Black Friday, are nothing more than strategies created by businesses looking to gain revenue during the holiday season. They are aware that shoppers will often do anything for a deal around the holidays. These increasingly ridiculous ploys are now beginning to interfere with the actual holidays themselves.

To get an edge on competition, stores are opening their doors as early as 5 AM on Thanksgiving Day to attract shoppers looking for deals.

Instead of enjoying a Thanksgiving dinner or watching

football with family, Americans are spending their evenings preparing for another holiday, which is about a month away. Instead of celebrating the holiday the way it is meant to be celebrated, we ruin the day by rushing into Christmas.

Not only are shoppers missing out on enjoying the holidays, but people who work for these stores are forced to spend their holiday on the job instead of with family. Although they may rather be doing something else, their holiday plans revolve around their employer's strange hours.

Similarly, large movie companies are intentionally releasing films on Christmas Day. Going to see these movies, especially the ones directed more towards families, has become a tradition in many households. Although families are technically spending time together by going out to watch a movie together, in reality, they are really just going to spend two to three hours seated next to each other, not interacting at all.

Even with the increase in store sales, those who consider holiday shopping to be a holiday tradition are seeing changes. Cyber Monday, which falls on the first monday after Thanksgiving, is gaining traction. Businesses have sales that are often only available online.

It's hard to ignore the convience of online shopping, but when buyers are spending more time shopping online, they are eliminating this annual tradition.

There is not much that can be done to stop the redundant television commercials from showing; however, individually, we can retain our traditions by reminding ourselves that the holidays are really about relaxing and spending time with our family.

As long as we keep these values in mind, we can continue to fully enjoy the holidays without the endless need for gifts and discounts.

# NEW TRIER NEWS

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