

Separating people from their personas

by Abby Burton

Many people don’t realize or want to admit it, but using and deciding what to put on social media takes a lot of thinking. What you post online basically is the first impression for the people you have yet to meet. Our society is so technologically savvy that everything we do over the media defines the type of person we are, although many may wish this was not the case. Even the littlest things like the pictures you post, the length of time in your responses to a text or a Snapchat, or even the use of certain punctuation is said to provide insight on who you are as a person. I would argue that people jump to false conclusions based on what they do over social media, though. If you really think about it, social media is only a small snapshot of a person’s entire world. There is the oh so common reference to an iceberg when talking about how much strangers know about another person. Above the water, the iceberg already appears

to be large, but there is much more to the iceberg that cant be seen. By looking at other’s pictures and statuses online, you only see and understand about 30% of their entire lives. The pictures and statuses posted online solely show the highlights of an individual’s life. At least with all of the people that I know, no one would ever post something online that made them look bad to the public. If this is the case, then why are we so quick to judge on social media? But I think, everyone is guilty of this. It is in our nature, as twenty first century humans, to use social media to “understand” another person. The information on others is so easily accessible, that it is almost impossible not to use a Facebook profile to “stalk” someone else. I have seen this come up most often in senior’s search for college roommates. As prospective students post in the Facebook group, everyone jumps to their profiles to determine whether or not they’d be a good match. It’s hard for me to understand though, how you could figure

out compatibility solely on appearance and a few messages. Beyond the world of Facebook, Snapchat and even texting cause false accusations. From personal experience, I’ve learned that if someone avoids the use of exclamation marks, they are not considered to be enthusiastic. I have also heard people say that someone comes off desperate if they respond to Snapchats too quickly. When in reality, someone may not be using aggressive punctuation because it just is not necessary, and they may just be on their phone at the exact moment that a Snapchat is sent to them. People look too deeply into the meaning of the littlest things in text messages and Snapchats just because it is so difficult to pinpoint another person’s true intention when a conversation is not face to face. With technology growing, it may be difficult to limit making first impressions and false assumptions on others based on their behavior online. It is important though to realize that someone’s virtual life does not entirely reflect their real life.

Pursuing your passion while juggling a high school career



Students view what their peers worked on for four weeks at the 2014 Senior Project Exhibition | New Trier website

by Lydia Wuorinen

New Trier offers its students an opportunity unheard of in most schools—the chance to go on Senior Project. The program which piloted in 1992 with just 20 students drew in approximately 135 students this year. Senior Project, according to the New Trier website, was created with the goal “to allow students to design and pursue a project of interest during their final quarter at New Trier.” Students are encouraged to expand upon preexisting hobbies, or to dive into possible career paths. Some task themselves with sewing a complete wardrobe, others choose to work downtown at an investment firm. No project is off limits. My job outside of school is to nurse animals back to health, and to make sure that they stay healthy. Yet, this passion to help our furry companions feels incomplete stopping there. I want to spend the time granted by New Trier serving a good cause, and what better cause than saving lives? As a veterinary assistant at Green Bay Animal Hospital since 2012, I have shot x-rays, worked in the kennel, assisted doctors and technicians. While I am very thankful for the

opportunity to be as helpful as a high school student can expect to be in a job, I have always felt that I could be doing more. What experience I have with stray and abandoned animals comes from the few times I’ve visited shelters to adopt, and although Dr. Miller, owner of the practice, has always welcomed stray animals, most of the animals I interact with are those that are accompanied by their loving owners. I’ve chosen to spend this allotted time working with Orphans of the Storm. Orphans of the Storm will allow me to help those animals most in need of care, love, and attention—even though most of the love they will receive I hope will come from their adoptive families. Any animals that are adopted in part because of me will have New Trier’s Senior Project program to thank, among the many hardworking staff and supporters of the shelter. A majority of my time will be spent at the Orphans of the Storm Animal Shelter in Riverwoods (Deerfield), but also at the shelter’s Pet Showcase at Northbrook Court, and at the Ruth Helen Wolf Animal Clinic & Hospital in Libertyville. Operations at the shelter itself will include caring for the animals, giving tours of the premises, making sure the shelter is well stocked and clean, and introducing new animals

into the shelter, while preparing old animals for their new homes. Work at the clinic will include routine admittance health checks, vaccine administration, and care for any sick/injured animals in the shelter. At the pet showcase, I will be responsible for transporting animals to and from the shelter and bringing people into the “store” to meet and greet our animals. All of this instead of everyday classes. There’s still a fair amount of paperwork involved—don’t get me wrong. Prospective seniors considering Senior Project should recognize that Senior Project isn’t an outlet for slacking off. There are numerous meetings, interviews, and appointments that need to be attended, and of course the Senior Project Exhibition—a culmination of all efforts put into the project. Lastly, the final project must be reviewed by a committee, that will either pass or fail you. High school is a major time commitment that rewards mastery of social skills, implores academic excellence, and encourages involvement in extracurricular activities, but New Trier reserves four weeks for students to follow their passions. Take advantage of the opportunity.

Staff editorial:

Has the United States transcended racial discrimination?

Seven years ago the United States experienced a monumental event. In the fall of 2008, then Senator Barack Obama became the first African American to be elected to the Oval Office. In wake of his election, many called this moment the beginning of the end of racial dividing lines in the U.S. and that this was a crowning moment in the fight to end racism. However, as we near the end of President Obama’s second term, it is apparent that racial tensions remain extremely high and hostile. If one simply looks over the course of President Obama’s time in the White House, numerous events come to mind. Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, have all become martyrs in the fight for civil rights in the United States and an end to racial discrimination. People in this country often stress that we live in “the land of the free and the home of the brave,” but in reality, that doesn’t seem to be the case. As recently as two weeks ago, one can see racial profiling continues to be a significant issue in the United States. On April 4, Walter Scott, a 50 year-old black man was stopped for a broken taillight in North Charleston, South Carolina. Though this stop continues to be contested as racial profiling, Scott eventually attempted to flee the scene and was subsequently fatally shot by officer Michael Slager. In addition, when footage of the shooting arose on the internet, Officer Slager can be seen planting a taser on Scott as he bled out on the ground, proof that Slager’s original report, that Scott had stolen his taser, was false. Unfortunately, this is just one of many cases in which it seems that blacks have been targeted by law enforcement. Another instance of this supposed targeting can be seen in the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. Brown, an 18 year-old black man, was shot by officer Darren Wilson of the Ferguson

Police Department (FPD). While questions surround what actually occurred that fateful day, Ferguson erupted into a full-fledged riot as the black community of the town contested Brown’s killing as racially motivated. In addition, issues arose within the FPD and how they carried out their duty of “protecting” the citizens of Ferguson. In his findings for the U.S Justice Department reported by the Washington Post, Attorney General Eric Holder found that in 88% of the instances in which FPD used force, the victim was Africa-American. Likewise, African-Americans in Ferguson are 2.07 times more likely to have their vehicle searched, yet they are 26% less likely to have contraband items. In light of these instances, one can see that racial tensions in this country remain high. However, shootings are not the only circumstances of racism in recent events. A few weeks ago, video surfaced of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity at the University of Oklahoma performing a racist chant on their bus as they traveled to their fraternity formal. The startling video showed that not only are there significant racial tensions amongst our parents generations, but ours as well. Many of the students pictured in the video, including Levi Pettit and Parker Rice, were only freshmen at Oklahoma, and are thus not much older than the senior class at New Trier. There is clearly an underlying issue in that racial intolerance and hatred did not stop with the enacting of the Civil Rights Act of 1965, nor with the election of President Obama. Race continues to divide this country, and although we have outlawed the action of racism, we have not transcended the ideas of racism that continue to haunt our nation.

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