

Beverly Hills Weekly

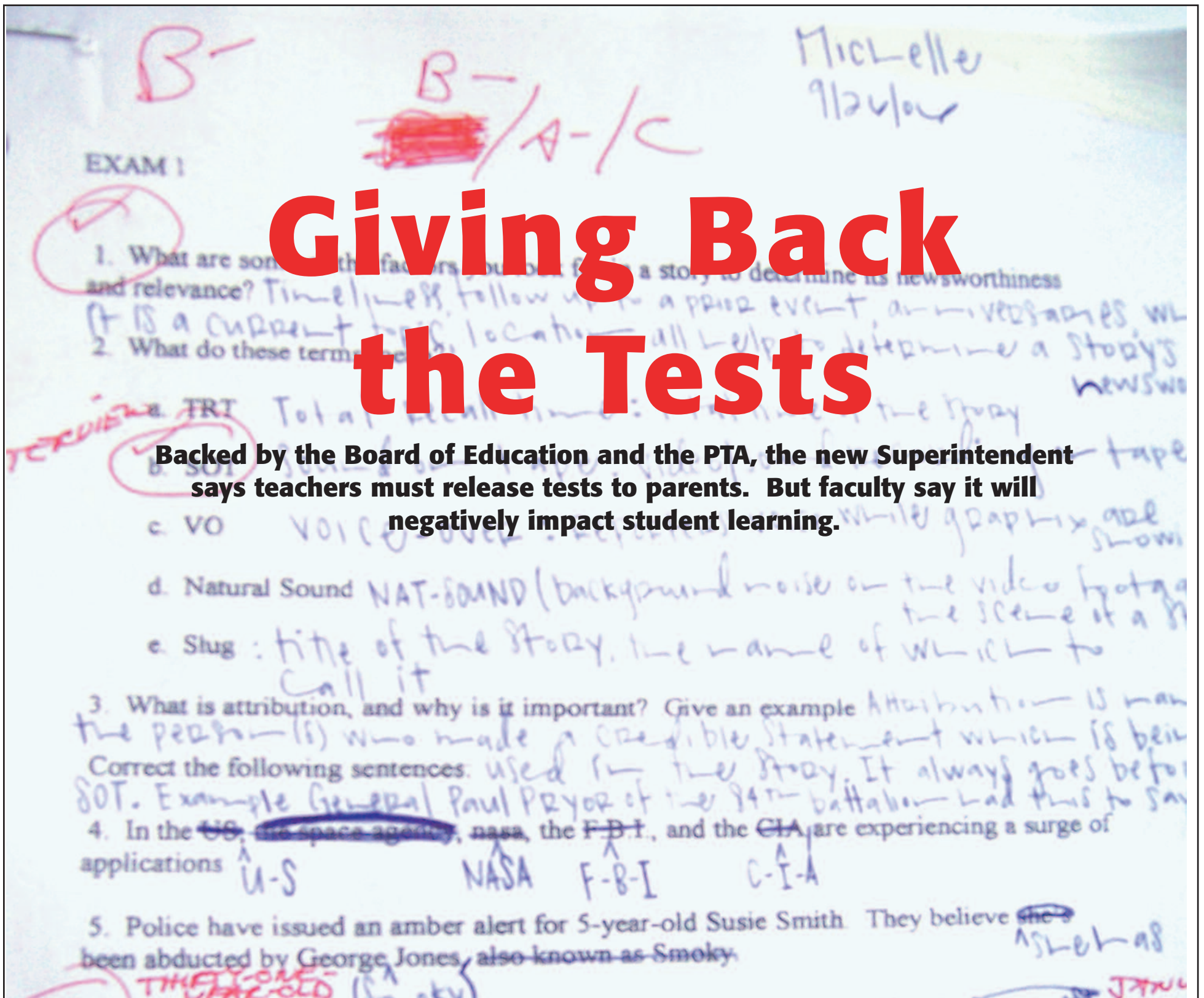
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Issue 375 • December 7 - December 13, 2006

Giving Back the Tests

Backed by the Board of Education and the PTA, the new Superintendent says teachers must release tests to parents. But faculty say it will negatively impact student learning.





letters & email

Why All This Anger?

In issue #374 Rudy Cole says:

“The Wallis Annenberg Performing Arts Center parking plan (two levels of parking surrounding the old post office building...and ‘hopefully to paid for by the city’) would not only benefit the center but bring much needed additional space to an under-parked section of the city.

Where was Rudy when the Canon Drive city parking garage in the 400 North block was being debated?

At the time the proposed theater development stated they were counting on the proposed new city parking structure for convenient area parking for patrons to the theatre. At the same time Vicki & MeraLee said they were on the “same page” as the area merchants.

No one in their right mind can now explain how the four stories of the parking building above ground ended up with retail

tenants and a language school. I suppose that is all you can expect with City Council members that have no previous training but negotiate real estate development as was proven again recently with the Montage development.

*Harry Vardon
Beverly Hills*

Mr. Cole’s creative approach to journalism concerning the Beverly Hills North Homeowners Association probably comes from the fact that he does not attend the group’s meetings, but chooses to critique the group’s activities anyway. “Why All This Anger?”, the title of his column, demonstrates my point. He creates a straw man and then writes an article knocking it down.

What he perceives as anger is the frustration that comes when people feel they have no voice in decisions being made by our elected officials.

Cole is entitled to his opinions, and I hope he will continue to write about us and even come to the meetings, but I would ask him to control the creativity when it comes to the name of our group: we are the Beverly Hills North Homeowners Association, which is BHNHA for short, and not North HOA, or NHOA or North Association.

*Nancy Barth
Beverly Hills*

See Rudy’s response in his column on page 8.

WHAT’S ON YOUR MIND?

You can write us at:
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Beverly Hills, CA 90212

You can fax us at:
310.887.0789

email us at:
editor@bhweekly.com



SNAPSHOT



Photo: Judy Okun

"A TIME TO REMEMBER" SOUTH BEVERLY DRIVE

Friends gather at a vigil to remember Beverly High junior Vahagn Setian, who passed away after a car accident last Saturday. See story on page 3.

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Community Mourns Student's Death

Police continue investigation into the car crash on South Beverly Drive.
By Marissa Pendergrass

Funeral services were held yesterday for Vahagn Setian, a junior at Beverly High, who was killed last Saturday after a fatal car accident on South Beverly Drive.

Police are investigating why three teenagers were riding with a 26-year old television actor in his Land Rover. The vehicle was heading Northbound on Beverwil Drive crossing over Olympic Boulevard when the vehicle hit the center median and struck a tree on the 300 block of South Beverly Drive, in front of Islands restaurant.

No other vehicles were involved and South Beverly Drive was closed for approximately four hours while police conducted their initial investigation.

Lane Garrison, a supporting actor on the Fox-TV Drama "Prison Break", was behind the wheel and "displayed symptoms of alcohol intoxication" when he was questioned by police, said Beverly Hills police Lt. Mitch McCann.

All three juveniles were rushed to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center by the paramedics. Shortly after their arrival at Cedars, Setian, 17, succumbed to his injuries. The two 15-year old female passengers, who do not attend Beverly, were critically wounded.

One female was released from the hospital under stable condition but "the other one has been hospitalized in serious condition," Lt. McCann said.

"In 2006, we have had six traffic related fatalities, however this is the only one involving juveniles," Lt. McCann said.

Garrison was treated at Century City Hospital for his injuries and police are investigating his impairment at the time of the accident. "Mr. Garrison is not hospitalized and has been released to recover," Lt. McCann said.

Alcohol containers were removed from the SUV and detectives are awaiting the results from a blood-alcohol test that Garrison took the night of the accident. "Everything is still under investigation and we do not want to comment," Lt. McCann said in regard to the speed of the vehicle at the time of the accident.

Garrison's publicist Catherine Olim at PMK Public Relations in West Hollywood did not return the Weekly's call to discuss the accident.

Students at Beverly High organized an afternoon ceremony on Monday with an open mic to vent their sadness and confusion over the loss of Setian.

"He has touched all of us and there are few students at the high school that we would all be out here on the front lawn showing this much concern," Associated Student Body President Josh Tucker said.

A moment of silence was held for Setian and students wiped away their tears as his friends spoke about the great memories

"He has touched all of us and there are few students at the high school that we would all be out here on the front lawn showing this much concern,"
-Associated Student Body President Josh Tucker

they have of him.

Grief counselors organized a crisis team on campus to help students cope with the tragedy and released students early for a memorial at the crash site.

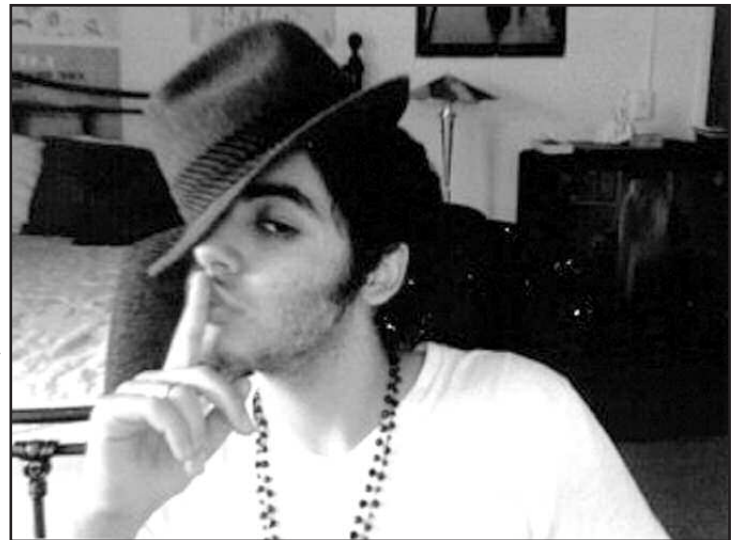
Beverly High students wore green to school in honor of Setian's favorite color after word spread among students over the weekend. The former water polo player, guitarist and drama student, was known for his affinity for green clothing and loveable personality.

Jonathan Pony, a junior at Beverly High, was one of his best friends and met him in water polo summer training their sophomore year.

"I spent a lot of time with 'V' and he's a really special kid, I love him a whole lot and I really miss him and I'm always going to," he said.

Students were reminded of a similar tragedy in 2004 when former Beverly High student Elana Rosenberg was permanently disabled as a result of a car accident on Sunset Boulevard.

Another former Beverly High student Pedram Kashani was killed in 1999 by a fatal car crash as he was making a left onto Whittier Drive from Wilshire Boulevard when a delivery truck plowed over his



Beverly High student Vahagn Setian

BMW.

"He just touched the lives of a lot of different types of people, not just your athlete or just your kid in the play, if you look out there you'll see all walks of life," Principal J. Guidetti said at the memorial at Beverly High.

When asked what his closest friends and fellow students needed, Guidetti said, "Students wanted a time and a place that coincided with the alleged time of his death which was at 11:50 at night and so they wanted to hold a vigil at that time."

Guidetti met with the Setian family Monday morning and said, "They are very much appreciative of all the support. There have been over 400 students that have come through their door and they just find it remarkable."

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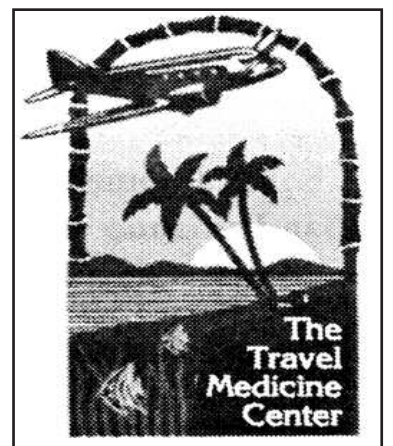
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2007 BUSINESS TAX RENEWALS

November 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Chris Castner
310.285.2430

2007 BUSINESS TAX RENEWALS

The City of Beverly Hills announced this week that 2007 Business Tax renewal forms are being mailed to all registered businesses in the city.

Business taxes are due, in full, by the January 31, 2007 deadline. Unpaid taxes become delinquent on February 1, 2007. Penalty and interest charges accrue on late registrations at a monthly rate of 10% and 1.5%, respectively.

Section 3-1-201 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code requires all businesses located or operating in the city to register and pay their taxes each calendar year. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in an estimated tax liability and legal prosecution.

For information regarding business tax renewals/registrations, please contact the City's Administrative Services Department at 310.285.2427.



BHHS Athlete Signs With Stanford

Norman boys' soccer team wins opener.

By Steven Herbert

Beverly High runner Ashley Menzies has signed a letter of intent to accept an athletic scholarship from Stanford, the school announced last week.

Menzies has won the Ocean League girls' 200 and 400 meter championships in each of her three years with the Normans and was the 2006 Mt. San Antonio College Relays seeded 400 champion.

"Ashley is a versatile all around sprinter with Pac-10 competitive marks sprint marks," Stanford Director of Track & Field Edrick Floreal said. "She will be an instant contributor at the national level on both of our relays."

Menzies is part of what Floreal, in his ninth season with the Cardinal program, called "our best and most complete recruiting class ever."

Boys' Soccer

South Bay/Westside Tournament Beverly Hills 3, Playa Del Rey St. Bernard 1

Sophomore forward Erik Munzer scored all three goals for the Normans as they opened their season with a victory in the pool play game Nov. 28 at St. Bernard. Munzer scored his first goal in the final minute of the 40-minute first half off Sam Forrest's assist.

Munzer headed in a cross from Scott Schwartz in the 50th minute to give Beverly Hills a 2-1 lead. Romeo Patroni began the scoring sequence with a steal in the right corner, followed by a pass to S c h w a r t z . Munzer headed in Jack Tiryakan's corner kick in the 75th minute for his third goal.

The Vikings scored their goal in the 12th minute.

The Normans led 33-6 in shots and 15-6 in shots on goal.

Beverly Hills goalkeeper David Roston made five saves.

Midfielder Daniel Kohen, Munzer, defender-midfielder Ryan Neman and defender Jake Weissberg, drew praise for their play for the Normans from coach Steve Rappaport.

Lakewood Mayfair 4, Beverly Hills 1

Schwartz scored off Munzer's throw-in in the seventh minute in a pool play game last Thursday at Nickoll Field.

The Monsoons scored in the 36th, 44th, 51st and 73rd minutes.

Shortly after Mayfair took a 2-1 lead, a shot by Munzer hit the goalpost. "The whole momentum would have changed if we put that one in," Rappaport

said.

Munzer "played very well again," Rappaport said, who also praised Patroni for his play.

Both teams took eight shots. Roston made four saves.

What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play at Los Angeles Loyola today at 3:15 p.m. and Los Angeles Windward Monday at 3 p.m. in South Bay/Westside Tournament games and play at Torrance Bishop Montgomery Saturday at 11 a.m. in a nonleague game.

Girls' Soccer

South Bay/Westside Tournament West Torrance 6, Beverly Hills 0

Playing without three starting defenders, the Normans opened the season by allowing four goals in the first half and two in the second in a pool play game Nov. 27 at West Torrance.

"We broke down defensively," Beverly Hills coach Ryan Franks said. "We couldn't keep up with their speed."

Norman midfielders Rachel Kove and Becca Rosen drew praise for their play from Franks.

Torrance 2, Beverly Hills 0

The Normans allowed a goal in each half Nov. 29 at Torrance.

On the two goals, "they outfought us in our box," Franks said.

"They wanted it a little more," Franks said. "They were a little more aggressive, so we need to be a little more urgent in our defensive 18-yard box."

However, "there were many more positives in this game," than the opener, Franks said. "We played 150 percent better than the game before," Franks said. "We created many more opportunities," with at least two shots hitting the crossbar.

Sophomore forward Alexa Block "played exceptionally well" and defender Ashley Menzies "played great" in her season debut, Franks said.

What's Next?

The Normans are scheduled to play host to Manhattan Beach Mira Costa Friday in a nonleague game, and Gardena Serra Monday and South Torrance Wednesday in South Bay/Westside Tournament games at Nickoll Field beginning at 6 p.m.

Beverly Hills is also scheduled to play Lawndale Saturday at 8:50 a.m. in a consolation bracket game of the South Holiday Tournament at South Torrance High School.

Boys' Basketball

22nd Annual Simi Valley Varsity Tipoff Classic

Beverly Hills 71, West Hills Chaminade 59

Cosmo Morabbi scored 26 points and Percy Miller 19 for the Normans in a first-round game at Camarillo High School Nov. 28.

Beverly Hills led the Eagles, 20-17 at the end of the first quarter, 39-31 at half-time and 47-41 entering the fourth quarter.

Julius Von Hanzlik added seven points, Cliff Frazier six, Michael Harding and Jerome Johnson four each, Demontae Flint three and Sejin Park two for the Normans.

Goleta Dos Pueblos 59, Beverly Hills 38

The Normans trailed 27-25 at halftime, but were outscored 18-4 in the third quarter and 16-7 in the fourth in a championship quarterfinal Nov. 29 at Camarillo High School.

Morabbi scored nine of his 21 points in the first quarter, as Beverly Hills outscored the Chargers, 16-9.

Dos Pueblos outscored the Normans, 16-11, in the second quarter, with Morabbi, Flint and Von Hanzlik all making three-point baskets and Miller accounting for their other points with a basket.

Von Hanzlik finished with six points, Johnson and Miller four each and Flint three.

Lancaster 52, Beverly Hills 49

The Normans missed a potentially game-winning shot with 10 seconds left in regulation and Teilden McKissic turned a rebound into a three-point play as time expired for the Eagles in a fifth-place semifinal last Thursday at Simi Valley High School.

Beverly Hills led 40-34 entering the fourth quarter, but were outscored, 8-2, over the final eight minutes of regulation.

The Normans trailed 15-7 at the end of the first quarter, but outscored Lancaster, 17-7, in the second quarter to take a 24-22 halftime lead. Morabbi and Von Hanzlik each scored seven points in the quarter.

Morabbi scored 30 points, including all seven of Beverly Hills' overtime points. Von Hanzlik added 10, Frazier six, Tenzin Soepa two and Ralph Batac one.

What's Next?

The Normans were to play Ventura Buena in a consolation quarterfinal of the Beverly Hills Invitational Basketball Tournament Wednesday in a game set to begin after the Beverly Hills Weekly's deadline.

If Beverly Hills won, it would play the winner of today's Culver City-Los Angeles Hamilton game in a consolation semifinal Friday at 3:30 p.m. A Norman loss would match them against the Culver City-Hamilton loser Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

sports cont. on page 9

Digestion Problems?

"Free Report Reveals The Shocking Truth About the "secret" Treatment Your Doctor Probably Doesn't Know...And Likely Hopes You Never Learn..."

BEVERLY HILLS – A new, free report has recently been released that reveals the "untold story" behind digestion problems. Digestion Problems misdiagnosis and mistreatment is rampant and leads to countless years of unnecessary suffering. This free report reveals a natural procedure that is giving digestion problem sufferers their "lives back." - with "miraculous" results for many. If you suffer from digestion problems you need this no B.S., no "gimmicks" free report that is giving hope to digestion problem sufferers everywhere. For your free copy, call toll-free 1-800-713-6950, 24 hr. recorded message.

briefs

2007 City Council Candidates File

Candidates have pulled nomination papers for the upcoming city council elections to be held on Tuesday, March 6, 2007. Incumbents Steve Webb and Jimmy Delshad both filed their nomination papers with the city clerk. Non-incumbents that have pulled nomination papers include Shahram Melamed, Nancy Krasne and Maggie Soleimani. Krasne was the first non-incumbent to file her nomination papers with the city clerk.

The period to file will close on Friday, December 8th. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 20 registered Beverly Hills voters and a maximum of 30.

Honoring Israeli Leadership in Los Angeles

Last Sunday the Century Plaza hotel held a gala night sponsored by StandWithUs.com to honor the Israel's Consul General Ehud Danoch. Since his arrival three years ago, this is the first time he has been honored for representing the country of Israel in Los Angeles. Dignitaries including Zev Yaroslavsky and Sheriff Baca attended, Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad was a Co-Chair of the Event and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa made a speech in support of Israel.

Honoring Israeli Leadership in Los Angeles



Left to right: Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Vice Mayor Jimmy Delshad and honoree Ehud Danoch, General Consul of Israel.

Environmental Award for 9900 Wilshire

United States Green Building Council-Los Angeles chapter (USGBC-LA) recognized Beverly Hills' New Pacific Realty company last Friday with its second annual Visionary Leadership Award for its dedication to sustainable design with the 9900 Wilshire building which is set to open in 2009. The USGBC-LA held its second annual "Swing into Green" gala at Union Station in downtown Los Angeles which honors leaders in the community that are committed to making better places to live through smarter planning, better public policy, and greener development.

"We are honored to receive this prestigious award from the USGBC-LA, which is the definitive voice for green building in the United States," David P. Margulies

said, CEO of New Pacific Realty.

The 9900 Wilshire building will become the first privately financed Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certified building in the Western United States using 25 percent less energy, 50 percent less water and emitting fewer greenhouse gases as compared to surrounding residential buildings.

House of Blues Thanksgiving Day Feeding



Photo: Gary Greene

Top Row: Event participant, Sylvia St. James, Jennifer Chadorchi, Fereshteh Chadorchi, Rachel Assil. Middle Row: Jason Chadorchi, Diana Assil, and friend. Bottom Row: Abe Oheb, Bijan Chadorchi, Kimberly, Ruby King, Viola Edwards, Jack Hamler.

House of Blues Thanksgiving Day Feeding

The West Hollywood Food Coalition and local organizations volunteered for the Thanksgiving Day feeding event at the House of Blues on Sunset Boulevard providing a holiday dinner for 1,150 people. House of Blues sponsored the event and provided entertainment by The Sunday

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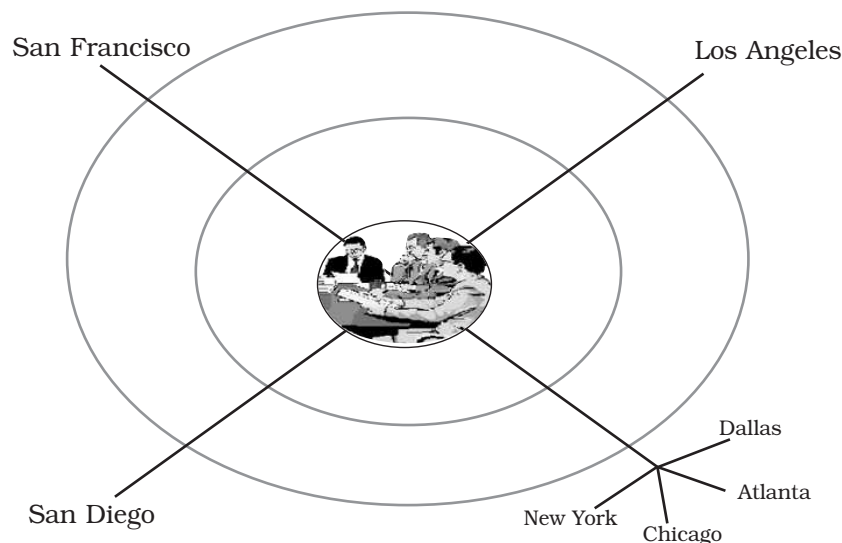
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briefs cont. from page 5

Brunch Gospel Choir.

The West Hollywood Food Coalition will hold a Christmas Dinner at the CBS Commissary at 7800 Beverly Boulevard from Noon-2:00 p.m. on December 25. To volunteer or for more information call (310) 288-0090.

Royal Crown Celebration at Mikimoto

The Mikimoto store of Beverly Hills hosted a cocktail reception to honor the 2007 Tournament of Roses Rose Queen and her Royal Court last Friday night. The official Mikimoto crown and tiaras which were designed for the queen and her court will be featured at the 118th Pasadena Tournament of Roses on Monday, January 1st 2007 at 8:00 a.m.

The Rose Queen crown is handmade by Mikimoto's master jeweler in Japan and contains diamonds and pearls valued in excess of \$100,000. The six Royal Court Tiaras are valued in excess of \$45,000 also featuring diamonds and pearls.

Royal Crown Celebration at Mikimoto



Left to right: Bernard Barbilla, Mikimoto Beverly Hills Store Manager; Mary McCluggage, 2007 Rose Queen; Christina Barsamian, Rose Princess; Paul Holman, 2007 Tournament of Roses President.

Environmental Award for 9900 Wilshire



Left to Right: Bharat Patel, Ed Begley, Jr., David P. Margulies, Arnold S. Rosenstein, Jim Crawford, Richard Meier.

New Adult Courses for Winter Session

Beverly Hills Adult School will offer 50 new courses when Winter term begins on January 8th. Brochures were mailed to residents and registration began Wednesday, December 6th.

Many courses are multi-level and are offered on Saturdays for added convenience. New classes include a variety of interests including personal finance, art,

design, fitness, dance, mental health and photography.

Beverly Hills Parent University, created to motivate parents in assisting their child/children through the educational process, will hold four meetings at the Beverly Hills Library next year. Meetings will be held on Thursdays in February and March (the 8th and 22nd of both months) from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. featuring classes

on parenting teens, creative and successful tactics, and children with AD/HD. A Citizenship Test Preparation class will be offered to ESL (English as a Second Language) students. For more information call (310) 551-5150.

Firefighters Help Out in Ventura

Beverly Hills Firefighters were called out "on immediate need" Sunday after-

noon to assist in battling the Shekell wildfire in Ventura County that burned more than 10,000 acres and five Moorpark homes, Battalion Chief Ray Navarro said. Two engine groups of eight firefighters were fighting spot fires and constructing a containment line around the fire. When the fire began, homes and residents were threatened.

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policeblotter & arrestsummary

December 5, 2006

Loss: \$6,300

Burglary: Occurred at 1239 on 11/30/06 in the 200 block of South Doheny Drive. Unknown suspect(s) used force to gain entry to the location. Suspect realized the victim was inside the residence, suspect fled the location undetected.

Grand Theft: Occurred between 1000 and 1005 on 11/30/06 in the 300 block of North Rodeo Drive. Suspect: Male White, 71, 6'2", 183 lbs., gray hair and brown eyes. Suspect walked away with victim's property while victim was conducting inventory.

Loss: \$6,350

Occurred between 0745 and 1730 on 11/29/06 in the 9900 block of Durrant Drive. Unknown suspect(s) used force to gain entry to the location. Suspect fled the location undetected.

Occurred between 1815 and 1915 on 11/30/06 in the 300 block of South Beverly Drive. Unknown suspect(s) removed victim's property from her purse which was left unattended at the location. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Loss: Unknown

Loss: \$4,000

Occurred between 1500 and 2100 on 11/28/06 in the 100 block of North La Peer Drive. Unknown suspect(s) used force to gain entry the location. Suspect(s) removed property and fled the location undetected.

Occurred between 1230 and 0700 on 11/29/06 in the 100 block of North Crescent Drive. Unknown suspect(s) entered the location through an unsecured door and removed property. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Loss: \$1,090

Loss: \$1,390

Occurred between 1845 on 11/27/06 and 0843 on 11/28/06 in the 8700 block of Wilshire Blvd. Unknown suspect(s) entered the location and removed property. Suspect(s) fled the location undetected.

Identity Theft: Occurred between 0800 and 1230 on 12/01/06 in the 8700

Grand Theft: block of Charleville Blvd. Suspect: Female with dark hair. No further description. Suspect removed victim's property which was left unattended at the location. Suspect fled the location.

Loss: \$150

Battery: Occurred between 1430 and 1445 on 12/02/06 in the 9600 block of Sunset Blvd. Suspect #1: Male White, 56, 5'7", 180 lbs., gray hair and brown eyes. Suspect #2: Male White, 20-30, 5'7", 170 lbs., brown hair and brown eyes. Victim was seated at the location when the two known suspects approached him and struck him several times in the facial area. Suspects fled the location.

Occurred between 1300 and 1304 on 11/29/06 in the alley of 100 block of South Crescent Drive. Suspect: Male White, mid 40's, 5'10", 180 lbs., black hair and brown eyes. Victim and suspect were involved in an argument when the suspect exited his vehicle and pushed the victim. Suspect fled the location.

Larceny/Theft: Occurred between an unknown time on 09/27/06 and 1415 on 11/29/06 in the 300 block of South Rexford Drive. Unknown suspect(s) used victim's ATM card to withdraw cash and purchase goods.

Loss: \$3,133

Identity Theft: Occurred between 1200 and 1430 on 11/29/06 in the 600 block of South Western Avenue. Unknown suspect(s)

entered the bank and attempted to cash a check.

Arrests: WOOD, DANIEL, 22, of West Los Angeles, arrested on 12/04/06 for making/passing fictitious checks.

FELDER, HOWARD ONEAL, 47, of Los Angeles, arrested on 12/04/06 for exhibiting deadly weapon other than a firearm.

LIPTON, LLOYD LANGFORD, 49, transient, arrested on 12/04/06 for petty theft.

HAMEDANY, LEILA MAHBOB, 34, of Beverly Hills, arrested on 12/03/06 for inflicting corporal injury on spouse.

EBRAHIMI, SHOHREH JAVAHERI, 45, of Beverly Hills, arrested on 12/03/06 for criminal threats.

BARNEY, NICHOLAS, 45, transient, arrested on 12/02/06 for public intoxication.

GEVORGIAN, ARTUR, 25, of Arcadia, arrested on 12/02/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

KELLER, CAPRIS INDIRA, 40, of Beverly Hills, arrested on 12/02/06 for a felony warrant.

TSIBOUKAS, EFTHEMIOS ALEXANDER, 27, of Long Beach, arrested on 12/02/06 for driving under the influence of alcohol.

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from the hills of beverly



Time Warner Shuts Us Down

And other winners and losers of the week.

By Rudy Cole

Without any real notice, all Time Warner email system abruptly shut down Monday or Tuesday, depending on your area, and will not be functioning until later this week. If you sent me a nasty note and I didn't respond, pray for a return of Adelphia. They may have been right wing extremists, but they made the trains, or in this case, cable service run on time.

Seriously, I am not able to access many messages I hope will be saved if and when they work out the changes. One series of emails I can not now respond to raised some personnel issues in the police department. I know some of the people involved, but I have no idea who sent me the internal personnel letters via email or the merits of the complaints raised. I would prefer that whoever sent me the material, do so by making sure I know their names, not just the names of the person who had an issue. I would then be more able to discuss the problems with the chief and the police association. Naturally, we will protect all sources.

Having said that and with full sympathy for anyone who faces issues that could change their careers, and not able to judge the merits of the dispute, I do have confidence in the integrity and ability of Chief **David Snowden** and the leadership of the police association.

Being a chief of police means you serve many constituencies. First, you must convince your community that you are able and dedicated to protecting and serving. In Beverly Hills, the chief reports to the city manager, but must also have the confidence of the members of the city council. Snowden has all of that.

Los Angeles police leadership is more complex and the constituencies more diverse. The Los Angeles Chief reports to a police commission, the mayor, city council, an outside oversight team and the community. However, the chief must have the confidence of the men and women of his department, and they have enormous political clout. Chief **William Bratton** understands that role far better than his predecessor. It means walking a tight line when issues of excessive force are raised, as

they were recently. If the Chief jumps on the rush to condemn, his ability to lead will be diminished as will his effectiveness. On the other hand, he must be able to respond to community concerns.

Side note: When there is television coverage of incidents, no matter what the merits, the over and over again showing of the police action without any ability to assess what might have preceded, is terribly inflammatory and irresponsible. Yes, police should be accountable, but within the context of due process.

A reader complains that this column (see Letters on page 2) was silent on the problems created by the planning and use of the D Lot, (north Beverly and north Canon Drives). On the contrary, we strongly urged the city to fulfill its objective of only renting space to retail uses. That is not what has happened and parking is not serving the shoppers and retailers as well as it should be because of the large demand by non-retail tenants, including a language school. On the other hand we do have a new book store and parking inventory has increased. As for the lot, the design is a maze as are the most of the city parking structures. And don't get me started on two hour free parking.

What has contributed to a major loss of parking in the city? A relatively new phenomena: Day time valet parking. Until about 10

years ago, restaurants and other merchants were not given day time permit parking- now hundreds of spaces are set aside for eateries and other. Some, such as Spago, take up as many as eight spaces. Even small diners now have valet parking at night and many for lunch. There are also many loading only spaces and commercial only signs in front of businesses and offices that have been closed for years or occupied for different purposes.

We don't lose parking revenues when meters are removed for valet parking - the city recovers revenue from the permit holders and a case can be made that valet parking reduces traffic since patrons aren't circling the block looking for a parking space. But many of these valet spaces are not fully used, sometimes not at all.

Its time for the Parking and Traffic Commission to call for a study of all the non-meter spaces and the possible return to public use of as many as possible.

Many of the school's teachers, including their association, are locked in a very unfortunate dispute with the board and some school parents over an issue that should have been compromised (See cover story on page 10).

What the board and some parents want is the actual text of tests and not just the grades of students. Teachers argue that giving the material violates their rights as the creative instrument and also makes it easy for following classes to learn just the answers to the tests.

A possible compromise should have made it possible for tests in the sciences to be

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obtained, but probably not tests for anything else. Math and chemistry tests could more easily be changed each year, but not tests on history, for example.

The teachers are far more active partners in the education process that employees of the city are in municipal programs. Mostly, this works to the advantage of the students, but there is a line: The school board is elected to carry out the educational goals of the community and they set policies and the administrators are obligated to enact. Put another way, teachers have tenure, but board members can be ousted very easily at the next election.

It would also help both the teachers and the community, if their association reached out more effectively. One of the reasons we have strong support for police and fire is the work of their employee associations in the city. (It also makes for better services).

The teachers also deserve far more credit for their contribution to the schools. But the buck stops at the board and, mostly, this is a very excellent board and has been well served by its retiring president, **Myra Lurie**.

Many years ago when, as president of the Greystone Foundation, I proposed the formation of a citizen support group to be called "Friends of Greystone," some of my board members warned this could mean the end of the Foundation.

The Foundation was created as an independent, city-appointed committee charged with finding a cultural use for the historic mansion. Under the leadership of **Fred Nicholas**, a very doable museum was

obtained that would have housed the Weissman collection, one of the finest modern art accumulations in the world. **Fred Weissman** was also prepared to fund restoration of the mansion and provide a world renowned curator. The city dropped the ball, not the Foundation.

But some of my fellow board members were right. The foundation was dissolved in part because of the Friends, but mainly because the Recreation and Parks Commission wanted advisory jurisdiction of Greystone. With that action, the challenge of finding a museum or other permanent, cultural use was abandoned.

However, exciting things have happened to Greystone, including restoration and repairs and many great programs, including the annual design and garden show, Theatre Forty, concerts and much more.

The Friends have become strong organizational advocates for Greystone and I am still pleased it was created. The whole board deserves applause for their contribution to the city including president **Lou Milkowski**. Much can be expected from the Friends' new president, J3

Susan Rosen, who has the confidence of the Friend's board and the city staff. Special thanks to my former board member colleague, **Marjorie Fasman**, who made a generous contribution enabling a recent improvement.

Rudy Cole served for eight years as a member and chair of the city's Recreation & Parks Commission. He was also President of the Greystone Foundation and served on three other city committees. Rudy can be reached at: Rudy@bhweekly.com.

sports cont. from page 4

**Wrestling
Chaminade Duals
Studio City Harvard-Westlake 50,
Beverly Hills 27**

Heavyweight Weston Cage recorded a pin in 50 seconds and Tal Dahan, wrestling at 135, recorded the Normans' other on-mat victory with a 15-10 decision.

Calabasas 54, Beverly Hills 39

George Abraham (130), Jake Marchiafava (171), Klar Kuo (215) and Cage recorded pins for the Normans while Justin Brezhnev, wrestling at 125, won 8-6 in overtime for Beverly Hills.

Beverly Hills 66, Los Angeles Salesian 21

Brian Kim (152), Daniel Berman (160) and Marchiafava all recorded pins for the Normans, who also won seven matches by forfeit.

One scheduled match was a double forfeit when neither team could field a wrestler.

Beverly Hills 70, Santa Barbara 24

Kim, Marchiafava and Cage recorded pins, while Abraham won an 18-5 decision for the Normans, who also won six matches by forfeit.

Beverly Hills 42, Sylmar 39

John Rogers (103), Brezhnev and Marchiafava recorded pins for the Normans, who also won four matches by

forfeit.

The meet was held Nov. 25 at Chaminade High School in West Hills.

Girls' Basketball

Beverly High will face Norwalk or Compton Centennial today at Norwalk High School in a Norwalk Tournament game. The opponent and time will be determined by the Normans' first-round game Wednesday against Santa Ana Valley that began after the Beverly Hills Weekly's deadline.

Beverly Hills is also scheduled to play Norwalk Tournament games Friday and Saturday and face North Torrance Wednesday at 8 p.m. in the Valley Christian Tournament.

Girls' Water Polo

Beverly High is scheduled to play at Orange Tuesday and Montebello Schurr Wednesday at East Los Angeles College in nonleague games beginning at 3 p.m.

Additional coverage is available on www.bhweekly.com.

Steven Herbert also covers sports for the Los Angeles Times and The Associated Press. He welcomes feedback and suggestions. He can be reached by e-mail at StvHerbert@aol.com, by telephone at (310) 275-7943 or by fax at (310) 273-4519.



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coverstory

GIVING BACK THE TESTS

Backed by the Board of Education and the PTA, the new Superintendent says teachers must release tests to parents. But faculty say it will negatively impact student learning.

By Ryan Vaillancourt

Superintendent Kari McVeigh issued a district-wide directive last Wednesday that requires teachers, upon request, to release completed exams to parents within 48 hours of the initial in-class exam review with the student.

What seems like a routine request to some has provoked heated protest from many teachers who claim they were not appropriately consulted by district administration and that the test release policy jeopardizes test security.

McVeigh, recently appointed by the Board of Education, says the policy aims to strengthen the partnership between parents and teachers.



Superintendent Kari McVeigh

“Our goal is to make sure that assessments are used to the benefit of students, and that’s also about the ability for parents to be able to participate in the process,” McVeigh said. “They have that right, as they should.”

While teachers maintain that parents are encouraged to review test materials in class with them, they say that releasing the tests will be counterproductive.

“Once you no longer have control of [the test] you can no longer consider it to be a valid assessment because it’s entirely possible that one or more children now have access to that material and to those questions,” said Stewart Horowitz, a social studies teacher at the high school.

The teachers’ concern is that students who see a test before they take it may study a limited selection of material, or worse, they will know the answers without grasping how they are derived.

The district has pushed the test release policy since at least the spring of 2005, when parents, including former Boardmember Barry Brucker, raised concerns about withholding math tests from students at the high school. These concerns led to a test release directive in the high school math department, but that policy was later withdrawn by former Beverly High principal Dan Stepenosky after

teachers circulated a petition opposing the policy.

Stepenosky went on to establish a group of high school administrators and teachers called the Assessment Task Force. The group drafted a three page “vision” for assessment at the high school, which touched on multiple assessment methods, including test release. The guideline ultimately left it up to teachers to decide which methods to use.

“[The Assessment Task Force document] has been the order of the day so to speak for the last year,” Beverly Hills Education Association President Chris Bushée said. “Everybody has been working under this document, so when Superintendent McVeigh approached me about this issue in October in one of our first meetings, for me, this was out of the blue.”

At Tuesday’s Board of Education meeting, Bushée called the directive “hastily issued” and derided the superintendent for “swatting away months of cooperation.”

But for parents who want access to their child’s test for use as a study guide, the test release policy is a welcome change and not a surprise. At least a dozen parents went on record at Tuesday’s meeting in support of the directive, including PTA Council Co-Presidents Stacey Raskin and Aviva Laufer.

“This is a long time coming,” Beverly High PTA Co-President Kathi Rothner said. “This is something the parents have been asking for years and years.”

One of those parents is Hayley Kaplan, who has two kids in the district. Both, she said, have been “directly hurt by the tests not coming home.”

“I’m praying that this superintendent is strong enough to not let [the teachers] overturn the ruling,” Kaplan said.

One of Kaplan’s children has struggled with math at the high school and until now, she has paid a tutor to go to the high school to review, but not copy, her son’s test.

“If you have someone that’s going to cheat, they’re hurting themselves,” Kaplan said. “But you can’t hurt the innocent people who generally want to do better because you’re worried about that handful that might be cheating.”

Teachers on the other hand, argue that their credibility as professional educators has been overridden.

Beverly Vista math teacher Mark Frenn said he used to release tests but when the

2005 directive was issued, he reversed his policy in support of the high school math teachers. Since then, he has devoted one class period to reviewing tests with the students.

“Having done both methods, I can tell you that retaining tests is a far superior way of handling this as far as using the test as a learning tool,” he said.

Under the new BHEA President Chris Bushée speaks to the Board of Education Tuesday directive, Frenn and other teachers say they will have to spend too much time making new tests.

“I don’t just throw any old random problems on my test. I really thoughtfully put powerful problems on the test that are going to truly assess the kids’ abilities. That takes time and even in math, there are a limited number of really strong problems,” Frenn said.

Extra time spent creating new tests, Frenn and other teachers say, means less time available for evaluating student performance.

Merle Bauer, who teaches English at Beverly Vista and opposes the directive, said her students’ past record speaks for itself.

“Last year, 88 percent of my students scored Proficient and above on the STAR test in English Language Arts; two years ago, my students ranked 9th in the entire state of California,” Bauer said. “I have been very proud of my students’ success.”

Because the directive requires teachers to release a test only upon a parent’s request, the policy’s unfolding will depend largely on the insistence of parents.

In a special request of their own, Frenn and Bauer sent letters home to their students’ parents on Friday and Monday, urging them not to take advantage of the directive. Beverly Vista Principal Erik Warren responded to the letters in an email to all teachers, asserting that as a matter of policy, all letters sent home must be pre-approved by the principal.

If enough parents choose not to request tests, current teaching practices could go



Under the new BHEA President Chris Bushée speaks to the Board of Education Tuesday

unchanged. But judging by the outpouring of parental support for the directive at Tuesday’s meeting, it seems unlikely. What is sure to last is the rift between teachers and district administration.

BHEA has its executive board meeting today and while members intend to comply with the directive for now, the group will look into copyright issues that could prove the directive to be illegal. Teachers who do not comply risk disciplinary action, but serious consequences are unlikely unless there are multiple infractions.

Tuesday’s meeting was evidence that the test release issue has two sides deeply divided; speakers from either side were met with enthusiastic applause from their supporters in the audience. But only one speaker drew applause from both camps.

Tuesday’s meeting was evidence that the test release issue has two sides deeply divided; speakers from either side were met with enthusiastic applause from their supporters in the audience.

Taking the podium at the very end of public comments, high school choral director Joel Pressman urged a compromise between both sides.

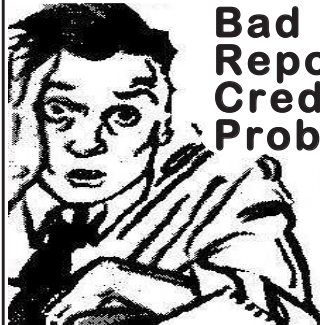
“It’s not black and white,” he said. “It’s gray.”

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