

Carol Hassler Retires After 31 Years By Bene Clear and Maggie Kohl

Carol Hassler doesn't mind changes. In fact, it is her desire to try something new that has driven her decision to retire at the end of this school year after 31 years of teaching at Warrensburg High school.

"It will be hard to leave," says Hassler. "But I want to leave with a bang."

More than just hairdos and music has changed since 1983, when Hassler (previously known as Ms. Lotton) began her journey at WHS, or what is now Sterling Elementary. "Things were definitely different then," says Hassler. "The day began at 8:30, there was no air conditioning, and teachers were allowed to smoke in the teacher's lounge."

Growing up in rural Montgomery City, Missouri, Hassler graduated from Central Missouri State University, earning degrees in English Education, Journalism and Counseling. Leaving behind her plans of becoming an accountant—"too much math"—she began teaching, a choice her high school peers would be shocked to know.

"I was a shy girl [in high school]. . . I could barely get in front of the class without getting nervous."

In her early days of teaching, Hassler remembers the stressful challenge of planning lessons and establishing a teaching style that would share her interest in English with her students. Unlike teachers who replicate lesson plans year after year, Hassler has a different philosophy. "I try to keep the material fresh every year. I always go



back and change some things."

Just in the past year, Hassler ditched her favorite lesson of teaching Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for Elie Weisel's *Night*, a choice she made to mix up the curriculum and "to learn alongside" her sophomore students.

Her evident passion for what she does has influenced students and colleagues alike. During her 29 years as advisor for *The Spirit*, Hassler has developed many friendships with her journalism students.

One particular student, Amanda Shreves, recalls the close knit relationship of the journalism class and Hassler's influence in her high school career—and beyond.

"I tell people about my relationship with her, and they are surprised by how close we are. She understands how students learn and was an important mentor of mine."

Shreves, a 2011 WHS graduate, is currently studying Finance at Truman State University and is using her

voice—a lesson from Hassler—to establish a place for herself in the world. "When writing all of my college papers, I look back and realize how lucky [I was] to have someone like her," says Shreves. "Not everyone has a Ms. Hassler."

Guy Albert, fellow veteran teacher of 29 years and Hassler's classroom neighbor—who describes his first impression of Hassler as "always on the go"—has taken notice of her upbeat teaching technique. "There always seems to be laughter coming from across the hall."

Albert considers Hassler to be not only an incredible teacher, but also a dear friend. "We've grown up together. We've shared major life experiences." After the highs and lows, it will be her constant presence Albert will remember most. "I will miss just her being there."

"It will be hard to leave. But I want to leave with a bang."

Like Albert, teacher Kris Howard has always had a special relationship with Hassler, but from the perspective of both co-worker and former student.

"As a student, I knew that she was one of those teachers that I could go to for more than just school," says Howard.

Today, Howard also has the honor of

working across the hall from his dear friend Ms. Hassler.

"Teaching across the hall from her, she has played the role as Mother Goose by watching out for me. Her personality is just right for our corner of the world. And that's what I'll miss most."

Year after year, past students who visit Hassler remind her of what she considers the most rewarding part of teaching. "[I love it when] students come back and I see how they make a difference."

Returning college students often credit Hassler's 12th grade Techniques of Writing and Composition classes to prepare them for academic writing at the university level. But equipping students with essential writing and critical thinking skills is just the beginning of Hassler's proudest achievements.

"The hope for teachers is that we will touch students' lives," says Hassler. "But what students don't realize is how much they touch ours."

It is her decades of standout students that Hassler will remember far into retirement. "Everybody has a story. Everybody has a talent. My students inspire me every day."

In the years to come, Hassler's plans include traveling (an activity she considers to be her passion outside of teaching) and to win Powerball. If all else fails—"I'll see what UCM has to offer."

5 Reasons *The Breakfast Club* Would Not Work Today

By Rachel Scott



I've wanted to be Molly Ringwald for the last year. It's almost problematic. I wanted to be Ringwald so badly I cut off seven inches of hair and washed my hair with cold water in the hopes of turning it red and curly. I convinced myself some Saturday at 4:37 in the morning, that I wanted my life to be the best John Hughes movie, *The Breakfast Club*. However, after a little bit of research as to what I would have to do to get Saturday school, I realized that there is no way for the majestic beauty of *The Breakfast Club* to be recreated in this day and age. It's extremely upsetting.

For one, none of the teachers at WHS are crazy enough to verbally abuse us and threaten us, or even rock an awesome white suit/black shirt combo for that matter. While reassuring that our teachers do semi-like us, I really do feel like I missed out on a valuable life experience, and the inner leather-jacket-tattooed-alter-ego that I truly am is disappointed.

Another disappointment that prevents my teenage dream of being stuck in the school with the hottest nerd I have ever seen from becoming reality is the technology. Let's be honest: if we were in detention, we'd be trying to sneak a text or beat our Flappy Bird score under the table. We wouldn't be staring into the eyes of the

mysterious basket-case or glancing at the fine criminal causing a ruckus at the table behind us.

Our school isn't even equipped to handle a *Breakfast Club* scenario. Have you looked at the ceiling tiles recently? Those suckers wouldn't even hold a puppy long enough to trot 3.58927 feet, much less a teenager. So long to my dreams of sneaking into the library through the ceiling vents and smoking a joint.

Something I pondered at 4:56 that same Saturday morning was, "Am I a princess, or am I a criminal?" While not exactly the deep soliloquy of *Hamlet*, it does offer a little bit of food for our minds to digest and potentially have indigestion over. Are we still split up enough to have defined social roles? I don't think we are. If you catch me on a bad day, I'm definitely a strong basket-case, but on ACT day, I have the potential to be a brain.

The fifth and final reason why my dreams of being in the 2014 rendition of *Breakfast Club* was pulverized into 63 small pieces is because we don't have a football field by the school, and I have no where else to fist pump while walking away from a successful day of shenanigans?

This is upsetting, people. Now, I have to focus my energy on remaking *Red Dawn*...long live the Wolverines.

Business Department Adds Courses

By Yusr Ghazzi

Teenagers love two things: shopping and video games. To teach students more about these worlds, the business department has developed three new courses for next year: Advertising and Video Game Design I and II.

"Studying advertising is important because it teaches consumers how to not be fooled by the smoke-screen of marketing techniques so consumers can make wise buying decisions," said Mrs. Perry, who will be teaching the course.

Advertising will cover the basic principles of promotion, as well as the role of marketing in society. Students will learn the techniques used by businesses to reach consumers by studying advertisements in various forms of media and by designing their own ads. Students will also plan, budget and create an advertising campaign.

Video Game Design I, taught by Mrs. Meyer, will teach the basics of video game creation.

"Video Game Design will be fun and exciting. It will be a class that really opens students' eyes to how interesting businesses classes can be," said Mrs. Meyer.

Students will become familiar with the programs and skills needed to design video games, and they will make their own working games. The prerequisite for the course is any basic computer class.

Video Game Design II will include instruction on advanced effects and animation configuration.

The new courses will be open to students in grades 10-12.

The classes were added in response to a survey about potential courses given to students in the business department, and the courses will correlate with DECA and FBLA, competitive organizations for students interested in business.

The Fight Against Black History Month

By Bobbi Gums

I can barely find words to explain how relieved I feel now that February, Black History Month, is over because nothing makes me angrier than forced assemblies and lessons that repeat themselves every year. For as long as I can remember, predominately white teachers have been preaching to students about the same watered-down endeavors that African Americans have had to endure. I mean, props to Rosa Parks, but I know what she did already.

It is ridiculous that every year some bald white guy takes the easy way out of Black History by telling us that Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream. Really?! Martin Luther King? How many times do I have to learn the same thing? Black History Month is awkward enough as an African American woman, and schools are making things worse by treating discussing our history as a chore.

I have been forced to endure 18 years of a society that uses the month of February to exploit the history of African Americans, and honestly I think that this needs to come to a stop. Our society has reserved the shortest month of the year to "educate" students on African American inventors, public speakers, and to point out the fact that we have had one black president. Schools and media present a façade that they want

to give credit where it is due and be granted amnesty for past offenses, but most of our society does not know anything relating to black history. It is time to move into a post-racial society that intermixes black history into normal history curriculum.

Of course, people know famous names like Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Barack Obama, but how many people know the story of Condoleezza Rice? Or Elijah McCoy? These people have made huge contributions to Americans, but I guess it isn't important enough to talk about in American History classes. There have been times when I try to talk to people about an African American historical figure and people stare at me as if I were speaking Mandarin. This is embarrassing. Why is it so important that I know about white contributions if people aren't going to take the time to actually learn about black history?

It has gotten to the point where I am fed up with our school systems and the media. If we are going to claim to do something, we need to make sure it is done with the proper respect and dignity that it deserves. Black History Month is becoming a joke. I am requesting that as a generation we make it a priority to stop separating history into race and actually demonstrate the equality that we pride ourselves in.

Voters Asked to Approve Funds for a New Art Center

By Cameron Romesberg

Rumors of a new performing arts center have been circulating the halls of WHS for years, and now those rumors might finally come to fruition. Within the next 3 or 4 years, a brand new performing arts center will be added directly to the front of the high school.

The arts center will have a newer, larger, and vastly improved auditorium. The auditorium will have 800 seats, a stage with a fly loft (which is a system of lines and pulleys suspended above the stage to move backdrops and props quickly, quietly and efficiently around the stage) and much larger spaces for stagecraft and storage for props and costumes.

The old lecture hall that we use for so many activities will become the new band room. The old band room will be renovated and be-

come science labs, something else the school needs.

The new construction will add 70,000 square feet in total and will be built in front of the school, reaching from entrance to entrance. It will extend out over part of the currently existing parking lot and bus drop-off. The parking lot will be extended along with the performing arts center. Both of the old entrances to the school will be covered and a new, more secure entrance will be constructed in their place. The new addition to the school will be built to withstand high-winds; however, it may not withstand extreme winds from tornadoes.

If approved, the bond and levy will cause a raise in taxes of about \$19 dollars per \$100,000 dollars in appraised property value a year.



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Claps & Slaps

#whsclaps #whsslaps

Claps to the Thundercats. Thanks for the spirit, guys!
Slaps to bad sportsmanship. Nice guys finish first.

Claps to iTunes. You supply my music craving.
Slaps to Snow. Staaph it, snow.

Claps to "Carry On, Wayward Son." You make me feel like life is bearable.

Slaps to "Dust In The Wind." It makes me feel like a speck on the horizon of life.

Claps to Jimmy Fallon. You are doing great on "The Tonight Show," babe.

Slaps to Staying up til midnight. There's not enough coffee.

Claps to Prom dress shopping. This is way more work than it should be.

Slaps to Prom pant suits. I can't believe those are real.

Heard in the Halls

#whsheardinthehalls

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- "I don't want to look like a pack of starbursts!"
- "Since when do we talk to walls? I thought we see unicorns."
- "You can't just bask in your own vomit."
- "Cat juices! Cat juices! Cat juices!"
- "I'd trust you with my ear."
- "Could you please, maybe, if it's okay, stop being so grouchy?"
- "My only talent is breathing." "--You have asthma."
- "I hate being sick. It forces me to be nice to people."
- "It's really cold outside" "--Bro, just 'Let It Go.'"
- "I got the USB in on the first try!"
- "No, cannibalism just does not sound attractive to me."
- "You know what would spice up this essay? Some lies."
- "That makes sense because you're a clone."
- "Why did she have a bag on her head?"
- "Jimmy."
- "It's too bad the Bill Nye days are over."
- "My spirit fruit is a coconut."
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What movie are you looking forward to this year?

Man on the Street



"Nothing.
Netflix is
better."

-Gabby Hill '15



"The Nut
Job. It looks
really
funny."

-Austin Taylor '17

Know Thyself

By Julia Rankin

Who am I?

This is possibly the most important question you can ask yourself, but it is one that most of us, including myself, cannot answer.

We live in the busiest society the world has ever known. The Internet, social media, cell phones, and the wide array of available technology have created a culture that revolves around constant interaction. We are compelled to engage in endless contact with the outside world. When we enter high school, we are further thrust into a realm revolving around relentless communication. We spend our time attending social events, meeting new people, and networking with teachers, potential employers, and possible colleges. We spend so much time focusing on the world around us, in fact, that we forget about something much more important—the world within us.

As teenagers, we struggle enough with knowing who we are without these unending distractions. But it seems that society has spent so much time telling us to reach out that it has forgotten to teach us to look within. If we spent more time on introspection, rather than being absorbed in extraneous affairs, maybe we would find ourselves more equipped to deal with our complicated lives.

This concept of understanding the world within us is known as self-awareness. Self-awareness is characterized by the ability to have a clear perception of our thoughts, feelings, motivations, strengths, weaknesses, and beliefs. With self-awareness, we can better understand how the outside world affects us, therefore enabling ourselves to better gauge our responses. As we develop self-awareness, we also develop the ability to make changes in the way we interpret things in our mind. Until you are aware in the moment of how to control your thoughts, emotions, words, and behavior, you will have difficulty making changes in the direction of your life. So if life is really what you make it, then acquiring greater self-awareness will empower us to make our lives the best they can be.

But how does one go about accomplishing self-awareness? The truth is, there are a million and one ways we can come to understand the nuances of who we are. You cannot, however, learn true self-awareness by reading a book or taking a Meyers-Briggs personality test. Some of the ways you can gain this important skill is by sampling new experiences. We often discover new things about ourselves when we're in unusual situations or facing new challenges. Our reactions or responses to new environments, new people, or new demands can help us understand how we deal with some of the more familiar aspects of our lives. A second approach is journaling. Writing down your thoughts and feelings offers the opportunity for introspection. Other methods include yoga, meditation, and asking for external feedback.

No matter how you decide to begin your journey towards greater self-awareness, the key is to take a few moments each day to step back and analyze your intentions and reactions to situations you have experienced. Ask yourself the question "why?" often, and you may find yourself being able to answer a more important question: who am I?



*“The
Fault in
Our Stars.”*

-Ashley Adkisson '16



*“Captain America:
The Winter
Soldier. Because
it's Captain
America.”*

-Rachel Mead '14

A Case on Keeping the Minimum Wage Steady By Conor Tennbus

In the fall of 2013, news broke about a Seattle suburb increasing its minimum wage to \$15 per hour, more than double the federal rate. This surprising increase sparked strikes across the nation, and Fast Food Forward, an advocacy group for fast food workers, began organizing strikes in NYC, Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles. These strikes have spawned slogans such as “Fight for Fifteen” and “Hey! Ho! \$7.40 has to go!” (LA Times).

Despite the number of poignant stories about parents having to raise a family on minimum wage, an increase would not produce any significant economic growth for the nation; indeed, the effects of an increase in minimum wage would hurt the upper and middle classes more than it would help the lower class.

An increase in the minimum wage would eliminate thousands of jobs across the nation. An increase in wages would reduce the amount of labor demanded by employers causing an even larger surplus of available workers. Translated to non-economic terms, this change would increase the unemployment rate, especially among low-wage, low-skilled workers.

Those in favor of increasing

the minimum wage to nine, or even ten, dollars an hour are now pointing to a recent report by the Congressional Budget Office that states a minimum wage of \$10.10 could lift nearly 900,000 people out of poverty; however, the report also showed that nearly 500,000 Americans could lose their jobs (CBO).

While it is true that more people would initially benefit than would lose their jobs, these beneficiaries would not benefit for long.

The economic well being of the 900,000 people affected by an increase in minimum wage would be short lived. Credible economists generally accept the idea that when a company pays its employees more money, the company generates less profit. Thus, in order to maintain steady profits, companies charge more for their provided goods or services.

Once the market adjusts itself, and prices rise to account for the higher minimum wage, the purchasing power of those 900,000 people returns to what it was initially. Moreover, the purchasing power of the upper and middle classes falls since only the lower class received a pay raise.

Soon, the lower class ends up unchanged,

save for the slightly higher paycheck and 500,000 lost jobs, and the middle and upper classes lose purchasing power.

I do empathize with blue-collar workers; in fact, this summer I will be working construc-

tion and making minimum wage. Those who earn the bare minimum are definitely worth more than they are paid. Unfortunately, raising the minimum wage is not the answer.

Hating on Ask.Fm By Sam Brooks



“You know no one likes you, right? You’re so ugly. How many people have you even been with?”

If these things were said in person at school as casually as they were thrown around on Ask.Fm, everyone would call up the anti-bullying campaigns and parents would be lining up outside the door to protest.

Ask.Fm is an online website that many high school students have accounts to, and these accounts let you ask and answer questions. These questions can be asked anonymously, allowing people to write whatever they want without the recipient knowing their identity.

Of course it isn’t all bad, and Ask.Fm can always be used to ask normal, pleasant questions instead of trying to tear other people down.

“I personally like Ask.Fm,” Miriam Hale, ’16, said. “I think it’s a good way to get to know students

at your school.”

However, many students are sending each other hateful messages, full of offensive language and invasive questions. If you choose to create an account, you’re opening yourself up to these possible character attacks.

“I’ve gotten a bunch of annoying messages and people all up in my business,” Jason James, ’15, said. “It’s gotten to the point where it’s hard to ignore.”

Whether or not you add your name to the question is up to you, and the faces behind the hateful messages often remain anonymous.

“I feel like some people don’t have any courage so they have to be anonymous,” James said.

Creating an Ask.Fm account is your decision, but you should always be prepared for the things that may come with it. It’s not only a question and answer site; it’s also used for students to send mean messages to each other behind the face of anonymity.

“It all comes down to the fact that high school kids like to start drama,” Hale said. “And none of them want to deal with the consequences.”

Families Celebrate Lunar New Year By Loan Tran



Coming from a Vietnamese background, Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year by many, is the one of the most important times of the year. All over Asia from China to Korea, Vietnam to Japan, families celebrate the action-packed holiday with tons of laughter, feasting, and family. Much like an American Christmas or New Year's, Lunar New Year is a chance to say goodbye to the past and hello to the future.

Based on the lunar calendar, the 15 day-long festivity falls between January and February every year to celebrate the arrival of spring.

Prior to the first day, sweeping and cleaning is done beforehand in beliefs that it washes away newly arrived luck (an excuse to not do the laundry, folks!). Families ward away the bad luck by decorating their homes in red, symbolizing fire, with paper cutouts and lanterns. With many Asian businesses being closed, people stock up on food to prepare for family feasts with not only the living, but the dead, as well. A celebration in honor of ancestors and elderly, many homes have a family altar where offerings such as fruit are given.

Thanks to Lunar New Year, we actually have a real reason to cause a ruckus and bother the neighbors! In the beginning of the festivity, much noise is produced to keep away spirits through firecrackers, fireworks, burning bamboo sticks, and playing loud instruments. In Chinese and Vietnamese culture, dragons are highly important, signifying strength and serving as a protector against evil. The second day consists of family and friends. This day is typically a favorite because of something we all enjoy: money. Traditionally, married adults gift junior members of the family with red pockets of money in hopes of passing on good luck and fortune. In many Asian cultures, elders are meant to be highly respected, so pockets are advised to not be opened in front of them out of courtesy.

On the third day, people are discouraged from visiting family and friends because, let's all face it, when family gets together, there's bound to be at least one fight and from experience, I can concur (I won the fight by the way). Around the fifth day, shops are back open for business. Depending on the community, some only celebrate the New Year for only two or three days. Traditionally, the fifteenth day is a day of romance; so, ladies and gentlemen, put on that deodorant and turn on that charm because it's time for . . . the lantern festival. Lights and colorful lanterns under the clear night sky; boy, do they sure know how to set the mood! Since women were not allowed to leave during ancient times because of inferiority against men, this makes a perfect time for those singles ready to mingle.

People Need People Skills By Taylor Lakey

Having stage fright is one thing, but not being able to order your own food is a whole different story. People skills are a thing that a lot of us are lacking these days. Many of us are just too involved in our social media, Netflix, cell phones and video games. We would rather sit at home alone and watch our TV shows, or talk to people we've never met in person, online. Everything we do is done with a screen in front of us, so when it is time to put down the laptop or phone, it's like we're in an entirely different world.

Facebook and Twitter were created to help bring friends and family closer together, but what we don't see is that it's actually doing the opposite. We find that it is easier to type what we want rather than say it out loud. It's almost as if we're afraid of our own voice. I have had to order food for friends at a restaurant because they couldn't speak properly to the person that was taking our order. We were only at McDonald's and he couldn't do something as simple as ordering his own food at the counter. I think that it is more embarrassing to not be able to talk in the first place than to talk and say something wrong.

Internet in general is depriving people of learning and improving

people skills. When we are online, we can be whoever we want and say whatever we want, but the moment we are put in a real life situation our minds seem to go completely blank and we sound like a group of uneducated, socially awkward young adults. Some people could go online and talk to people they've never met, as long as it's through text, but put them in front of someone real and new, and what do you get? Few to no muted words and a long period of awkward silence.

Being socially awkward isn't just something you are, it's a choice. It's something you can fix and work on. You can choose to improve your people skills and try to be better, or you can choose to experience that awkward, embarrassing, mediocre job interview that you'll remember for the rest of your life.

People skills are about having confidence, showing respect and being able to communicate and understand others. The ability to communicate can be improved everyday just by introducing yourself to someone new, or starting a conversation with someone you sit next to in class. Sure, we're not all born with people skills, but it's definitely a skill that everyone can and should learn.

What Happened to Class? By Paige Purvis

Looking back at photos of the past, I realized teenagers dressed like adults, unlike modern day people who walk out the door wearing their pajamas. Our generation seems to be lacking in motivation, preparation for the future, respect, and most importantly, class. Personally, I'm worried about what a future led by our generation will look like.

Classy people are a rare species in this era. People are so desperate for attention that they are behaving and dressing in outlandish ways.

Dressing classy means that you present yourself in a polished way. If the boss of your dream job was to walk into Warrensburg High School and hire you based on what you are wearing, would they? Chances are, more than 75% of the WHS student body would not be hired. Dress like the type of person you want to be. Put some effort into your appearance. You never know who you are going to meet that day.

Classy people not only dress presentably, but they are also polite, well-spoken and they use their manners. I'm so tired of walking around and hearing profanity spill from student's mouths. When did that become okay? People aren't going to take you seriously if you can't control your mouth. That applies in other ways, too. Re-

spect your teachers and other students as well. I realize that sometimes you are having a bad day and a teacher will say something that puts you over the edge, but guess what? Teachers are human, too. They have to put up with us every day and all of our whining about homework when half of us don't even try to succeed. Stop the sass talk, pay attention and try to learn something. Heaven forbid you become smarter.

Don't settle. Strive for the best. If your standards are high, then good for you. If they aren't, raise them. If we all set a new standard for ourselves and others, think about how much we could all achieve. Ladies, don't settle for the guy that whistled at you; he probably isn't worth your time. Gentlemen, don't be that guy, but look out for the girl who treats others right. Find the person that you would be proud to take home to your parents. Also, you don't have to be in a relationship 24/7. The thing about dating is you will either get married or you will break up. In today's society, you'll probably do both. It's okay to be single; it's not that bad. Trust me. Discover who you are before you complicate your life with a relationship.

So choose to act more like ladies and gentleman. What's the worst thing that could happen?

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