



Left: Michal Ruprecht rides an elephant in South Africa.
Right: Ruprecht gives a doll to Norma, a Peruvian girl, at Lares Valley Trek.

PHOTOS BY LECH RUPRECHT

NORTH POINTE

GROSSE POINTE NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

SINCE 1968

FRIDAY, OCT. 31, 2014

END OF FIRST QUARTER

Today at 3:05 p.m.

POPS & PASTRIES CONCERT

Saturday, Nov. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the gym (see page 2 for details)

NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, Nov. 4 due to elections and staff development

SAT TESTING

Saturday, Nov. 8 at 8 a.m. at North

MICHIGAN COLLEGE APPLICATION WEEK

Begins the week of Nov. 3, ends Nov. 7

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IDEAS

“HER IMPACT ON MY LIFE HAS EXTENDED FURTHER THAN ASSURING ME OF A CAREER PATH, SHE ALSO TAUGHT ME HOW TO STAND UP FOR MYSELF.”

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Phones linked to poor health

SPEAK NO *Evil*

SEE NO *Evil*

HEAR NO

Evil



ART BY LUKE STURGILL

By Anu Subramaniam & Jennifer Kusch
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & IDEAS SECTION EDITOR

It's in your hand when you walk into school, in your pocket at dinner and on your side table while you sleep. Modern dependency on phones is apparent, but the negative health effects are not. Sophomore Luke Muschong is among many cell phone users who are unaware of the possible consequences.

"I am not aware of any health issues my phone causes, except for occasional headaches," Muschong said.

Like most kids, Muschong has had a cell phone for many years.

"I got my first cell phone at age 10, and my current phone I have had for five months."

Cell Phones and cell metabolism

Although Muschong is not concerned about his cell phone use, controversy over the topic has grown as more people become aware of the potential consequences associated with usage. According to the National Cancer Institute, cell phones emit radio frequency energy, a type of non-ionizing radiation that can be absorbed by the body's tissue.

Radio frequency emitted energy by phones a form of electromagnetic radiation, has no known biological consequences. However, that has not stopped researchers and parents from worrying about the consequences of cell phone use, including Muschong's mother Heather Muschong, who is also a nurse.

"I encourage them not to leave it in their pockets as much as they can or next to their bodies at home and not to have it next to their bed while they are sleeping," Muschong said.

Heather has felt first hand the negative health effects resulting from using her phone.

"If I talk on the cell phone, I get a headache and tingling and burning on the side of my head the phone was on," Heather said. "I think your generation texts more than you talk on the phone, so I don't think they feel it's an issue— but I don't think we know enough of how much effect it has on the body."

While most studies that link phones' electromagnetic radiation to tumors are inconclusive, there have been some cases where cell phone use correlates with tumor development.

"It's been demonstrated by some studies that a few types of cancer, especially tumors related to the brain, increase in percentage," Dr. Ziad Kafri, a specialist in hematology and medical oncology said. "That's not yet, however, concrete. The only one that found to really increase in a statistically significant way is a ... nerve tumor called Schwannoma. That's the only one linked to phone usage. The other is suspected increased risk but not well proven. It is the electromagnetic waves, actually, when we put the phone close to our ear, stimulating, probably, metabolism in that area and leading to negative effects on cell metabolism, and that would, in time leading to stimulation and uncontrolled cell growth."

While it's classified as a benign tumor, Schwannoma can penetrate the skull and enter the ear causing severe damage by pushing the nerve aside.

Sleepless in Seattle, especially if you are on Amazon

Phone users are more likely to suffer sleep defects and other less severe effects from the electromagnetic waves.

"The biggest (issue) that we see with our teenagers is just the risk that it puts them at in terms of causing issues of sleep. We see lots of kids that come in with sleep problems because they are on their phone late at night ... they come in with headaches, and it's because of poor sleep hygiene," St. John Hospital general pediatrician Dr. Natalie Kontos said. "It's just the kids coming in with headaches and poor school function ... so then their grades start slipping and they do poorly in school, and that can then affect their attitude with their parents and their classmates and their teachers. So then they start having more and more problems in school just because they are lacking sleep."

After sophomore Katie Lesha's mother read about possible health consequences, she encouraged Lesha to keep the phone away from her when she sleeps.

"I can't sleep with my phone near me or anything. I usually just charge my phone in a different room than where I sleep. I just put it in a different spot in my room so it's not near my head," Lesha said.

Lesha not only sees the possibility of a phone disrupting sleep, but also sees the psychological effect it can have on people when they use their phones.

"I think that kids that spend a lot of time on Twitter and Instagram ... don't really socialize as much with their friends when they are out in public sometimes when they are at dinner and they are on their phones," Lesha said.

Kontos believes that the best solution to prevent affected sleep patterns is to limit a teenager's phone usage.

"Your parents probably say, 'I want you in bed by nine,' but if you take your cell phone with you, and you are on your phone texting your friends late at night, you are up on your phone till 10, 11, maybe even midnight. And if you have to get up in the morning at 6 a.m. to get to school, you are going from nine hours of sleep down to six hours of sleep. I think that parents need to take phones away at 9 o'clock. Kontos said.

Cutting down time spent talking on the phone can help reduce symptoms like headaches and exposure to electromagnetic waves that stimulate cancer cell growth. The increase in risk for a Schwannoma tumor can be reduced by limiting on exposure. Other simple preventative steps, like turning a phone's Do Not Disturb button on at night or charging the phone away from the bed can eliminate the flashes of light that interrupt sleep patterns and the constant exposure to electromagnetic waves.

"The phones need to be removed from their bedrooms so that we can ensure kids are getting a good amount of sleep throughout the night," Kontos said.



Freshman capitalizes on traveling lifestyle

By Olivia Asimakis
NEWS SECTION EDITOR

A green card turned into a lifetime adventure for freshman Michal Ruprecht and his family. After Ruprecht’s parents, Beata and Lech Ruprecht, immigrated to the United States in 1996, they made it a family tradition to vacation in different world capitals.

“The U.S. is the best country in the world. People are honest, and the landscape is beautiful. You can get everything you want,” Lech said. “You have to find the best place for yourself. All places are different if you have good eyes. Only look around.”

Michal began traveling at the age of 2. His first trip was to the United Kingdom. Since then, he has visited 16 countries including England, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Israel, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Chile, Peru, South Africa and Vatican City.

“It’s really interesting and fun because you get to learn about other people’s culture,” Michal said. “The last trip, we went to Africa. We brought some toys for the kids—the orphans. So we try to help.”

Lech organizes these trips to instill character traits he thinks will help his children for the rest of their lives.

“This was my personal project, to visit major world capitals with my kids. We need to teach them by our example and experience to give hearts to people who need the heart and love,” Lech said.

Out of Michal’s many trips, his favorite was to South Africa. Ruprecht feels the unique culture and diverse ecosystems helped enhanced his perspective of various communities.

“South Africa was my favorite trip because it was really different than all the other ones. Seeing all the—seeing Africa—it was real amazing,” Michal said. “It’s less developed, but still interesting with exotic animals like giraffes, rhinos, crocodiles and penguins.”

One of the most unusual experiences Michal said was discovering South Africa had penguins. He treasures moments, like these, that he shares with his family the most.

“I rode an elephant in South Africa. My favorite part was riding the elephant because we got to learn more about the elephants and how they function, like they will remember you forever,” Michal said.

While South Africa was the most extraordinary, Michal has visited other countries that

have had similar impacts on him. His trip to Israel showed him the effect that money can have on different regions.

“Seeing the Palestine region and how they thought about Israel and how Israel thought about Palestine, both areas have mixed emotions about each other,” Michal said. “When we went to the Palestine region, we saw the effect Israel had on Palestine, like the Palestinians are really poor, but the Israelis are rich.”

Michal’s dad encourages him and his sister, 2014 alumna Victoria Ruprecht, to focus on the present and carry what they learned on with them.

“We enjoy our pictures, remember stories of our trips. We know what we need in the futures to keep happy lives,” Lech said.

Visiting many Spanish speaking countries, Michal has expanded his education. He’s fluent in English and Polish, but he’s also working on his Spanish. These trips expose Michal to real-world Spanish and help him improve his skills.

“It’s a big part of my life because I get to interact with other people,” Michal said. “It’s educational. That’s why my dad organizes these trips. We go to countries when we think it will be interesting and it’s a good place.”

Traveling to different countries has taught Michal to be open to the good and bad aspects that cultures have to offer.

“Many people think many countries are very dangerous, but there’s a good side and a bad side. In South Africa, you have to have common sense. Don’t go to the dangerous parts and still be safe and have a good time,” Michal said.

The trips the Ruprechts take have not only brought them to a new understanding of the world, but also closer to each other. They have donated toys to South African and Peruvian orphans, and seeing the poverty in the world has shown Michal the hardships people face. Lech wanted him not only to see those harsh conditions, but appreciate what he has.

“He wanted me and my sister to be adventurous and not spend money on regular things, like phones. We try to go on a trip every year, so we learn more about that country and help other people,” Michal said. “I really like it, spending time with my family and having those moments I will remember forever. Happy and exciting ones that you would never think of, like the penguins in South Africa.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEATA RUPRECHT

Freshman Michal Ruprecht spends time at a South African orphanage and passes out toys to the children.

Classroom environments prove to affect student learning

By Haley Reid & Andrea Scapini
MANAGING EDITORS

Temperature

Focus is rarely achieved in a classroom when the air resembles the arctic or a sweltering jungle. Math teacher Marti Steiner sees a loss of attentiveness and decreased performance when classroom temperatures are extreme.

“I definitely think that temperature plays a role,” Steiner said. “My room can be either freezing cold or super sweating hot, so you’ll see students have to come dressed for all environments in here.”

University of California, Los Angeles’ (UCLA) studies concluded that proper control of temperature in classrooms and workplaces is vital. Studies show that temperatures above 74 degrees disrupt reading and mathematic skills. UCLA found that an ideal learning environment should be between 68 and 74 degrees.

“If students are sitting here, and they’re taking a test and they’re freezing cold, that’s not gonna help their test score. They’re gonna be thinking about how cold that air is,” Steiner said. “I’ve had students ask to move to the other side of the room, which is perfectly fine, but again, if every desk is taken, then you’ve got to find another room to put them in to get them away from this cold environment.”

Psychologist Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs demonstrates that it is essential for a person to fulfill their innate human needs before being able to focus on other tasks, like learning. Psychology teacher Jennifer Weisbrodt teaches Maslow’s theory and finds that it directly relates to the classroom.

“As Maslow would point out with his pyramid of needs, if needs such as comfort and security are achieved, one can progress to more advanced levels in the pyramid,” Weisbrodt said. “Those higher levels are where learning takes place.”

Lighting

Three rows of fluorescent lights and a Smart Board projector screen strain math teacher Marti Steiner’s eyes for seven hours every day. Chronic migraines have held her back from being able to feel upbeat throughout an entire school day.

“Obviously, if I have a migraine, I’m not going to be in the best mood ... and I think that the lighting could be bothering the students which is a bigger problem for me,” Steiner said.

“If the light is bothering me, it’s gotta be bothering other students as well, and that’s why I always have this first row off because the Smart Board’s on, and when the Smart Board’s on, the lighting is kind of coming from the board for the first row.”

Junior Rebecca Flynn also says she suffers from headaches due to the lights in classrooms.

“The super bright light bugs me in the morning because it’s really bright, and I’m not ready for that yet,” Flynn said.

One solution is to replace the fluorescent light bulbs with a softer type of bulb, although they tend to be more expensive. Additionally, natural lighting in classrooms is proven to help students achieve their optimum performance according to edudemic.com. Unnatural lighting levels are proven to be a hindrance to students and teachers alike.

“I’m really hoping they try a softer lighting for my room to see if that works. As a teacher ... I want you to demonstrate what you know. If you’re in some environment where it’s too cold or too hot or the lighting is really bothering you and giving you a headache, I would want to know that because I would want you to show me what you know during your test,” Steiner said.

“That’s extremely relevant because you want to optimize students’ learning, and you want to optimize what they can show you when they’re taking an assessment.”

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Seating

Science teacher Jaime Hainer found a seating layout that gets even her most shy students involved.

“There’s one student that I can think of right away, that said she would never talk in my class, and today alone, I called her out and was like, ‘You talked twice today.’ She’s like, ‘I did,’” Hainer said. “I think it’s not as threatening of an environment to talk in.”

This particular arrangement involves putting each desk in the middle of the classroom, and then fitting all the chairs into one large circle around them.

“I watched one of my colleagues do it, Mr. Pata, and I really liked the idea,” Hainer said. “I liked how everyone talked so well and how the conversation went back and forth and how it wasn’t always coming back to the teacher.”

The concept of students learning by leading

the discussions rather than the teacher lecturing is the aspect of this seating arrangement that Hainer finds most valuable.

“It puts us all on an equal playing field, so it’s not like the teacher is in the front. I’m sitting just as they are, and so we are all equals, and we all have the same voice,” Hainer said. “It also allows us to face each other instead of all facing the front.”

When they aren’t having class discussions, Hainer likes to switch up the seating arrangements and encourage class communication in hopes that the students will absorb information better.

“For my chemistry class right now, we are trying sitting with partners and for Physics, we do normally have rows of seats, and I always have them go talk to a partner or someone next to them.”

SYDNEY BENSON

