



A BRUSH WITH DEATH

GRIM REAPER DAY AT BHS GIVES STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE

Callie Shultz

Photo Editor

Berwick Area Senior High has its own way to show the students the effects of drinking and driving. The issue is extensive, and with prom next week, people need to see the potential consequences of their actions. One BHS club is reminding students to be safe and not make bad decisions on a night to remember or any night.

Every year since the 1990s, SADD takes the time to orchestrate when people will dress as the Grim Reaper and collect another club member from class, returning in silence as if they were never to return. SADD's advisor, Mrs. Heather Henry, runs the program and even remembers it occurring when she was a student.

"It has been taking place since before I was a student at BHS in the 1990's. Luckily, the average time has been improving. It used to be that someone died every 32 minutes, but it has improved to be every 50 minutes," Henry said. Even with the time lengthening, the club is spreading more awareness each year.

Henry said, "We host this day to give students a visual reminder that on average someone dies every fifty minutes as the result of a drunk driving accident." Making sure students can see the emptiness that the multiple deaths leave in the classroom. This can have a lasting impact.

Junior Member Alivia Stonerod said, "I think it puts it into perspective for people because everyone, before doing something destructive or during a drill, everyone says 'oh it'll never happen to me' or 'it'll never happen around here', but this just puts it into perspective because it does happen around here, it happens everywhere." The day gives students a chance to see the damage that can be done when driving under the influence. and that is often done everywhere when people get behind the wheel while impaired.

This is a huge issue that can affect more lives than just the driver. Senior member Morgan Draushak said, "My parents and brother were involved in a really bad accident because of a drunk driver when they were on the way home from the hospital when he was born. Anything I can do to spread the message about not drunk driving is worth it." Due to her own experience, she is making sure that students are seeing the true pain that comes with this decision. Even if someone is not driving intoxicated, being a passenger and knowing the driver is impaired is still part of the problem the world faces. Senior Tatyana Ochoa said, "For me to be an example of this consequence allows my friends and peers to realize that no matter if they drank or got in a car with someone who was drinking, that decision can affect their life forever." It is affecting lives every fifty minutes, and often it is more than just the person choosing to do this being impacted.



SADD created bulletin board.
Photo by Callie Shultz



The Grim Reaper arrives for a SADD member.
Photo by Callie Shultz

The day is not something to joke about or make into a game. Every student that is "taken" by the Grim Reaper, as well as the reaper, comes back wearing a shirt that says, "You can't talk to me anymore. I was killed by a drunk driver and now I'm just a memory." The shirts came about as a way to keep the day in perspective. Henry said, "It used to be that students just wore black clothing and then had their faces painted white. However, other students kept trying to wipe paint off their faces to put on their own." With the day becoming more of a game, the shirts were created to help keep this as a serious reminder.

SADD has kept the event going for years now and will continue it into the future to make sure students can see the effect drinking and driving has on people all around them. It can end lives; no matter who is drunk, and somebody will have to live with the long-term effects. One bad decision is all it takes to ruin lives.



Junior Alivia Stonerod with headstone.
Photo by Callie Shultz



Senior Jamir Ramos with Grim Reaper.
Photo by Heather Henry