

# Forum

## Ark Music Factory A path to fame or misery?

DANNY MCGARRY

From Justin Bieber to Willow Smith, teen pop stars have surged in popularity, and Ark Music Factory (AMF) is desperately trying to produce the next teen sensation. The problem with this is that they're putting talent to the side in order to make a buck.

On Feb. 10, AMF posted a music video featuring 13-year-old Rebecca Black singing, "Friday." After being featured on the Tosh.0 blog, Black's name and song exploded into an internet sensation. By April 25, "Friday," had amassed 119,083,153 views on YouTube in a little over 2 months.

In an interview on "Good Morning America," Black explained how the AMF process works. She heard about AMF through a friend and later researched the company. Her parents emailed the company to gain more

information. She skipped the audition process and met directly with two producers.

Black was given a choice between two songs to sing,



one of them being "Friday." Her parents paid \$4,000 for the rights of the song, then AMF produced the music video and posted it on YouTube.

Black has talent, regardless of what anyone else says. AMF takes mediocre talent, adds auto-tune, and directs a catchy music video that is targeted to children. But really what this company does is take kids and help

them leapfrog into celebrity life, teaching that you can buy success.

Many musicians attempt to go into the music industry the standard way by playing their song to anyone who will listen and working their way to the top. AMF creates a fast and easy way in, but with a disregard to any real talent.

Teen musicians need to connect with their audience and put themselves out there, before they try and jump in head first into an industry they have little experience in. They could play at a local cafe, start a Facebook page or post music on YouTube. They need to make sure it's what they want and that they're going into the music industry for the right reasons—not just for the fame and fortune.

As much as I hate to say it, Black made me appreciate artists like Katy Perry a little more.

## West Linn streetcars may not benefit; low amount of public transportation

ALEX SISCA

Is spending over half a billion dollars on a streetcar that won't even benefit our city worth it? Right now West Linn riders using TriMet currently ride one bus to reach downtown Portland. If a streetcar is built, then West Linn riders would have to make

two transfers to reach the same destination. If the streetcar to Lake Oswego is approved, West Linn citizens would have to pay higher taxes and service would not really be improved.

"Currently our citizens can ride bus 35 uninterrupted all the way

through Lake Oswego to North Portland," Teri Cummings, City Council member, said. "With the streetcar option, West Linn residents would need to make up to two transfers in order to arrive at the same destination. The increased travel time and reduced convenience will adversely affect mass transit use for West Linn citizens."

Public transportation

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## Amplifier

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Please limit letters to 150 words and include your full name and phone number, for verification only. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



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## Teacher talks trash

Todd Jones, social studies teacher, submitted this editorial in response to the excessive trash left around the school recently.

We have a great facility. If you've attended or visited other high schools, you know what I'm talking about. It is

designed with students in mind. That's why officials from all over the nation visit every year to study our design. Unfortunately, some don't appreciate what we have.

Have you noticed the trash all over our building after breaks and lunches? I have, and yeah, I'm concerned. Not because I'm a neat freak, but because I believe trash impacts the perception of our surroundings, and we're not going to learn well if we don't respect our learning environment.

I wonder about the few kids making these messes

— Why are you doing this?

I wonder, too, about the vast majority of students not making these messes — Are you aware this is happening? Do you think it's okay?

What do you do when you see someone deliberately trash the building?

Would you act differently if your teacher or parent was standing beside you?

If you're not cool with the trash, and I'm guessing most of you aren't, try this: When you see trash on the floor, or a bench, or a desk, grab it and toss it in a can. No need to say anything to anyone; you don't need to act like the trash police and come down on someone. Just act. You might just find that others will follow your lead.

Teachers, parents and administrators can't adequately fix this problem. Only you can.

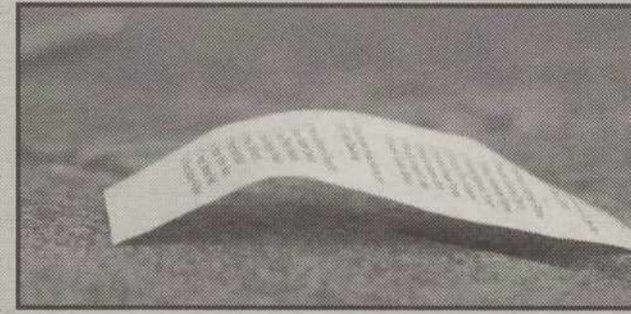


Photo by Laurel Massaro



Photo by Laurel Massaro

TriMet number 35 bus picks up southbound at McKillican, the nearest stop to the school. A proposed streetcar line from Portland to Lake Oswego would result in higher TriMet taxes and a more complicated commute.

## Vocational training proves necessary for life skills

SEAN PEBLER

The next step. The ultimate goal of high school is to prepare students for the gigantic leap to college and eventually, to a self-sustaining lifestyle. But is high school truly providing us with the fundamental skills we need to live and thrive in our future individualism?

West Linn High School is widely-viewed as having a very advanced curriculum, offering many Advanced Placement and Honors classes woven into the schedule. The downside to having such an accelerated curriculum is that many students feel these classes don't pertain to their needs.

"We're a liberal arts college-prep high school, with 85-90 percent of kids going to a four year

college," Lou Bailey, principal, said. "If kids do all they can in their classrooms, they can usually go to any college they want to. But it's that other 10-15 percent that may need these (vocational) classes."

As a junior beginning to prepare for life after high school, I feel that hands-on training, like woodshop or mechanics classes, would be extremely beneficial to life outside the classroom.

"A cooking class or woodshop would be a class I would actually want to go to," Alyssa Mackin, senior, said. "I think those would be fun classes! We don't have many fun electives at WLHS."

WLHS has attempted to include a variation of the traditional cooking

class with Culinary Arts, which is an online study comprised of all seniors.

"Culinary Arts is sort of a 21st century alternative for vocational classes, and Stacy Erickson, teacher librarian, did a great job incorporating that into the curriculum," Bailey said. "We are trying to find outside resources for the kids that want these experiences."

This type of class is befitting to necessary life skills, but it fails to provide the "hands on" quality that is valuable to the learning process of many.

According to Bailey, the biggest obstacle that stands in the way of these classes is space and money.

Vocational classes

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