

# Bellevue's Teen Paper



## Bellevue Council Announces I

by Alex Tang  
*Interlake High School*

On December 6th, the Bellevue City Council released their new 2011 Bellevue Budget. There was a sigh of relief as the council revealed that the Bellevue Youth Link program will be kept.

Dozens of teens and adults alike have stood together for the past few months, fighting to keep this program by backing its benefits—how youth have come away from this program empowered as new leaders within their communities, and how the lessons and messages drawn serve to inspire others. The discussion of all these points within meetings as well as letters and emails from members of Youth Link succeeded in the end, as it has been confirmed that the youth still have a convenient forum to speak their opinions and a role to play in the community.

While the City Council did decide to keep the Youth Link Program in the budget, there will be changes to be announced. Nevertheless, this youth program managed to avoid major cuts to its resources. Subdivisions of the program including the Youth Court, the Community Leadership Awards, and



the Youth Involvement Conference, will continue as originally planned.

To learn more about Youth Link, go to <http://youthlink.com>.



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# Cold Months Festivities

by Christina Huang  
*Lakeside School*

Although the year is coming to an end, Bellevue is still as busy as ever. From towering Christmas trees to small winter lights lining the edges of our community, the holidays bring joy and youthful spirit.

Many city dwellers feel the oncoming holidays through the bustling downtown area with last minute gift shopping. Santas return to Bellevue Square and decorations are everywhere. In addition to the myriad of promotions in stores and cards being received in the mail, the youth in Bellevue have many activities to experience during break.

Snowflake lane, which opened on November 26th, presents drummers and dressed up characters to brighten the evenings of kids, teens, and adults until Christmas Eve. From 7:00 pm, Christmas soldiers, Snow Royalty, Sugar Plum Fairies, and Mice roam the streets of the Bellevue collection, dancing and having fun. Fake snow gently fills the air and holiday-themed music plays as snowflake shaped lights are shown across buildings.

Lights, a major part of the holiday season, are extravagantly displayed at the Botanical Garden show of lights. Every evening, the



beautiful garden is illuminated with the display of the Garden d'Lights. With over half a million lights and over 150,000 visitors each December, nightly attendance can sometimes reach 10,000. To get the best view, an rsvp to this dazzling event is recommended, but driving by can be just as thrilling.

Finally, the winter season would not be complete without the winter ice rink. The annual ice rink in downtown Bellevue brings an opportunity for youth to engage in a winter activity that is not readily available. Brought to Bellevue by Group Health, everything is available for rental. Under the massive tent, there is a waiting

area, an area for skate rentals, and a stand for refreshments.

The Holidays are a time for happiness and rest. But they also bring special gatherings, winter activities, and festive decorations for enjoyment. In the Bellevue area alone, there are countless ways to keep busy from sledding to drinking hot chocolate. The New Year will bring refreshed minds, and, with a little luck, more snow days when the school year starts once again.

## Kids Care Coat Drive Helps Families

by Bonnie Pan  
*Interlake High School*

Every year, the Kids Care Coat Drive provides many disadvantaged people with warm outerwear for the winter, and this year will be no different.

First organized by Rick Teegarden in 2004, the Kids Care Coat Drive has become a tradition. As a member of the Bellevue Youth Council, Teegarden volunteered at Youth Link's Teen Closet monthly clothing distribution events. The lack of warm clothing brought to his attention the community's pressing need for outerwear. In response, he started a coat drive at his middle school, which later evolved into the Kids Care Coat Drive.

Originally, Rick and his brother Reagan would organize the event by themselves. This year, Bellevue High School's Fashion Club, Bellevue Youth Link, and others have the responsibility of collecting and distributing coats.

Collection boxes were dispersed among various schools, including Bellevue, Interlake, and Newport.

The coats will be passed out to families who go to the Crossroads Community Center from December 15th to 17th from 5:00 to 7:00pm. Volunteers, including Youth Link members and members of the Kids Care Coat Drive Action Team, will be helping out with this event.

The coats will be especially helpful this year, as snowfall is anticipated and warm outerwear will be essential.



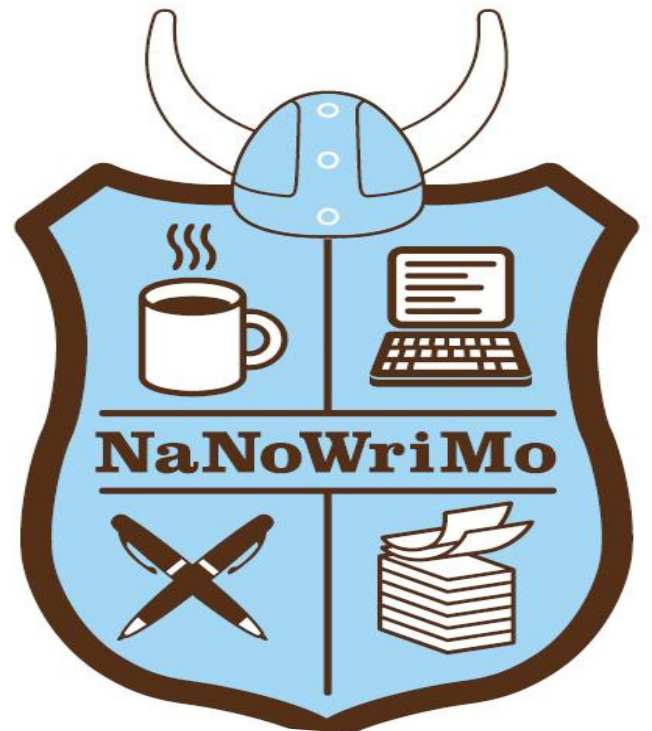
# A Month of Writing

by Alex Tang  
Interlake High School

The month of November has passed, and with it went the largest novel writing event, NaNoWriMo, which is short for (Inter)National Novel Writing Month. People of all ages and experiences participate in this endeavor.

Participants from around the world are given the month of November to write 50,000 words, an average of 1,667 words per day, in the form of a novel. This novel can be about anything from fan-fiction and science to mystery and horror.

The purpose of NaNoWriMo is to allow writers of all stages to simply try their hands at writing. Fifty thousand words in thirty days seems like an unattainable goal for a well-written novel and, honestly, it is. NaNoWriMo's goal is not simply to get writers to write, but to take risks. Because of the high word count goal, people must allow themselves permission to make mistakes, as there is only time to create and not enough to tear down what is unsatisfactory.



A few of my friends and I have participated in NaNoWriMo this year and years past. Every session is an adventure as we try something new each time. Completing the challenge my first year was stressful to say the least. But in spite of any difficulty, everyone who finishes their fifty thousand words gains a sense of achievement.

In addition, there is a community of writers and aspiring writers who support one another. NaNoWriMo is fun, go to [nanowrimo.org](http://nanowrimo.org). Invite some friends to join. Nothing is stressful and difficult. There are better times when writers simply want to quit, especially during the infamous "Second Week." Nevertheless, the

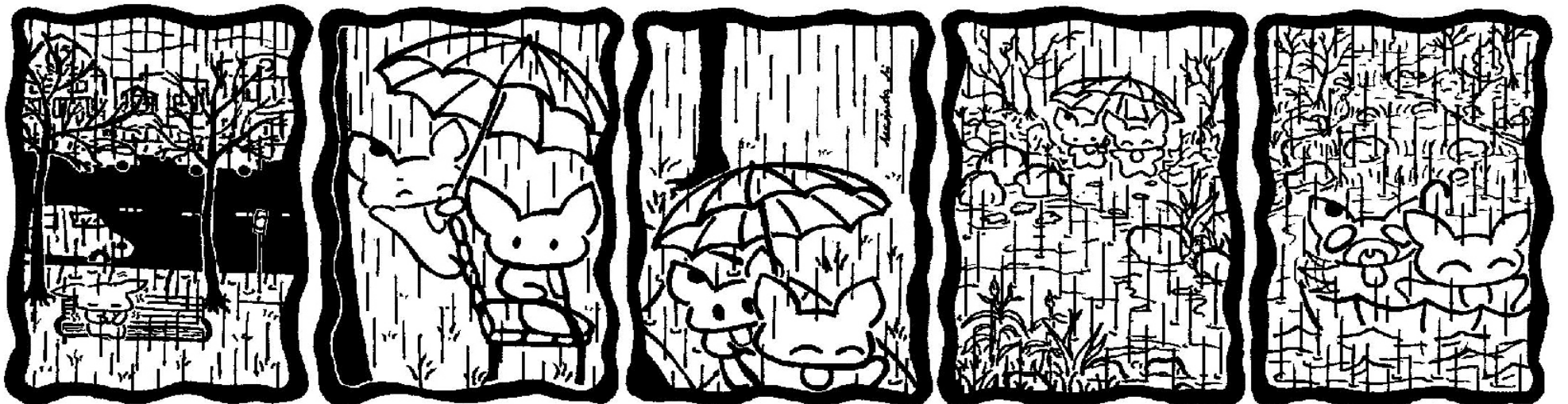
constant reminder that there are others all over the world who are going through the same issues with their novels is great encouragement for sticking with the project until the end.

To find out more, and to join in on the



## I = Bunny

by Lucinda Li  
Interlake High School



# How to Avoid Social Confrontation

by Donald Chao  
Newport High School

Okay, so small talk is great and all, but let's face it. All social interactions are awkward. Except for ones in which you are given promised success at life. That's alright, but nothing less than that is a proper incentive for pushing yourself into social interaction. This, of course, leaves the problem of how to (mostly) avoid it.

Social interaction is all about contact. Obviously, you can't interact with someone if you're not in contact with them. Ergo, to avoid social interaction, you must avoid contact. Now online, this is simple enough. Just don't friend someone or start conversations on msn (remember the days?).

However, this problem becomes trickier when you're just walking along the hallway and then, BAM! You see someone whom you kind of know...yet kind of don't know...and you're not sure whether or not you have reached the point in your acquaintanceship where it is socially permissible to wave. At this point, you could do one of the following options:

1. Pretend you're deep in thought about some reflective problem. That way, you'll have an excuse for not waving. If you need some inspiration, ponder the logic behind Lady Gaga's outfits.

2. Pretend you just saw a bird fly past. Frown for a second and then look confused. That way, your eyes are not in a position to meet someone else's and you will not need to wave. And if the other person is particularly chatty and does approach you for conversation, you'll have a topic to introduce ("I swear, that bird just disappeared. They're so good at doing that!").

3. If the other person seems at all creative or understanding, just stare at your hands. Some people can invent their own reasons as to why you didn't wave.

4. Wave. There is the slightest chance the other person will wave back and perhaps smile or say hi and this will lead to the warm fuzzy feeling of social interaction done right! Success! But, if the other person is a prick and does not wave or simply frowns at you, you could just continue the wave until your hand reaches above your head so that it looks like you're stretching.

You'll have to admit, those are some pretty good strategies. Too bad they aren't always applicable. Sometimes the said person is slightly more than an acquaintance

but not quite a friend. Sometimes he or she is heading in the same direction you're heading. Sometimes you're walking side to side! Which means, yes, not only is it socially permissible, but it may be socially necessary to make small talk. Oh the horror! Now, if you're a daredevil, you can refer to Lucinda's column. Or you could take my advice and avoid it all.

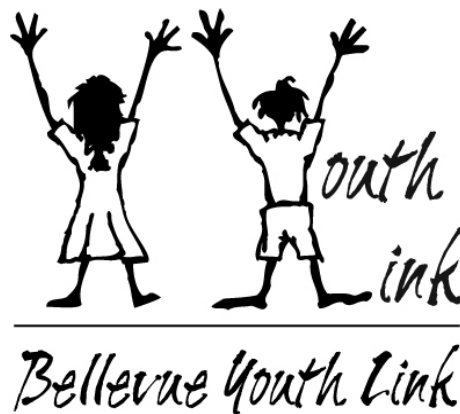
5. Proximity is the main issue here. Try walking a little quicker to increase the distance between the two of you. Accompany this with frequent glances at your watch and mutters of "late late late late."

6. Or, you could slow down and stop. Check your purse. Check your pockets. Check your hands. Check your shoes. Look confused and preoccupied.

7. Pretend you forgot something and need to turn back. Then, abruptly stop and dash quickly in another direction. This method is best used when you aren't under any time constraints because it involves not returning to your intended route until you can safely ascertain the other person is out of speaking-range.

Now, keep in mind that although all these scenarios apply to walking, with a little creativity, you can make adjustments to make them apply to all circumstances in which social interaction is imminent. Accidentally walked into a room full of people? Try Tactic 7. Sat down next to someone on the bus that you don't want to talk to? Try Tactic 5 and use the power of your mind to make your part of the bus travel faster.

Good luck and happy evading!



**To learn more about our  
Youth Link Program,  
please visit our web site at  
[www.youthlink.com](http://www.youthlink.com) or call  
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