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OBSERVER THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

The best reason for holding your chin up when in trouble is that it keeps the mouth closed.

—Ivern Boyett

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Mini-courses are maxi-fun way to learn

by Michael S. McCollum

Remember when you were in high school? It seems that all there was to learn were the three Rs and a little football on the side. Lately, the Berlin American High School has expanded its curriculum to include many diverse subjects.

This past week has been mini-course week at BAHS. Over 120 classes and more than 90 volunteer teachers have been involved in a program which is designed to bring a wide scope of courses to the high school student. The subjects are types of classes which are not normally found at a high school, but may be of interest to the student.

One week only

Mini-courses are designed to give the participant as much knowledge of a subject as possible in the short time available. The reason was that the mini-courses lasted only a week and not for a school year. The classes lasted only 55 minutes, and the "mini-student" was allowed to take five classes per day.



CHECK AND MATE IN TWO, says Harry Sweeney (right). Sweeney and Lloyd Olsen (left) were teaching beginners chess during mini-course week. Many kids learned about the basics of chess, while others learned some of the finer points. (Photo by Rich Bailey)

Some of the courses, such as Yoga, tie-dying, Karate, mountaineering, and trap and skeet shooting, seemed a bit exotic. Yet, as long as there was an interest, the course was offered.

Many of the courses involved things that would be akin to hobbies, such as bowling, tennis, amateur radio and puppeteering.

Courses for everyone

Many classes were on subjects you would have expected to find in a university: hematology, x-ray techniques, dietetics and anthropology, to name a few. There was a course for just about everyone.

There were a few administrative problems to be gotten out of the way. A program such as this requires that volunteer teachers be found within the community, that a curriculum booklet be written and that every student be registered for five of the more than 120 courses offered. Linda Culea, work-study co-ordinator and German language teacher at BAHS, has been primarily responsible for the program. Response to the program, she said, was "excellent."

"The students are very happy about the mini-courses," said BAHS junior Kent Stout, the schedule co-ordinator for the week. "They're getting a chance to learn things they normally wouldn't be able to learn in high school."



OOOOHHHHMMMM — One of the courses offered during the mini-week was a class on Yoga, meditation and spiritual song, taught by (are you ready?) Tattvika Amshumalii Brahmacarii (wearing turban). The class was met with great enthusiasm. (Photo by Rich Bailey)