

Boggling
Broadcast

De-auguration

My literature teacher has a very special clock. A countdown clock, actually. Flat, rectangular, and undeniably eye-catching, it's the kind of nifty little device designed for being carried around in wallets, so that every time a bit of cash is spent, the clock is read. It's probably made in China, but the spirit of it is purely American. Along the left side of the clock, bold white letters flash against a blue background: "Our national nightmare will soon be over." And above these words is the real prize, the juice of it all: a small digital display counting down the time left in our Bush era, down to every tenth of a second.

These past months have no doubt been months of great excitement, what with Barack Obama's racial novelty, John McCain's most remarkably anomalous V.P., and of course, Joe the Plumber's rise to fame almost as the Uncle Sam of this century. Prestigious news magazines bustled to get top coverage on this record-setting presidential race, while students all over the country added "presidential debates" to the long list of clips watched on YouTube. But amidst all the hectic campaign drama, there's been another element of anticipation that many Americans have been waiting to rejoice in.

For many people, Nov. 4, 2008 marked a milestone in the exhausting marathon of Bush's reign. It was a day that assured us a new president would be inducted into office on Jan. 20, 2009, a day that pleasantly reminded the country President George W. Bush would indeed get his "De-auguration" Day. Election Day was, in short, a day where paranoid Bush-haters were kindly reassured, "No, your nightmare of Bush proclaiming the oath of office is *not* going to happen a third time."

But as much harm as Bush may have inflicted on our economy, reputation, and spirit in the past eight years, we do owe thanks to his mistakes. As our country continues to move on, we should look back at the Bush era and simply accept it as a lesson learned the hard way, an impossible class mastered at the cost of a failing grade. Like all defeats in life, Bush's presidency was not a total loss. In the long run, it has only made our nation stronger and more mature, because when greater obstacles await us in the future, we can look back and say, "Hey, if we could trump the era of Bush Backfire, our country can pull through this too."

Many of us go through a similar experience here at MVHS. When we sign up to take A.P. classes, it is with the knowledge that we may risk ending up with a lower grade imprinted on our transcript. But just like the Bush era, the "greater good" that results from taking an A.P. class overrides those not-so-satisfactory grades. Not only do A.P. classes provide us with the academic enrichment regular curriculums don't offer, but the amount of work and frustration they delegate helps build us up to face greater challenges later on in life.

So even though the countdown clock won't hit 0:00:00:00.0 for another 69 days, I do hope the passing of Election Day has somewhat eased my literature teacher's heart. But I do also hope that once Obama, our new commander-in-chief begins his first day in office, we as united, faithful American people will back him up with lasting support. Because no matter what actions he takes, what decisions he makes, what policies he forsakes, it will be a learning experience for every citizen of our country. It will be a national "A.P." exam for pupils, young and old, struggling to become better people.