

Horned Homestuckers

Students express fandom by dressing up in cosplay

By Savannah Harrelson

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Racing through time to save a world, horned trolls stand up against aliens and other strange creatures to win a virtual game. They can also be spotted roaming the halls of Borah High School, sporting long red, orange, and yellow striped horns.

They are known as the Homestuckers, and they idolize and even cosplay characters from the webcomic Homestuck, found on mspaintadventures.com.

Cosplay, which is short for costume play, is an expressed art in which fans of a comic dress up as a certain character and act out their character's personality. Four students here have chosen a character from Homestuck, wearing their costumes about their daily lives, including at school.

Seniors Amber Darrah, Max Marsh, UsaAmera Coronado, and sophomore Willow Gravett-Arnold are also known by their Homestucker names: Sollux, Equius, Gamzee, and Nepeta.

The webcomic Homestuck follows four humans given the technology to

enter a game. When the technology activates, the humans are transported to a new reality while Earth is destroyed by meteors, after which the humans must save their new world to complete the game. While in the game, 12 trolls befriend the humans with a goal to help them through their journey.

Near the end of her junior year, Darrah grew to love the webcomic, and even dressed in cosplay at school. "I've always wondered what it would be like to dress up as a character and go crazy with it," she said.

On yearbook signing day, Coronado complemented Darrah's outfit, and the shared obsession of Homestuck began. Not even a year later, four Borah students take part in the Homestuck fandom, attending events and cosplaying together.

All four adorn the horns at school, made by Darrah. She even commissions the horns for Homestuckers all across Idaho, making them out of Crayola Model Magic and paint.

They started wearing them as a group because they "wanted to have our own kind of thing to do," Marsh claimed.

"I saw it as an opportunity to be something I'd always wanted to be," said Darrah.

Although they have had no protest from teachers, some students have attempted to smack and break the horns, claimed Marsh. "It's fun to see people's reactions to them," he said. "It brings us together as a kind of family."

Darrah claimed she has gotten looks of disgust, but tries not to let them bother her. "I can be myself and I'm not afraid to," said Darrah. "The positive comments I get override the negatives."

These four Homestuckers are not the only fan crowd, however. In the Boise area alone, there are "Homestuck meets" where fans come together to discuss the comic. There is also a group for Idaho fans titled "Idahostuck."

Darrah said this group really helped her discover her social life, commenting, "They got me better at socializing when I was always so bad at it." She also said during her transition from an "average girl" to a full-blown Homestuck fan, she made friends "left and right."

The four share a common love for Homestuck, and it is this webcomic that

will forever bond them. "I would never change it for any other life," Darrah said.



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Senior Amber Darrah struts Homestuck memorabilia nearly every day.



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#hashtagshashtagseverywhere #doyouknowwhattheyarefor?

By Brittany Perry

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#Soupisyummy. #Catsforlife. Such hashtags are widely used on Twitter, Instagram, even Facebook, basically anywhere and everywhere.

A hashtag, according to readwrite.com, was invented as a label for groups and topics in IRC chat. A hashtag refers to adding the '#' symbol before a word or group of words. The hashtag went mainstream because of Twitter.

"I am a fan of hashtags," senior Mikayla Reid said. "I, as well as the people I follow on Twitter, use hashtags more as a way of noting a statement as an afterthought, or trending a topic, rather than as a way to gain followers."

Even though hashtags are meant for Twitter, facebook users have completely changed what they think the hashtag

should be used for. A lot of people do not even know what the purpose of a hashtag is, and take it for granted. A hashtag is not just throwing a '#' symbol in front of whatever is written on a social media site.

"By July 2009, Twitter had realized what an ingenious trick its users had invented, so it began to turn hashtags into links. When a Twitter user clicks on a hashtag, it goes to the stream of tweets containing the hashtag. You can also find hashtags using search," Jon Mitchell said from readwrite.com.

"I think they can be really useful! They're fun and serve many purposes. I just think they're pretty pointless when you bring them on to site like Facebook. You may as well put a picture of a waffle in front of what you are hashtagging, because it literally serves that much purpose on Facebook," Reid added.