

## BHS senior dies in crash



The vehicle that William “Billy” Jervis II, 18, of 706 S. County Road 46, was driving Sunday morning rests on its top along Township Road 31.

EXAMINER PHOTO | JIM MASON

By [Brian J. Evans](#)  
**Bellefontaine Examiner Staff Writer**

*03/05/07*

William “Billy” Jervis II was well-known and admired by his peers at Bellefontaine High School — and he was loved by many in the local community. He loved to play the piano. He enjoyed jazz and soccer. And, the senior loved to participate in other BHS extracurricular activities.

Such is why today is somber at the high school, because “Billy was friends with everybody,” as one of his friends said.

Sunday morning, the 18- year-old Bellefontaine teen died in a car crash in Harrison Township.

Deputies of the Logan County Sheriff’s Office report he was northbound at 87 mph in a 2002 Volkswagen Jetta on Township Road 31 north of State Route 47 at 8 a.m. when his car went off the right side of the road and struck a utility pole and rolled.

Although he was wearing his seat belt, reports say, he was ejected from the car, which landed on its top.

The 706 S. Township Road 46 resident was on his way to church in Russells Point, people close to him said, to play in the praise team band.

“This will change the school forever,” said Maureen Yoder, who retired Jan. 31 as BHS principal and was close to the teen. “I’m not belittling any of the others we’ve lost (three in summers during her 13 years as principal), but he was a senior. He was a very strong senior, a leader. He was a good example for others. Not many didn’t know him. He loved life. He knew what he wanted to do in life and he knew exactly how he was going to do it, how he was going to get there.”

Sunday evening, more than 100 students and school officials gathered to grieve in the high school band room.

William’s pastor, David Buchenroth of the Galilee Lutheran Church in Russells Point, and several people close to the teen spoke about his life and their memories of him. Stories shared evoked both laughter and tears.

About 12 local clergy and mental health professionals were available at the high school today to counsel students. The school also had an assembly in the morning, honoring him with a moment of silence.

“He was excited about going to college and playing in the jazz band and orchestra,” Mrs. Yoder said, with tears in her eyes. “Words to describe him? Awesome. He had so much potential.”

Guidance counselor Bonnie Versele said he was in every possible music activity at the high school, played soccer, and he was looking forward to going to college.

“He was an unbelievable citizen,” she said. “As a freshman, his classmates elected him to receive the American Legion Citizenship Award for leadership and diplomacy and the ability to get along with others.”