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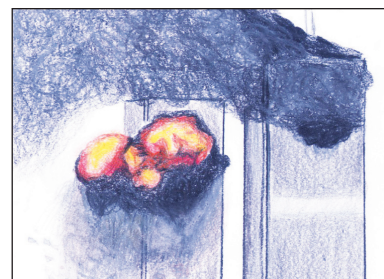
Clayton High School

1 Mark Twain Circle

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THE DECADE, pg 6

“I do not understand why in this late age of the twenty-first century we are still fighting wars. I think that's the central question of the human condition.”

Rebecca Taylor
English teacher

Two options proposed for WMS renovations

by Noah Eby
Editor

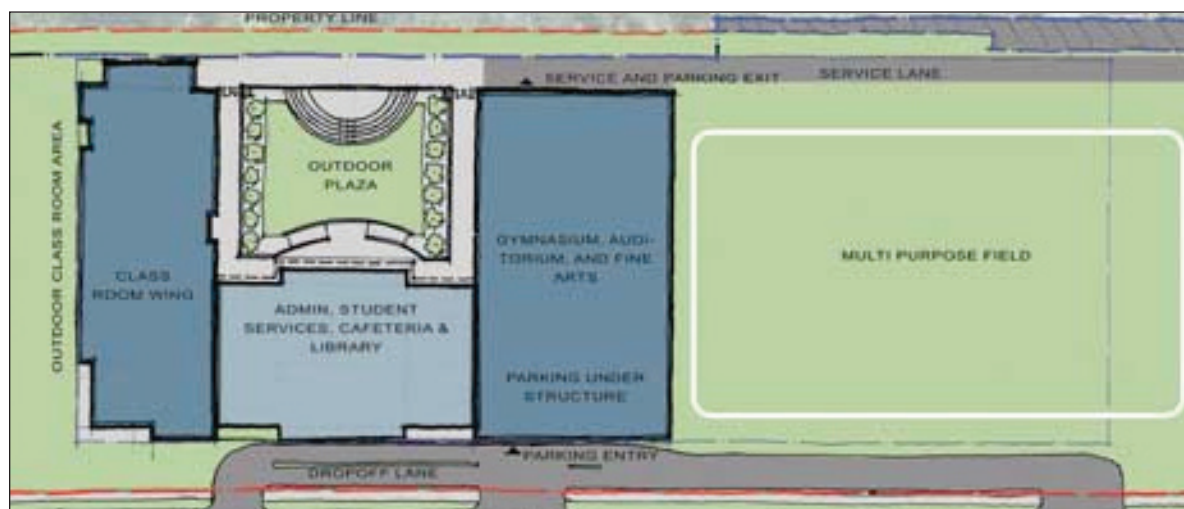
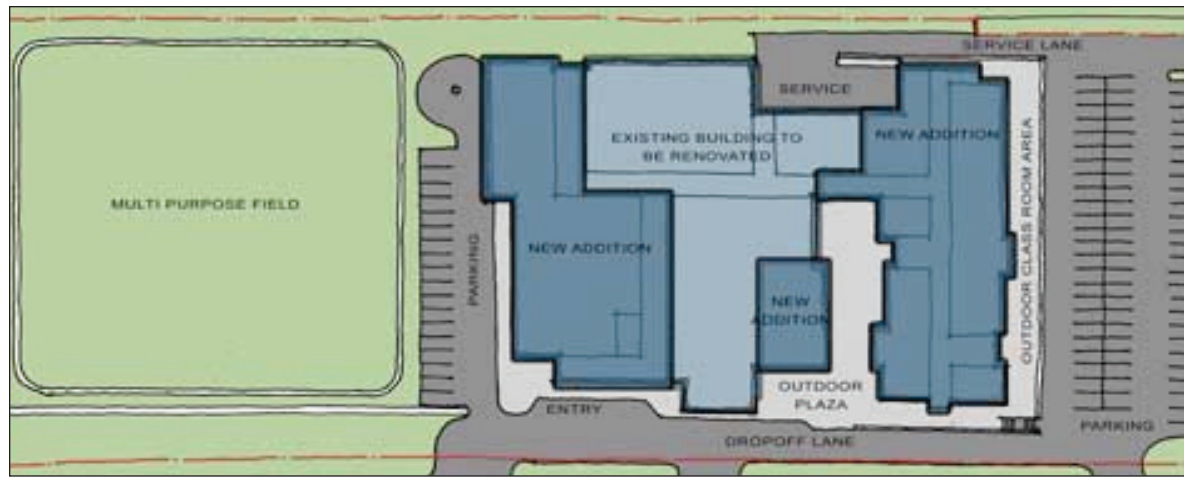
After a five-month investigation, Wydown Tomorrow presented its findings to the Board of Education last month. The 16-member committee drafted two options that it believes will adequately address Wydown Middle School's issues, namely a lack of space.

The first option involves reusing parts of the current building and building additions. The plan would cost \$35.4 million, result in a four percent increase in green space, and include 98 parking spots. However, it would take the auditorium offline for 29 months and the field and track offline for 19 months. The fine arts program and administration would have to be relocated for 29 months and 15 months, respectively.

“For me, one of the cons is the fact that we would be without a theatre and it would greatly impact our performing arts program,” said Wydown Principal Mary Ann Goldberg, who was part of the Wydown Tomorrow committee.

The second option proposed by Wydown Tomorrow is to build a completely new school on the existing site, which would be accomplished by building on the current playing field. Option two would cost \$38.3 million, increase the green space by 19 percent, and include 108 parking spaces. It would cause the field and track to be offline for 31 months and the gym and locker room to be offline for 15 months. Goldberg said that though this is the most expensive option, it is the one she would rather see carried out.

“The pro of course for the new school is that it will be a new school, everything will be new, it will be probably be a building that will be built for 50 to 75 years, and it's one of the [op-



TOP: Option One for the renovation of WMS involves renovating and building additions on the current building. BOTTOM: Option Two is to build a completely new building by flipping the locations of the current school and field. Though it would cost about \$3 million more than Option One, Option Two would have a lesser impact on WMS's performing arts program.

tions] that least impacts our schedule here,” Goldberg said. “Every principal's dream is building a new school.”

Building a new school or renovating the current building will be no easy task. As students have seen at CHS, even minor construction can be a hassle, and Clayton School District Direc-

tor of Communications Chris Tennill said that the process of renovating or rebuilding Wydown will be no walk in the park.

“You can't do any construction like that on a campus, I mean, even with what we're doing at Clayton High School right now, without creating

some minor inconveniences in terms of parking and everything,” Tennill said. “With the situation at Wydown, we're actually looking at, one way or another, recreating a whole school. It's going to be inconvenient, it's going to be tough.”

Students and staff will undoubtedly

be faced with a challenge once the construction gets underway, and it remains to be seen whether they will be able to adjust to such a major disturbance.

“I think they'll adapt to it, it's just how much you can adapt to it...” Goldberg said. “If you don't have a theatre to perform in, there's only so much adapting that you can do.”

According to the Clayton School District's website, “The committee carefully considered the need to continue to educate Wydown students during construction” and “explored temporarily relocating all or part of Wydown's programs to an alternate site...” Goldberg said that the committee did not look too deeply into how exactly programs would be adjusted to accommodate construction. Tennill also said that the district has some “general ideas” of how programs would be relocated and that they would be refined after the plans for Wydown are finalized.

The BOE will make a decision on Wydown's future by Jan. 25 so that a bond issue can be placed on the April ballot. However, the bond issue would not raise the property tax rate as Proposition S did. Once the BOE decides, the district will begin to campaign as they did for Prop. S last year. After the election, if the bond issue passes, the district would begin to draw up detailed plans for construction.

“If they have a bond issue, if the bond issue passes, then what they have to do is sit down with the architects and actually plan out the whole thing,” Goldberg said. “What they have in front of them now in the options are the concepts of how it would be.”

Goldberg said that if the bond issue passes, construction would likely begin in the spring of 2011. Construction for both options would be completed in November 2013. ☺



Current Clayton Superintendent Don Senti plans to retire following the 2009-2010 school year. The search for a replacement has resumed after one of the three finalists dropped out because of personal reasons just weeks before a decision was to be made.

District restarts superintendent search as candidate drops out

by Ben Colagiovanni
Reporter

The Clayton School District Board of Education has decided to begin searching for a new superintendent... again. The open administrative position, caused by current superintendent Don Senti's decision to retire following the 2009-2010 school year, has yet to be filled despite the school board's ability to narrow the search for a replacement to three finalists.

A few weeks before a decision was to be made, one of the top three candidates dropped out of contention for personal reasons. Instead of choosing from one of the remaining two finalists, the school board decided to restart the search process completely.

“The superintendent is considered to be the CEO of the district,” school board President Omri Prais said. “The superintendent is responsible for overseeing the effective overall management and operation of the district. That would include things such as curriculum matters, financial matters and hiring administrators. I think we all knew going in that this is the most important decision the school board makes. We make a lot of decisions but this is the one that you want to get right. The Board, recognizing the significance of this decision, felt that it was in everyone's best interest to start the process all over.”

The importance of the decision is heightened in light of the fact that the school district has had just three superintendents in the last 39 years.

While restarting the search may seem like a daunting task, a unique leadership profile, compiled by consulting firm Hazard, Young, Attea (HYA), should help to make the new process move more quickly. The leadership profile, which outlines the characteristics desired in the new super-

intendent, was compiled following four “focus groups,” held by HYA consultants and the school board, conducted over the course of 12 days in April and May.

According to Prais, these focus groups were “meetings to get input from a significant number of students from Clayton, parents, other community members, teachers, staff, and the school board.”

At each of these focus groups, a survey was handed out to every individual in attendance. The survey entailed ranking a number of criteria on a scale of 1-10. HYA then categorized the responses by affiliation with the district, which ranged from board members to community members, into a leadership profile.

The profile showed that 164 people completed surveys and submitted them to HYA. The result was a clear, cohesive picture of what attributes all stakeholders in the district wanted in the new superintendent.

“There was a lot of alignment between all of the different groups in terms of the general qualities that we're looking for and what's important to us,” Prais said.

According to the profile, characteristics that consistently received high priority rankings from all participants, regardless of the category to which they belonged, included “backbone, communication skills, ethical, experienced, and visionary.” Prais emphasized the importance that the leadership profile will play in speeding up the process.

“We have a leadership profile and we plan to take advantage of that, and it will allow us to move the process much more expeditiously,” Prais said.

Despite the open nature of the focus groups, the rest of the search process is confidential.

Plans drafted for public library move to CHS campus

by Zachary Prais
Reporter

Imagine the potential synergy of three different entities coming together to create something greater than their sum.

That is the vision behind the Mid-County Library Joint Use Facility conceptual study, which would connect Clayton High School, the Center of Clayton and the Mid-County Library in collaboration between the School District of Clayton, the City of Clayton and the St. Louis County Library (SLCL) to greater serve the members of the community and CHS.

The idea of a joint use library connected to both CHS and the Center was inspired by the success of the Center. Today, CHS students and members of the community are often found working out next to one another in the Center, since they share the joint use facility. Following the completion of the Center, some discussion began between the School District, the City of Clayton, and the SLCL concerning the benefits of adding the Mid-County Library to this unique connected facility in the future.

“The same synergy that happened when the school district and the city put together a community center, something that neither governmental entity could have done alone,” said Don Senti, Clayton School District Superintendent. “And we actually proved through that, that governments can work together.”

Consequently, Senti believes that a similar synergy and collaboration to that of the Center would be necessary for the Mid-County Library Joint Use Facility, but furthermore, the benefits of such a synergy would be tremendous.

Craig Owens, the City Manager for the City of Clayton, explained how the library is an important aspect of the community where people can read, learn and gather together. Owens said the joint use library would be a national model library that would have multi-generational use between members of the community and CHS, in addition to a high level of service and resources for Clayton residents and students.

“[The library] would be situated in a geographic position in the community center combination high school plan, so that it would be very convenient to the community center, and the Center of Clayton, and it would also be very accessible to the high school class-

rooms,” said Ted Christner, the Chairman Emeritus of Christner Inc., the architectural firm which presented the designs of the conceptual study. “[Our] goal was to allow all of the resources in that library to be available to all generations but to have it configured and managed in a way that the individual generations could kind of have a place of their own.”

The proposed three-story library would be located on the northwestern corner of the CHS campus at the southern end of the Center of Clayton. It would be connected to the Center on the second floor near the running track and there would be a bridge on the third floor connecting it to the future addition of CHS. The third floor of the library would be specifically for CHS students both before and during the school day.

“Pretty much everyone thinks it is a good idea... it seems like it would be in everybody's best interest,” Senti said. “It would give us a better library, a bigger library, and a library that is accessible for our [students'] expanded hours.”

The third floor of the library would accommodate the high school collection and include tables and study rooms for the use of the students. In addition, the CHS floor of the library would have a few classrooms and computer labs as well as a video production studio.

“[CHS] would get a world class library, a library that is light-years ahead of other libraries,” said Tim Wadham, the Assistant Director of Youth and Community Services for the SLCL.

In addition, students would have free access to the materials of the Mid-County Library, including their general collection, located on the second floor.

“I think our program would improve because we would have more access to resources... I think they have a really wonderful collection that we could certainly benefit from... and also they have a huge number of databases compared to us,” said Victoria Jones, the Head Librarian of the School District of Clayton.

Unlike the CHS library today, the joint use library would also be open to students during all of its regular operating hours.

“I think it sounds fantastic in a lot of ways because it would just open up the doors to more resources for our students,” said Lauran DeRigne, the

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'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' may see change under Obama

by Jackie Leong
Editor

The military may, sometime in the near future, be welcoming openly gay men and women into its ranks. Though the 'when' is unclear, the 'what' is readily anticipated by gay-rights groups all over the country.

President Obama had promised to put an end to the "don't ask, don't tell" military gay policy—from as early as his campaign days. Under the current policy, homosexuals and bisexuals serving in the U.S. military are not allowed to openly declare, nor act upon, their sexuality.

Those who do are charged with breaking the policy and are honorably discharged from the military services.

David Dresner, of the youth movement "The Right Side of History", a grassroots movement which strives for equal treatment of all people, regardless of sexual orientation or preference, strongly supports a repeal of the policy.

"It's a blatant form of discrimination," Dresner said. "It's disgusting. I don't see why sexuality should have anything to do with it."

Gregory Magarian, Professor of Law at Washington University, agrees.

"You get a group of people saying, 'We want to put ourselves in harm's way to serve our country' and you say, 'You aren't allowed to do that because you're gay?'" Magarian said. "That makes no sense."

Obama has met some criticism for not acting fast enough. The gay community is ready for a "quick repeal" of the law, said Fox News.

"I don't think it's going to happen right away," Magarian said. "But will happen, perhaps within the decade."

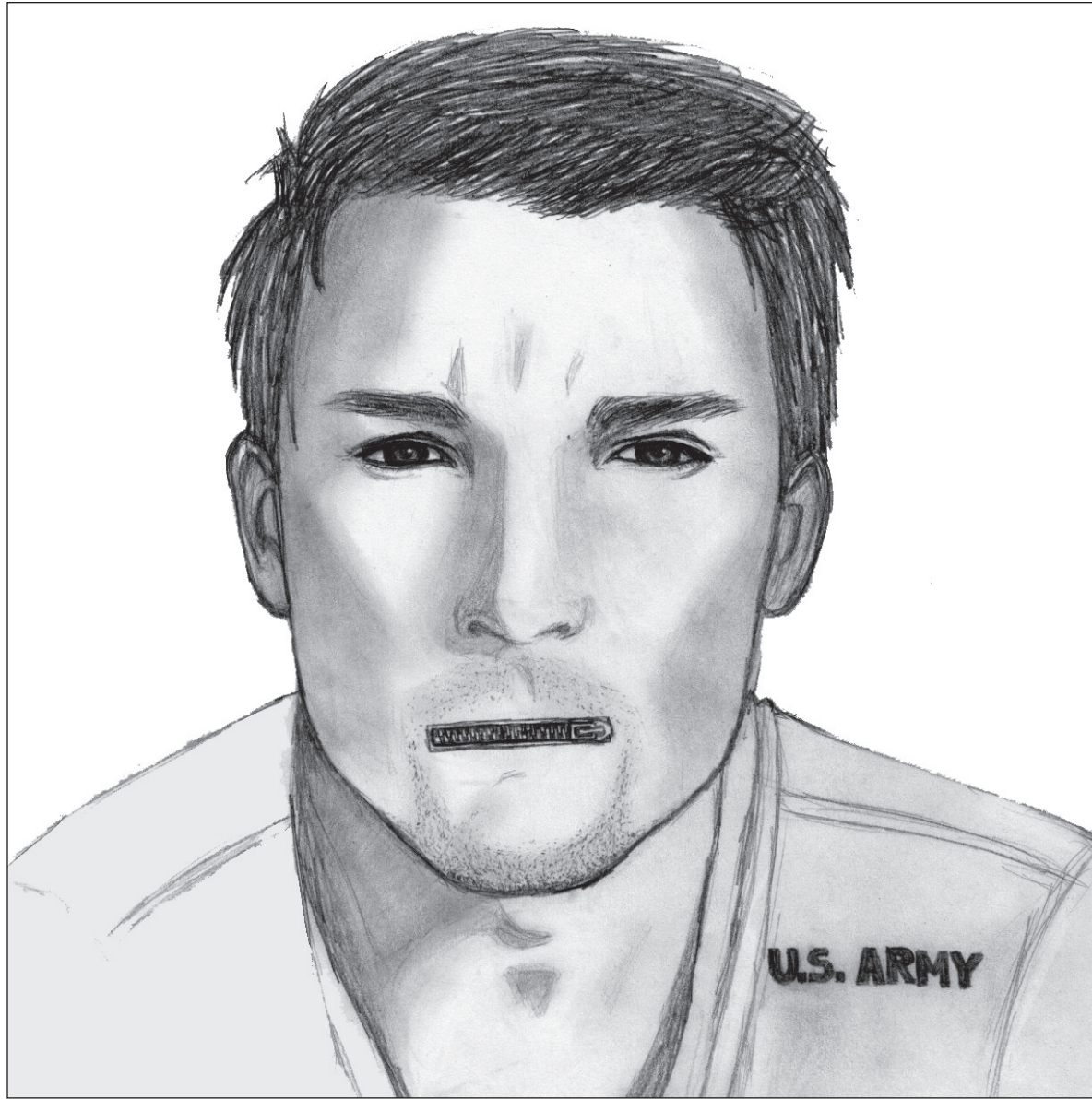
Dresner agrees, though he hopes for a shorter wait.

"Do I think it will be sooner?" Dresner said. "Yes. It'll happen in the next few years. Saying that 'don't ask, don't tell' will be ended in the next decade is like saying that in the next ten years, it's going to rain."

In a recent speech addressing the Human Rights Campaign, a gay advocacy group, Obama attempted to reassure impatient listeners.

"We have made progress, and we will make more," Obama said. "Do not doubt the direction we are heading, and the destination we will reach... we are moving ahead on 'don't ask, don't tell'. We should not be punishing patriotic Americans who have stepped forward to serve this country, we should be celebrating their willingness to show such courage."

The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was initially implemented in 1993. At the time, it was viewed as a compromise that improved upon the previous policy that allowed the military to investigate suspected gays, and discharge those



Under Obama, the military may revoke their 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy. Currently, open homosexuality results in an honorable discharge from the armed forces.

found 'guilty'.

Magarian believes that gay rights have come a long way since then, and most Americans are much more open-minded than they were decades ago. Even so, he says there is a "significant minority" that still opposes gay rights.

However, Magarian refers to the prime "stumbling block" keeping Obama from changing the policy sooner as military "turf-protectiveness"—resulting in tension between the Pentagon and the White House.

"Obama doesn't want to be perceived as trying to show

anyone up," Magarian said. "I gather that many military leaders do not like to have policy dictated to them in things they consider integral to their realm."

Those "things" are essentially morale and trust in the Army.

"The Army believes that there is the possibility that someone who is sexually attracted to his own brothers or comrades-in-arms leads to less trust," Magarian said. "Such justifications don't seem plausible to me, but do to military leaders."

Most universities, according to Dresner, have "equal opportunity" rules that forbid employers that discriminate against gays to recruit on campus. But because of the Solomon Act of 1995, which enables the government to deny funding to institutions that prevent military recruiting on their grounds—despite clashing 'don't ask, don't tell' and university 'equal opportunity' policies.

"That's basically forcing universities to knowingly break their own non-discriminatory laws because of funding," Dresner said. "That's a problem."

What bothers Magarian most about the policy are also the intolerant implications that segregating people of different sexualities implies.

"To suppress a part of one's identity means being treated as less than a human being," Magarian said. "Sexual orientation is predominantly unconscious."

Magarian equates the policy to a scenario somewhat resembling "telling Jewish people to pretend not to be Jewish", except that he argues that one's sexuality is an "immutable characteristic."

"There's nothing wrong with being straight," Magarian said. "To say that there is something wrong with being gay—that's pretty harsh. [In the military] the rest get to talk about 'my wife this, my girlfriend that'—but gay people don't?"

In addition, anti-gay discrimination doesn't stop at 'don't ask, don't tell,' Dresner pointed out.

"In 29 states, you can be fired for being gay," Dresner said. "In 32 states, you can be evicted from your apartment. [Legal] barriers make starting a family for a gay couple so much harder."

However, it is clear that many, including Magarian and Dresner, view the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell' as a start.

Although he admits that changes in military gay policy may take time, especially when such an issue is viewed by many as lesser compared higher-priority issues such as economic problems, Magarian is sure that in time, they will arrive.

"It's going to come," Magarian said. "We have moved incredibly far in the direction of gay rights in the last 15 years... it will happen, that is one thing I am truly sure of." ☺

Vatican invites Anglican clergy to convert and lead under Catholic faith

by Meredith McMahon
Reporter

The Vatican decided Oct. 20 to make it easier for traditional Anglican churches to convert to Catholicism. What led to this development was that some less traditional Anglican churches have "veered away" from the interpretation of the teachings of the Bible held by the traditional Anglican Church.

In a sense, the Vatican's position is not altogether new, but an evolution of an existing one. Anglican priests have always been able to celebrate Roman Catholic masses after converting to Catholicism and after being ordained in the Catholic Church. Anglican converts to Catholicism also retain the right to remain married and raise a family.

However, under the new Vatican rule, it is easier for this transition to happen. Additionally, the newly adopted position permits an entire Anglican congregation and its priest to move under the umbrella of Roman Catholicism.

Even an entire diocese, consisting of many "parishes" within a geographic area can move, or convert, to Catholicism.

"The new invitation the Pope just wrote about [was] the idea of whole parishes leaving the Anglican Church with their ministers and bringing their community with them," Monsignor John Schamleffer said. Schamleffer is the pastor at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Clayton. "It's [allowing] the people who believe that the Anglican Church has left their core beliefs and has taken on beliefs that they don't believe in and are teaching things that they don't put their faith into and opens up the possibility for this community or individual to affiliate with the Catholic Church. This new community could continue to celebrate the Anglican liturgy with their Anglican priest leading this community."

Although Catholic and more traditional Anglican church liturgies and rites are very similar, members of the traditional Anglican Church believe that less traditional Anglican churches, like the American Episcopal church, have gone astray.

Anglican polarization from Catholic teachings stems from the ordaining of women and teaching that homosexuality is not a sin.

"One reason why the Pope invited the people was because the American Episcopal Church had veered away from the doctrines of the Bible," an anonymous Anglican priest from the St. Louis area said. "My impression is that they would move for doctrinal purposes and the liturgy is pretty much the same."

For more traditional Anglicans, the "veering away" from the teachings of the Bible presents an issue.

"The church should change culture; culture should not change the Church," said the aforementioned Anglican priest who belongs to a more traditional church.

Other denominations have also moved in the direction of the Catholic Church due to members of the Church becoming too liberal, in the eyes of more conservative members, in terms of interpreting the Bible.

"Many denominations have moved in the direction of the Catholic Church," the Anglican priest said. "The reason they would move is because the Catholic Church preserves a sort of orthodoxy."

However, there exists at least one fundamental difference between the traditional Anglican Church and Catholicism: marriage for priests. While forbidden for the typical Catholic priest, marriage for Anglican ministers is a long-standing Anglican custom.

Recognizing this, the Vatican made it clear that Anglican priests who are already married when they convert to Catholicism may stay married and raise a family. However, these converted Anglican married priests would be limited to leading only converted Anglican congregations.

This exception for Anglicans has led to foreshadowing of a trend towards allowing Catholic priests to marry, or for married Catholic men to become priests. "It has nothing to do with any of that. [Anglican parishioners] would all become members of the Catholic church but [the Anglican priest] would only be able to lead that community, not have any



The Catholic Church recently invited priests of the Anglican Church to become leaders within Catholic faith. Anglican clergy converts retain their right to marriage, but the ordaining of women and homosexuals has been questioned by the Catholic Church.

other clergy do it, and it wouldn't lead to any other married clergy. It would certainly not open it up to Catholic men to get married and to become priests in the Catholic Church."

Another Catholic priest, Fr. John Valenta S.J., a Jesuit priest who resides at St. Louis University, felt that the Vatican's decision was a good one, and possibly represented a small move towards eventually allowing Catholic priests to marry. However, he was quick to add that if it happens, it will not happen immediately.

His own opinion on the subject of married priests was positive: "I think it's a step in the right direction."

The future of this new decision—the invitation to Angli-

cans- is uncertain.

"This is a relatively new idea, it's never been tried out before," Schamleffer said.

"What form it's going to take I have no idea," said the Anglican priest.

Although in theory it would be possible for entire Anglican congregations and priests to switch to Catholicism, it has potential glitches.

"The thing is, you have to consider the affect it will have on people," Valenta said. Although the outcome of this decision is uncertain, its potential to change both churches is undeniable. ☺

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Organization helps students learn with laptops

by **Appi Sharma**
Web Editor

Unlike many of its neighbors, Uruguay puts a lot of stress on education. All education even college and post-graduate studies is free. However, Uruguay doesn't come close to having amounts of resources comparable to those of the U.S. It comes as no surprise, then, that it is there that the One Laptop per Child program (OLPC) is making great strides.

According to the BBC, the government of Uruguay has provided over 362,000 students with the small but rugged laptops offered by OLPC. The whole project, dubbed *Plan Ceibal*, cost the government \$260 per child including the costs of maintenance and training.

The project revolutionized many families' lives in Uruguay, as more than 70 percent of the laptops were given to families who didn't have access to computers before. In this manner, the government of Uruguay and OLPC have given children access to a whole new digital world as well as the Internet.

Yet the OLPC project involves much more than giving out laptops. As is stated in the organization's mission statement on OLPC's website, the true goal is to inspire more children to learn, and give them the tools to do so.

The mission of the project is to create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning.

The statement goes on to explain how these laptops can accomplish the



Children in Uruguay celebrate as they receive their XO laptops from One Laptop per Child.

Photo courtesy of onelaptopperchild.org

goal.

When children have access to this type of tool they get engaged in their own education, it says. They learn, share, create, and collaborate. They become connected to each other, to the world and to a brighter future.

The laptops have the same clear focus as the organization themselves. The devices, named XO laptops, have been designed from the ground up to be optimal for their task.

Their hardware is built to be rugged and last several years. It has heavy-duty antennae, giving it the ability to better access Internet connections.

Also, the multi-purpose hinge allows the XO to take various forms, including the traditional laptop style, a form for reading books, and a tablet form. These facilitate various forms of

learning, making the XO a very versatile piece of equipment.

Perhaps more important than the hardware of a computer is its software, as it is what defines the user experience with the product. The XO comes with a customized Linux operating system called Sugar, as well as several programs that are designed for learning.

The Sugar operating system is designed specifically for child use. Thus, it is very simple, and neatly organized. It features 3 main views: neighborhood, group, and home. These show the broad network of nearby XO devices, the users' favorite nearby XO devices, and the software on the computer respectively.

The software that is bundled with the XO provides both educational and entertainment options for students. It

comes with a word processor that is capable of networking, allowing different computers to access the same document.

It also has many music creation programs, an Internet browser, some graphics programs, as well as games.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the XO is its Mesh Network. This system allows the XO to expand the range of its wireless Internet connections.

As soon as one computer is connected, it broadcasts that connection further using its own antennae. Thus, computers far away from the access point can also be connected to the Internet, if there are XOs closer to the access. All of these features make the XO a perfect computer for fostering education in developing nations.

Global Corner: Bangladesh



Local residents assist in unloading bags of fresh water from helicopter after the destruction from Tropical Cyclone Sidr in Doblachar, Bangladesh.

by **Sneha Viswantahn**
Senior World Editor

Bangladesh, a country sandwiched between India and Burma, is in the global spotlight after recent evidence has shown that it will be one of countries most direly affected by climate change.

The BBC reported that it expects to use 15 percent of the funds that developed countries are planning to contribute at the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen to aid developing nations with managing climate change.

According to the National Geographic's website, "almost half of all Bangladeshis live on less than \$1 a day." It is also among the most crowded countries, with more than 2,000 people per square mile. The country is already hit hard by natural disasters, with regular cyclones and monsoons.

Most people are closely tied to the land, and since farming is the

primary source of income of most people in Bangladesh, flooding takes a major toll on their livelihood. Global warming will exacerbate flooding due to the rise of sea levels.

Bangladesh is a relatively young country. According to the CIA's World Factbook, a third of the country's population is under the age of 14 and the median age of the population is 23 years. The predominant language and ethnicity of Bangladesh is Bengali. The majority of the population is Muslim, but a sizeable Hindu minority coexists in Bangladesh. Bangladesh gained its independence from Pakistan in 1971, and has since sought to differentiate its national identity from that of Pakistan.

Bangladesh remains socially stratified in rural communities. Rural Bangladeshis follow the Hindu caste system as well as a Muslim stratification system to fill various niches in the communities.

Medical marijuana seen as hope by some, danger by others

by **Caitlin Kropp**
Reporter

It is a known fact that the number of cancer and AIDS patients are growing rapidly as time goes on. As more and more people succumb to disease, the demand for new medication rises. Increasingly, people are flocking to a new form of alternative medication, which, although it has been around for several years, is fairly new to the medical scene.

Support for medicinal marijuana is growing rapidly, as more and more people claim that it helps ease the sufferings brought on by their various diseases. Already, 13 states have passed measures that allow possession of small amounts of the drug for medical purposes. President Obama has also promised not to prosecute medicinal marijuana users and suppliers as long as they conform to state guidelines. According to recent polls, about 44 percent of Americans support medicinal marijuana, and, if support continues to grow at the rate it has now, it is expected that nearly all of America will be in favor of medicinal marijuana in as little as four years.

Those in favor of the drug for medical purposes do so with some limitations. In order for it to be widely accepted, many believe that the usage and supply needs to be closely observed.

"I would be in favor of it [medicinal marijuana] with very strict guidelines and regulations, state by state," CHS History teacher Kurtis Werner said. "Obviously you would give the states the right, to have the power in the say. Or, you could have a strong federal mandate that comes down and says, 'This is going to be right or this is going to be wrong.'"

Others believe that the current form of medicinal marijuana is too unsafe. Those individuals would prefer that a more controlled form of the drug be developed before being widely available.

"I would prefer the development of safer medications or at the very least a delivery system for cannabis that does not require the inhalation of the more than 400 harmful chemicals that are contained in marijuana," CHS Student Resource Officer John Zlatic said.

Still others believe that marijuana has no place in a doctor's office, asserting that there are other drugs that work just as well, without the harmful side effects.

"Marijuana is not a medicine," National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention Specialist Wendy Lampe said. "There are other non-mood altering drugs that are more effective on illnesses that have significantly fewer health risks

than marijuana."

Among other concerns is the issue that the decriminalization of marijuana for medical purposes could encourage marijuana use in general. When coupled with current statistics, the effect can be unsettling.

"Probably 99.9% of persons caught in possession of marijuana who claim it is for medicinal purposes don't have a prescription from a doctor or hospital," Lampe said.

Law enforcement officials are uneasy about the change, as it could encourage drug use and could blur the lines between what is and what isn't acceptable when it comes to marijuana.

"A broader concern amongst law enforcement is that legalizing medicinal marijuana will provide a broader support for the legalization of marijuana drug use," Zlatic said. "Some individuals will see this new policy as legitimacy for marijuana use."

In addition, there is also the possibility of users falling into more drugs from the marijuana, resulting in more harm than good.

"Marijuana is a gateway drug for some users. I have personally witnessed numerous occasions where lives and families are destroyed because of heroin and cocaine," Zlatic said. "Opening the door on marijuana places more people at risk of entering into a life of dependency that is extremely difficult to extricate themselves from."

However, despite the objections, support continues to

grow, state by state, for medicinal marijuana usage. Many believe that a law similar to those passed already could be in Missouri's future, but after more developments.

"In the Midwest, being a more conservative heartland, what you're going to have is essentially people pushing for a different type of medical marijuana, maybe more like a pill or a vapor," Werner said. "It's because of the smoke. The smoke is always going to be an issue with some people."

Others think that Missouri will act more in correlation with what other states are doing. If laws are passed in other states, Missouri could quickly become another state to support medicinal marijuana.

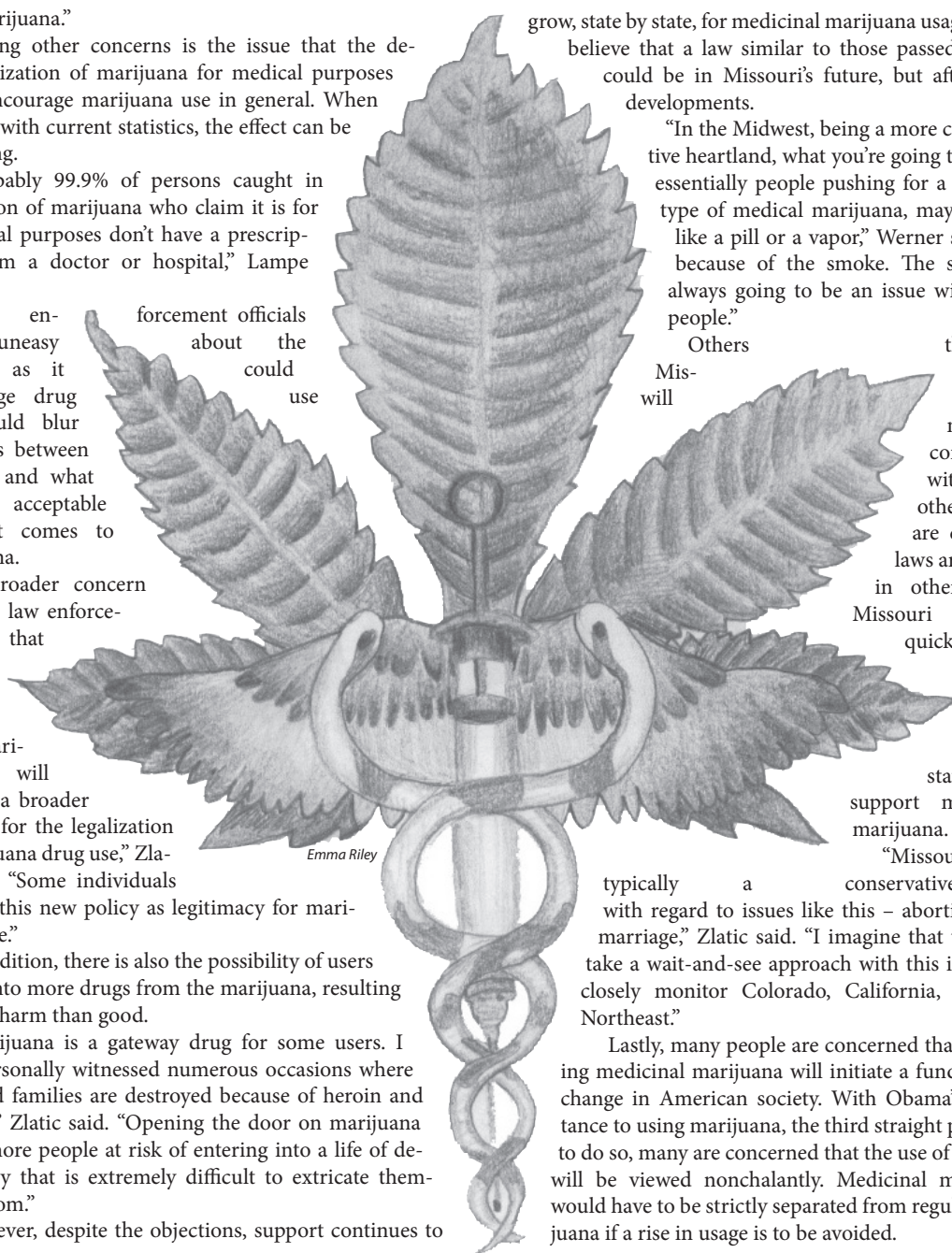
"Missouri is typically a conservative state with regard to issues like this - abortion, gay-marriage," Zlatic said. "I imagine that they will take a wait-and-see approach with this issue and closely monitor Colorado, California, and the Northeast."

Lastly, many people are concerned that legalizing medicinal marijuana will initiate a fundamental change in American society. With Obama's admittance to using marijuana, the third straight president to do so, many are concerned that the use of the drug will be viewed nonchalantly. Medicinal marijuana would have to be strictly separated from regular marijuana if a rise in usage is to be avoided.

"I would hope that society would view this as two separate and unrelated issues, however, I believe that there will be some groups who will view any legalization of medicinal marijuana as a significant step towards the legalization of all marijuana," Zlatic said. "Public education about the harmful effects of marijuana would have to counteract any notions that using marijuana is acceptable."

States permitting medical marijuana


- Alaska (1998)
- California (1996)
- Colorado (2000)
- Hawaii (2000)
- Maine (2000)
- Michigan (2000)
- Montana (2004)
- Nevada (2000)
- New Mexico (2007)
- Oregon (1998)
- Rhode Island (2006)
- Vermont (2004)
- Washington (1998)




Emma Riley

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CHS alum, students involved in AP science plagiarism

by Ken Zheng
Co-Editor in Chief

Many students at CHS and schools nationwide copy work far more often than teachers would like, but most don't get caught. Many students in AP Chemistry were recently caught plagiarizing a former student's lab reports by their teacher Nathan Peck.

The Qualitative Analysis Lab is the biggest lab of the entire course in which students attempt to test for the presence of 10 different ions. The lab is worth a total of 100 points, compared to the usual 20 or 30 points that most of the other labs are.

"What I found out was that there were some unique mistakes that showed up in many of the lab reports," Peck said. "How could so many students be making the same mistake unless they were collaborating on the lab report?"

After coming back from the weekend, Peck addressed his class and reviewed the lab protocol that states that students can only collaborate on data collection but aren't allowed to cooperate on the lab report.

"I understand that it's a lot easier for students to copy an assignment when they get behind," Peck said. "The whole deal about plagiarism is that it's not as black-and-white as many people would think. I believe that there is a point where people understand they are using someone else's work and passing it off as their own work. When you're not thinking about the concept and are just copying down someone else's work, then that's not right."

The students in Peck's class not only collaborated with each other; some plagiarized the labs created by Paul Orland, a CHS graduate of 2008.

In regards to either using the labs or receiving help from other students, Peck gave his students three options: to maintain their innocence if they did nothing wrong, to take a five-point deduction on their Qualitative Analysis Lab and apologize, promising to never do something of the sort again, or to deny their wrongdoings and take the chance of being proven a liar and a cheater with strong repercussions.

Senior Jordan Stern is in third period AP Chemistry and plans on choosing the second option because he collaborated with other students.

"I told Mr. Peck that I had access to the labs because they were sent to me, but I didn't use them like many of my peers," Stern said. "What I'm getting in trouble for is having access to them and seeing them. I still feel that I did my own work, but ultimately it is Mr. Peck's decision if I lose points or not, which I completely understand. For the people that copied the labs that were posted online, I feel like it is a problem and it is their fault. It's fair for them to lose points."

Orland, now an undergraduate at Yale, created a website for the lab portfolio that is assigned at the end of AP Chemistry.

"I was falling behind in my classes, and I ended up submitting it after the semester was over, and received no credit for it," Orland said. "I later shared the site with the next year's students as a reference. I also posted all of my AP Physics assignments specifically to help future students with an explicit note asking them not to plagiarize."

Senior Gus Heil was a student in AP Chemistry last year and is currently taking AP Physics.

"I actually didn't use that site last year in chemistry," Heil said. "I was an honest and hardworking student. I did not know about the website. I would not have copied even if I had known, because, apart from the fact that I am an

outstandingly honest man, I know that Paul Orland is way smarter than I will ever be, and I would be caught immediately because he says very smart things in his labs that I could never come up with without cheating."

Because he isn't part of Peck's class anymore, Heil believes that the punishments for those caught should be stronger.

"I think that harsher consequences would be a better course of action to take concerning the guilty parties," Heil said. "This would be one of the most valuable life lessons and would prepare the students for college. In college, you get kicked out for plagiarism. The point of high school is to prepare young adults for college."

Orland received no points for his online lab portfolio because it was turned in late.

"Your online lab portfolio looks good and if you decide to seek credit for the course at college, I'm sure that it will help you," Peck said in a response email to Orland back in 2008. "It won't help you on your Clayton AP Chemistry grade, however, since the course is over and you've graduated."

Then Orland shared the website with rising juniors and seniors entering AP Chemistry.

"I have always tried to help my peers succeed," Orland said. "While I was in AP Chemistry, I helped a friend in the class with his lab write-ups for several hours a week all year long, often at the expense of getting my own work done. This was a more productive use of my time than any lab report. By posting my work online as a reference, I could continue helping other students 'in spirit,' even if I was long graduated. I don't condone plagiarism, but instead think my work can be a valuable resource for current students."

After finding the website, Peck is disappointed that many of his students chose to blatantly plagiarize the source.

"The website definitely provides a real temptation for someone to use it, especially when they think I don't know about it," Peck said. "I think I gave a moderate penalty for those students who admitted violating my trust in them. I really just wanted kids to fess up and take ownership of their actions. I think kids need to figure that out because there will be serious consequences at some point if they continue to do the wrong thing."

Peck has many thoughts regarding the ethics of the entire situation.

"Basically what it boils down to with me is that when students put their names on a lab or test, they are taking credit for the thought and work that went into that assignment," Peck said. "To me, the message to students is you need to be very careful about what you put your name on to represent as your own work. Collaboration is different than copying. If a student doesn't understand the work they're turning in, if they don't 'own' the knowledge or the thinking that went into the assignment, then that's clearly a plagiarized assignment."

Stern doesn't believe losing points for collaboration



An array of chemicals that students use for the Qualitative Analysis lab, which is the biggest lab that students in AP Chemistry perform where they have to test for the presence of ten ions.

amongst students is justified, despite that not being the reason he's losing points.

"The collaboration between people only went as far as seeing if you got the same answer or reviewing the process," Stern said, "which I feel happens no matter what class you are in and is really not that big of a deal. There are parts of collaboration on labs that are a big deal, like if you use other kids' labs for answers when you haven't done them."

In order to deal with Orland's website, Peck has decided to simply have lab quizzes and practicals for the rest of the year.

"Colleges require a lab portfolio for credit," Peck said "I will collect the labs still and make sure they are adequate. I'm also going to even the playing field. Since some people found Paul's labs, then everyone should have them and I will share his website address with all of my students. If people want to look at them, that's fine, but beware, I certainly wouldn't offer them up as exemplary reports."

Students will still turn in a lab for their portfolio since that is part of the requirements for the class.

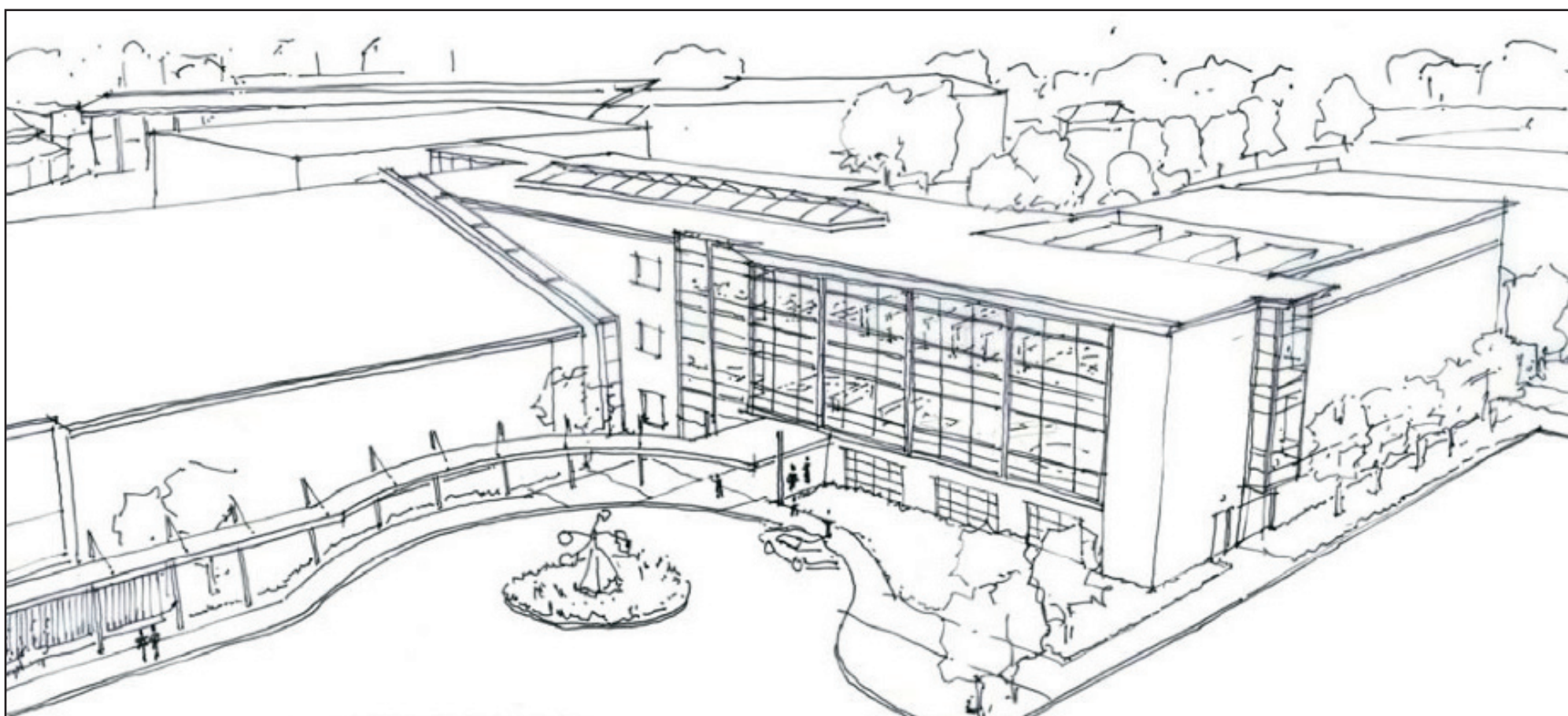
"We're altering the way we assess the lab program, however," Peck said, "and in the future will include in-class assessments relating to the concepts and procedures learned in the laboratory."

Stern believes that lab quizzes help the problem with many students cheating.

"[Lab quizzes] are probably the best way to go about solving the problem," Stern said, "but I still feel like it might cause some people's grades to go down just because of the idea of an in-class assessment. If they don't totally understand a con-

Disclaimer: Please do not extract text or graphs directly from my labs. Also, don't use any of my derivations or explanations that you don't understand. You will make a fool of yourself. Some of my assignments here have bad grades because they were turned in late. For the most part, my labs are amazing and you shouldn't hesitate to refer to them. Either way, use these resources at your own risk.

Paul Orland
CHS alum, quoted from website



The architect's rendition of the proposed joint-use library shows it connecting to the Center at the south end of the pool and to the new addition to CHS to the east. It would project into what is now the parking lot area and the new extended lot would be where the mulch pile is now.

Proposed library move could create 'true community'

Public library
pg. 1

Librarian of the library at CHS.

"It would allow access for students after school, which would be fantastic. Basically kids could stay until 9 p.m. a lot of nights to work on their schoolwork."

The library would benefit members of the community through its connection with the Center, who could utilize both facilities.

"I think it would be nice for people to be able to combine what they do," said Patty DeForrest, the Director of Clayton Parks and Recreation. "[The library] could draw people to a library who might only come here to see the fitness center, so they may use both because they are at one place, and that's kind of convenient and nice for them."

DeForrest explained how she would love to walk on over to the library and pick up a book during her breaks.

"Community Center is really the [term] that comes to mind when you

think of this combination, that it becomes a center of the city," Christner said. "The athletic facilities, art and music, theatre [and] the library: all of those things really create a synergy.... So, if you look at all of those things and the benefits, it becomes in our opinion a really positive kind of philosophy to bring all of these facilities together."

Christner, who helped design the Center of Clayton, believes that the joint use library would further develop this community center, as it would attract more members of the community from every age group, from CHS students to both young and old members of the community.

The proposed library would include a café, computer classrooms, a gallery space and an auditorium, in addition to the general collection and a children's library. The auditorium would give the Mid-County Library the opportunity to host authors and other speakers with a large audience. Also, the auditorium could host other venues including CHS plays along with other productions of

the Metro Theatre Company. In addition, the gallery space could host collections of local artists or CHS students.

"It just seemed a really cool thing to have a space for the arts as well as a library," Wadham said. "I've always felt that libraries are art institutions, combining literature with all the other arts."

With its unique connections to other facilities, countless resources and new facilities, Wadham hopes the library would become a regional center.

"The perfect vision would be for this to become a regional arts destination," Wadham said.

The proposed library would be built and paid for by SLCL through a future bond issue, probably in 2011. However, Wadham said there are still some obstacles that must be resolved before they go to voters in a little more than a year.

Under the proposition, the library would be built on the CHS campus, with the School District agreeing to practically donate the land to the Mid-

County Library in exchange for the CHS student floor of the library.

"Since we own the land, they would build the library and then for a nominal, maybe nothing, exchange for the land, we would get a free floor of the library for the high school's use," Senti said.

However, with CHS, the Center and the library all on the same site, there is concern over whether there would be too much activity at the location.

"For people to be able to come here to this site, work out and go check out a book or go online over at the library, I think that was kind of always the vision that there would be a lot of activity over here," DeForrest said. "I think the challenge is figuring how to fit all that activity on the site. Some things will have to be adapted."

DeForrest explained how there has also been parking issues around CHS and the Center as students and Center members struggle to find parking spots.

As a result, if the new library were

built, there would be a significant lack in parking spaces. However, the conceptual study presented the idea of possibly expanding the parking lot west, parallel to the Center's competition pool, to make room for approximately 80 more spaces, where the mulch pile is currently located. According to the study, if the City contributed the mulch pile for parking, then they would not have to pay for any portion of the construction costs of the library.

"If they need parking, that is obviously the most convenient place to park," Owens said.

However, Owens said that finding a replacement location for the mulch pile in Clayton would be difficult.

"The biggest obstacle in my mind is the mulch pile," said Wadham, who believes that those additional parking spaces would be vital for the success of the library.

Despite this and other obstacles, Owens said that he has "every confidence" that three different public entities will make this vision a reality. ☛

District search for leader restarted

Superintendent search
pg. 1

"The process of a selecting a new superintendent is a confidential process, which we think is important in order to make sure we bring out the best potential candidates," Prais said.

The Board also looked for guidance from past members.

"Some board members reached out to former school board members on how to structure the process and how to get input from people," Prais said. "We tried to take advantage of lessons learned."

The Board hopes to get round two of the search started fairly quickly.

"The presentation of the slate of candidates will be in mid-January," Prais said. "The first round of interviews will be the week of Jan. 25, the second round of interviews will be in early February, and ideally, if it goes well, we will be in position to present a new superintendent in late February or early March."

Among other things, the Board wants to ensure that the candidate selected will be a fixture in the community for years to come.

"On average nationally, new superintendents are selected every two to three years," Prais said. "Our goal is to have a superintendent who is here with the district and leading us for a long time period."

Prais said that he is hoping that this search process will be fruitful.

"I am really hopeful that when we complete this process, we're able to find the right candidate who comes in with a lot of integrity and vision and can carry the tradition of an amazing district forward," Prais said. ☛

Mock trial looks to make a splash at state

After finishing second last year in state, the Mock Trial team has revamped their dedication by starting the season a month earlier than last year. Mock Trial is a team that competes in trials with other high school teams.

by Katherine Greenberg
Editor

The Mock Trial team has been to state four times in the last 10 years. Last year the team placed second in state. They are working toward an even more successful achievement in state this year.

Brenda Bollinger is the teacher who coaches the team. Lawyers Asim Raza and Mike Wetmore accompany her to coach the team. Bollinger helps with the audition process for new team members. Her tasks include getting the team registered and working alongside the other coaches.

"My position is working and honing the speaking abilities for the team," Bollinger said. "The lawyer coaches help determine the logistics and what people should be saying and I help with how they should say it."

Junior Simon Warchol has been on the Mock Trial team for two years.

"I had some friends on the JV team two years ago who got me to come to the meeting last year," Warchol said. "I auditioned and was chosen for the varsity team."

Warchol returned to the team this year with high hopes for the end result.

"We definitely should have won state last year," Warchol said. "Getting second was good but I think that the team was strong enough to get first."

Bollinger agrees with this sentiment.

"We were very close to winning state and going to nationals last year,"



Rebecca Steinberg, Taylor Stone, Maddie Bullard and Simon Warchol discuss strategies during practice earlier this season while eating dinner.

Bollinger said. "This year we received a lot of new members and started working earlier, which I think will affect our chances at state greatly. Our current status indicates it will be a very successful year."

Junior Scott Jeffrey was asked by Bollinger to join the team.

"This is my second year on the team," Jeffrey said. "The team, the tri-

als and the state competition are all fun and rewarding."

Senior Jack Harned echoes his love for the team.

"This is my first year on the team," Harned said. "I tried out for the team and I am very glad I was chosen because I really enjoy how competitive the team is."

People do not suspect the Mock

trial team is as competitive as sports teams, but the members on the team work just as hard if not harder to occur a better end result.

"We work very hard so that we can be successful," Jeffrey said. "We practice a lot. We prepare before and after winter break. For four months we have been meetings three times a week for one and a half to two hours. I love

the team, the intensity of the trials, the meetings and the fact that we probably put the most effort in this than any other team in the state."

Warchol does not find the practice schedule too grueling.

"We definitely practice a lot," Warchol said. "By constantly refining our aspects, we make the whole team a lot better."

At the beginning of the Mock Trial season, the previous varsity members choose students to add to the team. The existing varsity members have precedence regarding their role on the team. The roles are decided by a combination of personal input and coach selection.

"I am a lawyer on both sides of the case," Warchol said. "I love the role because I have moved up from being just a witness last year. I really like increased level of responsibility that I have this year."

Jeffrey is also an important part of the speech and debate team.

"For the past two years I have been chosen as the 'character' witness," Jeffrey said. "I love being a witness because I love showing a lot of emotion, which is a lot of fun."

Jack Harned also enjoys playing the role of a witness.

"I am on of the witnesses for the plaintiff," Harned said. "I love the role because I get to play a very interesting character."

Bollinger also finds the team an enjoyable outlet in her life.

"I think that somewhere inside I have always wanted to be a lawyer," Bollinger said. "I am fascinated by the law. By working with the students I can vicariously be that lawyer."

The team has bonded over the many practice sessions.

"I have a lot of fun at our meetings," Warchol said. "I really like the kids on the team. It is a lot of fun and I also really like working on each side of the case." ☺

Trash disrupts students and staff

by Jake Lee
Reporter

The teacher walked up to another table covered in Gatorade bottles and greasy cartons and swiped off the ketchup from the chair.

"Just several more tables to clean," the teacher said.

Trash from food is always left on the tables by CHS students during students' lunch periods. Trash continues to be left on the tables every day by students, causing other students and teachers to clean up the mess.

Students who are forced to clean up after others to eat on the lunch tables believe that other students are disrespectful for doing so.

"Trash being carelessly left on tables in the commons is an example of a lack of respect from CHS students towards other CHS students who use those tables at other times during the day," sophomore Scott Floerke said.

"I'm disturbed when I witness people throwing food and leaving trash on their tables," freshmen Carmen Planells said. "I think about the people who have to sit there next hour and the janitors who have to pick it up!"

Teachers and CHS staff members are usually the ones that have to clean up after trash left from students. Staff members also feel similar to students about the trash always being left on tables.

"Obviously responsible people clean up after themselves," CHS chem-



Students leave lunch remains on tables in the Commons to the anger of the teachers and custodial staff. This has been a continuing trend among CHS students.

istry teacher Michael Howe said. "Kids shouldn't have to have their moms always clean up after them. They're high school students."

"It ain't fair that CHS staff members have to clean up after kids' trash," cafeteria cook Perry Cage said.

Though most students believe it is rude and unfair to students who have to constantly move tables just to eat, some believe that it is all right to do so. One big reason that some students may trash up their lunch tables is because they believe it is the janitors' job to clean up the school.

"Well it's really rude," freshmen Sydney Smith said. "But technically it's

the janitor's job."

However, students should be able to spend the thirty seconds to walk to the nearest trash can and clean up after themselves.

Not only is it unreasonable to leave trash on the tables, but also immoral, for people are forced to pick up after other students. Trash being left on the tables shows the laziness of students at CHS.

"Sometime the tables are too trashy or sticky so my friends and I have to move tables," Planells said. "I just wish other peers would just clean up after themselves more so that everyone can eat on a clean table." ☺

Weightlifting Club gains popularity

by Nick Van Almsick
Reporter

On a cold winter's day last year, a man entered the weight room at the Clayton Recreation Center, and never looked back. From then on, senior Charles Goodman became committed to working to become a better athlete and to become healthier in general.

After a few weeks of working out every day, he noticed that he would see similar faces day in and day out, and then the idea dawned on him: Weightlifting Club. Charles took it upon himself to become president of the club, and started to spread the word.

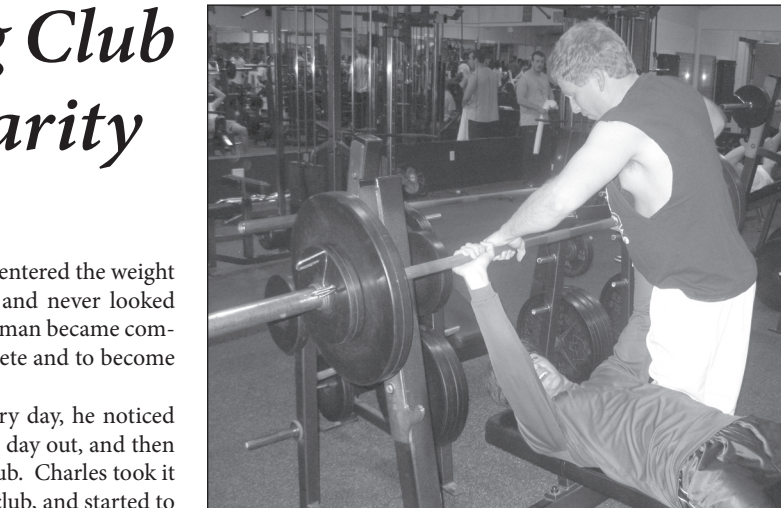
"It originally started as just me and a couple of other people that I would see in the weight room everyday," Goodman said. "But this year, word has spread and it has really taken off."

Charles decided to create this club not only because he loves working out, but also because he feels that if somebody has a group they can count on, it would get more people interested and involved in making themselves healthier people.

"I started Weightlifting Club to create a positive atmosphere where students could come into the weight room and work hard, advise others, and learn tips from people who may be more experienced in the weight room," Goodman said. "This club is an important part of what's happening at Clayton, because for the first time, students can go work out in the weight room as a group."

Weightlifting Club member Jack Ellston thinks there are many benefits to being a part of this club.

"It's nice to be able to go and work out and to see other members of the club and know that you have some support,"



Seniors Charles Goodman and Graham Gold work out together everyday by lifting weights in the Center of Clayton after school. Other members of the club also work out with them.

"It's nice to be able to go and work out and to see other members of the club and know that you have some support."

Jack Ellston
Junior member

50 active members. Goodman is very excited to see this many people dedicate themselves to becoming stronger and more fit, and encourages anybody to join.

"Anyone is more than welcome to join us and work hard in the weight room," Goodman said. "And don't forget, beach season is only a couple months away!" ☺

Ellston said. "It makes working out a better and more fun experience."

Weight lifting club member Carter Ellston agrees that creating this club was a good idea.

"Before I was a member of Weightlifting Club, I would work out anyway to get ready for baseball season," Ellston said. "I'm glad that I'm now a part of something where I can count on others to help make myself a better athlete, and that I can help them get better in return."

Weightlifting Club is quickly becoming one of the largest clubs at Clayton High School. It is now estimated to have at least



Meris Hoxah, a member of the Breakfast Club, relaxes after contributing advice to the library staff in their morning meeting.

Breakfast Club creating book scholarship for senior students

by Simone Bernstein
Senior Managing Editor

One club at CHS aims to get more students involved in the library. Typically, the Breakfast Club meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:45 a.m. to discuss activities for the library.

CHS Librarian Lauran DeRigne is the only teacher sponsor of the club. She created this group to give students an opportunity to discuss creative ideas to add to the library agenda.

"I wanted a student library advisory board to give me advice on changes and ideas I had for the library when I started three years ago," DeRigne said. "We discuss any issues affecting the library. We try to organize and plan one activity in the library each month. Last year, we had finals study nights in the library as well as some gaming events. This year, the group will be working more on literary events in and for the library."

This year the club has already completed an event to celebrate the release of the highly anticipated novel *Catching Fire*.

The group of students is also planning a book fair this year.

"We decorated the library and had giveaways for the release of the second Hunger Games books, *Catching Fire*, in September," DeRigne said. "We are now working on the up-

coming CHS Book Fair at Left Bank Books on Dec. 5 and Dec. 6 to fund a library scholarship for a CHS senior."

If you shop at Left Bank Books in the Central West End, and tell the clerk that you are there for the CHS Book Fair, a portion of your purchase goes toward funding the CHS library scholarship. This year seniors can apply for the library scholarship by writing an essay about using library resources.

Last year, library study nights during finals week were extremely popular.

"It's a great idea to keep the library open late during the week of finals," senior Melissa Kopp said. "The library was a really convenient meeting place for study groups. Also, as an added bonus, they served hot chocolate and snacks."

The club is mainly composed of boys. DeRigne encourages more girls to consider joining the club.

"We lost almost all of our original Breakfast Club members last year as seniors," DeRigne said. "This year it has been slow in starting, but we finally have a good group of students: Rasheed Henderson, Devan Westermayer, Meris Hox-

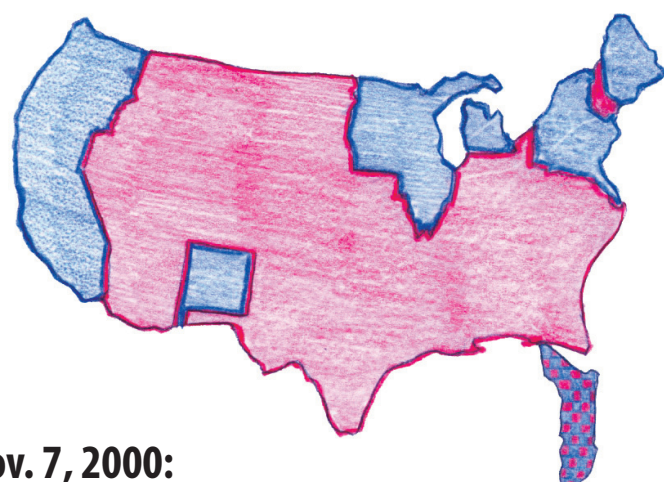
ha, Carter Ellston, Mohammed Kokan, Anna Adrignola, Jeremy Tubbs, Jordan Henry and Varun Chakravarthy. Last year it was a lot of girls, and now it's a lot of boys."

The group is always seeking new students to contribute ideas for future library activities. ☺

"I wanted a student library advisory board to give me advice on changes and ideas I had for the library when I started three years ago."

Lauran DeRigne
Librarian

The LOST Decade?

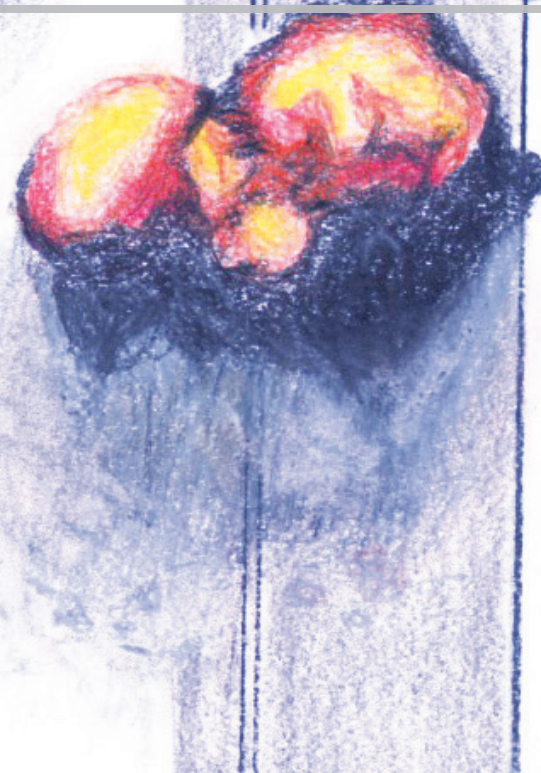


Nov. 7, 2000:

George W. Bush and Al Gore are locked in a dead-heat for the presidency. The disputed vote in Florida holds off a decision until the Supreme Court votes in favor of Bush on Dec. 12, 2000. Bush thus won the election with a 271-266 electoral majority despite receiving fewer popular votes than Gore.

Sept. 11, 2001:

Islamic fundamentalist terrorists led by the Al-Qaeda organization hijack four U.S. planes, crashing two into the World Trade Center and one into the Pentagon. The attacks cause nearly 3,000 deaths and destroy the Twin Towers. The fourth plane is heroically crashed by the passengers into a Pennsylvania cornfield when they learn of the plot, inhibiting the destruction of another structure in Washington, D.C.



The beginning of the millennium brought new advances as well as new complications: even as humans made great leaps forward, we were reminded of our ephemeral place in this world. Have we shaped history for the better?

by **Nina Oberman and Schuyler Longmore**

Optimism and pessimism run a fine line in a decade's retrospection. Did we enjoy ourselves? Did we hurt the world? Have we advanced or digressed? To cover 10 years is in itself a daunting task, but it is necessary. If we are to learn from our mistakes and benefit from our discoveries, we must first observe them.

Politics: A World Divided, Again

The world has seen two different U.S. presidents enter office, as well as leadership changes in the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. It has seen the global power spectrum hint at shifting from West to East. And it has seen more natural disasters and wars than the world has experienced in the last 30 years.

The world entered the 2000s with an overblown fear of computer crashes and near-apocalypse, but in a matter of minutes the "Y2K" threat was observed non-existent.

George W. Bush took office on January 20, 2001 to the tune of debatable election results in the form of a faulty Florida ballot and an electoral college win despite a popular vote loss to democratic candidate Al Gore.

Bush's first six months in office took a sudden turn on Sept. 11, 2001. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon would have far-reaching ramifications.

"Sept. 11, and more generally the rise of Islamic fundamentalism or jihadism have been the most significant events of this decade," Washington University political science professor Randall Calvert said. "9/11 led to the Iraq War, which fed the jihadist movement and probably amplified and lengthened the confrontation between the Islamic world and the West."

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism has created a conservative, extremist section of the Islamic world that loudly condemns western democracies.

A polarization between western and Middle Eastern nations ensued.

"The attitude of the Bush administration severely affected our relationships with citizens of other countries," Saint Louis University sociology professor Gretchen Arnold said. "The U.S. was immensely unpopular throughout the world. This might not seem important, but if those nations are democracies, and the people dictate policy, then it becomes extremely hard for the U.S.

to work with other nations on issues of common interest."

Calvert also believes that the Bush administration's foreign policy was ineffective.

"Under Bush, the U.S. approach to the world was remarkably and counterproductively unilateral and aggressive," Calvert said.

The administration's post-9/11 policy towards the international world politically separated the U.S. from a globalizing planet. Many, however, do not view this separation adversely.

"Honestly, the 'global image' of the U.S. is irrelevant to a large extent," CHS chemistry teacher Brad Krone said. "In my personal life, my actions are determined by my personal integrity, and what I believe to be right and wrong. I can't really concern myself with whether or not someone else thinks that my actions hurt my public image. The leadership of the U.S. should make decisions based on what is right and wrong for our country, not based on how the international community will perceive our actions. Obviously, I would rather see the U.S. viewed positively by other nations, but I certainly do not believe that such thinking should ever influence our government's decision-making process."

Unlike the Vietnam War and World War II, the American people do not feel the impact of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as closely. Lower casualty rates, no threat of drafting, and a careful spin on war information separate the harsh realities of war from its image at home.

"In a similar way that the threat of communism was used during the Cold War, now terrorism is often being used as the same kind of ideological weapon," Arnold said. "Terrorism becomes the reason to close off borders and generates more hostility toward illegal immigrants. It becomes a kind of rhetorical tool in political discourse."

Although there were certainly not as many protests during the 2000s as during the 1960s, poor approval ratings for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan impeded the government's efforts. Many at CHS have strong opinions about the war.

"I honestly think we could stop more terrorists if we sent textbooks, built schools and taught in Afghanistan," senior Lewis Kopman said. "We're not going to scare radical Islamic funda-

mentalists into stopping."

English teacher Rebecca Taylor also questions the effectiveness of violence during this decade.

"I do not understand why in this late age of the twenty-first century we are still fighting wars," Taylor said. "I think that's the central question of the human condition."

Unpopular international policy funneled directly into unpopular administration ratings. The Bush administration steadily received low approval ratings, with a bottom point of 25 percent approval, second only to Truman's short stay at 22 percent in 1952.

"One thing that really irritated me about all of the Bush Bashers over the past eight years is that they would never give him credit for the safety experienced in this awesome country from September 12, 2001 until he left office," Krone said. "The simple fact is that there was not another terrorist attack on our country during his two terms. He took serious action to solve a serious problem, and now it sounds like current administration would like to prosecute him for it -- what a joke!"

Bush and his cabinet witnessed disaster after disaster, with the Indian Ocean tsunami striking in 2004 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. These calamities have further emphasized global turmoil as a theme of the 2000s.

Europe grew in influence and power during the decade as it integrated through the European Union. The EU now holds significant authority in the political world after combining lesser powers into a conglomerate.

China's global political stance has changed dramatically, as the government has gradually moved to a capitalistic system with a communist majority in the government.

Central and South America have also become much more prominent in the political world.

"A significant event of the decade is the elections of populist-leftist heads of state in Central and South America," Calvert said. "The most notable is Hugo Chavez."

Chavez, the president of Venezuela, provided a contrast to the standard capitalist democracies of the United States in the 2000s.

In the heat of global economic meltdown, the 2008 election brought political fervor out of the American people that had lain dormant before. The political parties introduced charismatic and patriotic candidates in John Mc-

Cain and Barack Obama.

"I think that the American political system goes through cycles of polarization and moderation," Kopman said. "We're at one of those points at which the political parties are becoming more radicalized. It's become almost impossible to not be religious if you're a member of the Republican Party and it's become almost impossible to be a social conservative and be a member of the Democratic Party."

With a clear moralistic and ideological division drawn, the 2008 election resulted in the election of the first African-American president, Barack Hussein Obama. He won the election under the campaign promises of "hope" and "change."

Approaching the completion of his first year in office, Obama fanatics are seeing the reality of the "hope": politics remain largely the same. Almost a year has gone by and a health insurance reform bill now exists—but it is certainly not the dramatic change his constituents were pining for.

Obama's Nobel Peace Prize gave him recognition for a dramatic shift from the Bush administration's foreign policy, but only time will show his true impact.

Politics were far from calm during the Bush administration, and the Obama administration has yet to show that government leadership can turn the negativity of the decade around. The relative peace of the 1990s has been turned on its back.

Economics: Growth and Consequences

In 2000, the U.S. economy was by far the largest in the world. This size is measured in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), or the total value of all goods and services in a given year. A huge shift occurred, however, in the early 2000s.

The introduction of the Euro as the universal currency for the European Union (EU), a process that took two years to complete, set the EU at the same economic stance as the U.S. With relatively similar GDPs, the U.S. was no longer the lone economic giant.

"For the world as a whole, the introduction of the Euro created the early appearance of an alternative to the dollar as an international currency," Washington University Economics professor Gaetano Antinolfi said. "The Euro is not yet an alternative from a full blown point of view, but a lot of international reserve which are resources countries put away for emergencies is denominated in Euros, and a lot of trade oc-

curs in Euros."

The integration of the European economies allowed the countries to save on transaction costs when they traded with each other. It also allowed some countries that did not have strong currencies to obtain a strong currency, Antinolfi said.

Outside of Europe, the economies of China, Brazil and India saw a dramatic increase in size during this decade. Combined, their total population is approximately 2.5 billion.

"These have been poor countries for a long time, and they still are by and large," Antinolfi said. "But for the last maybe 15 or 20 years they have been growing and developing rapidly, and in particular over the last few years they have achieved a size in terms of domestic wealth that makes them important!"

The new significance of these economies will have ramifications throughout the world.

"The world has become a little bit more equal," Antinolfi said. "There is, therefore, some hope that it can also become more stable from an economic point of view. For example, if you think of the worldwide effect of the current recession in the U.S., the chance that this recession would spread abroad was smaller than it would have been in the past because these other economies had a lot more independence."

In addition, if another recession occurs in the future, demand coming from economically independent nations abroad may in fact help the U.S. recover, Antinolfi said.

The idea that the new interconnectedness of the global economy means failure in one place will cause turmoil worldwide is thus becoming less and less true.

Globalization is, in fact, a very complex concept that economists themselves are continuing to research. Antinolfi explains that economic globalization encompasses three types of flows among nations: the flow of goods and services, humans, and financial resources. Over the decade, each flow increased dramatically.

"Free flow of resources, if properly handled, should lead to better outcomes for everybody," Antinolfi said. "But of course this is not a process that is totally smooth. It can create problems."

One theory is that as cheaper, lower wage services will move abroad. This has already happened to a certain degree, with phone bank services and clothing manufacturers working out of poorer countries, but this has hap-

pened at a much lower level than people feared.

"It's not a gain for everybody, at least for some time," Antinolfi said. "There are aspects of globalization that are difficult to manage politically and economically."

At home, the U.S. economy has seen a tumultuous decade. The immediate impacts of 9/11 were largely social and political, but the ensuing economic effects are just as significant.

"If you accumulate just the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and then imagine the cost of handling security, these are immense consequences," Antinolfi said. "So somebody will have to pay for them, and for the moment by and large the government has borrowed to pay."

The U.S. is thus indebted to foreign nations, and Americans may soon see an increase in taxes to pay these expenses along with those of the recent bailout and stimulus packages.

More economically impactful than 9/11, the late 2000s recession has been accurately described as the bursting of a bubble.

"What has characterized the U.S. economy in the last ten years are these two big increases in asset prices," Antinolfi said. "First the high tech bubble, and then the real estate prices. Economists don't fully understand why these things happen and how they happen, but the consequences as we see them now are potentially very damaging."

Some economists think that these asset prices increased because the U.S. can borrow in its own currency so easily. All the resources flowing into the U.S. from abroad had to find their way into some good, and so they made their way into house prices.

Others explain that interest rates were exceedingly low, making people feel overly confident in borrowing. By borrowing a lot, they pushed up prices. The process ended abruptly when people realized that the growth was unsustainable.

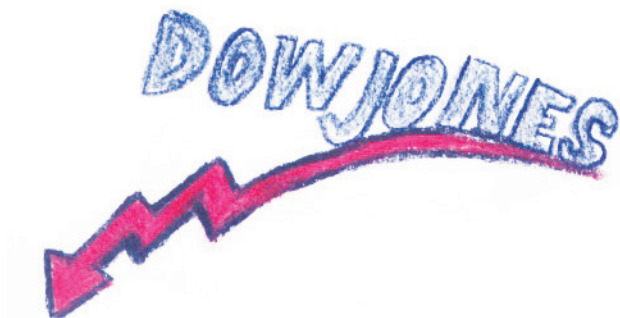
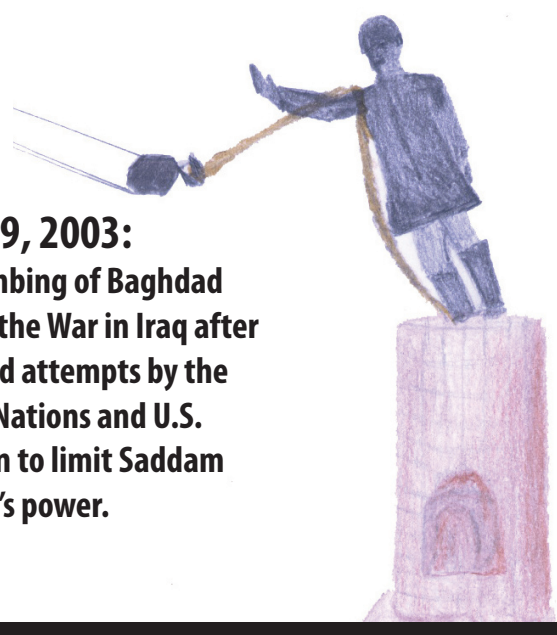
"It's easy to see the consequences of these processes, but it's much harder to understand why they occur," Antinolfi said.

Yet despite the sudden contraction of the U.S. economy in 2008, the huge increases in asset prices have in fact created an overall trend of growth during the decade. Taken as a whole, the U.S. economy increased in size during the 2000s.

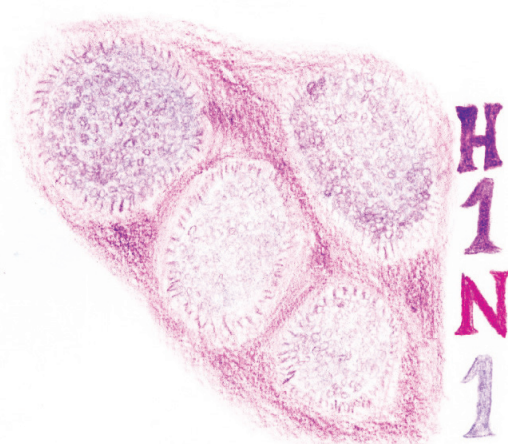
“The world has become a little bit more equal. There is, therefore, some hope that it can also become more stable.”

Gaetano Antinolfi
*Economics professor,
Washington University*

Mar. 19, 2003:
The bombing of Baghdad sets off the War in Iraq after repeated attempts by the United Nations and U.S. coalition to limit Saddam Hussein's power.

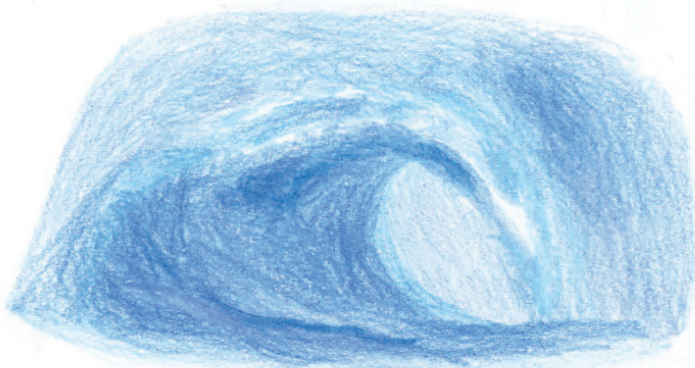


Oct. 3, 2008:
The U.S. Congress passes the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, a \$700 billion bailout designed to assist failing Wall Street and banking businesses due to the housing, banking and sub-prime mortgage crises

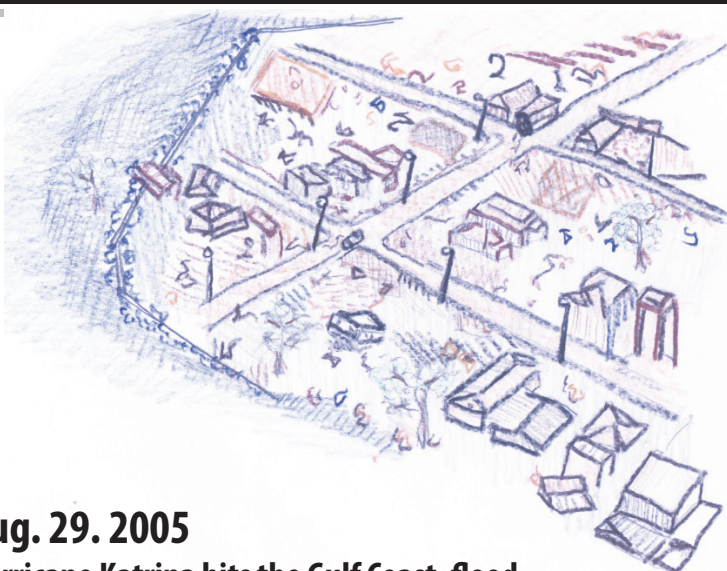


June 1, 2009
The H1N1 virus, known as the Swine Flu, is declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization

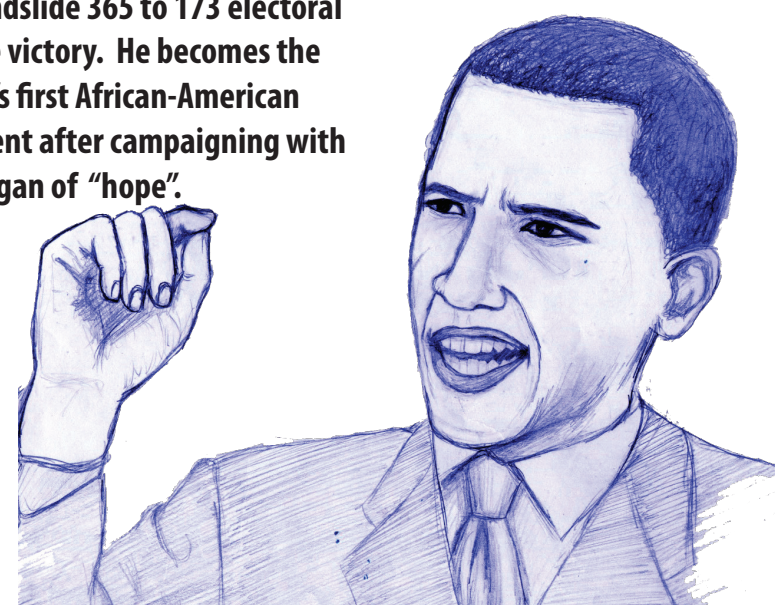
Dec. 6, 2004:
The southeast Asian Tsunami strikes following a 9.3 Richter scale earthquake in the Indian Ocean. Over 290,000 people die from Sri Lanka to Indonesia, causing one of the greatest humanitarian crises in history.



Aug. 29, 2005
Hurricane Katrina hits the Gulf Coast, flooding the city of New Orleans when the dysfunctional levees break. The government's response is exceedingly delayed. Over 1,300 people from Alabama to Louisiana perish.



Nov. 4, 2008
Barack Obama is elected president in a landslide 365 to 173 electoral college victory. He becomes the nation's first African-American president after campaigning with the slogan of "hope".



Illustrations by Nina Oberman, Schuyler Longmore and Raihana Omri

Technology: Connecting the People

The proliferation of the World Wide Web is the fundamental technological phenomenon of the 2000s. E-mail, Social Networking, and Twitter allow for instantaneous communication. Google, Wikipedia and online news sites put information at our fingertips. But the Internet is more than a tool for procrastination. It is changing the way the world functions and revolutionizing life as we know it.

"The new means of communication makes it incredibly easier to organize people," Arnold said. "It's a lot easier for voices to be heard now."

In Iran, for example, protesters used Twitter to organize protests against the 2009 fraudulent elections. Despite government attempts to filter news coverage of these events, videos of the violence were soon circulating all over YouTube.

Information, then, becomes much more accessible thanks to the web. But technology causes some notable changes in the nature of that information.

Newspapers and magazines are becoming outdated as the Internet displays the news faster and more frequently. But competition also stemmed from television news networks during the 2000s.

Ever-present sources like Fox, CNN, MSNBC, and C-Span have given the America people their opiate: constant news notification. Every event, domestic and international, is discussed on the news before the hour of its occurrence has ended.

"News is about informing the public, but Cable News companies make the news about selling a product," Kopman said. "They're not about news; they're about entertainment. It's become more commentary than information."

"It has never been more accurate to call something both a benefit and a threat," Calvert said. "Ironically, the Internet has vastly increased the accessibility of information and the ability to communicate with others and at the same time posed a huge threat to the sort of news-gathering and dissemination on which democratic self-government has always depended."

But the Internet can also benefit democracy. As people share their opinions, the world is hearing more viewpoints more rapidly.

The world has entered into a fast-paced conversation that, although dizzying at times, opens up new meanings for the phrase "government of the peo-

ple, by the people and for the people." With new venues to critique government policy, citizens can take a more active role in civic life.

People's private lives are changing just as dramatically. The advent of Social Networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace has revolutionized the way that we interact with others.

"Social Networking Sites have created a new dimension for friendship," Arnold said. "They have created these different kinds of relationships with people that we never saw before. On one hand, it is not satisfying like traditional friendship, but on the other hand it allows people to connect with people they wouldn't have otherwise. Still, a person could have thousands and thousands of Facebook 'friends' but still feel lonely."

Kopman, however, is not fearful of isolation.

"The core parts of relationships still exist within those technological venues," Kopman said. "Relationships will adapt to the way the technology functions."

Meanwhile, the technology is changing American and global culture in significant ways.

"Twitter and Facebook have exacerbated a celebrity culture that has been present in the U.S. for a while," Arnold said. "Reality TV shows, which were more prevalent earlier in the decade, have contributed too. Nowadays, you can become a celebrity not for doing anything spectacular, but just for being a celebrity."

Technology has not only altered the speed of communication, but it has also changed language itself. A new system of abbreviations and acronyms domi-

nates youth culture, casting aside the traditional rules of English grammar.

"Technology has caused an increase in communication but a decrease in the complexity and uniqueness of that communication," Kopman said.

The Internet has undoubtedly made the world smaller, but this decrease in size comes with the benefits of instant connections and the drawbacks of a world that is constantly on edge.

Culture: A New Tempo

The culture of the 2000s, as in decades before, has morphed to the whim of the youth. Indie music and films, hip-hop, blogs, vlogs and reality television are now the norm.

Teen music has seen a revival since the boy band era of the late 1990s. Artists such as Taylor Swift, the Jonas Brothers, and Miley Cyrus all cater to a younger audience with more innocent and playful music.

Popular music is fast paced and danceable, big box office movies have achieved near perfect special effects, and thousands of books are now accessible on a wallet sized electronic device, the Kindle. The new culture has geared itself for speedy entertainment and portability.

The youth generation is expanding tolerance to alternative lifestyles. Homosexuality, biracial relationships, and gender role alterations are viewed less negatively than they were in the past.

"With each new generation, rela-

tionships between men and women shift. I see youth today challenging the traditional roles," Arnold said. "They are more accepting of alternative lifestyles, such as the choice not to marry or not to have children."

Although the nation has not forgotten racial and cultural differences, the American people are on a path toward tolerance. The significance of an African-American president was a universal topic of news coverage after Obama's election. Some pundits dubbed the U.S. a "post-racial society."

"The very fact that we elected Obama shows that a majority of Americans are willing to look beyond race," Arnold said. "On the other hand, he does not at all fit the stereotypical mold of the African-American man. His election is good, but I don't think it means that there is no longer prejudice against blacks in this country."

A recent article in the New York Times revealed that the unemployment rate among college-educated black men is twice that of college-educated white men. Many black candidates for jobs feel that they must to hide their racial background in order to get an interview. Race therefore remains an issue in the twenty first century world.

Although women did not make dramatic advances during this decade, they did move forward in the U.S. military.

"A larger number of women have joined the armed forces, we are more

accepting of women in combat roles, and many women have risen high in the ranks," Arnold said. "Some feminists might view the adoption of combat roles as a step back, whereas others would argue that equality for men and women means equal responsibility, no matter what the venue."

Just as the war in Vietnam was a central rallying point for the youth of the '60s, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have seen low approval ratings at home. Although today's youth have been criticized for being less active than the youth during the '60s, this generation is vocalizing its opinions in different ways.

"The Internet changes things," Kopman said. "We don't have to shout in the street when we can put exclamation marks at the ends of our sentences."

Neither does Arnold find the accusation of apathy to be justified.

"Students are very willing to get involved," Arnold said. "I think the difference is having issues that they can mobilize for."

During the '60s, it was the draft. That's something that directly affected our lives."

Young people today are questioning authority, but differently. Our culture has and is changing, but the 2000s most significantly saw the increased volume and speed at which this culture changes. Ideas are spreading more quickly than ever before. 🌐

Nowadays, you can become a celebrity not for doing anything spectacular, but for just being a celebrity.

Gretchen Arnold
Sociology professor,
Saint Louis University

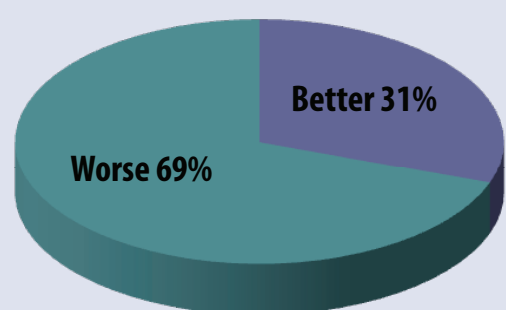
We don't have to shout in the street when we can put exclamation marks at the ends of our sentences.

Lewis Kopman
Senior

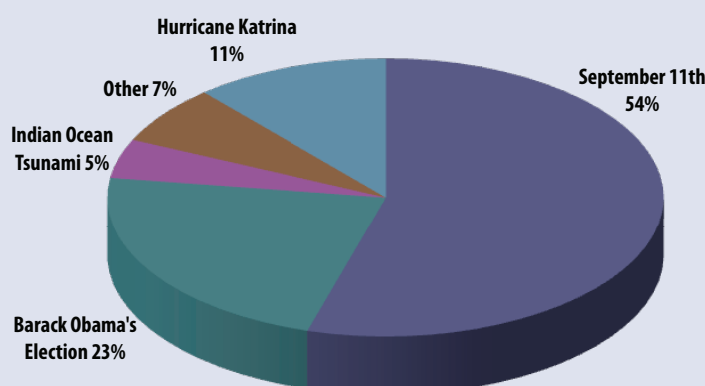
SURVEY: Growing up during the 2000s

150 CHS students responded to this questionnaire analyzing the decade during which they matured.

Overall, has the world changed for better or worse during this decade?



What do you see as the most significant event of the decade?



WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE OF THE DECADE?

The Dark Knight No Country for Old Men Paranormal Activity Men Atonement Benjamin Button Elf Up Penelope The Proposal Hot Fuzz Lost in Translation Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince Lord of the Rings Trilogy V for Vendetta Knocked Up Precious Superbad Hannah Montana Children of Men Freedom Writers Juno Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind Crash Fired Up The Kite Runner The Blind Side The Royal Tenenbaums The Reader Role Models Phantom of the Opera District 9 Milk Love, Actually Happy Feet Borat Click In Her Shoes Garden State Almost Famous Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire A Beautiful Mind The Sixth Sense Slumdog Millionaire

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SONG OF THE DECADE?

Gold Digger - Kanye West feat. Jamie Foxx
You Belong With Me - Taylor Swift
Paper Planes - MIA
I Believe - Spring Awakening
Reckoner - Radiohead
Party In The USA - Miley Cyrus
Forever - Chris Brown
This Celluloid Dream - AFI
Heavy Metal Drummer - Wilco
Inside The Fire - Disturbed
Do You Know Your Enemy - Green Day
Three Words - Josie and the Pussycat Dolls
Everything - Michael Bublé
Designer Skyline - Owl City
Samson - Regina Spektor
You Don't Know Me - Regina Spektor and Ben Folds
She's Killing Me - A Rocket To The Moon
Boom Boom Pow - Black Eyed Peas
Hey Ya - Outkast
Single Ladies - Beyonce
Fireflies - Owl City
Chop Suey - System of a Down
I Am Not A Whore - LMFAO
Transform Ya - Chris Brown
Secret - The Pierces
Dance Anthem of the 80's - Regina Spektor
American Idiot - Green Day
Candyshop - 50 Cent
Viva la Vida - Coldplay

'IdeaBounce' inspires, educates

by Jocelyn Lee
Reporter

Anyone can "bounce" an idea they have – even one that's barely developed. They can discuss, brainstorm, develop, create, and connect with the right people to actually move their idea forward.

This is the idea behind IdeaBounce, an entrepreneurial program at Washington University's Skandalaris Center designed to help people turn ideas into reality.

The purpose of the Skandalaris Center, started in 2003, is to make entrepreneurial educational experiences accessible to all WashU students and to the community, in general. The Center considers IdeaBounce to be the gateway to their other programs.

"IdeaBounce is both a website and an event that we hold," said Aimee Dunne Zander, Community Outreach Coordinator at the Skandalaris Center. "If people have entrepreneurial ideas, whether they be commercial or social enterprise ideas, they can post their idea to our IdeaBounce website. That's a forum for them to start talking about their idea and maybe network with some people to get some assistance in areas that they might need support in."

Zander says the IdeaBounce events are held four times per year. However, according to Il Luscri, Student Services Coordinator at the Skandalaris Center, the number can change depending on the amount of activity on the IdeaBounce website.

"The great part about IdeaBounce is that we can respond to the activity on the website," Luscri said. "That is, if we get a bunch of new ideas all of a sudden, we'll schedule another IdeaBounce event."

Open to the public, the events allow idea "bouncers" to present their ideas in 2-minute pitches to community members and a panel of judges. The judges then select approximately five winners.

"The winners of the IdeaBounce event win \$100 and also the opportunity to then have dinner with the judges and some community members from our Center, in order to continue talking about their idea, and gather support," Zander said. "It's a great forum to start the ball rolling if you have an entrepreneurial idea. Really the forum for garnering support happens at that dinner."

At an IdeaBounce event this November, senior Simone Bernstein was chosen as a winner for her idea to create a website, stlouisvolunteer.com.

"Participating in the event allowed me to make connections with numerous individuals in the St. Louis area," Bernstein said. "I've been communicating with some of these individuals about expanding my idea. Many of these individuals held high profile jobs at Washington University and in local organizations, so they were able to provide me with numerous contacts and ideas to find support to expand my National Volunteer site."

Zander said that IdeaBounce serves as a sort of practice round or proving ground for two larger competitions that occur each year – one for commercial enterprise (the Olin Cup) and the other for social enterprise (YouthBridge Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Competition).

To enter, contestants submit a three-page executive summary, which describes their idea, the individuals working on the idea, and how they plan to move forward, among other things. Judges then pick semifinalists, who move on to an elevator pitch competition. Finalists are then chosen for the big business plan competition, where a winner is selected.

"On the commercial side, the award is seed funding," Zander said. "On the social enterprise side, we have a number of grants that are offered by our supporters and our sponsors. If a winner happens to win in more than one category, they can win more than one grant."

While winners with a commercial idea win \$70,000 in seed funding, grants awarded to winners on the social enterprise side total \$150,000.

The competition has helped entrepreneurs fully develop and act on their ideas that might have otherwise been forgotten.

One winning team from a past competition created Yurtopia, a company that sells custom-fit ear buds for devices like the iPod.

In addition, another past winner founded The Blessing Basket Project, an organization that finds skilled weavers in developing countries and pays them what it calls a Prosperity Wage to help the weavers improve their lives.

IdeaBounce and the business plan competitions tend to see a wide variety of ideas from participants.

"IdeaBounce is fun because you

get to hear ideas for things all over the board – billion dollar business ideas, ways to save the world, inventions, everything," Luscri said.

For any entrepreneur, young or old, IdeaBounce can provide a supportive starting ground.

The Skandalaris Center also holds free workshops every other Friday on commercial and social enterprise skill sets for those who are interested in building confidence and asking questions.

"For someone who might not just go out and start a company it's a great way to get exposure and it's a great way to practice," Zander said. "It's a place for people to connect and we really believe in putting smart people in a room together and letting them find each other. So it's a great educational opportunity and a really great networking opportunity."

Although some high school students in the area have competed, Zander also said she hopes more high school students will get involved.

She said she encourages high school students to not be intimidated by the process of developing an entrepreneurial idea.

"The thought that we might be able to encourage entrepreneurialism at the high school level is hugely exciting to me," Zander said. "I think [high school students] have a lot to give us as far as their ideas and perspective, and I think we have a lot to give them as far as practice, encouraging them, and just giving them the opportunity to share what they know."

Bernstein also said she encourages high school students to participate.

"If a student has a creative business venture idea, they should definitely submit their application online," Bernstein said.

In addition to submitting ideas, students and community members can get involved just by attending one of the events.

"The event only works when we have a good mix of people from around the community in the audience," Luscri said. "The power of the connections that can happen when people hear new ideas is amazing, and we absolutely rely on that energy to make the event work. So people should feel free to come to our next IdeaBounce on February 18, 2010 at 5:00pm in Whitaker Hall Auditorium at WashU. They can register on our website, www.ideabound.com to receive a reminder." ☺



CHS students listen in at one of the first Habit for Humanity Club meetings, which now meets every Friday morning.

Elizabeth Sikora

Habitat for Humanity Club encourages new members to join

by Sarah Tah
Reporter

As the list of modern day social and economic problems continues to grow, CHS students have heeded the call for help and sprung into action. The Habitat for Humanity Club has been formed in an effort to get students more involved in community service work than they may have been before.

"I think it means a lot more for students to give up a day or a weekend to do community service rather than just donating money to an organization," junior Ali Meyer, the founder of the club, said.

If more involvement is what students need, Habitat for Humanity is certainly the right organization to provide it. Habitat works to end substandard housing by building or rehabilitating houses for those who would otherwise not have been able to afford a decent home. The families receiving the homes work alongside Habitat volunteers to build them, using donated money and material from the organization.

"I think the program is really well done," club sponsor Paul Hoelscher said. "They're not just giving money away, they're pulling people together."

Junior Klio Coppotelli, a member of the club, agrees that Habitat offers a unique way of reaching out to those in need. Coppotelli says that she likes helping out because it's a good way to help out in the community.

The CHS Habitat for Humanity Club is a youth chapter of the organization. The club works to educate people about the

cause, help build houses, and fundraise.

"As spring comes around we'll have build sites for students to work on as well as volunteer days at the ReStore," Meyer said. The ReStore is the Habitat warehouse where people can buy construction materials for a low cost.

Until the spring comes, the club will be focusing mostly on fundraising, an integral part of the organization's success. "We're about to start our biggest fundraiser called Brick by Brick," Meyer said.

The Brick by Brick fundraiser allows the club to sponsor a home by raising money for the bricks.

"We need to raise \$5,000 to buy bricks for a home," Meyer adds. "That's our goal for the end of this year."

With such an important cause at the heart of the fundraising, the club shouldn't have any trouble raising the funds.

"Housing shouldn't be a universal standard," Hoelscher said. "Poor people get stuck in rental ownership situations they can't get out of, and this organization gives people a chance to be home owners."

Meyer agrees that Habitat represents an important part of the solution to substandard housing.

"In the midst of the recession, people need more help than ever and we need to be there to give it," Meyer said.

Though the formation of the Habitat for Humanity Club at CHS is not a solution in itself, it is certainly a step in the right direction. With the help of the students' proactive dedication, we may be able to one day cross a problem off modern day's growing list. ☺



Students in the Electronic Music class take the time to learn about new software, song structures, and the answers to some of technologies most complex questions.

Thalia Sass

Electronic music: a brand new kind of class

by Apoorva Sharma
Reporter

By starting in middle school, the music program at Clayton becomes more advanced at the high school level. However, this system also has its disadvantages. The early start makes it hard for students to delve in to the music program at CHS, as the performing groups are generally past the beginner stage. However, classes like the Electronic Music class, taught by Kim Shelly, give these students another chance to learn about music.

Unlike most music classes, this class doesn't require one to perform. Instead, this class is focused on creating music electronically, hence the name.

Shelly teaches both the aspects of electronic music construction: the structures of songs and the functionality of the software used. However, Shelly finds that most students already come in knowing the basics of song structure, albeit in different terms.

"Students have an instinct for music," Shelly said. "They already know the basics of song structure, so it's just a matter of learning the correct terms for the parts of a song. What they call the 'Hook' is really the chorus."

Shelly thinks that Students get a feel for these musical ideas simply by listening to music.

"Most music - even Hip Hop, has a chorus and a verse," Shelly said.

Thus, the class gets centered on the second aspect of electronic music: the software side.

"I don't have to go heavy-duty into song construction," Shelly said. "The class is mostly focused on learning how to use the software."

The software used in the class is very much the same as the software used in the music industry. Shelly teaches students how to use programs such as Reason and Apple Logic Pro, both of which are used in the mainstream.

The latter, Shelly explains, is a very powerful piece of software.

"Apple Logic Pro is a hyper-drive GarageBand," Shelly said. "Unlike GarageBand, though, which is very intuitive, Logic Pro has a more complex interface."

Shelly spends time teaching students how to get the most out of these complex programs.

"Most students don't work on entire songs, but instead ask me questions like 'How do I get the sound I want?'" Shelly said.

Since Shelly only has 2 classes of Electronic Music to learn about the software, many of the questions people ask are too complex for her. Instead, she directs them to the students in Advanced Electronic Music, which takes place in a different area of the Music Lab.

The structure of this class allows students to take it multiple times, like other music classes. Each year, the class is

different.

"The class and the students are different every time," Shelly said. "At the beginning of the year, I have the students take a questionnaire, and that becomes the template for the class."

In addition to catering to student interests, the class changes simply because of the software used.

"Every year there are updates to the software we use, and I teach the new features that come with it," Shelly said.

Since everyone in the class is at different levels, the grading system is very unique.

"It's very individualistic," Shelly said. "It's based on personal progress. At the beginning of the class, I am able to kind of tell what level a student is at, and use that as a basis for grading. Although people are at different levels, I expect them to progress at the same rate."

This allows 1st year members as well as more advanced members to share the same room.

"It creates a great sense of collaboration between the students," Shelly said.

Overall, Shelly really enjoys the class, and thoroughly recommends it.

"I love it," Shelly said. "I get to see more kids, who don't make the jump to take other music classes in middle school, but still want to get involved in music. It's a great class, and everybody should take it." ☺

New teachers find niches at CHS, excel in classrooms

by Dylan Schultz
Reporter

Students at CHS will come and go, but for the most part the teaching staff remains constant. Over the last couple of years some teachers have left, and some have joined. Some are starting off their teaching career, and some are continuing a long life of educating children.

This year, a young new teacher joins the staff, teaching high school and middle school students for the first time. Laure Hartman is the brand new foreign languages teacher. Hartman is the teacher of French 1 for high school and eighth graders and also the teacher of seventh grade French.

She starts her day at the high school, teaching first hour students. Then she finishes her day at Wydown teaching periods three, five, and six over there. "The challenge I find at the high school and the middle school," said Hartman, "is to have the students turn in their homework on time." Hartman has previously taught in college, so there is now a little less discipline demonstrated by students.

However, it is not abnormal for a new teacher anywhere to face similar challenges at first. This slight annoyance does not bother Hartman at all. "The students are willing to learn and they are excited to be here," said Hartman. She truly is enjoying her teaching experience so far. Clayton is a good place for her to start her career due to the effort demonstrated by students.

However, we all know that there are two sides to every coin. Things can't all be perfect. Hartman's experience at Clayton so far has been all to perfect. She has not had trouble getting acclimated and sums up her experience with, "Any dislikes? No."

The newest addition to the math department was Jane Glenn. Glenn came to Clayton last year to teach Honors Geometry and Intermediate Algebra. She transferred from the Rockwood school district after a 14-year career there. She taught many successful students such as Philadelphia Phillies' first baseman Ryan Howard.

The transition into the Clayton school district was a little rough at first, but as Glenn adjusted, she found it to be an excellent teaching experience. "You feel like you're making a difference better," said Glenn. "In other schools you're more like a robot: kids get [the material], or else."

Challenges Glenn faced while first adapting included getting used to open campus and the difference between the sizes of schools. Clayton is much smaller compared to other schools Glenn has taught at. "Everybody is in your business more. Even the moms knew what was going on in class." This parent involvement was a new concept for Glenn. "In other schools, they don't care."

Leaving old teacher friends was also a struggle for Glenn. "I really didn't think that would bother me," said Glenn. "But there is nobody who can be nicer than our math department."

Overall, Glenn has thoroughly enjoyed her Clayton teaching experience. "The first year was quite an adjustment, but you get to see the results of what you do. You get closer to kids, and you can't imagine being anywhere else." ☺

Much anticipated college football bowl season arrives

by Jon Knohl
Reporter

Starting on Dec. 19 the 2009-2010 college football bowl season will take place.

Bowl games will be played nearly everyday until the bowl season climaxes on the Jan. 7 when the top teams in the nation, Alabama and Texas will fight to be crowned national champions.

The bowl season will kick off in Albuquerque, New Mexico for the New Mexico Bowl between favored Fresno State (8-4) and Wyoming (6-6).

Another big bowl matching two BCS Top 25 teams will be the MAACO Bowl in Las Vegas, NV between the Oregon State Beavers (8-4) and the Brigham Young Cougars (10-2). The following evening in San Diego, CA, Utah (9-3) and California (8-4) will match up to play for the San Diego County Poinsettia Bowl. Both teams were highly ranked coming into the start of the season, but both failed to live up to expectations because of injuries.

Almost every year there is a new bowl introduced to college football. Last year it was the Emerald Bowl in San Francisco. The game will feature Frank Spaziani's Boston College Eagles (8-4) and Pete Carroll's USC Trojans (8-4).

"USC's season was very disappointing for the most part," sophomore David Rhodes said. "They had a lot of big wins but missed a lot of easy ones as well. I'm looking for Matt Barkley to bounce back next season or even in the Emerald Bowl and prove to America that USC's season wasn't a joke."

Also on Dec. 19, the Champs Sports Bowl will be held in Orlando Florida between Miami (9-3) and Wisconsin (9-3).

The Hurricanes will be led by potential 2010-2011 Heisman candidate Jacory Harris, while Wisconsin running back, John Clay hopes to run all over the Miami defense in which could possibly be his last game in a college uniform.

After surpassing expectations for a rebuilding season, Missouri will be placed in a bowl game. On New Year's Eve, the Tigers (8-4) will face Navy (8-4) for a chance to win the Texas Bowl in



Alabama running back Mark Ingram (22) collides with Florida linebacker David Lerner (40) during the SEC Championship. Alabama will face Texas in the National Championship on Jan. 7.

Houston, TX. Sophomore Blaine Gabbert hopes to drive the Tigers to win their third straight bowl game.

"Mizzou has had up and down season for the most part," sophomore Sam Horn said. "They ranked twelfth in the run defense, which is something they can build off of for next year. On the other hand, their bowl game is a huge disappointment. They should be playing more on a national scale and playing a more competitive team."

One of the most highly anticipated

non-BCS bowl game will take place in Orlando, FL for the Capital One Bowl. Les Miles's explosive LSU offense (9-3) will face Joe Paterno's Penn State Lions (10-2).

To most teams in college football, there are only five bowls games that matter, the Fedex Orange Bowl, All-state Sugar Bowl, Rose Bowl presented by Citi, Tostitos Fiesta Bowl, and the granddaddy of them all, The BCS National Championship.

The first game out of the five will be

the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA, which has always been played between the winners of the Pac-10 and the Big 10 conferences.

This year it will be fought between Oregon (10-2) and Ohio State (10-2). Both teams suffered early season losses that set them back in the Top 25 Polls but fought their way back to the top of their conferences.

Later that evening, SEC runner-up Florida (12-1) will face off against Big East champions Cincinnati (12-0). After

a disappointing loss in the SEC Championship game to Alabama, the Gators will hope to bounce back and make something out of their season. The Gators were the top team in the BCS Polls all season up until their devastating loss in the SEC Championship.

The Gators had a great season but they will be losing a bunch of leaders on and off the field for next season, such as Tim Tebow and Jeffery Demps. They will still have a lot to build off of for next season.

But it won't be any easy match for them. They will have to play the two time defending Big East Champions. The Bearcats will be led Tony Pike. Pike hopes win the game and complete a "perfect" season in his last game in a Bearcat uniform.

On Jan. 4, the Boise State Broncos (13-0) will face the Texas Christian Horned Frogs (12-0) in the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl in Glendale, AZ. Both teams completed undefeated seasons and were able to win without any trouble whatsoever in both of their conferences. TCU is being led by Mountain West Conference offensive player of the year, Andy Dalton. Boise State will be powered by its explosive offense and also by its star quarterback, Kellen Moore.

The following day Big-10 runner-up Iowa (10-2) will face ACC Champions Georgia Tech (11-2) in the Fedex Orange Bowl. The game will take place on Jan. 5 in Landshark Stadium in Miami, FL. Georgia Tech is favored to win with the help of their dominant running game that consists of Josh Nesbitt and Jonathan Dwyer.

"I think Georgia Tech will win this one without a question," freshman Josh Becker said. "They are a great team. I can't wait to see Nesbitt and Dwyer with the help from their incredible offensive line go to work on the Iowa defense."

Sadly enough, the college bowl season will conclude on Jan. 7 in Pasadena, CA for the grand daddy of them all, The BCS National Championship. This year, the Texas Longhorns (13-0) will battle it out against the Alabama Crimson Tide (13-0). Alabama will be coming off an impressive win against Florida, defeating the Gators 32-12.

On the other side of the field Texas will hope to prove everyone wrong and beat the top-ranked team in the nation.

Texas is known for its offensive dynamic-duo that consists of Colt McCoy and Jordan Shipley. This season McCoy and Shipley connected for a total of 11 touchdowns and 1,363 yards total. Both the Longhorns and the Tide hope to complete perfect season and be crowned as the 2009-2010 BCS National Champions.

Will the Horns hook the Tide or will the Tide roll out alive? ♣

Holiday wish: new districts

by Evan Green
Senior Sports Editor

A new high school sports season killer has finally roared its head yet again. This is a killer that leads to lopsided state championship games and good teams' seasons ending too early in the playoffs.

I, of course, am talking about the unbelievable disparity between the strength of districts that the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) has created.

This happens when several of the best teams in the state in a particular sport are grouped into one district with each other based on location and in some aspects, type of school education-wise.

This essentially means that the state title game in some sports is really played in the district championship or state quarterfinal because the teams on the other side of the bracket are not even close to as good as the teams that lose in the really good district.

I personally have fallen victim to this cold-blooded killer. This fall, as many students know, the Clayton High

soccer team was pretty good, posting an 18-6-2 record.

However, our district was stacked with basically four of the top six teams in Class 2 soccer.

This meant that we were guaranteed a tough semifinal and final matchup, while lesser teams on the other part of the soccer state bracket were able to move through their district with ease while facing no competition. After the team beat a very good MICDS team, we had to turn around and face an extremely talented Westminster team in the district final two days later.

Westminster then faced the winner of the second best district, which turned out to be St. Dominic. While St. Dominic defeated Westminster in overtime of the state quarterfinals, many people in the state believe that was the true state title game.

This is because St. Dominic blew out the competition in the semifinals and finals (winning 7-0 in the finals in the biggest blowout in state title history).

While we faced tough competition, the 15-12 Cape Girardeau Notre Dame Bulldogs got to face DeSoto, Hillsboro, and Farmington on their way to a dis-

trict title.

Another example would be the Bolivar Liberators. Their schedule handed them West Plains High School, Webb City, and Marshfield en route to a district title.

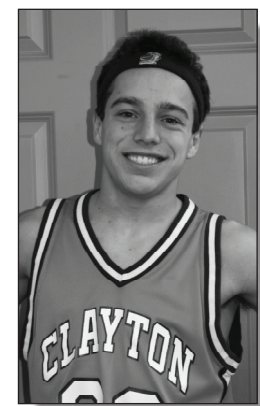
Bolivar ended up being the team that was crushed in the state finals. Now I'm not saying that we would've definitely beat Bolivar or Cape Notre Dame if we were in their district, but that schedule would've been a lot easier than playing MICDS and Westminster.

This is why MSHSAA needs to make a change in how they set the districts up. Yes, Clayton is close to the other schools in our district, which cuts down travel costs. But the cuts come at the expense of good teams losing early in the playoffs, although they probably deserve to be playing for the state title or at least winning their districts if the districts were set by recent performances by each school, creating a ranking system of sorts.

While this may not be the most efficient system, it is still an idea, one that should at least have thought given to it. The players deserve it, and so do the fans to see a good state title game. No one wants to see another state final like the one this year in Class 2 soccer.

Let the best teams duke it out for the championship, and no more having the real state title games in the state quarterfinals. ♣

Turf Tales



Evan Green

Girls' basketball growing as a unit

by Anat Gross
Reporter

It's that time of the year again.

Stuber Gym is full of sweaty faces hustling down the court, shoes screeching across the wooden floor, and cheers from the sideline as great plays are made.

The Clayton girls' varsity basketball team played its first three home games Nov. 30, Dec. 2 and 3 in the annual CHS tournament.

The CHS girls' varsity basketball team kicked off their first home game against Vashon. The then 0-1 Hounds began with a rocky start, struggling to play their game in the first half.

Starting the second half, the Hounds were on top 37 to 14, but had over 10 fouls and 16 turnovers. Despite the mistakes of the first two quarters, the girls came together in the second half with just five team fouls and nearly 30 more points on the board.

The defense dominated, switching between an aggressive man-to-man in the first half and a two-three zone in the third, letting up just 11 points in the second half.

Senior Maggie Lanter led with nine rebounds out of the team total of 38. Offensively, the team was led by senior Chelsea Grandberry with 18 points to win the game 65-25.

The Hounds faced off against Principia in their next game. Clayton struggled the whole game, trying to take on the great defense of the Principia Panthers. Unable to run through their offense, the Greyhounds were defeated 7-45.

Principia went on to beat Vashon on the third night of the tournament taking second place with a 2-1 record.

On Thursday night the Hounds played Saint Clair, 2-0 in the CHS tournament. The Lady Hounds started out well, taking the lead early in the first quarter. Things were looking good as the Hounds were able to run through their offense and stop St. Clair on defense.

The Greyhounds' deficit at the half was a surprise to both coaches and players. The team's inability to get the rebound on defense allowed St. Clair to put the ball back up for an easy two points repetitively.

As a team, the Hounds had 11 assists and five steals. Even so, St. Clair went on to win the game, taking first place and going home with a record of 3-0.

The undefeated St. Clair had much to celebrate. Along with the first place trophy, one of St. Clair's top senior players took home the game ball as a momentum to the game in which she scored her career total of over 1,000 points.

Despite the tough losses during the second half of the tournament, Clayton able to take a lot from their games so they can make adjustments for later in the season.

Senior captain Maggie Lanter learned a lot about the team and what changes need to be made to be successful.

"I learned that we don't have one strong offensive player anymore like we had last year with Mary Barber," Lanter said. "So we are going to need multiple people to step up offensively and defensively. We just need to try new things and find what will make our team successful."

The team has many challenges to overcome in order to meet its goals for the season.

"We all want to beat Ladue again, like we did last year," Lanter said. "I just want to overcome our challenges and finish the season with a winning record." ♣



The Clayton crazies support the basketball team during a recent home game. The Greyhounds have had a strong showing thus far this season.

Basketball slammed with freshmen

by Jonathan Shumway
Reporter

For the basketball season this year 28 freshmen showed up to play. This was a surprise to many and has helped stir hope for the remaking of the basketball program at CHS.

Freshman basketball player Will Brown describes his initial reaction as being scared.

"I was surprised, so didn't know what to think," Brown said. "I didn't know there would this many [players]."

To account for large amount of freshmen coming out to play Freshman A and Freshman B basketball teams have been formed.

"We have had to add ten more games to schedule for the season so everyone has a chance to play," freshman basketball Coach Mike Sankey said.

This is just one example of how the incoming freshman basketball players are changing the basketball program.

"It is good to have as many players as possible because everyone has potential to be good," said sophomore Jack Elliot, who is playing JV basketball this year and played freshman basketball last year. "If you don't play, you don't know."

Sankey feels that the surge of freshmen playing basketball is the result of the Young Greyhound Program. The Young Basketball Program helps basketball players at the elementary and middle school levels. The program's goal is to develop the basketball fundamentals and skills to make the transition to playing at the high school level.

"With the guys starting to play younger it will be natural for them to play basketball in high school," said Sankey. "We had a great year last year, and it brought a lot of new excitement with the Young Greyhound Program. There is a new buzz about basketball."

Brown played in the Greyhound program in elementary school and feels that the program has added to his basketball experience. Many others currently in the Clayton basketball program participated in the Young Greyhound Program.

This shows the growing importance of basketball players getting ready for the high school level.

At the freshman level, the team work works mainly on the basics of basketball and helping players learn more basketball skills.

"The focus is on the fundamentals and the teaching the game," Sankey said. "We have eight on nine guys who have never play basketball before. We are getting guys ready for the varsity level."

Elliot tells that though some of season has had to be spent on having the new freshman JV basketball players learning the plays, they have learned them quickly.

"There are a lot of good athletes, if work hard, they will become good basketball players," Elliot said.

Sankey believes that in order to have a successful basketball program, one needs to have a lot of kids in the basketball program.

"We will raise the level of basketball," Sankey said. "It helps in the long run on the development of each player."

Sankey points out that all the new freshman basketball players will help change the basketball program, as the class is playing more together than in the past. This year, no freshman has had to play varsity, and only a couple of the freshman are playing JV basketball this year.

"By the time the freshman class are juniors, they were will be a lot of depth, since they have been playing together all that time," said Sankey. In the last three or four years, we have always had a freshman play varsity, but we didn't have to have this happen this year. Hopefully, eventually we will not even have to have any sophomores playing at the varsity level."

The extraordinary amount of new basketball players this year will make a difference in the coming years, as the basketball program adjusts to the amount of the new basketball players coming in to play.

"We hope that this is a beginning of a natural occurrence," said Sankey. "We hope that eventually 20 to 25 new guys will be coming to play every year." ♣

Cheerleading squad excited about new season, doubles in size

by Sam Jacus
Editor

Since the end of the football season cheerleading has seen a dramatic change. The change is not a new coach or a new team to cheer for but rather the size of the cheerleading squad, which has doubled. The growth of the squad can be mainly attributed to the sophomore class, which bolsters the majority of the new members.

"The recent addition to the squad has made it the biggest it has been in a long time," senior Melissa Kopp said.

Other people on the squad feel that the addition of people to the squad will only had more variety and skill to the squad. With the addition of skills comes the addition of another squad.

Due to the increase in members, the cheerleaders will now have both a junior varsity and varsity squad. With the addition of an additional squad cheerleaders will be at junior varsity basketball games.

"I am sure that the basketball players will be happy to have cheerleaders at more games," sophomore Jocelyn Cooper said. "Everyone likes being

supported."

Although people seem to be thrilled about the increase in squad size, the question about what caused people to try out all of a sudden still remains.

"Some friends and I were talking one day and thought it would be fun to try cheerleading so we went out for the squad," Cooper said.

With sophomores comprising the majority of new members, some members of the original squad are still unsure as to why people are joining now.

"I don't know why so many girls decided to join since most of them are sophomores and could have tried out last year," Kopp said. "I'm glad they decided to do it this year though because Clayton needs more cheerleaders and we finally have a great sized squad."

The new squad size is hoping to gain more than just fan support at basketball games. The squad is hoping to gain the support of the school.

"With more people participating, the sport is growing and hopefully the support for the sport grows too," Cooper said.

Regardless of the support the squad



Eve Root

receives, the team is set to enjoy the season.

"I am having a lot of fun cheerleading," Cooper said. "I really hope the season stays fun and exciting."

Like newbies to the sport veterans

like Kopp also feel that cheerleading is fun and rewarding.

In addition, everyone seems interested in how the season will unfold.

"It should be interesting with so many girls this season," Kopp said. ☺

Due to an increase in interest in cheerleading, the cheerleading team has now been divided into JV and Varsity squads.

LEFT: Varsity Cheerleaders Briah Arms, Devonda Bell, Jaunna Outlaw, Carol Clay, Tierney Rogers, Caitlyn Patto and Kasey Giriffin cheer on the Varsity Boy's Basketball team Dec. 8.

BELOW: Anna Brodsky, Andrea Banks, Jocelyn Cooper, Brittney Banks and Alexia Barnes cheer on the JV Boy's Basketball team as a team member shoots for a free throw.



Senior Schuyler Longmore, a CHS hockey team defenseman, joins the play in their game on Dec. 8. Although the team is called the Greyhounds, they are not sponsored or funded by the school. Eve Root

Club sports give students exposure, freedom, choice

by Martha Burke
Reporter

For CHS students playing a school sport may be associated with some sort of pride or loyalty to the school. Recently CHS has even added pep rallies and other events to encourage school spirit and sport attendance.

However when attending a CHS pep rally in any of the various seasons two of the most highly attended CHS sports, are not present, boy's hockey and boy's lacrosse.

Both of these are considered club sports, which means the school does not sponsor them.

"Club sports generally require each player to pay money for their participation, because a school district isn't willing to sponsor it," Junior Tom Haslam said. Haslam plays lacrosse.

In addition to this, "School sports get money and facilities while we have to find practice fields and pay for them," Senior Max Goldfarb, a lacrosse player said.

Club sports, such as boy's hockey tend to have a rowdier reputation in the school. These sports aren't mediated by the school, and fights have been known to break out at games.

"School sports always have a coach

that works for the school," sophomore Gabe Jacus said, a hockey player. "I love our hockey coach, he's a bro, and that would be weird if he was a teacher."

Club sports don't necessarily have to follow under CHS guidelines.

"There's definitely more freedom in club sports because the team is less affiliated with the actual school district," Haslam said. "I'm pretty sure that means if you get in a fight on the field, a penalty is the only thing you have to worry about."

Goldfarb says that these sports aren't rule free.

"There's not really any academic guidelines, but our team imposes them anyway," Goldfarb said.

Club sports definitely have been pros for CHS students.

"I love playing hockey and that's a club sport so I definitely like club sports better," Jacus said,

"I definitely love the freedom in Lacrosse to wear and use whatever you can afford (in terms of equipment)," Haslam said.

However, club sports tend to vary from school sponsored ones.

"I can't imagine football being a club sport, so it's hard to compare," Haslam said. ☺

“There’s definitely more freedom in club sports because the team is less affiliated with the actual school district.”

Tom Haslam
Lacrosse player

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Boys' basketball starts season 5-1, led by Thomas, Bell

by **Evan Green**
Senior Sports Editor

The Clayton boys' basketball team has started the season with a 5-1 record following their third place finish at the Vinney Tournament the week of December 1.

The team started its season on November 28 at Rolla, where they won 83-56 and were led by junior forward Christian Thomas' 31 points and 11 rebounds while senior guard Devonte Bell added 14 points.

"Christian showed right away that he has really improved since last season," senior captain Sumner Ahearn said.

The next week, the Hounds started tournament play against Riverview Gardens, and in a back-and-forth contest, the Hounds pulled out the win 69-63.

The win was keyed by a late three-pointer by senior guard Alex Kasnetz as well as two late free throws by Kasnetz. Thomas still had 25 points and 16 rebounds while Bell was right behind him yet again, this time finishing with 16 points and five steals.

"Kaz [Kasnetz] really helped us win that game, he made several clutch shots," senior center Max Goldfarb said.

The victory helped the team advance to the semifinals of the tournament to face Hazelwood Central.

"I think that the Riverview game showed us that we have a really deep team, and that will help this year," senior forward Tommy Hummell said.

Hazelwood Central had a deep run in the playoffs last year and is an extremely talented team that gave the Hounds problems. Clayton actually held a double-digit lead early in the game before the Hawks of Hazelwood managed to roar from behind before eventually winning the game 73-60, handing the Hounds their first loss of the season.

Thomas managed 20 points in a losing cause, but struggled with foul trouble. On the positive side, Ahearn, a three-point specialist on offense, had 10 points and dished out five assists.

"It was an even game until a three minute stretch in the

third quarter in which made plays and we didn't," head coach Ryan Luhnning said.

In the third-place match of the tournament, the Hounds handled a tricky Eureka team with what seemed like ease. The Hounds actually trailed after the first quarter before putting together a lengthy second quarter run that left them with a seven-point halftime lead.

In the second half, both teams came out strong, but none stronger than Thomas, as he carried the team to a 77-65 win. The three-year varsity member had 30 points by the end of the third quarter on his way to finishing with a career-high 41 points.

Thomas' outstanding play has been rewarded as the St. Louis Post-Dispatch has named him to be one of the athletes of the week for the Metro Area. As a side note to Thomas' play, sophomore Charlie Harned added 11 big points off the bench. They were also Harned's first varsity points of his career.

"Christian [Thomas] is really talented and he has turned himself into a threat at any position on the court," Luhnning said.

On the season, Thomas is averaging 29 points and 11 rebounds so far, while four-year varsity starter Bell is averaging 14 points a game. Bell also recently recorded his 1,000th career varsity point for the Hounds, quite the accomplishment.

It will be interesting to see how teams change their game plan in an attempt to control Thomas as the season goes on.

"We will probably start seeing a lot of box-and-one, but he just can't get frustrated and he will be able to open up opportunities for the rest of the team," Luhnning said.

The team will face several big tests in the first month of the season.

"The next game is always the biggest for us," Luhnning said. "We cannot allow ourselves to look ahead of any team all season."

In the Hounds' home opener on Dec. 8, the team defeated the Lutheran South Lancers 58-44. Once again, Thomas led



Junior Christian Thomas goes up for a dunk in a game last year against Berkeley. Thomas is averaging 26 points a game so far for the 5-1 Hounds.

all Clayton scorers with 16 points, and Ahearn added 15, including five three-pointers. Four of Ahearn's five three's came in the fourth quarter to propel the Hounds to victory.

On Thursday, Dec. 10, the Hounds played a non-conference game at MICDS. Thomas once again led the team in points with 26, including a new facet of his game that was introduced when he started the game five for five from three-point land.

Bell added 19 as the team did a great job defensively to hold MICDS' star senior MacPherson Moore to only 17 points and got him into foul trouble early by taking three charges from the large Moore.

"Defense is what we really need to improve, the offense will always be there," Luhnning said.

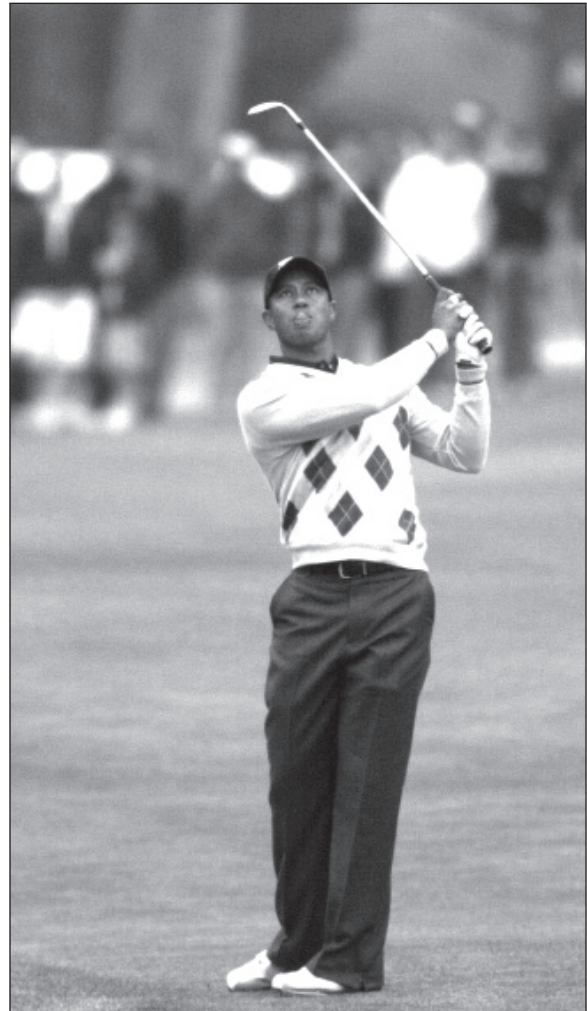
The win meant that the team improved to 5-1 on the season.

Also, the Post-Dispatch ranked the Hounds as fourth among small schools in the Metro Area in their recent high school boys' basketball polls. The team will not be able to be looked ahead of.

Over winter break, the team will participate in the MICDS tournament as well. The newly formed Clayton Crazyes will be in full effect at all home games and would like to see as much orange in the stands as possible. ☺



(Kamil Krzaczyński/Chicago Tribune/MCT)



(Anda Chu/Oakland Tribune/MCT)

Rugby and golf are the two sports that were recently added to the Olympic itinerary starting in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Brazil.

Rugby, golf to be added as Olympic sports starting in Rio de Janeiro, 2016

by **Sam Jacus**
Senior Editor

Sports go in and out of the Olympics due to popularity around the world. For the 2016 Olympics, which are to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, rugby and golf will be added. This new addition to the Olympic venue isn't the first; triathlon and taekwondo were added to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia.

Golf and rugby made their Olympic debuts in 1900 at the second modern games in Paris. After their debut, golf was played at only one more Olympics while rugby made appearances at three more Olympics.

Rugby and golf were rejected for the 2012 Olympics yet no sports filled the hole in the Olympic venue after baseball and softball were dropped in 2005.

With two spots remaining unfilled, both golf and rugby were again nominated to fill the two openings. Both sports received a majority of the votes from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) after the top players from golf and rugby made presentations in their respective sports.

Golf was approved with a vote of 63 in favor and 27 against with two absentees while rugby was approved with a vote of 81 in favor and eight against with one absentee.

Golf was accepted into the Olympics with very little room for modification and will consist of a 72-hole stroke play tournament for a field of 60 players for both women and men.

Rugby will consist of a four-day tournament. However, Olympic rugby will see a few modifications in the game with only seven players a side instead of the traditional 15 players a side.

Even though golf and rugby are set to become sports in the 2016 Olympics, some people still question the popularity of the two sports.

"I know I wouldn't watch golf even in the Olympics," senior Sammi LeGrand said. "I don't think that anyone is really going to watch it unless they play golf."

Some people unlike LeGrand have mixed feelings for the two sports. Senior Jack Harned thinks rugby should be an Olympic sport.

"Rugby is a sport that requires immense athleticism, and I think that

those athletes should be rewarded by a chance to earn a gold medal," Harned said.

However, Harned agrees with LeGrand and feels that golf is more of a hobby than a sport for several reasons. "Golf is what old people do, not rugby," Harned said.

Senior golfer Ryan Roth is ecstatic that it is ridiculous that sports like synchronized swimming were admitted to the Olympics before golf.

Harned said the growing popularity is not the only driving reason behind the reappearance of these sports.

"The Olympics are a business just as much as anything else and by adding more sports, the Olympic committee and host country can make more money," Harned said. "Although I would like to think the addition of these sports is to reward the athletes."

The world will have to wait a while to see if the new sports are followed, a six year wait. ☺

Girls' swimming improving under ex-college star's tutelage

by **Bianca Vannucci**
Reporter

The girls' swimming team has not had any meets yet, but their season looks promising. Formed of 27 girls this year, the team is still setting its goals.

For the 18th year, math teacher David Kohmetscher, is coaching the team, accompanied by another math teacher, assistant coach Katelyn Eustis.

Kohmetscher has a wide range of experience when it comes to swimming. His coaching varies from Age-Group USA swimming all the way up to Division Three Colleges.

The team will be led by senior Kristen Shaw and junior Elizabeth Sikora. Sikora finds value in Kohmetscher's coaching experience.

"Coach Kohmetscher swam in college, so he's knowledgeable," Sikora said. "He expects more from us and just wants

us to do well."

Kohmetscher has been swimming since he was 8 years old, and he has swam at all levels since then. His senior year in high school, he was the fastest high school swimmer in the country in his event, which earned him the chance to choose to swim at several Division 1 universities such as Ohio State and Iowa.

"My brother's swim teacher thought I'd make a good swimmer, so our parents got us both swimming lessons," Kohmetscher said. "It was definitely not planned."

In 1989, Kohmetscher swam in the Big Ten Championship in the fifty-meter free style, and landed third at the Olympic Trials. Kohmetscher then swam until he was 23 years old.

"It's nice to have a coach who has a wide range of experience," Kohmetscher said. "Kids probably think I'm harsh, but it's just a slightly different mentality."

Junior Alexis Atkinson is on the team for the second year this season.

"He expects a lot of us, which is good," Atkinson said. "We do dry land training two days a week this year in order to get us in shape."

Other than the stretching usually encouraged to minimize any injuries, the team runs or lifts weight in order to get themselves ready for the water. This training helps build muscle in a variety of ways.

Kohmetscher's high school swimming team had practice 10 times a week. At Clayton, the team only practices five times a week.

"It's great that at CHS we put so much value in academics," Kohmetscher said. "At the same time, we still need to set goals in accordance with how hard or how willing the team is to work."

However, the team has recently seen two girls become

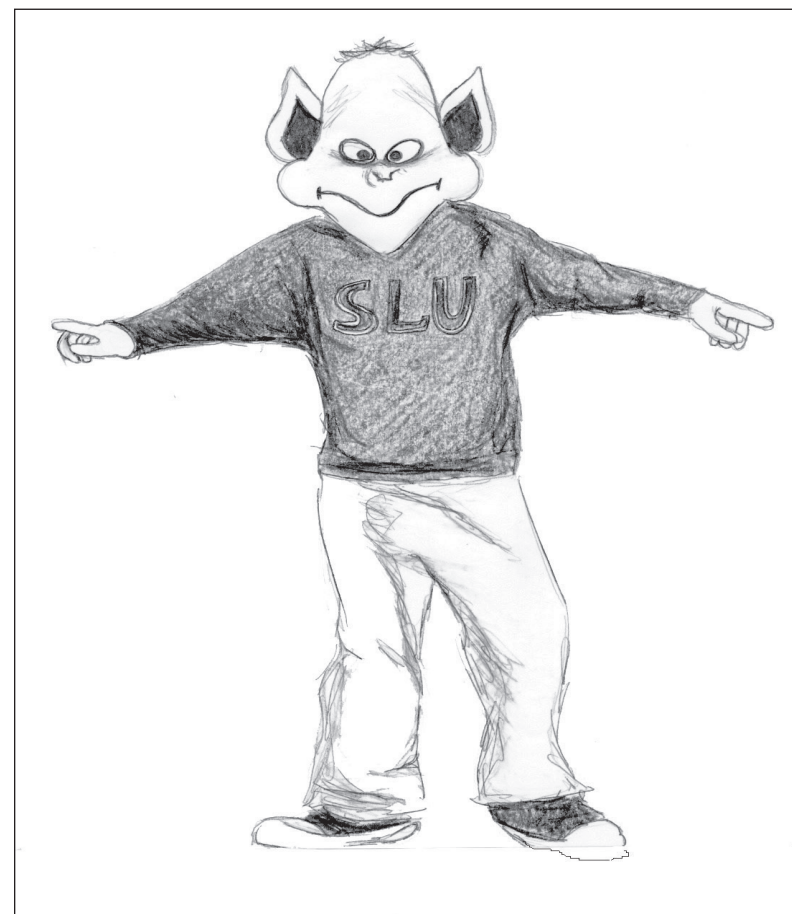
state swimming champions in the diving category. Three years ago, then senior Keely Brooks won the state diving title, and last year, then senior Paige Meneses won the state diving title as well.

"The team has rarely had aspiration to swim at those kinds of levels," Kohmetscher said. "You can't just go to state, you have to put work into it. You get what you're willing to put in."

Most of the team agrees that Kohmetscher has done a great job coaching, even if it is not the method they are used to.

"He expects a lot from us," junior swimmer Cecily Lane said. "He really pushes us."

Kohmetscher's swimming experience has pushed the team into setting goals for themselves that comply with Clayton's strong academic focus, and still get the most out of the experience for the student-athletes. ☺



Taylor Gold

Billikens' basketball starting another subpar season

Under Majerus, the team has actually performed worse than they did before; offense continues to be a problem, but defense remains stout for team.

by **Jake Bernstein**
Reporter

The Saint Louis University Billikens mens' basketball team should be performing better.

Everything was in place last year for an NCAA tournament appearance. Kevin Lisch and Tommie Liddell, both in the top 10 in career scoring at the school, were seniors and complemented each other nicely as players. Head coach Rick Majerus, with a nice contract upwards of \$1 million per year, was starting his second season. And perhaps most of all, the \$80.5 million Chaifetz Arena was unveiled.

The team finished 18-14, unable to reach the mark of 20 wins which Majerus' predecessor Brad Soderberg set in 2006-2007. Soderberg was fired after the 20-win season in eight years for the Billikens.

"It was determined that a coaching

change is necessary if the university is to achieve its goal of consistently having one of the nation's top basketball programs," the University said in its statement concerning the Soderberg firing.

It certainly does not seem like the Bills have come anywhere near the nation's top programs, and concerning their team record and Ratings Percentage Index (RPI), the team has actually gotten worse since Soderberg's firing.

One can come up with dozens of excuses for the Billikens' poor performance.

Until this year, I held the belief that last year's seniors had trouble adapting to Majerus' style of play, as their first two years in college were under Soderberg. However, every current and healthy member of the Billiken roster is either a freshman or sophomore. Therefore, they have played under only Majerus since entering college.

Since the team consists of all un-

derclassmen, I was not expecting stellar performances this season. I thought the additional familiarity with Coach Majerus would balance the lack of upperclassman, and the team would finish with a similar record to the past season.

The team has shown streaks of brilliance, but a lot of inconsistency. I was not expecting the Billikens to do great this year, but I was expecting, however, more consistent play and fewer of the problems that hurt the team so much last year.

Through the first third of the season, the problems which have plagued the team are the same as last year. The team always seems ready to match up on defense, as they have guarded some of the nation's best players in Luke Harangody and Craig Brackins very well.

However, the Billikens often cannot find a way to score. This has been evident so far this season as well. The team has not scored 80+ points all sea-

son, even against the much lesser teams scheduled at the start of the year.

The result of the Billikens' lack of offense is a 5-3 record, even though they are holding teams to under 57 points per game.

Adjustments are usually not successful during games, and multiple times, the Billikens have gone minutes without a field goal during crucial points of the game. Even after time outs, the Billikens often don't look any better than they did before they called a break.

And so far this year, it seems the Billikens will only win this year by consistently hitting the three-pointer. When the team counts on one shot to win, it is clearly lacking something, and one can blame only so many players before looking at the coach.

On paper, it does not look like Coach Majerus has accomplished anything since joining the program. And frankly, I am not sure if he has helped the program at all. ☺

The enduring legacies of *MUSIC*

'Brundibar,' an opera about overcoming oppressors, ensures that the memories of the Holocaust survivors live on. Written and used as a way of resistance in the camp of Theresienstadt, 'Brundibar' is performed across the nation in homage to those who perished.

by Ken Zheng
Co-Editor in Chief

Opera Theater of St. Louis (OTSL) presented the children's opera "Brundibar" this November in the Touhill Performing Arts Center. In addition to an outstanding cast, the performance was graced by the presence of Holocaust survivor Ela Weissberger.

The composer Hans Krasa finished the play in Theresienstadt, a model camp where Hitler placed artists and musicians to show foreigners the decent quality of life given to the captured Jews. Theresienstadt was a walled city in Czechoslovakia designed for 10,000 people and eventually filled with 160,000 people. "Brundibar" was originally written in Czech and then translated to German and English.

Stage Director Doug Scholz-Carlson worked extensively on the play's choreography in order to have it reflect the original productions as much as possible. He is a free-lance director brought in by OTSL for "Brundibar."

"The production is really like an urban fairy tale that exists in a big city," Scholz-Carlson said. "Aninku and Pepicek's father is dead and their mother needs milk to get better. When they go to the marketplace, they figure out that they need money, but are drowned out by the organ grinder Brundibar's mechanical music. They're stuck in the marketplace at night. They meet a talking cat, sparrow and dog, who figure out that if they get all the kids to sing together, then they will be able to drown out the organ grinder."

With a production cast consisting solely of children, the directors met challenges but still found the children a delight to work with.

"If you're doing a production with younger people, you're trying to teach the cast how to act and trying to stage a performance at the same time," Scholz-Carlson said. "This production is interesting because it was written to be performed by children. Part of what we're trying to do is show the life of the children who lived at the same time."

Music Director Greg Ritchey agrees.

"Young casts are different," Ritchey said. "There are some things that are more challenging and some that are easier. They have an incredible amount of energy. I've found that the best thing is to treat them like adults. They are like sponges. Their abilities to soak in new ideas are astonishing."

Ritchey believes that the score is very efficient. The biggest problem lies with the instruments that the composer had to work with in Theresienstadt.

"For me there's a charm about the musical score that's very bright, in spite of the circumstances," Ritchey said. "It's the simple charm and the rhythm of it. This production encapsulates the historical significance as well. Musically, the biggest challenge is the orchestration we were given. The composer was dealing with the instruments that he had."

Ela Weissberger performed in the original opera in Theresienstadt after arriving there on Feb. 4, 1942. She played the role of the talking cat for a total of 55 performances. After each performance in St. Louis, she gave a speech to the audience regarding her experiences.

According to Weissberger, the organ grinder Brundibar was symbolically associated with Hitler by the members of the model camp. At the end of the opera, the children triumph over Brundibar and they sing a victory song.

"When you get to the final victory march, it's like a triumph for the original cast and even the people that heard it," Ritchey said. "For these people, it was the ability to overcome the most difficult situations. It's not just about Hitler; we've all felt in our lives about something that we can't overcome and the ending of the play transcends that. It's been a very meaningful experience. I've actually been to Theresienstadt

and done other music. To do something like that with children the same age as the original cast is amazing."

According to Weissberger, Theresienstadt was just a pit stop to Auschwitz.

"We were lucky that we had caretakers and teachers," Weissberger said. "At a young age, we lost our childhood. We had to take care of ourselves. They separated us into group and my caretaker was a music teacher. She had a friend who used to teach us songs in Hebrew. In the cellar, we found a harmonium, and she wanted to play an opera for us. We went in the cellar and in the dark we dragged the harmonium up to our room. From the beginning, music was a really big part of our lives."

After being liberated on May 10, 1945, she returned to the Czech Republic.

"At first, I didn't think people were interested in our stories," Weissberger said. "When we came back to the Czech Republic, we weren't really welcome. When I saw that I wasn't welcome in my home, it was very hard for me. I never thought that I would be respected."

Weissberger worries about the memories that will die alongside her generation of survivors.

"Last month I was in Theresienstadt and we worked on a documentary about 'Brundibar,'" Weissberger said. "This is the first time since we did that propaganda film that I went in the hall. There are still bits in that hall that I can still remember. People were hanging on ledges of the walls listening to the opera."

She now travels across the United States to theaters performing "Brundibar" to share her experiences.

"Now I have so many friends and I love St. Louis," Weissberger said. "When I think about this opera and how it's performed over the entire world, I realize that it will never die. The last time we performed was 65 years ago. The performance means so much to so many people. After that last performance, most of the children in the cast were sent to their deaths in the gas chambers. When we were on that stage, we forgot where we were. I hear kids saying that they hate school. They don't know what it's like not to be in school."

After all this time, she still holds on to her Jewish star that she isn't ashamed of anymore.

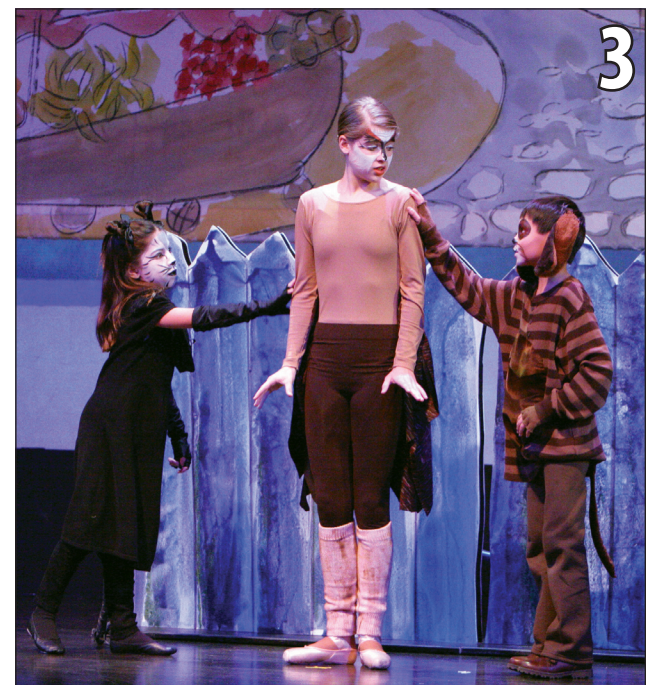
"Now I'm free in America," Weissberger said. "Out of the 1.5 million Jewish children, there are so few left and we will disappear soon. As the audience listens to us survivors, they will carry on the memories. I'm very proud to be Jewish, and wouldn't even mind wearing my star today. When we sang in 'Brundibar,' we didn't have to wear our stars and it was our form of resistance against the Nazis."

Senior Andrea Goldstein played violin in the pit orchestra for "Brundibar." Goldstein is Jewish and felt a particularly strong connection to the opera.

"The opera was really touching to me," Goldstein said. "Every performance reminded me of the struggles that Jews as well as other groups of people faced during the Holocaust. The fact that young children were the voice pieces for the story to be told was special to me. I know now that the memory of the people who perished in the Holocaust will live on."

The orchestra went through over 10 hours of rehearsal before meeting the cast.

"I felt it was important that we got to play the music that people in the Holocaust played," Goldstein said. "This felt like part of spreading the message and ensuring the survival of the memories. When I met Ela Weissberger, I felt that it was a really special moment because I feel connected to the events of the Holocaust because I'm Jewish. The fact that I was able to meet a survivor was amazing. The story she told and the way she looks at the world is really inspirational. She shows that no matter what happens in your life you can prevail and survive both mentally and physically." ☘



Performance Photos Courtesy of Eric Woolsey
1. Brundibar pompously arrives on the stage, scaring Pepicek and Aninku. The organ grinder Brundibar overpowers the duo's tender lullaby with mechanical sounds. 2. Holocaust survivor Ela Weissberger and senior Andrea Goldstein hug after the performance; Goldstein was inspired by the performance. 3. The cat, sparrow and dog are animals that would normally quarrel when found in nature, but set aside their differences to inspire the children to band against Brundibar to help Pepicek and Aninku. 4. After the performance, the cast finishes the final bow and Ela Weissberger holds hands with the actress of cat in the play, a connection of the roles across over half a century of time. 5. Aninku and Pepicek beg the milkman for milk but realize they don't have the money required to buy it, thereby creating the main plot for the opera.

NEWS BRIEFS

Shaw Park Ice Rink Now Open

Get your skates on and head to the rink with friends. The Shaw Park Ice Rink is now open for the 2009-2010 season. The rink is open from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. during winter break. Extra skating sessions will be added on Dec. 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, Jan. 1 and 18. The rink is also open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the winter months.

Wydown Open House

Go to the Wydown Middle School Open House on Jan. 6, 2010 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Wydown lobby. Stop by and learn about the Wydown renovation plans, review the options, ask questions, give your opinions and talk with board members.

Clayton Driver Education Begins Winter Program

Sign up for the Clayton Driver Education Program for the winter session. More information is on the Clayton website. Slots fill quickly, so sign up as soon as possible.

PTO Meeting Approaches

The next CHS PTO meeting is scheduled for Jan. 4, 2010. Since there was no December gathering, this meeting will be packed with information. All parents are invited to attend to discuss events and activities at CHS.

Tickets Now on Sale for Metro Theater Company production

The Metro Theater Company will be performing "Interrupting Vanessa" by Colleen Neuman Jan. 22-31 in the Black Box theater. To buy tickets in advance, call 800-838-3006 or visit www.brownpapertickets.com/event/80471

ST. LOUIS LIFE



'SNOW ANGEL', pg. 22

"'Snow Angel' explores themes of friendship, loneliness and fitting in. All teenagers can relate to those ideas."

Rachel Han
Reporter

Community theaters bring art to Clayton schools

The New Jewish Theatre and the Metro Theater Company share artistic passion with students K-12 through after-school programs and campus performances.

by Simone Bernstein
Senior Managing Editor

When school is not in session, the CHS theater is put to use by local theater companies. Other St. Louis area theater groups utilize the CHS stage when the high school is not using the space.

The New Jewish Theatre and the Metro Theater Company are just two of the many community groups that utilize the CHS theater for productions during the year.

Although in existence since 1973, the Metro Theater Company is a non-traditional company, without a theater to call home.

"We choose deliberately not to have our own theater space and to conduct most of our programs in the community, and mostly in non-theater spaces," said Katy Kaufman, Metro Theater Company Managing Director. "Most of what we're doing for most of the season is touring our professional productions to area schools, libraries, juvenile detention centers and other community sites, and conducting a range of education programs in classrooms. This activity in the community is really what we're about, though from time to time we surface in more public ways and mount productions for a general, ticket-buying audience."

Besides being the third oldest professional theater company in the St. Louis area, the Metro Theater Company is a cultural partner of the Clayton School District.

"In late 2007, the School District of Clayton put out a public Request for Proposals in a pursuit to identify an area theater company as a cultural partner of the district," Kaufman said. "The district was in a formal partnership with another theater company, Stray Dog Theatre, at that time, which was set to expire in January 2008, and they wanted to continue the practice of having a professional theater company as a partner to the district. With and through that partnership, the district is seeking to enhance the educational experience of its students while also reaching out into the broader community."

Among all the applicants to become a cultural partner for the district, Metro Theater Company was chosen to hold their productions at CHS. The district offered Metro Theater Company use of the CHS theater facilities in exchange for programming offered to the students.

"Because the middle and high school have really excellent theater programs already in place, the district was particularly interested in developing more theater programming for the elementary schools," Kaufman said. "We serve the middle and the high schools as well."



Courtesy of Metro Theater Company

Glenridge Elementary School music teacher Sue Williams believes it's valuable for a school district to have a cultural partnership with a theater company.

"I feel it is beneficial for the artistic community to bring their craft to students as it expands their understanding of the arts in several ways," Williams said. "Students begin to understand drama as an 'art' and the skill it takes to perform, they become informed of opportunities in the community theater, and they have a better understanding of the importance of self expression. This particular partnership provides an education in theater on the elementary level that is not offered in the current curriculum. Hopefully this will foster the desire for students to participate in the arts as they continue to grow."

Over the last year and a half, the Metro Theater Company has conducted after-school drama programs at the Clayton elementary schools. They also have a touring group that performs short productions at the schools. Due to construction on the stage and a busy schedule, the company has not performed at Glenridge this year.

However, the company performed at Glenridge last year and the students recognized their instructors from the after-school drama programs. Glenridge received positive feedback from parents whose children attended these extra-curricular drama programs.

"The response to these classes was wonderful as the parents in Clayton place a high value on artistic experiences which provides a different lens in a child's education," Williams said. "Students at Glenridge learned basic drama

skills such as how to use their voice, physical expression and improvise on the spot. This introduction to drama is a very valuable tool as it opens a whole new world to students who have not had an opportunity to be involved in community productions."

This year, the Metro Theater Company has also worked with students at Meramec Elementary School. Meramec music teacher Randi Shanker also believes this program helps young students become more open-minded about participating in theater.

"Once a week for eight weeks first and second graders could stay after and learn about theater," Shanker said. "They students seemed to enjoy the lessons. Third through fifth grade students will get an opportunity to participate in the after school workshops next semester."

Last summer, the Wydown Theatre Company worked with the Metro Theater Company to create a summer theater experience for middle school students in the St. Louis area.

"We held our first annual 'Young Artists' Theater Lab' last summer at Captain Elementary School," Wydown drama teacher Brain Engelmeyer said. "The program was a huge success and plans are already underway for the summer of 2010 lab. We worked with Metro Theater Company to create this

experience because there aren't many theater programs for middle school students to collaborate and work with other students their same age and with the same theatrical interests."

Having a cultural partner gives students a unique opportunity to gain experience from theater professionals.

"Theater is important for everyone and the educational opportunities that it creates have a huge impact on its participants," Engelmeyer said.

"With Metro Theater Company we are able to give all of our students the opportunity to experience theater in ways that we couldn't before. Metro is helping to enhance all that we already do for our students here in Clayton. We are very excited to have them as part of the district and look forward to all of the wonderful experiences that we can create together for our students."

After becoming a cultural partner of the district, the Metro Theater Company started to take a larger role in the Clayton community.

"Our partnership with the district has encouraged us as a company to develop other relationships in Clayton

as well," Kaufman said. "For example, after being selected as the district's cultural partner, we joined the Clayton Chamber of Commerce. We appreciate that the district's initiative has afforded us the opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with the entire Clayton community."

Due to other program plans, the Metro Theater Company did not utilize the CHS theater during their first year in the partnership. This year the company already performed "Fables" in the auditorium and will perform "Interrupting Vanessa" in the black box theatre from Jan. 22-31.

The New Jewish Theatre, a program of the Jewish Community Center, is also using the CHS theater. As their facility is undergoing renovations, the New Jewish Theatre was in need of a temporary space for their productions.

"As most of our patrons live in the central corridor of St. Louis city and county, Clayton provided a convenient location for our patrons," said Kathleen Sitzer, Artistic Director of the New Jewish Theatre. "Additionally, most of our patrons were at least minimally familiar with the location. Access to CHS is easy from any direction. There is ample, well-lit, free parking. There are two venues, allowing for more flexible scheduling to meet our production needs. All of these factors contributed to the decision to produce our shows at CHS."

The New Jewish Theatre performed all five productions of their 2008-2009 season at the CHS theater. Each of the shows runs three weeks. This will be their last season utilizing the CHS theater.

"For 2009-2010, we will be using CHS for the first three productions of the season," Sitzer said. "The fourth production could not be accommodated by Clayton due to schedule conflicts. It is likely that our final production will be in our new theatre at the Jewish Community Center in Creve Coeur."

The New Jewish Theatre rents the theater from Clayton. This production company hopes this temporary move has attracted audience members and brought attention to the area.

"Hopefully this is a win-win arrangement," Sitzer said. "For the New Jewish Theatre we are attracting more residents in the Clayton, University City, Maplewood and Richmond Heights area who we hope will follow us back to our new home. For Clayton, we are introducing many new people to the facility and what Clayton High School has to offer to the public."

Both the New Jewish Theatre and Metro Theater Company provide the Clayton community with performances that provide a sense of entertainment and bring cultural diversity to the area. ☺

Missouri school district fills backpacks to fight hunger

by Laura Blecke
Editor

From the corn farms of Iowa to the dairy farms of Wisconsin to the wheat fields of Kansas, it is easy to think that everyone in the Midwest has a surplus of food. But even here, hunger has reached people, especially children.

In the rural town of Moberly, Mo., the public school district has recognized this problem and created a solution. The school makes 106 backpacks filled with easy-to-prepare food every Friday for needy children to take home.

"We get some food from the Food Bank each month, but we also receive monetary and food donations from other individuals, clubs, and churches in Moberly," Home to School Liaison of the Moberly School District Francine Nichols said.

This is the district's third year doing the program.

"We really saw the need [for the program] when the economy began to take a turn," Mark Penny, Superintendent of the Moberly School District said. "This has allowed us to get to the point of where we are now."

The economy has forced families to cut down on food costs, and consequently their children have not gotten enough to eat.

"We've also had incidences where we've found kids stealing others lunch boxes and raiding the trash cans after meals have been thrown away," Nichols said.

Many cities across the country have started doing programs like this, especially after the economic recession.

Little Rock, Ark., was the first to start a backpack program in 1995. They noticed children having problems staying focused as well as hunger-induced headaches and stomachaches. The Arkansas Rice Depot created the Food For Kids: Because A Hungry Child Can't Learn program and provided the schools with snacks at school for children as well as backpacks of food for others.

The program began to snowball and now there are over 100 schools doing the same program, including the Moberly School District. The district remains humble about the program, even after an article from CNN featuring them.

"Now it's just become what we do," Penny said. "We've appreciated all this attention but it still doesn't change that we still think it's so important that our kids get this opportunity."

The Moberly schools saw positive turnaround almost immediately after they started the program.

"The kids on the program have better attendance and seem to be able to concentrate in class," Nichols said.

Children are able to acquire the food they need over the weekends, but the program also includes holidays, like Thanksgiving.

"In the past we just provided resources where children, parents, families could go," Penny said. "This year we put even more food in the backpacks.

If they couldn't get any food, now they would have some."

The program continues to spread as more and more districts through the country hear about it. Two more districts in Missouri near Moberly heard of it from them and wanted to join the bandwagon.

"One school district five miles away has already started," Penny said. "And it's a school district of only about 100 kids kindergarten through eight, and they've identified 15 students that they're working with. Another school district near us that has 500 students kindergarten through 12 has received several phone calls that say 'Hey if Moberly can do that, we can do that. To me, that is the best thing about this.'"

Although Moberly started the program because of the poor economy, they won't discontinue it when the economy improves.

"We will still continue this program because we have more than 56 percent of our students receiving a free or reduced lunch, which is part of our meal benefit program," Penny said. "So we have some children, regardless of the economy, that are pretty needy. So, we will do this as long as there is a need."

The school believes that if the child is hungry or in need he or she will be unable to learn and grow to their fullest potential.

"Everyone needs to eat but not everyone has the money or the transportation or the ability to get food to feed their families," Nichols said. "All we want is for the kids to have their basic

needs met so they can come to school ready to learn."

For Penny, one of the most important things people must remember is that although the children receive help, they can still do great things academically.

"Just because students have to receive an assisted meal," Penny said. "It doesn't mean they can't achieve academically."

The program allows the district to connect to the community. It lets the district help families and children who need some assistance in the bad economy.

"Sometimes our parents are doing the best that they can and it is up to us to extend our hand and be able to work together," Penny said. "And that's really what I'm most excited about."

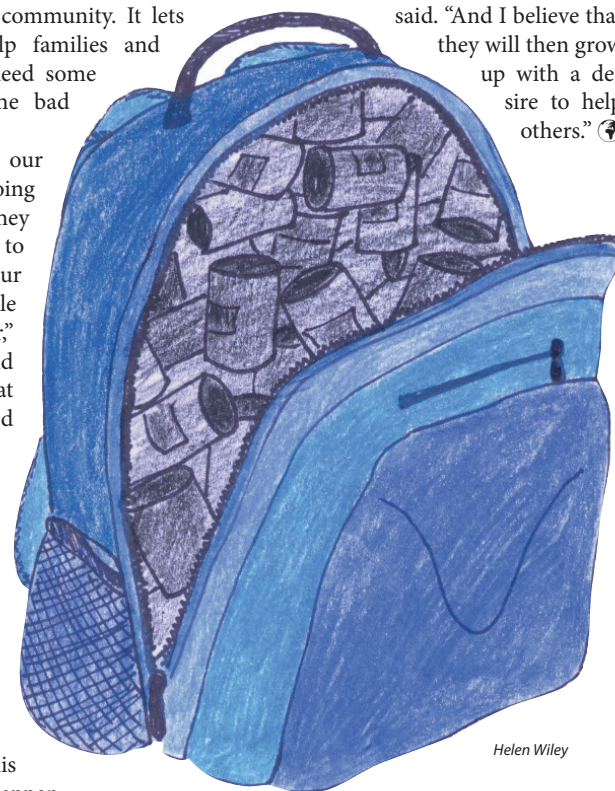
Moberly and so many other small towns have proved that a city doesn't have to be big to start a program like this.

"People may assume that this could never happen

in their community," Penny said. "But I don't believe that's true, I believe it could happen anywhere."

The program is meant as an aid. One that will help children so that they might be the best they can be. It is a program that lends a hand if you are in need, and then gives you a chance to give back when you're back on your feet.

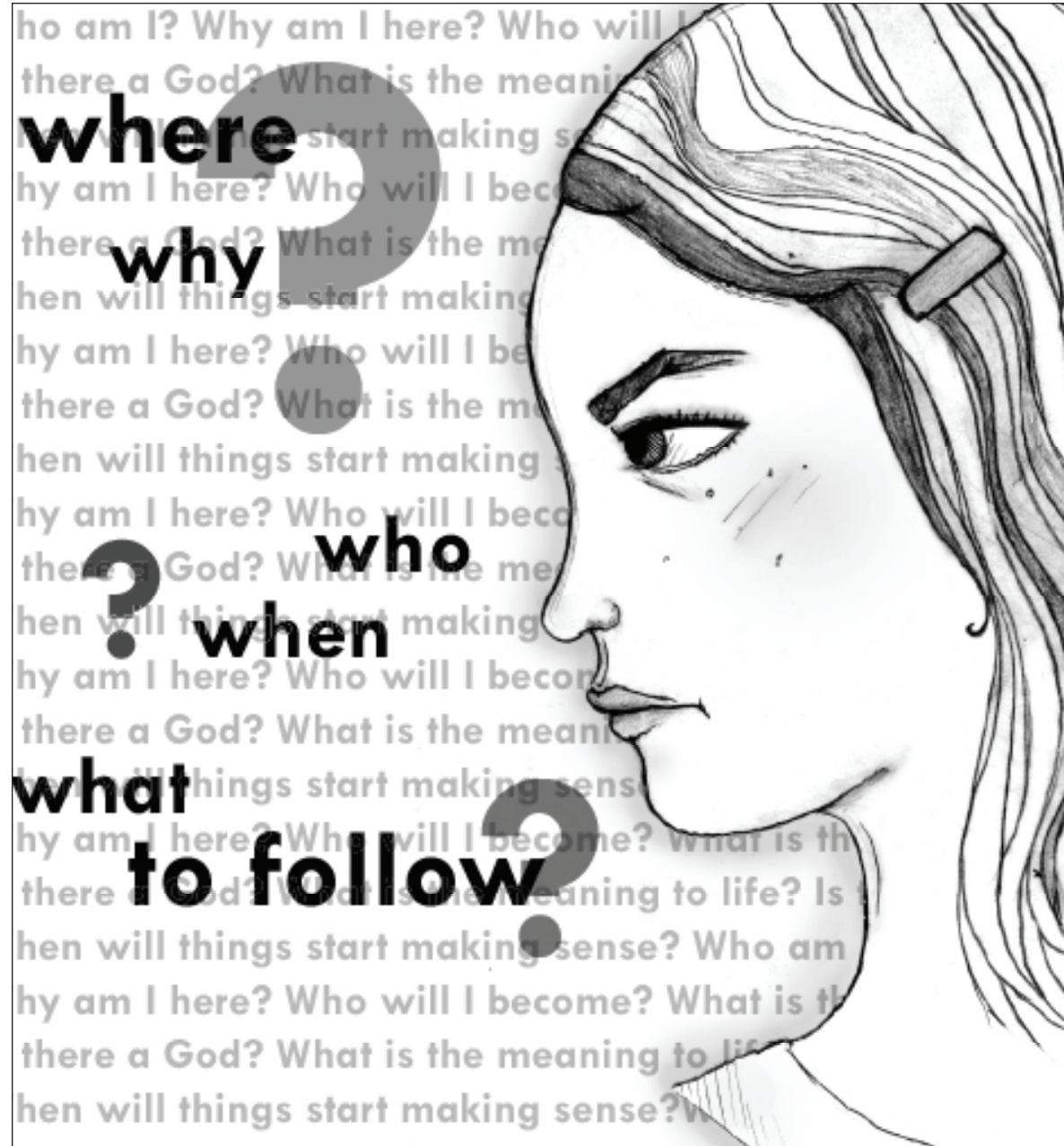
"I think that it is our duty to help these children," Nichols said. "And I believe that they will then grow up with a desire to help others." ☺



Helen Wiley

ANGST

Clayton students and teachers explore their unique beliefs. They find that the archetypal teenage search for self-realization is essential to reach full maturity.



by Hannah Callahan
Editor

Hannah Callahan

I smiled, satisfied, as Manic Panic "Hot Hot Pink" streams of my rebellion washed into the bathroom drain. It was all worth it—the \$20 spent on hair dye earlier that afternoon, the way I could alter future first impressions, even the bleach-induced headaches—just to make my mother mad at me for disobeying her words.

I turned up the volume on my stereo to play something fast and loud, as I waited for streaks of pink hair to dry, and my mother to come home from a day at work.

But when I finally heard the anticipated door knob turn, she didn't give me the reaction I had wanted. What I wanted was for her to cry out emphatically, falling to her knees, "But I told you not to! You're grounded for the next two years of your life!"

Instead, she gave me apathy.

Still, though, I waited for a door to slam. In the mirror, I stared at reflections of my hair dripping pink onto my shoulders. But the song had ended, and my mother was gone. So where was my rebellion?

Soon after in a hallway at school, I saw a girl I didn't know with pink streaks the same color as mine. I wondered if her mother had yelled.

It felt like realizing that your favorite song is thousands of strangers' favorite song too.

My rebellion was cheap and unoriginal.

Who was I trying to be, anyway? The only people I could think of with pink hair were Gwen Stefani in the '90s, and pop sellout P!nk, who labeled herself as "M!ssundaztood."

As a society, we commoditize rebellion for teenagers lost in suburbia, who feel empty amid their parents' appliances, so that they can drive their minivans to the mall to buy Che Guevara and Nirvana t-shirts.

But in some ways it is not such a bad thing. We do not suffer alone in our angst. We are all connected in not only our rebellion but also the spiritual search for our own beliefs and separation from our parents. Without challenging the beliefs we're provided with, or perhaps forced into, we cannot find our own.

"From a psychological perspective," junior Ikshu Neithalath said, "angst seems to be necessary as part of a formative stage in one's life, wherein authority is questioned and dogma is rejected. Yet, I do not think that teenage angst need be limited to the teenage years. Indeed, the trick is to keep that sense of rebelliousness throughout adulthood."

Neithalath said that he laments the reality of growing older, and thus leaving angst behind as a relic of youth before settling into established convention.

"Of course," Neithalath said, "I have a different worldview from my parents, but they are remarkably open to my personal conclusions. It is almost unfortunate that they have so nearly robbed me of the experience of rebellion."

Junior Andrea Glik agrees, perceiving the general lifestyle in Clayton to be the product of succumbing to convention, the end of a search, settling for everyone else's answers, instead of finding your own.

"There has to be something more, because this can't be it," Glik said, "living in Clayton, having a nice house, sort of belonging to a church or a synagogue, having two kids, driving a minivan, all because you feel like you have to. When you look at what you do with your life, you have to ask yourself 'for what?' The belief that I hold onto is that there is something more than this, something way beyond all of this stuff that we feel like we need. There's no way, that with my 16-year-old cousin, that was all he got."

The tragic death of Glik's cousin, Charlie, who was not wearing his seatbelt during a fatal car accident, was what inspired the organization, "Click for Glik."

Glik said she finds solace in Kabbalah, a school of thought concerned with the mystical aspects of Judaism.

"I'm going to find my way," Glik said, "but Kabbalah is helping me a little bit right now. I've been down the road of bad relationships, typical high school drama, and none of it matters. It's not what I want. Luckily, I was able to have my eyes opened up through Kabbalah, and my cousin dying, and realizing that I'm not here for that long. I don't want to keep making mistakes. While my life is pretty much superficial, committing to Kabbalah's teachings helps me break through that material. In Shabbat, you let go of everything material, and it gives me a break from the fake person I can become so easily. But I think the most amazing thing about Kabbalah is that no matter what problem, there's an answer."

Senior Ellen Spann said that she does not find answers in her religion. Unitarian Universalism, but instead perpetual questions that fuel her search. Spann has been involved with Unitarian Universalism since kindergarten, which her mother found through, what Spann described as, "church-shopping."

"Up until around eighth grade," Spann said, "I was kind of blind to the fact that there were some people who really struggled with the religions they grew up with. My mom has always been accepting towards my beliefs because it's basically written into our religion to be accepting of others' beliefs. I go to youth group every Sunday, and we go to youth conferences, and that's where I've met my best friends. Since we've joined the Unitarian Universalist church, though, my mom's siblings are convinced that she needs to be saved and that she's headed for hell."

Glik and Spann agree that they are both unsure of what

to believe in.

"I'm stuck in the middle of the country," Glik said, "and in the middle of who I'm going to be and who I am and what I believe in."

In many cases, what we see on the outside-- angst and pink hair -- is merely the surface product of a much deeper, stagnant spiritual search. It seems as though in high school we suddenly become aware of not only a generational but also a spiritual separation between us and our parents.

This adolescent questioning, as well as the rebellion that often follows, has penetrated the mainstream so that we see it in our school halls, in the classic novel "The Catcher in the Rye" that is still studied 58 years after its publication, in the king of self-loathing and angst, Kurt Cobain, and in the films of director John Hughes, who turned teenage aimlessness into a well-known, lucrative genre.

"The funny thing is," Spann said, "I wish I knew what exactly I believe in. That's the trouble and the beauty about my personal religion-- we have no written creed, so that we have to come to our own conclusions about God or a Higher Power. I've always been searching, and as cliché as it sounds, I am searching for meaning to life. The search will never stop, because it's just my nature to keep questioning."

Senior Sneha Viswanathan said that she is caught in between the opposing beliefs of her mother, who is religious, and her father, who is an atheist.

"From a young age," Viswanathan said, "I saw both of their perspectives and heard both of their reasons for why they believe what they do. Because of this, I stand somewhere on the middle ground in terms of religion, and I con-

sider myself agnostic. Although most of my family is Hindu, my responses towards some of their beliefs have been pretty similar to my dad. Since religion has not been ingrained in me from a young age in the same way many other kids have had it ingrained in them, I have a tendency to be slightly detached and question a lot of customs that are thousands of years old and taken for granted by many people, especially elders, in my family."

Viswanathan said that she is searching for "[her] place in the world and [her] role in the future."

"Sometimes," Viswanathan continued, "I hear pretty convincing evidence that a higher power exists, and other times I hear convincing evidence that it doesn't exist. I believe in the capacity of humanity and our collective potential for understanding. All the spiritual angst, confusion, and complexities that we have are the result of the beliefs that others have communicated to us either directly or indirectly."

While we may not all have a parent's dogma to rebel against, like in the case of Viswanathan, there is still a perpetual supply of questions, when in adolescence, are necessary to explore in our search for self-identity and spiritual understanding. In order to find our place amid everyone else's, we must question authority-- in our parents, our teachers, the government-- traditions, societal norms, and possibly the merit of pink hair dye.

We must always be thinking, searching, challenging the beliefs that we have been provided with. It's an omnipresent journey that doesn't just end with graduation or when our angst is supposed to dissolve into adulthood convention. While some decades have been more focused on searching,

such as the '60s, and some on following, such as the '50s, spiritual angst certainly isn't generational.

English teacher Sue Teson experienced many of the problems that affect teenagers today, and she's still not done searching for her own answers.

"I didn't rebel," Teson said, "and in that way I was atypical. Living in the suburbs, I was in line with convention. I had a structured upbringing and didn't go to church. My family was Lutheran. In the 6th grade, though, I decided that I wanted to be a Roman Catholic. It seemed like a secret society to me, with all of the saints and the beautiful stained glass and holy water. But I realized that those were the only things I loved. In college, I tried to come back to the Lutheran church. However, I found that the religious model was not what I was looking for, and I left religion behind."

As in Teson's case, spiritual understanding is not always found through religion or rebellion.

"I desperately want to be a religious person," Teson said, "but I've just never found a place. It's not rebellion, just an endless search. The church left me cold. The closest I've come is being in nature. I feel a spiritual awakening there. When I'm in the bottom of the Grand Canyon, looking up, I know that God exists, that there's something out there that created this. My family and I go on 6-week backpacking trips. We live in a world where we are so much in control, but when I'm in just a sleeping bag, staring at the stars, I see that there's so much more in this universe than me. I feel a sense of smallness."

Conversely, Glik said that she finds her true self in New York City, where she spends her summers.

"I never really fit in here," Glik said, "but when I went to New York, everybody got it. I'm in love with the city-- the lights, yelling at tourists in Time Square, the Hunter S. Thompson quotes right and left, the time I had a 45-minute conversation with a beautiful actor about 'On the Road' and how it changed our lives. There are all of these things that have been a part of me, things I didn't even know that I had, that were brought out there. In finding the city, I found myself."

The means by which one finds self-identity certainly varies. Neithalath explained that rebellion can mean drug use or rejection of a parent's political beliefs, the first motivated by pleasure, and the second by belief. He said that he has explored the role of angst through the philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard, who describes the experience as falling off a cliff.

"One dreads the unknown of the chasm," Neithalath said, "but at the same time one is aware of his or her freedom to willfully enter the abyss. It is this 'dizziness of freedom,' to quote Kierkegaard, that forms the essence of teenage angst. With angst we are made aware of choice. To retain this awareness, we must remain at the edge of the cliff in eternal angst and permanent rebellion, unfettered by the workings of age."

Ali Sehizadeh said that he too has explored philosophy and works of literature in attempt to find his own identity amid his parents' Islamic beliefs.

"For much of my childhood," Sehizadeh said, "I was as enthusiastic about Islam as [my family] was. But it all changed during my high school years."

Sehizadeh said that writer Kurt Vonnegut, as well as Buddhist philosopher Thich Nhat Hanh, has changed his perspective on the world. While reading the works of Vonnegut, Sehizadeh said that his beliefs became more humanistic and less focused on a deity.

"I am the kind of person who loves to learn new ideas and new philosophies," Sehizadeh said. "I became a somewhat self-described Buddhist-Muslim. The most important idea that I discovered while studying Buddhism has been that the universe, time, everything is chaotic and impermanent. As humans, we have a tendency to keep things as constant as possible, which is one of the sources of our suffering. If you question me about whether I believe in God or not, I will simply shrug and say that there is one, but just too far away from our universe to exist. I have very conflicting beliefs."

Though our spiritual beliefs and experiences may differ, we are all searching for our own meaning in a post-economic-crisis society that seems to worship appliances more often than God. But the nation is learning frugality, as Range Rovers and five-bedroom, built-in-garage mini-mansions cast shadows as shells of lost opulence. On the surface, the "Clayton bubble" seems to have protected itself against our nation's economic crisis. Sometimes I wonder if it has affected Clayton at all. But there are small crevices forming in our well-to-do isolation, even if that only means not buying the third car you always wanted.

Neithalath said that our society's conventions should not be accepted during only teenage years, but instead questioned always, throughout life.

"The young always wish to fly from the nest," Neithalath said, "but it is only a few more years before they are forced back to roost. To preserve one's angst is to renounce the roost for eternal flight."

Following Neithalath's advice, Spann said that her search for spiritual and self-understanding will continue.

"It's been a lifelong journey," Spann said, "but it's never going to stop. I've taken it in my responsibility to let myself come to my own conclusions, but by doing that I'm leaving a lot up in the air. One day it'll all come crashing down out of the air onto me, and then I'll just figure out something else to believe in." ☺

Globes answer the eternal question in 60 words or less: *what gives meaning to your life?*

Junior Justin Elliot



"Finding inspiration from the concrete walls of this institution filled with boundless expectations can be difficult. But I find true meaning in the bonds I create with others, the memories I have made and the idea in my head that if I work hard I can be whatever I want."

"My life has no meaning on its own. I find meaning in my relationships with my family, friends, and each person that I come into contact with. I'm just trying to change the world for the better and learn everything that I can from others during the short time that I'm here."

Junior Kara Kratcha



"For me, the most difficult choice is the one between dedicating my time to the activities I would never do if I didn't have close friends who 'get' me and the ones that make me feel isolated, but actually pertain to my academic interests."



Senior Nina Oberman



Junior Dawn Androphy



ABOVE LEFT: Style rookie, 13-year-old Tavi Gevinson, displays her quirky style on her well known blog. ABOVE RIGHT: In New York during Fashion Week, Gevinson is photographed by Autumn DeWilde in the Rodarte studio before attending the Pop party. Gevinson's cynical, humorous voice and wacky fashion sense enthralls many readers. RIGHT: Jane Aldridge, fashion forward Texan, sports an Ivan Grundahl leather skirt, Max Mara tights, Moroccan scarf, and most importantly, boots by Chanel. This shoe enthusiast is the creator of Sea of Shoes and she is now pursued by big names such as Urban Outfitters and Vogue for her extremely stylish fashion selections. LEFT: Rumi Kneely of San Diego started by posting pictures taken by her boyfriend on her blog, fashion toast. She is now a signed model at the NEXT agency.



Young bloggers enter fashion industry

Three teenage girls gain popularity, receiving job offers and designer gifts, after creating successful fashion blogs. The bloggers post their outfits and changing point of view.

by Andrea Glik
Reporter

Jane Aldridge, Tavi Gevinson and Rumi Kneely. Three names that a few short years ago were unknown in the fashion world. Thanks to BlogSpot and typepad, Aldridge has become Sea of Shoes, Gevinson is now The Style Rookie and Kneely is known as Fashion Toast. Their blogs' popularity has led to many opportunities.

Aldridge is now more than a Texan with an expensive shoe addiction. She has graced the pages of Vogue with her fashionable mother and was in this year's Crillon Ball in Paris. Being nominated for the ball by Vogue was one thing, but being dressed by Chanel Haute Couture is another. It doesn't stop there. Aldridge has received fan mail from Kanye West himself, and did a shoe line for Urban Outfitters.

Gevinson is not your average 13-year-old from Illinois. Instead of dressing in the typical Limited Two get up, Williams opts for Comme De Garcons, and worships the ground their designer Rei Kawakubo walks on. Most middle schoolers have only been on the cover of their Bat Mitzvah siddur, but Gevinson has been cover girl for Pop magazine, and has (single handedly) done a shoot for Love magazine. Not many tweens have spent

their back to school front row at Alexander Wang, but most 13-year-olds do not have fashion blogs.

Kneely has gone from being photographed for her blog by her boyfriend on the streets of San Diego, to being behind the camera as a signed model for NEXT agency. She has done collaborations for RVCA, posed for NO magazine, and even scored her photographer boyfriend gigs.

Sitting front row at Fashion Week, hanging out with the Rodarte sisters, and being in countless fashion magazine; these girls have done it all. All three of them, and many more have gotten their foot in the door of the fashion industry by doing one thing: creating a blog.

On their websites they post their outfits, their views on trends and collections, and a few tidbits of their everyday (if you could call it that) life. Magazine covers and clothing collaborations isn't the only thing these ladies are landing. They receive truckloads of free clothing to blog about.

Fashion Toast even gets paid to have an American Apparel ad on her site. Aldridge is still in high school, and Gevinson in middle school, but when they graduate, they will both have countless jobs lined up and waiting for them.

These girls are not the only ones

with fashion week invites pouring out of their mailboxes. More and more bloggers are attending magazine parties and fashion shows.

This online epidemic is completely changing the fashion industry. Websites like Fashionista.com or the New York Times fashion blog, The Cut are completely devoted to fashion-related news. The two sites have an average of 10 posts (mini articles) per day.

Most magazines like NYLON, Interview and V also have blogs, online articles and tons of videos.

"Style blogs make fashion less of an unreachable, thousand-dollar, runway fantasy, and more of something that I can access in my own life," junior Hannah Callahan said. "Unlike most fashion magazines, they don't tell me what to wear. They tell me to wear what I want."

Thousands of other people feel the same way and its because of the readers and word of mouth that these bloggers have their fame. They have gotten it quickly, and it has brought many opportunities for them. Not only that, it has impacted their readers styles, and helped people put together clothing in a whole new way.

Bloggers are becoming it girls. Websites are turning into publications. Our generation is all about the Internet, and fashion is reaping the benefits. ☺

Green lifestyle improves individual health

by David Behrend
Reporter

Everyone has heard that adopting a green lifestyle improves the health of the environment, saves you money, and can even help save the polar bears. But what about your own health? What changes can you take to make your life "greener" and also make it healthier?

Lower energy usage is a key target in the green movement to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. A healthy change that you can make for yourself and lower your energy costs is just opening up the blinds and letting in some natural light.

Medical News Today says that sunlight is Americans number one source of vitamin D and can help calcium absorption. Studies have also shown that sunlight can enhance mood, concentration, and overall mental health.

Another positive change that can be made is lowering your meat consumption. Not everyone needs to become a vegetarian by any means, but it good to know how much energy it takes to get the food on your plate.

According to a study by Stockholm University, the production of a Big Mac uses anywhere from 2 to 5.5 kilowatt hours of energy to make. And the average American eats 150 hamburgers every year. Overeating of meat can lead to health problems including heart disease and obesity.

One thing that we hear all about is of eating organic foods with limited use of pesticides. Not only can these substances be harmful to the environment, but they can be harmful to you. Just think about it, the poisons that are sprayed over plants in order to fend off bugs are going into you when you eat them.

Another thing that can harm you and the environment is bottled water. The bottles that they come in are obviously made out of plastic, which is difficult to recycle and does

not biodegrade quickly. In a test by Iowa University's water quality lab found that five of the 10 tested waters contained fluoride, six contained small amounts of the fertilizer ingredient nitrate, and two contained the drug acetaminophen. Other waters contained disinfection byproducts and carcinogens. A better choice for the environment and you is drinking water from the tap with a water purification attachment.

But what about the environmental issues that can only be tackled on a bigger scale by an entire community? Air quality can make a big difference in your health. Bad air quality can cause asthma, allergies, lung cancer, and heart problems.

The EPA says that asthma attacks can help be prevented by better air quality that comes from improved air filtration systems. You can personally contribute to better air quality each time you walk, bike or take mass transit versus using a car for transportation.

An EPA report to Congress estimates that proper implementation of the Clean Air Act could provide the United States with a projected \$1.1 trillion in health benefits due to avoided illnesses and death in 2010.

With a rise in global warming, diseases have increased also.

"Climate affects some of the most important diseases afflicting the world," Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum of the World Health Organization in an interview with MSNBC said. "The impacts may already be significant."

Much of the scientific world is aware of the changes that are happening and will continue to happen to diseases.

"Climate change is disrupting natural ecosystems in a way that is making life better for infectious diseases," Princeton University researcher Andrew Dobson said. "The accumulation of evidence has us extremely worried. We share diseases with some of these species. The risk for humans is going up." ☺



Part of a green lifestyle includes biking instead of driving places. Adopting a green lifestyle can fit into a busy schedule and also improve health through additional exercise.

Students share insight, personal experience online

The internet provides an outlet for blogging students to share news and thoughts as well as discussing otherwise unexplored aspects of life.

by Sarah Blackwell
Reporter

New ways to express yourself are created every day through modern technology. The internet has provided numerous opportunities for people all around the world to share their work: poems, stories, artwork, and experiences. Recently, blogging has become popular.

CHS students are becoming more interested in blogging and reading blogs. Some students have started their own blogs.

"My blog is about movie news here and there," sophomore Ryan Shields said. "My personal movie blog is about what I'm currently doing and how my movie is coming along. I asked people for opinions."

Blogs center around many different topics. They are a way for a person to write about whatever they're interested in.

"My blog is just about things that happen in my life, personal experi-

ences, sometimes my thoughts are just random ideas," freshman Rachel Han said.

Senior Taylor Stone writes a blog for an online magazine, called Relate Magazine.

"It's a national teen magazine for girls dedicated to bring them to a higher self esteem, inspiring and encouraging them by focusing on real teens rather than the negative influences of mainstream media," Stone said.

She got interested in blogging after discovering the Relate Magazine website. Shields started blogging so that people could read about movies and give him feedback. Han got interested in blogging through some friends of hers that had blogs.

"A couple of people I only knew on the internet had them, and I wanted to

stay in touch with them. I also thought it would be really cool, like keeping a journal, only more convenient," Han said.

Blogging is a way for every day people to express themselves. Most blogs can be viewed by everyone. Blogging can show people a person's view on a certain issue.

"My blog is just about things that happen in my life, personal experiences, and sometimes my thoughts on a random idea," Han said. "My blog is mostly just a personal way to express myself."

Some blogs are about specific topics. Stone's blog is specifically about fashion.

"The benefits of having a blog for

“The benefits of having a blog for me is being able to express myself in a completely different way.”

Taylor Stone
Senior

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Legacies controversial in college process

by Phillip Zhang
Reporter

As the college application deadline approaches, seniors recall their achievements over the last four years and sum them up on the applications, trying to look their best for the admission committees.

Each student presents his hard-earned grades, community service hours, ACT scores, and many other accomplishments to the college of his or her dream, hoping that college will send that acceptance letter. However, one of those accomplishments was completed years before the applicant was even born and could tip the applicant into the admitted pile. This is the legacy preference.

Under this practice, colleges in the admission process give preferences to children of alumni.

"A lot of times, I see students apply to colleges that their parents attended," said Chat Leonard, CHS college counselor.

Although the nation's economy is in a recession, colleges have been experiencing an increasing trend in the total number of applications they receive. This will likely make the college admission more competitive than it already is. Under such intense competition, applicants appreciate any extra push they could get, including the legacy preference.

"There is a higher number of legacy applicants among those who apply to top-rated colleges, like the Ivy League," Leonard said.

Last application season, the Ivy League experienced an unprecedented level of achievement in their applicant pool. According to The Boston Globe, Harvard University admitted only 7 percent of its 29,112 applications, the most selective year yet at one of the world's most selective universities.

It is important to note that legacy preference is only one of the many factors that colleges examine.

"Being a legacy student is not going to get you in if you are not admissible," Leonard said. "That is, the student must qualify statistically, in terms of his grades and standardized test scores."

The college admission process is not as easy as it seems. Each year, colleges receive more admissible applicants than they could fit into their campus. As a result, secondary factors like extracurricular activities, work experience, and legacy preference come into play.

"For students who are admissible to the college, legacy is definitely an advantage," Leonard said.

Because of the increasing competition among applicants, people are becoming more sensitive toward factors that colleges take into consider. Legacy preference, being a factor that is not related to the applicant's own ability at all, inevitably becomes a controversial issue.

In defense of the legacy preference, colleges claim that legacy students usually have more school spirit that could enrich the college's traditions.

Senior Jordan Stern is one of the legacy applicants this year. Both of his parents graduated from the University of Michigan and Stern plans to apply there.

"I see legacy preference as a tradition of the school," Stern said. "It is not necessarily the best way to go around picking students. But, being one of the applicants, I am thankful that it might help me get in."

The other front that the defense of legacy preference plays out is finances.

Legacy admission can increase university funds because parents whose kids have been accepted to their school are much more likely to make donations.

"In this economy, of course colleges want to raise more money," Leonard said. "Colleges spend an enormous amount of money on their research institutions and faculty salaries. In this tough economy, the use of legacy preference as a means to raise those necessary funds is justified."

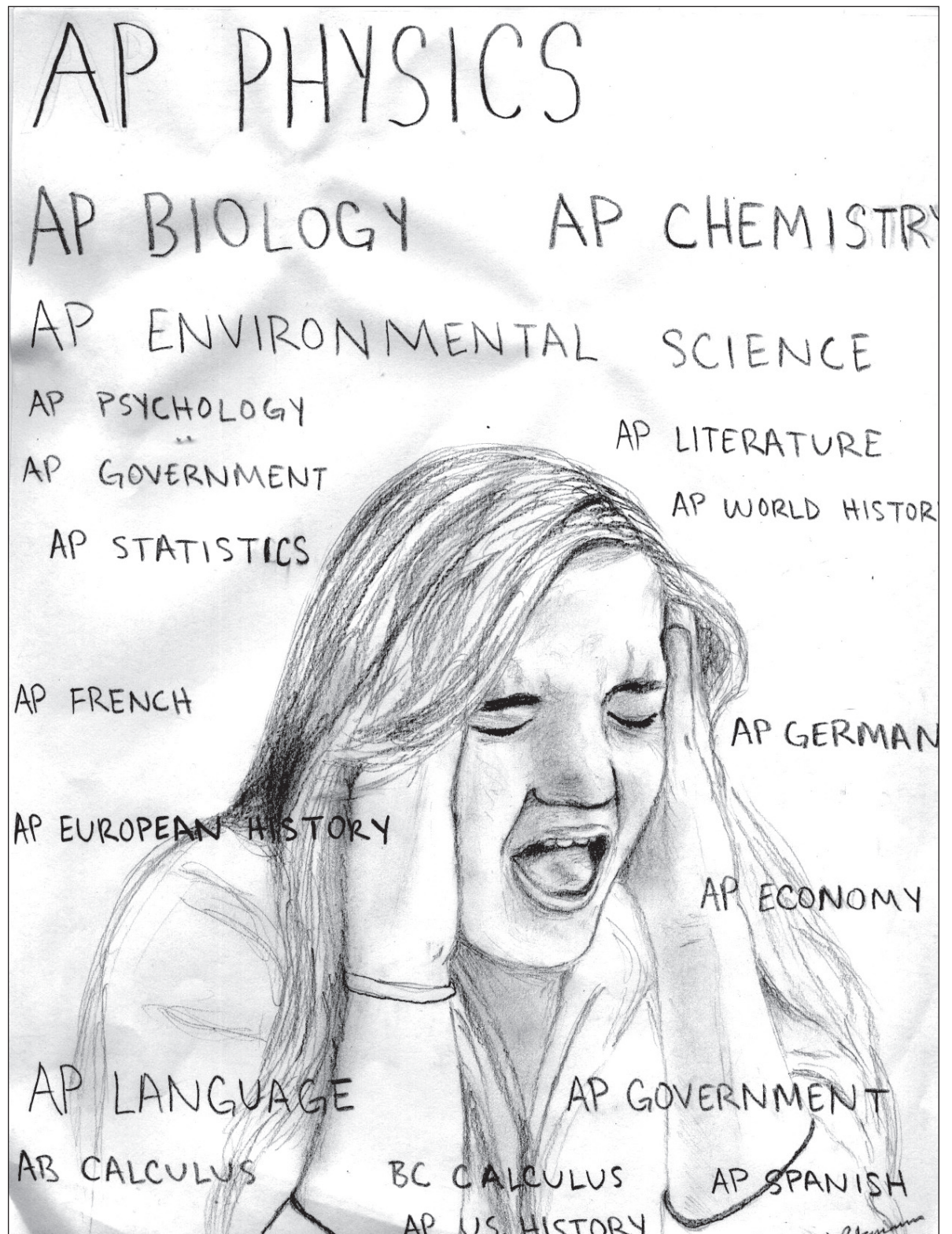
People who oppose legacy preference assert that it departs from meritocracy. They stand on the principle that people should be judged on their individual abilities rather than their family connections.

"I think it's an unfair advantage because they didn't earn it," said junior Melissa Milbrandt, whose parents both graduated from the University of Nebraska. "Legacy students are the opposite of those star athletes who earned their advantages through rigorous trainings."

Like legacy preference, affirmative action for minorities also rests on the same belief that people can be judged on something other than their individual abilities. However, affirmative actions are less controversial.

"The purpose of affirmative action is to create diversity," Leonard said. "All colleges want diversity because a diverse campus reflects the real world."

Given the secrecy of the college admission process, it is hard to determine how big of a boost legacy preference really is. As long as legacy preference helps colleges economically, colleges that employ legacy policy are unlikely to stop doing so anytime soon. ☛



Sanja Petermann

Students struggle with stress of multiple APs

by Tom Evashwick
Editor

We are the champions.

Those four immortalized words transcend the boundaries of logical use: victorious teams have sung in unison and civil rights groups have chanted in harmony.

And of course, 50 high schools across the nation sing it once laying claim to the title of "Best High School in the State."

According to U.S. News and World Report, Clayton claims Missouri. Why?

Plain and simple, our claim to fame lies in our school's success in Advancement Placement tests. The average AP student at CHS takes 3.3 AP tests over his or her high school career.

With college admissions reaching an all-time high in terms of difficulty for the class of 2010 CHS students are well known for distinguishing themselves by taking a lot of rigorous courses.

However, the question arises: when does "taking a lot of rigorous courses" become "taking too many rigorous courses" become "there is no way you were thinking when you registered"? There is no question about it: the line is very fine.

"There are some students, especially those who are high achievers, that have a tendency to over do it," social studies teacher David Aiello said. "There is no balance in their lives, and they are running themselves ragged."

Some students that take more than seven or eight AP classes agree with Aiello's views.

"The workload really limits out of school activities," said senior Gus Heil, who will have taken seven AP courses by the time he graduates. "[I] find many activities being displaced due to the combination of a large AP workload and college applications."

Senior Eve Root, who will finish with six AP classes, believes a rigorous course load to be beneficial.

"I think that taking so many APs will definitely help prepare me for college life," Root said.

However, many choose to take such a difficult schedule because of external pressures.

"One of the key players in that is the heavy emphasis on - whether it be by the teachers, counselors, or colleges - having kids think 'I need to do more, I need to do more,'" Aiello said.

Exchange student Lucas Power was taken aback when he arrived for the fall semester in CHS.

"In my opinion school is much more intense here [than in Germany]," Power said. "You never get to rest here... Students definitely compete over getting the higher grade."

Aiello believes this year-round competition is very detrimental to the students.

"I definitely see signs of students that are way over extended," Aiello said. "I see them losing sleep. I see them doing homework for other classes in my class. I see them to-

tally stressed out. To me those are all signs that this is too much."

Of course, high school students start feeling the college pressure as of junior year.

"I definitely think that Clayton students have gotten in the mentality that the only way to be successful [in the college process] is to take the most difficult classes," Root said. "But I don't think that holds true to everyone."

Clayton sent over 98 percent of its students to four-year colleges for the class of 2009, a clear sign that high pressure is placed on academic success.

Because of this, students feel as though the grade is more important than the test itself - the reason for the creation of the Advanced Placement curriculum.

"I care more about my grade," Root said. "A grade from a semester or a full year's work is a better reflection of your hard work than just one test."

Aiello believes the test and the grade go hand in hand, though.

"Working for the grade will have the long term benefit of doing well on the test," Aiello said.

However, the stress of many of his students has led Aiello to supporting a reform of students' schedules.

"Generally speaking, all but the occasional one or two students per class should not be taking more than some magic number [of AP classes]," Aiello said. "If [CHS says] a student can take no more than three AP classes then students will not be as stressed and also will not have to compete so much against one another for a spot in those top colleges."

Many students, however, feel that students can differentiate themselves as one of the top in the school by taking a lot of classes.

"I think that limiting students on how many hard classes they can take would suppress their desires to challenge themselves," Heil said.

Additionally, nearly all students refute the belief that one must take all the rigorous courses to be successful in the eyes of colleges.

"I can confidently say that, through talking to graduated students, that non-AP courses as well as AP courses prepare students for college classes," Root said.

While it is not always easy, the stressed out high school student is nearly always happy with his or her decision to put himself or herself in the most difficult classes with difficult reputations.

In the end, it is the student's decision. One may choose to take an Ivy League-level course load, and the fact is that many do.

"The subject matter is difficult, and there is a lot of outside work and reading required in some cases," Heil said. "I, however, enjoy this challenge, and only at times do I think that it is over the top."

High school isn't easy, and we'll keep on fighting till the end. ☛

Holiday Traditions

by Dee Luo
Reporter

Candy canes

"Candy canes were developed when maple syrup dripped over the bucket and then froze," senior Danny Steinberg said. "The resulting cane formation was popularized by lumberjacks in the north who would bring those canes back to their sweethearts at home."

"Candy canes, as far as I know, are supposed to represent the shepherd's cane," senior Cynthia Koehler said. "Or a 'J' for Jesus, lamb of God, etc. But they may have more pagan ties as well... a Yule phallic symbol, perhaps?"



The Truth:

There are many controversies over how the candy cane was first produced. The most popular story, according to the National Confectioners Association, is of a German choirmaster, in 1670, who used sugar sticks to keep the younger members quiet. Supposedly, he bent the sugar sticks into a "J" shape to represent either a shepherd's cane or for Jesus. Later, in the 1900s, the red stripes and minty flavor were added. The wintergreen oil, a healing essence, might have been added because sugar was thought of as a form of medicine.

Kissing under the Mistletoe

"The tradition probably originated because mistletoe looks like a mini Christmas tree and then some people made out under it," freshman Robert Love said.

"Gauls (Druids) and the Norse thought it was a sacred plant, a cure-all," Koehler said. "If Norse enemies met under mistletoe by chance in the forest, they had to lay down their weapons and declare a truce from that day forward. Additionally, the beloved Norse god Baldr was slain by mistletoe-making it super-sacred."

The Truth:

The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe did indeed come from the Norse. According to botanical.com, the god of peace, Baldr was shot by an arrow mistletoe and the world plunged into deep frost. When the other gods restored him back to life, the mistletoe was entrusted to the goddess of Love and it was ordained that everyone who passes under the mistletoe must kiss, to celebrate Baldr's resurrection and return of warmth.

Stockings

"The use of stockings to store candy came from the need to dry out socks during the cold and snowy winter season," Steinberg said.

"I bet someone went sledding, got their socks wet and had to hang them up by the fire," Love said. "Then their parents filled them with candy when they dried."



The Truth:

According to an 1883 copy of the New York Times, Saint Nicholas saw three poor sisters and wanted to secretly help them. One day, the sisters had hung up their wet stockings by the fireplace to dry. Saint Nicholas threw three gold coins down the chimney, and one gold coin landed in each stocking. Of course, the three sisters used regular stockings, not the specially decorated ones children hang up today. But to this day, Santa continues to fill stockings with a different form of gold - sugar.

Cookies for Santa

"Because Santa brings you presents, you should give him something," sophomore Haley Wartman said. "And cookies are yummy."

"This is a symbol of an offering to the god(s) who made the sun rise again in the spring," Koehler said. "The Druids and Norse spent all season hoping that the sun would continue to return. Originally, they made human sacrifices, but our wimpy society replaced that with cookies."

"Everybody loves cookies," Love said. "When I think of Christmas, I think of sugar. Cookies have sugar in them."

The Truth:

The custom of giving Santa cookies for his long journey most likely originated around the early 1900s. The exact reason why, or how, giving cookies to Santa originated is a mystery. Maybe the cookie exchange was a scheme that naughty children came up with to bribe Santa, maybe it was a replacement for human sacrifices to the Norse gods, and maybe it was just an excuse to bake delicious cookies.



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Shakira's 'She Wolf' does not measure up to previous albums

by Sneha Viswanathan
Senior World Editor

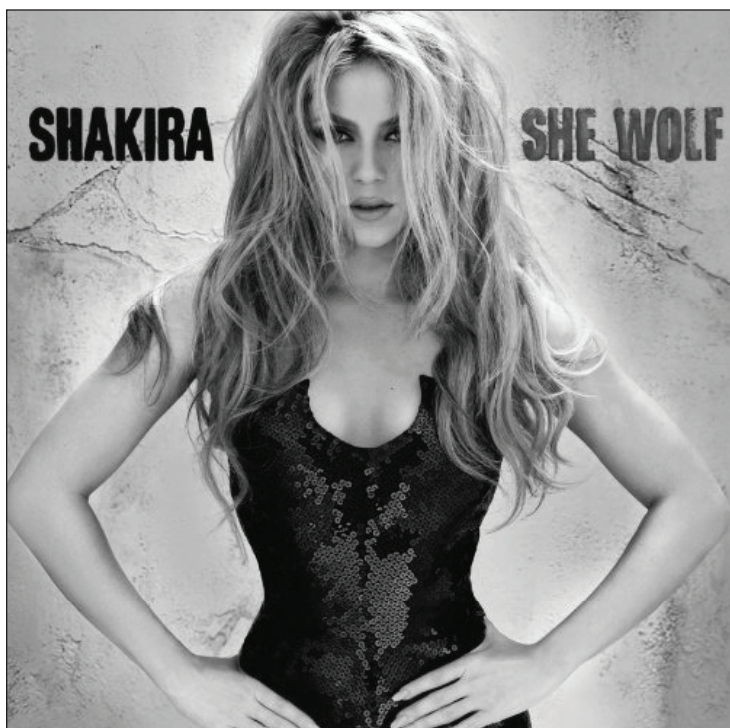
The title of Shakira's latest album, "She Wolf" is edgy and feminist, following the theme of most of her previous albums.

For the past few years, I have been a fan of Shakira's music mainly because of its originality and honest expression. Her music has always reflected her heritage and her cultural influences, as it often fuses traditional Middle-Eastern and Latin sounds with pop-rock.

She has a strong, distinctive voice that carries through the message of her songs, and unlike many other singers, she writes her own songs.

However, as I listened to her latest album, "She Wolf" I couldn't help wondering if Shakira has created a new style that is too mainstream in order to increase her appeal to a younger generation. Several critics have complained that her new sound is too similar to Beyoncé's. I couldn't help but agree when I listened to "Long Time," which has a very typical R&B melody. Shakira attempts to preserve her original style by inserting brief phrases of Latin sounds, but those attempts are barely noticeable in contrast to the overwhelmingly different style of the song.

"Men in This Town" seems to drown out Shakira's distinctively strong voice with its heavy electronic dance-pop beat. More than the overly electronic sound, I was disappointed by the unoriginal theme. The song is about feeling lost and confused by men in Los Angeles and Hollywood. The theme of finding oneself in Hollywood seems to be the most recent idea on the radio, and it is sung by everyone from Miley Cyrus to Lady Gaga. The track "Good Stuff" has a repetitive chorus with very original, metaphorical lyrics but the lyrics of the verses in between sound like they could be heard on any hit music radio station.



Other tracks on the album preserve Shakira's distinguishing musical features. The title song is catchy and provocative, and the aggressive undertones are very typical of Shakira. Similarly, "Did It Again" is a track that showcases Shakira's capacity for emotive expression.

This song empathizes with the mistakes women make regarding men, and it is probably the track with the best blend of old and new styles. Parts of the song are sung in a style that is I found very similar to Justin Timberlake's. However, Shakira's expressiveness is not masked at all by this blending. Another track that truly retains Shakira's original musical

style is the must-listen song, "Why Wait". Suggestive lyrics with a background of authentic belly-dancing and Bollywood music fused with 80s-pop rhythmic guitar chords set the mystical tone well for the theme of the song. The ethnic-rock fusion stays true to Shakira's hallmark sound. It is so catchy that it makes me want to dance every time I listen to it.

Likewise, the honest lyrics and laid-back pop mingled with a folksy tune in "Gypsy" are refreshing and light-hearted. Despite its consoling, matter-of-fact tone, it doesn't

portray relationships in the same superficial and oversimplified manner as many other contemporary pop artists often do.

Perhaps the song with the most unusual sound on the album is "Spy," featuring Wyclef Jean, with a unique fusion of vintage and modern pop. "Mon Amour," an angsty tune, is reminiscent of Shakira's old rebellious songs, like "Objection" from her album "Laundry Service."

While Shakira is clearly trying to blend her authentic style with popular music trends, some of her songs fall short of balancing both sounds.

However, even if the album as a whole isn't worth paying for, some of the songs on this album are definitely worth buying. ☺



Junior Corey Canon reads "Catching Fire" in the CHS library. "Catching Fire" and "The Hunger Games" are available to be checked out. Izzy Fratt

Sequel to 'The Hunger Games' continues entertaining readers

by Payton Sciaratta
Reporter

"Catching Fire" is the story of a young girl, Katniss, who from the previous book "The Hunger Games," just won the games with the help of her fellow tribute Peeta.

They faced many days in the wilderness fighting for their lives, and are now ready to return home.

Katniss proceeds back home to her mother, younger sister and most of all her friend Gale who has been there for her through it all.

However, when Katniss returns home, she has a big surprise waiting for her. The president of the capitol was waiting at her home to present her with a challenge that would then affect the rest of her life.

This book continues Katniss' journey to help her District, but most of all to save the love of her life.

Students at Clayton High School were presented with the opportunity to read "The Hunger Games" this past summer as an option for the summer reading program.

Some students put off the reading until last minute, but when they picked up the book they weren't able to put it down.

Once the school year began, students became eager when they heard that there was going to be a sequel to "The Hunger Games."

Suzanne Collins, the author of these two books was able to create a lot of action to keep the readers interested. Something new was happening at the turn of every page.

Readers couldn't put it down!

After the first book, when Katniss wins the Hunger Games. I didn't think anything more could happen, but I was proved wrong.

In the beginning of "Catching Fire," Katniss thought she had it all. She returned home to her friends and family, where she received a lifetime supply of food for winning the Hunger Games.

When the President of her capitol makes a discovery about Katniss' love life, however, her life takes a turn for the worse.

Katniss is faced with a decision that will change not only her life, but the life of her friends as well. She must choose the one she really loves, but attempt

to save the life of her other friends as well.

"Catching Fire" is written in the perspective of Katniss. While reading this, you can discover what is happening to Katniss, while knowing what her thoughts about the situation are as well.

This series is worth reading because it is filled with adventure and suspense with an unusual twist of romance that keeps you anxious to know what's going to happen next.

"Catching Fire" parallels to "The Hunger Games" because in each book

Katniss has to make a life changing decision.

Throughout each journey that Katniss takes, she has to keep her family and friends in mind in order to save them.

This series is a page turner that will constantly keep you wondering what's coming next.

Be sure to check out this new series, now available in the CHS library. ☺

“Some students put off reading until the last minute, but when they picked up the book they weren't able to put it down.”



Vintage Vinyl serves as a convenient and easy place for CHS students to buy vinyl. However, many students still store their collection electronically. Eve Root

Vintage Vinyl heaven for one student

In the age of MP3 players and CDs the love of vinyl records still lives on in the hearts of many.

by Andrea Glik
Reporter

I am one of those obnoxious, pretentious people you will over hear in conversation saying, "Well, I totally prefer vinyl, it's really the only way to listen to music."

I've learned to accept, and even embrace, my dislike for the iPod, boom box and CD player. I wasn't always this way, but once I discovered my mother's old record collection, I would never listen to music the same way again. I guess once you go vinyl, you never go back.

The ritual of carefully sliding the record out of its unique case, placing it onto the player, and gently placing the needle in the crease of the first track is so much more satisfying than scrolling and clicking through your iPod.

Record collecting is an insanely expensive hobby, and I have constantly told my friend whose father owns Vintage Vinyl that I'm paying for his college education. Vintage Vinyl has almost always fulfilled my record needs. When filling in the gaps of my mom's collection with the classics she seemed to lose or never buy (The Velvet Underground, Pink Floyd and The Kinks) or adding some newer ones (Neutral Milk

Hotel, Belle and Sebastian), Vintage Vinyl has pretty much always sufficed. The employers know everything there is to know about music, and most of them are members of local bands. To get a job there, you basically have to sacrifice your first-born or a limb.

Many a times I have walked out with a giant stack of records from their 99-cent bin. This requires a lot of patience to look through the endless rows of Billy Joel and Carly Simon records (to name a few) with the smell of dust forever embedded in your skin, but it is totally worth it.

On a recent trip to L.A. I found myself at the Music Mecca of Amoeba Records. I had heard rumors about the store (the size of a Target, and filled with music) and finally made it to the Sunset Boulevard location. When I walked to the front doors, I honestly believe I heard angels singing and the heavens opening. I made a beeline for the record section, as my friends abandoned me for a nearby boutique.

I found myself in a sea of new and used records, all reasonably priced. I walked up and down the aisles for a few minutes, in a haze of delight. I left with two records, Loveless by My Bloody Valentine and Psycho Candy by The Jesus and Mary Chain. I honestly think

I went into cardiac arrest when I found the used (and only!) copy of Psycho Candy, and thanked the Vinyl Gods for my luck. I thought I had found the answer to anything Vinyl until this summer, which I spent working in New York.

After a long day of work in the East Village, I stumbled upon Academy Records on 12th Street. I had been told that this was the best record store in Manhattan, but hadn't had anytime to actually go.

As I entered the small, dark shop, I took a deep breath and finally felt relaxed for the first time all summer. To my delight I was surrounded by bearded men in plaid (I was the only girl there) and the best assortment of used records I had ever seen. I knelt down next to a hipster perched on a skateboard to sift through the bins.

I left with Lou Reed, Siouxsie and the Banshees and the Smiths tucked tightly under my arm (and a major dent in my summer spending). When I look back on all of these record stores, there's no way I could possibly say which one was the best. Each one fulfills a certain need in my hunger for vinyl, and all filled a certain hole in my collection. However, my quest for the perfect record store continues. ☺

Susan Boyle lives up to the hype

by Preeti Viswanathan
Senior Community Editor

Susan Boyle's first album "I Dreamed a Dream" captivated me from the title track with her exquisite cover of various songs, all of which showcase her wonderful abilities as a singer. It is refreshing to hear a best-selling artist today who uses her voice as her primary instrument, not masked by digitalized melodies or obviously altered by the ever-present AutoTune software. In the title track, which is originally from the musical Les Miserables, Boyle sings with a pristine and natural voice reminiscent of her famous performance on the show "Britain's Got Talent." It made me want to continue to listen to the rest of the album.

The album also contains an interesting variety of songs, including classic hymns such as "Silent Night," "Amazing Grace," and "How Great Thou Art," which show a religious side of her personality. The tracks that stood out were Boyle's cover of the old-time classics "Cry Me a River" and "The End of the World" because they show the range and depth of her voice. When she sings these songs, Boyle sounds much younger than her forty-eight years. The majority of the tracks have minimal accompaniment, which emphasizes Boyle's originality as a singer. "Who I Was Born To Be" was

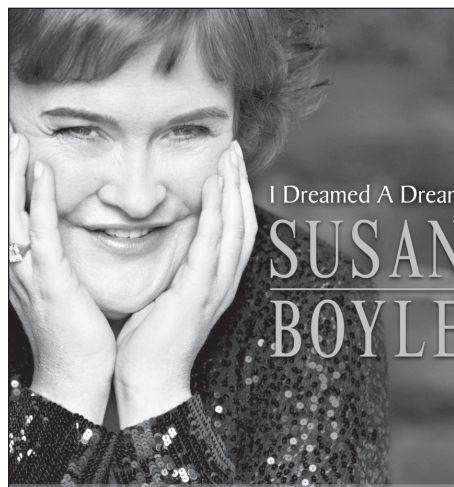
a song written for her that also features choral accompaniment and, with lyrics such as "So here I am/Open arms and ready to stand/I've got the world in my hands/And it feels like my turn to fly," aptly reflects her rise to success. "Up to the Mountain" is another track where she alludes to religion in helping her fulfill her dreams.

Boyle's rendition of "You'll See," a song originally by Madonna, is the most intense track on the album with its heavier, mysterious undertone of drums and guitar riffs.

Although Boyle did not write any of the songs on the album herself, the personal connection that she has with the songs is evident through both the lyrics and her deeply expressive voice. Her cover of the Rolling Stones' original "Wild Horses" strikes an emotional chord due to the moving and sincere way in which she sings it.

The beauty of this album is its authenticity; Boyle sounds like a genuinely talented human being, which she is, rather than a pop star trying to sell an image.

Though the album is definitely not ideal for a jam session and may quickly fade out in popularity with the younger generation, it will definitely stand out as a generally enduring classic, and establishes Boyle as a well-known musician among the sea of popular artists today. It is a perfect soundtrack to the holiday season, with its nostalgic melodies and timeless quality. ☺



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'Japanese Screens' exhibit evokes tranquility

by Taylor Stone
Senior Arts Editor

Various types of artwork are widely understood to possess a myriad of profound themes— including the evolution of nature and characterization, the messages of religious beliefs, cultural influences and ideas of a certain period, and experimentation in form and color. Each of these themes and influences can be evidently seen in folding screens, which are essentially room dividers.

While this treatment of seemingly solely utilitarian objects as an artistic cultural expression may strike one as peculiar, the legitimacy of this claim is exactly what is professed in the St. Louis Art Museum's recent exhibition.

"Five Centuries of Japanese Screens: Masterpieces from the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago" showcases 28 sets of Japanese screens in a collaborative effort from the St. Louis Art Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago.

The screens were taken from the permanent collections of both museums, 13 of which are from the St. Louis Art Museum's collection and 16 from the Art Institute's collection. The exhibition was shown in previous months at the Institute as "Beyond Golden Clouds: Japanese Screens from the Art Institute of Chicago and the Saint Louis Art Museum" before making its way to St. Louis.

"Five Centuries", curated in St. Louis by Philip Hu, associate curator of Asian art, and in Chicago by Janice Katz, the Roger L. Weston associate curator of Japanese art, is truly revolutionary in its content.

The exhibition brings together these exquisite masterpieces in a chronological, almost epic scope, including both traditional, pre-modern and bold, contemporary screens, a combination which had not been seen previously in the art world.

These screens, or byobu in Japanese (literally 'protection of wind'), are beautiful not only in their aesthetic elegance but also in their significant functionality in Japanese culture. Byobu, made of light-weight materials, are essentially temporary, though beautiful, walls in Japanese homes due to the screens' easily moveable nature.

The screens were often taken outside to serve as backdrops at a gathering or were used to divide sections in a large home in order to define specific spaces. Another function of the screens was to highlight important people at various festivals and ceremonies, later becoming ideal backdrops for priests and leaders.

Byobu tend to depict national traditions and Chinese influences, including motifs such as the change and beauty of seasons, famous locations and activities, descriptions of poetry, and traditional stories.

The exhibition is organized in specific sections each comprising of a few screens and following in chronological order beginning in the Muromachi period (1336-1573) and ending in the Heisei period (1989-present).

A visually striking pair of screens greets a viewer as they enter the exhibition. "Landscape of the Four Seasons" (c.1560), which is ink and light color on paper. The artist, Sesson Shukei (c. 1490-after 1577), paints a dream-like landscape which exhibits the flow of seasons in a quiet river-



Sakai Hoitsu, Japanese, 1761--1828, Edo period; Irises and Eight Fold Bridge, c.1820; two-panel folding screen: ink, color, and gold leaf on silk; 68 3/4 x 72 13/16 inches; Saint Louis Art Museum, The Langenberg Endowment Fund and funds given by Mary and Oliver Langenberg 20:2007 The exhibition is a collaborative effort between the SLAM and the Art Institute of Chicago, with screens displayed from both of the collections.

town covered in temples and grey clouds of fog, emphasizing the artist's Zen Buddhist belief in the ambiguity of the ever-changing universe.

Most screens are supposed to read right to left, mimicking the styles of manuscripts and other documents. Subsequently, the artist paints the flow from red plum blossoms to snow-covered mountains on the left side. This pair of screens is the earliest in the collection, exhibiting the traditional fascination with nature's role in the continually changing universe.

Another beautiful pair of screens evokes the development into the prominent themes of the screens of the 1600s and 1700s. The large, expansive surfaces of the screens allowed artists during this time period to experiment with depictions of both factual and imagined settings with a new fascination in mythological and historical subjects.

"Flowering Cherry and Autumn Maples with Poem Slips" (c. 1654-1681), an ink, color, gold, and silver on silk by Tosa Mitsuoki (1617-1691) portrays a culturally significant setting that would have truly appeared. Two trees are painted on opposite sides of the pair of screens, one a blossoming cherry tree and the other a maple tree with golden leaves.

While this setting does exhibit the traditional theme of the changing of seasons, a new cultural twist is added in slips of paper draping from each tree. These slips are "waka" poems, 31 syllable verses taken from aristocratic anthologies of Japanese literature describing the beauty of the spring and autumn seasons.

The screens are also historically significant, being commissioned by or given as a gift to a daughter of the shogun of the emperor Gomizunoo (1606-1678). The daughter of the shogun popularized the refined custom of reciting classical

verses during outings and the draping of the papers over the trees are supposed to capture the aftermath of such an outing.

Other notable pairs of screens include "Calligraphy of a Shi Poem by Li Bo and a Ci Lyric by Su Xiang in Cursive Script" (1850) by Nukina Kaioku (1778-1863), which moves to exhibit dynamic, bold calligraphy rather than vast landscapes to convey beauty and meaning. The artist founded his own Confucian school in Kyoto in 1809, explaining the Chinese poetic influence on the screens.

Another is a pair by Sakai Hoitsu (1761--1828) "Fans and Stream" (c.1820--28) which are sliding door panels (fusuma in Japanese) mounted as a pair of two-panel screens: ink, color, gold, and silver on silk. This unique pair depicts about 30 fans, seemingly thrown in the air together, with varying colors and scenes of nature pictured on them. The piece is wonderful in that it plays with notions of reality and perception of movement.

A legend associated with this setting is that a member of a shogun procession in Kyoto had his fan swept away by wind to a river below them, and the other members believed the action to be so mesmerizing that they all tossed their fans down to the river.

The exhibition also displays some extremely unique, modern sets of screens that utilize different types materials in the creation of the byobu, including new types of woods and metals.

One dynamic piece is by Okura Jiro (born 1942), "Mt. Lake Screen Tacki" (1990). It is composed of five screens from its original 16, each its own vertical, jagged form resembling a gleaming skyscraper made of wood, black and cinnabar red pigment, and gold foil applied with glue.

However, traditional elements can still be found in the screens, as the exhibition notes that the artist accepts that the wood will eventually return to its original form and the gold foil (easily moved by the slightest gust of wind) will fall off. Truly, remnants of Zen Buddhist can be found even in modern times.

Accompanying this set of screens is a video showcasing the process of building them in the U.S.

I would strongly recommend using the iPod multimedia tour included with your admission payment. The tour is \$3 on Fridays when the exhibition is free. I gained a better understanding of the themes and cultural significance of the screens by having the director and curators explain specific paintings. This allows for a truly personal experience.

"Five Centuries of Japanese Screens: Masterpieces from the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago" is an exhibition that provides a fully enlightening experience. With an unprecedented collection mixing traditional and contemporary pieces, one will exit the museum with a knowledge of both the significant function of Japanese screens, but also their cultural significance and aesthetic beauty.

Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$6 for students and seniors, \$4 for children 6-12, and free for children younger than 6. The exhibition is also free to everyone on Friday.

The St. Louis Art Museum is open to the public Tuesday through Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Friday 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. ☎

'Precious' a dramatic, heartbreaking account of an abused Harlem teen

Gabourey "Gabby" Sidibe's magical portrayal of a sexually and emotionally abused teen highlights the film, which has received Oscar buzz.

by Chelsea Cousins
Editor

Full of drama, adaptation, and redemption, "Precious" is an over-inspiring film for many. Directed by Lee Daniels and written by Geoffrey Fletcher, the story of Clareece "Precious" Jones (Gabourey "Gabby" Sidibe) leaves audience members with a new outlook on life. Based on the novel 'Push' by Sapphire, "Precious" brings on a strong wave of admiration and puts viewers in a powerful story.

Precious is an overweight, illiterate African American teen in Harlem, New York, who is often teased for being fat.

What audience members seem to get... from the film is a message that evokes a certain energy within them.

Chelsea Cousins
Editor

To add to her misery, Precious is pregnant with her second child as a result of being constantly raped by her father. While Precious's instincts tell her to keep pushing for the affection she desires, she realizes that if she's ever going to break free from her mother's grip, she will have to dig deeply into her own resources.

While watching the film, you can't help but to feel overwhelmed at the explicit and pervasive language used by the leading characters. Phrases like, "You think you're a woman now?" and "You're worthless!" automatically sink into the emotions of the audience.

Executive produced by Oprah Winfrey, Tyler Perry, and Lisa Cortes (all inspiring leaders themselves), the film "Precious" has done an amazing job depicting the lives of those people that often go unseen. Sidibe does an outstanding performance in playing the role of such a deserving character who only dreams to be loved by those who surround her. Often caught day dreaming about becoming a famous singer or the next top model, Precious puts herself in a daze that always gives her comfort.

It's so heartfelt to see the endlessly miserable life that Precious leads while still living with her abusive mother

and you start feeling her pain almost immediately.

It isn't until Precious gets suspended from her low-scale school in Harlem, as a result of her being pregnant for the second time, that she begins a transformation into the next chapter of her life. With the intentions of doing good, her principle directs her to an alternative school called "Each One. Teach One," where Precious develops a remarkable relationship with her new teacher Ms. Rain (Paula Patton).

Patton is almost flawless when it comes to such a sensitive and loving character, who she portrays tremendously. Ms. Rain is one of few in the

film who comes to Precious's rescue being the only person who wants to understand what's going on at home.

Perhaps, what surprises viewers the most was

Mo'Nique's memorable portrayal of a heartless and hopeless mother who is jealous of her equally overweight daughter, Precious. It's weird seeing Mo'Nique continuing to give in our community, among others, and then seeing her careless throughout the film.

Another character is Ms. Weiss (Mariah Carey), the social worker who does everything in her power to make things better at home for Precious and her children.

While it's clear that both Precious and her mother have issues, what audience members seem to get the most from the film is a message that evokes a certain energy within them - only derived from anger and hope.

While watching the film "Precious", and even after it, you can't help but to shed tears at the scenes that leave Precious at her worst. So many different emotions come to mind - one minute



Gabourey Sidibe stars in the new film "Precious." She is shown here with director Lee Daniels.

you're angry at the people openly showing remorse towards Sidibe's character and the next you're disgusted at the constant replay of the levels of abuse shared between characters.

Although the entire cast is amazing at showing their share of raw emotion, both Daniels and Fletcher have unleashed a courageous story that will leave you shocked in your seat. If you

passed Precious on the streets today, you probably wouldn't take the time to notice her nor would you even acknowledge the fact that she's there. However, when her story is revealed, you're left with an undeniable image of a girl who finds the strength to turn her life around with fierceness, creativity, and humor. "Precious" is definitely a five star film. ☎



Helen Wiley

Legendary TV show's changes prove unsettling

by Eudora Olsen
Reporter

After nearly 40 years on television, the fuzzy muppets of "Sesame Street" have all gone on a diet that they can't seem to stop singing about.

"All the songs are about healthy food," 6-year-old Hannah Zwirn said. "Cookie monster likes carrots."

The characters dance along to raps about their favorite vegetables and you will often find Cookie Monster with scraps of orange carrot leftovers in his scruffy blue beard. Cookies are a "sometime" food.

Throughout the years, "Sesame Street" has been a children's show aimed at racial equality and acceptance. Hidden within every episode there has always been a message about creating a peaceful environment through sharing and singing.

Nowadays, the focus has shifted. The same diverse characters make up the cast, but the songs vary little, as almost every episode is about vegetables. Lots and lots of healthy vegetables.

Sitting down to watch an episode of "Sesame Street" brings back fond memories of footie pajamas and a bowl of cereal, cross-legged in front of those peppy tunes. But that classic opening tour of everyone's favorite street on the screen is now in 3D, and the catchy opening song is remixed with a poppy rhythm.

Raps about healthy food and small children dancing with giant Brussels sprouts are opening acts, a start to an episode loaded with vitamin A.

All of these changes are easy to adjust to with time, television shows are constantly revising their opening credits. But what are probably the biggest

differences between the '90s version and today's is that Cookie Monster no longer gobbles cookies, and Oscar the Grouch finds his home in a blue recycling bin.

"Me one healthy dude," Cookie Monster sings. "Me eat healthy food."

First Lady Michelle Obama recently guest starred on the nutrition-centric children's show to teach kids about growing gardens, and to no one's surprise, eating healthy.

"If you eat all of these healthy foods," the First Lady said, "you're going to grow up and be big and strong, like me!"

The show made some major changes in 2005, when they began the "healthy habits for life" campaign. As a result, the children's show, once beloved, has been ranked at the bottom of the viewing count of shows for the past four years.

Those rankings were only for children's shows in the United States, but in other countries, "Sesame Street" has seen changes that have brought it to the top of the charts.

In 2002, the South African version welcomed Kami, the world's first HIV-positive muppet. Since then, viewer ratings have sky rocketed. "Sesame Street of Canada" saw its ratings do the same, right after they added a muppet named Katie who sings from her wheelchair.

Today, the "Sesame Street" in the U.S. could learn from these countries who have listened to their viewers and added influential characters to their cast of fun-loving muppets. Talking cucumbers don't seem to have the same appeal.

The show turns 40 next year, and you can bet that no sweets will be eaten in celebration. ☎



The upcoming "Avatar" movie, which is directed by James Cameron, captures the fantastical imaginary planet of Pandora. The film is almost entirely constructed from CGI effects, and can be viewed in theaters in either 2D or 3D. The movie will be arriving in theaters Dec. 18.

A full year of action, thrills and drama: the top 10 movies of 2009

by Alex Grayson
Reporter

The year is almost over, and since January there have been a ton of great and memorable films. Some were big-budget explosion movies that were more entertaining than great, and others were smaller films that still managed to be highly acclaimed. Now that the year is wrapping up, it's time to go back and list my top ten movies of 2009.

1 Number ten is "Angels and Demons," the Ron Howard-directed thriller based on the book by Dan Brown. Starring Tom Hanks as Robert Langdon, "Angels and Demons" was a moody and tense thriller. It had many interesting plot twists and strong performances, but it was a little too dark in tone. The film took itself far too seriously, so it was hard to be entertained. Still, it managed to be a good film and it kept my attention all the way to the brilliant twist at the end.

9 Number nine goes to "X-Men Origins: Wolverine." This film, from director Gavin Hood, was much improved over "X-Men: The Last Stand," although still doesn't top the first two films. It was loud, had good acting, and cool special effects, but it wasn't quite as good as expected. The script was a little cliché, and some of the scenes were a bit too comedic for being based on a dark superhero origin. However, Hugh Jackman is always great as Wolverine, and the film was very fun to watch.

8 Number eight is "Public Enemies," the gangster film starring Johnny Depp as John Dillinger, one of the greatest criminals of all time. The film had great performances from everyone except Christian Bale, who after Batman always speaks in that low raspy voice, even when he is trying to be dramatic. He was miscast, but Depp was perfect as Dillinger. He always had that tough guy look on his face, but also had a touch of the Jack Sparrow romance. The film had a strong ending scene, but near the middle it started to drag. Still, a great film.

7 The seventh slot goes to "Taken," the action film starring Liam Neeson as an ex-"preventer" whose daughter is kidnapped in Paris. The film was fast-paced, action-packed, and totally unrealistic. It also took a while for things to start speeding up, but after a half an hour the remainder of the film is just Neeson beating people up. What is there not to like?

6 Number six is "Terminator Salvation," the fourth in the classic Terminator franchise from director McG (yes that's his name). The film starred Christian Bale as John Connor, but again, he wasn't very good. This guy needs to learn to stop using the Batman voice. However, the film was very good. A lot of people disliked the film because of the PG-13 rating, since all of the other films were rated R. But the rating didn't bother me at all. I just cared about the plot and the action, and thankfully both were pretty good. It paid homage to the Cameron films, and was a nice addition to the franchise.

5 Now I am getting serious with naming the best films. Number five is "Zombieland," the ultra-hilarious zombie spoof starring the ultra-hilarious Woody Harrelson. The film was advertised poorly, and the previews made it look stupid, but the film was brilliant. It was almost as funny as "Shaun of the Dead," the film that inspired this one. There were so many great moments in this film, including the cameo by Bill Murray. Harrelson was genius, and even the co-star Jesse Eisenberg was excellent, even though I have never seen him before. Overall, "Zombieland" was close to flawless.

4 Number four is "Inglourious Basterds," the Tarantino-directed war satire starring Brad Pitt. This film was genius, and definitely one of Tarantino's better movies. Brad Pitt was hilarious, but a little miscast. Christoph Waltz, however, was absolutely fantastic. He probably had the best acting this whole year, and definitely deserves an Oscar. Although a bit long and slow, "Inglourious Basterds" was perfect.

3 Number three is "The Hangover," aka the funniest movie of the year and probably decade. With a low budget, no stars, and very little advertising, "The Hangover" soared as the biggest sleeper hit of the year. It was brilliantly written, directed, and acted, and there were so many hilarious lines in the film that makes it worth watching several times just to hear them again. This movie is the definition of comedy, and will continue to be until the sequel hits.

2 The number two spot goes to "District 9," the science fiction film from first-time director Neill Blomkamp. Produced by Peter Jackson, "District 9" blew me away. From the unbelievable special effects (\$30 million budget!) to the terrific acting from lead Sharlto Copley who has never acted a day in his life, "District 9" is perhaps the greatest sci-fi film of the decade. Well, until number one came along...

1 ...which is "Avatar." Through personal connections, I managed to catch an advance of this film, and I was blown away. I knew from the previews and hype that it was going to be good, but not this good. "Avatar," from highly acclaimed director James Cameron, was absolutely terrific. The film was made almost entirely out of CGI, but the actors did all of the motion capture work and acting for the characters, making them seem alive. The 3D effects were the best ever, and the world of Pandora felt like a believable world. The emotions on the alien faces as their world is getting excavated were so believable that I felt emotional toward them. My advice, see this movie right after your last final on the 18th, not to only relieve stress but to enter a new world that will change ours forever.

Overall, 2009 was a strong year in cinema. With films still yet to be released, such as "Invictus" and "Up In The Air," this year may have just enough to pack the Academy Awards with competition. 2010, here we come. ☺

'New Moon' an overall success

The hotly anticipated follow-up to last year's 'Twilight' movie did not fail to disappoint the scores of fans who raced to see the film the first days of its release.

by Caroline Greenberg
Reporter

The intriguing story of "New Moon" kept me up even at two in the morning on a school night. Going to the midnight premiere, I stood in a line that wrapped around the block awaiting the sequel to "Twilight." The audience was filled with excited girl teenagers who couldn't wait to get the first glimpse of the new twist and turns of Bella's love life.

The story of Bella (Kristen Stewart) depressed after her love left had all the drama, love interest and more. At the end of "Twilight," it is all happiness as Bella and Edward get to be together. In "New Moon," it takes a drastic new turn. Bella is depressed after Edward tears her heart to pieces while Jacob Black swoops in to mend it.

I have read the books and I knew what was coming, but the movie still kept me in suspense. The movie didn't stray from the plot of the book but still portrayed it in away that brought the story to life. The film could still take my breath away even though I knew what would happen next.

The musical score was one of the highlights of the film. As the climax of the story is going on, the music pulled the scene together. The music flew to the top of the iTunes chart in days. The music played, such as "Friends" by Band of Skulls, set the mood of what was going on very well.

The main difference between the book and the movie was Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner). The heartwarming wolf was unexpectedly portrayed well.

The switch from human to magical was smooth. In the movie he was shown in a different light than in the books. In the books I thought of Jacob as the annoying little kid always bugging Bella, but in the movie he is shown as the male protagonist that takes care of Bella. Jacob is shown as a hero instead of the sidekick.

If you have not read the book, then you might automatically become a Jacob fan based on Lautner's portrayal of him, but the majority of the people who have read the books are loyal to Edward, for the books pull the light from Jacob to the strong relationship that Bella and Edward had, which is not effectively conveyed in this movie. This movie created the divide for the team Jacob fans and the team Edward fans. Everywhere you looked in the audience, you could see tension from the "Twi-hard" fans.

The Volturi, leaders of the vampire clan were chosen very well. The Volturi rule over the reckless vampires that threaten the earth. Dakota Fanning, child star of many years, plays a powerful and high ranked vampire who could kill her victims with a blink of an eye. The Volturi could make you shiver while watching their blank stares.

Stewart is not my favorite actress, but her performance in "New Moon" changed my mind. She reached a new depth in the movie that she lacked in "Twilight." She had to demonstrate a wide range of emotions that surprisingly were effectively portrayed.

As soon as it was released, "New Moon" rightfully skyrocketed to the top of the box office. ☺



Author Stephenie Meyer's New Moon is the second installment in the bestselling young adult "Twilight" series. The film, long-awaited by eager fans, opened at midnight on Nov. 20.

Heartwarming holiday movies for every age capture magical spirit of the season

While many CHS students haven't been thinking very much about the holiday season so far due to increasing amounts of exams and college applications, reminders of it can be seen everywhere. After being pried away from my textbooks, I have helped place ornaments on my family's Christmas tree, been constantly reminded to start my Christmas list for relatives, bought the red Starbucks cups, etc. However, the most striking reminder for me in the last few weeks has not been the twinkling lights outside of my house, but a certain article in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Oh, yes, I'm talking about the listing of holiday movies on TV.

It's easy for one to get lost in a sea of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer and Frosty the Snowman, but there are actually many movie choices that are both traditional and entertaining, defining the holiday season. Here are a few of my favorites:

1. Miracle on 34th Street (1994) - This film has to be my absolute favorite and a traditional part of my family's holiday season. Starring child-star Mara Wilson as the adorable Susan Walker and the convincing Lord Richard Attenborough as Kris Kringle, it truly encompasses the holiday spirit. The plot centers on the six year-old Susan and her cynical, single mom Dorey, who both know the "secret" of Santa's "fictional" existence. Both of their lives are changed after they meet one special department store Santa, who gives them the greatest gift of all- something to believe in. When I was younger, I

didn't fully understand the legal jargon in the courtroom scenes, but children can still comprehend the profound realization of Santa's role and existence in the hearts of all. My favorite quote in the movie is when Kris is attempting to convince Dorey of his sanity and legitimacy— "I'm not just a whimsical figure who wears a charming suit and affects a jolly demeanor. You know, I... I... I'm a symbol. I'm a symbol of the human ability to be able to suppress the selfish and hateful tendencies that rule the major part of our lives. If you can't believe, if you can't accept anything on faith, then you're doomed for a life dominated by doubt."

2. Elf (2003) - Honestly, if you haven't watched Will Ferrell pour maple syrup on spaghetti noodles, then you haven't had a true Christmas holiday. Buddy is a human raised by elves in the North Pole who travels on a magnificent quest (through the sea of swirly twirly gumdrops) to find his true father, the crabby Walter Hobbs, in New York City. Buddy experiences human culture and wreaks havoc as only an elf can upon his father's job and family, forcing Walter to reevaluate his priorities in time for Christmas. This film is absolutely hilarious, and has remained a classic in my house for years. However, it actually carries a very sweet message, pro-

fessing the forgiveness and joy of the holiday season.

3. Barbie in the Nutcracker (2001) - Yes, I know what you're thinking. However, I am still unashamed of adding this straight-to-video children's movie to my list. In the tradition of the original story, Barbie plays Clara, a young girl who receives a nutcracker for Christmas from her aunt (her uncle in the ballet). While she is asleep in the family room on Christmas Eve after her brother breaks the toy, the Mouse King and his soldiers invade the home, casting a spell on Clara to shrink her and prompting her and the Nutcracker to battle and escape to the desolated former kingdom of Prince Eric, who is later found to be the Nutcracker. The pair encounters colorful characters in their quest to save the land such as Captain Candy and Major Mint. My sisters and I love this film, particularly the colorful animation and overall faithfulness to E.T.A Hoffman's story and Tchaikovsky's delightful music. Ballet is also incorporated in various scenes in the film and the voice cast is superb, with Kelly Sheridan as Barbie, Kirby Morrow as the Nutcracker, and Tim Curry as the Mouse King. If you haven't seen this film already, look past its seemingly childish cover and experience the innocence and magic of this movie.

4. It's a Wonderful Life (1946) -

If any holiday movie list does not include this movie, it should not be treated as legitimate. This classic film, loosely adapted from Charles Dickens' story A Christmas Carol, centers around George Bailey (James Stewart), the owner of a modest building and loan company. Trouble brews after his Uncle Billy loses the business's \$8,000, intending to deposit it at the bank. The millionaire miser Mr. Potter picks it up and hides it from Billy, while the bank examiner discovers the shortage. George, realizing that the loss will be blamed on him and will likely be sent to jail, contemplates suicide while thinking his family will be better off without him. His guardian angel, Clarence, halts this attempt, taking George on an incredible viewing of what the town would be like without him, with everyone he loves being dead or miserable. George then realizes his positive impact on the town and his loved ones. This heartwarming tale, sending the message that everyone has personal significance in the world, is both entertaining and profound. The character of the movie is depicted as Clarence declares, "You see, George, you've really had a wonderful life."

While I have numerous more holiday favorites and there are even more choices than my limited handful of picks, holiday movies (seemingly supposed to be grouped with the commercial excesses of the season) carry positive, enlightening messages for any age and truly define the generosity and innocence of the season. ☺

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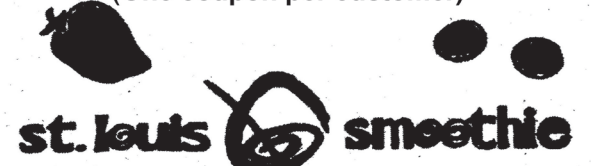
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'The Blind Side' tells inspirational tale of unlikely success

by Jack Holds
Reporter

Often in our lives we will pass the paper cup on the sidewalk, or jam our hands in our pockets and look down while strolling by saxophone players at a Cardinals game. For one family though, just picking up the cup was not enough. With a huge act of kindness that turned into a life commitment, Leigh Anne Tuohy (Sandra Bullock), changed the life of a young man, Michael Oher (Quinton Aaron).

"The Blind Side," directed by John Lee Hancock, is an inspirational film based on the true story of Michael Oher, a young African American man who, after an incident with his mother, is separated from his family and hardly ever sees them after. When he is 17, Michael is enrolled in a Christian school with the help of his friend's father, who he relies on for a place to sleep. He struggles to keep up with the rich students at the private school. His teachers are appalled by his low reading and math skills, but they notice that his tests mention his high "protective instincts".

At school, Leigh Tuohy's son befriends "Big Mike," as Michael is referred to. But Michael doesn't fit in

with students his age and feels out of place at school.

Michael's friend's father eventually decides that he and his wife can no longer support the abandoned teenager. Michael is turned away, with nowhere to sleep.

On one freezing night, as Michael walks to the gym for warmth, Leigh Tuohy and her family find Michael on the street and decide to take him in for the night. Soon enough, he is living with the Tuohys. The family accepts Michael as one of their own. The entire family begins to grow and discover things about themselves they never realized they had.

Once his grades improve, Michael is able to go out for football where, while timid at first, he excels rapidly and, with talks from Leigh, makes a fantastic lineman. He even blocks one particularly pugnacious opponent all the way to the end zone.

After Michael emerges as a superb left tackle, he is swarmed with college requests. He must make his choice while being faced with the duty to make his family proud.

Michael Oher eventually completed college, playing football all the way, and went on to be drafted by the Baltimore Ravens in April 2009. Oher still plays

left tackle for the Ravens today, and is currently having one of his best seasons yet.

"The Blind Side" delivered almost all that was promised. Strong acting coupled with a great script and a hint of humor made the film both powerful and believable. The true story behind the film made it even more remarkable. As an inspirational sports movie though, I was expecting more of a tear-jerker and was left moved but not to the point of tears. It is not, however, fair to judge a film on whether the audience cries or not and there were many people in the theater who were smiling with damp cheeks.

This is perhaps because the point where life started going uphill for Michael came early in the film. He was already well on his way to greatness by the end and the climax of the film was stretched out so there wasn't one moment where the viewer has an immense deal of pride for Michael.

Released Nov. 20, "The Blind Side" is a movie not to be missed before it leaves theater. For some, a box of tissues or the comforting shoulder of someone might be needed but for those who are harder to kindle the emotions of, expect a great, inspiring and touching sports film of the decade. ☺



Ralph Nelson/Courtesy Warner Bros. Pictures/MCT

Jae Head as S.J. Tuohy, foreground left, Quinton Aaron as Michael Oher and Sandra Bullock as Leigh Anne Tuohy star in "The Blind Side," a Warner Bros. Pictures release. The movie was unexpectedly popular and well received among varied audiences.



Columbia TriStar Marketing Group/MCT

TOP: Morgan Lily, from left, Amanda Peet and Liam James star in Columbia Pictures' "2012," directed and written by Roland Emmerich. The motley group attempts to escape the apocalypse with scientist Adrian Helmsey and his ex-wife's boyfriend (Tom McCarthy).

BOTTOM: John Cusack, left, and Woody Harrelson also star in the action film. Cusack plays the main character, scientist Adrian Helmsey, who discovers by chance that the world is about to end. Plagued by natural disasters (including earthquakes and tsunamis), Helmsey attempts to save himself and his family from impending disaster.



Joe Lederer/Columbia TriStar Marketing Group/MCT

Overemphasized special effects of '2012' make for predictable disaster film

by Nate Townsend
Reporter

When writer and director Roland Emmerich created the well-made and successful apocalyptic film, "Independence Day", viewers couldn't get enough of the then-new technology of CGI (Computer-generated imagery). Emmerich then delivered "The Day After Tomorrow" a few years later, a doomsday flick less well received than the first.

Now, in 2010, Emmerich once again places his eggs in the CGI basket to create a film where disaster never ends.

The overwhelming digital graphics used in '2012' make over-the-top "Transformers" director Michael Bay look like Walt Disney.

In this film, it seems that Emmerich continues to try to top himself via hugely expensive computer generated disaster sequences.

It is clear, however, that he crosses the line this time. The days of finding new and sophisticated ways to portray disaster are over.

I could fill this review completely with titles of films that focus 90 percent on making the picture visually entertaining and 10 percent on good writing and story telling.

Sure, with a \$200 million budget you can accomplish 156 minutes of non-stop digitally created disasters while still having enough cash to hire John Cusack and Morgan Freeman. Unfortunately, famous actors only go so far in a poorly written movie.

It begins in 2009, when scientist Adrian Helmsey discovers that the earth's core is heating. Eventually, he discovers that by 2012 the earth's surfaces would crack, spawning earthquakes, tsunamis, and other natural disasters worldwide. Eventually, his

knowledge is extended to the president (Morgan Freeman).

Subsequently, a Noah's Ark-like evacuation plan is set up for the best and brightest in the world, along with anyone who has a billion Euros to spend.

Everyone else is left clueless of the impending disaster, except for Jackson Curtis (John Cusack). Cusack plays a failing novelist, who happens to overhear the evacuation plans.

Shocked, Jackson attempts to reach the safety-ships, his only hope of escape, with his two children, ex-wife, and his ex-wife's boyfriend (Tom McCarthy).

At least Michael Bay can create a stupid movie and still have people at the edge of their seats. In '2012,' anyone can foresee the entire film after the first 20 minutes.

Unfortunately, unlike other predictable films, this one isn't worth sticking around for to confirm your predictions.

The writing was corny, as was most of the story line.

The conflict with the single father (Cusack) desperately trying to gain the approval of his young son (Liam James), was incredibly cheesy. The son, instead of looking up to his father, admires his successful and cheesy stepdad (McCarthy).

This scenario in Hollywood blockbusters too many times to count. The lack of creativity in both the script and the general plot of the movie are very disappointing.

So if you're looking for another disaster flick that includes the signature young wizard-like scientist who knows the fate of the world, the familiar good-hearted president who wants the best for his people, and the struggling family in which the survival of the planet depends, see this movie. ☹

Students choose favorite holiday films

by Alex Kasnetz
Reporter

The holiday season in the United States is incredibly multi-faceted. There is a convergence of family, friends, community, and charity. Everywhere you look, decorations are being put up, malls and shops are packed with people buying gifts for their loved ones, and families are on their way to church or temple. Holiday music has been playing on some radio stations since mid-October. Decorations are omnipresent, as are advertisements for holiday movies, which sometimes start as early as November or even October. One more aspect of the holidays, and one that can't be overlooked, is holiday movies.

Holidays are a joyful time to spend time with loved ones. And what better way to spend time with one's family than to go to one of the many films opening during the holidays, when you don't have to talk to them. Hollywood studios capitalize on this time of year, knowing that during the cold days of

winter, many will use their days off work or school to flock to the theatre. But holiday movies are more than just a lucrative business strategy.

Holiday movies are an integral part of the season, and are inseparable from the holidays themselves. These movies, whatever the subject may be, mean a lot to people. Movies can help one celebrate the holiday themes of joy, love, charity, and jubilation. From *A Christmas Carol* to *It's a Wonderful Life*, to *Miracle on 34th Street*,

to *A Christmas Story*, to *Meet Me in St. Louis*, holiday movies can mean so many different things to so many different people. Some students enjoy less classic movies like *Die Hard* or *Eight Crazy Nights*, which have become a tradition for some.

Seemingly everyone at Clayton High School has his or her

own favorite movie to watch during the holidays. For some, holiday movies stand as a family tradition. For some, it has even become just as important as putting ornaments on the Christmas tree or lighting the menorah.

"[My favorite holiday movie] is *Meet Me in St. Louis*," senior Evie Root said. "I watch it every year during Christmas."

For many people, holiday movies help bring out feelings of warmth, love, and romance, another genre of holiday films.

"My favorite holiday movie is *The Holiday* because the storyline is adorable and I love the actors/actresses in the movie," senior Jessica Zaccarello said.

During the holidays there's a feeling of jubilation in the air. During the holidays, everyone needs something to share with their family, friends and co-

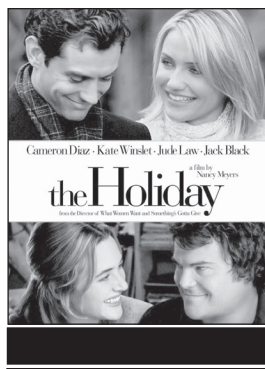
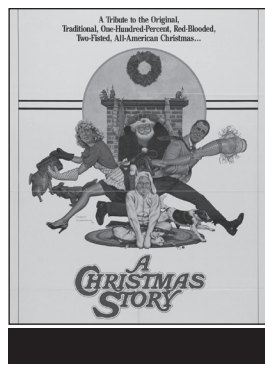
workers. There's nothing better to share during the holidays than a little laughter, which is why many choose a "laugh out loud" comedy for their favorite holiday movie.

"I love *Elf*," senior Anna Copilevitz said. "There is no better movie to watch during the holidays."

Other holiday comedies can go even further, giving a sense of shared holiday experience. Many holiday films even bring back fond memories of childhood.

"I like the *Home Alone* series because it's based on me," senior Graham Gold said.

There is no doubt that this holiday season, individuals, families, and friends will gather at home, maybe near a fire, and watch their favorite holiday movie. There is also no doubt that millions more will flock to the theatre for new releases, like they have in every past holiday season, to some of the many films that will hit the box office this season. Everyone has a favorite holiday movie, and maybe this year you might find a new favorite. ☺



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Meredith McMahon

Traditional U.S. dolls removed from shelves

American Girl dolls are under attack, being taken away one by one.

The company American Girl is famous for selling historical dolls and books that focus on specific times of American history from that doll's viewpoint. This past year, American Girl has discontinued a classic doll, Samantha Parkington, who, in the books about her, grew up in 1904.

I think that placing Samantha in, as American Girl calls it, their "archives" is a terrible thing. She was one of the original dolls, which included Samantha, Molly McIntire, and Kirsten Larson, and rather popular among pre-teen girls, the main buyers of the dolls. Taking away her, or any historical doll, for that matter, limits real girls' knowledge of that time period. Sure, some girls may pick up a nonfiction book about the early 1900s, but not many.

What's worse is that Samantha was replaced. The newest addition to the collection of dolls, Rebecca Rubin, was released when Samantha was discontinued, in May 2009.

Don't think I'm hanging on Rebecca. I'm not. In fact, I think it's wonderful that American Girl finally created a doll with a different religion than the others. Rebecca is, according to her books, Jewish. I can see that American Girl is trying to become more diverse in their collection of historical dolls, and that's good.

But I don't like the fact that American Girl used Rebecca as a replacement for Samantha. Samantha should not have retired; she's only ten, after all.

There are several similarities between the two. Rebecca and Samantha even look alike. Samantha's story took place in 1904; Rebecca's took place in 1914. This shouldn't be a reason to replace Samantha; many historical dolls "grew up" within 10 years of another.

Why can't both dolls' collections be sold? Taking away Samantha is like taking away the 1900s for preteen girls who may not want to open heavy books regarding the same time period. I also think the addition of Rebecca is valuable to girls. Rebecca's story not only enlightens girls about the 1910s, but her story also inspires girls to follow their dreams.

Although American Girl never actually said why Samantha was taken away, I have a feeling it has to do with

money and finance. However, I think continuing the American Girl tradition is more important than raking in money, which I'm sure they are still making anyway. Of course, I'm not in charge of American Girl.

If I were in charge, Samantha and Rebecca would coexist in the collection.

Another tragedy is coming. Soon, at the end of the year, Kirsten Larson will also be discontinued and moved into the American Girl "archives."

Another original American Girl doll gone? It seems as if the company American Girl is hoping to rake in some extra cash from collectors during the holidays.

American Girl is taking away historical, although fictitious, girls that real girls today can identify with. Trust me, I know girls do, because I did when I was a preteen. I owned Molly McIntire, who "grew up" in 1944, and like other girls learned about the American home front during World War II from her story. I looked a bit like Molly, with the hair and glasses, which made learning about the



Maria Massad

home front more interesting. I'm sure other girls have related to their dolls in this way also, or the company would not have profited.

Not only have the dolls' stories taught real girls history, they have also taught girls how to be good citizens, intertwining perseverance, courage, and kindness into girls' characters. Girls relate to girls; it does not matter if the relatable girl is fictitious. I know that Samantha's story taught me how to be charitable, because she always was generous to the less fortunate; her relatives were made of money.

The books prepare girls for being nice to others, but in a protective way. The dolls never actually suffer. If only life was like that. The books do hand girls the tools to build a road to a good life, though.

I suppose these character traits I learned through the dolls' stories stuck and made up the person who I am today. If American Girl keeps taking away dolls, other girls won't be able to have a chance to build character in such a way.

Samantha and Kirsten should be able to stay in the collection. Keep the classics. Add new dolls, but keep the old as well. ☹

Father commended for adaptability

In many Nigerian families, one of the goals for success in life—besides having long hair—is to have a boy in order to carry on the family name. In my family, however, that hasn't worked out too well. I don't know how the chromosomes worked out with the same result four times in a row (well, actually I do, but it's too math-complicated; I'd rather not discuss it), but my dad ended with four darling little daughters. And I must applaud my father for his patience throughout all these years; he is the only man in the family.

That means his evenings at the dinner table are primarily composed of gossip, his nights, full of chick flicks, and all year 'round, "that time of the month." However, don't doubt his masculinity; I don't mean to sound silly, but my dad is super.

However, a man can only take so many romantic comedies. I'm not

surprised when he flees to his room to confer with his council—Letterman and Larry King. And while the house is decked out in kitschy ornaments, doilies, and frilly bed dresses, he seeks sanctuary in his old golden Mazda, which my older sister and I dubbed "The Manhole," which is like a second home to him. As one would expect, it is ridden with receipts from Home Depot coffee cups from McDonalds, and old doughnut wrappers from White Castle.

But as always, when amongst something for a long period of time, something is bound to brush off on someone, and that's how it is with my father. If you walk past him wearing something tacky, he will tell you.

And like the rest of the ladies, he has his melodramatic moments (i.e. "If you want to go far away for college, I'll never trust you again.") when we fight.

He wasn't the only one impacted

Ijeoma Onyema



Ijeoma Onyema

Tardy policy unequal for students, more classroom-specific punishments necessary

The tardy policy at CHS, implemented during the 2008-2009 school year, is designed to pressure students to attend every class and to arrive on time, by assigning after school and in school detentions as consequences for unexcused absences or repeated tardiness. Though created with good intentions, this policy is constantly violated through deception of students and teachers. Abuse of the system results in inconsistency in execution of discipline.

Those who know how to trick the system, and whose parents are willing to cooperate, are able to avoid school-administered punishment entirely.

In an attempt to limit ridiculous excuses for missing class, the school outlined eight acceptable reasons for an excused absence. If every Clayton parent were completely honest, this method of limitation would successfully keep students from skipping class. Unfortunately, many parents are more than willing to call into the attendance office within the allotted 24 hour period, and report that their poor son or daughter "had a headache" during sixth period, and therefore was unfortunately unable to attend. Thus the unexcused absence and forthcoming detention disappear.

And if it's that easy to trick the system, then why not? Maybe the student is involved in sports or music, and a detention after school would completely interrupt a carefully planned schedule. Maybe the student skipped class because they didn't feel ready for the quiz that day. A grade-emphasizing parent wouldn't want their kid to take the zero on the test as well as serve a detention. So the parent calls in and fixes the dilemma.

Still other students are able to convince their authorities that the absence marked was a mistake. Charm and feigned innocence result in fewer detentions.

Others, the majority of CHS students, don't have parents who are willing to excuse a skipped class or aren't able to talk their way out of anything. Therefore, an inconsistency occurs as the rules apply to some and not others.

The one time I fall asleep on my books and forget to set my alarm, I sleep in and miss my zero hour and serve a detention. My friend skips an entire day of classes and somehow six unexcused absences equates to one detention.

I, being one of those unlucky ones whose parents refuse to fib for my benefit, serve a detention for my zero-hour absence while a fellow classmate of mine is constantly excused for his skipped classes. So while he is able to take an extra lunch hour or finish preparing for his test without penalty, I am penalized for accidentally sleeping in.

As with any other rule, individuals will enforce it in various ways. Some teachers strictly adhere to school policy while others are more lax with counting tardies and taking the trouble to assign detentions after the third offense. Yet others provide their own classroom policies, such as physics

teacher Rex Rice.

In either Rice's Honors Freshman Physics or AP Physics class one must fill out a tardy form giving the reason for tardiness, and each subsequent tardy after the first offense must be made up by arranging a 30-minute period of the student's free time to complete a task for Rice, such as cleaning lab equipment. Instead of requiring students to waste time in detention, Rice motivates students to take responsibility for their tardiness by rewarding students with "made up" tardies and no unexcused absences with the benefits of being a student in "good standing."

I commend teachers such as Rice who create a classroom-specific tardy policy because a student is more motivated to respect the authority of an individual, especially a teacher who assigns grades, than the authority of the administration.

We are constantly reminded that our safe haven, CHS, the Clayton bubble, is nothing like the "real world," when in fact our tardy policy is an overemphasized version of the work force. Yes, employers penalize employees for late arrival and skipped days of work, but most CHS students are not presently preparing to graduate and become a member of the work force. Regardless, by the time one secures a meaningful job, attendance and tardiness is a lot more significant to oneself and one's employer than it is currently at CHS.

Because the large majority of CHS students head to college after graduation, it would benefit students to prepare for college life rather than the life of a working adult. Our classes are college preparatory and challenging, especially for seniors taking numerous AP courses, and those making an effort at CHS must learn to manage time.

By senior year if one has still not acquired time management skills, that student has made a conscious effort not to try. CHS does a good job of forcing more independence on its students with each passing year, and upperclassmen are well aware of the repercussions of their actions.

Miss class for any reason, and you fall behind. Arrive tardy, you may miss a quiz or assignment given in the first few minutes of class. We can comprehend the consequences of our actions without a slap on the wrist from the administration.

In college, one has the choice to attend class; the administration has no interference if grades are kept up. If we were really preparing for college, seniors in AP courses (college level classes) would not be babied by the administration and penalized for minor misconduct.

On the other hand, students are expected, as they should be, to respect authority, especially that of teachers devoted to their education. That being said, any student with behavioral problems, including repeated offenses concerning tardies and absence, should be dealt with individually. As is, the school policy is unable to justly deal with misbehavior in terms of class attendance. ☹



Mary Blackwell

Media's representation of 'Road to College' embellishes real truth

For eighteen years, I have never once questioned why I go to school. It has always been clearly understood that I need to succeed in order to get into the college that I want to. As a sixth grader, when my mom suggested that I take Latin because it would help me score well on my SAT, I didn't stop to wonder why I was preparing for something that I wouldn't have to even worry about for another five to six years.

Well now it's less than a month in front of all of my classmates and me and my sense of life-security is beginning to deteriorate as I realize that this whole system is just a gamble.

Sure, if you work hard, get good grades and do some community service, you'll get into college; that much can be guaranteed. But what about after that? Can your parents guarantee that if you work hard and graduate from college with a certain degree you can do what you want to do?

We have been taught our whole lives that with hard work and determination, we can succeed at anything we want to do. This is all true until you have that sad realization that these skills can only take you so far.

When I went to SLUH from Clayton freshman year, I was so used to the "Everyone's a Winner" philosophy that I didn't think twice about playing football. I got a real wake up call, however, when at try-outs I got my 120 pound freshman self tossed ten feet into the air by a six-foot-four behemoth named Darion. I don't need to tell you that I didn't make the team.

The thing is, most of us are going to have this feeling come college graduation when the "Follow your dreams" attitude (that I have held on to for years) becomes a euphemism for fighting to the top. What our parents and teachers forget to tell us is that a lot of us won't reach this "dream," a kind of Nirvana that college graduates

use hundreds of thousands of dollars and several degrees to get close to.

But that's not what seniors think about now. It's all about getting to that point that people are focused on. Kids skip class and party more senior year not in a celebratory fashion, but as a means of distraction. "Senioritis" is really just a disease caught by seniors way too freaked out to deal with applying and going to college. The thing is, you can't escape it; or even set it aside for a night. I'm growing weary of going to a party and the topic of every conversation being college. Well it scares me that four years from now my college graduation will involve me sitting alone and broke with a bottle of red wine, longing to have a few more years of school where I am able to use "preparation" to further put off my life.

But I have too many chips on the table now to go back and do anything differently. As a matter of fact, I don't think that I would go back and do it differently. I'm not trying to put down the traditional system that has been used in this country for years, I'm just inviting people to take a step back and see it for what it is: uncertainty. ☹



Nate Townsend

Ijeoma's 10 Ways to make your Christmas merry, your Hanukkah happy and your Kwanzaa cool:

1. Go give some time to someone less fortunate.
2. Get psyched up with some holiday songs.
3. Bake! Accept it, you're going to gain a little poundage. Gain it in style.
4. Treat yourself for a well-earned holiday.
5. Use your extra free time to take up a new hobby.
6. Read a good book! Introduce yourself to new ideas or novel plot lines.
7. Watch a movie that really, truly makes you laugh.
8. Play in the snow. Burn off some of the calories you gained from those holiday meals.
9. Get creative and decorate to make the most of the season of lights.
10. Spend time with the family.

The Globe student newspaper exists primarily to inform, entertain, and represent the student body at CHS to the best of its ability. It serves as a public forum for the Clayton community. All content decisions are made by the student editors.

The Globe is self-funded for all publishing costs and offers advertising to all school-appropriate businesses. Please contact our office for more information. The Globe is distributed to students each month of the school year. We also offer bulk mailing subscriptions for \$20 a year and first-class subscriptions for \$30 a year.

Editorials
Unsigned staff editorials will appear only on the designated opinion page and shall represent a majority opinion of the staff. A by-lined editorial reflects only the view of the writer. The views expressed on the editorial page do not necessarily reflect the views of any of the faculty, the administration or the board of education.

Letters to the Editor
All letters to the editor must be signed when submitted to the editorial staff. The paper reserves the right to edit letters for length and repetition. Publication of letters is subject to the laws of libel, obscenity, incitement and copyright.

We also remind students that as the Globe is a student publication, all compliments, opinions, complaints, and suggestions are welcomed and should be forwarded to the Globe Office:

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Some material courtesy of American Society of Newspaper Editors/MCT Campus High School Newspaper Service
Winner of MIPA All-Missouri, NSPA All-American with four marks of distinction, Quill and Scroll Gallup Award, CSPA Silver Crown (2004), Pace-maker winner (2003), NSPA Hall of Fame Member (2006)

CHS should strive to improve participation in community service

Many CHS students participate in countless hours of community service each school year. From playing bingo at a nursing home, cleaning up a local highway or planning the annual Arts Fair, the opportunities to get involved are endless for CHS students.

Sadly, despite the ample options for CHS students to start volunteering, not enough students actually get involved.

Why is this? Is it an unmotivated student body or lack of leadership from the administration? Do some CHS students feel that their families already give money to charities and thus they are exempt from volunteering?

Maybe it is a combination of all of these forces working together. But the only thing that can be easily changed is the way the administration endorses volunteering.

It's not that the administration doesn't support community service; it just has been neglected in CHS education. **STAFF EDITORIAL**

Currently we have a school-sponsored community service club that offers students several opportunities to volunteer each month. And most notably, each year the administration supplies the resources and the entire day off of school for the Arts Fair.

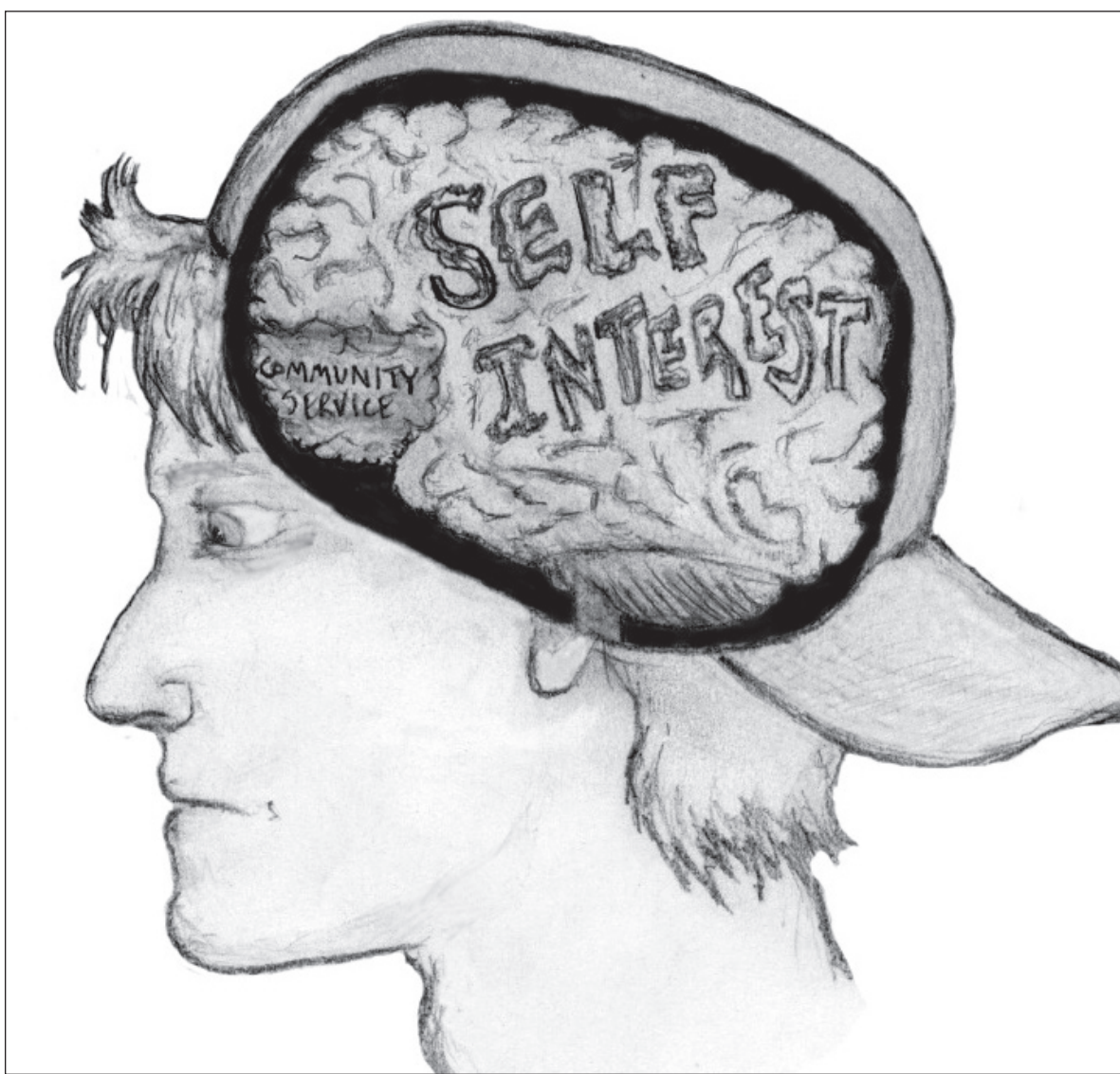
Furthermore, if a student completes 40 hours of volunteer work during their high school career they receive a "Community Service Award" and an asterisk by their name in the graduation pamphlet.

However, there used to be two tiers to this award. A 40 hour and 100 hour level. But for whatever reason, the administration has consolidated the award into one level. Any students who complete a mere 40 hours during their high school career will now receive this honor.

Nonetheless, even with the low standard of 40 hours, that is a mere 10 hours of volunteering each year, only a third of the graduating class even received this award last year.

Although there are local schools that give less encouragement to do community service than we do, by any Clayton standards this is merely a rudimentary attempt.

At some St. Louis county public schools community service is actually a requirement for graduation. At other schools, though not a requirement, the principals, coun-



Ali Sehzadeh

selors and teachers encourage volunteering so much that almost every student participates regularly in some way. At other schools around the country, entire curriculums are based off of community service.

of motivation for students to try to better the community around them. Some students do it out of the goodness of their heart, while others are doing it for their college applications or to get the asterisk next to their name on the graduation pamphlet.

However, whatever the motivation, the outcome is always positive. Not only does the community students' work with gain something, but also students themselves gain a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction and a life long habit of giving back to the community. Community service not only builds character but also exposes students to a multitude of fields in which they may gain an interest in studying in, teaches students new skills and allows students to make a positive impact on the world around them.

By no means is a graduation requirement necessary, but the administration needs to support community service accessible to all students. **AGREE 97%**
DISAGREE 3%

At one point the CHS freshmen used to go on a field trip called "respect and Responsibility day" where students would learn about and participate in community service across St. Louis. Could this day be revived to encourage freshmen to get involved?

Principals and counselors need to continually encourage students to participate in community service and create incentives for students to get involved, because a simple asterisk isn't going to motivate too many CHS students.

Nonetheless, this issue does not lie entirely in the hands of the administration, the real issue lies within the student body.

Students who attend this school, regardless of where they live or how much their family makes, are more fortunate than a large portion of the world, just because of the quality of education they are receiving.

Because of this we are not burdened, but privileged, to have the responsibility to give our time and energy to those who need help and give back to the community that has allowed us to be in the position we are in.

Community service does not have to be a chore. Choose something that is fun, do it with friends and do something that is actually making difference. ☺

An experience in ISS

Globe Co-Editor in Chief finds herself doing time in an adventure with Clayton's truancy policy

I have trouble going to class. Some have called it a severe case of senioritis while others have dubbed it mere irresponsibility. But I know that neither diagnosis is correct.

I can't find meaning in going.

Many things that we cover during a 45-minute period, I could absorb in much less time by reading on my own. And I would much rather read the work of a renowned writer than listen to a teacher lecture to an audience of unengaged teenagers.

I recognize the value of hearing my peers' insights and ideas, but I feel that what they contribute is sometimes not sincere, but simply an attempt to get an A.

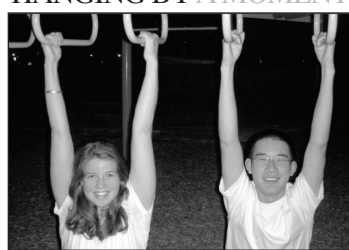
I go most of the time. And there are certainly classes that I enjoy, ones that I find intellectually engaging. But sometimes there is just no reason for me to go.

So when I was offered a choice between detention and In-School Suspension after missing several after school detentions, I jumped at the opportunity

to spend the entire day with a book.

I walked into the ISS room the next morning with comfy sweatpants and a snack, eagerly awaiting my punishment. The eyes of the students and supervisor widened immediately when they saw me.

HANGING BY A MOMENT



NINA OBERMAN

Who is this girl that looks so "good"? Why is she here? I was confronted candidly by the stereotype of my self.

I sat down at a desk. A huge orange poster glared at me from the white board, heatedly proclaiming the rules of the room in capital letters.

No music. No talking to anyone if it is not about an "academic issue". Work only on schoolwork. No sleeping. No cell phones. No games.

It was as though the discipline team had tried to pinpoint everything that made a teenager happy. This was a torture room, a prison for the typecast high school delinquent.

Nice try, I thought. I opened my copy of "The Unbearable Lightness

of Being" and watched a world of intrigue, betrayal, and love unfold before my eyes. Milan Kundera's insights were so profound and his characters so moving that I could not have been more satisfied.

But the day only got better from there. A junior sitting next to me was struggling with a biology essay about photosynthesis. She asked repeatedly to talk to her teacher or to see a textbook—so I stepped in to help her with a topic I knew well. I took her through photolysis, Chlorophyll A, the electron transport chain, the thylakoid membrane, ATP and the Calvin cycle.

I guess this was an "academic issue" because the supervisor let us talk, but nothing could have made me happier. I helped someone understand an amazing natural phenomenon—and I made a new friend.

She came up to me a week later with a hug and a smile. She'd gotten an A+ on that paper and had an A in the class. I could tell she felt more confident and prepared to tackle her assignments.

Sometimes the most valuable educational experiences can't happen in the structure of a normal school day. If there's one thing the administration should realize, it's that learning isn't torture for all of us—just class. ☺

Student calls for more skill-based final examinations

Oh, how the time has flown. With winter break just days away, thoughts of snow, freedom and sleep dance about in students' minds. And yet, lying between now and bliss is the guardian of the threshold, the feared and dreaded final exams. Though finals have been in place for years, it has come time for Clayton's administration to take a hard look at the value and legitimacy of its exams.

The purpose of finals is simple: to evaluate students' knowledge and understanding of a subject area. This is a perfectly valid goal and deserves no criticism. The methods used to go about this purpose are questionable, though. Teachers require students to recall facts and details learned months ago, which, if the student missed that packet or worksheet while studying, leaves him or her helpless. Final exams are, for the most part, entirely material-based, meaning students have to study and memorize the material covered in the class. This is purely ludicrous.

Forcing students to memorize facts and details does not make practical sense. My future does not depend on my knowing that Franklin Roosevelt was governor of New York before becoming president or my ability to regurgitate the quadratic formula or the value of Planck's constant. It is dubious that memorizing Aristotle's definition of a tragedy will aid me as I head into my adult life, and I would bet a million dollars that knowing that it was Duncan who said, "What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won" will ever be of real value to me.

Instead of the current system of asking students to spit back the definitions or equations that they have memorized nine hours prior to the test (and will likely forget nine hours

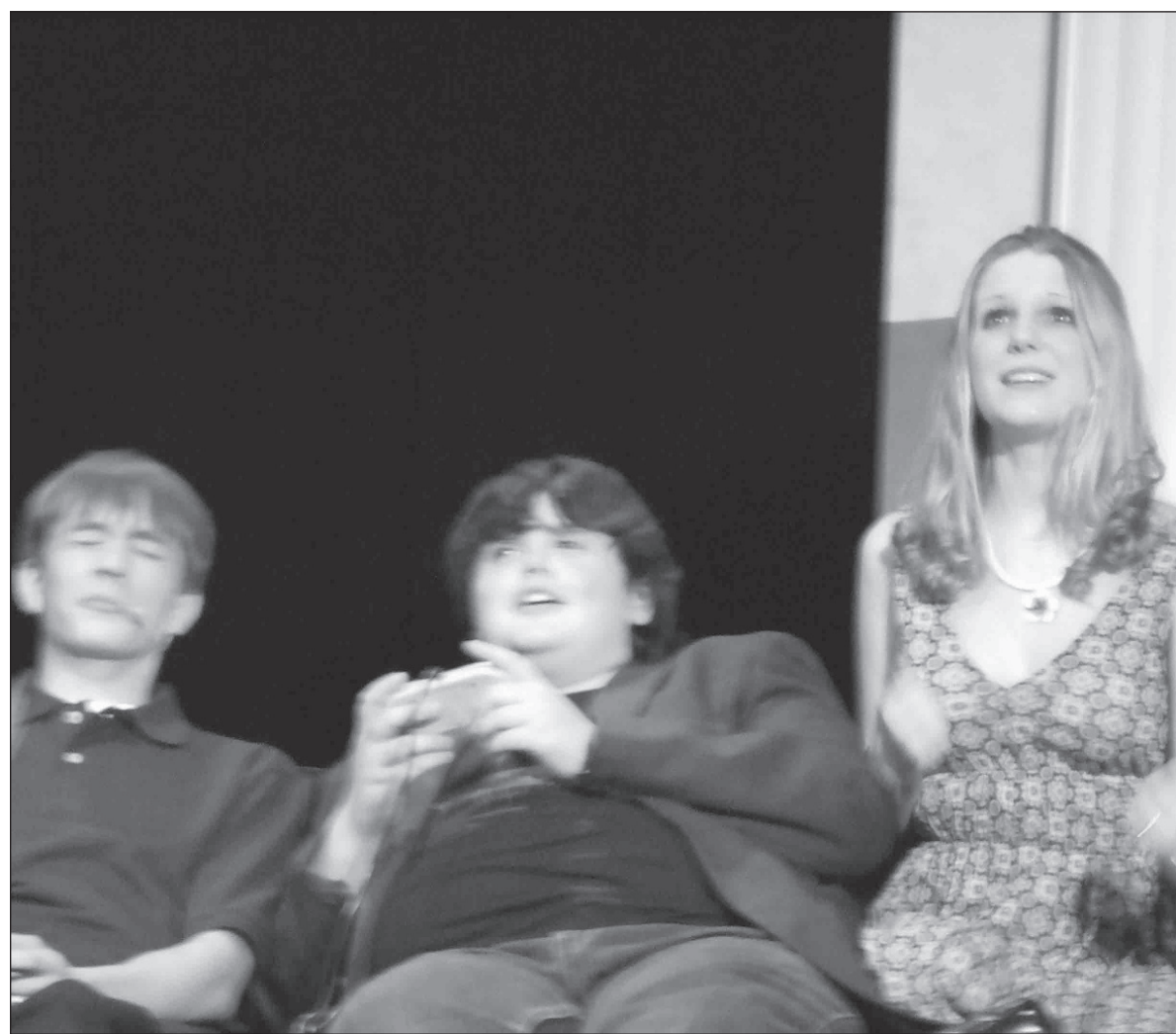
later), it would behoove teachers to take a more qualitative approach. Students should be evaluated on the skills that they have learned in the class, not the material itself, for skills are not easily forgotten. Since it is the skills that we will be taking with us as we leave CHS, it makes far more sense for us to be tested on them than the raw material.

For example, history finals should incorporate more document-based questions that force students to analyze a document using the material they have studied and the skills they have learned. English exams should focus on reading and writing skills and a student's ability to analyze and respond to a reading. Math and science are slightly trickier, but for the most part the idea remains the same. The final exams should be less about memorizing equations and more focused on applying those formulas and methods to real-life situations. Language finals, unfortunately, need to stress memorization-heavy things like vocabulary and tense structures, but teachers should still focus on a holistic approach that evaluates a student's ability to use the language in everyday applications.

By slightly altering the format of their tests, teachers could fairly evaluate a student's competence in a certain class. At the same time, they would be forcing students to stress what is, in the end, the most important aspect of a class. After all, it is not the dates, the definitions, or equations that we will take with us as we leave adolescence. Instead, it is the skills and techniques for learning and applying our knowledge that will prove useful and vital to our futures, and it is on these that we should be tested. ☺



Noah Eby



Globe archives

Senior Meredith Redick (right) shares a scene with junior John Holland (left) and senior Nick Oliveri (middle) during the 2008 Spring musical, *Company*. While Redick enjoyed singing in the show, she found the dance numbers more challenging.

Drama buff rediscovers joy of music

I am not a dancer. Although my friends have been switching off between satin slippers and jazz shoes since they were five, dancing never inspired me as books and music did. Of course, part of the reason for my disinterest in dancing is that I'm clumsy: since I was eight, the bones in my feet

have endured four fractures due to overly vigorous games in gym class. The lattice of scars on my knees betrays my vulnerability to rocks, sidewalk cracks, and my own shoelaces. I run cross-country, so I haven't completely abandoned physical movement, but I mostly stick to the safer pursuits of reading, writing—and singing.

In my basement, amidst the lazily teetering piles of board games and old movies, there sits a stack of home videos. When I was a round-bellied three-year-old with a bowl haircut, I insisted upon performing the classic "I'm Being Eaten by a Boa Constrictor" song for the video camera. It was by no means on-key, but I sang it with as much gusto as Kristin Chenoweth. Fourteen years later, singing in the shower remains one of my favorite parts of the day.

Broadway show tunes infiltrated my consciousness when I first saw "Rent", and since then most of my favorite songs have come straight out of musicals. True, "Sweeney Todd," "Wicked," and "West Side Story" don't have the twang of the window-shattering punk rock the Homecoming DJ enjoys, but I've found that last notes of a Sondheim finale resonate beyond the doors of the theater. Unfortunately, when I entered high school, my nebulous musical ambitions were tempered by a biting reality: in musicals, dancing is pretty much inevitable. Still, standing before the audition sign-up sheet for "Company", the sound of an ensemble singing one of Sondheim's spine-tingling opening overwhelmed my memories of falling down the stairs. I gripped the pencil hanging from the bulletin board and, in one capricious scribble, took the plunge into a world of black top hats and jazz hands.

Most of the cast watched our notoriously outspoken choreographer, Zoe, dance once and repeated her moves with astonishing precision. I floundered with a simple jazz square. Zoe felt no need to lower her voice as she pointed out my crooked arms and meandering feet. It took at least two hours

before I could manage the dainty hops of a scissor-step without losing my balance. The rehearsals were arduous, and occasionally I just wished to be at home reading a book instead of here, daily demonstrating my impressive incompetence in dance. Still, I wanted to sing in the show.

By opening night, I could get through the longest dance without cataclysmic mistakes. Still, I solemnly predicted that I would trip and tumble over the side of the stage. I stood in the shadowy wings, my heart beating with a new ferocity. Zoe, materializing out of the darkness, clamped her hand on my shoulder and whispered "Just smile and nobody will notice your feet." Slightly taken aback, I pasted on a smile. The sound of a lone clarinet gamboling gracefully through the first bars of music caught my attention. In the darkness of the wings, I couldn't see my indomitable feet, but I could hear the music, gaining momentum as other instruments joined the first brave clarinet. I remembered that I had auditioned in order to sing, not to dance, and I turned my focus to the song I had been ignoring as I struggled with the dancing. My feet probably flailed during the scissor-steps that night, but I was too busy basking in the music to notice.

I've performed in many other shows since "Company", though none have boasted the dancing extravaganzas that make "Company" at once entertaining and terrifying. Thanks to countless hours in front of the full-length bathroom mirror, my dancing has improved. More importantly, though, I do my jazz squares with a smile, and I have the confidence to audition for any show whose music inspires me—even if it involves scissor-steps. ☺

UP IN THE AIR



MEREDITH REDICK

FACE OFF: A retrospective of the decade

In spite of great tragedy, the decade was notable for technological, scientific, and social advancement

by Maddy Bullard
Editor

We are a decade without a name. The first 10 years of the 21st century, from 2001 to 2010, have yet to gain an "official" title. Suggestions have been made -- "the noughties" (from the word "naught," which is used around the English-speaking world), "the O's," "the zeros" or "double zeroes." But do any of these names fit our generation, our decade?

Due to some of the detrimental events that occurred both in the U.S. and around the world (September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina, and the worldwide economic recession of recent months, to name a few) some have ventured to christen the decade "The Decade from Hell," "The Reckoning," the "Decade of Broken Dreams" or even the "Lost Decade."

These alternative suggestions likely come from people who reason that because of the myriad of bad things that have happened in the past 10 years, the decade will go down in history as one of the worst we have known.

Certainly history will remember the tragedies, the mistakes, the trials and tribulations the world has experienced in the past decade. But I would argue it wasn't all bad. After all, the human race has made at least a few strides since the close of the nineties.

Perhaps the most obvious success of the decade was the election of Barack Obama, a multiracial American politician, as president of the United States. Voters around the U.S., from an endless variety of backgrounds, ages and socioeconomic situations, were told to hope, to dream -- and they did.

In a country that, less than 150 years ago, was ravaged by the evils of civil war and still healing from the wounds of slavery, this accomplishment is truly remarkable. Whether the administration will live up to the hopes of those who voted for it remains to be seen.

On a different world stage, that of science and technology, incredible advances have also been made. The Human Genome Project, which began in the nineties, has mapped the more than 20,000 genes that make up the human genome.

Although this development may seem insignificant to the average person, it has implications for societies around the world. The knowledge this discovery can afford scientists will be invaluable in predicting and studying genetic disorders including breast cancer, hemostasis, cystic fibrosis and liver disease, among others.

This decade has also led to the development of wireless Internet, and the production and perfection of the personal computer, cell phone and portable media player. For some, the decade should perhaps be known as "the Age of Apple."

The iPod has become ubiquitous in high school environments like that of Clayton. The convenience and speed of wireless Internet has afforded academics and professionals alike with unprecedented access to a wealth of information, whose magnitude is growing every day.

Now ever-present cell phones allow for connections even across vast distances. Not just phone calls, but also texting, instant messaging, Skype, video chatting, and built-in laptop and cell phone cameras have allowed for almost unlimited access to friends and family.

A certain awareness of the global, human community has also led to new developments in the areas of both environmental protection and civil liberties.

During the past decade, warnings of climate change and global warming have rung out from televisions, radios and podiums worldwide. Although there is still a long journey ahead of us, progress has been made as conscientious communities respond to those warnings. Carbon emissions are still unaccountably high, especially considering the contributions made by only a few countries of the world, mainly the United States. But awareness is the first step, and awareness is spreading rapidly and widely.

Some of the tragedies that have occurred in the past decade have brought with them a silver lining of sorts.

The economic downturn, while troublesome for many, has hopefully taught Wall Street a lesson. With the seemingly unending news of embezzlement, money laundering and inside jobs in big, powerful companies, the American public has hopefully begun to understand a truth about the economy -- that it is more complicated than it may appear.

The outrage Americans have shown at the heinous salaries of Wall Street executives, at the "bonuses" they receive after leaving their messes for the government to clean up, at the corrupt, unscrupulous companies that are "too big to fail" should be sending a message. The American people have hopefully woken up, and will now be more cautious, more discerning, and will now, at last, make the effort to be more informed.

The past decade has undeniably been a challenge. The human race has lived on, through struggle and through conflict, and sometimes in peace and prosperity.

Was this the worst decade we, as humans, have experienced? Was it as bad as the Civil War in the United States? Did it compare to the French Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Holocaust? Was this decade really as hellish as some say?

I would argue that it was not. Every decade has its ups and downs, the good and the bad. Some are, inevitably, more balanced than others. If nothing else, this decade will serve as proof that we can survive through tough times, that we are a resilient, hardy and irrepressible race of people. In the future, some may look back on this decade as a failure. But at least it will be a failure that we survived. ☺

With global warfare, terrorist attacks, and economic turmoil, the decade was dominated by pervasive fear.

by Kara Kratcha
Editor

With food stored in basements and batteries hoarded in excess, the decade started out on a note of irrational anxiety. At midnight on Dec. 31, 1999, Y2K arrived to a relieved, "Happy New Year." And thus the first decade of the new millennium began. However, it was the sort of anxiety leading up to the celebration, not the relief, which would come to mark the 2000s.

The decade's tone was perhaps more substantially set on Dec. 12, 2000, when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of George W. Bush as the nation's next president. The winner could not be determined without careful examination of votes from the state of Florida, whose Electoral College votes Bush won by a margin of less than a thousand. More than ever, America was a nation divided.

However, it was not America's dichotomy of a political system that will come to the decade that is now coming to a close.

On Sept. 11, 2001, a series of al-Qaeda suicide bombers performed the attack heard 'round the world as they drove an airplane into each of the two towers of the World Trade Center.

Thus a new word introduced to the American psyche: terror. Before this decade, the Homeland Security Advisory System, the color-coded scale used to gauge levels of terrorism threat, did not exist.

Before this decade, arriving at an airport hours before a scheduled flight's departure time was unnecessary, and "travel-sized" meant "small enough to fit in a carryon," not "small enough to legally bring on an airplane."

Before this decade, the term "War on Terror" would have seemed vague, perhaps even like something out of a child's bedtime story about a struggle between good and evil. Today that war, while still vague, is very real and very frightening for many Americans.

On Oct. 7, 2001, the United States officially declared war in Afghanistan. From that point on, America was, and still is, at war, creating a negative outlook of fear and confusion that would permeate the entire decade. The aim of the mission, to capture Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda officials, to destroy al-Qaeda as an organization, and to end the Taliban regime, has not yet been achieved.

Meanwhile, even nature seems to be against the first decade of the new millennium. Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, destroying the city and displacing millions of people. Homes were ruined, leaving mold and water damage in their places.

The natural disaster was bad enough, but what many believe was government mismanagement left people to suffer without food, shelter, fresh water or protection from violence in the aftermath of the storm. Some families lived in government-provided trailers long after the storm had passed, while others sought refuge as far away as the Midwest.

While the physical effects of Katrina eventually blew over, the storm increased in some a distrust in the American government that could be seen everywhere from the dissenting opinions on the War in Iraq to the increasingly popular phenomenon of "Bush bashing."

Then, in the midst of a far away war and political parties vying for the Presidential office, the world economy suffered a major hit. The Stock Market sunk, oil prices were high, housing prices plummeted, long-standing banks shut down, and American citizens everywhere asked themselves whether a second Great Depression was descending, this time on a global economy so interdependent that any one major country's fiscal failure could cause other economies to come crashing down. The fear of war suddenly became the fear of losing a job, of having to file for bankruptcy.

The economy is not the only global problem of the 2000s, however. Even more recently, the H1N1 virus, or "Swine Flu," scared nations all around the world. The World Health Organization deemed the outbreak a global pandemic, the only such classification in more than 40 years, on June 1, 2009. Now scared for their health as well as their wallets, Americans waited for vaccines and assurance that Swine Flu was not going to cause more casualties where they lived.

Luckily, there does seem to be an end in sight to this anxiety-filled decade. The war shows at least a small chance of ending soon, holiday shopping is showing signs of improvement from last year's, and H1N1 seems like less and less of a threat.

President Barack Obama has promised change, and with a little bit of his coveted hope, perhaps second decade of the new millennium will be one of growth, prosperity and peace.

The first decade of the second millennium has been marked throughout by fear. The fear of technological failure, the fear of terrorists, the fear of economic downturn, and the fear of illness have all marked the decade and probably created an overall negative feeling regarding it.

With no glaringly positive events or life-saving inventions, things do not bode well for the first 10 years of the 2000's legacy. ☹



Letter to the Editor: CHS English shouldn't alter curriculum

Near the beginning of his November editorial, Noah Eby states that the English curriculum is flawed primarily because it is too heavily focused on textual analysis—on teaching students how to read [Clayton English Curriculum has room for improvement," 10/18/09].

Mr. Eby claims that the only professions for which "textual analysis" is a relevant skill are those of English teacher and professor. Indeed, "bankers, doctors, and lawyers do not make money by reading books and then writing essays pointing out the author's use of figurative language and the underlying coming of age theme."

Putting aside the extraordinary fact that Mr. Eby, as a high school sophomore, can make categorical generalizations about the work place, I find it disappointing that his only criterion for educational value seems to be its correlation to professional utility.

Under this standard, I wonder how many of the things I learned in high school could be deemed "unimportant." Rice's double period on circular motion would probably make the list. So would Rogers-Beard's lecture on the history and impact of coffee. So would Blackmore's annual paean to the American march.

And yet, these are some of the

most valuable experiences that I had in my four years at CHS. School is special precisely because it's *not* the real world. High school prepares us not for our 9 to 5 jobs, with their commitments and responsibilities, but for our lives outside the work place. It gives us the opportunity to appreciate the elegance of a William Carlos Williams poem, or the mystery of protein synthesis. It reminds us that there are things in this world that are genuinely astonishing, and that there are things that we will never fully understand.

So no, our English teachers do not show us how to read legal briefs, nor do they shove lists of "The 1000 Words You NEED to Know

for the ACT!" down our throats. They teach us to read carefully not only because it is a necessary tool for survival in college, but because it is a skill that is required for the rest of our lives. It is a skill that will keep us afloat when the pressures of "the real world" are closing in around us. While there are still people who seek pleasure, guidance, and nourishment from books, our English teachers have an obligation to teach close, deliberate reading.

Mr. Eby makes a valid point that we do not learn enough grammar at Clayton, and he claims that writing an essay a month is an unreasonable expectation, which I won't address because it is a matter of opinion, but I find his central argument—that learning how to read properly is not a valuable skill—to be genuinely disheartening. When did we get to the point that even our brightest students no longer see the value of knowing how to engage deeply with fiction?

High school is probably the only time in life that there will be 50 minutes a day set aside for this very task. I would try to enjoy them while they last.

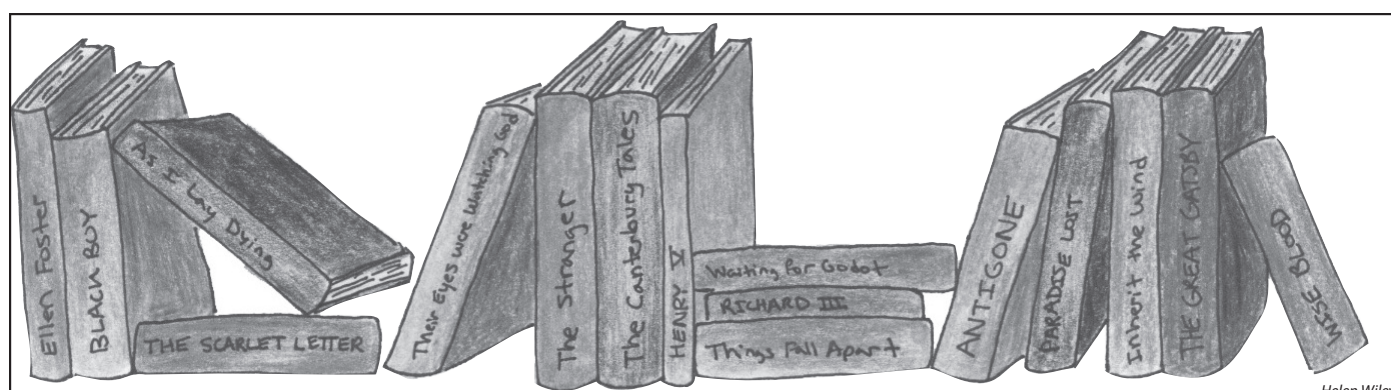
Sincerely,
Jeremy Bleeke (CHS '09)

Corrections from November:

~ "The Stepfather" movie review was written by reporter Meredith McMahon, not Zach Praiss.

~ The artwork for the InDepth about the English curriculum was by artist Helen Wiley.

~ The pictures of the cross country race were taken by Jake Bernstein.





The freshman and sophomore play delighted audiences with humor and heart.

by Rachel Han
Reporter

The play "Snow Angel" was a perfect way to welcome in the holiday spirit. "Snow Angel" opened with a scene of a group of teenagers crossing their fingers for a snow day. After the radio eventually confirms their wishes, they all go their separate ways.

As the plot thickens, we witness a growing romance, social cliques and stereotypes, and even the battles of rivals. Because the play was centered on a group of teenagers, there are easily identifiable stereotypes in the characters, from the dumb jock and the superficial cheerleader to the quiet shy boy and the loner.

The main storyline of "Snow Angel" is the quest of Eva, a mysterious and elusive girl who wanders in the nearby woods, looking for "White Stone", which we discover is the farm where she lives. Eventually, all the other characters unite to help her find her way home, but instead discovers the truth about her past.

Although the plot was cliché and somewhat overdone, it was pulled off well. The familiar story of a group of people with contrasting personalities bonding together for a cause made for a great cozy performance rather than a boring one.

"Snow Angel" took place in the

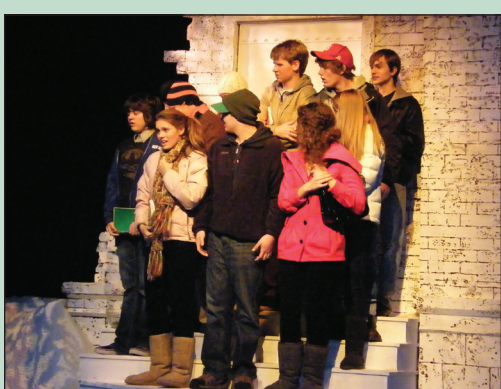
Black Box Theater. The sole set, one of a stone wall with digital snow projected onto it, was simplistic but used efficiently. Between scenes, small changes were made to fit the action, such as adding benches and a cashier booth to transform the stage into the local hang-out spot. Although there were small glitches in the technical effects, they were hardly noticeable.

The actors stayed in character easily and presented their lines flawlessly. The snow angel in particular, played by freshman Emma Riley, was done fantastically. She was at first an aloof, mysterious character, but transforms her personality several times to fit the plot. The hardcore and hated bully, portrayed by junior John Holland, was also a strong character. Eudora Olsen also did a spectacular job playing the social outcast, Frida.

Even though this play was primarily a freshman and sophomore production, the performance seemed almost professional. Humor was a main part of Snow Angel, from sarcasm to repetition and wordplay. Even in the more serious situations, someone would crack a joke to lighten the mood.

"Snow Angel" explores themes of friendship, loneliness, and fitting in. All teenagers can relate to those ideas.

However, people of any age would have enjoyed this funny and heart-warming play. ☺



ABOVE: A group of students, including junior John Holland, is excited for their first snow day of the year. Although this was the freshmen and sophomore play, juniors John Holland and Ian Miller lent their talent. LEFT: A group of students is excited for the snow day filled with sledding and snow ball fights. RIGHT: Freshman James Kerr portrays a nerdy employee at the Pretzel Hut. To enhance his character, he wore a retainer for the entire performance.



TOP: Freshman Emma Riley and Eudora Olsen portray the Snow Angel and Frida, respectively. Frida finds the Snow Angel in a snow drift and they develop a unique relationship on their quest to find a long lost farm. ABOVE: Sophomore Fergus Inder and junior Ian Miller go ice fishing on their snow day. BELOW: Frida writes in her journal. All the students hoped for a snow day and were then surprised with a journal assignment from their teacher. Frida reflects on the day of adventure with the Snow Angel.

