



clayton high school theglobe

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1 Mark Twain Circle, Clayton MO 63105

[snapshots]

New tardy policy instituted at CHS

For the 2007-2008 school year, students get two free tardies per class every quarter. For every tardy after that, an after-school detention is compulsory.

2006-2007 yearbook purchases

If you didn't get a chance to buy a yearbook last year, you still can! Bring \$60 to Ms. Roney in the Cottage. Checks should be made out to CLAMO Yearbook.

Save the date: Homecoming 2007

Homecoming spirit week will be September 24-28. The homecoming football game, parade, and dance will be September 29. Class themes: Freshman- Moscow Sophomores- Montego Bay Juniors- Madrid Seniors- Paris

Clayton Farmer's Market

The Clayton Farmer's Market will continue to be open every Saturday through September 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The market can be found at 8282 Forsyth Blvd. (the west parking lot of Straub's Market).

Saint Louis Art Fair

The 14th annual Saint Louis Art Fair will take place September 7-9 in Downtown Clayton. Expect original art, children's activities and food from outstanding restaurants.

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I-64 delays cause frustration, hope

[Kelly Moffitt]

Co-Editor in Chief

Whatever one's opinion on the reconstruction of Interstate 64 is (complete shut-down, partial closure, segmented restructuring, or not at all), the truth is this: the construction is here and it won't be done until 2010. What started as a far-away dream for commuters and construction engineers alike, is now taking place—memorialized in the giant steel bases for the directional ramps between I-64 and I-170.

The most direct effect on Clayton deals with the areas the Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) has been working on through most of this summer—the I-170/I-64 interchange, Brentwood exits, and Hanley exits.

Though the construction causes the hassle of added traffic at rush hour, the end result is hoped to relieve that very same problem.

"At the I-170/I-64 interchange, we are building new directional ramps to ease traffic," I-64 Community Relations Manager, Linda Wilson said. "They will help because the driver will be able to ease between the two interstates and won't have to exit at Brentwood or Eager to do so. This will also be beneficial for those two roads, as traffic will lighten greatly."

The construction on the Saint Louis County Section of I-64, is slated to last until July 31, 2007. The I-170/I-64 interchange will be under construction for most of that time.

Over the weekend of August 17

to 19, the highway was closed from I-170 to Bellevue, in order to tear down three old bridges and repair another one. This caused traffic to be detoured onto Clayton Road.

"All of this work required Highway closure" Wilson said. "The upside is, we got all of them done in one weekend, instead of closing the highway four times. All hands will be on deck to ensure this project goes well."

The reconstruction is also necessary because of the age of the bridges, some already past their prime of 50 years. All bridges are being worked on, and nearly 50 percent are considered "deficient" or unsafe for travelers.

This closure will be a taste of what is held in the future for the highway construction.

"More closures will be coming in the next few years, however, this one is the most dramatic for 2007," Wilson said. "In January 2008, highway 40 will be closed between I-170 and Ballas road. That will last until December 2008, then in January 2009 we will close the highway from 170 to Kingshighway. By 2010, we will only be doing touch ups, like landscapes and lighting, and then the highway will be finished."

The project is being funded completely by federal and state "user" tax money.

"User taxes' are from the taxes drivers pay for gasoline, getting a new license plate, and general car relations. This isn't a sales tax funded activity, so it a very fair deal for motorists."

MODOT is working closely with



Above: Directional ramp under construction near the Brentwood Promenade. Highway 40 as well as the intersection pictured here will not be complete until July 2010. Right: The aim of the construction is to alleviate traffic in busy areas such as the intersection of I-64 and I-170.

Abbie Minton



St. Louis County, who own many of the local roads which the construction might affect. By informing one another, St. Louis county has been able to change traffic signals and striping on the roads for the best advantage of the traffic flow.

They are also partnering up with Metrolink, as many of their bus lines either cross or use the high-

way. MODOT is helping them put together a new schedule and route-way, that will be effective for the next six months. Metrolink is also receiving federal money to finance the addition of more buses to their fleet, to make buses more frequent.

There are other ways commuters can reduce their time in traffic, Highway, 2



used with permission of Kate Lipstein



used with permission of Kelley Ryan

Above left: The cast poses during their trip to Scotland. Above right: A performance of "And Carl Laughed," an original play written and produced over the course of the last year.

'And Carl Laughed' goes international

[Gila Hoffman]

Senior Managing Editor

For the students who participated in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer in Scotland, the trip was more than just a fun summer activity; it was a chance to learn and grow as a performer and as a person. "The purpose of our trip was to participate in AHSTF (American High School Theatre Festival), and also to perform in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the largest arts festival in the world," junior Susie Wirthlin said. "The trip also gave us a lot more experience with professional work, and took us outside of our comfort zone into a new, exciting aspect of performing." The Clayton drama department was chosen to perform at the Fringe Festival this summer. The festival, in Edinburgh, Scotland, is a great platform to showcase new work. The festival featured 18,000 total performances, 2,000 of which were theater shows. Drama teacher Kelley Ryan went last summer to the festival to see what types of shows were being performed. "I saw the most intriguing shows and I decided that I really wanted to do something original," Ryan said. "I was out to dinner one night with my husband and I read an article about Carl Kabat in the Riverfront Times. He was a 73-year-old priest in jail for breaking into a nuclear missile silo dressed as a clown. First I thought, oh my God! This is crazy and amazing and would be

a great idea for a play. It ended up that I dedicated a whole year to writing this play about Carl Kabat." The play "And Carl Laughed" is about a radical priest from St. Louis named Carl Kabat, who protests nuclear weapons by dressing up as a clown and breaking into nuclear missile silos. He has spent 17 years of his life in prison. "The play chronicles some of his actions and key moments in his life with some added parts as well," senior Cameron Davis said. "It's told by a troupe of clowns (not Bozo-type clowns, but Marx brothers types). Everyone has clown make-up and pops out at the end with red noses." Ryan and retired English teacher Nick Otten co-wrote the play. They spent a lot of time workshoping with the students to find new ideas. The students played a large part in the writing process. "A lot of it was built by improv and clowning exercises," Wirthlin said. "Although it has very dramatic and tragic moments, it's a comedy at heart, and brings Carl's clownish tendencies across to the audience in an excellent manner." In addition to the work that was done within the CHS community, outside sources played a part in the writing stages as well. "An alum, Kevin Wall, came back and worked with the kids," Ryan said. "He helped to shape the script and

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School board chooses to extend VST

[Nava Kantor]

Co-Editor in Chief

In keeping with Clayton's tradition of valuing diversity, the Board of Education voted in June to participate in a proposed five-year extension of the Voluntary Student Transfer (VST) program.

The VST program was scheduled to end as public schools in St. Louis improved, removing the need for transferring students from the city to county schools. However, applications for the VST program have not decreased and have consistently outnumbered spots available.

After a meeting attended by over 100 people, the BOE decided that Clayton's VST policy will remain unchanged.

"Based on the resolution the board passed, we will continue to take new VST students for an additional five years past the 2008-2009 original deadline," BOE President Steve Singer said. "While the actual number of students taken will be up to future boards, I would assume that the total number would be around 450 or approximately what we have today." Those students in the program when it ends will be able to stay in Clayton schools until graduation.

In the late 1990s, the Voluntary Inter-district Choice Corporation (VICC), which manages the fi-

nances of the VST program, came up with a settlement agreement. Districts could decide to stop participating in VST right then or if the reimbursement ever fell below what the district pays per student. Otherwise, schools that continued to participate in the program would accept new students until the 2008-2009 school year. This year, districts were asked to vote on a further extension.

"I think the board felt that the same reasons for continuing the program in 2004 exist today and are likely to exist in 2008-2009," Singer said. "First, the impact on diversity for the district. Second, the financial impact on the district. And third, the continuing problems facing the St. Louis Public School District."

CHS principal Dr. Louise Losos agrees that the diversity added to Clayton by the VST program is indispensable.

"One of the guiding principles of the Clayton school district is that we value diversity, and I

believe they felt that the benefit to both transfer and resident students of having a diverse body of students was such that it warranted extending that deadline," Losos said.

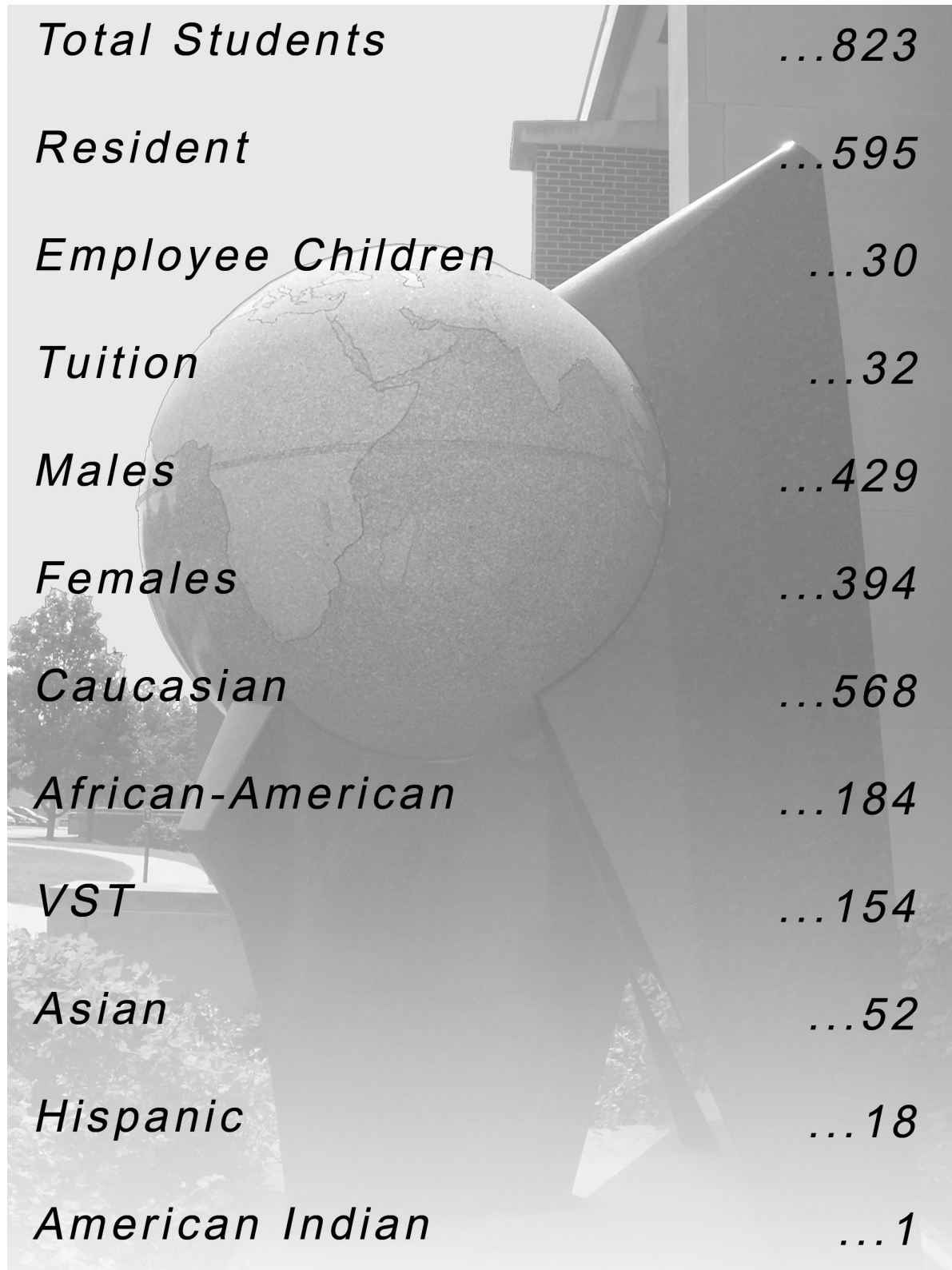
Board members Susan Buse, Sonny Buttar, Lily Raymond and Steve Singer voted in favor of the extension. Omri Praiss participated VST, 2

One of the guiding principles of Clayton High School is that we value diversity.

[Louise Losos]
CHS Principal

Diversity key factor in VST extension

By the numbers: CHS demographics



Graphic by Siobhan Jones

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via conference call and so could not vote, but stated for the record that he would have voted in favor.

Jane Klamer and Robert Kerr didn't support the resolution. The two dissenters said that waiting to make the decision could present more options to address diversity and more time for more financial analysis.

"I do not see any other meaningful options to increase diversity," Singer said. "The board will be spending a significant amount of time in 2007-2008 looking for options."

Losos said that tuition and scholarship programs are possibilities that could add diversity to Clayton schools.

"We're trying to see how we can maintain a diverse student population once this program winds down," Losos said. "If there were an easy answer, we'd be doing it."

Currently, CHS enrolls 823 students. Out of 184 African American students, 154 attend Clayton schools through the VST program. Simple subtraction shows that few African-American students will be left in the district once all the students come through.

"In farther-west districts, where the bus rides are really long, the impact would be felt far more quickly," Losos said. "It won't be overnight, but it will be a slow decrease over time. Anyone who is a Clayton student at the time the program stops can remain a Clayton student until they graduate or transfer out."

Finances played an important role in the VST decision.

"The board always looks at the short and long term financial impact of any decision it makes," Singer said. "The financial issues in this case were quite complicated and took a significant amount of time for the board to understand and digest."

The compensation the district receives per VST student is around 7000 dollars, while the district pays 14,000 dollars per resident student.

"There's a 7000 dollar difference, but those numbers aren't always clean," Losos said. "Part of those 14,000 dollars is overhead, like electricity. The cost of electricity isn't going to change whether we have 600 students or 800."

Some board members and community members have felt that the district has been subsidizing the VST program. Others said that the 7,000 dollars received per VST student is money that the district wouldn't otherwise have.

"One of the questions was, how can we make up

that gap of money if the students eventually aren't here?" Losos said. "Let's say you have three first grade classrooms, each with 21 kids, with 13 total from the city. If those 13 aren't there, you have 50 students. That's still probably three classrooms, and we have to pay three teachers. So if you take the 13 away, you have 13 less students, but you haven't reduced the amount it costs to run the three classrooms. There are financial considerations on both sides."

Because many people pay a great deal to be able to live in Clayton and attend Clayton schools, some are reluctant to also be paying for someone else's education as well.

There is no easy answer to the complex financial issues of the decision.

"There are those who would say that the social value of diversity, the benefit the students get, outweighs the economic concerns," Losos said. "On the other side, they say that economics needs to take the fore, and we can get social and economic diversity in a different way."

Despite its positive aspects, the current VST program is not without faults.

"Any time a student has to ride a bus outside their community to attend school, there are inherent negatives that come with that," Losos said. "Most of our city students ride the bus to get here, and none of our residents do because we don't provide bus service. There's a distance factor that comes into play. Any student that comes here is a Clayton student, but sometimes it can be more difficult for transfer students because they live in two

different worlds. We have 32 kids paying tuition and 30 children of employees that also don't live in Clayton who are in the same boat."

Despite the controversy, Singer believes that Clayton supports the board's decision.

"Our community generally is very positive on the VST program," Singer said. "This opinion is based on polling data the district has done, on public comment and on election results when this topic was a central issue. It is unfortunately a very polarizing issue for the community, one that has, in the past, been divisive."

Losos is positive about the effects the decision will have on CHS and the entire Clayton district.

"I was proud of the Board for taking this stance," Losos said. "The benefits to the students far outweigh any negatives, and it's our job as teachers and administrators to make sure that everybody gets the high quality of education they deserve." ☺

We're trying to see how we can maintain a diverse student population once this program winds down. If there were an easy answer, we'd be doing it.

[Louise Losos]
CHS principal

National Urban League hosts annual conference in St. Louis

[Fontasha Powell]
Editor

Spacious homes with wide decks, round pools, and manicured lawns, luxury cars and corporate jobs are all universal aspects of the American Dream. In order to assist ordinary citizens achieve this surreal aspiration, the National Urban League hosted its annual conference at America's Center on Jul. 25-28. Last year the conference was held in Atlanta, Ga. and the year before in Washington, D.C.

The National Urban League has been a fixture in American society for over 95 years, fulfilling its mission of enabling African-Americans to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights by involving itself in urban communities worldwide.

Currently supporting the ideology that four basic opportunities are necessary for the American citizen in to achieve the American dream: the opportunity to thrive, the opportunity to earn, the opportunity to own and the opportunity to prosper.

President Marc H. Morial compared the mission of this year's Conference to the current state of the nation during his keynote address at the 2007 Conference.

"Just like the National Urban League, our nation is at a crossroads," Morial said. "We've come here to change the conversation with our nation's leaders. We're broadening our mission beyond just providing programs to becoming the voice of advocacy for urban America in Washington, D.C."

Morial elaborated on the purpose of the four previously mentioned opportunities.

"That is why we have developed our Opportunity Compact, a set of policy prescriptions for a stronger and more prosperous urban America and the nation as a whole."

Interest points from the week included meetings that addressed the Black vote, a session with seven candidates for president of the US. Some of the presidential candidates included Democratic Sens. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, former



Robert Cohen/St. Louis Post-Dispatch/MCT

Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) spoke at the National Urban League convention in St. Louis, Missouri, July 27, 2007. The NUL has been involved in American society for over 95 years.

Democratic Sen. John Edwards, U.S. Reps. Dennis Kucinich and Duncan Hunter and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee.

The candidates spoke on a variety of topics they hoped to improve in urban communities including education, corporate issues and a mentality renovation.

Junior Jasmine Adams attended the National Urban League confer-

ence as a spectator. She heard 4 of the presidential candidates speak at the conference, but her favorite speakers included Obama, Clinton and Edwards.

"I enjoyed listening to the speakers," Adams said. "A lot of people clapped for Obama because he was charismatic. He spoke about change. Change like him being the first black person in office and changes in the country's mindset about certain issues."

Adams was also particularly fond of Clinton's speech.

"Hillary Clinton was another speaker," Adams said. "When she

spoke, she focused on males age 16-21 that end up in jail. She said that instead of spending more and more money on jails, we should get these men jobs and education so that they can accomplish things in life."

Adams finished with Edwards. "John Edwards spoke about the two different worlds," Adams said. "The world of big corporate businesses and the world of the smaller

business. He talked about neutralizing the difference so that it would all become one world."

Following the speakers, Adams attended the optional career fair that was held.

"There were lots of place to go within the career fair," Adams said. "You were able to talk to people in different fields and they provided business cards and other information."

As the week progressed, other festivities ensued including appearances by Susan L. Taylor of Essence magazine and former Olympic gold medalist Dominique Dawes.

[Our mission is] becoming the voice of advocacy for urban America.

[Marc Morial]
National Urban League president

Delays due to highway work worth results

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as Wilson explains.

"My advice for construction in general is that drivers should pay attention to what is going around town, see what is open and what is closed, and plan their trip around road work," Wilson said. "If you are going to the zoo, Esquire, Galleria- think about how you would normally get there and make the necessary changes. For commuters, look for other options, like carpooling or taking the metro. We also encourage working flexible hours like seven to four instead of eight to five. If some people do a little bit of all these ideas, traffic will thin that much more."

She also encourages drivers to stay updated on MODOT's website, [www. thenew164.org](http://www.thenew164.org), which lends updates on closures, planning, computer animations, e-mails, and on-site cameras. Though many changes are taking place at a rapid pace, Wilson believes the community response to construction has been a good one so far.

"We are getting feedback that the construction isn't too impactful," Wilson said. "The people are starting to see the changes and progress and they feel good about that. Of course there are always complaints from people. We really try to schedule bridge and highway closures on weekends when there is little major activity anywhere. For instance, the weekend of the 17 to the 19, there were no Cardinals games, no Mundy productions, and Washington University hadn't started moving students in yet."

However, there are always going to be repercussions to such arduous construction. Clayton VonDras, a senior, lives in a neighborhood cornered by Hanley and Clayton roads. He has found that traffic has become somewhat of a

problem since the highway construction started.

"I have friends who live out in Chesterfield and because, the Hanley ramp has closed, I can no longer get to their houses with ease," VonDras said. "There is also a back-up between Clayton and Hanley every morning which is going to make getting to school a tougher journey."

Junior Shannon Harms has experienced the same feelings.

"I used Highway 40 quite often this summer to get to my softball games," Harms said. "Also, I use it to drive to my dad's apartment."

She hopes that the updates about the highway will be more informative.

"I think that if they announced which exits and ramps to get on and off of 40 were closed day to day more clearly, then there would be much less wasted time in traffic," Harms said. "I hope the construction will actually help when it is finally completed, but unfortunately I'll be gone away to college by the time it is finally finished."

In the end, MODOT can only do so much to please the community.

"We are trying to be the best neighbor we can be," Wilson said. "There are always people who find something wrong with the work we are doing, but we are trying our best to find a happy midway for all."

Though traffic may be a hassle, closings confusing, and drivers more on edge during these coming three years, the end result of years of planning will hopefully leave MODOT with their task complete- "a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri," and the drivers of St. Louis with much better transport across St. Louis county. ☺

French president takes steps to revitalize country

[Leah Eby]
Editor

This past spring marked the end of Jacques Chirac's presidential reign over France and the beginning of newly elected president Nicolas Sarkozy's.

Sarkozy, former French Interior Minister and son of a Hungarian immigrant, is a member of the ruling party of France, the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), to which Chirac also belonged. In the May 6 elections, Sarkozy defeated Socialist Party candidate and potential first female president Segolene Royal with 53 percent of the popular vote.

Sarkozy, who officially took office on May 16, has since vowed to reform France and restore the people's pride in their country. In a victory speech in Paris, Sarkozy noted that the French people "have chosen to break with the habits and behavior of the past to give greater value to work, to authority, to respect, to merit."

The French government is classified as a republic, wherein the president serves as Chief of State and the prime minister as Head of Government. The president is elected for a five year term, and the prime minister is then nominated by the National Assembly majority and appointed by the president.

Legislative power is vested in the bicameral parliament, composed of the Senate and National Assembly. The judicial branch of the government is comprised of the Supreme Court of Appeals, the Constitutional Council and the Council of State.

The right-wing and left-wing coalitions have remained relatively stable throughout history, the right consisting of the UMP and Union for French Democracy, and the left comprised of the French Socialist Party, the French Communist Party and the Greens.

Despite Sarkozy's association with conservatism, he has promised to make many reforms in order to prepare France and its people for a new era and insure their survival throughout the 21st century.

Among these reforms are tougher law and order and tighter immigration control, which many fear will alienate the lower classes and fuel social tensions. In addition, he said he hopes to boost economic growth and employment by cutting taxes, reducing deficits and loosening labor laws, as well as reverse the trend of France's diminishing global.

Since his election, Sarkozy has already set an individual tax rate cap at 50 percent of income, provided

universities with more autonomy, discontinued taxing overtime pay and guaranteed a minimum level of service during strikes.

However, these modifications have not achieved a great level of attention from the media. Instead, France's transactions with Africa and Sarkozy's summer vacation have received all the hype.

Cecilia Sarkozy, First Lady of France, jetted off to Tripoli, Libya on July 23 and returned with five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor. These medics had been detained since 1999 and were accused of infecting hundreds of children with AIDS.

Her intervention came just when Libya's Supreme Judiciary Council had changed their sentences from death by firing squad to life imprisonment after payment of \$1 million.

On Aug. 2, Saif Gaddafi, son of the Libyan leader, outlined a \$350 million French-Libyan arms agreement that sparked rumors of a quid pro quo involving the captive medics. This arms agreement is the first between Libya and any western country since the European Union lifted a ban in 2004. Libyan officials stated that the country agreed to buy Milan anti-tank missiles and radio communications equipment from subsidiaries of the European defense and aerospace group EADS.

Sarkozy strongly denied that the captives had any part in the arms agreement, and is supported by Defense Minister Herve Morin, who said the deals had been under discussion for quite some time and that a special committee on arms sales had passed them in February, three months before Sarkozy was even elected. Yet, many of France's left-wing politicians continue to challenge the arms negotiations.

"Libya is not a democratic country and at least we could have been informed in parliament of the negotiations going on," said socialist Marisol Touraine to the BBC.

The socialist party also challenged the new president when he and his family chose to travel to Wolfeboro, New Hampshire for summer vacation, rather than the more common destination, the French Riviera.

Sarkozy has long been an unabashed admirer of the United States, and has been relaxing in luxury on the lakeside. His lavish holiday has given some reason to believe that elitism and wealth will cause him to protect the interests of the upper class at the expense of others.

Sarkozy also traveled to East Coast on Aug. 11 to



Nicolas Gouhier/Abaca Press/MCT

France's newly-elected president Nicolas Sarkozy along with his wife Cecilia wave to his supporters at Place de la Concorde in Paris, France, on May 6, 2007. Sarkozy defeated Socialist Segolene Royal by 53-47 percent with a massive 85 percent turnout, according to near-total results.

lunch with President George W. Bush and his family at their home in Kennebunkport, Maine.

White House spokesman Tony Snow commented that the Bush-Sarkozy convention represented a "new era of relations with the French."

Sarkozy had previously commented on the strained relationship between France and the United States under Chirac and the friendlier one which he hoped to create.

"I'd like to appeal to our American friends to say

that they can count on our friendship," Sarkozy said. "But I would also like to say that friendship means accepting that your friends don't necessarily see eye to eye with you."

Since his election, Sarkozy has made great strides toward revitalizing France. Yet, it is often said that the country, unable to reform, can only change through revolution. Though the French, while led by Sarkozy, seem to be in the mood for change, it may be too soon to tell whether the country can truly transform. ☺

Fringe festival showcased original CHS work

'And Carl Laughed,' written by Kelley Ryan and Nick Otten was preformed by CHS students in Scotland this summer. The group spent two weeks in the United Kingdom, focusing most of their energy on their four performances at the festival.

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make cuts. It's hard when you have two writers. One person says, 'I have to have this,' and the other will say, 'No, I have to have this.' It's good to have a third person come in and say, 'No, you don't need any of this.'

The entire 2006-2007 school year was spent preparing for this show. From August to November Ryan and Otten workshoped with the students to write the first draft and then they blocked the entire show.

On Nov. 16 the cast previewed the show to an audience hoping for some constructive feedback.

"We got a lot of feedback and then I spent 60 hours rewriting," Ryan said. "After winter break we came back and had two weeks of intense rehearsal and then we preformed for two weeks in January. We sold out every show and even had to add in an extra show. Then from January to the end of the year we toured the show to a bunch of venues to get used to performing on different stages. That was really beneficial to us because we ended up getting a stage that was 25% smaller than the one we were expecting."

During the first week of July the cast rehearsed intensely again. The cast was in for a surprise the last week of July.

"Carl got out of jail the last week of July and we performed for him three times," Ryan said. "At first we were worried that Carl wouldn't get to see the play because he wasn't supposed to get out of jail until after we left. Luckily he got out early and got to see the show."

Two days after their last performance in St. Louis they left for Scotland. For Davis the idea of going on the trip to Scotland started as just an enjoyable summer activity.

"Initially I just really wanted to go to Scotland since I had never been out of North America before, but this is back when we were going to do 'Lord of the Flies' as our play," Davis said. "But once we chose 'And Carl Laughed,' it became more about spreading our story and our message to as many people as possible than actually traveling across seas."

Wirthlin didn't become excited about the trip until she learned about the play they were going to perform. "I obviously love to perform, and this experience sounded way too good to pass up," Wirthlin said.



Kate Lipslein

Hannah Klein, Stephen Pohlman, Alex Phillips, David Redick, Mary Von der Heydt, Mariah Smith and Cameron Davis pose in front of a castle during the drama trip to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

"At first, we were possibly going to do 'Lord of the Flies,' but then Mrs. Ryan read the article about Carl Kabat. The trip really started off for me as a fun activity, but as the play progressed and grew, it really became about my own beliefs and spreading Carl's message to the entire world."

The show was well-received during the four performances in Edinburgh.

"I never would have been able to foresee just how much attention our play would have gotten," Davis said. "People loved it. We even got mention in a paper called The Scotsman, which only reviews professional, high-quality shows. The simple fact that we got their attention is huge."

The Scotsman newspaper said that the show was 'an inspiring story' and that the kids were 'energetic.' The show was also nominated for an Amnesty International Freedom of Expression award. One of the unique aspects of "And Carl Laughed" was that it was an original work.

"I knew people would like the play, but after seeing some of the other high school shows I got a little

nervous," Wirthlin said. "Schools were doing shows like 'Once on This Island' and 'Pippin,' which were fantastic, but pretty well-known as well. However, everyone who saw our show was enthralled and impressed that high schoolers could handle the mature material."

Along with a standing ovation each night, the last show was oversold by 125 seats. There was standing room only and at the end the cast came out for a second bow.

"My personal favorite thing about the trip would have to be doing our very last performance, not only our last at the Fringe but our last ever," Wirthlin said. "It was very emotional and this particular audience loved it. It was our best performance ever, and we really put our hearts into telling the story of Carl Kabat for the final time."

Many teachers who were present at the festival were interested in bringing the script to their own schools.

"Hopefully this script and play will have a life past this year that we have given it," Ryan said.

The personal reactions that Ryan and the cast received were what made the trip meaningful.

"A high school kid came up to me after the show and said it was the best hour and a half of his life," Ryan said. "Someone else said it was the best show he saw at the Fringe. One teacher said that he knew it was going to be good, but he didn't know he was going to be that moved. The reviewer came to me after and congratulated us and said that the students were extremely talented and that he couldn't 'gobble it up fast enough.'"

Another meaningful reaction came from a Canadian priest who had met Carl ten years previous.

"He loved the show," Ryan said. "He said that if he had just come to Edinburgh to see the show, it would have been worth it."

Wirthlin's experiences in Scotland this summer have had a strong impact on her.

"This trip really changed my life," Wirthlin said. "Andrew Davidson once said during the year, 'what if this is the coolest thing I ever do?' At the time it was funny, but now I look back on that and it really resonates with me. This entire experience changed my outlook on a lot of issues, not only with performing, but with the world." ☺

Debate rages over paper or plastic

[Carol Iskiwitch]
Editor

"Paper or plastic?" This seemingly mundane question is one that millions of Americans are forced to deal with on a weekly basis as they buy items from their local grocers. The choice four out of five times, according to Sierra Club's website, is plastic.

Many people, whether or not they actually choose paper, believe that paper bags are more environmentally friendly because they are made from trees, a renewable resource. But according to a life-cycle energy analysis by Franklin and Associates [www.ilea.org/lcas/franklin1990.html], a plastic bag uses less energy and produces fewer pollutants than a paper bag.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that plastic bags are more "green" overall. The issue of recycling also plays a role. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [www.epa.gov], Americans currently recycle 0.6% of plastic bags and 19.4% of paper bags. All of the non-recyclable plastic bags fill up landfill space, pollute the environment and harm ecosystems.

Junior Taylor Obata has some experience choosing grocery bags. "I occasionally go grocery shopping, usually with my parents" Obata said. "I often choose paper. At Schnucks, though, you can return your plastic bags and they recycle them, so at Schnucks I usually use plastic."

With U.S. consumption of shopping bags estimated to be at about 100 billion plastic and 10 billion paper per year, this issue is quite weighty. Experts agree that the best solution is for consumers to use reusable shopping bags. According to the EPA it takes just 11 uses of a reusable shopping bag for it to have a lower environmental impact than 11 paper or plastic bags.

Obata said that she would consider using a reusable shopping

bag, but only if she were purchasing just a few items.

Reusable bags are very valuable to consumers and to the environment, and their use is essential for many reasons.

Plastic bags are not biodegradable. Rather, they break down into small, toxic particles, and contaminate both soil and water, and they also end up in the food chain when animals accidentally ingest them. In fact, hundreds of thousands of whales, dolphins, sea turtles and other marine mammals die every year after eating discarded plastic bags.

Plastic bag litter has reached even the most remote locations in the world, including Antarctica. According to

David Barnes, a marine scientist with the British Antarctic Survey, in the late 1980s and early 1990s plastic bags were rare, but today they are almost everywhere in Antarctica.

Going "green" has been a trend in recent years, with so much media attention on global warming and pollution. One surprising trend has been designer shopping bags.

Beginning in April of this year, popular British bag designer Anya Hindmarch has been selling canvas tote bags embroidered with the phrase "I'm not a plastic bag." The bags are so popular that there was a near-riot when they went on sale in Taipei, Taiwan in July.

Also joining the eco-friendly bandwagon are top designers Stella McCartney, Hermes, and Louis Vuitton. So the fashionista needn't worry; she can be earth-friendly while still being in style. For those of us who can not drop \$500-plus for a shopping bag, there are plenty of regular canvas bags to be easily found.

If everyone makes an effort to use a reusable shopping bag or to reuse regular shopping bags, the difference it would make on the earth would be tremendous. ☺

According to the EPA it takes just 11 uses of a reusable shopping bag for it to have a lower environmental impact than 11 paper or plastic bags.

German exchange deemed success

[Abby Eisenberg]
Editor

Ever since the mid 1980s, German teacher Glenn Cody has been organizing an exchange program with the school Matthias Grünwald Gymnasium in Tauberbischofheim, Germany.

This program originally started because CHS used to have a fencing program and Tauberbischofheim also had a fencing program; therefore the connection was made between the two schools, beginning what would become the exchange program at CHS. Every third year, Cody has arranged students from Germany to come here for three weeks, and then have CHS students go stay with them later in the year.

Two years ago, the topic of another trip came up, and he went into more detail during fall of 2006 handed out itineraries to interested students and invited parents to a meeting giving a more in depth description of the adventure.

Parents were generally in favor of the trip, because the cost was very minimal, and the experience was invaluable.

"My parents encouraged it from the very beginning; they recognized that it was a unique opportunity to

learn about another culture from a first hand experience." Junior Tim Smith said.

The Germans came here in late March, staying for three weeks before a brief stay in Atlanta. CHS students left for Germany early June, staying until early July.

"The plane ride there was really long and boring, but then got we got there and we visited two really interesting towns before meeting up with our families," Smith said.

The group went to Munich and Bamberg, where they saw the sights and became familiar with the unique German culture through independent explorations.

"Herr Cody left us alone most of the trip to spend more time seeing the place with our friends and let us out very late, which meant that he trusted us a lot," junior Farzana Saleem said. "It was really nice for him to do that."

After the trips to the cities, the groups settled down with their families in Tauberbischofheim.

"For the majority of the time that we were in Germany, our schedule consisted of going to school with our exchange partner and then meeting with the rest of the American students and the teacher," Smith said. "We would discuss the up coming events and problems

and questions we had about our families or German culture.

We would then take a tour of a town, castle, factory, etc. We were let out around noon, though some trips lasted longer, to do whatever we wanted. Most of the Germans got out of school around that time as well so we would meet up with the Germans and either return home for lunch or just hang out together.

There were also special things that the exchange students got to do, besides simply attending school. They had the opportunity to attend major German festivals. They also went on a day trip to France.

"The day trip to France was kind of a bust," senior Kat Nowotny said. "We had to get to the train stations really early, and then we

traveled almost all day.

Then once we got to France we had two hours to walk around and eat something on our own. Then of course none of us spoke French, so we all had some problems while we were there."

Though most people didn't enjoy France, they had many other things that they loved about the experience.

"I made a lot of new friends and when I came back on this trip I was able to see that the friends I made were still really close, so I'm pretty sure the friends I made will stay friends for a while," Nowotny said.

Sophomore Shelby Sternberg said her favorite part was making lots of new friends and learning so much about a completely different culture,

If you haven't been to Germany, I definitely suggest you go, preferably staying with a family. . .it totally immerses you into the culture.

[Alice Lehmann]
Sophomore

"I also liked all the festivals the town had," Sternberg said.

Sophomore Alice Lehmann also enjoyed meeting new people.

"My favorite part was being with the people," Lehmann said. "They were all awesome and so much fun to hang out with and to talk to. My least favorite part was saying goodbye to all of them."

The students all had a lot of fun on the trip, but it was also a great learning experience.

"I learned that you have to be very patient with people, because it was very difficult for me to communicate the entire time," Sternberg said. "I also learned that I am terrible at French, but more people know English than I expected."

Others learned about rural life. "I learned how people in a small city in southern Germany live and how different it is from a large city like Munich or Berlin" Nowotny said.

Of course, the trip provides ample opportunity to practice German.

"My ability to speak the language and my knowledge of the culture improved the most," Smith said.

Even though one student is fluent in German, it was a completely different experience traveling with

fellow CHS students.

"I was born bilingual and I've been going to Germany almost every year since I was 18 months old," Nowotny said. "So I had more of a starting ground than everyone else. But I still learned a lot and had a lot of fun."

The trip overall was a success, but it wouldn't have been without the generous effort of Cody.

"I'm so glad that Herr Cody decided to do this trip again," Nowotny said. "Because without him the trip would not have been the same. He is amazing for doing this. What other teacher would have the guts to take 25 kids to a foreign country where they can barely speak the language; much less do this trip repeatedly? I honestly couldn't imagine going on this trip with any other teacher."

Fellow travelers feel similarly. "Herr Cody is awesome, and I had a great experience in Germany," Smith said. "It was a great trip."

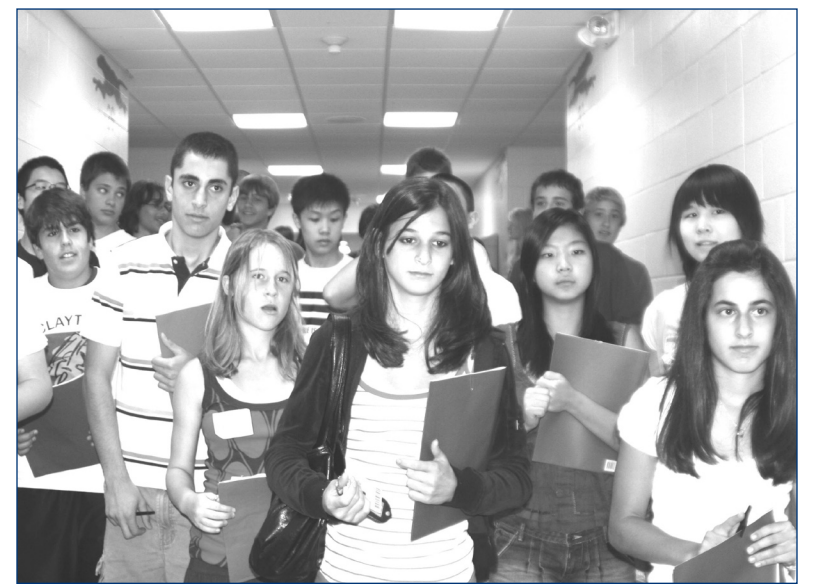
The trip was an overall positive experience.

"If you haven't been to Germany, I definitely suggest you go, preferably staying with a family for a while," Lehmann said. "It's awesome and it totally immerses you into the culture." ☺

New teachers at CHS

Twelve new teachers joined the ranks of Clayton High School for the 2007-2008 school year. Next month, look for an update on counseling, library, and support staff.

NAME AND CLASSES	WHY I CAME TO CLAYTON	WHY I CHOSE THE SUBJECT I TEACH
 Micah Johnson Advanced Spanish	<i>Greyhounds are much tougher than Wildcats.</i>	<i>A love of Spanish and Latino culture and language.</i>
 Caron Settle French I	<i>I'm a Clayton grad and thought it would be fun to teach where I went to school (weird, but fun).</i>	<i>I've loved French ever since I studied it in middle school. My life has been incredibly enriched by my knowledge of language and the time I have spent in France, and I want to pass that love of language on.</i>
 Donna Crecelius Freshman and Honors Physics	<i>Great district, wonderful students.</i>	<i>I love all areas of science.</i>
 Mike Sankey Biology Physiology	<i>I came to CHS for the opportunity for growth and experience with a great science department.</i>	<i>I had a great biology teacher in high school that made the subject interesting to me. So interesting that I decided to make it my major in college, and to pursue it also as a career.</i>
 Ben Murphy College Prep English II, American Literature	<i>I wanted to come to CHS because of its diversity, academic excellence, and committed teachers.</i>	<i>I chose English because I deeply appreciate what we can learn about ourselves, each other, and our society by reading and discussing literature, and I recognize that effective communication is the most important skill a person can possess.</i>
 Adam Dunsker College Prep English II, American Literature	<i>I wanted to come to Clayton because it's a school that others in education around the St. Louis area admire and respect. I taught at another excellent school for the past eight years.</i>	<i>My interest in reading is what drew me to English in the first place. I love attacking a book from new perspectives, which is what we do each time we start a novel with a new class.</i>
 Sarah Maddox Truman Intern in English	<i>Clayton High School has a great reputation--I knew it was a school with knowledgeable, enthusiastic teachers and students.</i>	<i>Studying literature combines two of my favorite things: reading and people. I love looking at the world through a character's eyes--it helps me to understand people better.</i>
 Rick Kordenbrock World/US History II, Sociology, Women's Studies	<i>CHS is an outstanding school with serious students that offers a challenging opportunity to grow as a teacher.</i>	<i>I love studying history and trying to figure out why we as a society and as individuals live the way we do.</i>
 Kurtis Werner Truman Intern in History	<i>I received a full-year internship from Clayton High School through Truman State University. I can both learn the nuts and bolts of teaching and receive my masters in education.</i>	<i>I had some of the most influential social studies teachers a student could ever ask for. In this way, I not only had a great historical education, but made life-long friendships with most of my social studies teachers.</i>
 Kellye Markowski Art I, Digital Photo	<i>I wanted to teach at Clayton High School because in the District's philosophy and feel there is a great deal of support for art education in the district.</i>	<i>In high school I was immediately drawn to art courses and enjoyed them very much, taking as many as my schedule would allow. I had one very special art teacher in high school, Mr. Marshall, who helped me realize my artistic talents.</i>
 Jim Haskins Integ. Math III, Honors Alg/Trig, Geometry	<i>Mr. James called and told me about the opening--great school--what an opportunity!</i>	<i>Math came easy to me and is exciting. It allows me to make a difference.</i>
 Anna Avett Integ. Math II, Algebra II, Honors Geometry	<i>Smaller classes and a tight knit community, and the math department is AWESOME!!</i>	<i>I have always enjoyed math and when I started working towards my teaching certification, I had the most fun when I worked in mathematics classes.</i>



Abbie Minton

A crowd of freshmen heads down the halls of CHS during their orientation. Though some are nervous for the heavier workload of high school, most are excited for the opportunities CHS will provide for their education.

Freshmen gear up for high school

[Ellie Bullard]
Editor

The first week of school may be, in some people's opinion, the worst time of year for high school students.

Returning to school after a relaxing summer is often painful, especially after spending most days on the couch watching television, eating junk food and taking the occasional nap.

However, for the incoming freshmen, this first week of school may be even more painful. Not only do they have to struggle with the back-to-school-blues, but also freshmen have to navigate a new school to find their classes, learn about new rules and freedoms, adjust to the heavier work load and try not to anger upperclassmen. One of the biggest concerns for freshmen may be the difficult workload. Between freshmen physics, geometry, literacy, world history, clubs, sports and dances, schedules quickly become daunting. Many freshmen are especially worried about the work load.

"I am not looking forward to more homework," freshman Elizabeth Sikora said.

Freshman Elle Jacobs agrees. "I guess I'm just nervous about the workload," Jacobs shared.

Another worry for freshmen would be navigating the school halls.

"I'm really excited but also a little confused about where all my classes are," Jacobs said.

Freshmen might also be concerned about having friends in their classes, especially because they are coming into a new school.

"I'm also a little nervous because I don't have a lot of friends in my classes," Sikora said. However, there is a lot for the freshmen to look forward to, including new freedoms that they did not have at Wydown Middle School.

"I am looking forward to meeting lots of new people and I hear there is a lot more freedom than

there is at Wydown," Jacobs said.

"That will be nice."

Sikora agrees. "I am looking forward to more freedom than we had at Wydown," Sikora said.

Additionally, there are dances at Clayton High School, whereas there are none, or very few at Wydown.

"I'm very excited to meet new people and I'm psyched to go to the dances, those should be fun," freshman Josh Goldstein said.

Another pleasure that freshmen can look forward to is school sports.

"I'm looking forward to soccer season the most because I made varsity and I love to play," freshman Kevin Matheny said.

Finally, freshmen have the opportunity to join the many new clubs and groups that CHS offers. Many of them are taking advantage of these opportunities.

"I am planning to join Newspaper," Sikora said. "I might join the Foreign Music Club, and Peers Protecting Peers. Also, I might join the Green Club or Yearbook."

Some freshmen may not decide to do clubs and extracurricular activities their first year at CHS.

"I don't really know what the clubs are yet, but with sports and homework I think I will be pretty busy," Matheny said.

Some freshmen plan to join clubs, but are not sure what their options are yet; they may find that there are so many options that the process of choosing clubs and other after school activities is quite difficult.

"I will definitely join some clubs but I'm not sure which clubs there are so I'm going to find some interesting clubs and join them," Jacobs said.

With the many new opportunities available to freshmen and school work, it is sure to be a busy year for them, but most freshmen seem very excited to join the student body at CHS.

"I can't wait to go to high school! It will be a great experience and it sounds like fun," Jacobs said. ☺

'Talk To Me' tells heartwarming tale



Don Cheadle (from "Hotel Rwanda" and "Crash") stars in 'Talk To Me,' which tells the story of Washington D.C. radio personality Ralph Waldo "Petey" Greene Jr.

Used with permission of Focus Films

[Anya Veremakis]

Editor

Each summer brings highly anticipated movies that quickly evolve into summer blockbuster hits. This summer was no exception, with releases like the ever popular "Harry Potter," "The Bourne Ultimatum" and "Transformers," all raking in millions of dollars. Yet while extremely entertaining and jam-packed with special effects, none could compete with the lesser publicized, "Talk To Me."

Feature Film's "Talk To Me" stars Don Cheadle ("Hotel Rwanda," "Crash," "Traffic" and "Boogie Nights"). The supporting cast contains a mix of old and somewhat familiar faces such as Chiwetel Ejiofor ("Children of Men") as Dewey Hughes, Taraji P. Henson ("Hustle and Flow") as Vernell Watson, Martin Sheen as the radio program's owner and Cedric the Entertainer as "Nighthawk."

The film's truly talented cast brings to life the true story of Ralph Waldo "Petey" Greene Jr.

Greene is an aspiring radio deejay with quite a mouth, unafraid to speak his feelings during the 1960s

in Washington, D.C. The film comically begins by displaying Greene disc-jockeying at his first gig in jail. The audience soon learns that Greene is somewhat of a celebrity in jail for his wit, humor and authenticity. One of Greene's followers, Milo, happens to be the brother of the program director at one of Washington, D.C.'s R&B stations. After Greene cleverly bargains his way out of jail, he tracks down the station director, Dewey Hughes.

Despite a rocky start, Petey proves himself to Hughes and lands himself a job at WOL-AM along with popular disc jockeys like "Nighthawk" and "Sunny Jim." However, just like in jail, Petey's wild spirit and realness regarding race relations captivates his audiences and launches Petey far above the other deejays as a Civil Rights icon, especially after the death of Martin Luther King Jr. As the film continues and Greene becomes more and more famous, he struggles to be faithful to his sassy girlfriend Vernell, battles alcoholism and most of all fights to "tell it like it is."

Using Michael and Rick Famuyiwa's brilliantly written script, Kasi Lemmons effectively conveys the powerful story of Petey Greene while also incorporat-

ing comedy. Not only did Lemmons recreate the 60s from setting to attire, but she also powerfully conveys the strength of Petey Greene during a difficult time in America. While Greene's impact on the Civil Rights Movement was evident after watching the film, it was a bit overshadowed by the story's focus on the relationship between Greene and Hughes and Greene's alcohol problem. Nevertheless, Greene's impact on society and race relations is effectively conveyed and his message to the world is still very apparent.

Without such an amazing cast, though, the message would not have been as clear. From the minor roles to the leading role, it is undeniable that the acting was superb. Although their parts were more minor, actors like Martin Sheen and Cedric the Entertainer both captured their characters and delivered flawless performances. Taraji P. Henson as Vernell Watson, Petey's girlfriend, is a less known actress who still delivers a great performance. Henson's acting is full of energy and effectively conveys her vivacious and powerful character.

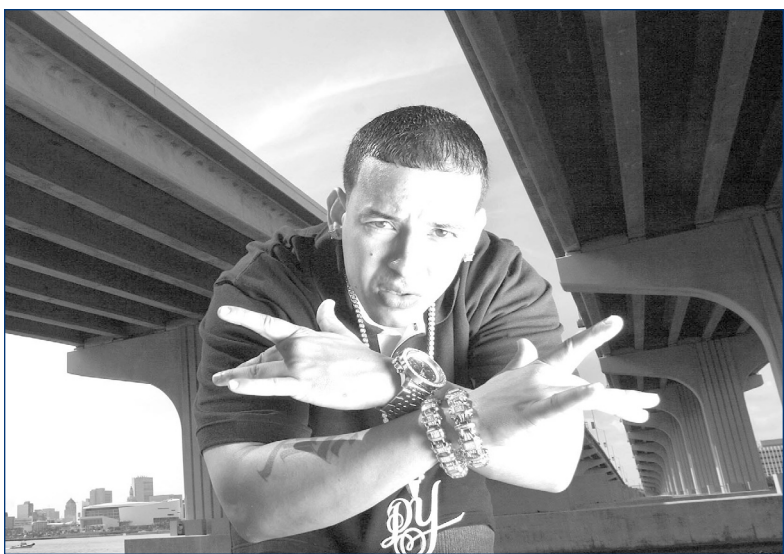
Another less familiar face, Chiwetel Ejiofor, as Dewey Hughes also acted wonderfully. Ejiofor probably

had one of the most complex roles to play, as he skillfully conveys a character who struggles to find himself between his familial roots as a hustler and the influence to be proper and uptight by the white-dominated world he is stuck in.

If any actor deserves credit for his superior acting in a complex role, though, it is Don Cheadle. In "Talk To Me", Cheadle walks, talks and has the spunk of Petey Greene. After playing many roles of the uptight and responsible male figure, Cheadle shows his versatility by capturing the essence of the unrefined hustling ex-con, Petey Greene. Cheadle's acting in this film seems natural and consequently creates a believable captivating character.

The film's excellent acting and powerful story was complemented by a great soundtrack, highlighting R&B oldies. Since the movie is about a radio deejay, the music is an essential part of the movie and enhanced its greatness. With R&B classics like "Say It Loud I'm Black and I'm Proud" by James Brown and "Knock on Wood" by Eddie Floyd, the soundtrack is filled with great music.

The fact that "Talk To Me" is a less-budgeted and less-publicized film is no shortcoming. The film was nevertheless entertaining, powerful and engaging, far beyond the well-known summer blockbusters of 2007. ☺



Reggaeton rapper Daddy Yankee, 28, poses before a concert in Miami, Florida.

Daddy Yankee delivers quality

[Sarah Horn]

Editor

The King of Reggaeton, the Big Boss, Daddy Yankee has finally returned, after three long years, with a new CD, El Cartel: The Big Boss (The Placard: The Big Boss). It's been three years since his hit song "Gasolina" gained him success in the United States, and now as the first track "Jefe" says: The King is back!

Most people have heard of Daddy Yankee thanks to his popular tracks "Gasolina" and "Rompe", but reggaeton is still a fairly well kept secret. Reggaeton is urban music that first developed in Panama and quickly spread to Puerto Rico, the famous home to many popular reggaeton artists, such as Daddy Yankee. Reggaeton definitely draws from hip hop and Jamaican dancehall as well as Latin American influence such as bomba, plena, merengue and bachata, but is distinctly different from Latino hip hop, due to its rhythm called "Dem Bow" (after a dancehall beat popularized by Shabba Banks, one of the first reggaeton artists). Reggaeton often includes rapping in Spanish, English or Spanglish.

El Cartel: The Big Boss is an example of reggaeton at its modern best. The CD includes 21 tracks, and costs \$11 on iTunes. The CD starts off with a longer song titled "Jefe" ("Boss"), which has The Big Boss singing that he is back, and after this slightly long-winded song, the tracks jump right into great

background music coupled with quick and smart lyrics. Some famous English stars join Daddy Yankee, such as Fergie in "Impacto Remix" an upbeat song that includes both English and Spanish lyrics that are a bit easier to follow and sing along with, the Pussycat Doll Nichole Sherzinger in Papi Lover, a slower song with a sultry background that croons about her "king of the heart" and how she was his "from the start". The CD also features Will.i.am in the track "Plane to P.R.", an upbeat song that is an ode to Caribbean senioritas.

In addition I recommend "Ella Me Levanto" ("She raises me up"), which is like a follow up to Daddy Yankee's past hit "Lo que Paso, paso" (What happened, happened). Yankee sings of how after his painful breakup, his new girlfriend "stops him from falling and lifts him up".

With the help of famous producers such as Scott Storch and Will.i.am, Daddy Yankee presents his most multi-faceted album to date, and a fresh example of reggaeton at its finest, mixing the quick rapping, such as in Gasolina, but also with slower tracks. And while you probably won't understand him while he is rapping at his quickest, there is enough English sprinkled in, along with slower Spanish, making it easier to sing along too (or at least look like you might be saying the right words).

As the last track, Impacto (Remix), says, Daddy Yankee has certainly given it all he's got and made an impact! ☺

Kingston shines

[Maddie Harned]

Editor

When it comes to R&B newcomer Sean Kingston's self-titled new album there are two types of listeners. The first group falls madly in love with the insanely catchy, somewhat hypnotic reggae-influenced tracks, singing alone with every hook.

The other group most likely wants to choke the other group before they can finish crooning the first verse. As a whole, some listeners will want to put the album on repeat for days while others will would rather listen to anything but Kingston.

Riding off the success of the CD's first single "Beautiful Girls" it is highly likely that Kingston has a hit album on his hands, chalked full of ready-made hits just waiting to arrive at the top 40 singles chart. However, even the "hate it" group could find some buried treasures hidden between tracks. The 17-year-old singer-rapper's debut album is a musical mash-up of catchiness, immaturity and creativity.

The album's first track, "Kings-

ton," is a strong opener, setting the mood and displaying Kingston's range from gangster rapper to loving boyfriend. The song is a beat-heavy autobiography as well as self-aggrandizing and slightly paranoid, "I'm aware of the snakes / 'Cause they near / They plottin' to get me."

A few minutes later, the second single, "Me Love," can be heard. Think "Beautiful Girls" but catchier, if that's even possible. Love it or hate it, "Me Love's" reggae-style beat and irresistible hook gets stuck in your head for days.

Breakout hit "Beautiful Girls" builds on a hearty helping of Ben E. King's "Stand By Me". It's deceptively joyous melody rails against unfaithful women who leave you "suicidal, suicidal," sparking a controversy over the use of that word as a hook.

With lyrics more fitting for a Weird Al album than a hit CD is the supremely silly track, "Your Sister," in which Kingston sings, "I kissed your sister last night / it ain't my fault / it's just your sister's my type." Whether the lyrics are delightfully humorous or downright laughable is up for debate.

Third 'Bourne' film thrills

[Dakin Sloss]

Senior Managing Editor

Bourne is back with more thrilling action sequences and engaging twists.

"The Bourne Ultimatum" picks up where the previous two left off as Jason Bourne, portrayed by Matt Damon, runs from Moscow police. In the trilogy's final installment, Bourne continues to search for his past, while discovering corruption and treachery within the current agency.

As viewers have come to expect, the storyline is highly entertaining, drawing the audience to the edge of their seats. As Bourne travels internationally, uncovering further tidbits from his pre-assassin life, an informant surfaces through the work of a British journalist. The reporter investigates Blackbriar, the secret operation responsible for CIA assassin training and suddenly becomes the target of both Bourne and CIA operatives. Bourne races to learn the identity of a possibly useful source about Treadstone, the operation under which David

Webb transforms into Jason Bourne. Meanwhile, the CIA attempts to cover up its tracks and erase all incriminating evidence.

The new director of covert operations, Noah Vosen (David Strathairn), recruits Pamela Landy (Joan Allen) who tracked Bourne in the previous film and Nicky Parsons (Julia Stiles). The three, in addition to a brief cameo by Albert Finney as Dr. Albert Hirsch, a significant figure in Bourne's dark past, serve as the supporting actors. Each cast member delivers and unique and superbly crafted performance.

Allen portrays a realistic and sympathetic Landy. She becomes a complex character, not only working for the CIA, but also assisting Bourne in his mission to rediscover his alter ego David Webb. As Bourne uncovers deep corruption, she pities him and scorns the power-hungry Vosen leading a never-ending chain of assassinations. Allen supplies the much-needed compassion, complementing the cold disposition of the various heartless killers and CIA officials.

Opposite Allen, Strathairn excellently fills the role of a man with



Courtesy of Amazon

Kingston continues his unorthodox musical blends on "I Can Feel It," the most surprising song on the album. Sampling Phil Collin's haunting "In the Air Tonight," "I Can Feel It" sounds nothing like the rest of the tracks.

Both musically and lyrically the CD has a lot going on, and even

older singers might get lost in the mix. Ranging from the scruffy ode to his jailed mother in "Dry Your Eyes" to the shocking grit of "Colors" Kingston's lively persona and fluid delivery keep the disc focused, fresh and – thanks to some crafty sampling of a few pop classics – strangely familiar. ☺

too much power who has begun to use it unrestrainedly, ordering the assassination of nearly everyone in sight. He tries to protect CIA secrets, but in order to do so he is willing to eliminate anyone, including CIA officials. His acting is also superb and convincing.

Leading the high quality acting, Matt Damon delivers a nearly flawless Jason Bourne. The character continues to grow in complexity as we learn about his mysterious transformation into an assassin. As Bourne battles numerous assassins, his memory is intertwined with the action. Blurry and provoking segments erupt, further sparking audience curiosity.

Bourne's growth and rediscovery of the past create the image of not only a highly trained and efficient assassin, but also a compassionate and thoughtful man, struggling to do what is right and still survive. Damon perfects both the resourceful machine-like combat and the humane, caring individual who struggles with the ultimate identity crisis. This mixture effectively touches and entertains viewers, making it an all around appeal-

ing film. Damon will have trouble topping this more than adeptly portrayed character.

The film could not be the brilliant creation it is without the genius of director Paul Greengrass. His vivid depiction of the frightening counter-terrorism CIA operations evokes thoughts of "Couldn't this be happening right now?" Alongside the realistic accomplishment, Greengrass effectively includes the stunning chase and combat scenes. With cameras rapidly switching perspective and winding round, audiences feel as if they are actually in the fight. Effective camera work makes would be mediocre sequences into unforgettable action. By the end of the automobile chase, every viewer's heart should be pounding in exhilaration.

Despite the appeal to adrenaline, the film is still a broader and deeper product. Viewers leave the theater with an appreciation of meaningful topics such as justice, corruption, the value of life and a surprise romance. It has something to offer everyone and that is the result of Greengrass's outstanding direction. ☺

Extreme heat creates dangerous conditions for sports teams

[Phillip Levine]
Editor

Scorching temperatures appeared throughout the United States this summer and Saint Louis came at the top, breaking its previous record highs on both Aug. 14 and Aug. 15 with temperatures of 105 and 104 degrees. With the unquestionably dangerous conditions, sports teams have to be careful about practicing outside in the extreme heat.

The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), the governing body for all high school activities and athletics in Missouri has specific guidelines for situations of this nature. According to MSHSAA, "If a heat index over 105 degrees is stated, plans to postpone or reschedule...should be implemented."

Although the rule is purely for safety, various repercussions have occurred as a result of the inability to practice outside for so many days and for such a long time during each day.

"It has been ridiculously hot," senior soccer player Scott Belsky said. "As a result, it's just been really tough competing with the weather for practice time. It isn't that it's harmful to us to not practice, it's just that it keeps us from practicing as much as we would want to in order to get to our full potential."

Teams need to change their normal practice times to other times during the day, move indoors whenever possible and even sometimes completely cancel all practices for the day. It is tough for a coach to maintain a two-a-day practice schedule when the weather is constantly overriding him.

"The heat is really affecting the team," senior field hockey player Leigh Katz said. "We have to wake up at 5:30 and get up and be ready to go a little before 6 a.m. Our practices are from 6 a.m. until 8 a.m., which is tough to handle. We all have to go to sleep much earlier than normal and take naps during the day. In the past, the team has had two-a-days, but because of the heat, we can only practice in the morning, and so we try to make it count and have really intense practices. Both the conditioning aspect and the ball work are all crunched into the same practice and it makes it more intense."

Coaches have been beginning to get frustrated about the heat and the problems that it has caused.

Varsity soccer coach Matt Balossi believes that it has been more of a nuisance this year than it has been helpful.

"Usually the heat helps us to condition ourselves better, but this year it has definitely been more of a pain," Balossi said. "Our morning practices moved from eight to seven in the morning and our afternoon practices have been changed from three to six in the afternoon. Often we have had to cancel practices altogether because of the severity of the circumstances. Obviously safety comes first but it is difficult to practice with limited facilities."

The soccer team usually practices on Gay Field but because the Astroturf holds in the heat, late night practices aren't even possible. Additionally, many of the Shaw Park fields are reserved for recreational softball



The varsity boys' soccer team rests during one of the two team daily practices. Because of extreme heat, the team had to change practice times to cooler hours of the day.

games and the like.

Most teams have had to change their routine in some way throughout the course of the two week preseason stretch. In addition to the change in practice times, the practices themselves have had to be altered.

"We have to get water breaks at least every 10 or 15 minutes," said senior football player Tucker Szybala. "With pads covering our body, it is just so incredibly hot and there is lots of dehydration. We have gone inside lots of the afternoons because of the temperature but we can't hit inside because it just isn't the same atmosphere. The only benefit is that we get more prepared for hotter situations by practicing in the extreme heat."

Both Belsky and Katz agree that the players get better conditioned by practicing in the hot weather.

Carrie Sickmann, trainer for CHS athletics, is out on the field with the teams taking measurements of the heat index as well as making sure that the players do not suffer the various heat related illnesses.

"I simply abide by MSHSAA regulations," said Sickmann. "The conditions that occur in the athletes as a result of the heat such as heat cramps, heat syn-

cope, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. If coaches see a kid struggling with heat, they will tell them to sit down. Various signs might be a kid looking dazed and confused, being pale or looking fatigued and the tell tale sign is when an athlete stops sweating. I stress to them the necessity of water and additionally Gatorade, which replaces the electrolytes in their bodies."

Many players have seen the effects of the heat as well.

"Everyone is always thirsty," said Katz. "And people often get light-headed and exhausted."

Szybala remarks that he often sees a few kids throw up each day at football practice.

"This heat will delay our expectations for the first week of the season," said Balossi. "I really do think though that my guys have held up very well under the heat. We have had very few problems, other than the players simply being physically exhausted, which is normal for preseason."

Regardless of whether or not the heat is helpful in conditioning the players, extreme heat is a dangerous situation and being outside for hours can be disastrous. ☹

Bonds remains a homerun king despite suspected steroid use

Distance between pitchers mound and home plate: 60 feet 6 inches

Minimum pitch speed: 75 mph

Maximum pitch speed: 100 mph

Pitch type: Any

Hitting a major league pitch is the hardest thing to do in sports—hitting it 400 feet for a homerun is unathomable—and Barry Bonds is the homerun king.

I watched the San Francisco Giants games on Aug. 4 when Barry Bonds belted his 755th career homerun, tying Hank Aaron's all-time record, and the game on Aug. 8 when Bonds passed Aaron on the all-time list with his 756th home run with a monster shot against Washington National's pitcher Mike Bacsik.

Although I'm incredibly relieved that I don't have to watch any more Giants games, I'm glad I witnessed history—however tainted the record may be. Hey, it's the steroids era.

Everyone takes or has taken steroids or some other performance enhancing drugs. Ever since the 1998 season when Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa contended for the home run record, baseball made its comeback with only one thing to thank; steroids.

That season was responsible for bringing fans back to baseball, after the 1994 MLB strike caused many to leave, and they came to see the long-ball, which nobody except Barry Bonds has perfected.

Of course, he may not have achieved the feat the same way as some other players, mainly Aaron and Ruth, but they played in different times and nobody can be blamed for that.

At the end of the day, Bonds sits alone at the top of the list, and nobody can deny the fact that he will go down in history as one of the greatest hitters and greatest overall baseball players of all time.

His stats are remarkable, even beyond the homerun record. First of all, he is the only player in MLB history to be in the 400-400 club, which means that he has stolen at least 400 bases and hit at least 400 homeruns—and now he is a 500-500 player. Bonds is also a seven-time NL MVP, an eight-time outfield Rawlings Gold Glove Award-Winner, as well as many other accolades.

To be honest, I would like to own up to some premature comments I made about Bonds in a column I wrote last spring attacking Bonds for his potential steroid use. I have changed my mind in how I view Bonds and his record, and can accept the fact that I may have made a mistake. As mentioned above, Bonds is a great—and legendary—player regardless of his off-field activities and whether I, or anybody else likes it, he does have the record and has not been proven guilty of steroid use.

With that said, I would also like to add that Bonds' record-breaking performance was quite different from Aaron's since Aaron battled racial issues as an African American breaking a famous white man's (Babe Ruth) record in the Deep South.

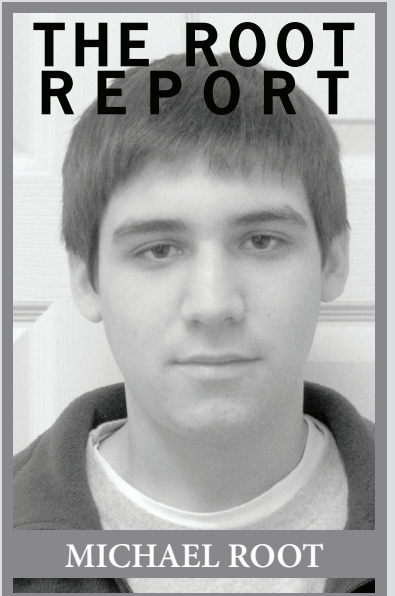
Aaron's homerun was a spectacular moment that provokes the ultimate question—Where were you when...?—which people ask with monumental events such as the assassination of John F. Kennedy, or most recently the Sept. 11 attacks. Bonds' record-breaking performance, however cool it was to see, will probably not (at least in my life) rank high on monumental events. Will I remember where I was, who I was with, what I was wearing, or any other minute detail of the event? No, but I could be wrong.

I would also like to point out one more fundamental difference between Bonds and Aaron. Strictly from media interviews, I perceive Bonds as an arrogant and bitter person especially with tons of media attention, whereas Aaron is the complete opposite.

Aaron is a stand-up, classy guy, who, despite the constant media bombardment trying to figure out his opinion regarding Bonds and the steroids issue, even had a taped message to Bonds that was played at the game Bonds broke his record. I have a feeling Bonds, if given the opportunity, would not return the favor to a player who breaks his record.

On another note, I would like to make a comment regarding MLB Commissioner Bud Selig's actions regarding his attendance at the games Bonds tied and broke the record. I agree with Selig's thinking of not committing either way until Bonds was one homerun away, but after Selig attended the game where Bonds tied the record, I believe he was obligated, as the senior representative of baseball, to attend the next games until Bonds broke the record. Selig, however, was not in attendance but sent some lower-ranking officials to the game instead. This was irresponsible and wrong, however controversial Bonds may be.

So, with the record changing hands in my lifetime, I am looking forward to the next 10 to 15 seasons where players like Albert Pujols and Alex Rodriguez have the opportunity—however slim—to break Bonds' record. Who knows what will happen next? I sure don't. ☹



Athletic department gains various coaches

[Ugochi Onyema]
Editor

As the new year begins, many changes are taking place around the school. One place that has experienced changes is within the Athletic staff. This fall, six sports will gain new coaches.

Cross Country will acquire Mike Nelke as head coach and Kurtis Werner and Jeremy Rauch as assistant coaches. The volleyball team will be coached by Christian Juenger, as head coach, Liz Overberg, Jessica DiPaolo and Jennifer Hall. Coaching the Field Hockey teams will be Caitlin Plein, Anne Wolken and Libby Bollinger. Rich Chappuis will help coach tennis this year, while Barry Ford, who used to coach girls' basketball and girls' track and field, will be coaching the football team. Although this seems like an abnormal number of new coaches, Athletic Director Bob Bone says that it is quite the contrary.

"I don't think that this is an unusual number of coaches," Bone said, "but we seem to have a lot of turnover from year to year."

Many of the new coaches are not teachers at CHS, and Bone attributes that to the variety of sports offered at CHS.

"Clayton is a little bit unusual because we offer over 20 different sports, which is more than a school twice our size would offer," Bone said. "Our pool for finding coaches is very small and that hinders us in terms of finding teachers who coach."

According to Bone, the Athletic Department had to

go beyond the district to find some of the new coaches, but they all have experience coaching.

"We did have to go outside the district to find some of the coaches," Bone said, "But most of them have experience in coaching. I don't think that there is anyone that we hired that hasn't had any experience."

Junior Katie Poplawski, a member of the cross country team, is getting used to her new coaches.

"Our coaches are pretty good and really enthusiastic," Poplawski said, "but they are getting adjusted to the team."

The field hockey team has also made some changes to its coaching staff. Laura Bliss, a member of the varsity field hockey team, said that only one coach has been added to the varsity coaching staff.

"The only addition has been Caitlin [Plein] as assistant coach," Bliss said. "We already knew that Lizzy [Dooley] would be gone this year. I haven't interacted much with Caitlin, but from what I've seen, Caitlin has been pretty helpful and nice."

Poplawski said that she wasn't surprised upon discovering that there would be new cross country

coaches.

"We weren't surprised that we would be getting new coaches because Ms. Etling made it pretty clear that she would be gone during the season," Poplawski said. "We were just happy to have coaches because we weren't sure if the assistant coach would be moving up to head coach, and we didn't have a coach until a couple of weeks ago because they hadn't been assigned yet."

Poplawski said that the coaches are doing a good job of adjusting to the team dynamic.

"The coaches are really trying to connect with the team and keep the old team traditions like team dinners around."

CHS isn't only acquiring new coaches. Lee Laskowski, a CHS graduate himself, will be replacing Matt Willett as the Assistant Athletic Director. Laskowski's main duties will be to make sure that athletes are meeting the CHS eligibility and Missouri State High School Activities Association requirements, monitor the academic records athletes and assist coaches with any problems that may arise. However, Laskowski has many more duties, such as monitoring middle school athletics and the supervision of the rental of Gay Field. ☹

The coaches are really trying to connect with the team and keep the old team traditions like team dinners, which is a good thing.

[Katie Poplawski]
Junior

AUGUST SPORTS EVENTS

AUG. 27

4 p.m. Girls Varsity Tennis @ Webster Groves
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Golf vs. Farmington
4:15 p.m. Boys Varsity Soccer - MICDS Tournament
4:15 p.m. Boys JV Soccer - Ladue Tournament vs. Whitfield

AUG. 28

4 p.m. Girls JV Volleyball @ Riverview Gardens
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Softball - Suburban East Tournament
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Tennis vs. University City
4 p.m. Girls Freshman Volleyball @ Riverview Gardens
4 p.m. Girls JV Field Hockey vs. John Burroughs
4 p.m. Boys Freshman Soccer - Parkway Tournament @ Hazelwood West
5:15 p.m. Girls Varsity Volleyball @ Riverview Gardens
5:30 p.m. Girls Varsity Field Hockey vs. John Burroughs

AUG. 29

TBA Girls Varsity Softball - Suburban East Tournament
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Tennis @ Eureka
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Golf vs. Villa
4 p.m. Boys Freshman Soccer - Parkway Tournament
4:15 p.m. Boys Varsity Soccer - MICDS Tournament
4:15 p.m. Boys JV Soccer - Ladue Tournament vs. MICDS

AUG. 30

TBA Girls Varsity Softball - Suburban East Tourn
4 p.m. Boys Freshman Soccer - Parkway Tournament
4 p.m. Girls Freshman Volleyball @ MICDS
5 p.m. Girls Junior Varsity Volleyball @ MICDS
6 p.m. Girls Varsity Volleyball @ MICDS
7 p.m. Boys Varsity Football VS. Lutheran North

AUG. 31

TBA Girls Varsity Field Hockey - Gateway Classic @ Soccer Park
4 p.m. Boys/Girls Varsity Cross Country - St. Charles Invitational @ McNair Park
4 p.m. Girls JV Tennis @ Berkeley
4 p.m. Girls Varsity Softball @ Riverview Gardens
4:15 p.m. Boys JV Football @ Lutheran North
4:15 p.m. Boys Varsity Soccer - MICDS Tournament
4:15 p.m. Boys JV Soccer - Ladue Tournament @ John Burroughs

FADING INNOCENCE

America today offers a playground for the timeless pull between classic values and the way of the future. But when that pull centers on America's children and their innocence, an extensive tug-of-war ensues over which way the future is headed.

[Kelly Moffitt]

Co-Editor in Chief

What used to be Legos has become the Sims; the Madame Alexander doll, a Bratz playmate; Hotwheels, an actual miniature MiniCooperConvertible; the singing stuffed lion, an iPod. If these examples don't portray the difference between the kids of America today and 15 years ago, just think: even the Rugrats are "All Grown Up."

Recently, the timeless debate raging between old and new, technology and antiquity, moving forward and staying back—has manifested itself again in the topic of age-appropriate growth in children.

Much of the controversy over questions dealing with children "growing old too fast" and "maturing too quickly" came about with the release of *Parents, Children & Media: A Kaiser Family Foundation Survey*, on June 9, 2007. The survey of 1,008 parents of children aged 2 through 17, boasts startling statistics about the impact of modern media on the growing child.

For example, 55 percent of parents polled think that recent sexuality in the media is the biggest influence pushing kids to sexual activity before they are ready. Some 43 percent think violence in the media is a big influence on violent behavior in children. And a whopping 66 percent favor new regulations to limit the amount of sex and violence as portrayed in early evening television shows.

Alice Morrison, freshman counselor, adamantly believes the influence of media on children has heightened in recent years.

"It's easy to say the media has influenced kids more now than at any other time because information about tragic things in this world is in every kid's face," Morrison said. "It was once easier to insulate kids from such tragedy—war, rape, national disasters. Now, more personal and familial strength is needed to get through these things. Kids don't have a place to put tragic things during middle school. Adults and older siblings need to be constantly protecting and framing such events for the younger ones."

In some cases parents are pointing the finger at media in today's world because they don't want to recognize the level of heightened sexuality and violence in America, from government officials to popstars. To come full circle, however, the media tends to accentuate these aspects of American citizenship.

perception that there is more violence and sexuality than there actually is, leading to more hysteria than is necessary.

While most parents have come to grips with the fact teens will always be pushing the bounds of what is socially acceptable, they seem to be most alarmed with the growing trend of the "tween" set (10 to 14-year-olds) tending towards more 'adult' behavior.

Tara Hoyne, mother of two boys—a first and second grader—has witnessed this trend firsthand from their respective schools, Meramec Elementary and Wydown Middle School.

"I think there is a mixture of maturity amongst the kids my seventh grader's age: some kids you wonder who let them out of the house dressed the way they are; others have obviously grown up in a sheltered environment, with A-type parents making sure they stay in line," Hoyne said. "At fifth grade parents night—I'll never forget it—I overheard some girls in my seventh grader's class saying 'Oh good, we've got the good boys in our class this year.' They were dressed like they were 17, and I guess I was surprised to see them acting so teen-like."

Are the conditions of today's world pushing children to act differently than they did before? Morrison doesn't think so.

"When I start to think about all that is different about this decade from the last, [I think of] crime, terrorism, pressure, families splitting up—all the 'ugly' things so life seems sort of overwhelming," Morrison said. "Yet, I think back on every other generation and I realize they all have had things that keep parents up at night. I don't think, in the last 15 years, that middle schoolers seem to be using, smoking, participating in sexual activity any more than they did. Every cycle of kids wants to think they are more active—sexually, socially—than the years before."

However, Morrison does believe that the schedules kids are taking up in today's America, are forcing them to process new, somewhat alarming news too quickly.

"I don't know if the life, the time schedule that kids and teenagers are taking on with school, community, friends, and family amazes me or scares me," Morrison said. "I don't think it's healthy to be inundated by information 24/7, like they are today. Cell phones, instant messenger, e-mail, the internet—

stant gratification and immediate response of these modes of communication gives kids no time, to think, mull, and decide in general."

According to Morrison, the time once available for kids to shape their personal values, self-worth, and decision-making skills is fading away, forcing them into situations they aren't prepared for.

"It's part of the human condition to question identity," Morrison said. "However, the press for time, the lack thereof, leaves no time to flow into your own identity, and leaves many kids conflicted, stressed, and sometimes without any identity." This, combined with a "tween's" natural tendency to begin self-doubt during the middle school years, is part of what is accelerating "tween" maturation.

[Tara Hoyne] mother

"There is a drive that begins in elementary school, but hits hard during middle school, to fit in and belong," Morrison said. "There is pressure not to miss out on anything—no missed phone calls, parties, sleepovers, coffees at Starbucks—because they think they'll never be invited again. They want to fit into the older persona that they think they understand. They want to be mature, cool, popular, and generally more teen-like, though they may not yet be a teenager."

As well, they are in between a rock and a hard place in terms of who to take the lead from. "When children move into teenage years, they start to move away, emotionally, from their family and start identifying more with their peer group," Morrison said. "When middle schoolers have no true identity they will take on the pop culture of the moment, in order to fit and belong."

Today's pop culture has undeniably more sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence than ever before (though the amount in yesterday's media had the same relative shock value), which may be one of the reasons "twens" are tending towards more provocative, teen-associated behaviors earlier.

Hoyne sees more sexually "mature" behavior being displayed by the girls who attend Wydown. "I still remember being interested in boys before they were interested back," Hoyne said. "Today, it seems as if the girls are interested in the boys at a much earlier age. But, as I only have boys I only have a one-sided view. We have had the phone calls, the door bell ringing, the break-ups already in sixth grade. It all seems rather innocent even if the "talk" sounds much more mature. And, the boys I know are still a bit clueless really."

Morrison, a former Wydown counselor, believes the variety of levels of sexual maturity in middle school can lead to peer-influence or perception.

"It's peer influence, not pressure, that pushes younger kids to do things they normally wouldn't," Morrison said. "The perception that 'everybody's doing it' pushes them to actually do things, whether it's the reality or not. The perception is there, and the kids will emulate what they allow themselves to think."

Another factor in maturation is simply the physical evolution of America's modern child. "Physically, just the appearance of students is maturing," Morrison said. "Look around. Beyond hairstyles, clothing, and makeup, kids are just growing faster. Is it evolution, genetics, the food we're eating? Physiologically, with the accelerated maturation of the body, and the onset of hormones, kids are put in conflicting situations around the age of 11 or 12. They are treated older because of their looks, but that doesn't necessarily equate with emotional or social maturity."

Hoyne, who grew up in Clayton's neighboring University City, sees a complete change from the rules and regulations of childhood in yesteryear, which may have contributed to a slower rate of maturation. "I can see my twelve-year-old growing up faster, without him even realizing it," Hoyne said. "He acts older than I did at his age: he hangs out at Starbucks with his friends and he wants the independence to do it by himself without me checking in on him. When I was his age, my parents didn't let me walk around Clayton by myself. There are definitely pressures to act older and more independent, even if they aren't really at that stage yet."

Realizing how old the seventh grader acts already is making her nervous for his high school experience.

"I'm in denial about high school for my son," Hoyne said. "That really does scare me. . . Sometimes we discuss my high school experiences because, even though he is in middle school now, I worry that he'll feel the pressures now that I felt in high school, in middle school. Hopefully I am getting some ideas through to him like showing respect to girls and others in general, making individual decisions instead of relying on his peers, etc'. I think kids are categorizing each other, labeling who the "cool kids" are, etc. and I hope to see my son embrace kids of all types and think for himself. We all want our kids to be leaders instead of followers."

Like every cycle of radical change, the backwash of conservatism always comes, and this debate is no different. Since the threat of the erasure of more childhood innocence became apparent, many parents and schools are attempting to crack down on early maturation, in both the media and students' everyday lives. Unfortunately, this crackdown is forcing students to grow up faster in a different way, into a more stressful and pressurized lifestyle. "My concern, like all parents, is to make sure they are safe and well-balanced," Hoyne said. "Kids are still going to find ways to do things you don't approve of, no matter how sheltered you keep them. But I try to keep the lines of communication open so I can offer the best advice I can come up with and, at the same time, have some idea of what they are up to."

Sometimes I bring up my high school experiences [with my son] while he is in middle school because I'm worried he'll feel the pressures now, that I felt during high school.

The potential implication of growing up too fast is that children are more likely to engage in activities before they are developmentally prepared.

[Nichole Thompson] Ph.D.

The issue of parent restriction is particularly debated in terms of parental involvement in a child's schooling.

"Today, there is much more parent involvement," Hoyne said. "And it can sometimes be quite a sensitive subject to discuss amongst parents. I may not be in the mainstream of opinion here - I'm not sure if a lot of parent involvement is good. I came from a situation where my parents were not involved with my school at all and I am not advocating that. Some parent involvement at school is wonderful. But, there can also be too much of a good thing."

For Hoyne, massive parental involvement hinders the child's learning experience.

"I keep in contact with other parents and some of their involvement is a bit overwhelming," Hoyne said. "I don't think it's in the best interest of the child. I believe that if you keep the bar high for your child, they will strive. If they don't succeed, then at least they did their best. Each child's best is different, and each requires a different environment to bring it out of them."

In terms of children's social lives, many parents attempt to control their children's socialization, especially in the romantic sense.

"I would rather let my 12-year-old make his own decisions about dating rather than trying to restrict him now," Hoyne said. "However, there are guidelines: I want to know where, when, and who he's with. I want him to know to call me if he needs help."

Morrison works with families with this tension about involvement often, both about involvement in the classroom and their general daily life.

"Are parents too involved or not enough?" Morrison said. "Every case is different. I think, truly, most parents love their children and wake up every morning, thinking, 'I want to be the best parent I can be today.' That love can force them to try to manipulate and control their kids to keep them safe. On the flip, there are parents who are emotionally absent in children's lives. Like anything, there needs to be a balance between not letting your child trip and fall at all and letting them fall in too deep; there must be room to make some mistakes."

She also comments that many times, it is the child who is forcing the high-pressure environment of their academics. Morrison is not sure of what is healthiest for the child. "Time will tell whether the pressure to excel is appropriate and helpful," Morrison said. "Lack of drive isn't a great result; that has been shown. In the end, there has got to be balance: under-involvement creates boredom, being over-active creates stress and surface commitment. The goal would be to find the happy medium, and everyone's is different."

Both the allowance of accelerated maturation and the complete control of it offer potential risks for the children, both forcing them to grow up faster into different people.

"The potential implication of 'growing up to fast' is that children are more likely to engage in behaviors before they are developmentally prepared, both emotionally and cognitively," Nichole Thompson, Assistant Research Professor at the Missouri Institute of Mental Health, said. "The impact of this is very complex and will be different for every person, but generally may result in risk behavior that has unintended consequences: unplanned pregnancy and/or contracting STDs, contact with police, drug and alcohol use, etc."

Because the age range for growing up faster is younger than before, consequences can be dire.

"These consequences are particularly harmful for young people because they may lack the emotional maturity to cope with the unintended, negative outcomes," Thompson said. "The potential effect on the child's psyche is vast: increased stress, anxiety, depression, conduct problems, relationship issues (especially within family), poor self-concept, and issues with identity formation are some of the results."

Thompson believes that the effects will vary based on the individual characteristics of the child and his or her environment, specifically citing the quality of support from others as a contributing factor. Support from older influences is what Morrison believes will help children as they are faced with the pressures of maturation. "You'd be surprised how often middle schoolers cite their biggest influence being their older siblings," Morrison said. "They are always watching older kids carefully for tips on how to fit in better. Older teens are really building the legacy of what's acceptable and what's not, not necessarily building a legacy of maturity. If high schoolers gave a consistently healthy message, they could have a lot of power in keeping younger kids safe."

In terms of what adults can do to effectively support and nurture children ("twens," teens and otherwise) as they grow up in today's America and world, she believes balance is key. "Adults can help by instituting open communications. A kid needs adults in their life, parents or otherwise, to give perspective and balance," Morrison said. "They need people to say 'it's all going to be all right; you'll have an amazing life even if you screw up once in awhile.'"

The toys may be different, the media more up-front, the clothing more revealing but the fact is this; children will grow up, sometime. "My opinion on kids these days is that I see a huge amount of potential and ability, and a lot more expected of them at an earlier age," Hoyne said. "It's not up to us to solve all of their problems for them—it's part of their growing experience, perhaps for us parents as well. The world is a more challenging place today than it once was, they need to be prepared for it. All I try to do is take a breath, have them do their best, and enjoy the experience."



How do Clayton eighth graders compare to national statistics?

	Clayton	National
Marijuana use in the past 30 days	5%	6.5%
Been in a physical fight in the past year	28%	15%
Tried Alcohol	52%	34%
Tried LSD in the past 30 days	1%	.4%

Statistics taken from "OVERVIEW OF DRUG/MENTAL HEALTH/VIOLENCE STATISTICS OVERVIEW OF DRUG/MENTAL HEALTH/VIOLENCE STATISTICS: Wydown Middle School", "Monitoring the Future: National Results of Adolescent Drug Use," and "Research Brief: current trends in adolescent school-related violence." All statistics were taken from eighth graders in the year 2006.