



Former President, now Prime Minister, of Russia, Vladimir Putin and former President George W. Bush speak to the media in 2005. MCT

## U.S. relations with Russia in the midst of change

Jonathan Shumway  
Reporter

In the last half century, two superpowers have dominated world affairs: the United States and Russia. As enemies in the Cold War, relations between the two countries have always been tense and guarded. Even since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has continued to be a world player, and watchful of U.S. actions, as the United States is to theirs.

One of the several controversial subjects with Russia is their government. Though Russia may claim representing some democratic ideas, such as their check balances system, it can be disputed on the validity of this claim.

An example of this was when Dmitry Mendvedev, the former Chairman of Gazprom, a state-owned petroleum institution, was chosen to be chosen as President. Vladimir Putin, then acting President changed to the role of Prime Minister.

"It suggests that Putin is still in control of the government, just perhaps in a less obvious or public way," social studies teacher Paul Hoelscher said. "I don't consider it a true representational system of government, but I do believe they will continue to add more and more elements of public participation."

Not only has there been corruption in government, but also an increase in crime. Marsha Orgill, an attorney who works in Clayton, lived in Russia in 1979 said, "When I went there in 1979, there seemed to be much regulation order, and because of this, Russia was a very safe and crime-free place, now since the fall of the Iron Curtain, there has been an increase crime and disorder, then there was before."

The Economist says that Russia has a "corruption market is estimated to be close to \$300 billion," says the Economist. (November 27, 2008) Not only this, but "80% of all Russian businesses pay bribes, in the past eight years the size of the average business bribe has gone up from \$10,000 to \$130,000." This shows how crime has increased indeed, at least in the "corruption market."

To understand the underlying policies and industry of Russia, Gazprom must be recognized as a key figure in its economy. It generates 20 percent of tax revenues and also has been used to buy up media stations, according to the New York Times. (January 8, 2009)

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Gazprom helped make Russia what it is today. Though Gazprom has made a significant influence on Russia, it may have too much of a dependence on the institution, leading to an at-risk, undiversified economy.

"They are currently flush with petrodollars and their economy is not diversified enough to continue at this rate for the next 50 years," Hoelscher said.

In recent weeks, Russia has cut natural gas supplies from

Ukraine, which supplies 80 percent of transit of gas supplies from Russia to the rest Europe, claiming that Ukraine was "stealing" from Russia, said the Economist. (January 8, 2009)

However, Ukraine has claimed that although it has been underpaying for its gas, it was also undercharging Gazprom for gas transit to Europe, according to the Economist. (January 8, 2009)

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has attempted to continue to have power and influence over the former Soviet nations. Russia has been reluctant to let Eastern European countries join the European Union, since it shows that those countries are leaning towards the West instead of Russia.

From this incident of dispute between Ukraine and Russia, it shows how, "Russia has portrayed Ukraine as a flaky transit country that is jeopardizing European energy security and is thus unfit for any form of integration with the EU.," said the Economist. (January 8, 2008)

The Ukrainians say that it shows Russia as a "bully that uses gas as a political weapon," said the Economist. (January 8, 2008)

Though Russia may be able to use gas as tool in politics, it might backlash on them, since there is talk in some Eastern European countries of diversifying their energy, and lowering their dependence on Russia gas.

"Both Bulgaria and Slovakia are threatening to reopen nuclear reactors closed as a condition of joining the EU," says the Economist. (January 15, 2009)

Not only this, but there is also discussion about "Nabucco, a pipeline to bring gas from Central Asia and the Caspian to Europe via Turkey," says the Economist. (January 25, 2009)

If Eastern Europe were to diversify their supplies, they would then lose their reliance on Russia, for its gas, then Eastern Europe would have more choice in its action, instead of having to deal with the Russia, when chooses to do something unpopular in Russia's perspective.

In the past years, U.S relations with Russia have improved, but still clashes of each other's opinions and policies occur such as the incident of Georgia with Russia in August occur. Interestingly, the present American Ambassadors to Russia, John Beryle's father fought with the Russians on the Eastern Front. This illustrates that while the U.S. and Russia have differences, they also have similarities, where they have fought against a common evil together.

From the old Soviet Union, to Russia to the present, relations with the U.S. have been throughout time cautious and slow.

Russia continues and will continue to play a major role in world politics, but even so, not to the degree that it did, when it was Soviet Union. Hopefully, Russia has started to go toward a more democratic direction in government, but only time will tell, what will really happen. ☺

## With Obama inauguration Democrats take control of D.C.

Not since the Carter administration has the nation been led by a Democratic president and a significant Democratic majority in congress.

Gabrielle Lachtrup  
Reporter

Thirty years have passed, and Washington is a vastly different place. Our nation inaugurated our first African-American president. It has been three decades since any party has so dominated our nation's capital. Furthermore, the era of Jimmy Carter marked the last time a Democratic majority in the Senate has ever been so influential or massive.

With 58 Democratic senators, and the strong potential of 59 if Norm Coleman's challenge of Al Franken's senatorial victory in Minnesota remains unacknowledged, the party is a mere one or two seats away from a filibuster-proof majority. This change, a massive upheaval from the razor-thin margin of 51 to 49 in the previous congressional race, is an even greater one considering the 10-year Republican domination of the House and Senate before that time. How did such a massive change occur, and more importantly, what will result from it?

"I think [the change] stems from dissatisfaction with the Republican party in general, you know, with incidents surrounding the War on Terror, the abuses at Abu Ghraib, certainly what happened at Gitmo [Guantanamo], CHS English teacher Dave Jenkins said.

CHS history teacher Kurtis Werner cited a more personal approach.

"To be honest, over time, candidates stand out," Werner said. "Obama proved to be a strong, popular candidate, particularly among middle-of-the-road voters. I think that in both the White House and the Senate, people wanted a change due to what happened in the executive branch. They were not seeing the results they wanted."

Others think that the change in Congress is due to the emotional state of the American people.

"I think people were frustrated, certainly partially with the economy, which I think affected swing voters the most," CHS debate coach and teacher Brenda Bollinger said. "Those opposed to the war, another big issue, were probably already Democrats to begin with."

Jenkins agreed with Bollinger. He thought that the economy was an issue that persuaded the United States to favor a democratic majority.

"I think a lot of people would point fingers at the economy," said Jenkins, "but I personally think it was almost more of an afterthought, sort of the straw that broke the camel's back to people who were likely already leaning one way or another. Maybe the economy solidified some peoples thinking, but essentially I think it was just icing on the cake."

Like Jenkins, CHS Learner Center teacher Janet Curry cites issues other than the economy for the Democrats' victory.

"By 2006, both Iraq and Afghanistan [wars] were still underway and it most be noted that from October 2001 to December of 2001, more civilians had been killed in Afghanistan than in the 9/11 attacks," Curry said. "This left some of us wondering who the good guys really were."

An underlying theme throughout all the responses was the desire for change.

"Our system of government is essentially a giant scale of checks and balances," Werner said. "When one branch of the government grows in power, often there is a change or shift in power towards the other side."

Jenkins said he was not very predisposed to vote for any Republican this year.

"I thought it was time for a change, mostly because I guess

I perceived the current administration as not very responsive to the will of the people," Jenkins said. "They seemed to have a very isolationist, arrogant attitude."

What bothered Curry was "the deliberate use of cluster bombs [in Afghanistan] rather than a different type of explosive bombs"

"They often failed to explode, and were later picked up by children, whose limbs were blown off... we saw tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians dead, as well as significant figures of U.S. troops wounded both physically and psychologically," Curry said. "People had simply had enough."

Curry, however, is hopeful that the new Democratic majority means help is on the way. "We need, and will hopefully receive, among other FDR-related changes, some creation of new jobs, not just minimum wage, dead-end, soul-crushing ones," she said. "Also, mortgage relief, banking reform, health care reform—50 million Americans are uninsured, and that number is expected to rise as the economy worsens—help in education, especially in inner-city schools..."

Curry continued. "We also have to start doing our share with foreign aid as well, in places such as Darfur... green-ify our economic structure, unhinge from a military-industrial complex and embrace international diplomacy with intelligence and compassion, not threats... oh, and help Papua New Guinea, which is currently flooding," Curry said.

Werner takes a slighter shorter view, believing [the Democratic majority] will impact policy to a certain extent.

"They'll be more changes in Social Security, which will come to the forefront with a more liberal Congress for sure," Werner said. "I believe with this economy you will see more federal dollars going towards banks, certainly."

CHS English teacher Jennifer Sellenriek thinks "everyone's hands are tied, to a certain extent."

"Most changes will be around surviving the economic crash, so it won't feel like change, more like repair," Sellenriek said. "Some things I'd hoped for in health care, education, that sort of thing—gay rights—are pretty much on hold."

Bollinger said we don't know yet how things will play out, referencing what policy changes might occur.

"It's definitely a mistake to think changes will take place overnight," Bollinger said. "I think change in our Middle Eastern policy is certainly a possibility, though. We won't completely forget about them, but perhaps we might drop this sort of holier-than-thou attitude we have and quit trying to solve everyone's problems... We definitely need to allow for some cooperation [between the parties] to occur."

Werner said he thinks cooperation will definitely happen.

"People really do like Obama, I think," Werner said. "You look at bipartisanship, how warmly Senator Hillary Clinton was received by Republican delegates, and with this economy bipartisanship will have to play a role if this country wants to maintain its elite status."

Even those excited don't want to see other voices silenced. "I always like to see even representation, or at least numbers that truly reflect the American people," Bollinger added.

"I admit that perhaps my political bias wants a clear majority in Congress," Sellenriek said. "But I also think a true democracy has more balance."

Perhaps Curry sums up the feeling of many.

"The closer we can get to including all voices, the better off we'll be," Curry said. ☺

## Melting of the polar ice caps threatening, urgent matter for all

Payton Sciararratta  
Reporter

The shrinking of the Arctic ice cap is speaking up, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council. Global warming is an increase in the earth's average atmospheric temperature that causes corresponding changes in climate and that may result from greenhouse effect. In other words, the snow and ice in the polar ice cap are supposed to form a protective cooling layer over the Arctic, but because of all the chemicals and pollution that we have been using and causing, these layers are melting and the earth absorbs more sunlight which is causing the weather to get warmer.

People and animals are being affected all over the world because of global warming. The main effect of global warming is the rise in the world's temperature. It has been increasing twice as fast in the Arctic as it has anywhere else in the world.

Claire Bliss, a freshman at Clayton High School who doesn't believe that global warming is taking place said, "I think that the weather is just going through a wave of temperatures."

But, another effect in the Arctic is the ice, which is getting thinner, melting and rupturing. These two problems are

causing troubles for many animals and even people.

Although those aren't the only affects of global warming, many natural disasters are also taking place. "We have seen crazy natural disasters in the past ten years, it's just nature but it's destroying many people," sophomore John Holland said.

"Wheat farming in Kansas, for example, would be profoundly affected by the loss of ice cover in the Arctic," said NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) on their website. "According to a NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies computer model, Kansas would be 4 degrees warmer in the winter without Arctic ice, which normally creates cold air masses that frequently slide southward into the United States. Warmer winters are bad news for wheat farmers, who need freezing temperatures to grow winter wheat. And in summer, warmer days would rob Kansas soil of 10 percent of its moisture, drying out valuable cropland."

As of now in the Midwest, we aren't being severely affected just yet, but sophomore Emily Holtzman believes we will be.

"Global warming will affect us in the future because the environment will be much worse and it will be affecting our kids," Holtzman said. But Bliss says, "It

could affect us, but not anytime soon." Global warming as of now is a big debate, but whether it is happening or not, we need to find a solution before the environment gets any worse.

"Arctic ice is getting thinner, melting and rupturing," said NRDC. "For example, the largest single block of ice in the Arctic, the Ward Hunt Ice Shelf, had been around for 3,000 years before it started cracking in 2000. Within two years it had split all the way through and is now breaking into pieces."

Meg Flach, the CHS substitute coordinator thinks that the polar bears are being negatively affected.

"The polar bears in the polar ice cap are being the most affected right now because their food sources are being taken away," said Flach.

However, the melting of the ice caps doesn't only affect the polar bears. The animals that live in the Arctic such as polar bears, whales, walrus and seals are dying off and the natives are finding it harder and harder to find food to survive.

Some people at CHS are trying to help put an end to global warming by recycling, turning the lights off after leaving the room and using fuel efficient cars. But English teacher, Rebecca Taylor said, "The solutions are very difficult."

At CHS, some of the staff members



Many scientists say the polar ice caps are melting faster than ever, and that it is a result of human interactions with the environment. MCT

have different opinions about the new government and how that will help with global warming. "I hope that the future government, Obama, keeps the promises that they have made," Flach said. Taylor also added, "In Barack Obama's inaugu-

ration speech, he mentioned it. He knows the issues, but I don't know if he will do anything about it."

If we don't all contribute or act soon enough, the sea level is going to rise. When this happens, we are then going

to have to face beach erosion, coastal flooding and contamination of fresh water supplies. Before this continues to go too far, we need to act soon before the beaches are under water, and it is too late. ☺



# Security cameras or morality cameras?

Ken Zheng  
Editor

In November 2008, science teacher Douglas Verby went into coworker Nathan Peck's room to borrow a balance worth \$250.

"I thought for sure that Mr. Peck had seen me take the balance so I didn't say anything to him regarding it," Verby said.

However, that was not the case. The balance was reported stolen but in the end, everything was resolved.

"We have had problems with stolen property on the 3rd floor in the past, specifically with balances," Verby said. "With the amount of lab materials and chemicals on this floor, the cameras are more than justified."

After the incident, security cameras were installed on the third floor. These cameras are just a few of many that are here to protect students and staff as well as their property.

Clayton Police Officer John Zlatic works together with Tim Wonish, Director of Facilities Services, to pick locations for the cameras. They try to find locations where issues have risen in the past.

"The cameras should provide students with an increased sense of security," Zlatic said. "The purposes of the cameras are to provide security to students and staff, allow for the investigation of crimes that occur on campus, and to deter crime."

The very first cameras were installed in the commons about four years ago because it was a high crime area.

"I have 45 cameras on campus," Zlatic said. "That does not include the Center of Clayton which I also maintain, or the elementary and middle schools. Even the family center has cameras."

The additional cameras were not installed due to an increase of any particular behavior.

"When I was assigned to my current position," Zlatic said, "I evaluated the surveillance coverage of the campus and identified areas that would benefit from the installation of cameras in order to provide a more comprehensive coverage."

Zlatic, Wonish and Superintendent Don Senti have been working together to improve security in all buildings of the district.

"I utilized the cameras as a reactionary measure only, which means that I only review historical surveillance in the event of a complaint or criminal report,"

Zlatic said. "No one sits at a monitor during the day and watches the real time behavior of the students, so I do not believe that anyone's privacy is or has been violated."

Principal Louise Losos believes there was no specific event that triggered the installation of cameras. The budget for the cameras was spread out for a total of \$70,000 plus a matching grant from the Federal Government for an additional \$25,000.

"The district received a grant which helped to offset the costs," Losos said. "I think the main reason is the world in which we live. There's a movement toward increasing security in public places, especially schools."

The first set of cameras was installed in the Commons and every doorway. The more recent installations were all indoors.

"The cameras are not watched constantly," Losos said. "The only time we access the cameras is when an incident has occurred and

When we caught a student stealing in the Center his comment was 'I didn't know there was a camera there.'

Louise Losos  
Principal

we're trying to find out what happened. I think people are becoming immune to being on surveillance cameras. The fact that this interview is about four months after the cameras were put in place is a testament to that. I was expecting students to come to me, complaining, immediately. We, as a society, are becoming immune to those types of invasions in privacy. Having said that, I think that students forget they're there."

Wonish agrees with Loso's assessment that increasing security has become an easily discussed matter.

"The world we live in has changed from a few generations ago," Wonish said. "We adapt to changes in our society and the on-going changes in technology. Over the years technology has changed the way we live our lives, mostly for the bet-

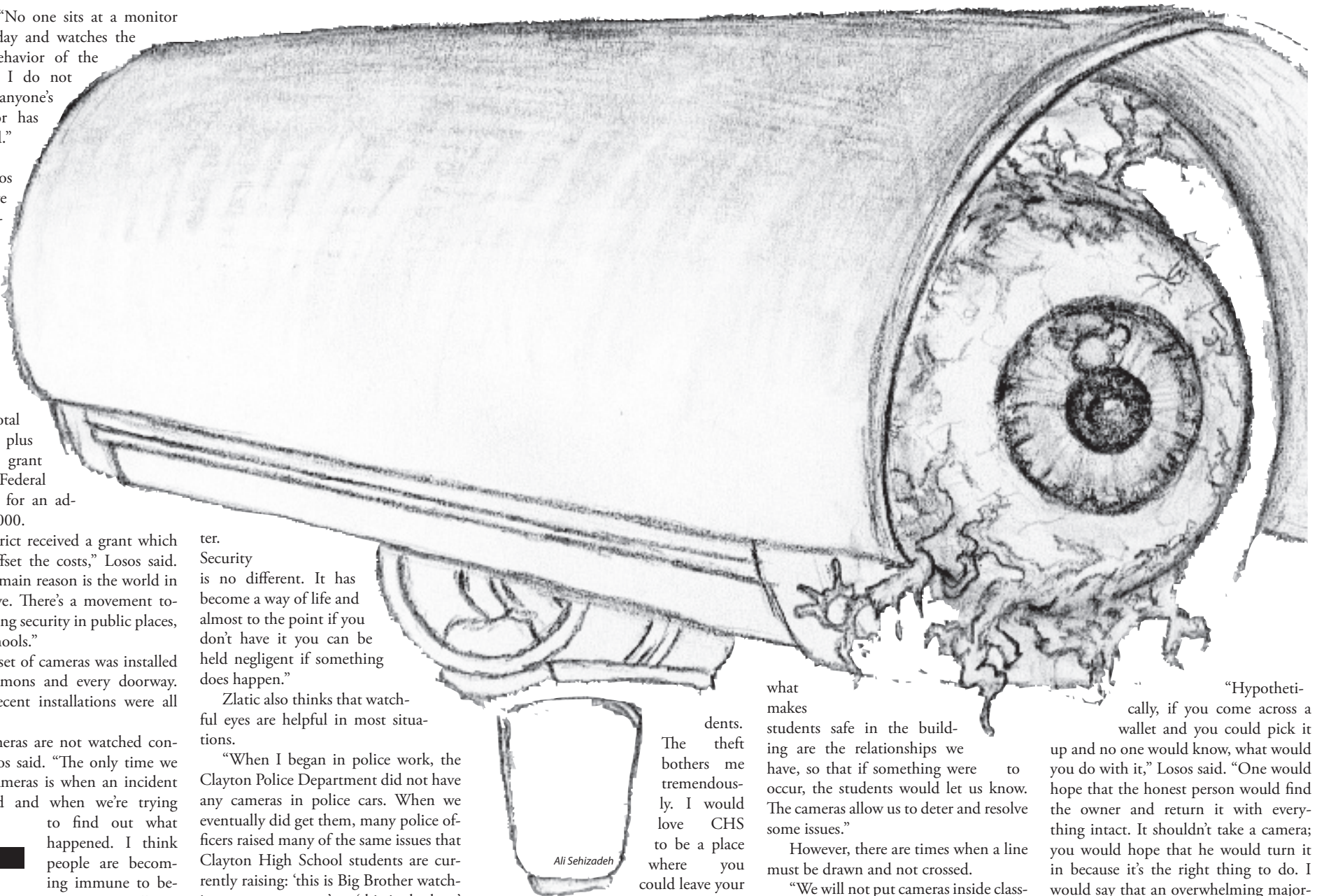
ter. Security is no different. It has become a way of life and almost to the point if you don't have it you can be held negligent if something does happen."

Zlatic also thinks that watchful eyes are helpful in most situations.

"When I began in police work, the Clayton Police Department did not have any cameras in police cars. When we eventually did get them, many police officers raised many of the same issues that Clayton High School students are currently raising: 'this is Big Brother watching our every move' or 'this is the boss' way of firing us if we make a mistake,' or even 'this is a violation of my privacy.' Over time many officers came to realize that the cameras are a major benefit. First, those officers that had any intention of doing police work improperly either quit, were fired, or corrected their behavior. The vast majority of citizen's complaints could be investigated more accurately because of the cameras, and so far the officer has been exonerated in every instance."

While wishful in thinking, Losos understands the darker side of the situation.

"Last year we had an issue with stolen iPods because most are so small," Losos said. "When I first arrived, Mr. Blackmore was advocating for cameras in the hallway in front of the band room because there was problems with thievery of instruments. CHS does have issues due to the stark differences between the economic backgrounds of some of our stu-



Ali Sehzadeh

Com- mons first period and come back at lunch. It should be the way our school is. It's not. But, the world isn't that way and schools are often microcosms of the world in which they are."

Wonish firmly believes that the cameras are there to protect students.

"I hope that the students feel comfortable with security in our schools," Wonish said. "It's for their benefit that we have them."

With the help of the cameras, administrators have gotten to the bottom of a number of different thefts.

"With the cameras, we've gotten people who've stolen things," Losos said. "Those who are intentionally doing it know where they are. We had a fight at the end of September with six kids involved and made it easy for us to identify the individuals involved. The cameras allowed us to use the video to corroborate with the evidence. I'm a believer that cameras don't make you safer from outside events,

what makes students safe in the building are the relationships we have, so that if something were to occur, the students would let us know. The cameras allow us to deter and resolve some issues."

However, there are times when a line must be drawn and not crossed.

"We will not put cameras inside classrooms," Losos said. "There is one inside the library, if I had known it was going in there, I would've said no. The librarian actually asked for it. To me, that's too far. A while ago, there was a theft of a laptop and we were able to track it down and find the student responsible due to the camera on the door because of what they were carrying when they went in and what they were carrying when they left."

Losos also believes that cameras shouldn't be required to force a student to do the right thing.

"When we caught a student stealing in the Center," Losos said, "his comment was 'I didn't know there was a camera there,' which meant that there were many places in the school where he wouldn't commit a crime because the camera was there. Personally, I don't think that's a good reason to have cameras, but that's the reality of it."

Losos is a firm believer in the saying "character is what you do when nobody's looking."

"Hypothetically, if you come across a wallet and you could pick it up and no one would know, what would you do with it," Losos said. "One would hope that the honest person would find the owner and return it with everything intact. It shouldn't take a camera; you would hope that he would turn it in because it's the right thing to do. I would say that an overwhelming majority of our students, the high 90 percents, would do that. But we have 870 students and not everyone will share that ethical standard."

The number of incidents last year was disturbing to Losos.

"Just the sheer number of thefts we had was shocking to me, as if it became too easy," Losos said. "I'm hoping that was just an anomaly. The punishment depends on the price of the merchandise stolen. Sometimes, if we get the item back to its rightful owner, it'll be an in-school suspension or more moderated. Big-ticket items have bigger responses. We have had a student who has consistently violated rules and ended up sending them to collab."

Overall, Zlatic has noticed an improvement in the number of incidents.

"I have been able to successfully complete numerous theft-related issues at the school," Zlatic said. "As of this time last year I have noticed that theft and property damage has been reduced." ☺

## Center closing due to renovations causes mixed emotions, hassle

Katherine Greenberg  
Reporter

For five days starting on Thursday January 22nd the upstairs exercise machine room will be closed. This is because the room that is encircled by a track is getting all new flooring and new muscle strengthening machines.

"We decided to make renovations because customer service is our number one priority," Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Operations Toni Siering said. "The renovations were supposed to be next year but we sent out a customer survey and the renovations were very much wanted so we moved it up."

The machines in the upstairs lobby are still open for use but there will only be ten machines so it will be difficult to get one. Members are encouraged to go to the Richmond Heights Center to work out and if they use their Center pass they will not have to pay.

However, many people do not think the Center needed new equipment.

"I work out in the weight room downstairs so I don't really think there needs to be more weights in the upstairs room," Goldfarb said. "People that want to use more of the muscle strengthening machines should just go downstairs."

Junior Chelsea Hesterberg also agrees that there is no need

for new facilities.

"I work out at the center, and I really didn't think they needed anything new," Hesterberg said. "They all ready have all of the equipment that I need."

Junior Jack Harned also feels inconvenienced by the renovations.

"I am really upset about the center closing for five days because I have to find a new place to get ripped," junior Jack Harned said. "It's just really inconvenient."

Some students are not affected by the renovations. The center's basketball courts are always full of high school students practicing.

"I'm not upset about the machine room closing because all I do is play basketball," junior Sumner Ahearn said. "I am also very fit, so I don't really need the machines."

Despite some negative feedback, the Center faculty believe the renovations will improve the Center overall.

"We are hoping that the new additions to the upstairs will help increase our member satisfaction and membership base," Siering said.

Senior Alli Holt is looking forward to using the new facilities.

"I work out at the center a lot and I am happy that they are getting some new machines," senior Alli Holt said. ☺



Puhan Zhou

Students enjoy a variety of activities available at the Center workout area.

Above: Senior Aaron Prais and Freshman Zachary Prais

Furthermost right: Junior Chelsea Granberry

Center right: Senior Patrick Cunningham, Junior Sam Jacus, and Junior Letizia Zihlmann

Right: Former student Hannah Longmore





# CHS earns silver medal for college readiness

In the latest U.S. News and World Report ranking of America's best high schools, CHS is awarded the second-highest level of distinction. Ratings are based on student performance on Advanced Placement tests and state standardized testing.

Nina Oberman  
Editor

In its annual ranking of America's High Schools, U.S. News and World Report honored CHS with the highest college-readiness index in Missouri, along with a Silver Medal for overall academic achievement.

These rankings are based on participation and performance on AP exams, as well as the success of a school's most underprivileged students.

"Our high scores are a direct testament to the excellence in teaching, as well as students who really focus in and take it seriously," principal Louise Losos said. "We're very fortunate that we have a community that values education very highly, and values the most challenging parts of education."

CHS's score of 56.2 indicates both a high participation and performance rate on AP exams. Clayton students take 3.6 AP exams on average during their high school career, and 90.9 percent of participants pass their tests. Losos has her own criteria, however, for measuring CHS's accomplishments.

"Success is so hard to quantify, because any time you create a statistical number, there are always problems with it," Losos said. "How I would measure our success is if our teachers are asking our students to perform at the highest possible level all the time."

Smaller performance gaps between Clayton's privileged and underprivileged students also helped CHS to earn its medal. The school's clear academic environment drives all students to succeed,

even those whose circumstances are not as advantageous.

"As in every school, the top kids are the top kids," Losos said. "But the next group care more about their grades. So our students really do their homework, and there's the belief and the expectation to get good grades and be focused in class."

However, CHS is certainly not perfect. Administrators and teachers are continuously making an effort to better the Clayton experience.

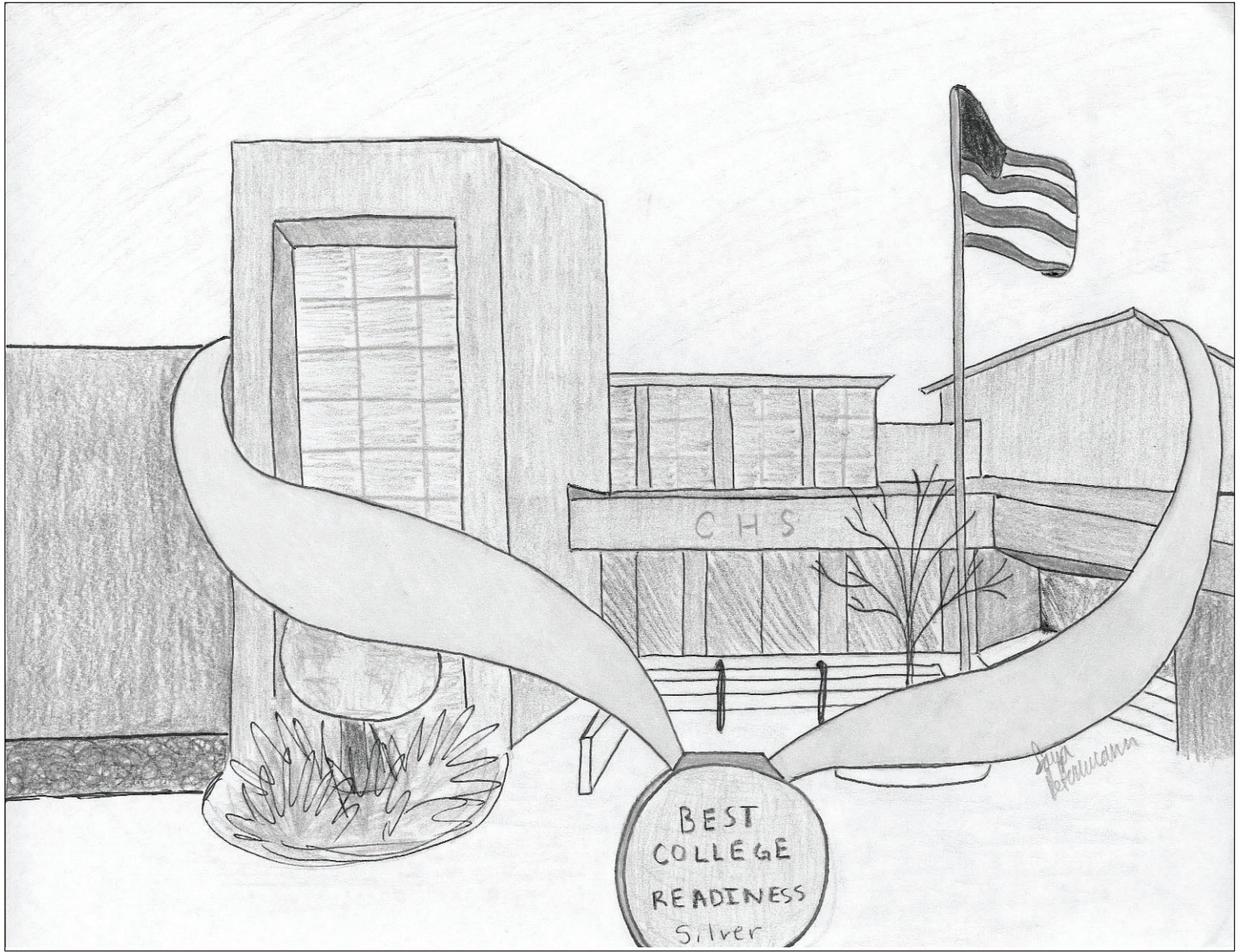
"I think that we guard against complacency because we've consistently performed on a high level," Losos said. "We can't just sit back and say 'We've always been good, we'll always be good.' We have to constantly strive to improve."

At the moment, CHS is focusing its efforts on decreasing the achievement gap between African American and non-African American students, utilizing technology more effectively, and creating stronger bonds across departments. Yet CHS's college-readiness index certainly rings true.

"Even our students who sometimes struggle with our curriculum say that they are very well prepared for college," Losos said. Mary Goodman, a 2008 CHS graduate who is now a

freshman at the University of Denver, found her high school education to be extremely beneficial at college.

"When I was assigned my first paper, I certainly felt more prepared than my other classmates," Goodman said. "The first large paper, about a thirty page lab report, was easy because of the prepara-



Sonja Petermann

“Our high scores are a direct testament to the excellence in teaching, as well as students who really focus in and take it seriously. We're very fortunate that we have a community that values education very highly.”

Louise Losos  
Principal

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## Exciting changes in store for annual Peppers Prom

Fontasha Powell  
Senior Managing Editor

With Peppers season upon us, CHS club has been hard at work for the past month with the goal of making Peppers sweet. The annual girl-asks-boy dance, a CHS tradition, is scheduled to take place Sat. Feb. 7 from 8-11 p.m.

"Currently, we're working on trying to make sure the DJ plays good music," Hamylak said. "We want a variety of music, to appeal to as many students as possible. There won't be too much of a difference between Peppers and Homecoming. We want it to be just as successful, if not better. We will keep the cool lights and have simple yet fun decorations."

Senior co-president of CHS Club Alli Holt agreed with Hamylak.

"We thought that Homecoming was a success this year so we wanted to have that sort of attitude and optimism toward Peppers," Holt said. "As seniors, we're trying to make it the best Peppers we've ever had and trying to make sure that everyone's excited."

Holt said that this year the placement of various apparatuses would be different. "We're going to try to do a little different set-up," Holt said. "We're going to have a refreshments station in Stuber and maybe have a platform for the DJ and the crowning of Peppers King, but we will still have the normal DJ location and coat check."

Hamylak elaborated on more new changes that will possibly occur.

"It is possible that we have a stepped up refreshment area, [that might resemble something like a bar]" Hamylak said. "We are also meeting with the DJ to discuss some new technology we might be using. We want to discuss what we're doing with the projection screen, and we also discuss a new text message thing. It's like you text a message that you want displayed on the projection screen to a certain number, and after screening to see if it's appropriate, we'll display it on the screen."

Hamylak did acknowledge that mixed feelings were expressed over this new technology and that it might not occur.

"However, it's unlikely that we'll even do that," Hamylak said. "After meeting with the DJ, we will discuss it with a few students and try it out to see if we like it or not."

Hamylak believes that the close relationship CHS has with

the DJ will help make the dance a success.

"We've been working with JAM3 DJs for a long now," Hamylak said. "The owner has a good relationship with us because he used to be a school resource officer for CHS. So, not only does he know the student expectations, but he also knows that staff expectations. However, no matter what the DJ plays, not everyone will be satisfied."

Holt concurred.

"We're doing fun colored lighting so that the lights aren't as bright, and they add to theme," Holt said. "We're making our own playlists for the DJ and making it a range of songs that everyone likes and can dance to."

CHS club decided that the themes for this year's dance will be A Midsummer Night's Dream.

"The girls submitted ideas and we all voted," Hamylak said. "Decorations will resemble something like a mystical, romantic garden-type scene."

Holt said that the girls on CHS club selected the theme because of the wide range decoration possibilities.

"We picked a Midsummer Night's Dream because we thought we could put together some really cool decorations and lighting," Holt said.

Peppers King is another CHS tradition associated with Peppers.

"The boys up for Peppers King are decided by staff, coaches and the CHS Club," Holt said.

Girls inviting guys to the dance is another CHS tradition that makes Peppers so unique.

"At almost every dance at Clayton, girls have to wait around to be asked by boys, who somehow love to wait until the last minute," Holt said. "This time, girls get to be in charge and ask exactly who they want to go with and I think they should take advantage of that. You go through high school only once and you don't want to regret not asking someone just because you're shy or scared of being rejected. That's part of the fun of it. But if you're really don't want to ask anyone, then get a big group of girl friends together to go."

Hamylak expressed his hope that the dance will be well attended and everyone would enjoy himself or herself while making good decisions.

"I hope everyone comes out, and that they all have a good time and stay safe," Hamylak said.

education.

"I was definitely more prepared for the overall volume," Blumenfeld said. "If I had three papers to finish within a week, for example, I would be less inclined than others to 'freak out,' because after taking AP courses at CHS, it felt fairly normal. I'm much better prepared

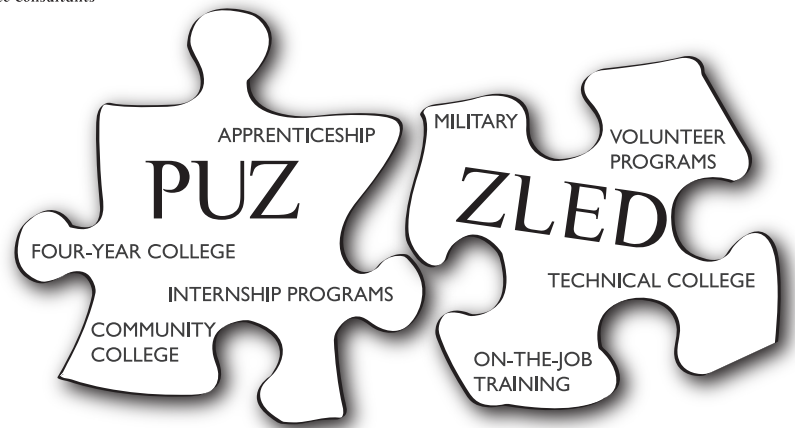
for the inevitably varied assignments that come flying at you in a liberal arts institution thanks to the overall experience at Clayton."

When comparing college classes to AP courses at CHS, Blumenfeld found that there are very few differences.

"The things that I love about Deni-

son courses are essentially the same things I loved in my favorite Clayton courses," Blumenfeld said. "The material is engaging and challenging, the professors are easy to talk to, and you walk out of the classroom hungry for more. CHS students should rest assured that there isn't anything that is lacking."

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# Seatbelt safety necessary for teen health

Ken Zhang  
Editor

Junior Alexis McCormick has had been severely impacted as a result of deaths caused by motor accidents.

"I've had two people who were really close to me that have been in really bad car accidents," McCormick said. "A third person I knew was also in one, he was just an acquaintance."

Out of those three two were wearing seatbelts. "The two people that weren't wearing their belts both died," McCormick said. "One was my best friend and having him ripped out of my life has affected me in a way that can't really be explained. [Jordan Shaw Tyler] was 19 and died on impact. If he would've had his seatbelt on he would've gotten out of the car and walked away."

Anne Wilding, Director of the Community Alliance for Healthy Kids, co-sponsors Peers Protecting Peers (PPP) with Student Activities Directors Eric Hamylak.

"Part of being a teen is thinking that you are invincible and bad things only happen to other people—not you," Wilding said. "Unfortunately, bad things can happen to all of us. I hope that [buckling up] is a habit since childhood that the statistics reinforce. Something students don't realize is that if you are buckled up, but someone in the car with you isn't, that person will be thrown around the car and may injure or kill you during a crash. So you have to encourage everyone to buckle up."

McCormick has many reminders to wear her seat belt, and those who know getting in the car with her.

"I have a sticker, which many students have seen, on the back of my car," McCormick said. "I have some things hanging in my review mirror and every time I get in my car I remember. I remember him and I always wear my seatbelt, it doesn't matter where I'm going or how long I'll be in the car after a while it just becomes a habit."

McCormick dearly misses her friends and knows that the seat belt is often the difference between life and death.

"I'll also always remember him and it will make me cherish everyone I know for the rest of my life," McCormick said. "Having someone taken out of your life so quickly, while they're so young is an eye opener for sure. It makes you realize you're not invincible."

A year will have passed on Dec. 8 since the death of Tyler and everyone in the community is coming together, once again, to mourn his death and remember him.

"It's still making an impact, everyday," McCormick said. "Brent Foltz, who was also wearing his seatbelt made me realize the same thing. Kyle Pendergast wore his seatbelt and lived. He just got out of the hospital recently and although he'll never be the same, he's alive."

Hamylak, who co-sponsors PPP, believes that there is no good reason why students should not be wearing seat belts.

"I don't know if laziness is the right word," Hamylak said. "I think, unfortunately, that students who have been influenced by an accident are impacted the most. Last year, in the Battle of the Belts, we were the school with the most improvement. We have PPP members stationed at stop signs around campus and they just stop each car and make sure each passenger is wearing a seat belt. [PPP] is also going to have hangtags for kids to put on their view mirrors to remind people to buckle up. We're giving some of them away for free and we're also selling some for six dollars."

PPP voluntarily participates in Battle of the Belts because they believe it is a cause worth fighting for.

Two years ago PPP did a presentation to all CHS students. Stephanie Winchell, CHS senior this year, shared her story. She and her Mom were driving home down Warson Road after a day at the zoo and going out to lunch. They were hit by a drunk driver. Stephanie's Mom swerved the car to protect Stephanie. Her mom died from her injuries.

That same summer Charlie Glik, a Ladue High student who was a friend to many CHS students, died late at night in a car crash. Charlie wasn't wearing his seat belt. The following spring, a CHS student, Jazzilyn Williams, was on her way home with her cousin and some friends after going to a prom at another school. Jazzi was in the back seat and not wearing her seat belt. She was thrown from the car and died.



In a demonstration by Peers Protecting Peers (PPP), a simulation was done in which a dummy was thrown from a truck. PPP hoped that this demonstration would show the impact that a lack of a seatbelt can have.

Winchell and McCormick told their respective stories at an assembly Jan. 8 to CHS freshmen and sophomore.

"PPP wanted to reach out to the freshman and sophomores before they start getting their driver's licenses and ride along with their friends," Hamylak said.

On Oct. 6, 2006, PPP performed a surprise seat belt check on 332 drivers and found that only 88.4 percent of the students were wearing seat belts. After running a campaign to change these statistics, including selling Click for Glik t-shirts, hosting assemblies, and having students sign pledges, PPP did another seat belt check with much better results. On Nov. 17, 2006, out of 332 drivers, all but nine were wearing their seat belt properly. One thing they noticed was that many of the adults in the cars were also not wearing seatbelts.

Michelle Mitchell, Program Coordinator for the Child Health Advocacy and Outreach Department for St. Louis Children's Hospital, participates in close-up visits with emergency room doctors and helps educate teens for use of seat belts.

"It has nothing to do with drinking and driving, but simply putting on a seat belt," Mitchell said. "Two-thirds of these teens die because they don't have their seatbelts on."

Mitchell She is also affiliated with the Click It Crew, which has brought seatbelt awareness to over 5000 students in high schools.

Statistics show that a teenager dies from a car accident every

13 minutes, and that the leading cause of death in teens is motor accidents.

Sergeant Al Nothum, Public Information Officer of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, also understands the importance of seat belt usage in surviving accidents.

"If you hear the word 'ejected' on the news, it means [the passengers] did not have their seatbelts on," Nothum said. "The seat belt should keep you in the vehicle, and that's why the Missouri State Highway Patrol stresses it so much."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, teens have the lowest rate of seatbelt use. Nothum advises teens to put on their seatbelt as soon as they enter the vehicle. However, the seatbelt does have its flaws.

"There are some situations where [a seatbelt] will not do you any good, but it will still increase your chance of survival," Nothum said.

While the nationwide average for seat belt usage is 84 percent, Missouri's average is only 75 percent. This discrepancy accounts for the average death of 1100 people per year in Missouri, for the past seven years.

"We need harsher fines," Mitchell said. "Ten dollars is not a high enough price for a life. [Teens] don't have the required maturity level, to [them] the vehicle is just a play toy."

Nothum believes the only way to accomplish the raise in penalty is to contact state legislators.

## Percent of CHS students who wear their seatbelt most or all of the time

2004

9th Grade - 82%

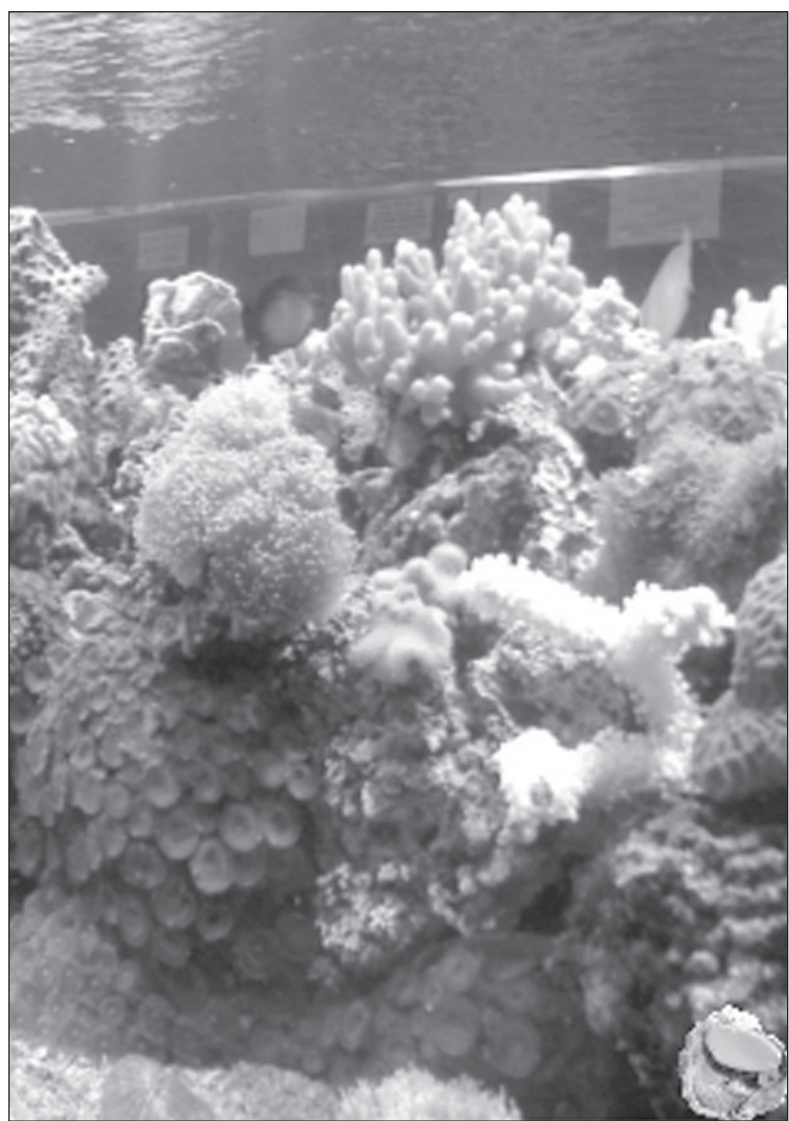
11th Grade - 76%

2007

9th Grade - 89%

11th Grade - 90%

# Clayton Pet Emporium closing after 25 years in Clayton area



Left: The Clayton Pet Emporium has a variety of corals and fish species available to buyers.



Above right: Potential buyers can survey the animals available for sale in the glass tanks that fill the store. Below right: The pet emporium will close as soon as there is a buyer. The owners hope that the space will continue to be used as a pet shop.

Caroline Kennard  
Staff Writer

After 25 years of serving salt-water fish buyers in the St. Louis area, the Clayton Pet Emporium is planning to close.

The store was fondly known for its variety of fish and other animals and knowledgeable staff.

Jan and her husband Gary Thaller opened up Clayton Pet Emporium in September 1986.

Originally, Jan Thaller wanted to be a vet.

However, she continued her education and continued to incorporate her love of animals into her work by starting the Clayton Pet Emporium.

"I worked at a pet shop since I was 16, and when we found this place as a pet shop for sale and it was like, okay," Thaller said.

Since then, Jan and Gary Thaller have given homes a variety of pets and maintain fish tanks at home.

The Thallers specialize in salt water fish, coral, live rocks, and invertebrates. Their selection of animals also includes freshwater fish, birds, pond fish, hermit crabs, and small animals.

The emporium has been in business for 25 years in the 509 South Hanley location and are selling the pet shop.

"So far, we've had no offers," Thaller said.

Clayton Pet Emporium is closing because of recent fluctuations in the economy that have contributed to decreased business.

There is no set date for the closing. The Thallers are hoping to get an offer soon.

The Thallers plan to sell all the maintenance tanks and equipment to people who are involved in the fish business.

Lucky for fans of the store, Jan and Gary Thaller plan to keep serving clients in some capacity.

"We will still have maintenance part of our business even if we do close down," Thaller said.

If the emporium does close down, there will be a sale on all the animals and supplies.

Clyde, their Queen Emperor Angelfish mascot, will not be sold. He will be moved back to one of Thaller's tanks at home.

"This building itself has been a pet shop for 55 years and we'd like to keep that going," Thaller said.

Even if the location continues to be a pet shop, pet buyers everywhere in the St. Louis area will lose a valuable resource in the closing of the Clayton Pet Emporium.

“This building itself has been a pet shop for 55 years and we'd like to keep that going.”

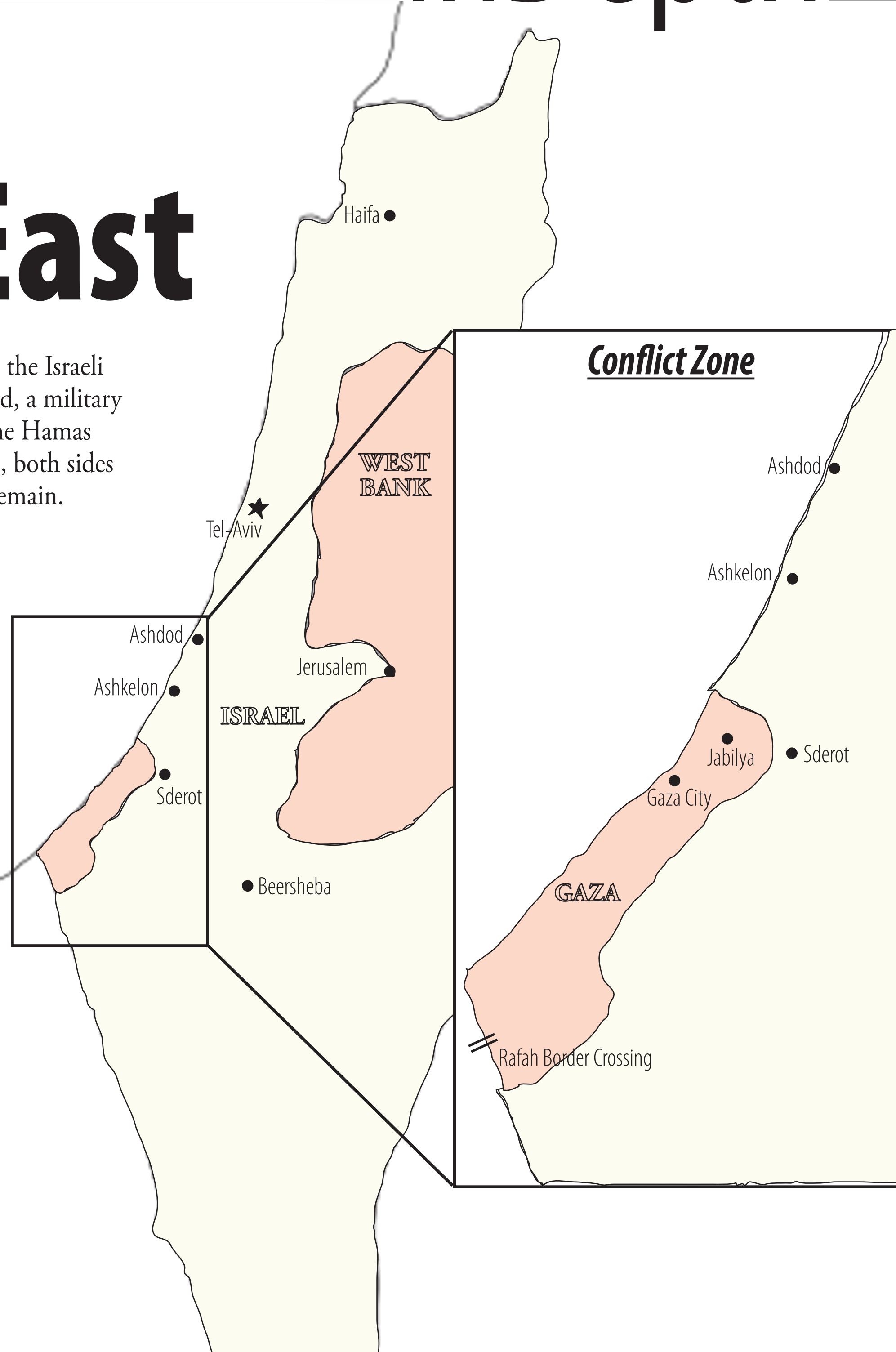
Jan Thaller  
Owner of the Clayton Pet Emporium

”



# Conflict *in the* Middle East

On December 27, in response to hostile rocket fire, the Israeli Air and Defense Forces launched Operation Cast Lead, a military campaign in the Gaza Strip aimed at weakening the Hamas government. On January 17, after a 22 day offensive, both sides reached a tentative cease-fire, though tensions remain.



**22**  
The number of days of conflict in the Gaza Strip.

**140**  
The land area of the Gaza Strip in mi<sup>2</sup>: slightly more than twice the size of Washington D.C.

**1,300**  
The number of Palestinian deaths in Gaza, as a result of the 22 day conflict.

**8,500**  
The number of rockets fired by Hamas into Southern Israel since 2001.

**80%**  
According to the UN, this is the percentage of people that rely on humanitarian aid.

**900,000**  
The number of Israeli civilians at risk under Hamas rocket fire.

**10,700**  
The population density of the Gaza Strip in people per mi<sup>2</sup>.

**90%**  
The percentage of Sderot citizens that have experienced a rocket attack on their street or the one adjacent

**Leah Eby**  
*Senior Managing Editor*

On Dec. 27, 2008, growing hostility between Israel and Gaza erupted and resulted in 22 days of warfare between the two regions, killing 1200 Palestinians and 13 Israelis.

Since the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, conflict has enveloped the Middle East, and Israel and its neighbors have engaged in fighting on numerous occasions. The day after Israel declared its independence, surrounding Arab states declared war on the emerging country. Again, in June 1967, Israel combated Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in the Six-Day War, a conflict that resulted in Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula.

After years of turmoil between Israelis and Palestinians throughout the West Bank and Gaza, Hamas was founded in December 1987.

Hamas, an acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement, has declared its commitment to the elimination of Jews, destruction of the state of Israel and has been widely recognized as a terrorist organization. In 1987, Hamas led an intifada, or uprising, against Israel, and support for Hamas continued to grow with another intifada in September 2000.

Eventually, in September 2005, after increasing resistance by Hamas, Israel withdrew unilaterally from Gaza, ending its 38-year presence there.

On Jan. 26, 2006, Hamas emerged victorious in Palestinian parliamentary elections, successfully ousting the more secular Fatah government. Fatah, unlike Hamas, recognizes the existence of Israel and has been more open to peace negotiations with Israel.

With this political advance, Palestinian suicide bombings and rocket fire increased in Israel, leading to further conflict in the region. Eighteen months ago, Israel enacted an economic blockade on Gaza, patrolling the borders and controlling access to the Palestinian region.

In June 2008, a six-month cease-fire was brokered by Egypt between Hamas and Israel, on the conditions that Israel would ease

the blockade on Gaza if Hamas discontinued rocket fire into Israel. However, the cease-fire began to break down in November as Israel failed to fully lift its blockade and Hamas continued to fire rockets into Israel, each side blaming the other for breaking the cease-fire.

In November, when the Israeli blockade was reinstated, Israel completely stopped all humanitarian aid from entering Gaza.

The Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated areas in the world and, according to the United Nations, 80 percent of the residents live in poverty and are dependent on U.N. assistance. Therefore, when humanitarian aid could no longer reach those in need, Gazan residents and the approximately half a million Palestinians in refugee camps were left without aid. During this time, Hamas rockets continued to fall on Israel.

Ultimately, on Dec. 19, the day that the six-month cease-fire officially ended, tension between the two regions intensified. Consistent rocket strikes by Hamas led the Israeli Air Force to launch a massive air attack on Gaza in the morning of Dec. 27. This first strike, aimed at Hamas targets throughout Gaza, killed approximately 195 Palestinians.

In a statement issued after the initial raid, according to the New York Times, Israel warned that "This operation will be continued, expanded and intensified as much as will be required," though Israeli officials have claimed their goal is not to reoccupy Gaza.

After a week of severe air strikes on Hamas security stations, weapons stores and government symbols, Israel launched a ground offensive in Gaza, deploying tanks and troops across the border. The Israeli military claimed that the objective of the air and land attacks was to "destroy the infra-

structure of Hamas" and take control of Hamas rocket-launching sites, according to the New York Times.

Throughout Israel's offensive Hamas continued to retaliate, demonstrating to Israel and the rest of the world their powerful arsenal that they have developed by smuggling weapons from Iran into Gaza, according to Israeli and American officials.

On Jan. 18, Israel and Hamas agreed to a fragile cease-fire as other nations pledged their support in rebuilding Gaza. By Jan. 21, Israeli troops fully withdrew from Gaza.

Upon the conclusion of three weeks of heavy fighting between Israel and Gaza that left over 1300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis dead, Gaza is in ruins. According to the BBC, the U.N. estimates that more than four thousand buildings are destroyed, 400 thousand Gazans are without running water, and about 50 thousand Gazans have been left homeless after Israeli attacks.

Though many first questioned whether the Israeli attack was justified, former President George W. Bush's spokesman urged Israel to avoid civilian casualties, while Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak denounced the attacks.

At the time, President-elect Obama refused to comment, stating that there is only one president at a time.

However, after officially assuming the role of President of the United States on Jan. 20, Obama vowed to pursue an aggressive course of action in the Middle East. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Obama named George Mitchell, negotiator of the Northern Ireland peace deal, as a special envoy to the region, according to the

BBC.

"It will be the policy of my administration to actively and aggressively seek a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians," Obama said. ☺



A crowd of Hamas supporters burns a mock coffin proclaiming "Death to Israelis" at a demonstration in Gaza City, Gaza Strip, Tuesday, January 20, 2009.



Children boil water for tea amid the wreckage of their home in the Tawam section of Gaza City.



Qassam rocket are seen fired toward Israel from the Gaza strip; after a relatively quiet night in Southern Israel, the onslaught of Palestinian rockets resumed Friday, with two salvos of Grad rockets hitting Ashkelon.



Maha al Sultan, right, surveys the damage to her family's home in Gaza City; the building housed six families and 55 people, all of whom survived by fleeing to a relative's house when Israeli tanks moved in.



Hundreds of Hamas supporters gathered in Gaza City for a "victory demonstration" following the 22-day conflict with Israel.

## What do you think of the situation in Gaza?



Junior Ali Sehizadeh

Although I do identify Hamas as totalitarian terrorists with strong North Korea - like politics, Israel has often caused a lot of chaos and anguish to the lives of innocent Palestinians as well. In this case, it is an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) operation that has killed more than 1300 Palestinians and flattened cities, just in response to the eight years of rocket fire that has killed only up to 23 Israelis total. Definitely not an eye-for-an-eye. The only result that will come out of fighting fire with fire, is an even bigger fire.

The conflict in Gaza was a double-edged sword for the Israelis. If they attacked, people criticized them for destroying peace, and if they did not, they would continue to be attacked by terrorists. Israel has offered peace several times, but Hamas and Hezbollah are not interested. They don't want to create peace; they want to destroy.



Senior Rebecca Singer



Junior Daniel Iken

Israel is completely justified in going into Gaza. A democracy is a government of the people, and therefore must protect its citizens. Israel has not responded to the rocket fire until now, and not a single Israeli except for captured I.D.F soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit has been in Gaza since 2005, when Israel unilaterally withdrew. The U.N. charter states: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations."

Get rid of Palestine and Israel, forcibly demilitarize the entire area and deploy a very large international peacekeeping force made up of soldiers from western, Middle Eastern/Muslim countries and Israeli soldiers. It's not justified at all, though 'accurate' descriptions of what's actually happening are hard to get. It's not a war; it's a massacre. I don't support Hamas' firing rockets into Israel, but they rarely do anything against Israel's state of the art equipment... bought and paid for by the U.S. actually.



Alumnus Michal Hyrc



# New York Excursion 2009:

DECA representatives from CHS went on their traditional voyage to New York City, visiting several well-known venues, including the Martha Stewart studio, Sports Illustrated Inc., and the famous hat shop in Soho.



Clockwise from left: The representatives from CHS make their traditional pose outside the renowned hat shop in Soho. Sophomores Kyleigh Smith and Kaily Sciaratta talk to the proprietor of the hat shop. DECA always makes sure to make a trip to the hat store, as well as talk to big companies such as Sports Illustrated, Calvin Klein and many others. DECA sponsor Marci Boland, Kyleigh Smith, and senior Sam Muslin listen attentively to a representative from Sports Illustrated.

## Authentic relic recaptures essence of historic Clayton

Ugochi Onyema  
Senior Managing Editor

The city of Clayton is the epicenter of all of the goings-on in St. Louis County, and as such, is home to many treasured artifacts and places. One historically significant gem in Clayton is the Hanley House, a former residence of the Hanley family.

The Hanley patriarch, Martin Franklin, began the construction of Hanley House, which is located on 7600 Westmoreland Avenue, in 1855. There is evidence that suggests that the exact date of the digging of the cellar was May 15, 1855.

According to Hanley House docent Sarah Umlauf, Martin was not just an architect; rather he was a jack-of-all-trades.

"When Martin purchased the land in 1847, he bought 100.6 acres," Umlauf said. "During the next eight years, he constructed the Hanley Road, owned a market, bar and had a blacksmith business at present day Olive Boulevard. He was also a plow smith when he built Hanley Road."

After Hanley built the road, he wanted to build a linking road between his old property and his new property. In 1876, during the Great Divorce, when St. Louis City wanted to split from the county, and the county needed a county seat, Martin Hanley and Ralph Clayton joined together to donate 104 acres on the condition that Clayton would become the county seat. Martin Hanley was the first justice of the peace for the county.

"We have some surviving subpoenas from his term as the justice," Umlauf said. "He must have been respected, because he was referred to in his obituaries as 'Squire Hanley.'"

The partnership between Hanley and



From the late 1800s to the present, the Hanley house quietly stands as an emblem of Clayton and its antiquity. The house of founder Martin Franklin and his wife Cyrene has been a popular visiting spot for many families, as well as many history buffs at CHS.

Clayton served a greater purpose than merely creating a county seat. The duo strove to avoid the amalgamation of Clayton and University City. The fact that Clayton was incorporated into a city in 1913, when University City made its desire to combine the municipalities is far from coincidental. The relationship that Hanley and Clayton maintained with the city led to the boundaries being drawn around their properties.

"All of the property of Clayton was near Ralph Clayton's property," Umlauf said. "Martin's property is directly to the east [of the Clayton property]. The town was built around the original courthouse."

Hanley's domestic life was just as

chaotic as his professional one. In 1839, he married a native St. Louisian, Cyrene Walton. Soon after, the couple embarked upon creating a family.

"Martin and Cyrene had seven children when they first moved into the house," Umlauf said. "After that, they had three more children at the house, so out of a total of 11 children born to the Hanleys, 10 survived. The eldest surviving child, Caroline, never married and she never had any children. She lived at the house until she was 97 years old. In the twentieth century, she had two nieces, Barbara and Byrd, one of whom sold Hanley House to the city of Clayton."

The Hanley family was also known for causing a stir around the St. Louis re-

gion. The women of the household acted upon their instincts cultivated by their confederate upbringing.

"Martin Hanley was neutral during the Civil War," Umlauf said. "He had four sons at the time of the Civil War, but they were too young. But Martin was Virginian and Cyrene was born in Saint Louis, so they were Southern sympathizers. He supported slavery and the Confederacy. His daughters helped Confederate soldiers by sewing their uniforms, and Cyrene was accused of assisting soldiers, according to records from Jefferson City. But we have no record of her going to jail. Women were sent to jail for aiding the Confederacy, usually to Gratiot Jail. The daughters

also corresponded with the Confederate Prisoners of War."

The Hanley legacy is also notorious for attempting to hinder the educational system in Clayton, simply to maintain serenity around the Hanley property.

"The Hanley family hindered the educational system in Clayton," Umlauf said. "By the time of 1890, the four acres that Hanley donated were bought by the city, and was going to be used for a school. Cyrene did not want a school to go up so close to her house, so she tried to get the land back by suing the county. She took the court all the way to the Missouri Supreme Court. As reparation, her son was allowed to buy back three acres of the land. The land that he bought

back is now Maryland Avenue. Now the Bracken building is on the land, and it is still owned by the school district."

The Hanley family has diminished significantly through the years, but there are still relatives who remain in the U.S., according to Umlauf.

"As far as I know, there are no descendants on the St. Louis area," Umlauf said. "But there is a Susan Hanley, who is a descendant of a Hanley son. There is also Barbara Cole, who is Jenny Hanley Yore's descendant. Out of 10 family lines, only three have survived."

The Hanley House was almost taken from the Clayton community when surveyors wanted to build a railroad through the property. However, the house was saved by the position that it was placed on the property, as it was situated on a slight hill. Fortunately, the house remains for Clayton residents to enjoy. According to Umlauf, the Hanley House sponsors a myriad of activities for citizens young and old.


"We recently had a haunted Hanley house," Umlauf said. "We play the characters of the family, living history tours. We're getting ready to do a candlelight tour for the holidays. We did the fall festival this year. We had a symposium where professors gave talks on the civil war. We're planning a special herb exhibit in the spring, and we will continue to incorporate new scholarships into the Hanley House. We have luncheons at the house. Next year, we hope to have more events for adults, women and little girls."

Hopefully, this historic landmark will remain for another century in order Clayton's posterity to fully enjoy the extensive list of events offered by the Hanley House staff. Hanley House serves as a reminder to Claytonites of the both the detriments and contributions made to the area by the Hanley family. ☺



Courtesy of Sarah Umlauf

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# Varsity hoopsters got game

The boys' basketball team is 11-5 and on the brink of being ranked in the All-Metro poll after taking second in the MICDS tournament. The team has a good chance to win a district title for the first time in three years.

Evan Green  
Editor

The varsity boys' basketball team is off to its best start in recent memory. With an 11-5 record so far, the Hounds have exceeded the expectations of many in the area.

The exception to that is the team itself.

"I expected us to be exactly where we are right now," junior guard Devonte Bell said. "We have played really well at times."

The Hounds recently took second place in the MICDS Holiday Invitational tournament, the team's best finish in several years. The Hounds started the 16-team tournament as the fourth seed, then beat SLUH in the quarterfinals by six, followed by an upset victory over top-seeded Howell. The game against Howell was a hard fought 77-73 victory for the Hounds in which senior forward Syd Warner had 25 points and Bell added 24 points and six steals for the Hounds.

The game was filled with runs and droughts, as both teams seemed to answer the challenges time and again. In the third quarter alone, the Hounds outscored the Knights 21-8, but Howell responded by outscoring the Hounds 30-24 in the fourth quarter to make the game so close. Luckily, the Hounds put the game away at the line, shooting 80 percent from the charity stripe, much higher than the team's usual 62 percent free throw shooting.

"The Howell game was definitely our best team game so far this season," head varsity coach Ryan Luhnning said.

Luckily for the Hounds they can score. A lot. The team is averaging 64 points a game.

"Offense is definitely our best overall team aspect of the game," Warner said.

However, the Hounds are giving up nearly 58 points a game, something that cannot happen if the team wishes to be successful in the postseason.

"Our defense has got to get better; I want to personally improve mine, and the team needs to improve its man to man defense," Bell said.

After the team's win over Howell, they moved on to face Jennings in the finals of the tournament, but the team just could not stop Jennings' 5'6" superstar De'Shaun Cooper as he dropped 35 points against the Hounds. Warner had 20 in a losing effort, as seemingly the whole team got into foul trouble, and stars Bell and sophomore forward Christian Thomas had to sit out large amounts of the game.

Recently, the Hounds pounded Kennedy at home 53-36 as the team's starters barely played in the fourth quarter. The next day, the Hounds beat the Pattonville Pirates 66-48 as the team led by 23 points at halftime.

The Hounds have developed their own big three this season, somewhat similar to the Boston Celtics' big three of Kevin Garnett, Paul Pierce, and Ray Allen.

"I would say that Christian, Devonte, and Syd have lead the team, but we have definitely received key contributions from everyone," Luhnning said.

The Hounds' big three has combined for 68 percent of the team's total points, an astonishingly high number. Of the three, Warner leads the team, averaging 16 points and seven rebounds a game, while Bell is second in points with 15 a game to go along with his averages of four assists and two steals a game. Thomas rounds out the trio, averaging 13 points a game while leading the team in rebounding with eight per contest.

The interesting fact about the three is that they all lead the team in at least one category.

In terms of role players, the Hounds have picked up their contributions from several different sources. Senior guard Andrew Kiplinger has started for the team and provides a good balance with Bell at the guard positions.

As well, fellow senior forward Louis Maclin has been a pleasant surprise for the team, averaging five rebounds and nearly two blocks a game for the Hounds off the bench.

Also, junior Sumner Ahearn, a recent starter is hitting about 50 percent of his three point attempts, providing the team with a threat from behind the three-point line.

Even though the team is doing well, there are several things the team must do in order to continue to be successful.

"I expect us to play with effort, enthusiasm, and have fun, and, if we do that, we will continue to do well," Luhnning said.

If the Hounds can do that every game, then the team has an extremely bright future for the rest of the season.

"Right now, we are just focusing on one game at a time," Luhnning said.

In terms of the rest of the season, the Hounds only have approximately a month before the postseason, including key home games against Normandy (Jan. 30), MICDS (Feb. 4), and Wellston (Feb. 20). As well, the Hounds go on the road to Ladue on Friday.

Feb. 13 in a revenge match for the Hounds after their stinging one point defeat to the rival Rams earlier this season, the only Hounds loss to a team with a losing record.

"I would really like to go out with a win against Ladue," Warner said.

The Wellston game will be the last home game for seniors Ben Stamp, Kiplinger, Maclin, and Warner, their last night to play in front of the home crowd and the last time the team will step foot in Stuber Gym as part of a meaningful game.

If the Hounds can continue to build on their recent success, the Wellston game will not be the last meaningful game the Hounds play of the season.

With an extremely talented squad, the team has high expectations for themselves, and if any Clayton team can accomplish the ultimate goal of winning a district title, this team can do just that. ☘



Junior guard Devonte Bell lays the ball up in a recent Hounds victory over John F. Kennedy High School at home. The Hounds are 11-5 on the season and have been lead by senior forward Syd Warner, Bell, and sophomore forward Christian Thomas.

Andrew Dowd

## Senior diver leads young swim team



Julia Riley

Senior Paige Meneses practices a dive during practice. Meneses placed second in the state diving competition last year for the Hounds. Meneses is a favorite to win this year.

Mary Blackwell  
Editor

Out of a team of 24, the girls' swim team has only two seniors. Despite the lack of upperclassmen leadership and record of 1-5, head coach David Kohmetscher remains positive.

"We have had many positive individual accomplishments this year," Kohmetscher said. "All our swimmers are making progress. The team is doing well, but our overall record is a bit disappointing."

Paige Meneses and Julia Hartel are the two seniors and team captains.

"We were originally going to have a couple of different team leaders, but then a couple quit so now we have two, Julia and Paige," sophomore Moriah Olschansky said. "Paige is really nice but because she's a diver she doesn't really talk to the other swimmers as much, but Julia is a really great team leader, and she tries really hard to get everyone to do their best."

With the loss of older team members towards the start of the season, the team lacked experienced members.

"It made the beginning of the season difficult," Kohmetscher said. "But the remaining members quickly stepped into leadership rolls. The main impact from the loss of swimmers will be in our team win record."

The lack of seniors on the team definitely has impacted the younger members of the squad.

"It's harder because the freshmen didn't really have as many people to help them or to look up to," Hartel said. "It was sad for the people that stayed on the team because we lost a lot of our friends - people that were like fun to swim with. We lost a lot of good swimmers so getting to state will be harder because we don't have as many good swimmers for the relays."

The team was reduced further when junior Anjali Dharna injured her shoulder.

"I was injured so I can't swim, but now I'm the manager," Dharna said. "It's fine but I wish I were swimming."

The effects of the smaller numbers were not all negative.

"I met a lot of new people because a lot of the old members were gone," Meneses said. "I got to meet a lot of really cool freshmen and sophomores."

Also, the lack of older swimmers gave underclassmen more opportunity to compete and improve.

"We have many accomplished freshman this year," Kohmetscher said. "The two that stand out the most are Katherine Kirchoff and Julia Grasse."

The main impact of the reduced number of swimmers is their record.

"We are a smaller team than we've been in a long time so going into meets it's harder to fill up a lineup when you have less people," Hartel said. "We don't usually get too down after losing a meet, we still have fun."

The team's first win was Jan. 20 over University City.

"The focus isn't really to try and go out and win every meet, it's more just improving our personal times," Meneses said.

The team's best chance for qualifying for state is in the medley relay, a relay consisting of four swimmers each swimming a different stroke.

"We have a strong medley relay," Hartel said. "We're still enough seconds off of the qualifying time that it's like, I think we could, but I wouldn't say we have a good chance."

The state championships are on Feb. 21, and one member of the team has already qualified.

"The most impressive accomplishment is Paige Meneses qualifying for state in one meter diving," Kohmetscher said. "Paige is our best athlete and is expected to compete for first in state."

Meneses was recruited for diving at Yale and will be a freshman in New Haven, CT next year.

"Ivys can't give scholarships, but they recruit athletes," Meneses said. "They're NCAA division one, but they can't offer any money. What they do is they help you and support your application through admissions."

Meneses, who also competes in relays when needed, is focusing on individual as well as team goals for the rest of the season.

"I want to have a good state meet in February, and I just want everyone on the team to have had an enjoyable experience," Meneses said. "Hopefully one of the relays will be all conference. It's hard because I mainly do diving, but I feel like the team has faced a lot more challenges this year. The captains have tried to pull everyone together." ☘



Mark Cornelison/Lexington Herald-Leader/MCT

## Clayton athletes find healthy ways to prepare for games

Christian Thomas  
Reporter

Different Clayton High School student-athletes have different pre-game rituals related to their choices of food. It is no secret however, that carbohydrates and non-sugary snacks provide the best boost for athletes.

Most Clayton athletes follow the expectation of "eating healthy" set by coaches.

"I have a strict, recommended diet for my team," wrestling coach Andre Howard said. "The day of a meet, I strongly encourage my team to eat fruit and drink a bottle of water for breakfast. And for lunch possibly a piece of meat the size of their palm and a bottle of water. Even during the off season, I encourage my wrestlers to make smart decisions regarding nutrition."

Unfortunately, his advice has not had an impact on all the wrestlers.

"During the season, I typically eat a lot of healthy sandwiches from Subway. For the most part, my teammates also decide to eat healthy," sophomore wrestler Jordan Henry said. "During the off season is a different story. I basically eat anything I'm in the mood for even if it's unhealthy."

"Prior to games, I always tell my team to get something healthy in their stomach," boys' varsity basketball coach Ryan Luhnning said.

Some players are better at following that advice than others.

"I usually get a 6-inch sandwich from Subway," said senior Louis Maclin, a member of the varsity boys' basketball team. "I found by eating a sandwich, over chips and soda I am able to play better in games."

Pasta is also a favorite of some athletes.

"My favorite pre-game meal is bowtie noodles with butter or graham crackers. I also enjoy a piece of candy right before the game," said junior Maggie Lanter, a member of the girls' varsity basketball team.

A few students choose not to follow the healthy advice given by coaches.

"I've eaten just about everything before a game. Burgers and fries from McDonald's, chips, unhealthy sandwiches, and even soda. It doesn't really affect me because I can still play fine," stated a member of the boys' basketball team who wished to remain anonymous said.

The University of Illinois-Champaign provided these tips to ensure you are eating properly prior to a sporting event: hydrate the body (lots of water), eat enough to avoid hunger at the event, and stabilize blood-sugar levels and add some food energy to complement existing energy stored in muscle cells.

For follow-up information, you can visit <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/hsnut/hsathletes2.html>. ☘



# New administration may change college football system

Newly inaugurated President Barack Obama has expressed an interest to reform the college football system

Tom Evashwick  
Staff Reporter

Change.

The word President Barack Obama built his campaign around.

He promises a change in the economy, a shift in the Middle East, and the Bowl Championship Series.

Barack Obama supports changing the current college football system.

Of course it won't be as high on his priority list as saving the economy or environment, but Obama believes that a playoff system would be better for the sport.

Since 1998, the BCS has chosen the top two teams from the final rankings and thrown them in the national championship game.

The main criticism to the BCS system is that the two teams chosen aren't chosen as the top teams in the nation by living, breathing people. A computer formula determines who is worthy of playing for the national championship.

"[The BCS system is] a horrible way to choose the national championship game," chemistry teacher Nathan Peck said. "The system is flawed."

Along with picking the national championship game, four other BCS Bowls match up conference winners or highly ranked teams.

However, many of these elite teams all have a legitimate argument for playing for the national championship.

"The BCS puts too much emphasis on conference strength," Peck said.

This past season, USC displayed the best defense possibly in college football history, but was left out also because of a conference that was thought of as weak.

Texas Tech, Texas, and Oklahoma played in the same division, but each won one game and lost one to the other two. Oklahoma was chosen to play for the national championship—they were selected possibly because their loss was the earliest in the season.



The Florida Gators defeated the Oklahoma Sooners 24-14 in the BCS National Title Game. Even though the Gators won, there is still a question as to whether they are the best team in the country. Many believe that a playoff system would be able to rightfully determine a true national champion in college football.

"Lesser known teams that have really proven themselves over one season just don't get a chance at the championship because they aren't regulars at bowl games," junior Nick Kirchoff said. "It just isn't fair."

Utah, the only undefeated team in all of college football, wasn't chosen to play

in the championship game because the conference they play in is not particularly strong.

At the end of the 2003-2004 season, USC was the number one ranked team in both the AP Top 25 and the USA Today Poll. However, the BCS chose #2 LSU and #3 Oklahoma. LSU won the

game and the BCS national championship. When USC won the Rose Bowl against #4 Michigan, they were recognized by many as being the split national champion, and brought a second and stronger wave of controversy.

The first controversy was in the inaugural 1998-1999 season, when highly

routed and third ranked Kansas State was left out of all of the four BCS bowls.

Many have suggested a "Plus One" system or playoff system instead of the BCS.

A "Plus One" system would entail playing the four BCS bowls—the Rose Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, Orange Bowl, and

Sugar Bowl—and then choosing two of four winning teams to play for the national championship.

"Those are the four biggest bowls, but there still some debate and ambiguity for which teams you chose," junior Emil Thyssen said. "That still wouldn't be a fair way to determine the national championship game."

A college playoff system would take the top eight or 16 teams and play a single elimination tournament.

This would more accurately determine a true national champion. With the best of the best playing each other, a playoff system would cause college football to become more similar to the NFL.

Many believe becoming more like the NFL is the reason college football keeps the current bowl system.

"Some people like college football more than the NFL because of the big rivalry games," Thyssen said. "College football brings the element of tradition into the picture."

"The tradition of inter-conference rivalries has been a major part of college football," Peck said. "Games like the Rose Bowl have developed into conference rivalries and brought big games to the NCAA."

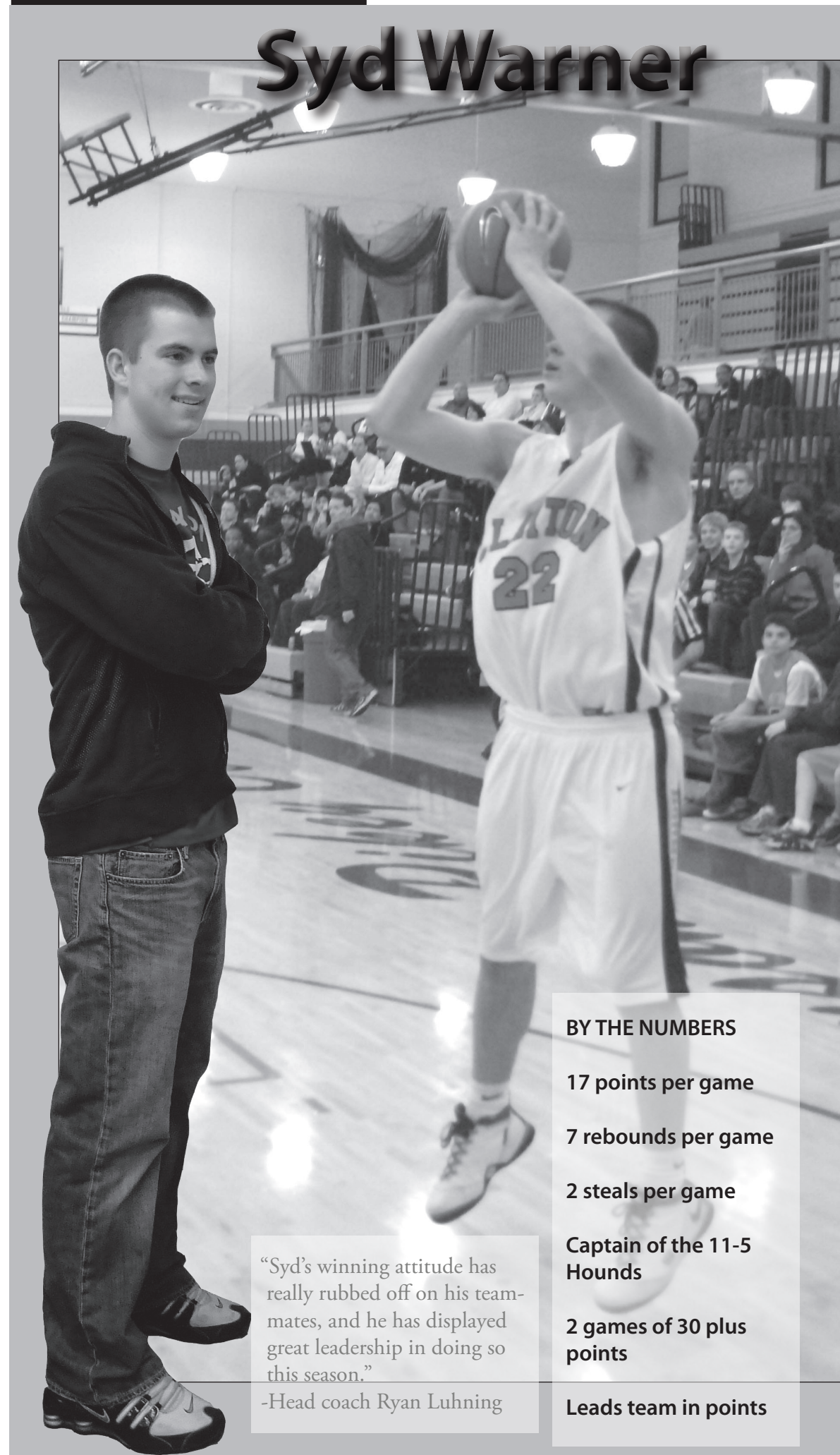
It seems as though the colleges themselves are more concerned with their endowments. Every bowl game has a certain payout: BCS bowls pay \$17 million and non BCS bowls pay determined on the caliber of the teams playing. Each team puts its winnings in a conference pot, then that is divided equally by all the teams in the conference. Being a part of a big bowl game can affect the amount of money the university ends up with.

However, a playoff system would cause the season to expand far into the NFL playoffs, and possibly even into the Super Bowl.

"Football season can never be too long, though," Kirchoff said.

## Athlete of the Month

### Syd Warner



#### BY THE NUMBERS

17 points per game

7 rebounds per game

2 steals per game

Captain of the 11-5 Hounds

2 games of 30 plus points

Leads team in points

"Syd's winning attitude has really rubbed off on his teammates, and he has displayed great leadership in doing so this season."

-Head coach Ryan Luhning



Scott Shapiro

Senior Syd Warner shoots at a home game in Stuber Gym. Warner has demonstrated remarkable leadership on the varsity boys' basketball team. Warner has recently been approached by several colleges and universities to play college basketball.

## Warner demonstrates leadership on varsity boys' basketball team

Evan Green  
Editor

Senior forward Syd Warner seems to have finally broken through to the successful side of high school basketball.

As a freshman and sophomore, Warner came off the bench for the Hounds the majority of the time. As a junior, Warner finally started to come into his own, starting for the Hounds and playing a large role for the team. Before this season, Warner strived to change this.

"I really worked out and played a lot over the summer to get myself ready for this season," Warner said.

Coming into the season, there were a couple questions as to who would step up for the Hounds this season.

Luckily for the team, Warner has answered that question, leading the team in points and rebounds, averaging nearly 17 points a game, while also pulling down eight rebounds, two steals and two assists per contest.

As well, when the team needs someone to step up in their toughest games, Warner has risen to the challenge for the Hounds.

Some of Warner's biggest games include Hazelwood central (27 points), Whitfield (34 points and 14 rebounds), Howell (25 points), Jennings (20 points), and McCluer North (32 points).

The most interesting part of the matter is that all of those games were decided by less than eight points (with the exception of the Jennings game). Also, several of the games decided the Hounds' future in their tournaments, especially the fact that the Howell game was the semifinals of the MICDS Holiday tournament and the Jennings game the finals of that tournament.

"The biggest difference this year for myself, and the reason I've been doing well, is that I have better players around me, which opens up my game," Warner said.

Warner's productivity has resonated with the team, and seemingly, as he plays well, so does the team. That has led the team to their successful 11-5 record so far into the season even though the team has faced a daunting schedule thus far.

Warner has several explanations as to why he has done well so far this season.

"I need to continue to be aggressive and crash the boards in order to be successful," Warner said.

Warner's game intensity has definitely been noticeable this season.

"Syd's attitude has transformed from one that was a want-to-win attitude his sophomore and junior years to a will-win attitude that he makes happen this season," varsity boys' coach Ryan Luh-

ning said. "Also, his winning attitude has really rubbed off on his teammates, and he has displayed great leadership in doing so."

In fact, Warner has been doing so well that several colleges have started to give him a serious look for their program.

He has received letters from Missouri State, McKendree, Skidmore, Christian Brothers University, Lewis and Clark, and a handful of other small schools. Another option for Warner is to walk on at a Division I school.

As to making a decision, Warner is not sure as to where he is leaning towards or exactly when he will make his decision.

"All I know is that I will make my decision after the season," Warner said.

With that in mind, Warner would much rather focus on the season at hand and not look ahead to next year.

"Right now, the biggest thing on my mind and my ultimate goal for the season is to win districts," Warner said.

The Hounds have not won a district title for boys' basketball since Warner was a freshman, and he would like nothing better than to go out with another one.

In doing so, that would put the ultimate exclamation point on a stellar career for Warner at CHS.



# Pep band energizes crowd

Justin Elliot  
Reporter

As the high school basketball season has sprung into full gear, the basketball players are not the only ones pressured for good performance.

The CHS pep band are off the court players that allow the varsity basketball games to be the fun, loud and enjoyable events spectators come to love.

"The pep bands is a really great addition to the basketball games," said pep band Director Kim Shelly. "We are able to motivate the players, energize the audience, and let the band members show off some of their skills."

Shelly said the band program does not place a huge emphasis on pep band.

The band is still able to produce a high quality pep band because of the extremely talented band students; and this talent does not go unnoticed at games.

"I really enjoy it when the pep band

plays at the games," sophomore Tom Haslam said. "It makes them a lot more fun and the band sounds really good."

It's always important to remember and appreciate everyone's work that goes into making a sporting event happen.

Scott Shapiro  
Senior

Pep Band member for four years. "And I don't think anyone wants us to be here anyway, including me."

Although many band members agree with Schlessman, a large number enjoy the pep band experience.

"I know I have to come here because I am in band, but it is actually pretty fun; and we spend most of the time just

sitting here talking to our friends," said junior Cynthia Koehler, a member of the band for three years. "Plus we get into the games for free."

Many at the game greatly appreciate the bands presence.

"When the pep band isn't at our games, it just feels like there is something missing," said boys' varsity basketball team captain Syd Warner. "The pep band really pumps the team up and gets us psyched for the game."

However, Shelly likes to think the pep band does more for the team.

"This may be pushing it, but I feel that we help the players get a few extra points in the game," Shelly said.

Nevertheless, Warner does not see the correlation between the pep band and additional points. It is very easy to take the hard work of the band for granted.

"I am in the pep band, have been on the field while the band is playing and have been a spectator; I have seen that is easy to take for granted everything that goes into a sporting event," senior Scott Shapiro said. "It's always important to remember and appreciate everyone's work that goes into making a sporting event happen." ☺

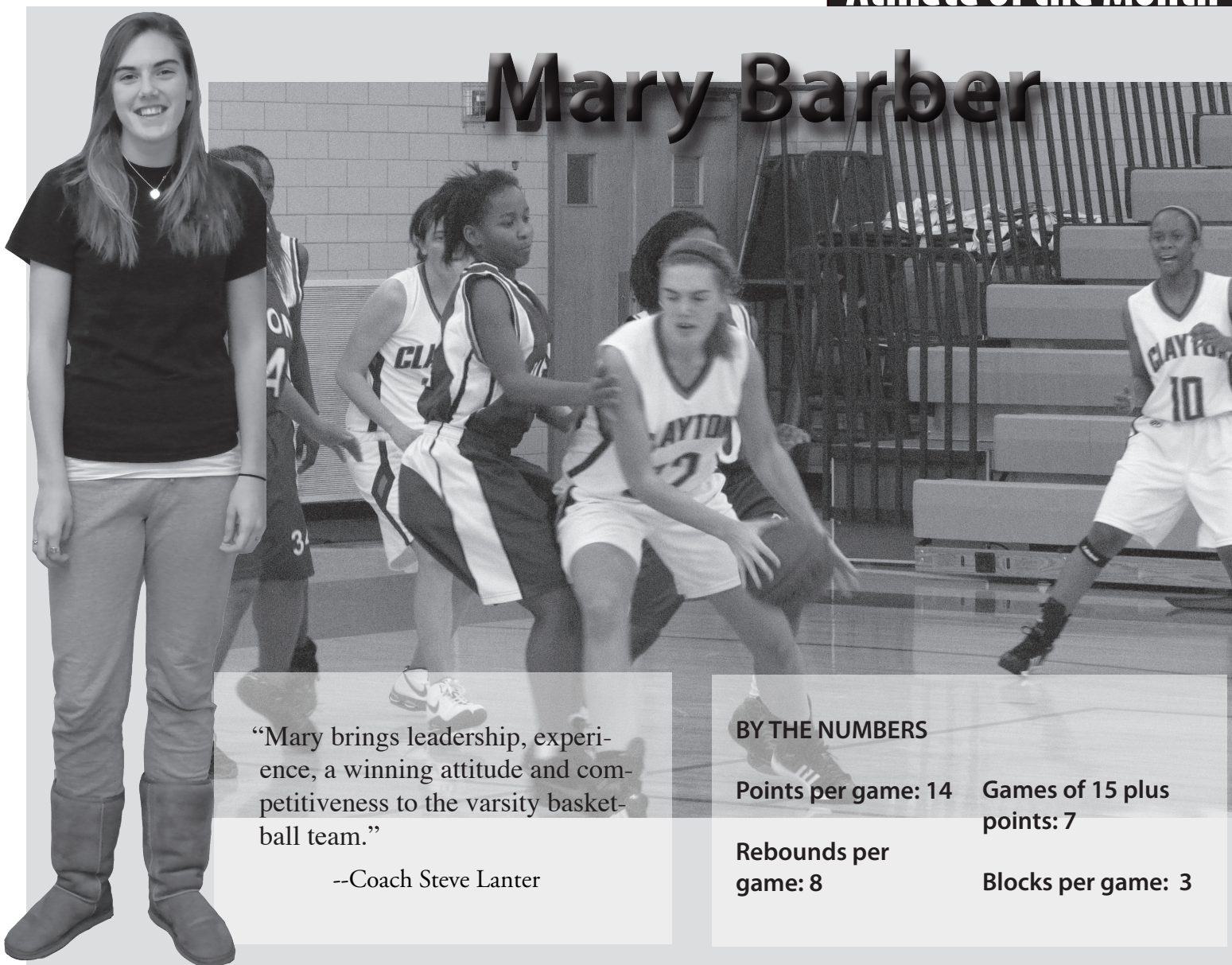


Pep band plays at numerous CHS varsity boys' basketball games during the year. They provide entertainment and encouragement.

Scott Shapiro

## Athlete of the Month

# Mary Barber



"Mary brings leadership, experience, a winning attitude and competitiveness to the varsity basketball team."

--Coach Steve Lanter

### BY THE NUMBERS

Points per game: 14 Games of 15 plus points: 7

Rebounds per game: 8 Blocks per game: 3

BASKETBALL

POST/CENTER

## Senior star shines on court

Simone Bernstein  
Editor

This basketball season senior Mary Barber leads CHS girls' varsity basketball in points and rebounds. Barber shows her talent as a center and a forward during her last year on the team.

"I am one of the only two seniors on the girls varsity basketball team," Barber said. "I bring four years of experience and a leadership role. This year I share the role of captain with Diane Martin and Maggie Lanter."

Varsity girls' basketball Coach Steve Lanter agrees that she is a substantial member of the team.

"Mary brings leadership, experience, a winning attitude, and competitiveness to the varsity basketball team," Lanter said.

Barber feels one of the keys to her success was off-season training.

"Part of my success is due to training in the spring, summer and fall," Barber said. "A player can get much better if they play basketball in the off-season. That is definitely my best piece of advice I can give to all basketball players."

Barber has a few memorable games this year. In the future, Barber hopes to play more basketball.

"This season, my best games were against Whitfield and Lutheran South," Barber said. "Right now I am focusing my search on colleges that have basketball programs. Playing basketball is a big factor in my college decision. I hope to play four years of basketball at a division three or NAIA school."

One of Barber's responsibilities on the team is to help the freshmen, junior varsity and varsity teams interact with

each other.

"One of my goals is to help the younger girls feel welcome and part of the team," Barber said. "I will miss the girls in the entire program. This year all the teams are really close."

Barber feels that girls are more likely to succeed if they enjoy themselves on the court.

"Girls really need to have a passion for basketball," Barber said. "The game should be both fun and competitive."

Many freshmen girls agree that Barber is a great player who inspires them to stick with basketball all four years of high school.

"We interact with the varsity team on a daily basis," freshmen basketball player Traci Walker said. "Mary encourages her teammates during games and helps younger players improve their skills on the court."

There are still games remaining in the season. Some of Barber's most highly anticipated games haven't passed yet.

"I am excited for the Ladue game later in the season," Barber said. "This is a highly anticipated game. My goal is to beat them this year."

Barber has many positive memories of her four years on the basketball team.

"My first year on varsity was really fun," Barber said. "All our team dinners and bonding experiences are great moments which I will miss."

Barber is eager to play basketball in her future, but will miss the CHS sports program in its entirety.

"Girls really need to have a passion for basketball," Barber said. "The game should be fun and competitive." ☺

## No-cut policy equals no win?

CHS is different than most high schools in the area. I think most Clayton students would agree with that statement.

There are many differences at Clayton, some of which include open campus, good grades, high college acceptance rates, many class choices, and we like to live up to the "work hard, play hard" mentality.

But there is one more glaring difference at CHS: the attitude towards our sports teams. The root of this "difference" begins with the youth leagues in the area.

As Clayton kids are raised athletically through the Clayton Parks and Recreation leagues, kids have fun playing sports, making friends, etc. However, there is one big problem with this concept: it is UNREALISTIC because sports does not imitate life.

These recreational (have fun, don't keep score) games are instituted with good intentions, but they don't prepare kids for high school sports, college, and especially not for LAC (Life After College).

You would think that the whole recreational concept would end at the start of high school, but no, not at Clayton, where there is a "unique" no-cut policy for any student who wishes to play any sport, as well as the every-kid-should-play ideals that hail from the recreational league mentality.

However, the reality of high school sports is that it is a competitive atmosphere and truly the best players should

be playing for their respective teams.

I personally feel that Clayton could use a cut policy. The school is small enough that it would not affect many teams, so that should not be a problem. Why not? Winning makes sports even more fun in my mind.

As the great Herman Edwards once said in a post game news conference, "You play to win the game."

That is a statement that I agree with whole-heartedly. I have, over the years, heard several other reasons as to why some students play high school sports. Those reasons have ranged from the desire to get into shape all the way to "my friends were doing it, so I decided to do it also".

I personally respond to those reasons by recommending that the player get into shape in the off season by exercising before the season begins, rather than wait until the season starts to try to get in shape, thereby hurting the team. Let's be honest, the real world is a much more competi-

tive place than high school sports, so why not prepare kids for future challenges in life on a smaller scale?

Most likely if there was a cut policy, more students would probably train harder (and get in shape) in order to make a sports team, thereby setting and accomplishing a goal for themselves.

As well, if there was a cut policy, younger players would be able to fill varsity spots that they deserve more than an older player, and, in doing so, the younger player is able to develop him or herself with a group of talented players,

gaining valuable varsity experience and allowing the older players the chance to make themselves better by facing a stronger and more talented opposition in practice and hone their skills.

By doing that, the starting players are more prepared for games, and the younger players gain experience that they will be able to use when they are older. This is a win-win situation for both young and old and the truly deserving players.

If a student really wants to make a varsity team, they will train hard enough to do so. With the current system, a senior is guaranteed a spot on the varsity squad and by knowing that, some seniors don't work out as much in preparation for the season, or even take the preseason tryouts seriously because they know that they are already on the team.

One possible solution to this would be for students who do not wish to play as often as a school sport, or maybe even are not talented enough to play the sport at the varsity level would be to start an intramural team for that sport.

In all, the situation is a cycle. If CHS does not make their sports teams seem very competitive or show that it is a privilege to play a varsity sport at CHS, then less and less students will want to attend games or seriously respect any team at the school.

That is why I propose that the school institute a cut policy, therefore making the right to play varsity sports at CHS a more special and distinct accomplishment than it is now.

By putting in these changes, Clayton will improve much more athletically than ever before. While academics should, and always will, be a students main focus, why not increase a students chances for athletic success along the way and prepare them for the rest of their lives? ☺

### Turf Tales



Evan Green

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CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: Freshman Zoe Keller performs a double filp. Keller, along with a number of CHS students, is a member of the Saint Louis Skating Club, an organization devoted to the cultivation of figure skating skills, particularly for younger skaters. Keller relaxes after practice. Keller has a bit of fun on the ice. According to Keller, the sport is fun because of the intensity and beauty that accompanies the sport. Fleur-de-lis, a St. Louis synchronized skating group of which Keller is a member, performs a block. Keller practices a scratch spin. Fleur-de-lis performs a spiral line. Keller performs spread eagle.



## *In Sync on Ice*

Freshman Zoe Keller, a five year member of the St. Louis synchronized figure skating group Fleur-de-lis, appreciates the sport for its grace and intensity, as well its deviation from mainstream figure skating. According to Keller, the sport of synchronized skating is more than just pretty dresses and glitter.





## Close Up with Obama

On Jan. 20, Barack Obama became the 44th President of the United States. The Close Up group visited D.C. during his Inauguration.



MCT Campus

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January 28, 2009

# The Loop embodies St. Louis culture and history

Kara Kratcha

Reporter

Meandering slowly down the sidewalk, staring intently at the ground as you go, you read the names of seemingly unconnected famous people etched into star-shaped plaques in the sidewalk: Cedric "the Entertainer." T. S. Elliot. Nelly. Ulysses S. Grant. Maya Angelou.

You have found yourself in the Delmar Loop, reading some of the many stars in the St. Louis Walk of Fame, one of the many projects started and maintained by Joe Edwards.

"I guess I'm an eternal optimist," Edwards said to the St. Louis Business Journal in a 2000 interview. "Because I think we'll see a thriving riverfront (on both sides of the Mississippi), a strong central corridor, flourishing neighborhoods and parks connected by trolley 'spurs' to a mass transit system envied by other cities."

Thirty years ago, the Loop was not the fun, diverse place it is today. Edwards' optimism may have helped him over the years in his quest to make the Loop a model neighborhood, but his dedication to the job probably had more to do with Delmar's fame and success.

Edwards is the owner of Blueberry Hill, the Pageant, which he built in 2000, the Pin-Up Bowl and formerly the Tivoli Theater. He co-founded and serves as chairman of The Loop Special Business District, originated the Loop's holiday lights, and started the annual Loop Ice Carnival.

Edwards aside, another great St. Louis tradition resides in the Loop. Fitz's Bottling Company finds its home in the restored West End Bank building, according to the restaurant's website.

No doubt, Edwards' work on the Loop has made Delmar into the place it is today—a street full of diverse restaurants, hip venues and stages, unique entertainment opportunities and an eclectic shopping experience, ranging from the appropriately-named Rag-o-Rama, to the sleek clothing racks of Ziezo, to the heavily incensed Macro Sun.

Sophomore Greg Dallas, whose band has performed in the Loop several times, says that the Loop is what makes St. Louis unique.

"It's like the only awesome thing in St. Louis," Dallas said. "So the Loop's pretty important."

With its wide cultural spectrum and rows of colorful facades, the Delmar Loop is arguably the best entertainment destination in St. Louis.

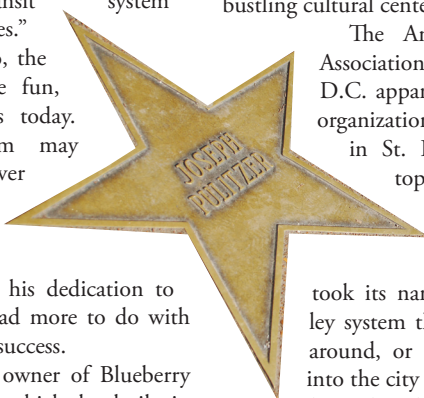
"I think it is a source of some level of pride, and possesses distinct cultural and historical value for the city," sophomore Ikshu Neithalath said. "The Loop remembers a time when this city was on par with Chicago and New York as a bustling cultural center in the country."

The American Planning Association in Washington, D.C. apparently agrees. The organization named the Loop in St. Louis one of the top ten great streets of America in 2007.

The Loop took its name from the trolley system that ran in a turn-around, or loop, to get back into the city from Delmar. Today, Edwards may be fulfilling his dream of a working trolley system as plans for a vintage trolley running from University City's City Hall to the History Museum and back, are already under way.

In fact, Edwards' dreams aren't going anywhere. Construction on the Moonrise Hotel is currently underway. The hotel will have, according to Edwards' page on the Blueberry Hill website, a restaurant, 125 rooms, meeting rooms, and a rooftop patio.

With its current standing success and promising upcoming businesses, the Loop leads the way for entertainment and culture in St. Louis.



Andrew Dowd



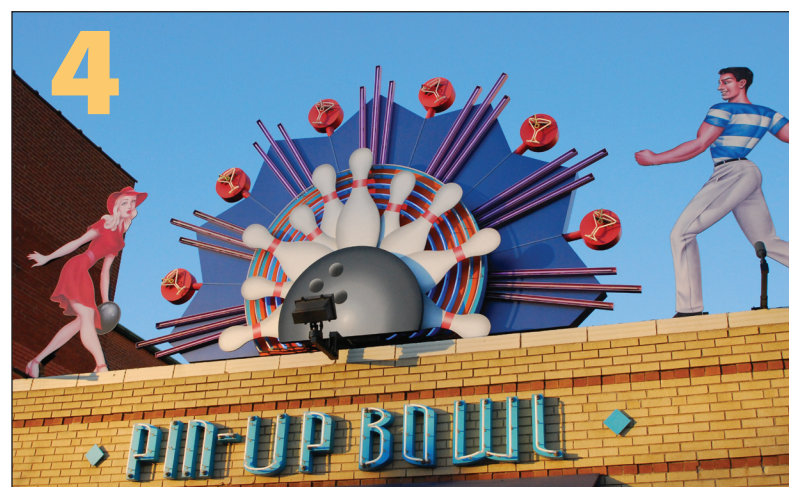
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Nicole Burton



3

Andrew Dowd



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Andrew Dowd



5

Andrew Dowd



6

Andrew Dowd

1. The Pageant was built in 2000.
2. The American Planning Association in D.C. named the Loop in St. Louis one of the top ten streets of America in 2007.
3. Blueberry Hill was opened by Joe Edwards in 1972.
4. Edwards also opened Pin-up Bowl in 2003.
5. Originally built in 1924, the Tivoli theater was restored and reopened in 1995 by Joe Edwards.
6. The interior of the Tivoli is reminiscent of its original grandeur. Joseph Pulitzer's star in the center is part of the St. Louis Walk of Fame which opened in 1980. It honors famous St. Louisans with informative plaques. There are over 120 plaques in all.

## News Briefs

### Clayton Bond Issue

The Clayton School Board voted to place Proposition S, a \$51 million dollar bond issue, on the April 2009 ballot. The ballot proposal will provide funding for projects at all Clayton schools. The bond issue is estimated to raise the District's debt service tax rate by 29 cents or \$275 per year on a \$500,000 home.

### CHS Attendance Calling

CHS started a new automated attendance calling system. Parents will receive an automated call when their student has an unexcused absence. The call will notify the periods the student was unexcused and how to contact the CHS Attendance Office.

### Peppers Dance

This year, Peppers is scheduled for Feb. 7, 2009. The theme will be "A Midsummer Night's Dream." If you plan on bringing a non-CHS student to Peppers, the guest forms are available in the Activities Office and from the CHS website.

### CHS Broomball Tournament

The CHS broomball tournament is scheduled for Feb. 12, 2009 from 8pm to 11pm at the Shaw Park Ice Rink. This event is open to all students interested in creating a team.

### National African American Parent Involvement Day

The School District of Clayton will celebrate National African American Involvement Day on Feb. 9, 2009 from 8:30am to 3pm. This is a national call to action in order to get parents more involved in their children's high school education. This will open up dialogue among Clayton teachers and students.



# Seasonal Affective Disorder: more than just winter blahs

Bianca Vannucci  
Reporter

As the cold weather gets colder and the days are short, you might have to blame your blues on the season. Many people are, in fact, heavily affected by changes in seasons and temperatures.

Many people claim to experience the winter blues, but what many people call winter blues may be a sign of a more serious problem, such as Seasonal Affective Disorder or even depression.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a disease that affects half a million people in the U.S., in which people who have normal mental health throughout most of the year experience depressive symptoms in the winter, or in rare cases, the summer.

"Even though I love the cold, I get sadder when winter comes," freshman Thalia Sass said. "No one ever gets excited about going out into zero degree weather unless it's a snow day and there's a foot of snow on the ground."

The U.S. National Library of Medicine notes "some people experience a serious mood change when the seasons change." Freshman Chelsea Colangelo fits in this category.

"I don't really look forward to winter," Colangelo said. "It always makes me gloomy."

Any drastic change in temperature can have similar effects on some people.

"My mood is affected when there are big changes in temperature," Sass said. "I can see myself getting a little depressed when there are extreme changes, like when it gets really hot in the summer here or really bitter cold in the winter."

Mood changes can be a first step to identifying this disease. Medline Plus lists symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder as a change in appetite, especially a craving for sweet or starchy foods, weight gain, drop in energy level, fatigue, tendency to oversleep, or anxiety.

"During the winter and fall time I

get tired very easily and during summer and spring I seem to stay awake longer," junior Nick Oliveri said.

What most people dislike about winter is being restricted to staying inside, but an important part of dealing with SAD winter depression is going outside.

"When the cold weather comes and I can't go outside and play football it stinks," freshman Max Diekneite said.

In fact, according to Medline Plus the first and most important step to avoid winter blues is going outside and catching some sunrises. Other helpful tips include learning to manage stress, taking a vacation to a different climate zone, or even talking to a doctor because what many people think

is just a common dislike for a season can be SAD.

Winter blues can be cured by changing your diet, according to Do It Yourself. One should eat lots of carbohydrates like pasta, rice crackers or even starchy vegetables like corn or potatoes. It's recommended to eat foods that are high in Vitamin D. These foods are known to raise your energy level, but if a change of diet doesn't do the trick, there are other ways.

SAD can be cured with medicines such as antidepressants, counseling or light therapy. Light therapy, featured on CNN in 2007, uses blue lights to affect the biological clock and cure the winter blues.

Although much more uncommon, SAD can also affect people during the summer. This is called Reverse Seasonal Affective Disorder.

"I'm happier and more willing to go outside during the winter because I like cold weather the best," freshman Karley Woods said.

If a season is affecting your mood to the point where you can't live your life the way you would normally live it, it's time to talk to a professional. ☺

## A full-court press against winter

"Seasonal affective disorder" (SAD) is the depression that settles over many people during the cold, dark months. It's actually a syndrome, or group of symptoms, and there are ways to counteract

### SAD causes these ...

Craving for sugar and sweets

Overeating foods heavy in carbohydrates

Disturbed sleep patterns (excessive sleeping and fatigue or insomnia)

Fatigue and neglecting to exercise

Healing light

■ Daily exposure to sunlight – 30 minutes or more, if possible – or artificial light

### ... so do these

Consciously put together a good diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, and be sure to find sweet foods – such as bananas or dates – that you

Decide how much sleep your body needs, and consciously get that amount each night. It may be more hours than you need during the summer.

NOTE: If you don't know how much sleep you need, try sleeping different lengths of time and see which ones leave you refreshed and which leave you yawning

Do moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, for 15 or 20 minutes. Find the types of exercise that are most

■ During the winter, try to let as much sunlight into your home and office as possible. If a room is dark, consider repainting it in lighter colors.

MCT Campus

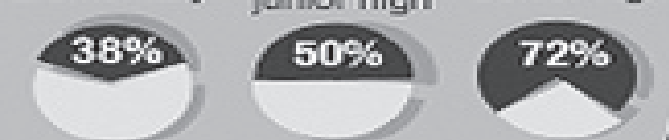
## Unhealthy food at schools

A new survey shows many U.S. public schools have contracts with companies to sell soft drinks.

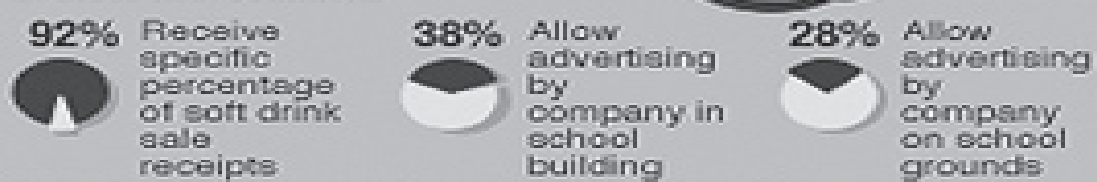
### Soft drinks

Contract with company to sell soft drinks

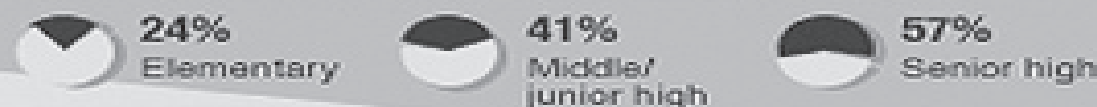
Elementary Middle/junior high Senior high



Of those with contracts:



Schools with contracts that receive sales incentives



### Top-selling foods

Most popular items according to food service directors in Pennsylvania high schools



Source: (U.S.) Institute of Medicine, Pennsylvania Department of Health  
Graphic: Lee Hubbard, Judy Trable

© NCT

## Faced with rising teen obesity rates, schools beef up nutrition

Jocelyn Lee  
Reporter

Bake sales banned from school grounds, weekly organic produce stands – these are among the more extreme changes seen in school districts across the nation. Recently, school nutrition programs have been gaining ground, partly because of the looming problem of childhood and adolescent obesity.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (cdc.gov), data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) (2003–2006) showed that the prevalence of obesity among 6–11 year olds was 17.0 percent, and for 12–19 year olds was 17.6 percent.

A recent study of 500 to 600 school districts in the U.S. found that many had policies that limit the amount of fat, trans-fat, sugars and sodium in school food. According to the New York Times, standards for foods like cookies and soft drinks that compete with meals have been laid down in 16 states.

Since July of 2007, California has had strict nutrition standards for public schools that control the types of foods that can be sold to students. Snacks sold during the school day must contain less than 35 percent sugar by weight, derive less than 35 percent of their calories from fat and less than 10 percent of their calories from saturated fat. Thus, the banned

Over the past several years, CHS has taken steps toward providing more nutritious options, including cutting items for sale in vending machines and offering more bottled water. However, health teacher Melissa Hobick says food served in

schools is a very small factor in the overall obesity issue.

"There are so many other factors," Hobick said. "[People are] being lazy, drinking soda and then not burning off those calories." Although school food might not be a significant contributor to obesity, it may shape student eating habits.

"More so in the elementary and middle schools than in high school, [school food] can have an effect on eating habits because you don't have a lot of choices," Hobick said.

When there are healthy, nutritious choices available, it seems that students are influenced in a positive way. Recently, a study by the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale found that children were not increasing their fat and sugar intake outside of school to make up for the lack of unhealthy options at school.

"Some people think that kids have this internal potato chip monitor, but there's not evidence of that," said the center's deputy director, Marlene B. Schwartz, as quoted in the New York Times. "People really do eat what's in front of them."

Hobick said she thinks CHS' lunch program has made very good improvements over the last few years.

"They have expanded what they're offering especially by having sandwiches and salads available," Hobick said. "I think they've come a long way."

However, when it comes down to nutrition, schools can only provide healthier options for students. In the end, students have to decide for themselves.

"People have to make good choices every time they eat," Hobick said. ☺

More so in the elementary and middle schools than in high school, [school food] can have an effect on eating habits because you don't have a lot of choices.

Melissa Hobick  
Health Teacher

## High-fructose corn syrup not as sweet as it seems

Grace Cohen  
Reporter

Two figures appear on the screen. There is some sort of an argument. The man refuses to eat a Popsicle because it has high-fructose corn syrup in it. When his girlfriend asks why high fructose corn syrup is so bad, he can't seem to think why. His girlfriend explains that high-fructose corn syrup is fine in moderation and has the same amount of calories as sugar.

This is all part of a new campaign arranged by The Corn Refiners Association, which is trying to change the negative perception of high-fructose corn syrup, also known as HFCS.

Some scientists debate whether HFCS is metabolized differently than other sugars. Those who believe it is say that it can lead to health problems such as diabetes and obesity.

"Some health experts believe high fructose corn syrup is responsible for the rise in obesity," said Diane Friedman, a registered dietician. "Some theorize that corn syrup is metabolized differently than other sugars; it puts weight on the mid-section."

Others disagree. According to the Sweet Surprise website, HFCS has the

same natural sweeteners as table sugar and honey, and the same number of calories.

To figure out which side is correct seems nearly impossible; both sides have the support of health experts. Looking at how HFCS is made reveals straight answers.

King Corn is a documentary about corn in the Midwest that shows the evolution of corn over the last hundred years. The filmmakers, college graduates Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis, investigate corn sweetener as part of a self-driven inquiry into the role of corn in America. At home they simulate how HFCS would be made in a factory. First, the corn sits for 16 hours in 180-degree water. A small amount of sulfuric acid is then added. The starch begins to separate from fiber. Then it's mashed or ground. Enzyme protein

is added to extract the sugar.

The problem is, HFCS seems to be in almost everything. When walking down a grocery aisle, everything seems to contain some HFCS. In 2003 The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated that Americans ate 79 pounds of HFCS per year-- a 400 percent increase from 1970.

"Some people get so used to the sweet taste in foods that they don't like products without some form of sugar added," Friedman said. "For example people get used to peanut butter with added sugar, which usually is HFCS, and peanut butter without it doesn't taste good to them."

Are you really in for a "sweet surprise"? It's all the consumer's choice. It can be hard to tell which side is right. There are so many mixed messages especially with the new ads on TV. One thing is for sure: remember the saying "Everything in moderation." ☺



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# Coffee becomes addiction for stressed students

Ijeoma Onyema  
Editor

Whether it's before school or right as the last bell rings, many CHS students can't survive the day without a hot cup of joe. As the college process begins for juniors, their coffee consumption has augmented to an amount that might be considered unhealthy by many physicians.

Rarely seen without her mug of coffee, junior Erica Bluestein says a cup of coffee is essential to stay alert throughout the day, especially during first and second periods.

"I usually drink one cup a day," Bluestein said. "However, during finals, that can change from one to two or three cups."

Like Bluestein, junior Cynthia Koehler drinks one to two cups of coffee.

"I go from a day to a week without a cup of coffee," Koehler said.

In addition, Koehler believes that the boost from coffee really gets her up in the morning.

"I enjoy the stimulation of the caffeine because I tend to do better when I am hyper," Koehler said. "Also, I think hanging out with friends at a coffeehouse is way much better than boozing up at a late party."

Many factors affect the amount of coffee consumption within the junior class. One well-known factor is sleep deprivation.

"The strength and amount of coffee depends on how tired I am," Bluestein said. "Most mornings, I have a regular cup or a plain latte, but if I am really tired, I might put in an extra shot or have European blend."

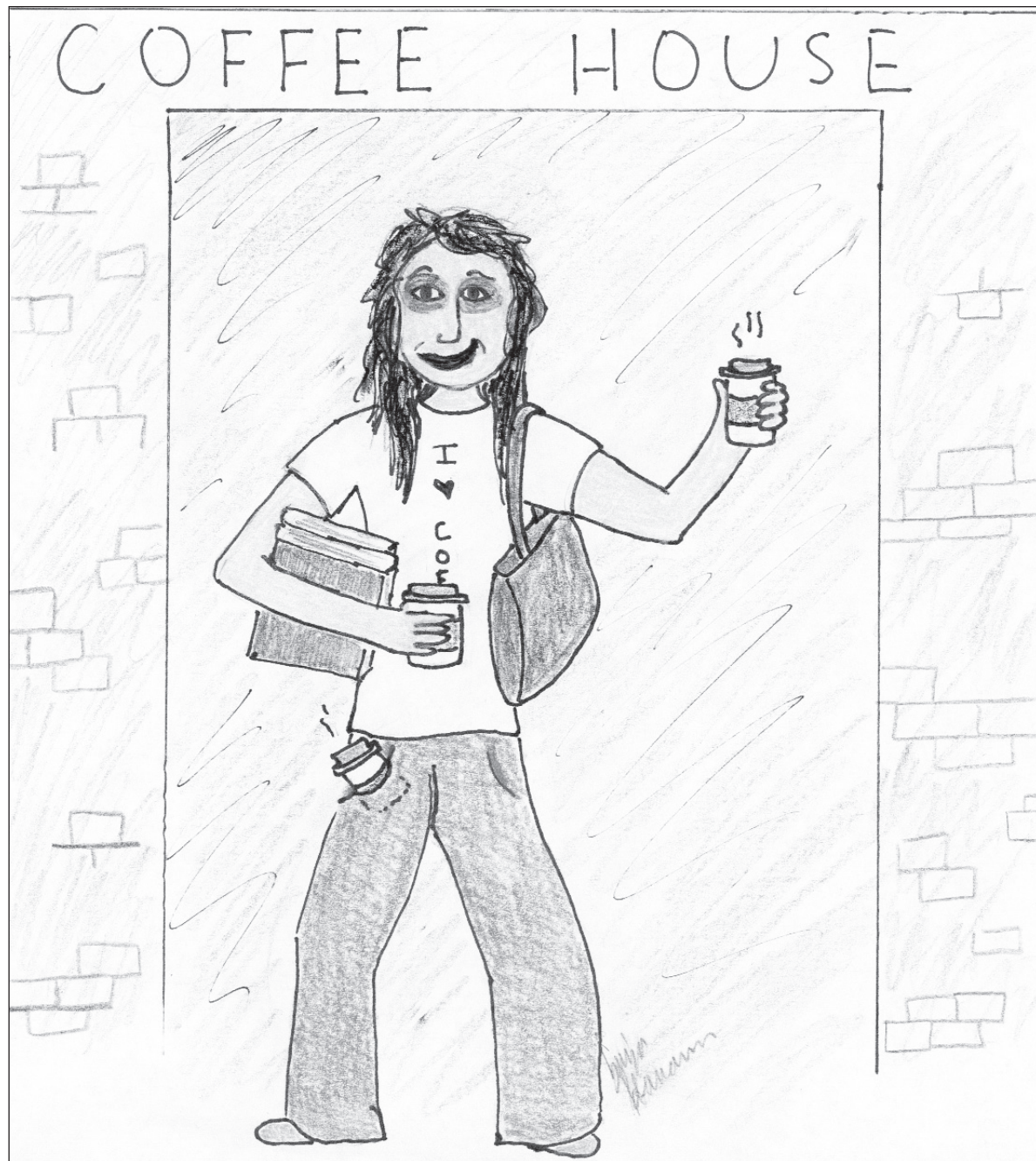
Another factor is family history. By watching guardians drinking coffee, one could find himself becoming an avid coffee drinker as well.

"I watched my parents' coffee consumption for a month-long experiment as I did a self-study as well," Bluestein said. "My dad could drink a whole pot of straight black coffee without feeling out of the ordinary and my mom made two trips to Starbucks plus made herself a cup of coffee once she got home."

Though Bluestein's consumption is not as severe as her parents, she still noticed that she had a slight dependency on coffee.

"Even after the experiment was over I had some strong side effects," Bluestein said. "I would always feel really tired each day without my cup of coffee."

Like many of others, Bluestein has admitted to having an addiction to coffee.



Sonja Petermann

"I used to get up thirty minutes earlier than I usually do just to go to Starbucks."

"I noticed that I was able to go days without any withdrawal symptoms," Bluestein said. "However, going without coffee for three weeks would be a different story."

Nonetheless, Bluestein knows when to stop drinking.

"Many drink more coffee than they need to, especially when they are not tired," Bluestein said. "Moreover, many don't monitor their caffeine intake because, when they drink too much coffee, they might end up with heart murmurs."

Coffee has been reported to reduce the risk of cirrhosis, gout, and Parkinson's

disease. However, these aren't enough to surmount to the dangers of drinking too much coffee. Coffee augments blood pressure and cholesterol, along with increasing the risk of cancer due to the carcinogens found in the roasted beans.

More importantly, the stimulant caffeine can cause what physicians call caffeine intoxication. These "caffeine jitters" are what occur when one constantly consumes more than 310 milligrams. Symptoms vary from constant blushing and twitching to mania and death. Inconsideration of this lethal dependency can lure many unaware teens into dangerous health situations.

Though the exact amount consumed by the class of 2010 isn't known, one can assume that it is fairly high, especially

as college standardized exams near and the stress escalates. However, Koehler believes that it is not right to judge how much her fellow classmates drink.

"It doesn't seem fair to just probe into other's business, asking 'Is this their first cup or their third?' As long as they're performing well in school, it shouldn't matter how much they drink," Koehler said. Bluestein agrees with Koehler, saying that it's not up to one's fellow peers to judge how much he drinks.

"Most people are very responsible about their caffeine intake," Bluestein said. "They know how much they can withstand, and I think they monitor their consumption while minding their limits very well." ☺

# Beginning drivers learn lessons about maturity

Jackie Leong  
Reporter

Heading past one of the schools in Clayton—be it elementary, middle, or high—there's a noticeable difference that separates CHS from the younger factions. What is it?

The answer lies in the extensive drop-off lines that form, most conspicuously in front of Wydown Middle School, and the sizeable parking lots at the high school.

Driving. Starting with the arrival of one's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, many students choose to embark on the long journey to freedom.

Although the steps seem tedious—learner's permit at age 15, intermediate license at age 16, full license at age 18—the process for most students begins early with the permit—which, after a lifetime of being a passenger, is the first big jump towards independence.

"I got my permit the day after my birthday, actually," freshman Stephanie Avery said. "I was excited."

Avery isn't alone—many students seem to be choosing to start the process early on.

Because of the six-month waiting period to get the intermediate license (the next step after the permit), the earlier students start, the earlier the next rung on the ladder becomes available.

"Lots of students will choose to get their learner's permits close to their fifteenth birthday," said Matt Carroll, office manager of the Clayton Department of Revenue Contract License Office. "Because of the waiting period to get the license afterward, many try to get their permit as early as possible—mostly—no less than age 15 and a half, so they can get their license close to their sixteenth birthday."

That's not everyone—Carroll says that there are those who wait.

Driving has long been the perceived privilege of a "more responsible" person, offering more freedom and self-reliance.

No longer is a person tied to someone who is willing to drive places when driving by oneself is an option. However, questions have occasionally been voiced about the maturity—or lack thereof—of young drivers.

"Fifteen is a good age for the permit," freshmen Samantha Werdel and Katie Marvel said. "When you're in

high school, you're becoming more mature."

Contrary to popular belief, the age for obtaining a learner's permit is still 15—no matter what the birth date reads. (Many believe that all students turning 15 after January 2009 must wait longer to obtain the permit.) However, even with this confusion cleared up, some freshmen still aren't satisfied.

"I hate the age thing," freshman Courtney Dickson said. "What if 14-year-olds are capable of driving, too?"

However, Dickson admits that the 6-month wait for the intermediate license and the driving hours requirement are reasonable, as do most freshmen. After all, one learns the rules by experience—and no one wants to make mistakes when the consequences could be a bit more than a couple of scratches.

"I think people should get their permits at least a year before they get their license," said Avery. "I know you only have to have a permit for 6 months before getting a license, but I don't really think that's a lot of time."

In the end, the decisions are always up to the parents.

"Talking about maturity, the rule is that there are requirements," said Carroll. "If someone meets those requirements and they apply, we are required by law to issue the permit and/or license. All other parts of the decision are to the parent or guardian's discretion."

Carroll regrets that he's unable to give advice or opinion, as every student, and indeed, driver, is different. There are no tips or recommendations that fit anyone perfectly—it's up to the individual.

Others have plenty of opinion to share.

"You should get [the permit] as soon as you turn 15," Avery said, "because the more time you have to practice, the better of a driver you will be."

Others with later birthdays are wishing they could start just as easily—and find themselves resenting it. "I think I'm perfectly capable of driving, despite my age," Dickson said. "Yeah, you need experience, but why put an age to when you can start experiencing?" ☺



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## Indie film captures viewers' hearts

'Slumdog Millionaire,' a social commentary that portrays the impoverished slums of India, wins four Golden Globes.

Elle Bullard  
Senior Editor

It's hard to keep retelling the Cinderella story. The rags-to-riches blueprint has been used in a slew of tales in countries and cultures around the world in varying ways. It's a story that's reinvented itself a million times over.

That's why the success of "Slumdog Millionaire" is so astounding. The movie won four golden globes total, including not only best picture, but best director, best screenplay and best original score. The film was nominated for ten Oscars, including best motion picture of the year.

Despite its success, "Slumdog Millionaire" was originally only released to limited theaters around the country. The movie's rise to popularity is similar to its plot.

Based on the novel "Q and A" by Vikas Swarup, "Slumdog Millionaire" the story of Jamal, a native of the slums in Mumbai.

Although Jamal is illiterate and has had little to no formal education, he has managed to advance very far in the Indian chapter of the popular game show, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." He is on the verge of winning one million dollars. He has done so well that he is suspected of cheating.

"Who Wants to be a Millionaire" is not the main focus of the movie. Rather, it is a very clever mechanism used to tell the story of Jamal, played by Dev Patel. Although it is coincidental that Jamal's life experiences not only have provided him with the answers to the multiple choice questions, but are in chronological order in respect to Jamal's life, the game show provides a structure for the film that is effective.

Jamal's flashbacks reveal memories of the gangsters of Mumbai, the Hindu-Muslim riots in the slums, and the Taj Mahal.

Jamal has two companions throughout his story—his brother, Salim, and Latika, a girl that Salim and Jamal traveled with after the Hindu-Muslim riots in the slums.

Eventually, Salim and Jamal part ways; Salim becomes a gangster with a mob in Mumbai, and Jamal becomes a "chai-wallah," a person who serves tea, at a call center. However, Jamal still remembers Latika, and tries to find her in the city of Mumbai.

There are a number of things that the film does exceptionally well—the music, the cinematography and the directing.

The music is an original mix of more traditional Indian synthesized with pop. The music juxtaposes a new, modern

world with that of traditional India, a theme that runs through the entire movie, especially with the incorporation of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire."

In conjunction with the cinematography, the music of "Slumdog Millionaire" also helps to create the energy that the film emits. The pulsing sounds and the vivid, sharp images make "Slumdog Millionaire" thrilling to watch. Boyle transforms the slums of Mumbai into a fairytale land.

Perhaps the only point of complaint is the acting; Jamal spends a lot of his time with his mouth open, and Latika's character, the main love interest, was flat and underdeveloped.

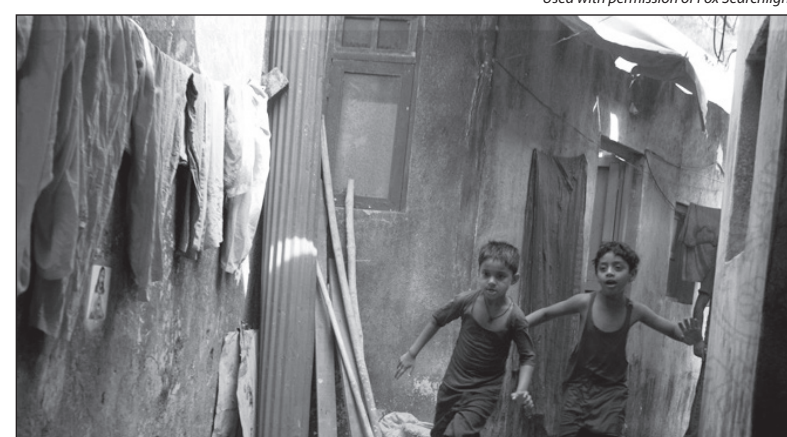
The actors that portrayed Jamal and Salim as children were better than the adult actors. The story, however, does not require amazing acting. The sweeping energy of the film carries the audience throughout the film without difficulty.

In terms of its speedy ascent to popularity, "Slumdog Millionaire" is reminiscent of last year's Juno. However, "Slumdog Millionaire" is much more global a film than Juno; its message is universal, and can be enjoyed by multiple diverse audiences.

Influenced by several popular Bollywood films, including Black Friday,



Above: Jamal Malik (Dev Patel) and his girlfriend Latika (Freida Pinto) are reunited after numerous events which tear them apart. Right: Jamal and brother run through the neighborhood slums. "Slumdog Millionaire" is nominated for numerous Oscars including best motion picture and achievement in cinematography.



director Danny Boyle stays true to the influence of Indian film, not only in Slumdog Millionaire's cinematography, but also in its optimistic plot and even its musical ending.

Boyle's creation is a triumph, and a bit of a miracle. ☺

## Based off Fitzgerald's short story, 'Benjamin Button' depicts timeless tale

Taylor Stone  
Editor

The United States seems to have always been unusually fascinated with films. During periods of war and peace, hardship and happiness, Americans find a sort of bizarre escapism in films. Hollywood's ability to transport movie-goers, armed only with popcorn and raisinettes, is coveted by many. "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" is one of those few films that gracefully deliver the viewer to an alternate reality.

"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" is based on a short story by American author F. Scott Fitzgerald. The quick tale was essentially morphed into a film that pushes three hours, having been adapted and largely expanded by screenwriter Eric Roth, the Oscar-winning screenwriter of "Forrest Gump," and director David Fincher, who is known for films such as "Fight Club" and "Zodiac."

Benjamin Button seems to be, on the surface, your average blockbuster. The credits boast A-list, Hollywood actors such as Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, and Tilda Swinton. After combining that with a sweeping score and magnificent special effects, the movie seems to be an almost deliberately packaged gift to 'Oscar.'

However, the plot itself is both thought provoking and whimsical. Benjamin's life begins in a prominent New Orleans family home in 1918. On the night of his birth he is promptly ejected by his father after Benjamin's mother dies in childbirth and he is discovered to be a monster— an elderly infant. That night, Benjamin is found on the doorstep of a nursing home

by an African-American woman, Queenie, who becomes Benjamin's foster mother despite his startling appearance.

Benjamin spends his childhood in that nursing home, among others who look to be at similar stages in life. Ironically, this similarity in appearance only accentuates the difference between the maturity of those living in the nursing home and Benjamin's innocence. However, unlike other children his age, he observes death on a regular basis as house-members die. He also gains knowledge from the tales and lessons he is taught by his "elders." Benjamin eventually comprehends that he can only learn from his own experiences how to fit into the larger world.

After a childhood spent in Benjamin's enclosed world, where Benjamin starts a life-long friendship with a young girl named Daisy, Benjamin works on a shipping boat and experiences both World War II and a first love in Russia with an "older" woman—Elizabeth Alcott, played by the wonderful Tilda Swinton.

The latter portion of the film consists of Benjamin's tragic descent into youth, and a fleeting, profound relationship with an older Daisy.

Overall the plot, despite being drawn out for a long period of time, was fairly easy to follow and was original and intriguing enough to keep a viewers attention for the entire duration of the film.

The acting in Benjamin was universally superb. An obvious standout was the dynamic Brad Pitt, taking on both a superb Southern accent and the mannerisms of an elderly man. Mr. Pitt truly captured the innocence and sense of wonder in the character of Benjamin. Many would incorrectly lash out

at Pitt's lack of development in his role. Benjamin was, however, purely a narrator, one who observed the changing world and his physical change, while his persona remained the same. This application to Benjamin's character merely heightens Pitt's distinction as an actor. He relied solely on his powerful exterior— voice, presentation, facial expressions, and mannerisms, to create the puzzle that is Benjamin Button.

Another notable contribution to the superb acting in the film was Cate Blanchett. Her mere presence was radiant— she lit up the screen and added to the mystery of Benjamin. Hers was the character that developed— she had to attempt to understand Benjamin along with the audience— adding to her appeal and ability to relate to the audience. Her exterior, along with Pitt, partly carried her characterization. Her outer elegance starkly contrasted with her inner, emotional conflicts, adding poignancy to Blanchett's performance.

The entire cast was notable. Tilda Swinton was remarkably powerful as Elizabeth Alcott, a married Russian and failed record-breaker for swimming the English Channel. Her inner turmoil is reflected in Benjamin's conversations with her, and her eventual success as a swimmer is even more reflective of Benjamin's mysterious influence over people.

The cinematography and scenery were both beautiful. First set against the vibrant backdrop of 1920's New Orleans. The quality of the imagery was vivid— demonstrated best in a colorful naval battle scene in which Benjamin partakes in. Benjamin himself was a large feat in visual effects. Brad Pitt— one of the most recognizable actors in the world— was difficult to find in the face of a much older Benjamin.

Though the film was shown no love at both the Critic's



In his "youth," Benjamin Button takes a motorcycle ride with Daisy.

Choice Awards and The Golden Globe Awards, receiving none of the awards it was nominated for, "Benjamin Button" truly is a masterpiece. The film's profound message of the inevitability of death and the importance of personal relationships in shaping humans, helped along by top-notch acting and dazzling visual effects, truly impacts its audiences.

The movie's message is bottled in one specific, final statement by Benjamin himself. "Along the way you bump into people who make a dent on your life. Some people get struck by lightning. Some are born to sit by a river. Some have an ear for music. Some are artists. Some swim the English Channel. Some know buttons. Some know Shakespeare. Some are mothers. And some people can dance." ☺

## Accomplished actors enhance historic movie

Jeremy Bleeker  
Editor-in-Chief

Although Sam Mendes' "Revolutionary Road" is filmed confidently, scripted intelligently, and scored beautifully, the performances of Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio are what make it truly memorable. Both leads received Golden

Globe nods for best acting in a drama, and Winslet took home the award for best actress. "Revolutionary Road" is not an easy film to watch. In place of the wide-eyed, star-crossed idealism that characterized Winslet and DiCaprio's first collaboration—"Titanic"—the world that unfolds in "Road" is haunted by all the realities of Adult Life.

The setting of the film is 1950s suburban America. Several years after meeting as young bohemians in the big city, April and Frank Wheeler have settled down to raise a family.

Frank works an office job he can't stand, while April tries to break the monotony of domestic life through some part-time acting. April's fantasy of success, coupled with her lack of talent, irritates Frank. Likewise, April perceives Frank as an office drone, bearing no resemblance to the earnest thinker she knew when they were younger.

The Wheelers' relationship is revealed as much through what is not said between the couple as what is said—or, in

many cases, shouted. I cannot think of another film in which the actors display such powerful dynamic range, in which they whisper so delicately and scream so furiously.

Indeed, this contrast between loud and soft, between words trapped inside and words let loose for all to hear, is at the heart of the conflict between the troubled couple. Out of touch with each other, and with themselves, they find it difficult to communicate without resorting to violent outbursts. They have grown so far apart that they both think they must yell to hold the other's attention.

And thus they are unable to communicate. April is unable to express to Frank that she feels she has been reduced to nothing more than a vessel to carry his children.

Frank is unable to express to April that he finds her dreams childish and unrealistic. An unspoken understanding of mutual frustration develops between the two. As the patterns and frustrations of domestic life become more and more entrenched in the Wheelers, a madness grows within them, breaking to the surface in torrents of rage.

It is fitting that a man straight from the asylum—John Givings, played with an unrelenting, straightforward recklessness by Michael Shannon—is the first to pick up on this burgeoning insanity.



Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio costar in 'Revolutionary Road,' set in the 1950s.

John, the troubled son of the Wheelers' neighbors, has had his social filters fried by repeated shock therapy. Consequently, he freely speaks his mind on all subjects.

John trusts the Wheelers, for he sees in them an awareness of the suburban hell into which they are descending. When they announce their plans to move to Paris to rekindle the flame of their romance, it is John who most encourages them.

As the Wheeler's plans evolve over time, so do John's praises or condemnations, and we remember them because he speaks our minds as well.

"Revolutionary Road" is a visceral tour de force. It is a dark look into our national past, as well as a look at the constrictive decade to which the reaction was free love and Woodstock. It is sinister and violent and brutally honest. It is a feast. ☺

## So bad, it's good

Maddie Harned  
Senior Editor

If there is one film that seamlessly blends canine athletics, searing drama and good old fashioned family values, that film would be Air Bud. The 1997 Disney classic tells the tale of gawky athlete Josh Framm who later learns that his adopted dog, Buddy, is ridiculously talented at basketball despite the fact that Buddy doesn't have those pesky opposable thumbs somewhat needed to grip

the ball with. Rebounding from his father's accidental death, Josh builds a rather unusual surrogate father-son relationship with Buddy.

However, just when Josh and Buddy's inter-species rapport is at its strongest trouble arrives. Their b-ball bond is almost thwarted by Buddy's evil former owner, Norm Snively, who attempts to cash in on the dog's newfound athletic fame. Essentially, the movie blatantly and unabashedly treads into the realm of the absurd, but that's what makes it so hilariously entertaining.

Despite the film's total number of impracticalities adding up well into the millions, Air Bud still is an awesome movie. And in all seriousness, some of Buddy's moves would put LeBron James to shame.

With lines like "What's the matter gentlemen? Afraid your team might get

beat by a dog?!" The cheesy dialogue and acting is about as believable as a golden retriever being able to score a three-pointer.

However, it could be argued that the preposterousness and all around silliness of Air Bud is what makes the movie so compelling for so many people. When watching the film you know that it is goofy, you know that dogs indeed cannot play varsity basketball and that the dim-witted plot is so poorly constructed that the film appears to be made by preschoolers.

Nevertheless, it is nearly impossible not to get caught up in the childish yet strangely stirring movie. Air Bud truly is so awesomely bad that it becomes somewhat good in an entertainingly superficial way.

Inspiring many spin offs including classic pieces of film such as Air Bud: Golden Receiver, Air Bud: World Pup and Air Bud: Seventh Inning Fetch, Air Bud truly has stood the test of time as the movie that is still fooling innocent young children into believing that their own dog can one day learn how to master a sport instead of scratching its own leg all day. ☺



27 Dresses  
Maddie Harned







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Gabriel Macht stars as Denny Colt/The Spirit in Lionsgate's release of the Will Eisner comic book series film, "The Spirit." The film, which also stars Scarlett Johansson and Eva Mendez, has met with much criticism of the comic book's fans.

## Movie fails to capture essence of comic book series

David Rhodes  
Reporter

With a mess of hype built up in this past holiday season, "The Spirit" comes to the cinematic table with an exciting plot, a star-studded cast, and an extremely celebrated director, Frank Miller.

Expectations were incredibly high for Miller, especially with films under his belt such as "300" and "Sin City".

As mentioned, the cast is full of A-List actors. The stunning Scarlett Johansson and Eva Mendes, along with the ever-versatile Samuel L. Jackson, sculpt out the main characters

along with Gabriel Macht, a relatively new Hollywood face, who portrays his city's hero, The Spirit.

So, with high expectations, a great Cannes Film award-nominated director and a cast full of stars, you would anticipate that "The Spirit" intrigues and excites viewers, right?

To tell you the truth, "The Spirit" greatly disappointed many viewers. Great cinematography along with an interesting plot base lay down a perfect base for this film, but the dialogue tears it to shreds.

The action, however, is exciting and gripping. Jackson plays The Octopus, a mad scientist of sorts, who wishes to live forever by drinking the blood of Hercules. Alongside him is the

lovely Scarlett Johansson, who acts as Silken Floss.

Eva Mendes plays the temptress of Sand Saref, who desires the most valuable shiny object that she can possibly get her hands on, Jason's Golden Fleece.

After a minor confrontation between Mendes and Jackson while Mendes is trying to steal two boxes, each end up with the other's desired item.

Throughout the movie, The Spirit tries to find each of these artifacts, and most importantly attempts to prevent The Octopus from drinking the blood of Hercules. So an interesting, complex plot line helps this movie's status, although many of the other characteristics do quite the opposite.

Although the film is said to be in color, Frank Miller darkens the screen, and only shows vibrant colors, mainly red, leaving the viewer with much to desire.

The Octopus, as said, is a mad scientist who wants to be immortal, so you may think he was a little out of the ordinary. One such act of madness left me deeply offended.

While Jackson and Johansson have The Spirit captured in their underground lair, they are both dressed in Nazi paraphernalia.

Overall, "The Spirit" did not live up to the hype. The questionable calls in dialogue and filming techniques overshadow the exciting plotline and star-studded cast. ☹

## Wash. U. spotlights classic in Big Read, play production

The recent performance of "To Kill a Mockingbird" successfully brings the book to life.

Mary Blackwell  
Editor

Three days before America's first black president was inaugurated, I watched as an innocent black man was accused and convicted of raping a white woman. "To Kill a Mockingbird," the play version adapted by Christopher Sergel, had just as great an impact as the book did when I read it as a required reading in middle school.

Performed at the Edison Theater on Washington University in St. Louis' campus, the play followed Harper Lee's novel closely, often using the exact same dialogue and narration. When the play did stray from the novel, the differences were so slight that they were hardly noticeable and completely cohesive.

But at the same time, for the sake of time, the play was obviously unable to include all the important details included in the book. For example, the whole plot line of Mrs. Dubois' addiction and death were excluded. The plot line would have been significantly less effective and meaningful for someone in the audience who had never read the book.

The acting was overall satisfactory, with only a few characters lacking, such as "Boo" Radley, who was not ghostly or strange enough for my liking.

The children were especially charming, which is essential to "To Kill a Mockingbird" because the story revolves around their involvement and point of view in the trial and aftermath.

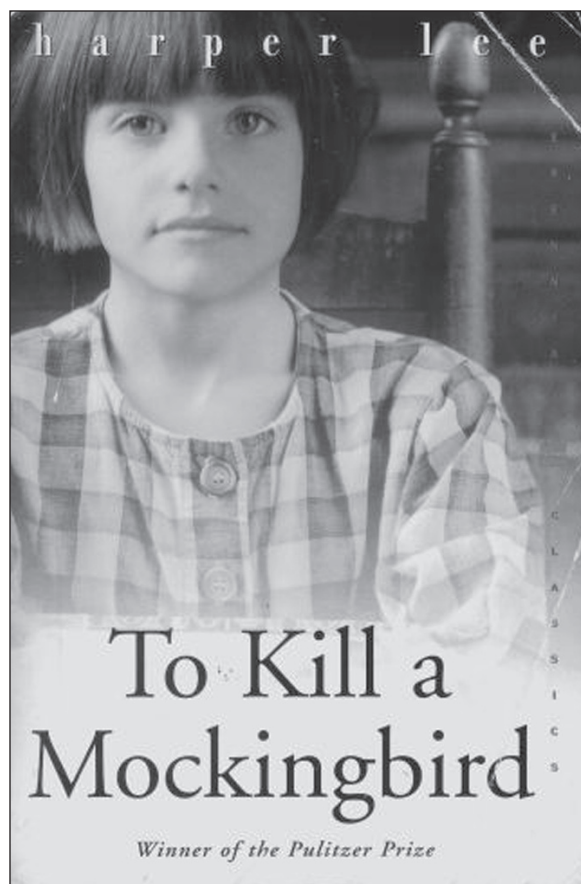
Scout (Emily Jackoway) was just as I had pictured her while reading the book. Spunky and high energy, she never faltered. Jackoway embodied Scout's defiant, outspoken personality.

Jem was not the most outstanding, although his role did not call for him to be. Played by an extremely experienced actor and freshman in high school, Jimmy McEvoy, Jem successfully portrayed the slightly more sensible and protective older brother.

Atticus, though no Gregory Peck, delivered his lines with conviction and enthusiasm. And the ignorant, deceiving Ewells seemed to come straight from the backwoods.

Maudie Atkinson, the Finches' friendly neighbor, was played by CHS drama teacher Kelley Ryan. The comic relief was found in Calpurnia, Jem and Scout's caregiver, whose animated scolding amused the audience.

The set designers did the best with what little area Edison Theater offered. With the exception of the court scene, which



Harper Lee's novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" was the title for this year's Big Read sponsored by Washington University and the source for a play based on the book, which was performed this month at the Edison Theater. Drama teacher Kelley Ryan played Maudie Atkinson in the production.

had other structures, the set consisted of the façades of four houses with porches. Well made and with impressive attention to detail, the neighborhood provided an appropriate and pleasant atmosphere.

Two of the houses turned around to become the jail or courthouse. But the remaining two, the Finch and Radley houses, did not budge, which was distracting and out of place during the scenes set in the courthouse or in the town square.

Nonetheless, the designer seemed to use what I am sure was not an enormous budget to its fullest extent.

The costuming made an equally positive impression on me. Scout's overalls and plain shirt reflected her tomboy side, the neighborhood gossip was set apart by her busy, brightly colored dress, reinforcing her role as the town busy body. Atticus's suits, button up shirts, and sweaters set him apart from the ragged ensembles of the countrymen. The costumes fused with the set to mirror the time period, the 1930s.

One of the interesting aspects of the play was the narration by an older version of Scout. Jean Louise Finch opened and closed the play, and assisted in moving the plot along.

Sponsored primarily by The Big Read, "To Kill a Mockingbird" was the second product of the Metro Theater Company and Edison Theatre partnership, the first being the play "Hana's Suitcase."

Unfortunately, the last performance was on Jan. 18. Edison Theatre's mission to "challenge, educate, and inspire" was achieved in the production of "To Kill a Mockingbird." ☹



Miramax Pictures

In a period drama steeped in internal conflicts, Meryl Streep and Philip Seymour Hoffman portray a nun and Priest in "Doubt." Streep has won numerous nominations for the performance.

## Streep shines in dark drama

Laura Bleeker  
Reporter

The acting of the all-star cast was the definite high point of the movie "Doubt." Meryl Streep's performance once again stunned the audience. Sister Aloysius (Streep) is the principal of a Catholic school in the Bronx.

It is 1964, and everywhere things are changing. Everything, it seems, except Sister Aloysius. From her perfectly tied black bonnet to the banned ball point pens, she is single minded and stubborn when it comes to change.

Sister James (Amy Adams) comes to Sister Aloysius about suspicions she has of the priest, that he has had inappropriate relations with a 12-year-old boy, Donald Miller. Donald, the first and only black student at the school, has sought comfort from Father Flynn (Philip Seymour Hoffman). Sister Aloysius immediately goes into action, without any solid evidence.

Father Flynn (Hoffman) has all the attributes of a caring, loving person at the beginning of the movie. He talks to the students, like a friend, and listens to their everyday problems. He, unlike Sister Aloysius, is open to change.

As the movie progresses, however, his character begins to change. During a scene where Father Flynn (Hoffman) shows the boys his long, clean fingernails, or during Sister Aloysius's con-

frontation when he asks for three sugar cubes in his tea, you start to see a different side of him.

Sister James (Adams) represents an innocent side to this battle. She feels guilty about telling Sister Aloysius about her suspicions, and is filled with doubt. Her innocence and Father Flynn's almost frightening, but also caring exterior, clash with Sister Aloysius's stubborn, hard shell. Sister Aloysius has no truths or facts or information that will prove Father Flynn's crime. She only holds her suspicions and prior biases to judge him.

Donald's mother, Mrs. Miller (Viola Davis), brings a whole new level of emotions to the screen.

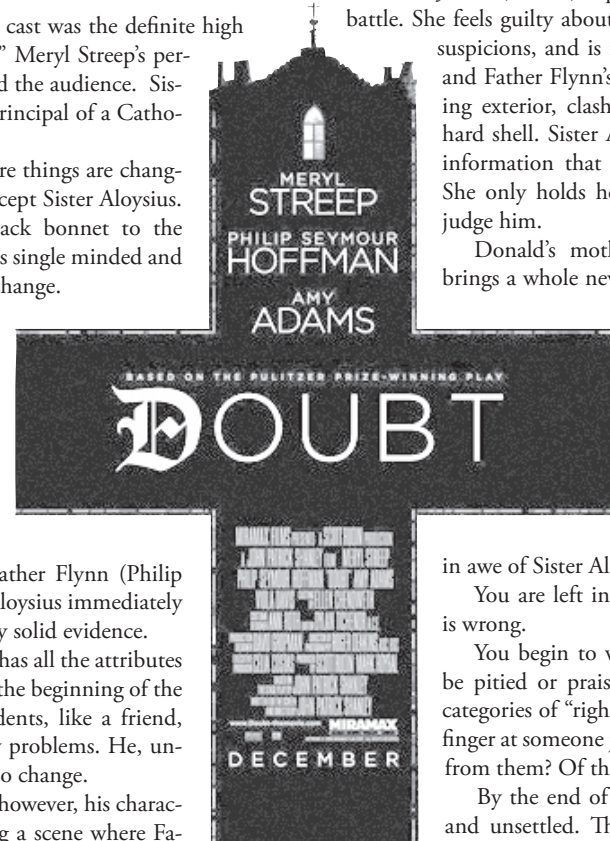
Her strong scene leaves you questioning what it really means to love, and what the boundaries of love are.

The weird camera tilts and intense, focused shots give the viewer an uneasy feeling. You are left wondering whether you should pity Father Flynn, or be in awe of Sister Aloysius's determined actions.

You are left in doubt of who is right, and who is wrong.

You begin to wonder if either character should be pitied or praised if either can be put into the categories of "right" or "wrong". Can you point the finger at someone just because of the feelings you get from them? Of the way they talk and act?

By the end of the movie, you are left confused and unsettled. The movie has not answered your burning questions, and instead has left you hanging, questioning all of your previous beliefs. ☹





## Dell introduces new portable electronic device to the market

Innovative "mini" laptop offers convenient alternative to standard-sized laptops

Apoorva Sharma  
Reporter

With a 7-inch screen, 256MB of RAM, and a mere 2GB of storage, the laptop didn't look like much. However, the price as well as the size of this computer made it one of the most revolutionary devices in history.

Yes, when Asus, a Chinese computer manufacturer, released its Eee PC 701 2G in 2007, and started selling it for just \$245, it started a new class of computers, now commonly referred to as netbooks.

These low cost, ultraportable computers became extremely popular, as they fit into a separate niche from other computers. They lie beneath powerful desktops and larger laptops, but above smartphones and other handheld devices. This position makes them appeal to a wide variety of people.

Firstly, netbooks make perfect laptops for children or other people who don't need the processing power of a larger computer. These computers can handle simple word processing and browsing the internet. In fact, the term "netbook" is used to describe these computers because the pioneer netbooks were meant for doing internet-related tasks.

However, these computers have already evolved to the point where they can be used for much more than that. Higher class netbooks, such as Dell's Inspiron Mini 9, the HP Mini 1000, as well as newer models of the Eee PC, such as the Eee PC 1000A, give decent performance, with 512MB to 1GB of RAM, better processors, larger disk space, and wide 10" screens. These performance improvements have not had much effect on the size of the computers, as they are only slightly bigger than the 7-inch models (the 7-inch screen had about a

1-inch border around it). The effect on the price has also been small. Base models of these computers are still priced below \$500. In fact, the base models of the Dell Mini 9 and the HP Mini 1000 are both priced in the mid-\$300 range.

Secondly, the incredibly small form factor of netbooks paired with the decent performance appeal to people who are looking for a very portable computer device. The devices are extremely light as well, starting around 1kg (2.2lbs). Therefore, people who are frequent travelers will find this class of computers attractive.

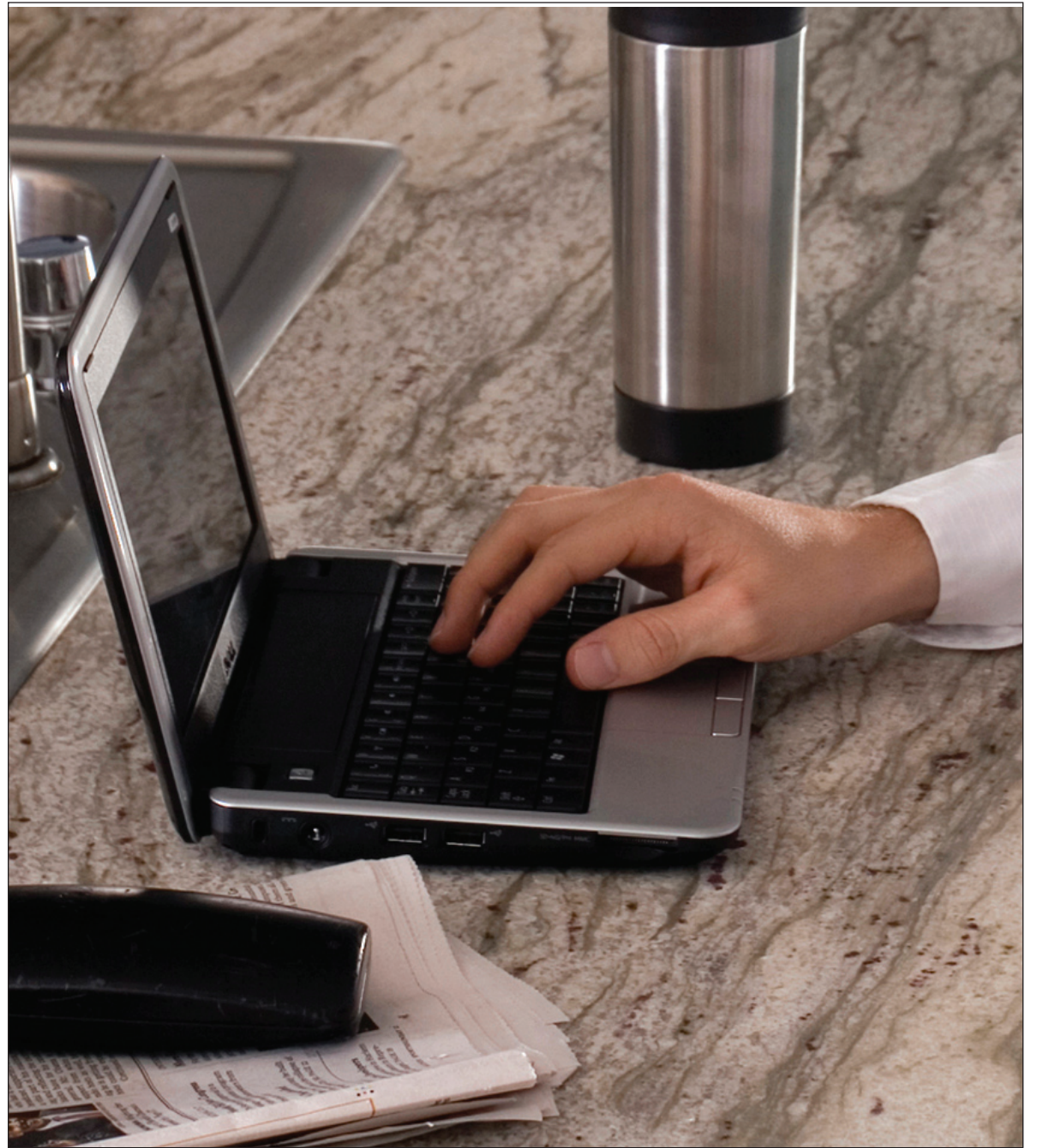
Finally, because these computers are low-priced, ultraportable, but lacking as far as performance goes, they lend themselves well as a second, companion computer for power users. People who own a desktop may realize that it would be nice to have the portability that comes with a laptop. However, they may not want to pay the price of a laptop just for that. The low price of the netbook gives user portability, and while it doesn't have the performance that a laptop has, these users have no need for it, as they have a desktop for their high performance needs.

Because of this wide range of appeal, the netbook niche was soon crowded with products from almost all computer manufacturers. This class grew from the original Eee PC to the plethora of netbooks that exist today, including hundreds of variations of the Eee.

Their low price and high appeal should also make the netbook industry the last to get hit by the recession, if ever.

**The new Dell Inspiron Mini 9 laptop measures 7 by 9 inches, is a little more than an inch thick and weighs barely over 2 pounds. It currently sells for three hundred dollars.**

“People who own a desktop may realize that it would be nice to have the portability that comes with a laptop.”



Amazon.com

## Students pledge to improve academic record, maintain positive outlook in 2009

Chelsea Cousins  
Reporter

Students at Clayton High School have officially set off the New Year as they begin to set goals for 2009. They've made it yet through another year of hard work and now that the time has come, many students are preparing for reform.

"During the new year my main priority is to stay focused on school work," senior Carolina Tejada said, "especially because graduation is right around the corner."

At this point in their lives, students tend to develop similar goals. Because education is so important to most Clayton High School students, they have a more positive outlook on the things they can accomplish.

"This new year one of my main goals is to get rid of all the stress from school and to have a good rest of the school year," sophomore Gabby Morris said.

As common as it might seem, students often begin setting goals that are more than likely in their reach. However, these goals may fall under many different categories.

"In 2009, I'm just hoping for an overall improvement in the way I perform both inside and out of school," junior Jack Harned said.

The diversity of how students at Clayton High School live their lives is displayed accurately through the commitments they put their minds to.

"Going into the New Year, I'm starting to face the realities while growing more mature every step of the way," Tejada said.

In most cases, students often believe that the purpose of a New Year's resolution is to make the necessary changes in their lifestyles that will benefit them, as individuals. Morris agrees.

"A lot of students look at New Years as a chance for a fresh start," Morris said, "It's important to maintain a stress free en-

vironment."

Although students may have similar goals, they have different perspectives on goal-setting as a whole. As the New Year emerges many new commitments are formed within Clayton High School students.

"This year I really want to help other people in need because, right now, seeing my aunt in the hospital inspires me to give a helping hand," Tejada said.

Although some resolutions for the New Year are made for more personal reasons, they are equally carried out and fulfilled.

"My new years resolution for 2009 is to stay focused on school and to keep my grades up," Harned said, "This year is critical for me."

The coming year has many accomplishments in store for students at CHS. Out with the old ways and in with the new. The year 2009 has arrived!

### Facts about resolutions for 2008:

-In a study by the University of Washington, 40 percent of people were able to fulfill a resolution in a single attempt.

-According to a nationwide poll in 2008, 35 percent of those surveyed broke their New Year's resolutions by the end of January.

-Last year, Americans' top resolutions were to eat healthier, to save money, and to lose weight.

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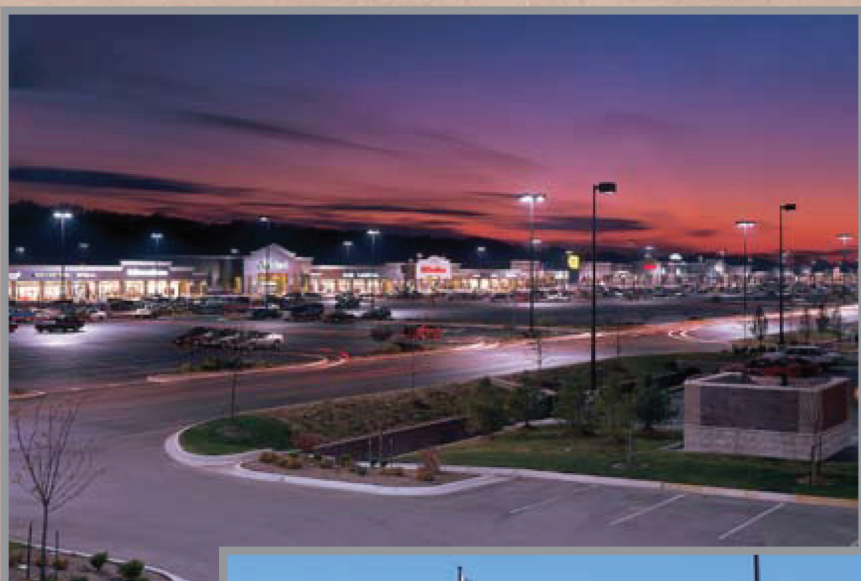
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# Globe

## Conflict in the MIDDLE EAST:

Recent conflict between Israel and Gaza has devastated the region, killing a number of Israeli and Palestinian civilians.

page 6-7



CHS students who participated in Close-Up last week gather around the World War II memorial in Washington DC.

## Students get a close-up view of Obama inauguration

Last week, 36 CHS students traveled to Washington D.C. with Close-Up, a non-profit organization that sponsors trips to our nation's capital.

Fontasha Powell  
Senior Managing Editor

Close-Up, a nonprofit, nonpartisan citizenship education organization that promotes educated politics among high school students, sponsored a trip for CHS students to visit the nation's capital and attend the inauguration last week.

Senior Katie Poplawski attended the trip and said that she enjoyed the trip immensely.

"It was amazing," Poplawski said. "We went to all of the memorials: Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Marines and Air Force I. Although I've been to D.C. before, I'd never done that before."

Junior Gus Heil agreed. Not only did he enjoy the memorials, but he also enjoyed other activities that the group took part in.

"We went to the capitol and met our representative, Rus Carnahan," Heil said. "We also went to the museum and looked at some freedom of speech stuff."

The group was also fortunate enough to witness the inauguration of our 44th president, Barack H. Obama.

"Even though it was cold, everyone was really excited," Heil said. "The whole experience was amazing. I can't even describe. I was so happy to be there, along with a giant crowd, watching such a historic moment."

Poplawski agreed with Heil. She thought that the atmosphere of the inauguration was an extremely memorable aspect.

"My group didn't get to the inauguration until later, so we were kind of far back and saw everything on the jumbotron," Poplawski said. "But the energy was amazing and excited. There was also a sense of relief. It seemed like people were relieved that Bush was finally gone. It seemed like the inauguration had an impact on everyone around us. There was a woman next to me that was literally crying."

Sophomore Maddy Bullard's favorite aspect of the trip was also the inauguration.

"I enjoyed the inauguration because it was such a historic moment, and I was able to be there to soak it all in," Bullard

said. "The atmosphere was really excited and also interested. It seemed like everyone was interested in what Obama had to say and everyone was hopeful for what the new administration would accomplish. It was also very cold."

After the inauguration, the group attended the "Yes We Can" concert, where a series of popular music artists performed in honor of President Obama.

"We also went to the 'Yes We Can' concert," Poplawski said. "We saw all different types of artists like Bruce Springsteen, Beyonce, Shakira, Bon Jovi, Mary J. Blidge. All of them gave very good performances."

Heil thought that concert was entertaining, but the crowd was not as emotionally charged as the inauguration ceremony.

"The concert was pretty good," Heil said. "Even though it was cold and we were far away, people in the crowd were singing along."

Poplawski and Heil both believed that meeting and interacting with other students from around the nation was a great aspect of the trip.

"I met and hung out with people that I hadn't before," Bullard said. "It was such a great experience to see so many people gathered in one place, having a common interest. It was really cool to be there."

Poplawski agreed.

"We stayed in a hotel with students from Michigan, Alaska, Texas and California," Poplawski said. "I learned that a lot of them had political differences that were pretty radical, but at the heart of everything, we are all pretty much the same."

According to Heil, sophomore Brett Virgin-Downey received the big honor of being named President of the national Close-Up group.

"There was a president election vote among the entire Close-Up group with kids from all around the country, and Brett won that."

Overall, Heil is happy that he attended the trip.

"Although I didn't get much sleep and the trip was tiring, it was a good use of time and I'm glad I went," Heil said.

Poplawski agreed with Heil.

"The trip was worthwhile and I got to meet lots of other really cool students." ☺

## CHS students fly to Never Never Land

Simone Bernstein  
Editor

Never miss an opportunity to go to Never Never Land. "Peter Pan" will open on the CHS stage Feb. 18-22. The popular children's tale, originally based on the book by J. M. Barrie, tells the story of Peter, a boy who is determined to avoid growing up.

Peter Pan, played by Ian Miller, takes three siblings to Never Never Land where an ongoing war with Captain Hook takes place. Wendy and her brothers join Peter and the Lost Boys in a society free of adult rules. The story of Peter Pan first appeared in a section of "The Little White Bird," a 1902 novel written for adults. The stage play first debuted on Dec. 27, 1904. The story was later adapted, expanded, and later created into a musical on Broadway.

"I advise everyone to come see the show in February," junior Nick Oliveri, who plays Captain Hook said. "There are new special effects in this show, including the ability to fly on stage."

This year the spring musical will showcase a variety of students. Freshmen even note the formality and differences between CHS and Wydown theater departments.

"This is my first show at CHS," freshman Amanda Wagner said. "The theater department at the high school is very different than the middle school. If desired, it seems that everyone has a chance to be in the musical at CHS. There are definitely more opportunities to take part in theatre at the high school."

Cast members recognize that this production is quite different from the performances in the past.

"Compared to 'Company' last year, 'Peter Pan' is a kid friendly classic," Oliveri said. "Our last musical was meant for an older audience. This show has high energy. Everyone will smile after this performance."

Even CHS students are excited to attend a performance.

"I have not seen the musical performed in a long time,"

junior Katie Johnson said. "Although this is not my favorite musical, I would like to learn more about the CHS performance."

The cast is ready to view the show in its final production. "After many long weeks of rehearsal, the whole cast looks forward to the performances at the end," Oliveri said.

Although students are ready to perform, many are apprehensive about the work remaining in rehearsals.

"Although exciting and nerve-racking, I have a large dance number during this show," senior Susanna Wirthlin, who plays Tiger Lily said. "In my four years at CHS, I have never led a major number dance number in a performance. I will need to practice the dance routine many times before the first performance."

For some senior cast members, this will be their last spring musical before college.

"It is bittersweet that this is my last musical at CHS before college," Wirthlin said. "I still have the Student Run Musical to direct before the end of the year, but 'Peter Pan' is my last major production at school. It's going to be nice leaving on a fun show that does not require as much effort as a show like 'Company'."

Some actors are nervous about accurately depicting their character.

"In the show I play John, the oldest son," sophomore John Holland said. "I am nervous about realistically developing this characters' polite personality."

The cast members have set high goals for each of the performances this February.

"Our goal is for each night to be sold out," Oliveri said. "Tell all your friends and family to buy tickets in advance."

"Peter Pan" allows viewers to explore and delve into their childhood dreams. The CHS cast will set off on a trip to Never Never Land, "...where dreams are born, and time is never planned." ☺

## Teachers struggle to cover religious material at school

Noah Eby  
Reporter

Numerous Supreme Court rulings and lawsuits regarding religion in public schools have made it a complicated subject and have spurred much confusion as to what teachers can and cannot say. This may seem a foreign concept to some, but several Clayton High School teachers deal with the issue of religion in school on a daily basis.

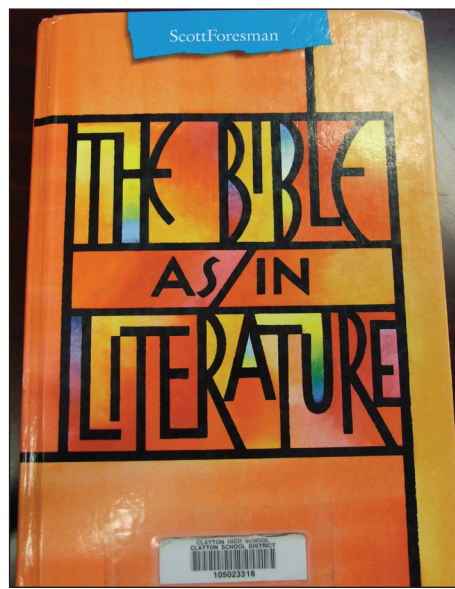
Emily Grady teaches the Bible as/in literature as part of her Honors English II course. She said that she has to be particularly careful when dealing with such a touchy subject.

"I always go into it with a lot of care because I know that it's really hard for people to separate their beliefs from the content area," Grady said. "I try to get people to understand what someone else's viewpoint might be."

Charles Collis, who teaches the Evolution class at CHS, agreed with Grady.

He said that he, too, has to be cautious when teaching such a controversial topic.

"Sometimes students with very strong religious convictions get uncomfortable with it," Collis said. "So you have to be very careful that you are speaking science and not trying to do a refutation of religious beliefs."



Puhan Zhao

Collis and Grady also agreed that religion does have a role in public schools. They both said that it is appropriate to teach about religion as long as the instructor is not preaching to the students.

"I think it's okay to learn about what different religions hold as beliefs as long as an instructor doesn't proselytize or cause a conversion or anything like that," Collis said.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) supported Collis' belief in its Joint Statement of Current Law on Religion in the Public Schools. It said that teaching about the role of religion in society and history is acceptable.

"The history of religion, comparative religion, the Bible, or other scripture as literature, either as a separate course or within some other existing course, are all permissible public school subjects," the ACLU said. "It is both permissible and desirable to teach objectively about the role of religion in the history of the United States and other countries."

Though her course is perfectly legal,

Grady said that students' religious beliefs do occasionally cause issues in the class. She recalled one instance in which a student was uncomfortable with Grady's use of the word mythology in association with Christianity. She described that particular situation as an opportunity, but said that sometimes students do get offended.

"In most cases it's an opportunity to clarify things," Grady said. "Occasionally, though, people have gotten feelings hurt, and I regret that. It just shows you how powerful religion can be."

Collis has had students get uncomfortable with the subject matter in his class as well. He defended the teaching evolution, however, and said that it is a vital part of understanding other realms of science.

"Evolution is a major unifying theme of biology," Collis said. "Are you going to ask me to not teach current science because it is for some reason religiously offensive? I can't do that. Scientists overwhelmingly agree that evolution is not only a theory, it is a fact."

The ACLU also maintains Collis' opinion. It said that public schools can teach intelligent design in a comparative religions class or other such course, but that evolution is what should be taught in the science classroom.

"Schools may teach about explanations of life on earth, including religious ones, such as 'creationism,' in comparative religion or social studies classes," the ACLU said.

"In science class, however, they may present only genuinely scientific critiques of, or evidence for, any explanation of life on earth, but not religious critiques, or beliefs unverifiable by scientific methodology. Public schools must not teach as scientific fact or theory any religious doctrine."

Collis said that he does not have much trouble keeping his own beliefs out of the science classroom because that is not his mission.

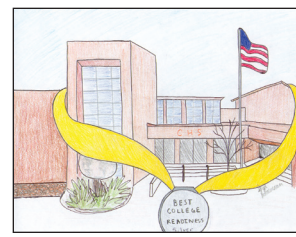
"I certainly don't try to push any religious philosophies that I may or may not hold on the student body," Collis said. "I'm here to talk about science."

Grady echoed Collis and said that she tries to conceal her beliefs and that her religion does not influence the way she teaches.

"That's not what I teach," Grady said. "I teach literature and writing. It's not my job to teach religion." ☺



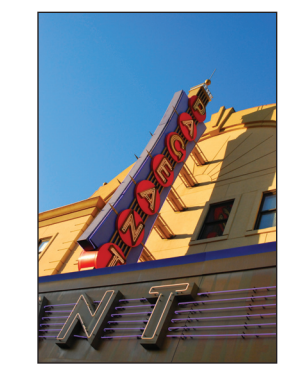
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Puhan Zhao

Senior Susie Wirthlin, who plays Tiger Lily in the upcoming production of "Peter Pan" leads the Indian chorus in song and dance during rehearsal. "Peter Pan" will open on the CHS stage on Feb. 18.



# Israeli/Palestinian conflict in the Gaza Strip

Were Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip, from Dec. 27 to Jan. 16, justified?

Since December 27, 2008, when Israel attacked the Gaza Strip, the world has protested and criticized Israel's actions as an unjustified and disproportionate reaction to Hamas's rocket attacks on Southern Israel.

In Israel, however, the Israeli public strongly supports the Israeli operation, viewing it as entirely necessary and justified. To understand this response, it is important to consider the following historical background and facts.

In 1948, Israel was declared a new state. The Gaza Strip remained under Egyptian control and was not included as part of Israel. In 1967, during the Six Day War, Israel defeated its surrounding Arab countries and acquired the Gaza Strip along with significant other territories.

Over the next few decades, approximately 9,000 Israeli settlers moved into the Gaza Strip, living side-by-side with the original Palestinian population. However, during the Intifadas (Arab uprisings) of the 1990s and 2000, violence escalated between the Palestinians and Israelis.

Suicide bombings became a regular event in major cities throughout Israel. In addition, Palestinians from Gaza began firing Qassam rockets (small, homemade rockets) into Southern Israel. Slowly, over time, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) was positioned in the Gaza Strip and around the border to protect the Israeli citizens living there.

Since 2001, over 8,500 Qassam rockets have been fired from Gaza into Southern Israel. Most of the time, these rockets only travel up to 20 km reaching cities like Sderot and other towns in the vicinity.

The people living in these cities have had to adjust their lives to the relentless rocket attacks, as 90 percent of Sderot's citizens have experienced a rocket attack on either their street or an adjacent one. As a matter of fact, 75 to 94 percent of kids in Sderot suffer from symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Whenever the siren sounds throughout Sderot, the people know they have less than 15 seconds to reach a bomb shelter.

By 2005, the violence from Gaza escalated and was getting out-of-hand. As a result, Israel unilaterally left the Gaza Strip, withdrawing all soldiers and settlers from the region. Israel hoped that this unilateral action would provide the Palestinians in Gaza with an opportunity to focus on building an independent state rather than continue to attack Israel.

Yet, Israel's hopes went up in smoke.

In 2006, the Palestinians elected Hamas, an Islamic militant group, to govern over the Gaza Strip. At the time, Hamas had helped build up the community, providing civilian services, hospitals, schools, and shelter for the Palestinian people living in Gaza.

Yet, Hamas is considered a terrorist organization. Hamas has an undeniable connection to Iran, as well as Hezbollah, another terrorist organization to the north of Israel in Lebanon.

Both Iran and Hezbollah train Hamas militants and provide weapons to Hamas, which are smuggled into Gaza through tunnels that cross under the Gaza-Egyptian border.

With the majority, Hamas then took a radical move in expelling Fatah from the Gaza Strip. Fatah was the other popular group in the election, yet while Hamas is a fundamental Islamic organization, Fatah is more secular. Moreover, Fatah recognizes Israel's existence, and is more open to peace agreements and treaties. In contrast, Hamas's charter is committed to the destruction and extermination of Israel and all Jews.

Following the 2006 election, Hamas used brute force to kill and eliminate Fatah from the Gaza Strip; some Fatah members were even thrown off rooftops. Some of the Fatah members escaped to the West Bank, if they made it out of Gaza alive.

From this point on, Hamas focused its attention on continued resistance and violence towards Israel. On a daily basis, Hamas militants fired Qassam rockets into Israel. However, in June 2008, Egypt brokered a six-month cease-fire between Hamas and Israel. The guidelines were that if Hamas stopped firing rockets, Israel would ease its economic blockade on Gaza. Unfortunately, Hamas continued to fire rockets into Israel, while Israel did not fully lift its blockade. Both sides blamed the other.

Yet, when the cease-fire ended this December, it was Hamas that made the choice to continue firing 50 to 80 more rockets a day into Israel.

And, no longer were these rockets simple homemade Qassam rockets, but Iranian-produced, long-range Grad and Katyusha missiles – reaching more than 40 km.

Now, approximately 800,000 Israeli civilians are facing the daily danger of rocket attacks. One can only imagine the horror of the next missiles and weaponry Hamas gets from Iran, with the possibility of reaching Israel's capital and international

airport.

Israel had no choice but to respond with force. Everything Israel had previously tried, had failed. Israeli government officials even appealed to Hamas, telling them not to provoke conflict. The economic blockade didn't work, as rocket fire continued, and obviously, the cease-fire was broken consistently. Indeed, if Israel had continued to let these rocket attacks go unnoticed or ignored, that would have only given Hamas a green light.

If this had happened anywhere else in the world, no other country would have stood by as thousands of rockets rained down over its citizens, waiting to attack back.

In 22 days, over 1,300 people died as a result of Israel's operation in Gaza, about 400 children and 100 women. Nobody wants to see the images of mothers burying their children, or babies crying next to their dead parents. But, what the world doesn't seem to remember or understand is (1) that Israel was responding to the long history of rocket attacks against its citizens; and (2) that Israel truly does everything in its power to protect Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

Hamas aims its rockets at Israeli kindergarten classrooms and hospitals, determined to kill innocent people. This is most certainly not the goal of Israel. The IDF has developed many techniques to prevent civilian death in Gaza. Planes drop leaflets, warning civilians of specific times and places of bombings. The IDF makes automated phone calls to civilian homes, warning them of future bombings, so as to ensure their safety. The Israeli Air Force has even developed a method called "roof knocking," which is meant to act as a warning to civilians that a specific building will be attacked shortly. In some cases, the Israeli Air Force will bomb the corner of a building, causing no civilian harm, but dispersing crowds away from military targets, since Hamas purposefully situates their military areas in highly populated and crowded civilian areas.

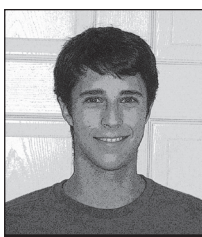
The simple reality is that Hamas uses its own civilians as human shields. Hamas stores weapons and missiles in and around civilian homes, hospitals, mosques, and schools. Hamas purposefully fights amongst its people, even wearing civilian clothes, in hopes of either preventing Israeli troops from shooting when civilians are more at risk, or, even better, having the world blame Israel for the inevitable collateral damage and civilian death toll.

Hamas is responsible for the death of its citizens, since Hamas is the one directly putting them in danger on a daily basis, by not only instigating Israel for over eight years, but by also fighting amongst the Palestinian people in Gaza.

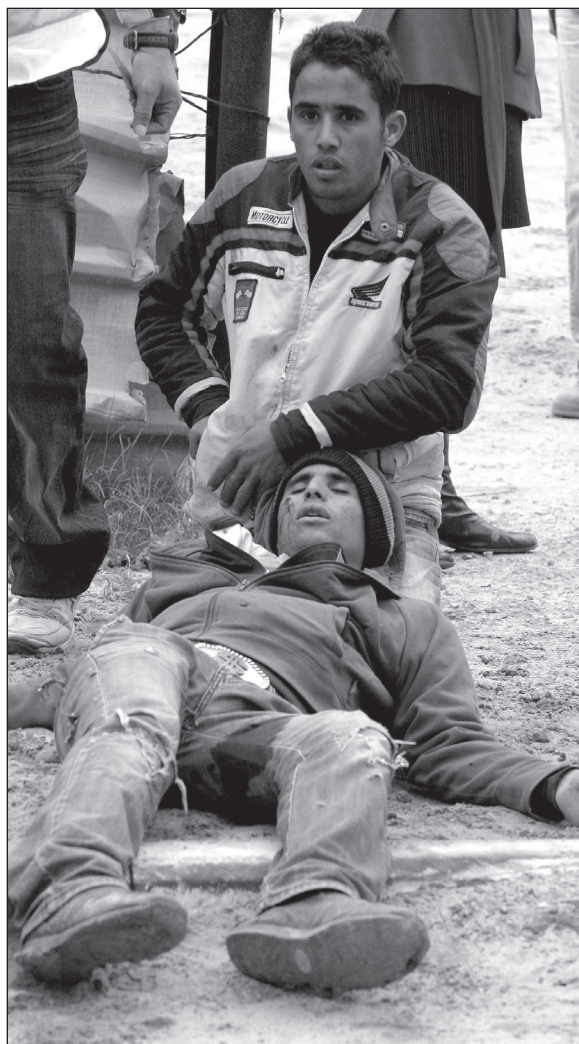
Thus, Israel was entirely justified to respond with force to Hamas's relentless rocket attacks, as well as justified to continue fighting, despite rising civilian deaths, since Hamas is truly at fault for its civilian deaths.

The tragic irony in the ongoing conflict is that it could be avoided so easily if Hamas would simply recognize Israel's right to exist, stop firing rockets at Israel, and if rearmament was truly prevented. In turn, Israel would eliminate the economic blockade against Gaza, providing an opportunity to lay the foundation for a long-term peaceful coexistence between Israelis and the Palestinians. ☺

**PRO**  
52%



Aaron Praiss



Courtesy of MCT Campus

A rocket fired by Palestinians landed in the southern Israeli town of Ashkelon, Monday, December 29, 2008. One Israeli was killed and fourteen others wounded by a Palestinian Grad missile which exploded near a construction site in the coastal town of Ashkelon.

**Abstain**  
3%

strip, calling the action a positive step toward peace.

The removal of soldiers, however, did not put an end to Israel's power over Gaza. The non-partisan organization Human Rights Watch stated that under international law, Israel remains an occupying country by maintaining control of Gaza's airspace, coastline, and borders.

In 2006, the Palestinians showed their frustration with the deteriorating situation around them by electing Hamas (widely recognized as a terrorist organization) to a majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council. Hamas came to power in the same way that many dictators and autocrats have in the past—out of the desperation of a subjugated people—for in addition to its stated goal of destroying Israel, Hamas promised to build schools and hospitals, and to improve infrastructure throughout Gaza.

In the wake of the elections, international pressure and economic sanctions on Gaza grew to a fever pitch. From January 2006 to June 2007, Israel and the Quartet (composed of the E.U., the U.S., the U.N., and Russia) imposed economic sanctions on the Palestinian Authority that, among other things,



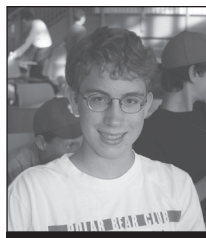
Courtesy of MCT Campus

A woman walks past a crushed vehicle on Friday, Jan. 16, 2009 in the Tel Hawwa neighborhood of Gaza City, Gaza Strip. Israeli forces trying to destabilize Hamas pulled back from the neighborhood on Friday.

**CON**  
45%

Israel's invasion and subsequent occupation of Gaza over the past month is unjustifiable. Through operation "Cast Lead," Israel has worsened an already-dire humanitarian crisis, breached international humanitarian law, and severely weakened any prospect for a long-lasting peace with the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world.

With nearly 1.5 million people squeezed into its 140 square miles, the Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated areas on Earth. The majority of its residents are part of refugee families who, after the U.N. partition of Palestine in 1948, either fled or were driven out of what is now Israel. Many Gazans currently live in one of the eight refugee camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, where they survive entirely on international humanitarian aid.



Jeremy Bleeke

Although through this assault Israel may have dealt Hamas a weakening blow in the short term, its aggression will result in the radicalization of an outraged populace.

further restricted the movement of people and goods (including humanitarian relief) into and out of Palestinian territories.

In June 2007, following a period of violence between members of Hamas and the opposition party Fatah, the previous sanctions were eased on the West Bank, while an even stricter blockade of Gaza came into effect.

Under the ongoing Israeli blockade, exports from Gaza have been blocked, and imports of relief commodities such as food, fuel, and medicine have been limited to the point where only the amount needed to survive is passing through.

As a result, the U.N. estimates that as of September 2007, 70 percent of residents in the Gaza Strip were unemployed, while 80% were living in poverty and relying on U.N. assistance to survive. For a period of time in early November 2008, humanitarian aid was cut off entirely, so that the U.N. warehouses literally ran out of food, and hospitals were unable to function.

Although Israel has maintained the blockade to pressure Hamas to stop firing rockets into southern Israeli towns such as Sderot, the Gaza civilians are paying the price. U.N. Human Rights Investigator Richard Falk has condemned the blockade as "a crime against humanity." Falk cited the Geneva Convention of 1949, which outlaws "collective punishment" against civilian populations. He was subsequently expelled from the region by the Israeli government.

It was into this environment of desolation and despair that Israel launched its offensive against Hamas. People already deprived of their basic human right to livelihood fled their homes as the Israeli Defense Forces bombed and shelled civilian communities, hoping to kill Hamas militants hiding amongst the innocent. Gazans who fled to U.N. buildings still didn't find refuge. 40 were killed in an attack on a U.N. school, and several were injured in a bombing of the U.N. Relief headquarters. Israel defended its actions saying that militants had fired rockets from those buildings. Although estimates as to the death toll vary, Reuters reported that over 1,300 Palestinians are dead, more than 400 of them children.

Israel's actions have been widely condemned. As the death toll passed 1000, nine Israeli human rights organizations called for the IDF to be investigated for war crimes. The U.N. Human Rights Council passed a resolution that stated that Israel's actions "resulted in massive violations of human rights of the Palestinian people." Around the world, thousands poured out in demonstration against the incursion.

While Israel has the right to defend itself against rocket fire, a full-blown invasion of an impoverished, beaten-down territory was certain to end in massive loss of innocent life. Although through this assault Israel may have dealt Hamas a weakening blow in the short term, its aggression will result in the radicalization of an outraged populace. Young men and women with nothing to live for will take up rockets and bombs and continue to attack Israelis across the border. Arab states that may have been inching toward a two-state solution will have a new, potent justification for the elimination of the Israeli. Terrorist organizations will have a renewed rallying cry in their recruitment of suicide bombers.

In the end, the greatest tragedy of all may be that Israel's actions have pushed a final solution for peace entirely out of sight. ☹

## Student comments on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in Gaza

The Middle East has been stirred up by conflict again by the recent Israeli invasion of Gaza. Gaza is a small strip of Palestinian land in the southwest corner of Israel. Legally, Gaza is a part of Israel although any Palestinian would argue it's their own land, governed by their own elected government, Hamas. The notoriously confrontational Hamas government has sent Israel over the edge with a recurrence of rocket attacks in southern Israel, and the termination of an informal Gaza ceasefire. Israel retaliated with air strikes beginning on Dec. 27.

The conflict has escalated since the Israeli Air Force's (IAF) first attack, and the number of deaths in Gaza has spiked

with the movement of Israeli forces into heavily populated Gaza, including Gaza City.

This is almost a mirror of the Israeli occupation of Gaza occurring in 2005, which resulted in an unofficial ceasefire due to heavy pressure from world powers for an end to the fighting. As expected, an outcry is being heard from all around the world for the end to the conflict, and support is clearly being drawn out amongst the world's most important nations. The question is, who is in the right?

The Economist magazine recently ran an article on the current conflict titled "The Hundred Year War," which isn't too

far from the truth. Many Arab nations have been vehement in their statements of hate for Israel. Israel, created in 1948, has had conflict with its neighbors for as long as it has existed, including the Six-Day War of 1967, which doubled Israel's land holdings and secured them as a power in the Middle East.

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict has been going on through all this time, and it always occurs for the same reason: pride. Both nations believe they are justified in their crude actions because of their pride as a Middle Eastern entity. Neither is right in their actions, because the inveterate conflicts always take lives and wreak havoc on the area. The world, being an outside opinion does not see the pride. The world sees a conflict affecting safety and security in the area, so international opinions react to the death toll and destruction.

Although Israel was the first instigator by taking over land (mostly legally), and intruding on predominantly Muslim territory, the Palestinians struck back with violence, and the conflict has continued this way. The Palestinians continue to be a thorn in the side by making minor attacks against the much more powerful Israel. Then, logically, Israel attacks back and takes more lives than need to be taken.

Palestinian fatalities are always great in number because the less organized governments often work within heavily populated civilian areas, and the military is much more difficult to identify among the Palestinian people. Israel, in-turn, targets Palestinian forces in civilian areas, and heavy death tolls ensue.

As Palestine suffers high death tolls, the world jumps on Israel's back and criticizes them on the conflict. Most of

the world cannot understand the roots of the conflict, and so the opinion tends to be one sided. It is even arguable that the Palestinians like it this way because they cannot inflict much damage on the much more powerful Israeli army, so they settle for receiving the world's sympathy and bask in the scorn that Israel has to endure, until the conflict settles, and the Palestinians agitate again.

The cycle of events is unfortunate and unfair for both sides. The Palestinians continue to suffer heavy losses, and the Israelis receive disproportional criticism for their defensive actions.

The Palestinians, whether Hamas, Hezbollah or the former Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), has always been like a pest to Israel, and they continue without rest until they irritate Israel into squashing them. The world doesn't have an accurate perspective, so they al-

ways condemn Israel for what seems like harsh and unexpected attacks.

Solutions have been sought after for years, and nearly succeeded in the mid 1990s when Yassir Arafat, the leader of the PLO, approached an agreement with Israel, including everything the Palestinians asked for, and he turned it down. Arafat did not choose to decline based on his own decision. He received a Saudi Arabian call that told him if he signed it, powerful Saudi oil money would stop backing him.

This event was significant, because Israel will never deal with all those negotiations just to be let down again, and the Palestinians don't hold enough of their own unified power to make a move like this on their own.

The nations have a hate for each other that we haven't ever had to endure, and sadly there is no end in sight. ☹



Schulyer Longmore



# Bipartisanship evident early in Obama government decisions

A politician once spoke against partisanship: "We cannot learn from one another until we stop shouting at one another—until we speak quietly enough so that our words can be heard as well as our voices."

What this quote says to me: America is a diverse group of people, with a diverse set of values and ideals. While we cannot always agree, we can amicably work to solve a problem.

However, this quote, with its "togetherness" tone, seems to ring flat when one finds out the source of this quote is... Richard Nixon. Nixon, infamous for the Watergate scandal and his fierce paranoia, is not exactly the poster child for bipartisanship.

This quote is not only dripping with hypocrisy, but also shows how empty words can be when they are not followed up with action. This quote seems to justify the skepticism that so many have towards Barack Obama's assertion that he is against post-partisan politics.

Our first president, George Washington, actually warned against the formation of political parties and affiliations all together.

"[Political parties] serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party...to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common counsels and modified by mutual interests," Washington said.

Washington was able to predict conflict in a government revolving around partisanship. He warned that Americans must see the unity we share for liberty and justice and not to delay progress with petty grievances.

Looking throughout modern history it seems that presidential candidate after presidential candidate promised to be the reformer of Washington politics. As a matter of fact, it was George W. Bush who was supposed to be the "uniter," and his legacy has left an even greater rift between Republicans and Democrats.

But I can already see that Barack Obama will not lead a similar presidency as Bush did. And it is not just because Bush is a Republican and Obama is a Democrat. Bush seemed to be in a bubble for the majority of his two terms because he only listened to those who shared his own political and ideological beliefs. Liberals and even moderates across the nation were not

at all represented in the White House.

And I know this prediction of *actual* post-partisanship seems very premature. Obama has been in office for less than a week, but already there are indicators that Obama is different.

My first solid example of his active bipartisanship could be seen at the inaugural weekend events. Obama caused a major controversy when he announced that Rick Warren would deliver the invocation at his inauguration on Jan. 20. The reason for contention over Warren's invitation was that this particular pastor holds anti-gay beliefs and is an opponent of gay marriage. Obama is certainly not anti-gay, but it is evident that he did believe his historical inauguration should have some balance on the political and belief spectrum. And balance it certainly had.

"During the course of the entire inaugural festivities, there are going to be a wide range of viewpoints that are presented, and that's how it should be, because that's what America is about," Obama said. "Part of the magic of this country is that we are diverse and noisy and opinionated."

Along with evangelical pastor Warren, Obama invited openly gay Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson to read a prayer during the National Mall Concert on the Sunday before his inauguration.

Also, Reverend Dr. Joseph Lowery read the invocation during Obama's inauguration ceremony. Reverend Lowery is a fervent supporter of civil rights, including gay rights and civil unions.

A second piece of evidence to indicate more peaceful party relations is Obama's extension of a hand to a former opponent. It has been reported that Obama has asked Sen. John McCain to help him work with his Republican colleagues in Congress. Both these men are able to set aside what seemed like countless months of highly contentious and sometimes down right nasty debates and campaign speeches, in order to work together for a common good.

I think this step especially shows Obama's willingness to work with former opponents and Republicans to ensure that every aspect of American society is heard. After all, the very definition of the word "liberal" is tolerance.

A liberal is not just defined as a person with progressive views dealing with the war in Iraq, the environment, education, and the economy. Obama is a liberal in the sense that he exercises tolerance of opposing beliefs, and that is exactly what the country needs in order to move forward into the next phase of American politics. ♣



Hannah Novack



MCT Campus

Caroline Kennedy wants to replace Hillary Clinton in the U.S. Senate and cites years of public service as a major qualification for the job.

## Caroline Kennedy lacks political qualifications

For the past month, there has been a lot of speculation about who will be appointed Hillary Clinton's Senate seat. However, once Caroline Kennedy (daughter of a president and a senator) announced her interest in pursuing the appointment, even more buzz began to surround the issue.

At first, the mainstream press seemed to be fervently against her appointment in most cases and cited her lack of experience and her political family as grievances. Many were concerned with the idea of the U.S. Congress too closely resembling the House of Lords. However, it is hard not to notice the dramatic shift in the press' opinion in past weeks.

Suddenly, interviews popped up on news sources such as MSNBC from Kennedy's friends and colleagues. The message of these articles seemed to be that Kennedy is intelligent, hardworking, and a role model for mothers who choose to re-enter the workforce. Articles with this theme mention her law degree from Columbia Law School and experience on the boards of many non-profits (including her own family's library foundation).

Despite all of the recent positive press coverage, the fact still remains that Caroline Kennedy completely lacks political experience. Kennedy is undoubtedly an intelligent woman, but just because she has a law degree doesn't mean she is qualified to hold one of the most prestigious federal elected positions in the U.S.

New Yorkers seem to agree. According to a Jan. 14 poll conducted by Quinnipiac University New York residents would prefer Attorney General Andrew Cuomo of Caroline Kennedy by a 7 percent margin.

Governor David Paterson needs to consider which person will best meet the needs of New York citizens. It is a difficult argument to make that Caroline Kennedy would be considered for this position if she were not a member of a very influential political family. If Paterson appoints Kennedy to Clinton's Senate seat, he will be making a very strong statement about the state of American politics. How can Americans believe in the American dream if they are not represented by the best and most qualified individuals? ♣



Dawn Androphy



MCT Campus

Large crowds gathered at the Capitol for the inauguration of President Barack Obama, who promises a new era of post-partisan politics.

## Focused motivation necessary to fulfill Obama expectations

Are the expectations too high for Obama?

To do: fix the economy, reform healthcare, halt global warming, ensure world peace, end terrorism, and, when you are done with that, try minimizing the swollen executive bureaucracy.

And yet, the President, who was elected on an all-American platform of "Yes we can," believes that America and Americans have the power to do all of them.

If Barack Obama were Cinderella, he would never be allowed to attend the inaugural ball. The tasks at hand for the President seem not virtually impossible, but literally so.

In his Jan. 20 inauguration speech, Obama essentially presented the to-do list for his term, affirmed that all this we can do. All this we will do, and proceeded to remark that "there are some who question the scale of our ambitions, who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage."

I hate to be one of the cynics who fails to understand that the ground has shifted, but I feel like Americans ought to have a reality check.

Without putting the problems at hand in a reasonable viewpoint, we may end up hating a man in four years or eight, who did indeed bring change to America.

I am of the same opinion as Barack Obama that bright and

motivated men and women, when pouring their all into the various common problems that affect either a nation or the world, can succeed.

However, there are two inherent issues within this belief when one tries to apply it to the current status of the community.

The first is, of course, an issue which Obama himself addressed in his 18-minute speech: making American men and women bright and motivated. Unfortunately, the state of American education is one of the problems on the national to-do list. In the new president's words, we transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age.

Americans face a big problem as they attempt the gargantuan to-do list. In general, Americans are unwilling to pour their all into the demanding problems at hand. This is a modern world, where people are used to multitasking. The same sort of hectic and ineffective stress that can consume the average, working American could affect the new administration as it attempts to take on the problems of the world. Prioritizing has to be done. Without it, even the most brilliant solutions will not see completion by the end of an Obama presidency.

I am not trying to instigate fear over hope. There's a new president, a new administration, and a sense the ground has shifted. We have no reason to abandon our new found hope. Americans simply have to be a little patient, and extremely proactive, as they await the miraculous promise of change. ♣



Maddy McMahon

## Test-taking eccentricities develop empathy

I pulled out yet another tissue during the second section of the practice ACT, glancing at the clock to see how much time I actually had to spend on the test when I subtracted the estimated time spent blowing my nose. It was probably my fifth tissue of the section.

A counselor paced around the room, irately carrying a box of tissues behind his back for the few kids who were desperate enough to take the test even when they were sick. He probably thought I was like that, someone who felt compelled to take tests no matter how blocked my sinuses were. I'm not really like that. I just happen to get colds with an unusually high frequency when I take tests, especially "standardized" tests. The more "standardized" the test, the worse my cold seems to be. Not surprisingly, it always irks the people sitting around me.

During the practice ACT, several bored students finished their tests early and spent the remaining time staring me down with annoyance as they tried to focus on the juiciest scenes from their Twilight and Gossip Girl novels. I tried to ignore my own sniffles and wrapped up the last ten questions, feeling like I was watching myself languish in my own pathetic allergies. The same thing occurred during finals week. Time and again, I sneak out the pack of tissues, which for some unknown reason always makes me feel guilty. Maybe it's because I'm so conscious of how it might

disturb people around me. As the tissues gradually pile up, the scowl of the proctor grows deeper. As their eyebrows furrow I can seriously read their minds as they think, "Why are all those tissues on that desk? Is she cheating? Why is she still here if she is sick?"

I've never figured out exactly why I have allergies and colds when I take tests, which is a fairly recent development. Maybe the room isn't well-ventilated, or maybe it's the stress and pressure to do well, or maybe my surroundings just always hap-

pen to be dusty. As much as it bothers me, there are other habits that irk me as much as my allergies probably bother other people. For instance, the gum-smacking, nose-picking, and excessive throat-clearing that I see and hear might be pet peeves to many people. Yes, there are people who do it intentionally because they think it's funny. But many of those habits might be natural "reflexes" to taking tests, just like my colds.

In many ways, standardized testing is nothing close to being "standardized". But the nagging behaviors that people display when taking tests are the most standard thing about all tests. Despite many distractions, my body's own odd response to tests allows me to realize that the pet peeve-ish things that people do might be natural, subconscious habits that help them adapt to the testing mode.

So am I allergic to taking tests? Probably not, but don't stare. It makes my allergies worse. ♣



Sneha Viswanathan



MCT Campus

At his inauguration, President Obama encouraged the participation of the American people in making the changes he promised them.



# Globe

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The Globe student newspaper exists primarily to inform, entertain, and represent the student body at CHS to the best of its ability.  
The Globe is self-funded for all publishing costs and offers advertising to all school-appropriate businesses. Ads range in size from business card to full page; prices vary.  
Please contact our office for more information. The Globe is distributed to students each month of the school year. We also offer bulk mailing subscriptions for \$20 a year and first-class subscriptions for \$30 a year.  
We also remind students that as the Globe is a student publication, all compliments, opinions, complaints, and suggestions are welcomed and should be forwarded to the Globe Office.  
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Some material courtesy of American Society of Newspaper Editors/MCT Campus High School Newspaper Service  
Winner of MIPA All-Missouri, Quill and Scroll Gallup Award, CSPA Silver Crown, Pacemaker winner (2003), NSPA Hall of Fame Member

## Math department program provides work, success

Clayton High School's math department offers a very diverse selection of courses, and four unique tracks for students, teachers, and parents to select. However, only recently has this been the case. Clayton High School previously offered traditional mathematics, however switched to the integrated system in 2000.

As a second semester senior who has enrolled in all four courses in the traditional track which includes Geometry, Algebra II, Functions/Statistics and Trigonometry, and Pre-Calculus Discrete Math, I have been very satisfied with the math department's offerings and success in all four classes.

Students, parents and teachers may remember back to late 2004 and early 2005, when District officials were approached by a group of involved parents expressing their support for the district to offer a traditional mathematics track for students to enroll in. After many meetings, discussion and 'buzz' in the Clayton community, a compromise was reached that would allow the math department to offer both the integrated and traditional tracks for students, in addition to the Honors and informal mathematics, which is intended for students requiring more time to develop mathematical concepts.

What has been beneficial for me about the traditional math curriculum is that each class has specific math concepts covered rather than many different concepts covered in various units within the same course.

The Freshman geometry class primarily fo-

cus on theorems, angles, shapes, arcs, and implemented technology such as graphic calculators and Sketchpad software to help reinforce concepts.

Throughout the first three years of the program, classes were mixed between grade levels, which was unique. Another interesting aspect throughout my courses was the fact that teachers hadn't taught these courses for several years or it was their first time teaching a traditional course. Therefore, over the years I felt like I was a beta tester experimenting

with these courses as I have been working with all brand new books, and handouts, and was perhaps among the first to take several of the tests, quizzes, and exams.

By my sophomore year, the Algebra II class carried significantly more book work, but was extremely well taught and built on the rudimentary algebra skills I in middle school math with functions, imaginary numbers, inverses, and sequences

Junior year, however covered the most variety of mathematical concepts.

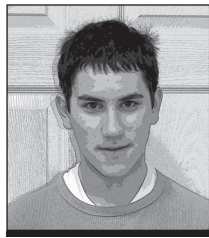
Overall, I felt the majority of the course in-

cluded functions, but we also spent a significant amount of time on trigonometry, and to a lesser extent statistics. While I felt the level of difficulty increased significantly, my course was also very well taught and had many opportunities to reinforce concepts covered in class. I particularly enjoyed the statistics units of the class and am currently enrolled in Advanced Placement Statistics. The math department allows seniors to take statistics as an elective in addition to Pre-Calculus Discrete Math.

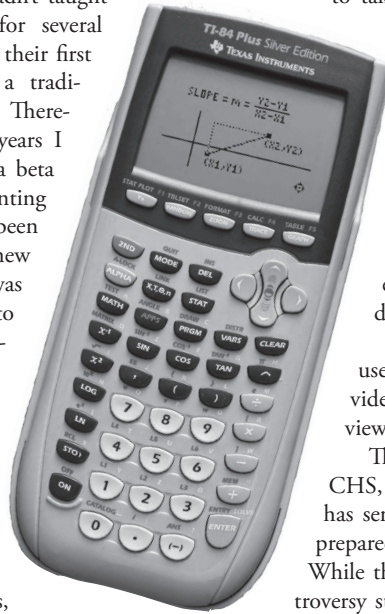
There has been less variety in the units and concepts covered in Pre-calculus discrete math. So far, I have learned a lot in this class about finite and infinite processes, trigonometry, and will be working with derivatives.

I have found the textbooks used in all four classes to provide sufficient examples and review material.

Throughout my four years at CHS, the traditional math program has served me well and I feel well prepared for college mathematics. While there still may be some controversy surrounding the course offerings, the math department has done the right thing by offering many different courses and allowing students, parents, and teachers to have input in selecting the course that best meets the students needs. ☺



Nick Andriole



## Cars and kids

I'd like to take a survey. With a show of hands, of all of you out there, how many have cars? How many are planning to get a car as soon as they're old enough? How many wish they had cars? Okay, I see. Now, the really important question: how many actually need a car? Yeah, that's what I thought. Virtually no one.

Cars used to represent freedom and hard work. A teen would save and save, working as hard as they could to get their own ride. And if they didn't get it in high school, so what? They would get one eventually, and that was all that mattered. In today's consumer society, cars have just become another commodity, with little to no actual meaning. In fact, Clayton High School students have actually become spoiled with their cars.

In our school, how many have actually purchased their cars on their own, with no parental help? And how many have had to really work for it? Again, the number is surprisingly low. Since driving has been reduced to simply getting a little piece of plastic that allows you to drive to school or go out with friends, the importance of the car has been lost.

Plainly speaking, cars have now become little more than a rite of passage. I can't count the times I've heard people complain about gas prices and the make of their car. Twenty years ago, we wouldn't even have to worry about those things!

Honestly, what is the point of everyone in high school having cars? Do we really go to so many places that we need a means of transportation 24/7? Whatever happened to the bus or bikes or even just walking? It seems to slip peoples' minds that in the grand scheme of things, none of us really need cars. By just having them, we're spoiled.

I have friends from all over the country, and some from overseas, and most balk at the idea of having a car in high school. "How do you afford one?" they gasp. "I'll probably be saving for one until I'm out of college. My family doesn't have the money to just buy me one, and there really isn't a reason for me to need one."

No reason. Out of all the people who own cars at school, there are three or four who really need one. And not just for late-night parties and Starbucks runs. For things that actually matter. The only reason my brother got a car during high school was because he had to help take care of my sister and myself. With our dad in the hospital and our mom helping him through chemo and transplants, the task of picking us up and caring for us often fell to my older brother. That was the only reason he even got a car.

For most Clayton students, the reasoning behind their car is because their parents got it for them, and why waste such a gift? Why waste it? How about using the money they spent on your car to do something ac-



The BMW above is one of the fancier cars seen in the CHS student parking lot. Izzy Fratt

tually important? There are more than enough people below the poverty line in the world, and here we are, throwing money away on things we don't really need. If everyone gave up their cars and donated the money to something worthwhile, we could really make a difference in the world. Even by just giving gas money away, so many people could be helped.

The harmful effects that cars have on the global environment must also be considered. With all the unneeded cars people own at Clayton High, we're probably killing enough trees to build a house. We're probably killing entire forests, and just because we have succumbed to modern commercialism. If everyone who had a car walked where they needed to go, or rode a bike, or took a bus, or even car pooled, I bet we could save enough power to light a small suburb. This needless consumption of cars and gas is slowly damaging our planet. If we keep this up, you won't have to worry about road conditions in the future--the Earth won't be around anymore.

I understand that as a freshman who has never experienced the luxury of owning a car that perhaps my argument may seem unrealistic. There have been many days when I wish I had a car, or even just a ride from a friend who had a car. But after some serious reexamination of my priorities, I have realized that the cons far outweigh the pros. Those with cars are indeed lucky to have that much money to waste on something so insignificant.

So, the next time you find yourself daydreaming about a better or cooler car, check yourself. Don't be ashamed to catch a ride with your parents. Try taking a walk. Just realize how fortunate you are, and do something to help someone else. Because, in the end, if it's not the spoiled who help out, who is going to? ☺



Caitlin Kropp

## Band geek encourages musical entente

It is the age-old question of identity, the paramount distinction for any high school music student—Band Geek or Orch Dork?

The difference is often a matter of pride. Band people see orchestra kids as soft—too weak to march in parades like their disciplined counterparts. Conversely, orchestra people see the band as a barbaric horde, a mass of uncivilized rabble that play Sousa as opposed to Sibelius.

Although I am technically a band geek, I consider myself to be a cultural orch dork. The vast majority of my friends play stringed instruments, and despite my undying allegiance to the clarinet, I find that I usually prefer symphonies to marches.

However, my time spent amongst the viola, violin, and cello-obsessed has always been a source of some frustration. Comments about exciting trumpet or bassoon pieces I've recently found are frequently met with scoffs of disdain; invitations to band concerts are usually met with looks that plainly say, "Over my dead body!"

Such intolerances are unfortunate, but more importantly they don't make any sense. Some of the most beautiful melodies in the history of classical music—both orchestral and otherwise—have been played without the use of a bow. "Band instruments" (woodwinds and brass) are written into almost every major symphony. Over and over they are used to introduce and recapitulate themes because their unique timbres contrast so well with strings.

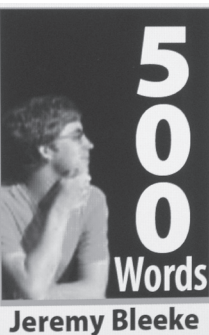
For example, what would Tchaikovsky's first

piano concerto be without the battery of brass that plays the iconic opening four notes? What would Dvorak's "New World" symphony be without the second movement's English horn solo? What would Prokofiev's popular "Peter and the Wolf" be without the twittering flute as the bird? The list goes on and on.

I am confident that if people from both band and orchestra opened their minds to the others' music, they would find something special. Orch dorks may be surprised to hear that Gustav Holst, famous for his orchestral suite "The Planets," also wrote two suites for military band that are now in universal popularity. Additionally, Ralph Vaughn Williams, whose folksong suite for band is standard repertoire, also composed for viola—a fact that surprised a friend of mine who then commented, "Well, I guess we can agree on something."

Of course, I will be the first to admit that some light-hearted snobbery has its place. As a woodwind I am obligated to make occasional remarks about trombones sounding like seal farts, and as a clarinet player I always have to make the crack about oboes and dying ducks. What bothers me, however, is when some stuck-up violin player dismisses flutes as "easy to play," or when a puffed-up saxophonist calls the cello lame. Give each other a chance, people.

I know some very talented musicians. They are people who have ascended to principal positions in prestigious orchestras and bands, who practice religiously and work hard, but who



Jeremy Blecke

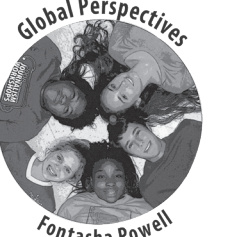


Band members proudly display their skill and discipline at a varsity basketball game. Scott Shapiro

only care about music played by instruments like theirs. I also know some mediocre players (such as myself) who delight in baritones and marimbas and violas alike. And despite the fact that these people are not as "accomplished" as the others, my personal esteem for them is infinitely greater. ☺



Might I just open up this column by simply saying: OH NINEEE! Never did I actually believe that I would one day be able to say that I am a SECOND SEMESTER SENIOR! It's okay, one day you all will be able to say it too. Being a SECOND SEMESTER SENIOR, I am thus officially inclined to share with you the heaps of wisdom I have learned personally and gleaned from others via observation from my 7.5 semesters spent here at our wonderful CHS. With my current study of Dante's Divine Comedy in English class and studies of the Reformation in European history, I thought it would only be necessary if I followed the Biblical trend and shared the 10 commandments of CHS.



Fontasha Powell

1 Thou shalt not be overheard by the guy that makes the coffee when telling someone in line at Northwest that the hot chocolate is weak (even though it really is. IF YOU WANT GOOD HOT CHOCOLATE, DO NOT GO TO NORTHWEST. IT IS WEAK.) If thou doeth, the mean man at Northwest will yell and bitch at you bitterly. (Really Monty, offending CHS Students, your most loyal consumers, is a bad idea.)

2 Thou shalt ALWAYS wear shorts under rip-aways (You know, those gym pants with the buttons on the side), especially when playing flag football in Team Sports class. I had the unfortunate experience of literally getting my pants ripped away in front of my whole gym class sophomore year. It was really quite unfortunate, for all parties involved.

3 Thou shalt become a devout follower of the church "Rex Rice, God of Physics." He is without a doubt, the most beastly physics teacher to ever calculate the acceleration of an apple with respect to the moving sun. When interviewed, one AP Physics student even claimed that he saw Mr. Rice levitate the Hovercraft without even switching on the power button.

4 Thou shalt never. Under any circumstances. Crank Dat. Like, Ever. (This commandment is especially geared toward certain AP Calculus BC and Latin teachers.)

5 Thou Shalt always jump up and down crazily when the following songs come on at a CHS Dance: "Sandstorm," "Everytime We Touch," and the "Numa Numa" Song.

6 Thou shalt not ever make out in the hallways. Really, it's just gross.

7 Thou shalt never make the librarians angry in the library by squeezing 15 people around a small wooden table that only seats 4 people. Then laugh hysterically at an outlandish volume at something that's actually not really funny. Then get kicked out after the Librarian comes over to shush you and discovers that you guys have been stashing an ice cream sandwich, 2 popartaks, a pomegranate and a steaming bowl of soup.

8 Thou shalt not ascend to the fourth floor, which is the physics cave of Rex Rice. It's called the lair for a reason. You don't mess with the greatness of physics up there. For all you know, there might be a bunch of mini black holes...One second you think you've found a great makeover place, and the next thing you know, you've been sucked up into a black hole, never to be heard from again. I mean, you take the chances if you want to.

9 Thou shalt never under any circumstances confuse an Erlenmeyer flask full of a titrated acid/base in room 207, mistaking it for "Purple Drank." I guarantee you; the consequences will not be "pHun."

10 Thou shalt always read the Globe. Self-explanatory. ☺





**Website of the Month**



**chucknorrisfacts.com**

MCT Campus  
Chucknorrisfacts.com is a website that provides little-known facts about the action movie star, along with rare videos and T-shirts. There is also a capability to design your own Chuck Norris shirt.

The Interest page focuses on funny and interesting bits of pop culture. If you have any item you think is worthy, drop us an e-mail at [globe@clayton.k12.mo.us](mailto:globe@clayton.k12.mo.us) or come see us in the cottage. Photos, funnies, and favorite songs and websites are all welcome.



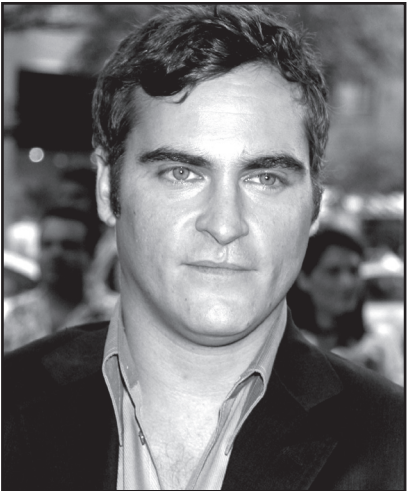
The photographer's representation of the landscape in his vacation spot of Moab, Utah. Photo by Andrew Dowd

## January Photo of the Month

### Abby's **Line of Infamy**

All photos from MCT

#### Joaquin Phoenix



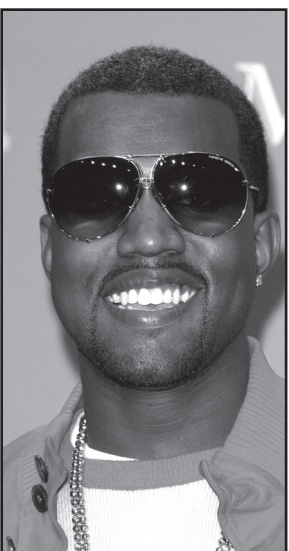
Former actor Joaquin Phoenix has recently decided to try his hand in the musical field--as a rapper. Not only is he horrible, but he also has been rumored to have bad attitudes at his shows, throwing diva-style fits. He also has made a habit of coming to shows under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, which was revealed after he fell flat on his face in his latest performance in Las Vegas.

### Layoffs

The tribune declared bankruptcy Dec. 8, and the LA Times has been struggling ever since. A total of 310 workers were fired this summer, and even more layoffs are expected come March.

Rapper Kanye West has recently been spotted sporting the infamous eighties hairdo at The Youth Inaugural Ball event in D.C. Not exactly the most appropriate for the historical event.

#### MULLETS




### 24's Agent Walker

A blatant disregard for the rules, non-recognition of authority, and intense torture tactics all characterize FBI Agent Walker on Fox's hit show, "24." It is all more than a bit reminiscent of her counterpart, Jack Bauer. Sorry, Fox. There is only room for one rouge agent in the show.




## DO NOT FORGET!

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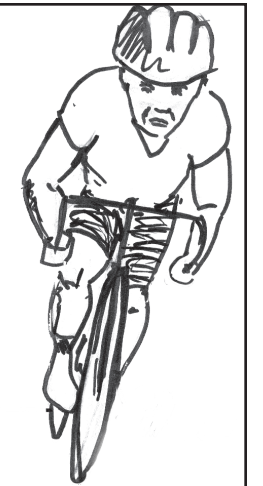
**N** Susie Wirthlin, as Tiger Lily, and the Indian chorus (above, below) rehearse for the musical coming soon to CHS. The play is directed by acting teacher, Kelley Ryan and will star Ian Miller as Peter Pan (photos by Puhon Zhao).



**Showing February 18-22 in the CHS auditorium**

### Environmental Tip of the Month: Ride a Bike!

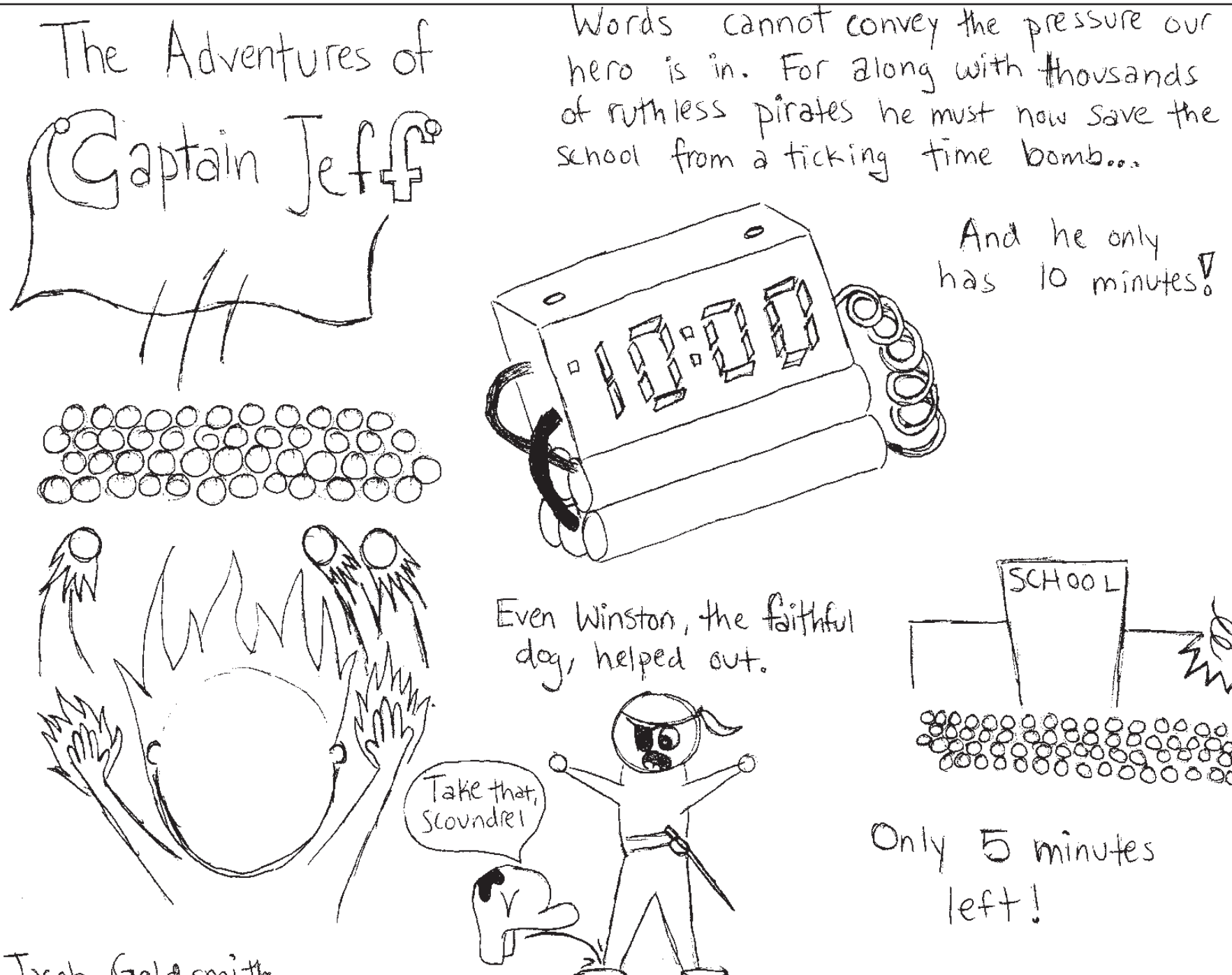
We all know bicycling is the alternative mode of transportation that creates no air pollution, noise pollution, and no virtually carbon. Biking not only helps the environment, but helps you as well. Besides burning from 400 to 500 calories in an hour-long bike ride, the sport is also a great way to tone leg muscles and strengthen the body's core. Also, choosing to take a bike to work instead of a car can save up to 500 dollars per month. Biking is just downright fun!



The Adventures of Captain Jeff

Words cannot convey the pressure our hero is in. For along with thousands of ruthless pirates he must now save the school from a ticking time bomb...

And he only has 10 minutes!



Even Winston, the faithful dog, helped out.

Take that, Scoundrel!

Only 5 minutes left!

Jacob Goldsmith



Various scenes and attractions from Close Up's trip to the capital. In addition to witnessing the Obama's inauguration, the group visited the national memorials, took in the Inaugural Concert, and went to museums such as the Newseum and the Smithsonian.

## CHS Goes to Washington

36 students travelled to D.C. with Close Up to witness the inauguration of Barack Obama



Nina Oberman  
*Editor*

The sun rose over a teeming crowd on Inauguration day, coloring the sky of a new era. As orange flushed into pink and violet, seagulls took flight from the frozen reflecting pool, collectively beating their wings.

Below, we waved our flags, echoing the unique capability of nature to synergize. On the coldest of winter days, humans had gathered from around the globe to witness one of the most pivotal events in the history of our nation.

For the first time, a black man would hold America's highest office. The moment was invaluable, summoning the memory of those who fought and died to defend our country's proposition of absolute equality. Their daring dreams have at last been translated into reality.

As I looked into the faces of my neighbors, the statement "We are one" never rang more true. We were packed tightly: a necessary defense against the cold and a result of eager pushes from those behind us. The result was a communal embrace, every person touching some one else in some way.

A man next to me had traveled from Chicago, and a woman came from Las Vegas. But in that moment, our stories seeped together. Huddling, we grew warmer in this "winter of our hardship," as the president would soon identify it.

I wonder what it looked like to the birds: 1.8 million heads forming a mass on the national mall, every neck craning to see that small, black dot in the distance.

Witnessing the inauguration, however, did not mean seeing Obama's face. It did not mean laying eyes on his hand as he placed it on the Lincoln Bible. Witnessing

the inauguration meant hearing the simple oath spoken at 12:04 pm, hugging those around you, and looking to see a vast expanse of people sharing the same inspiration you felt bursting in your chest, the same smile you felt spreading across your face.

Obama's address transcended politics and instead appealed to patriotism, unity, and shared goals. His vision is not reserved to America alone, but embraces all of humanity, all of those willing to build a future based on justice and equality.

"America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace," he proclaimed as the world watched.

Such a task is demanding, and lies certainly not in his hands alone. We have braved freezing temperatures, aching, swollen feet, and fatigue. Now, there are greater challenges ahead of us. In this new "Era of Responsibility," we can no longer expect things to fall into place.

The economy is moving steadily downward. Our image worldwide is faltering. Schools are failing students. Our waste is destroying the Earth. Although Obama's success is historically momentous, racism is still deeply ingrained within our society.

But with every four years comes an opportunity for change. Our chance has merely begun.

At an indiscernible distance, the President's Own Band closed the ceremony. The tubas bounced, the trumpets buzzed, the clarinets purred, the piccolo whistled. And at the finale, the sounds grew into one. ☺

“A man next to me had traveled from Chicago, and a woman came from Las Vegas. But in that moment, our stories seeped together.”



All photos courtesy of Close Up participants