

THE PARADE

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West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

Sweet victory for gymnastics team

By Libby Bursley
Oracle Editor

The gymnastics team has raised the bar.

After a successful season, the 13 girls that make up the gymnastic team were able to

overcome four schools, including Lake Braddock, by .6 points to win the Patriot District competition. This is the first time that the team has won Districts in sixteen years.

"Six people are allowed at each meet, and then the top four

scores count," said junior Sara Flory. "We only beat Lake Braddock by like one fall, basically."

Flory, juniors Breanne Boyle and Alexa Czajkowski and senior Amy Sullivan received the highest scores of their

team's competitors, competing all around on the beam, bars, floor and vault.

"Breanne's vault was amazing," said Flory.

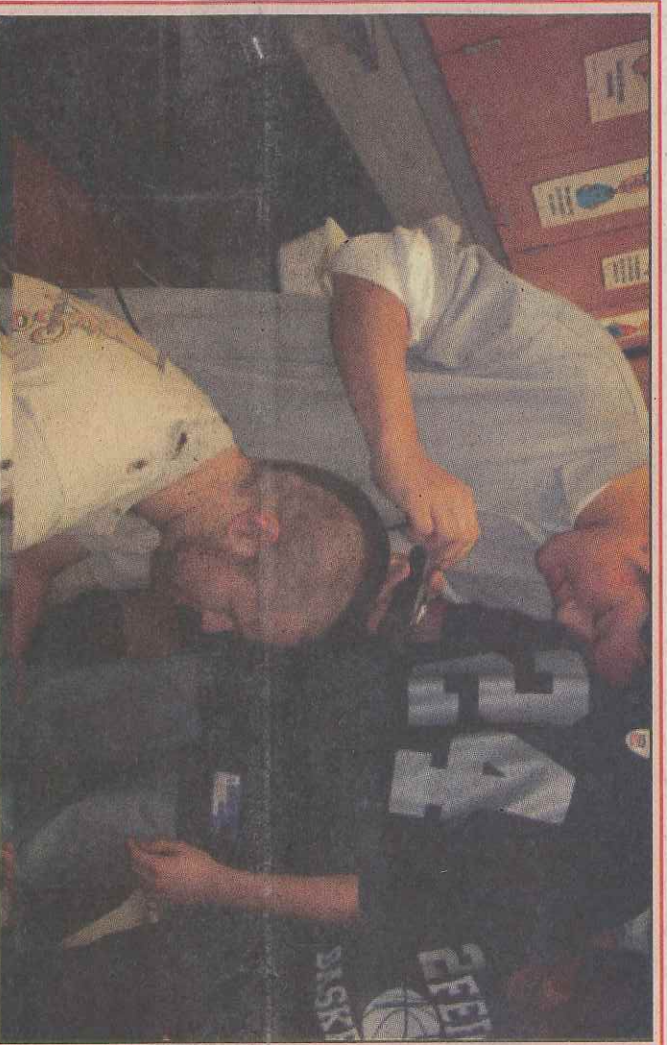
The teammates support each other in every event, as their combined scores add up

to the final score for the team.

"I have never felt so accomplished. Doing

gymnastics since I was five, I've always wanted to be part

of accomplishing such a great goal. The actual meet was one
See GYMNASTICS on Page 6.



Barbara Zemle

What's the buzz?

Todd Johnson, Special Ed teacher, Senior Class Sponsor, and coach of freshman basketball made a bet with his team ; If they beat Lee by 20 points, (which hadn't been done in about 20 years) then his class would be allowed to shave his head. The team won by 21.

THE BIG 1,000

Senior Kevin Kilday reaches milestone in his high school basketball career this season

By Chrissy Regelski
Oracle Editor

The victory for the Boys Varsity basketball team happened when the buzzer sounded and the scoreboard read 71-56. The victory for their guard, senior Kevin Kilday, however, occurred before the game was even halfway over.

Kilday scored his 1,000th career point in basketball against Hayfield in January, a feat accomplished by only three other players in WS history.

"I knew I was getting close but I didn't know exactly when it would happen," said Kilday. "[The coaches] told me at halftime."

The ball that Kilday scored his landmark point with was presented to him at halftime and was marked with



Lifenouch

See KILDAY on Page 5.

Kevin Kilday becomes the fourth player in Spartan basketball history to score his one thousandth point.



Senior challenges prejudices.



New, acclaimed restaurant opens in Kingstowne.



Swim splashes into second in districts.

Students start a letter writing campaign to show that they care

By Rebecca Naramore
Forum Editor

On Tuesday January 23, the WS chapter of Amnesty International held a letter writing campaign. Their goal, to lobby the government for legislation making it possible for the U.S. to go into Darfur.

About fifteen students came to support the cause and write letters to Senator Jim Webb.

"In the State of the Union Bush acknowledged Darfur, and by sending letters to Senator Webb we let him know

Americans care," said Senior Ben Trump, Vice President of Amnesty International here at WS. Senior Ally Campo is not sure that the letters will have much of an impact, but she hopes that it will set things in motion, allowing for changes to take place.

"I think it will definitely bring more attention to an important world event," said the club's sponsor Rebecca Rosenbaum, "Hopefully it will show current administration that students

See AMNESTY on Page 6.

Tis' the season for elective class selections

By Katie Costello
Oracle Editor

Spring is approaching and with it comes the frantic frustrations of signing up for the right electives.

Teachers do their fair share of advertising to get students interested in signing up for their classes when it comes time to fill out schedules.

"I visit tenth and eleventh grade classes," said Current Affairs teacher Andrea Schlegel. "I give them handouts to let them know what its about."

Students are then able to make informed decisions about what classes they will want to discuss taking with their counselors.

"I think it's helpful because some classes no one has ever heard of, so no one will sign up for them

See COURSES on Page 6.

Letter to the Editors: FCPS gets it wrong on student safety

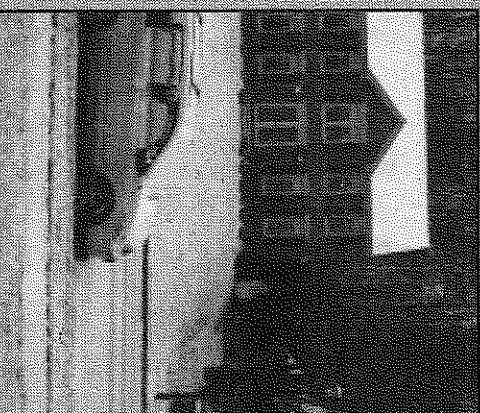
Dear Editors:

Fairfax County is one of the richest countries in the entire country. Our beloved county also places education highest on its list of priorities. Unfortunately for the students, however, education is placed so high on the priority list that it is actually placed higher than our safety! I guess as long as we can do calculus in our hospital beds, these priorities are right on track.

Personally, I would rather be given the opportunity to learn in a safe environment (as promised in the Student

Rights and Responsibilities handbook).

Maybe Dr. Smith's motto should be shared with the administrators in charge of making decisions for inclement weather. Apparently they forgot to "take care of each other," mainly their precious students whose education they profit from and therefore care so much about. It is only fifth period and I have heard a couple dozen horror stories involving cars, ice, pedestrians and even scarier sliding into intersections! On my way to school, not only were 90 percent of the minor roads icy and unsafe but also



Colin Embrey

January 22 brought dangerous road conditions that many believe should have merited a cancellation, not a delay, major roads such as Huntsman and Hillside were also icy. Now, you may be saying, "Matt, this is only for WSHS. Aren't we talking about the whole of Fairfax County?" Why, yes, but I haven't

heard stories from only WS students, but also Robinson and Lake Braddock as well. There is a street near Robinson that many students travel down called Pope's Head. This is a very lengthy, winding road and when this road is icy, it becomes a deathtrap. All I'm trying to say is that we need to be more concerned about our students' safety. I know that this week happens to be exam week and taking off school would create more complicated situations, but I would rather (just as every other student) that my schedule be messed up one day than my life on a dangerous road. I realize this isn't Loudoun county and is quite a bit more urban, but that doesn't make black-ice less dangerous. I write this only to improve my education as well as the safety and education of others. After all, are we not supposed to "Take care of ourselves, take care of others, and take care of this place?"

Just a few thoughts,
Matt D. Norwood, Senior

Senior scrutinizes stereotypes

Zohra Alnoor fights misguided Muslim prejudices

By Zohra Alnoor
Senior Staff Writer

I am fortunate enough to have been raised in a well-off middle class neighborhood in Springfield, VA, and I have dealt with little to no stereotyping in the past 17 years.

The Middle East conflict has been going on since before I was born. Everybody has to deal with stereotyping. It will never cease to exist.

Goths are stereotyped as "devil worshippers," hippies as "druggies" and African Americans as "ghetto." Muslims just happen to be another group like these, who are stereotyped as terrorists.

What is the source of stereotypes? A few people take one bad thing that they see and escalate it to huge proportions. Then the media

gets their hands on it, airs it on TV, radio, internet and other forms of communication and millions of people believe it. The stereotyping process has now begun.

The stereotyping of Muslims is an exaggeration. Islam is a peaceful religion. The word Islam comes from the Arabic word, 'aslama,' which means, 'to make peace.' But when the public sees videos and pictures of suicide bombers and flag burners, they retain that image of them and view all Muslims as dangerous extremists. No one should judge billions of people because of the actions of a few. This goes for every 'group' and the people that judge them.

Everyone knows that all Goths aren't, "devil worshippers," all hippies aren't, "druggies," and all African Americans aren't, "ghetto."

WS students are lucky to be attending such a diverse school with so many groups. There are so many different people in this school who are friends with each other. Caucasians are friends with Indians, Asians with Latinos, etc, so there is less stereotyping in our little bubble at WS.

But unfortunately, there are some people who aren't open to learning about other diverse groups, and they stereotype against students who attend WS everyday. This is due to the fact that they do not do their research about Muslims, Asians, Jews, Latinos, etc, and they only follow the opinions of the media.

We all need to do our part and get to know our peers around us and maybe then this forever-long problem of stereotyping can end starting at WS.



Students at the Muslim Inter-Scholastic Tournament at the University of Maryland last April. Clockwise from left to right: Zohra Alnoor, Noria Ullah, Rehmatia Popal, Runa Alnoor, Neeleam Alnoor.

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The Oracle is a student-run publication to inform and entertain the students and staff of West Springfield High School and the Springfield community. We publish articles written with as little reporter bias as possible. Opinion is expressed in Viewpoint, Inside Story, ETC., and in reviews and columns. Editors represent the opinion of at least two-thirds of the staff and do not reflect the views of the adviser, the administration, or the Fairfax County Public School System. The Oracle reserves the right to reject advertising deemed inappropriate. Signed letters to the editor and personal commentary will be considered for publication, but could be edited for grammar, spelling and space.

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Letter to the Editors:

M³ spreads love for math

It was gratifying to see *The Oracle's* acknowledgment of m³. Intended to raise awareness among staff and students regarding math, Make Math Matter is a practice designed to dispel negative views of this curriculum. I applaud Ms. Pedersen for addressing m³ in her Viewpoint column. *The Oracle* is a powerful medium that can influence our student body and emphasize the need for and the importance of education.

When Ms. Pedersen writes that she is not a math lover (precisely the idea that m³ wishes to change) but that she shines as a B+ student in Honors Algebra II, she exemplifies many of her classmates. She has the potential to make a difference by helping others succeed in their math classes. Her tutoring, mentoring, and

guidance can help us overcome negative attitudes toward math. A goal for our school is that all students achieve and pass their SOL exams in all subjects. Her positive leadership to promote math would be one way to help more students pass these barrier tests.

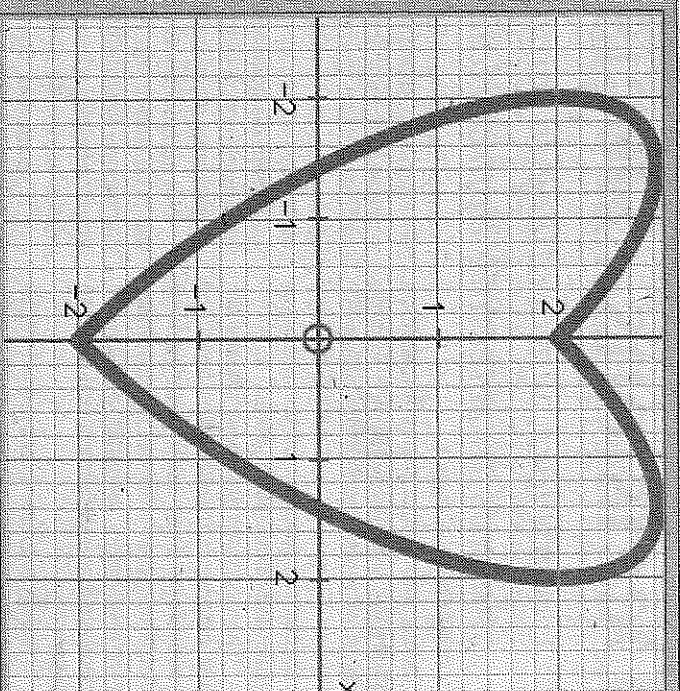
m³ promotes lively discussion and interaction to validate the importance of math. No longer should anyone say that "Boys are better in math..." or "My mother wasn't good at math and so neither am I." It is time to discard these ideas and promote positive views of all learning. Love of math and excellence in it is not genetic—practical application, all can excel at math.

In addition, I invite Ms. Pedersen to report on c³—cross curricular connections.

Partnered with m³, this idea promotes learning and its application across all curricula. By using skills learned in one subject when working on assignments for a different class, students can recognize and thus appreciate the relevancy of all learning.

Ms. Pedersen is correct in stating that TJHSST provides for the sciences and math, but FCPS also has other academics such as the Fairfax Academy for Communication and the Arts that addresses the performing arts. Enrollment in these schools is limited, so we offer comparable learning experiences at our high school. No one has to wait until college to specialize in history or English."

I fervently believe that historians, journalists, and poets use math daily. To prepare



The equation y equals the absolute value of x plus or minus the square root of the quantity of four minus x cubed creates a 2-D heart of love for WS students that "Make Math Matter."

for our work experiences in the future, we will need expertise in every curricular area to move flexibly from career to career.

None of us can anticipate what we will be doing twenty years from now, but whatever it is, it will involve math. So...m³!

Susan Latour,
WS Technology Specialist

Parents and teachers inflate importance of PSAT/NMSQT

By Kelly Sipple
News Editor

The PSAT/NMSQT test is not important in the grand scheme of our high-school careers.

Granted, it is proven that practice makes perfect. The more times you take a test and seriously evaluate what it is you have been doing wrong, chances are you'll do it right the next time around. This process, however, should not be shoved down our throats.

Even though we are given the option to opt from the PSAT, it is frowned upon and the majority of students end up taking the exam. There is so much emphasis on the test that we even get a half of day off of school.

Don't get me wrong, I am grateful that I am essentially forced to take the test and have the answers given directly back to me (even though it is several months later). This is a wonderful opportunity to improve my test scores.

To take instructional time, however, to not only take the test but receive a guide to evaluate the self-explanatory answer sheet is a bit too much for me. If you look at the big picture, the test does not matter, except for those who can earn a NMSQT scholarship. For the rest of us, the test merely means feeling good about ourselves for scoring better than our friends.

or, feeling incompetent as others' scores are drastically higher.

Except for a few colleges, the majority never view the exam, our teachers don't view the exam, and not all parents see the scores. Unfortunately for some of us, our parents place too much emphasis on the exam.

My father, who studies every e-mail he reads from the school, learned of a session provided by the school, which would help him understand my sister, and my test scores. The day we got our results back, my dad demanded my scores, and, as soon as I had gotten home from practice that night, had already translated them into projected SAT scores. He had then drawn a chart of my top schools, how my projected SAT scores compared, and what I needed to do this year (I have not yet done any of this). It bothered me that based on a test that I took half asleep back in October had become the center of a family argument about me not trying hard enough.

For those extremely intelligent students and those select students that take the time to learn from their scores, the PSAT test can be very helpful. It is a great chance to get in the practice. Even though it is a wonderful opportunity and I genuinely appreciate the time and effort that is put into providing me with this chance to excel, the emphasis that the school and parents put on the test is not needed.



Kelly Sipple

The pressures from school and home to do well on the PSAT led one student to set her booklet on fire to relieve tension created by the test.

We put the 'i' in iPod

Technology inhibits human interaction

By Jordy Serwin
Oracle Editor

Apple's unveiling of the iPhone at the Macworld Conference & Expo begs the question, "when will they ever stop?"

The latest in Apple's extensive line of products, the iPhone combines a Cingular-powered cell phone, a 2 mega pixel camera, an iPod, an internet browser, and a media player into one slick, \$499 package. I love gadgets, but not ones that make me pay large amounts of money for devices I already own. More than high prices, the latest personal electronics all cater to individual use, removing interaction with others.

Consider Apple's naming strategy: iPhone, iPod, Mac, etc. Each new device increases the ease with which people distance themselves from one another. While technology lets us do more now than we could decades earlier, people

interact with one another less frequently than they did decades ago. Technology's role in our lives keeps increasing. The role other people play in our lives keeps decreasing. This is not a good thing.

We like to say technology brings people closer together. It does in the sense that teleconferencing allows businessmen and women in Los Angeles to see and hear other businessmen and women in Tokyo. But this can never truly equal true person-to-person contact. One new device, though, was designed with such an idea in mind.

While nearly all other electronics companies focus on "i," one chose to focus on "Wi." Among other reasons, Nintendo created their newest game system, the Nintendo Wii, to give players an opportunity to engage in collective, group entertainment. Even the two lowercase "i's" intentionally represent two people standing side by



Associated Press

side. I sincerely hope other companies will follow Nintendo's philosophy.

Humans are physiologically and psychologically designed to interact with other humans. The fancy electronics we use every day are intended for our individual use and as such go against our very nature. If we keep relying on MP3 players and the internet as heavily as we do now, we will eventually exhaust what makes us human. Technology will become stronger than we are. We just can't let iPod become "I, Robot," if you get my reference.

Decisions, Decisions

Counselors, with college in mind, aid students in selecting appropriate electives

COURSES from Page 1.

unless the teacher shares information about it," said junior Becky Koenig. "Lots of juniors ended up taking AP Human Geography and AP Psychology because the teachers of those classes came and talked about them."

The decisions for these classes are not made without the help of counselors. They meet with each of their students to work out the upcoming year's schedule, including picking the electives that will be most beneficial to them.

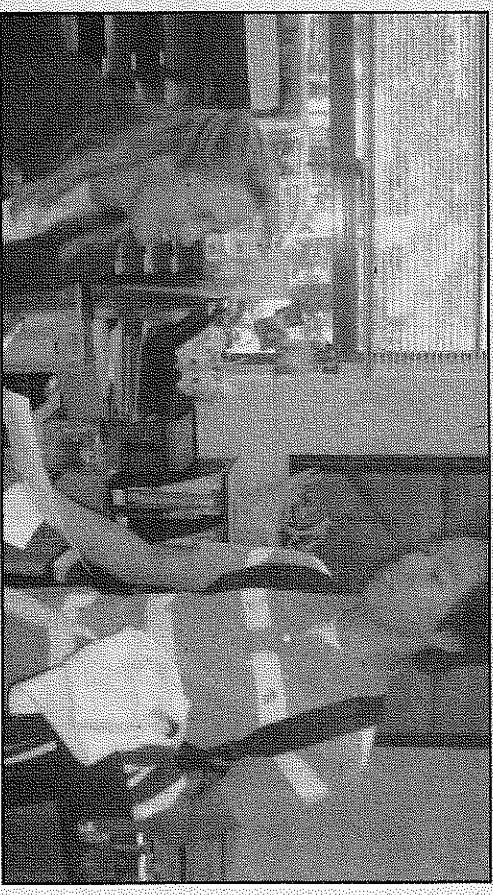
"We try to create a course load where the student will be successful," said guidance counselor Jeffrey Stahl. Counselors help students pick

classes based on what students plan to do after high school. They know what colleges look for in a prospective student and use that knowledge to guide students in picking appropriate electives.

"While it's good to try new stuff they [colleges] look at sequences—a sequence of marketing classes, art, etc.," said Stahl.

Not all students are happy with all of the assistance they get from their counselors, feeling that they might be a little too helpful when it comes to picking what electives the students want to take.

"It seems like counselors don't trust students' own judgments about how capable they are," said Koenig. "They seem to generalize."



Sara Kohai

Senior Daniel Kim seeks the assistance of guidance counselor Michele O'Brien for help with his schedule.

Counselors disagree, the success of students being first and foremost on their minds.

"I wouldn't say we promote some [electives] more than others," said Stahl. "We don't discourage."

It all boils down to what a student wants to do in the future — something that is different for everyone.

"All electives give you skills you'll need," said Stahl. "I think it really depends on the individual students."

Kilday drops a grand

KILDAY from Page 1.

the number 1,000.

"It's a great feeling," said Kilday. "I feel like I achieved something for all the hard work that I put into it."

Though Kilday is positive that he wants to continue basketball after high school, he is unsure of where at the moment. Varsity coach Dick Wickline believes Kilday is "highly motivated" and "will be a successful college player."

Kilday attributes his current success to working hard at shooting during the off-season and to the encouragement he receives from his family and friends. "I get a lot of support," said Kilday. "My teammates helped me accomplish [his feat]. Without them, I

couldn't have done it."

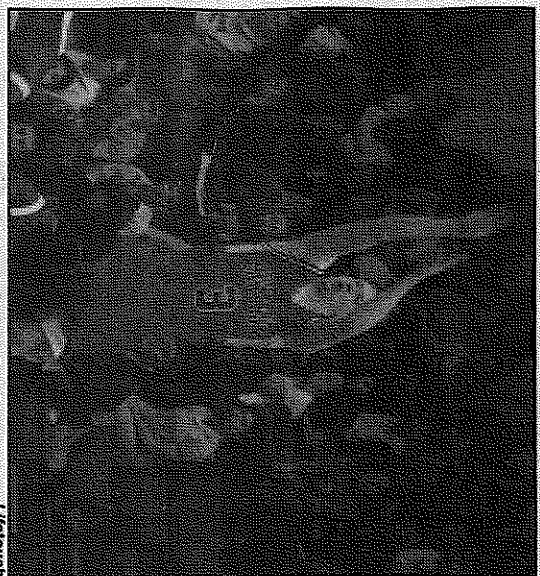
Wickline believes Kilday's success will encourage his fellow teammates on the court.

"It's a great feeling. I feel like I achieved something for all the hard work I put into [basketball]."

— Kevin Kilday, Senior

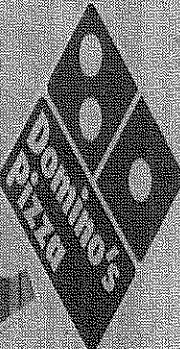
"[There is] no question [he will inspire others]," said Wickline. "He is a model competitor. Kevin leads and we follow."

Kevin Kilday works his way to his 1000 basket in a varsity basketball game.



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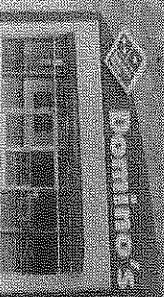
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Hall passes go AWOL

Teachers improvise when their hall passes disappear

By Jake Serwin

Ed. Editor

One by one, they are vanishing. In the last few months, WS's wooden hall passes have been disappearing right under teachers' noses.

So far, at least 17 teachers have reported missing passes. Some portion of these can be attributed to forgetful students who leave them by the bathroom sink when they return to class. The volume of the disappearances, however, suggests a more sinister truth: someone is hoarding hall passes.

Tech teacher Charlie Scudder's classes made the passes last spring, at the administration's request. Initially, they were a hit.

"Most teachers said they liked them," said Scudder, "because they're too big to stick in your pocket."

Large as they may be, students have still managed to lose or steal them. Scudder's classes have been working overtime to make replacements for the lost passes. "We just put [the blocks of wood] into the milling machine," said Scudder, "but it still takes effort."

As the number of passes reported missing in action increased, teachers became extra vigilant to protect their room's pass. Even so, they can only do so much, as math teacher Sandra Novak found out.

"I was one of the later ones [to have a pass stolen], after Christmas," said Novak. "I would consistently watch my pass. I was out one day, and when I came back it was gone."

Novak believes that while the passes are being stolen, the motives are less than malicious.

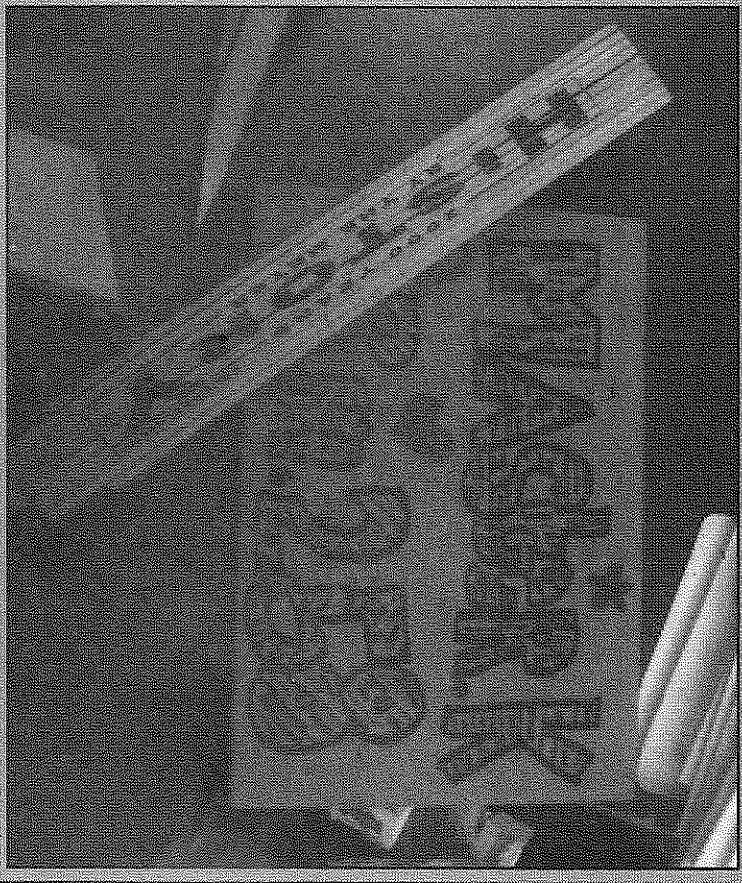
"Someone's doing it for fun," said Novak. "They're collecting them."

Individual teachers have tried their own approaches to solving the problem. Some have decorated large, clumsy objects, like two-by-fours, for hall passes to prevent students from stealing them.

Others, like English teacher Amy Block, are offering extra credit points to any student who finds the missing pass.

Block also adheres to the collection theory, with a bit of hearsay thrown in.

"Some people have been saying it's a senior prank," said Block. "I'd like to give them more credit than that."



Sara Kohn

Teachers were given these room-personalized passes at the end of last year but, recently, many have gone missing.

Despite the threat of a pass-theft conspiracy, Scudder isn't worried.

"If somebody is trying to start a

collection," said Scudder, "you know they'll show up on the doorstep at the end of the year."

News Bites



Capitol Steps

Political comedy troupe, The Capitol Steps, will perform at WS on February 11.

On Thursday, February 1, a man attempted to rob three local banks in 45 minutes. The robber went to the SunTrust Bank in Kingstowne first, then the BB&T in Springfield Plaza and finally the BB&T at Huntsman Square. No money was taken nor was anyone hurt.

Around 200 juniors and seniors were inducted into the National Honor Society on January 9. History teacher Tamara Ogdan sponsors the organization and that night, Ann Wong was a guest speaker who talked about the influence of teaching in her life.



Congratulations to the Forensics team for capturing its fifth Patriot District title. The following students will compete at Regions on February 20.

Senior Ben Trump, 1st Place, Foreign Extemp; senior George Sturges, 1st Place, Domestic Extemp; junior Matt Grogan, 1st Place, Impromptu; junior David Bae, 3rd Place, Impromptu; senior Richie Hartz, 2nd Place, Humorous Interpretation; junior Kelly Andrews,

1st Place, Dramatic Interpretation; sophomore Destiny Sweney, 2nd Place, Dramatic Interpretation; senior Cori Buck, 1st Place, Storytelling; junior Robert Miner, 4th Place, Storytelling; senior Nadia Khatouri, 1st Place, Prose; senior Jocelyn Ott, 2nd Place, Prose; sophomore Jay Friedel, 1st Place, Original Oratory; freshman Justin

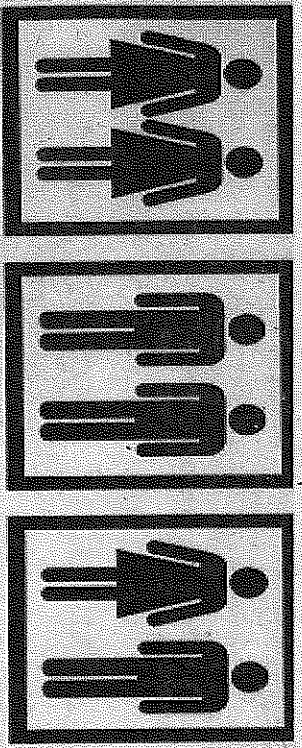


Pizzazz presents Jimi Gibson's "Hypnosis: The Show," at 7 PM on Friday, February 23 in the school auditorium. Tickets are \$8 each, and can be obtained by contacting the Choral Department at wshschorus@gmail.com, or they may be purchased outside the cafeteria.



West Springfield Choral Patrons present The Capitol Steps, a satirical singing group of congressional staffers, who will be performing at West Springfield on Sunday February 11 at 7:00 PM. Reserved seats cost \$25 and groups of 10 or more are \$20 each.

—Compiled by Bethel Habte



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WS gymnasts beam at districts competition

GYMNASTICS from Page 1.
of the best I've had," said Sullivan.

Each girl that participated faced lofty goals. To advance individually in an event, a score of 9.5 is needed. A team needs to achieve either first or second place. The girls dedicated themselves to practicing what they needed to.

"I tried very hard. I was very focused which I'm usually not," said Flory. "I'm usually the crazy one."

The next step for the team is the Regional meet, held on February 9 at Lake Braddock. To prepare, the whole team has been participating in daily practices.

"Every day before the 9th, there are

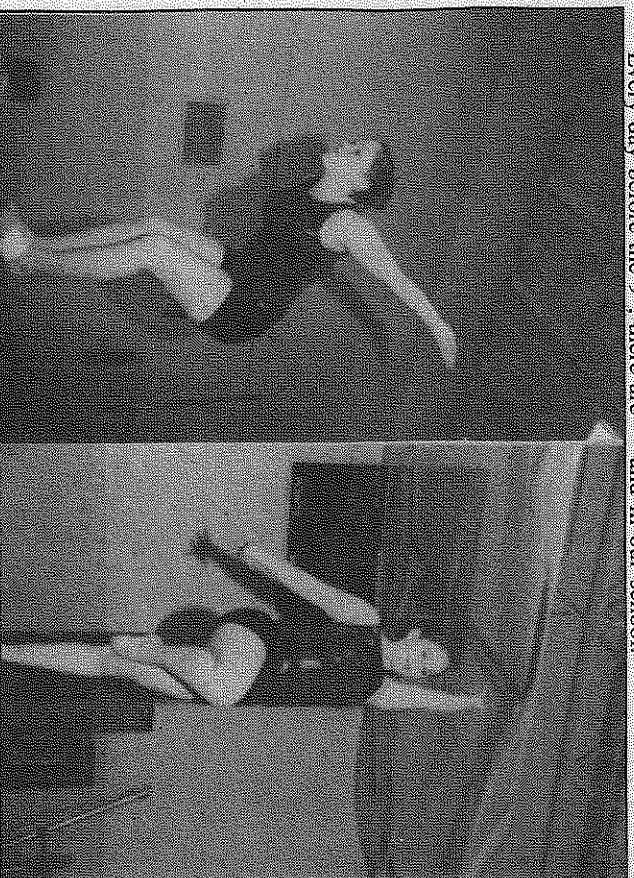
two-and-a-half hour practices when we will focus on our weaker areas of strength," said Sullivan. "I think we have a good chance."

Since they placed second in the Districts, Lake Braddock will also be advancing from that competition.

"We're going to need all-around consistency to win. I hope we win and I think we can," said Flory.

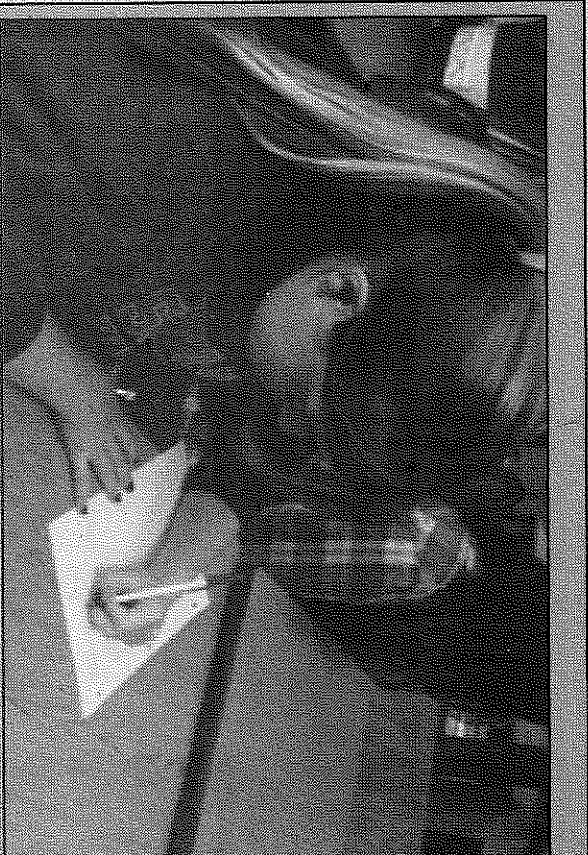
Setting a high score for the season and advancing farther than in previous years, the team has their goals set high.

"Our team has come a long way," said Sullivan. "[Winning Districts] reminds people that this awesome sport exists, and in our school."



Junior Breanne Boyle shows off her skills at the gymnastics districts.

Lifetouch



Katie Page

Senior Ally Campo writes a letter to local legislators during an Amnesty International meeting trying to raise awareness on the conditions in Darfur.

Amnesty connects with people, politics

AMNESTY from Page 1.

administration that students know and that we are paying attention".

Amnesty International does not only focus on Darfur and the other problems in Africa, the club also spends a lot of time discussing political issues in other parts of the world.

"My hope for the club was that it would become a hub for political discussion for people who really care,"

said senior and Amnesty's president Sam Peck. Peck set up the WS chapter after researching organizations that

work to preserve human rights. So far, Peck has managed to draw between ten and fifteen students to each meeting.

"We want more letter writing campaigns and I'm going to try to get a guest speaker from the state department," said Peck. His future plans are all based towards getting more attention to the problems in both the developing and developed parts of the world.

"I hope we have [started to make an influence], because if we haven't, what the [explicit] are we doing here," said Peck.

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Kids placed in the hands of caring students

ECC program gives students a head start on careers involving childhood development

By Carlin Sherrill
Weekend Editor

Three times a week, little kids with huge backpacks can be seen walking the halls before last block. They are greeted by the smiling faces of 10 or so more WS students who are their caretakers for an hour and a half. This is the ECC class, Early Child Career Meeting on the last block of each day, the students help these pre-school children learn different subjects, as well as have tons of amusing moments.

"[The class] is always so crazy. You never know what to expect with the kids. They are always doing something different, whether they are happy or sad," said senior Missy Duffy.

Duffy has been involved with the ECC program since freshman year. The kids that she teaches and plays with each time are the reason that she keeps working with them. She plans to work at the daycare



Molly Cushing

ECC seniors Maria Galindo and Tori Prohoda play and teach the kids with hands-on activities. During the last period of the school day, students interact with children participating in the ECC program at WS.

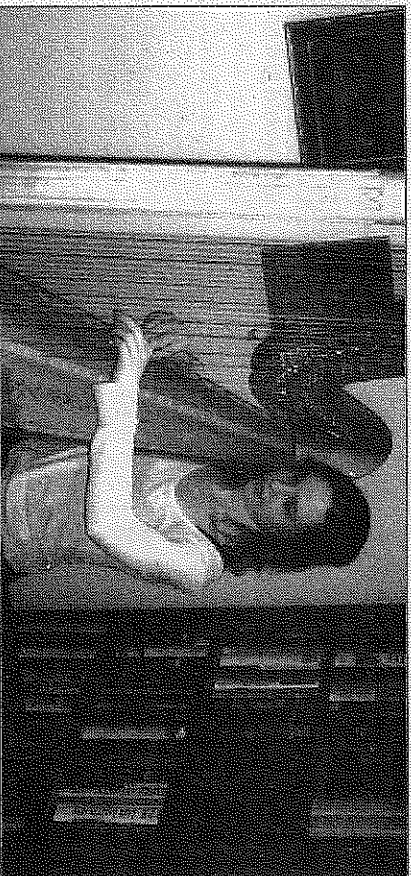
once she finishes high school. "I love kids so much and that is why I keep on doing the class," said Duffy.

Although the kids are only in the classroom three times a week, the other two days are not wasted. As a class, the students evaluate what they are doing with the pre-schoolers and how they can improve. They

"It's just so much fun to play and work with the kids."

— *Katie Gorham, junior*

also plan what they are going to do for the following class periods. Currently, they are learning how to teach the children science, by doing a rocket and vinegar experiment.



Senior Sheetz

Sheetz has been dedicated to playing the harp since the age of six.

Curtain opens on talented freshman Katherine Sheetz

By Bethel Hable
News Editor

Freshman Katherine Sheetz finds time for that little thing called school in between 14 hours of ballet practice and five hours of harp practice every week.

In order to make time for all the extracurricular activities she is currently committed to, Sheetz must make small sacrifices.

"I have to get home [from school] right away," said Sheetz.

Although Sheetz is not involved in any school sports or school-sponsored activities, a busy schedule awaits her right after the fourth block bell.

Her unconventional interest in the harp started at six years old when she watched her grandfather play it.

"I always wanted to do it, but my mom wouldn't let me until I was six," said Sheetz.

Her hard work and experience has paid off. Just recently, unaffiliated with the school's orchestra program, she showed

off her talent in the theatre department's performance, "Pride and Prejudice."

Her other main hobby, ballet, sparked her interest when Sheetz saw the Nutcracker when she was young.

"Ever since then, I wanted to be a pretty pink ballerina," said Sheetz.

Friends are not excluded from Sheetz's scheduled formula for the week.

"At the beginning of the year it was hard [to spend time with them]," said Sheetz. "[But now] they come to my ballet shows."

But for this bubbly freshman, even with her busy life still has time for school.

"When I'm not doing something else, I'm doing homework," she said.

Her driven spirit and knack for time management is what she thinks will help her in later years.

"People talk about how they didn't do that in college," Sheetz said. "But I think I'm going to be able to manage it better."

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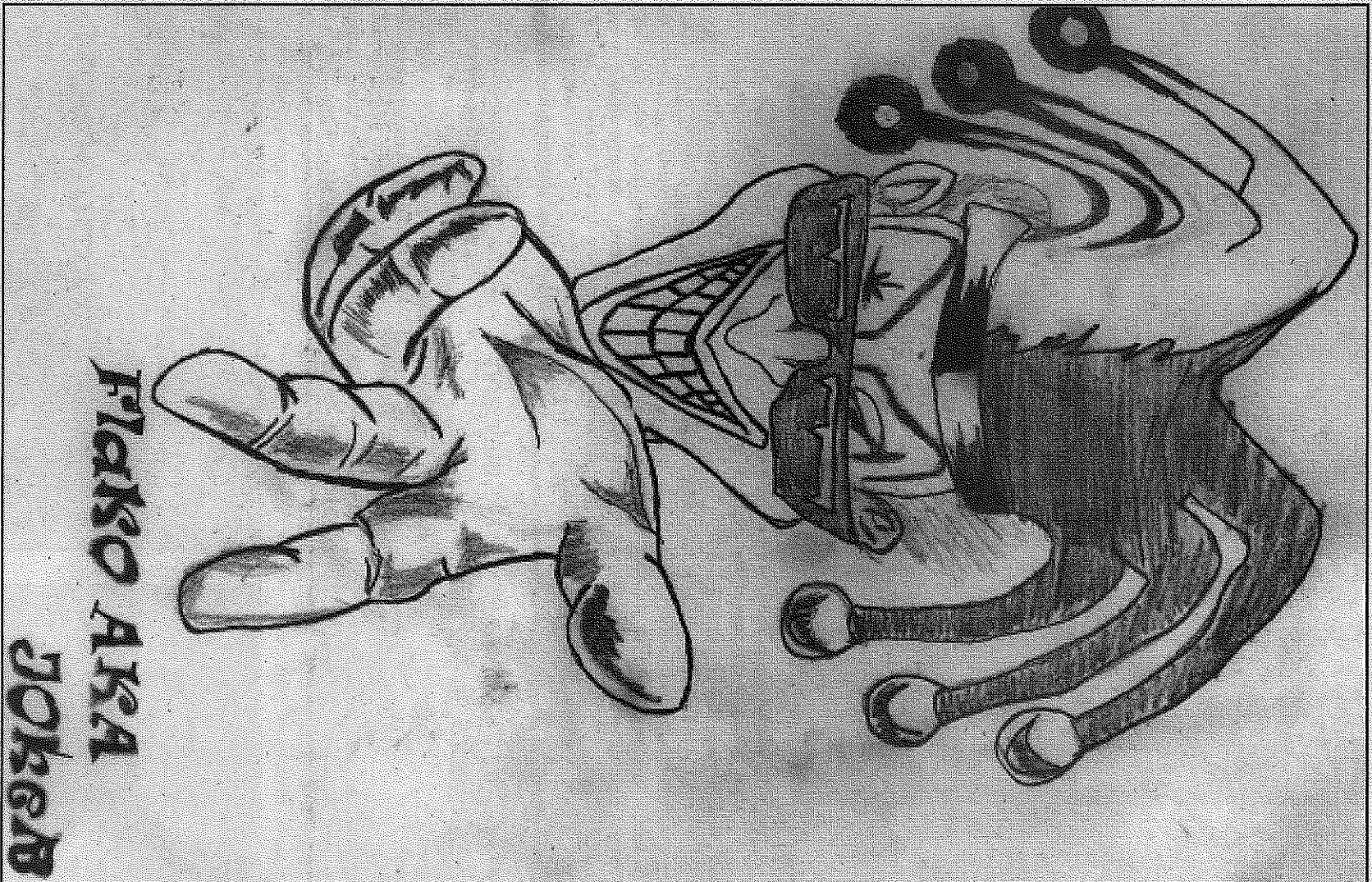
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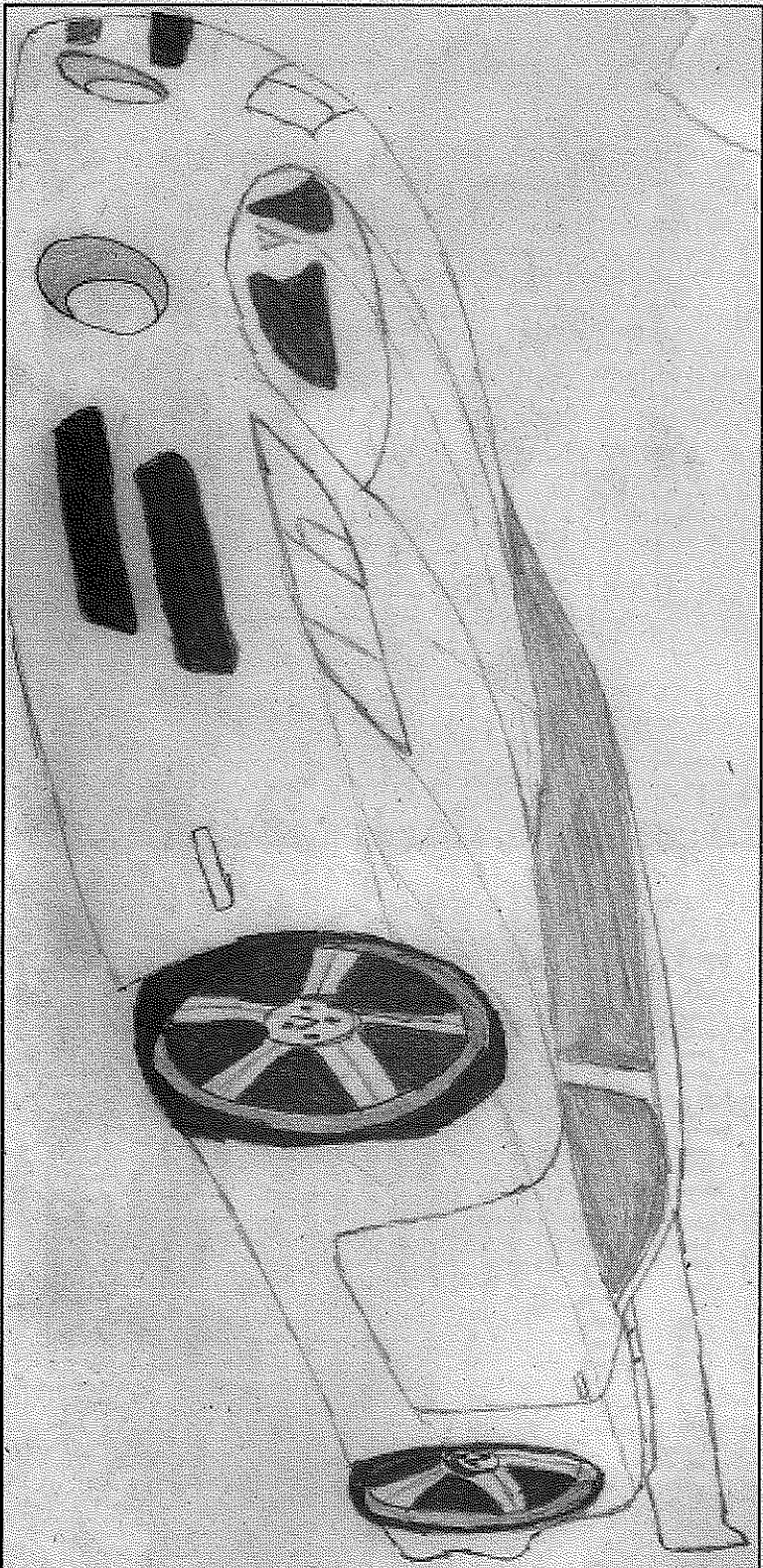
Teen Commandments

1. Don't let your parents down; they brought you up.
2. Choose your companions with care; you become what they are.
3. Be master of you habits or they will master you.
4. Treasure your time; don't spend it; invest it.
5. Stand for something or you'll fall for anything.
6. Select only a date who would make a good mate
7. See what you can do for others; not what they can do for you.
8. Guard your thoughts; what you think, you are.
9. Don't fill up on this world's crumbs; feed your soul on the living bread.
10. Give your all to Christ; He gave His all for you



**FLAKO AKA
JOKER**

Jonathan Pienda, junior



Atlantis Nascar

Gajindra Surujpaul, junior

I Wonder What Life Would Taste Like

If life had a flavor, what would it be?

Or would life have a taste?

Would it be a bland dull, water based flavor?

Would it be part of a sweet tangy aura?

Would life's taste depend on the mood one would be in at the moment, a lollypop

flavor for those with childish content,

liquorish for the angry at heart, possibly

chocolate for those witnessing love?

Maybe life would be multi-flavored to

adapt to all that want to taste it,

Or maybe life would be in all flavors that

we perceive to expect,

Or life could be in a flavor not even fanned

by man's taste buds,

What part of the rainbow colored

spectrum would life be part of?

Would life be a fiery red, a sunny yellow,

or a midnight black?

Would life's color change like a mood

ring?

Would like be spicy hot or icy cold?

Would life be seasonal in appearance only

being available at certain times?

How would we be able to know when

we've actually tasted life?

Is it distinct from all other flavors?

Is life an acquired taste or would anyone

be able to handle it's delicacies?

What would life's flavor be called, "Life"?

Would we ignore the politically correct

depiction of what life's name would be and

go off on a tangent to be creative?

Would life have age limits to ban those not

yet mature enough to handle its taste?

Would everyone want to have a taste of

life, or would some oppose it?

How do we judge something so incumbent

and yet so misunderstood?

Has man adapted enough to know ALL the

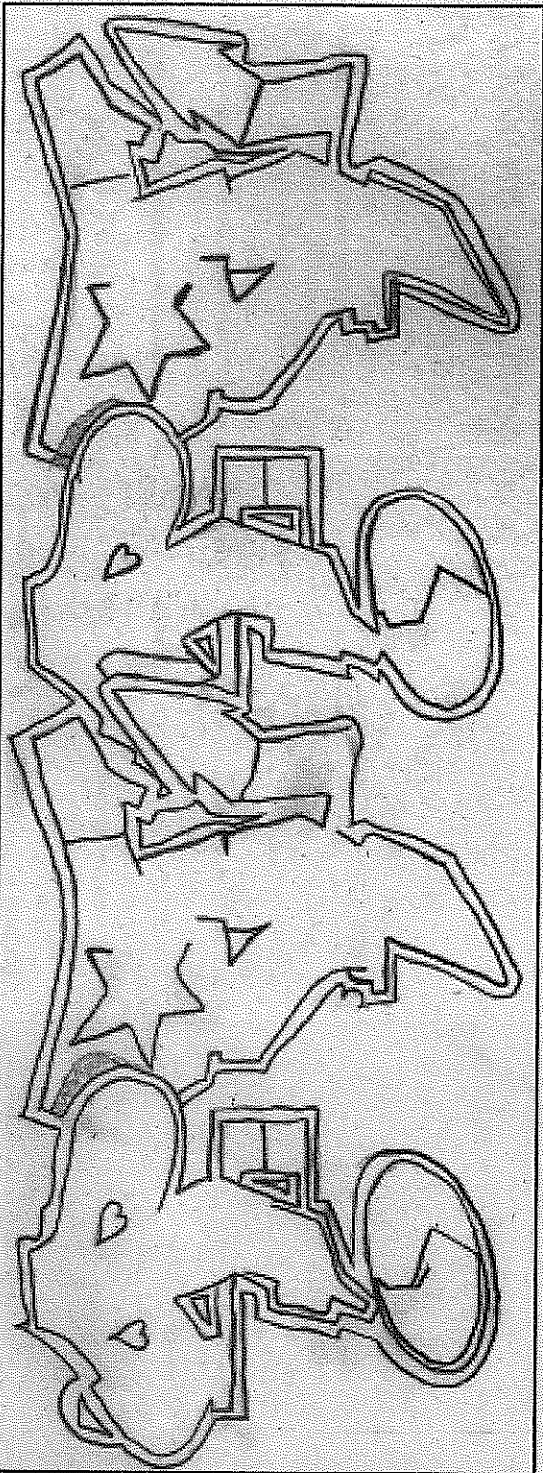
flavors of life or is it another never ending

mystery to be gradually learned bit by bit?

Life is a mystery, but if I had my choice,

life would just be delicious.

David Nelson, senior



Jonathan Pienda, junior

Questions
 Why when no one else is around do I feel
 like crying?

It is like a thick layer of sad fog,
 Pushing against my deepest heart held
 thoughts,

My Dad?

My Mom?

My Brother?

My Family?

Problems I can't Solve!

Why Me?

Why my family?

Why must I feel such a great pain and
 suffering?

Questions send my heart into darkness,

A great sea of salt pored wounds,
 Broken memories hitting the shore of my
 heart,

heart,

As the months and years go by,
 I don't feel the stab from the blade of a torn
 family and life,
 But only a numb, dim feeling of life
 unlive! things regretted,

My roots, my family left behind in a hidden
 garden in my heart.

Demi Wolfgren, sophomore



Elisabeth Havinga, sophomore

Carpe diem with Felix Dias

The newest musical sensation moves out of WS and onto bigger and better places in Fairfax

By Cam Rushton

Sports Editor

In Latin, the phrase "felix dias" means happy birthday. However, at WS, the phrase has a somewhat different meaning.

WS's newest musical sensation, Felix Dias, is a hand composed of seniors Blake Lewis, Eric Highfill, Esther Erbe and Leoncarlo Canlas. The four members are best known by the student population as the band that welcomed everyone into the main gym for the winter pep rally with soothing riffs and a catchy tune. "[Playing at the pep rally] was a good opportunity because it gave us more attention," said Highfill.

At the beginning of the year, Lewis, Highfill and Canlas had an idea to create a band, but decided they needed a bassist. Thus, Erbe joined the trio to create the Felix Dias that the school knows today.

"The good thing is we have two really good, professional players [Erbe & Canlas] that help out the sound of the band a lot," said Lewis.

Since their formation, Felix Dias has not run short of gigs to perform and shows to appear in. Most recently, the quartet performed at Jammin' Java on Sunday, January 21.

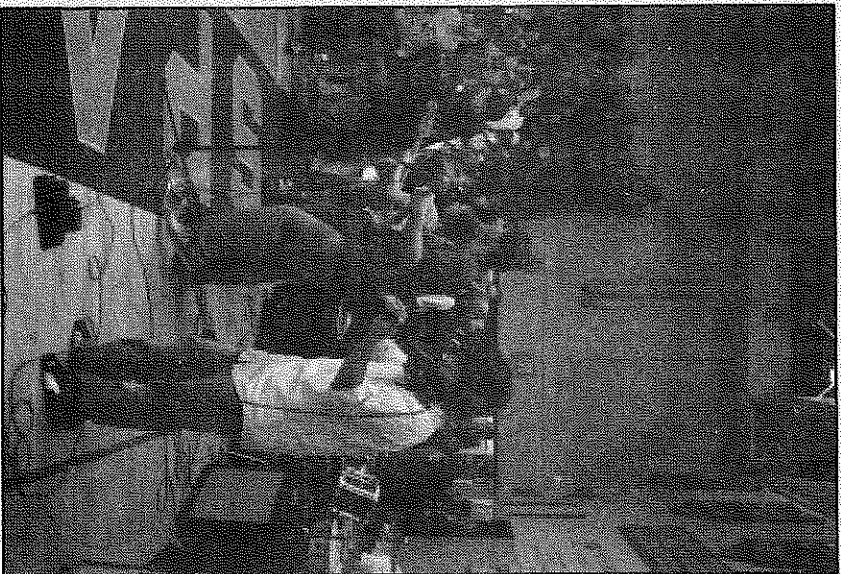
"The good thing is we have two really good, professional players [Erbe & Canlas] that help out the sound of the band a lot."

—Blake Lewis, senior

"The best part about playing in a band are the ladies and the dancing," said Lewis.

However, the most exciting show, according to the band, is still in formation and will not be unveiled until it is perfected.

"We are planning a joint cooperation with the Fun Bunch," said Lewis. "It is going to be epic."



Hilary Clitherhead

Felix Dias played at the winter pep rally while the students found their seats. Now they have graduated from playing at high school shows to shows at more popular spots, such as Jammin' Java.

Abercrombie outshines the rest

The hottest place to shop becomes hottest place to work

By Sunnie Ko

Senior Staff Writer

Abercrombie is no longer just a place where students at WS shop.

Starting this year, a surplus of juniors and seniors have been getting jobs at Abercrombie and Fitch in Fair Oaks mall. Abercrombie and Fitch have two departments: "Fitch" which targets adults, and "Abercrombie," which sells clothes for juniors and children.

Students who want a job with the franchise and are under the age of 18 must work at Abercrombie.

Working at A & F has perks that draw students into working there.

"There are pretty good discounts," said senior Kevin Quinn. "The clothes are expensive so it's a plus."

Quinn works at the children's branch along with senior Lauren Stephenson

who persuaded him to get the job.

Although the bonus of discounts comes with the job, there are also downsides.

Senior Emily Lambert worked at Abercrombie for a short amount of time before quitting.

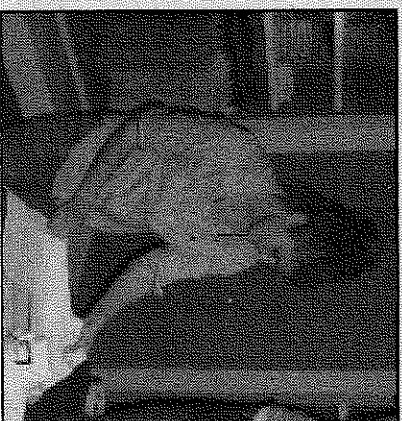
"I started working during the holidays when it was really hectic," said Lambert. "I guess it wasn't the best time to start working because it was so frustrating."

During the holiday, Abercrombie is especially busy with frantic shoppers.

"It would take forever to fold a whole display," said Lambert. "As soon as I was done, people came and just messed it all up."

Lambert, along with many of the other workers, did not go seeking employment but instead were recruited to work.

"I was just visiting a friend," said Lambert. "The manager just came up to



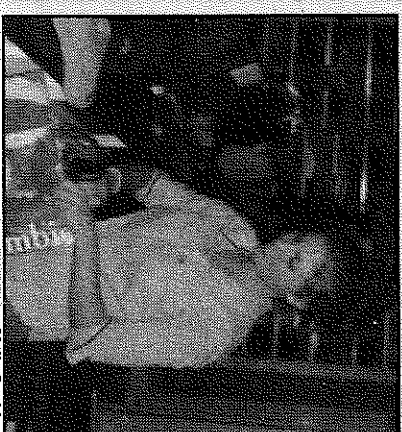
Molly Gushling

Senior Lauren Stephenson has been working as an Abercrombie model at Fair Oaks for a couple of months. She works at Abercrombie and Fitch, aimed at younger ages. She works both on the floor and at the cash register during her hours.

me and asked if I was interested."

Like many jobs offered to students, the pay is often seen as a downside.

The pay for working as a "model," a basic floor worker, is \$6.25 an hour at both branches. Many clothing store jobs, including Abercrombie's competitors, American Eagle and



Molly Gushling

Hollister do not pay as much as other jobs. Although the models get discounts, many have to spend it on clothing from their store, which they have to wear to work.

"The worst part is definitely the long hours and the pay," said senior Ben Street. "But it's worth it."

Top 5 in Kingstowne

The shopping center just keeps growing

By Carlin Sherrill & Andreaana Maxwell

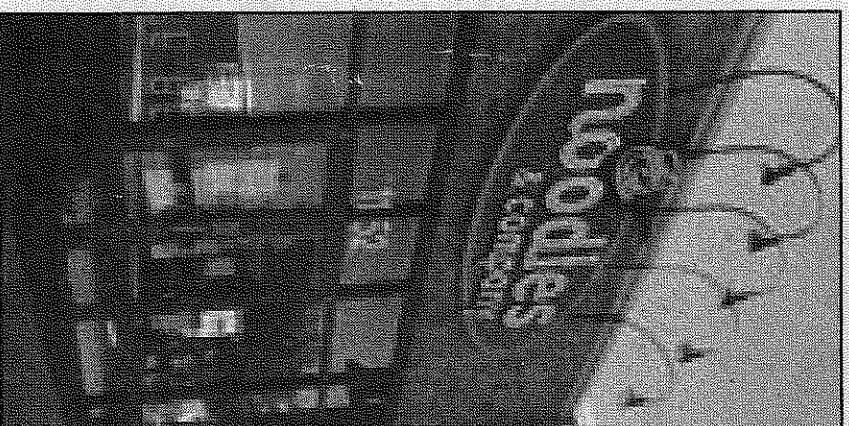
Senior Staff Writers

The infamous Kingstowne center has yet again impressed its visitors with new restaurants, stores and an overall ambiance that is sure to please. The continuous changes make this a haven for high school students, families and everyone in between. The most recent additions include a Noodles and Company and Johnny Rockets, both which share a building with the bustling movie theatre.

Those feeling like there is nothing to do in Springfield are in for a treat. Just moments away exists a growing area with plenty of fun activities to go around.

Top Five Things to Do in the New and Improved Kingstowne:

1. **Ready. Set. Devour.** Eat a big bowl of macaroni and cheese from Noodles and Company, an overly stuffed burrito from Chipotle and a made-to-order deli wrap from Panera, all in the same sitting.
2. **"Born to hand-five, baby."** Listen and sing along to the waiters singing random fifties songs every five minutes while you sip an enormous chocolate milkshake at Johnny Rockets.
3. **"Hit me with your best shot."** Take a break from the average mini-golf course and attempt your best swing at the high-tech Top Golf driving range.
4. **Lights. Camera. Action.** Race your friends through the maze of shrieking pre-teens clumped together outside of the movie theatre to see who can obtain their movie ticket and bucket of popcorn first. What follows, of course, is time to relax while enjoying the comfort of reclining movie seats and a new favorite movie.
5. **Shop 'til you drop!** See which one of your friends can find the cheapest outfit or goody gadget at Home Goods, TJ Maxx or World Market.



Daily Utah Chronicle

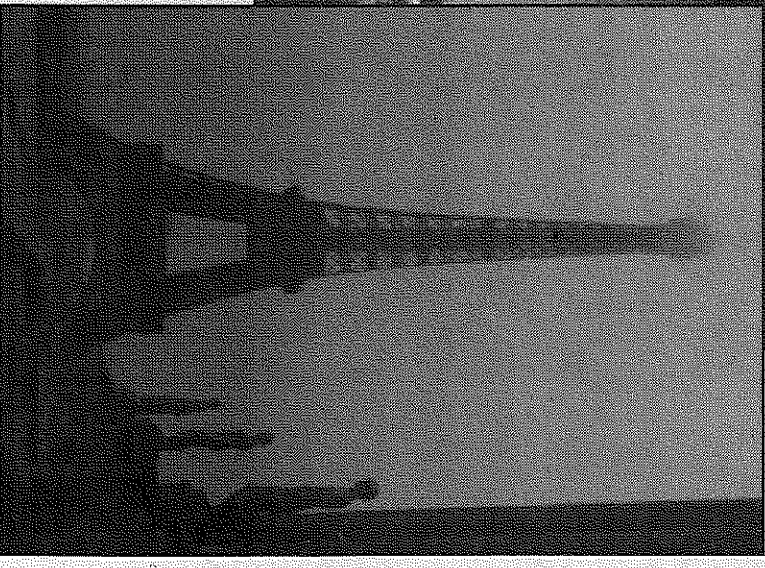
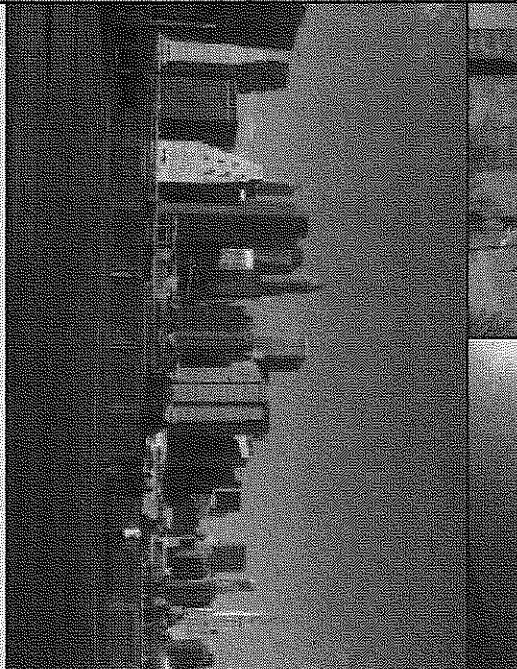
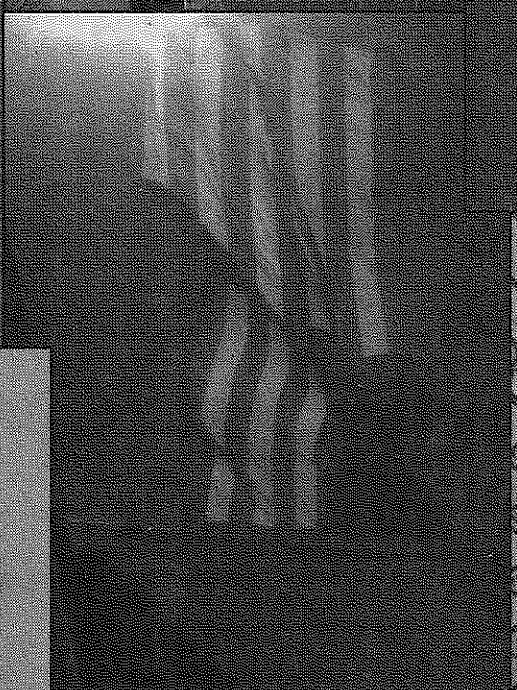
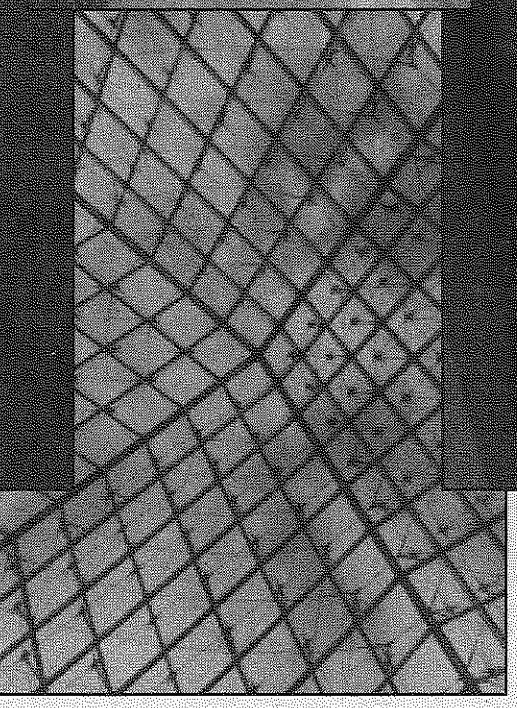
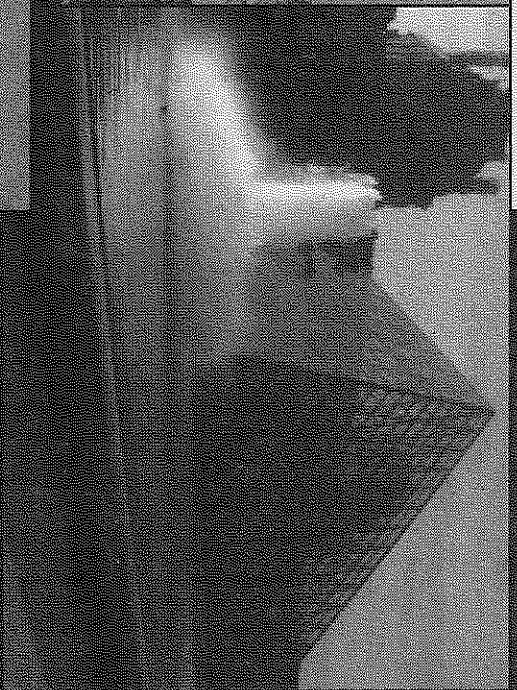
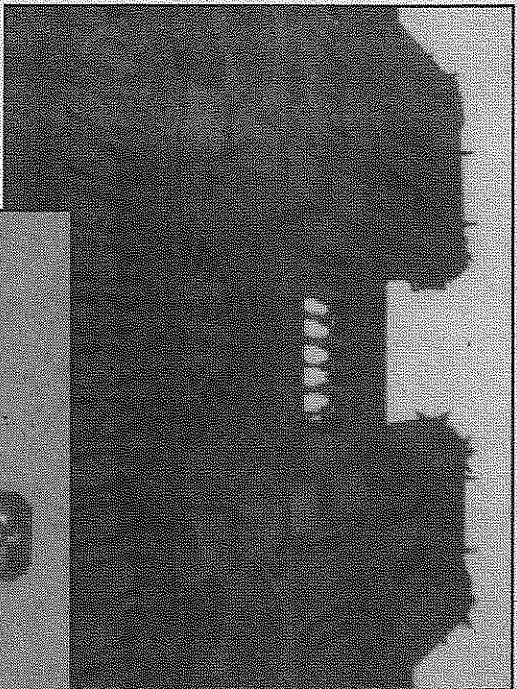
Although not yet open, the new Noodles and Company is going to be a huge hit at Kingstowne Shopping Center, mainly because it's the only one in the West Springfield radius.



Lauren Golf Center

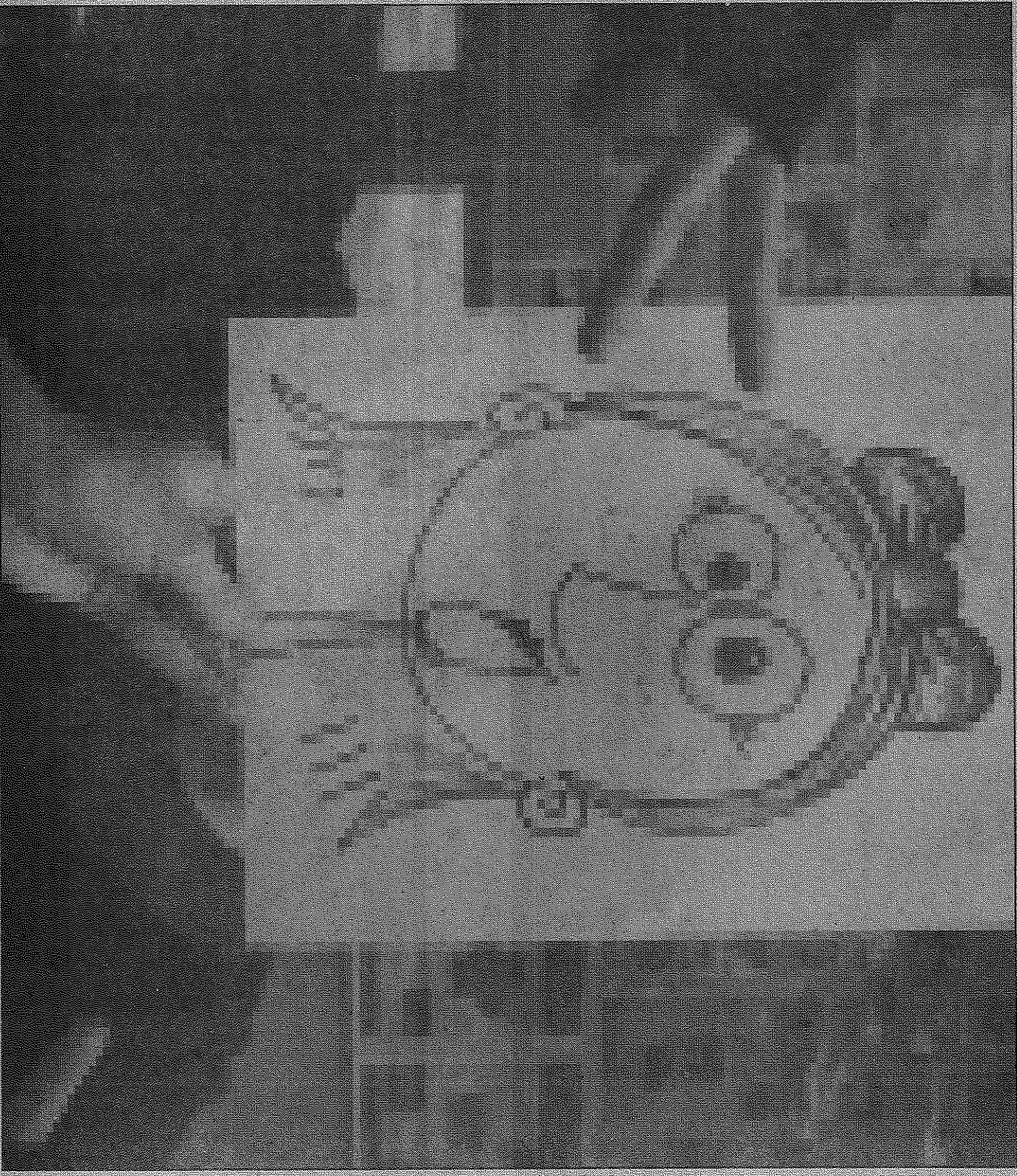
Top Golf, the new sports phenomenon, consists of technology that involves tiny sensors in a golf ball that track how far the ball travels.

Around the world and back...



By: Sara Kofalt

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Molly Cushing

Spartan Spotlight:

Julie Lukeman Senior, Track and Field

By Ariane Irvine
Senior Staff Writer

How long have you been doing track?
"Four years. I started winter season of my freshman year."

Why did you start?
"My sister ran track in high school and said that it was a good way to meet people."

What's your favorite event?
"Discus, because it's all about technical things, so you just have to learn a technique to do well."

Do you think you're going to continue in college?
"Probably not. I plan on doing more music."

What do you like about track?
"Definitely the people. You can hang out and socialize, but you get a workout at the same time."

Have you won any awards or broken any records?
"No, I have a varsity letter for discus, though."

What else do you like to do?
"I like to do music. I sing in my church choir and I play the cello."

Did you have any goals for track?
"Not really, I just try to improve a little at each meet."

What kinds of things does the team do to bond?
"Just last week we played ultimate Frisbee, and meets are also a good time to hang out, because we're all stuck there."

Do you have any advice for someone who wants to join track?
"I'd say definitely do it. It seems hard at first, but the friends you get and the work ethic you learn make it worth it."

Swim and dive team splashes into second place at districts

By Stephanie Aguilar
Features Editor

During the teacher work days in the last week of January, while some students were sleeping in or going over to friends houses, the WS swim and dive team competed in their district meets at Lee District.

Before the meets, the boys team closed out their season with a phenomenal 7-0 record, while the girl's team finished with a 6-1 record. Both teams placed second at districts, each behind the Lake Braddock Bruins.

"We did as best as we could but apparently we didn't have the depth we thought we had," said senior captain Billy Coffey.

Coffey swam the 4 x 100 freestyle relay and qualified for the regional meet along with juniors Andrew Brian and Austin Clark, sophomore Cory Chamberlin, and fellow senior Trey Hagy, who qualified for regionals in the 200 IM and both the regional and state meet in the 100 breaststroke. The boy's 4 x 50 medley relay also qualified.

While the boys were undefeated in the regular season, the girls team lost to the school's top rival, Lake Braddock. Despite the fact many swimmers on the girl's team had made it to regionals.

Sophomore Alex Sieracki qualified in the 500 yard and 200 yard freestyle, sophomore Lindsey Gregg qualified for the 500 freestyle, Mary Ashley Krogh qualified in the 50 yard free and 100 yard backstroke, and both the girl's 4 x 50 free and 4 x 100 free relays qualified.

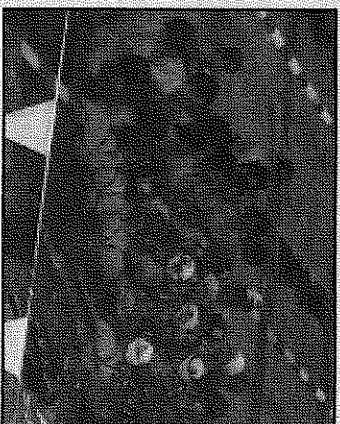
"I dropped time in both of my events, but I didn't qualify," said sophomore Megan Collier, who swam the 50 yard and 100 yard free.

Another team member, freshman Christie Fabish, swam backstroke at the district meet.

"I think I could've done a lot better," said Fabish. "But I think both the boys and the girls teams did really well."

Overall, both the boy's and girl's teams had a successful season. Throughout the seven meets before districts, the boys team went undefeated. The girls were close, with just one loss. Although the second place finish was not the same as last year's first place finish for the boy's team, each team closed out a very good season.

With the regional meet on February 2nd and 3rd and the state meet the week after, the swim and dive teams have a lot of time left and much to look forward to. "Our kids will do what is best for the team," said swim and dive coach Karen Spooner. "I'm very proud of that."



Sarah Wink
The swim and dive team prepares to cheer before a meet vs. South County

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Spartan Spotlight: Alexa Czajkowski, Gymnastics

By Cam McCallum
Assistant Sports Editor

How long have you been doing gymnastics?

"I guess most of my life, I can't remember a time when I wasn't doing gymnastics."

What's your favorite event and why?

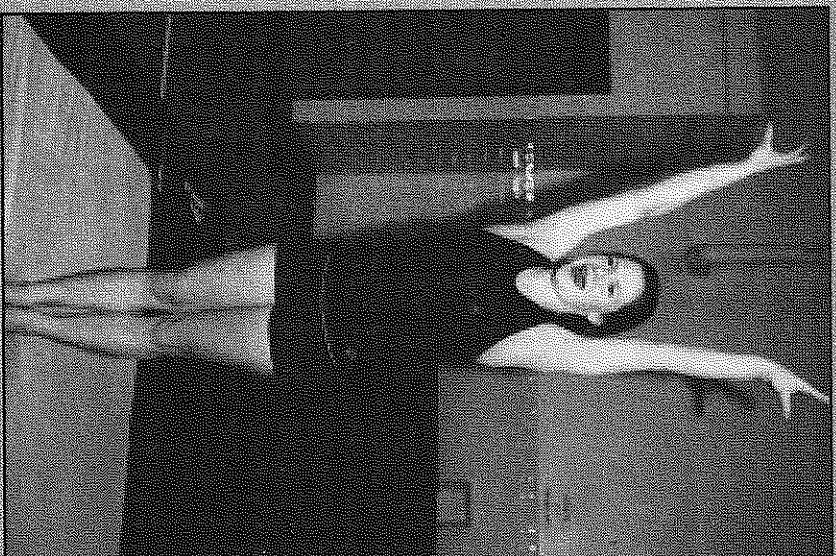
"Balance beam, I guess because I've been doing it the longest."

How does high school gymnastics work?

"It's a lot different than club, but it's basically just a few smaller competitions. It's pretty laid back."

What's the best part of the team aspect of high school gymnastics that you wouldn't get from competing individually?

"Definitely the support from your teammates. It's great having everyone look out for each other."



LifeTouch

How has the season gone up to this point?
"The team's done really well so far. Regionals are coming up soon, so everyone should come out and watch us."

Which makes you more proud, an individual win or a team win?

"I have to say a team win for obvious reasons. They both feel pretty great."

What's the off season like in gymnastics?

"There really isn't an off season. High school is only in the winter, but I do club year round. Club's a lot more serious and pretty demanding."

What's one thing difficult about gymnastics that other sports can't compare to?

"Mental blocks for sure. You get to something like a new routine, and you have to master it, but you can't, and it gets really frustrating. Other sports don't have that kind of thing."

If there's one thing you think the rest of WS should know about gymnastics, what would it be?

"It's a lot more complicated than it looks. Success doesn't come easy."

Junior gymnast Alexa Czajkowski gets ready to practice her routine.



Dave McGregor

Forget shampoo! Eighth graders are conditioning

By Jimmy Bradshaw

Sophomore Staff Writer

Coaches have always wanted the extra edge over other teams. Now they can. Football and lacrosse programs have created an opportunity for eighth graders to condition with the teams during the off-season.

Since he arrived at WS, Varsity football coach Bill Renner has allowed Irving students to train with the team.

"I believe in order to get the results needed, you first need to train these young kids," said Renner. "If you don't prepare them early they won't be ready come September."

The football team prides themselves on the work they do in the off-season, and with eighth graders already in the weight room and interacting with coaches, it will only help them succeed come the beginning of the season, believes Renner.

The evidence of the off-season work is on a big white board which tracks all the strength, agility and running records held for current and former players.

"The people whose names are up there are well respected, and are incentives for others to get faster and stronger," said Renner.

Lacrosse also allows students from Irving to participate in their off-season

practices. This is the first year that Freshman Varsity Head Coach Chris Bengel has allowed the younger players to participate with the high school. The lacrosse team has conditioning three days a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

"Other schools in our district have been doing this [having eighth graders train with high school students] and we believe that if we do it to it will only benefit to the success of our program," said Bengel.

Freshman lacrosse goalie, throws the ball out of the crease during a tournament in December. His substitute was an eighth grader from Irving.

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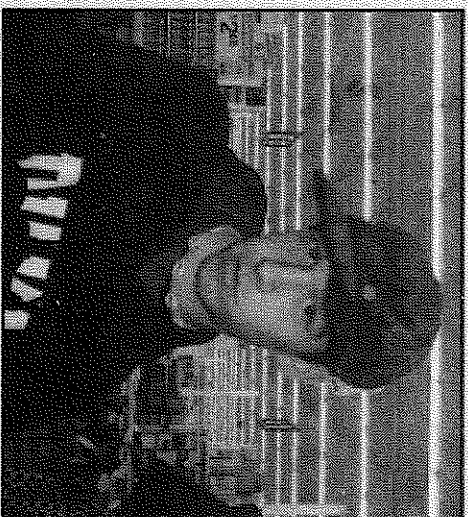
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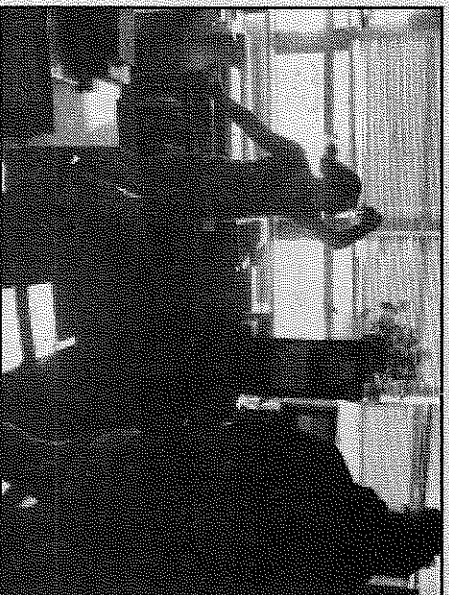


10. Because sometimes you get to climb the walls.

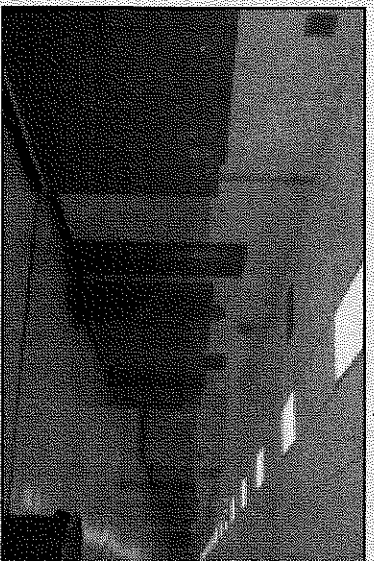
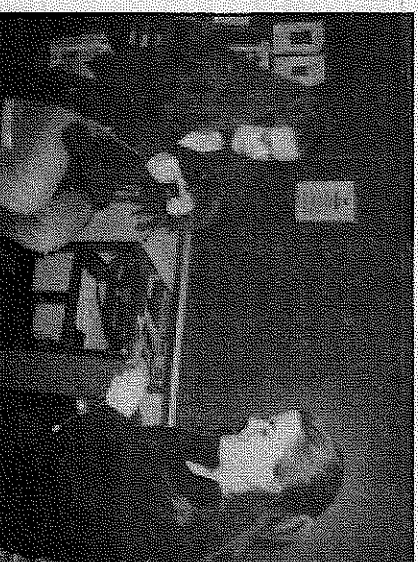


9. Because you get to wear your hat in class.

8. Because we like to dance and have a lot of fun.



7. Because knitting needles are not required.



6. Because you get to wander the halls aimlessly.

But seriously, folks...

- 5. Because colleges like to see Journalism electives on your transcripts.*
- 4. Because your verbal SAT scores have a good chance of going way, way up.*
- 3. Because your grade is based on participation, so you'll get a good grade while learning a lot.*
- 2. Because you'll know EVERYTHING that's going on in the school.*
- 1. And most of all—it's SO MUCH FUN!*

Oracle Questionnaire

What present would you least like to receive for Valentine's Day?



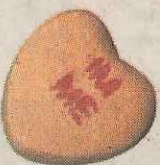
"Pictures of yourself that you didn't realize someone was taking."

—Mike Mukai, Senior Administrator



"Girls' underpants, because I prefer boxers."

—Chris Prohoda, sophomore



"Socks, because they're stinky and smelly. They're not really from the heart because they go on the feet."

—Laura Marts, senior



"Candy underwear; that's kind of weird."

—Nikki Anderson, sophomore



—Compiled by Rebecca Naramore

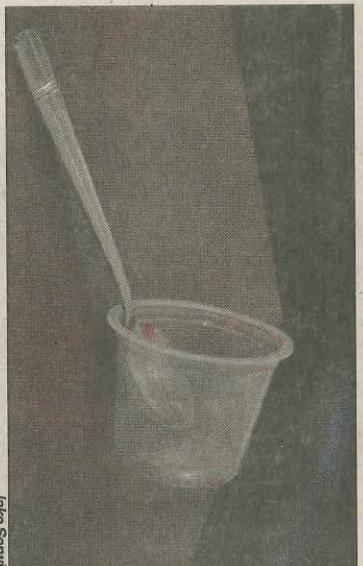
Jake Disagrees
Rules for the adolescent houseguest

By Jake Serwin
ETC. Editor

There are simple ways not to be an idiot when you are a guest in someone's house. The fork always goes on the left, boys should always open doors for girls, we should always say "please" and "thank you" and belts should match shoes whenever possible.

These neat little imperatives are just as pertinent to toddlers as they are to ninety-year-olds (though when I was a toddler, you were lucky to get me to wear pants, let alone a belt and coordinating shoes). For a few years in between, however, some more rules come into play.

Adolescent Houseguest Rule Number One: Jello belonging to the host is not to be consumed without explicit written or spoken permission. This is a very personal concern for me. Nearly all of my regular guests have violated this rule, which should be common sense. There is one in particular, whom I have so graciously chosen not to name, who breaks it every time he comes over. He knows who he is, and he now knows why I



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Eating jello without permission and leaving socks in appropriate places are direct violations of the rules. Eating the bristles off his toothbrush with my toenail clipper.

Adolescent Houseguest Rule Number Two: Any and all socks left behind after a social gathering and not collected within 48 hours are the rightful property of the residents of the house in which they are forgotten. Depending on the degree of odor emanating from said socks, they may be used as either footwear or as kindling by their new and rightful possessors. Once again, this shouldn't have to be addressed, but it happens every day and it must be stopped.

Rule Number One: Jello belonging to the host is not to be consumed without explicit written or spoken permission.

Adolescent Houseguest Rule Number Three: The host's or hostess's mother/female guardian is not to be referred to as "dude." Rule Number Three applies equally to the terms "sir," "dog," "papa bear" or "hey,



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food lady." Fathers/male guardians should likewise never be called "ma'am" or "honey." It is best to refrain from breaking Rule Number Three within your own family as well. If your family is anything like mine, your noncompliance will result in your re-staining the deck with your face.

Adolescent Houseguest Rule Number Four: Do not prank your host or hostess during his/her slumber. Guests are perfectly acceptable targets for pranks by the host — they can always get back at you the next time they are hosting. It is completely unacceptable, however, to rouse me from my sleep in my own home with the stench on my pillow of a waste product that came out of my own dog. That is a true story that is not to be reenacted under penalty of heavy smacking. **Adolescent Houseguest Rule Number Five: The bathroom fan is in there for a reason.** No further explanation is required.

Just cut out this list and carry it in your wallet (along with any illustrations you wish to add), and you should be everyone's favorite 13- to 18-year-old houseguest in no time. You might also want to remind ninety-year-olds about the fan, though.

FEBRUARY '07

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9 Girls Varsity Gymnastics Regional Meet @ Lake Braddock 6:00 PM	10 Track Districts @ Episcopal High School 7:30 AM	11 International Friendship Month	12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday	13 Girls Basketball Districts @ Hayfield Time TBA	14 Valentine's Day School starts three hours late	15 National Sea Monkey Day
16 National Heart to Heart Day	17 Girls Basketball Districts Finals @ Hayfield Time TBA	18 Chinese New Year	19 Presidents Day No School	20 Girl's Basketball Regional Quarters Time TBA	21 National Engineering Week	22 AP Parent Night @ WS 7:00 PM