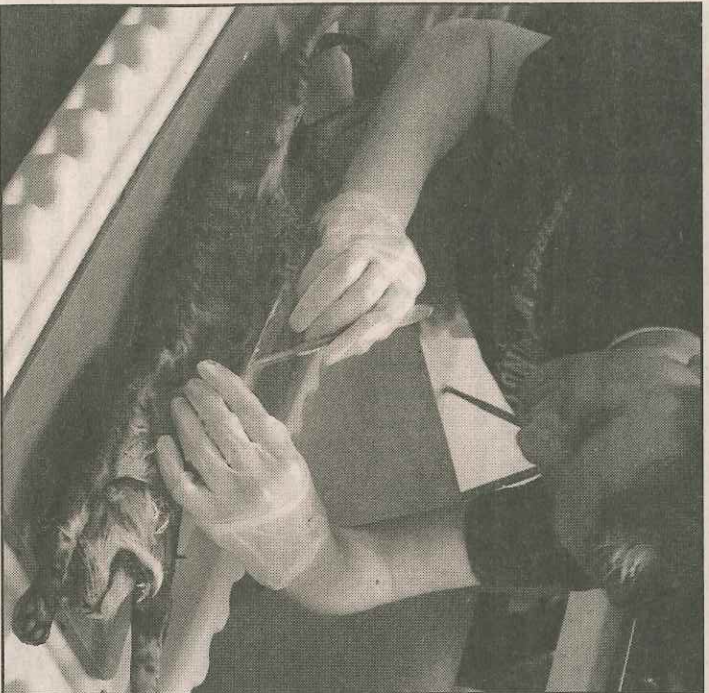


THE ORACLE



March 9, 2007 Volume 43 Number 13

West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152



Libby Bursley

Senior Jonathan Blaylock dissects a cat in his Anatomy class.

Student activist wants the cats out of the bag

By Libby Bursley
Oracle Editor

Students' curiosity killed the cats.

To go more in depth while learning about the body systems, the WS anatomy classes choose to dissect cats, providing a different view than the Frogs Biology classes dissect. Although neither of these animals is county mandated, cats have always been used.

"A cat is a larger vertebrate, so you can see better," said

anatomy teacher Susan Kinsley. "They are closer to human size."

Although some students become squeamish around the cats, others think that this is an important part of the class.

"It is important to be able to apply what we learn in class, and dissection is the best activity to do that," said senior Jonathan Blaylock.

Until this year, there had been no problems regarding the dissections. Each year students who take the class are offered the option of opting out of that

part of the unit. The dissecting is only done to provide a more hands-on approach to what has already been learned in the textbook.

The day before the students would start to skin the cats, Kinsley was surprised when she was approached by a senior who was not in her classes about the subject.

Senior Lewis Carrera decided to start a petition against the use of cats.

"Cats are household pets," said Carrera. "People love them. See CATS on Page 5.

Gibson's 'Hypnosis' entrances audiences

Hypnotist makes appearance at WS

By Zohra Alnoor
Senior Staff Writer

From a one dollar kissing booth to a formal dinner, there are many ways for clubs, schools and all-female singing groups to earn money.

The members of WS Pizazz have taken the term "fundraiser" to a whole new level.

On February 23, hypnotist Jimi Gibson performed his renowned "Hypnosis" show for eight dollars a ticket to the eager WS community.

"People are having a really big interest in it," said senior Caitlin Baker before the show, who is also a member

Pizazz plans on using the money to help members pay for their spring trip to Disney World.

"We're also going to use the money for new performance uniforms," said junior Elise Shellenberger.

At "Hypnosis" Jimi Gibson chose 15-20 volunteers from the audience. After the volunteers got on stage, he hypnotized them for five to seven silent minutes.

Afterwards, the audience laughed and applauded, as the volunteers were hypnotized into doing outrageous things from talking to a shoe to thinking they were Victoria's Secret models.

Senior Nahid Jahed, one of the See HYPNOSIS on Page 4.



Beth Clapsadle

Participants in the "Hypnosis" show fell asleep on the command of Jimi Gibson.

Government classes rock the right to vote

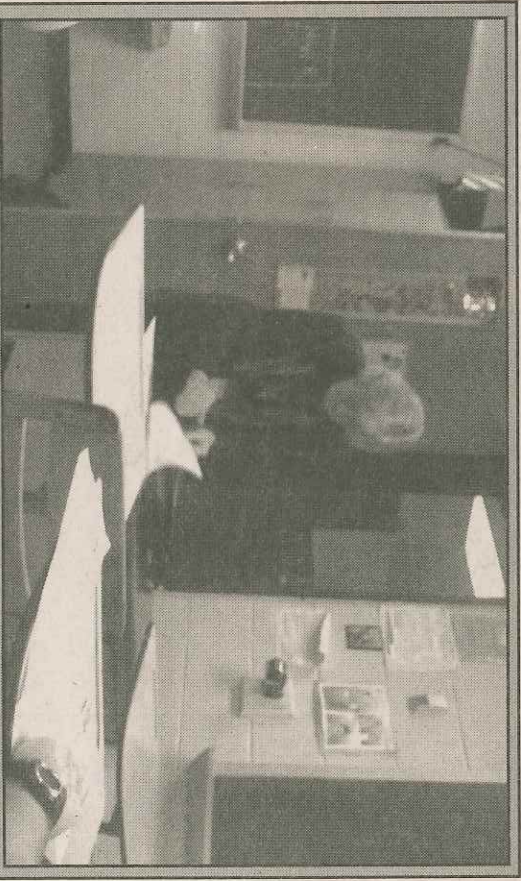
By Jordy Servin
Oracle Editor

The senior class registered to vote during their government classes between January 29 and 30. Teachers took time out of regular classroom instruction for a representative from Fairfax County's General Registrar to explain the voter registration process and assist students in filling out the registration application. Upon successful completion of the required form, each student was given a voter

registration receipt to which a colorful sticker reading "your vote is your voice" was affixed.

While registration opportunities do exist outside of school, registering as part of a government course carries certain appropriateness. Government teacher Martin Kaltenbaugh, who was in charge of providing registration for students, believes having students register in such an environment is important.

See VOTING on Page 4.



Colin Embrey

Mary Field, a representative from the Fairfax County Office of Elections, helps seniors register to vote in their government class.

Students anticipate raise in wages.



Friends to take a European escapade.



Boys reach final four with disappointment.

WS has got the fever!

So – one day, you wake up and you're deathly ill. Nothing would make you happier than to curl back up in bed and try to keep the room from spinning.

Unfortunately, you've got AP classes you have to go to, so you come to school – along with all your new little germy friends that are using your body as their sole form of transport. Or at least, they will until they get to school.

Editorial

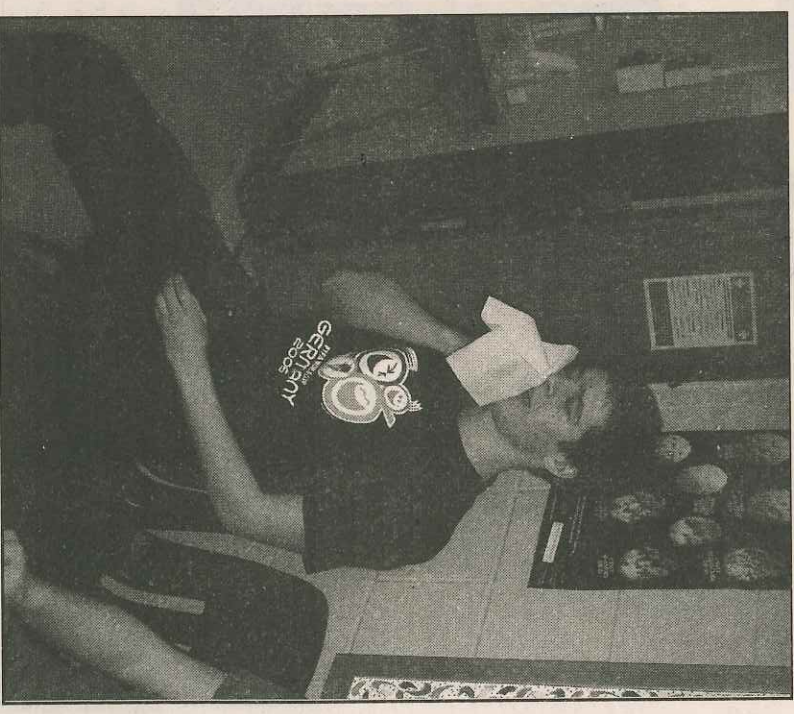
Then they'll use your hacking cough, dribbling nose, and questionable hygiene in order to jump to all your friends, teachers, and classmates. They'll probably end up infecting a lot of innocent bystanders who just happened to walk within

twenty feet of you. Then all of *them* will have to come to school sick so they can make up their work. Eventually everyone in the whole school will be just as sick and miserable as you. It'll be all your fault.

There's an easy way to make sure you don't miss anything when you're out – it's called *Blackboard*. If you've been in this school for more than a few days, you should know what it is. It makes it really easy to get your assignments and even get in contact with your teachers if you needed. You can sit in comfort at home with some chicken soup and finish all your work without having to infect anyone, or even having to leave your room.

So no matter what your little germy friends tell you, make sure to keep them home. They're not your real friends, anyway.

Your *real* friends are the ones that you don't want to infect with whatever disgusting disease you've managed to pick up.



Senior Sam Hart blows his nose in the Clinic after being excused from class. The Kleenex prevents the spread of sickly germs.

Payday comes with a raise

By Lindsay Bruhn
Senior Staff Writer

Money doesn't buy happiness...but it does buy insurance, cell phone bills, food, gas and clothing for teenagers at WS.

"It bothers me that a state that is as affluent as Virginia is still paying people Third World wages," Delegate Vincent F. Callahan (R-Fairfax), one of the strong supporters of the minimum wage bill in congress, said. "You can't support a family on that."

Not only is a family not supportable, but simply surviving is difficult for students here. For an average student gas costs \$6,750 but if they work 40 hours per week, which most students don't, they would only have \$3,962 left for food and clothing. Not to mention, many students have to pay for car insurance.

Minimum wage in Virginia is currently \$5.15, and has been since 1997. Delegate Vincent F. Callahan Jr. (R-Fairfax) and Senator Charles J. Colgan (D-Prince William) proposed a bill that would raise the current minimum wage by \$1/hour on July 7 of this year and then a raise of \$1/hour a year over the next two years.

Sadly, for high school students and others with minimum wage jobs, the bill was killed on February 7.

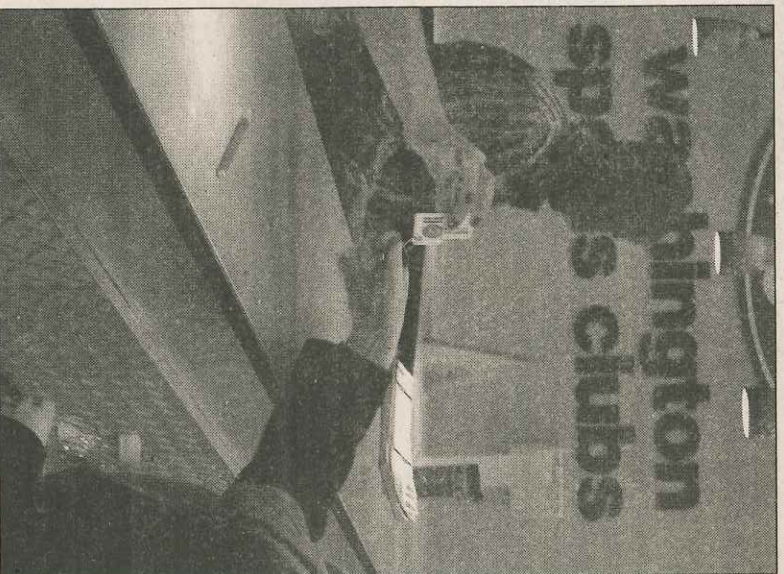
Now, the only thing to do is wait for the national bill which would ultimately raise the minimum to \$7.25/hour.

For many of us, minimum wage jobs are the best we can get. For those of us with cars, gas alone can be difficult to pay for not to mention cell phone bills, clothes and food. Now, of course there are some who are fortunate enough to have their parents pay for many things but for the less fortunate, our bank accounts are almost always empty.

Not only is a family not supportable [on minimum wage] but simply surviving is difficult for students

When I started working at a skate shop in Springfield I was paid just above minimum wage and worked about 24 hours a week. So per week I earned \$123.60 a week, leaving me \$13.90 short of keeping gas in my car. So without enough gas I can either quit my job and have no money or work more and have not time for homework. Thankfully, I am lucky enough to have a bit of help from my parents.

The senate bill, if passed, would make a big difference in the lives of students.



A minimum wage earning student hands a client her gym keys at the Washington Sports Clubs complex.

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The

ORACLE

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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. Editorials 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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Aaron Snow in the Know: Obama wins nomination for Senior Aaron Snow's heart

By Aaron Snow
Senior Staff Writer

Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois) burst onto the scene in July of 2004, delivering the keynote address to the Democratic National Convention. Today, just two years removed from his national debut, Obama is running for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States.

Obama is best noted for his reasoned eloquence and idealistic vision for the future. He brings renewed hope to the jaded political world and speaks with the voice of a younger generation.

Obama offers relief from the corruption and dishonesty that plague Washington, speaking with an openness that is rarely seen in politics. Perhaps the least polarizing figure in Washington, Obama seems

poised to usher in a new era of American politics. Obama has, however, drawn some criticism over the past few months.

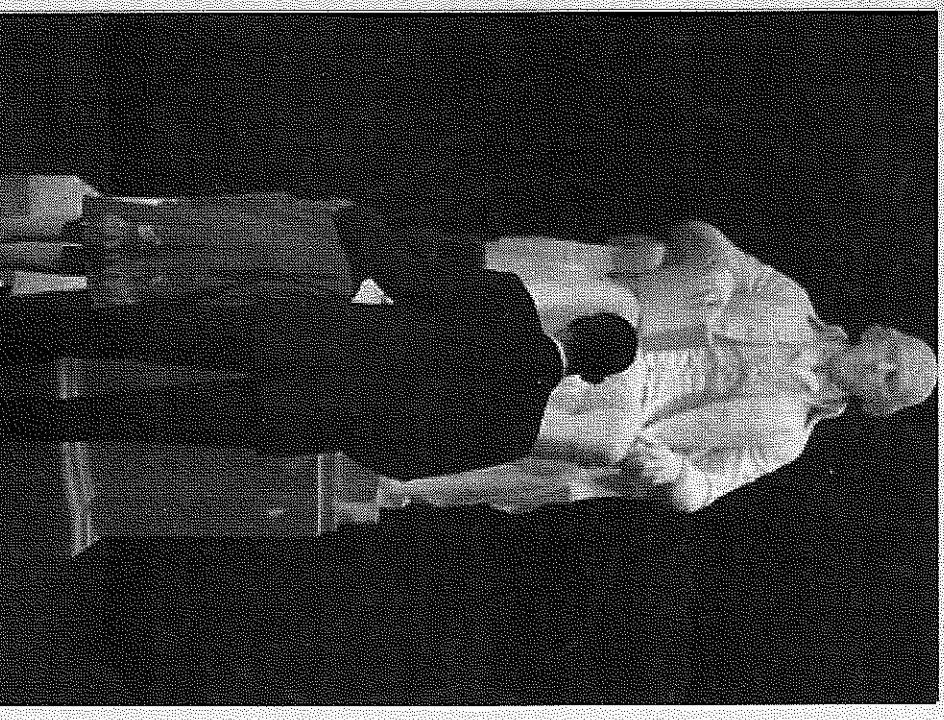
As Obama has ascended from a relative unknown to the Democratic poster child, conservatives across the country have delighted in pointing out that Obama's middle name is Hussein. They seem to feel, for whatever reason, that this somehow makes Obama unfit for the presidency. It is shocking that, what is essentially racism still exists in the minds of so many Americans. Obama's name has absolutely no relevance in his ability to govern our nation, and any suggestion otherwise should be viewed as offensive to Muslims everywhere.

Furthermore I would like to aid in discrediting the shameful report by Fox News that Obama attended an Islamic school

teaching intolerance, hatred, and fundamentalist ideas to children. This report was in fact false. Obama attended a secular public school in Indonesia which in no way advocated any form of Islamic dogma. Fox News should apologize for allowing their right wing agenda to get in the way of responsible journalism.

There is one major criticism of Obama, however which is more credible. Obama is very inexperienced. Serving only his second year in the Senate Obama may lack some of the knowledge held by veteran politicians. It is important to have not only great ideas, but also the experience to govern a nation. Perhaps Obama's gifts would be better utilized further in the future.

It is my opinion that while experience is important, Obama is by far the most qualified



Paté Souza
Crowd favorite Senator Barack Obama visits the statue of James Madison at the Library of Congress with his daughter Malia.

candidate for President. His reach across party lines set him strong convictions, willingness on an entirely different tier from to act on them and ability to all other candidates.

Internet resources melt snow days

By Jordy Serwin
Oracle Editor

Looking back on the succession of snow days, I realize that technology has extinguished a small portion of my childhood. I used to long for snow days and all their possibilities for play and merriment. Now, snow days mean nothing more than work.

Blackboard.com and student email enable students and teachers to share information more efficiently and effectively than ever before.

Before Blackboard and student email, no school meant no homework. After all, homework was given out at school. If we couldn't physically go to school to receive homework, we wouldn't have homework to complete.

Back in the day, I could wake up late on snow days and smile at the thought

that I was safe at home, away from school and its homework-giving possibilities.

Now, however, thanks to Blackboard and email, I don't get to wake up late and not only will I have homework, I may actually have more than I would have if I'd gone to school.

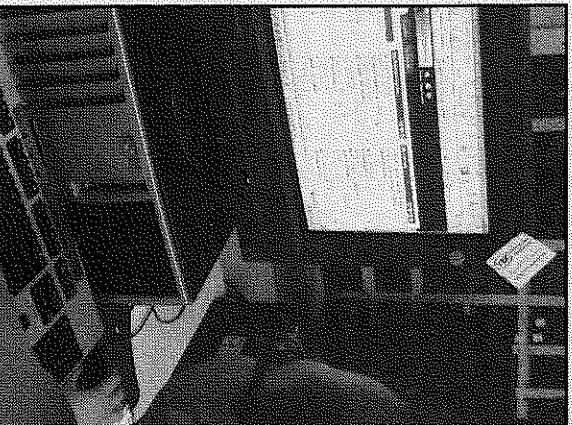
Blackboard and student email obliterate the fun of snow days.

AP teachers seem to seize the opportunity to give homework when school is closed more often than other teachers do. I understand that AP test dates don't change because of snow days, but students who choose to take on more difficult courses deserve to use their snow days to relax, as do those

who teach more difficult courses.

A majority of AP classes require students to take notes on what they read in their textbooks as homework to prepare for class lectures the next day. When teachers assign reading on snow days, students get ahead of their teachers in the material. Syncing back up is frustrating for all involved, and can require multiple class periods after school resumes to complete. If, however, both students and teachers take a break from the material while school is out, everyone will be on the same page and will benefit from the compulsory rest and relaxation.

Snow days used to mean sledding, snowball fights, hot chocolate and general immaturity without thought of school, homework, or other obligations. Blackboard and student email obliterate the fun of snow days.



Chrisy Regelski
Blackboard allows teachers to assign homework even on snow days.

Parental advisory at the games

By Sunnie Ko
Senior Staff Writer

You suck.

This familiar phrase can be heard all throughout a high school environment but, lately it hasn't just been hormonal teens spitting out this type of vulgarity.

Parents and other adults attending sporting events have become out of control in the bleachers. Fairfax County (and most other counties in the area) have a sportsmanship creed that players and spectators are supposed to abide by. Basically, it sums up to "cheer in a positive manner," meaning cheer for your team instead of *against* the other team.

Well, I am a two-season athlete and I have heard more screaming against my team by parents than I have in any of my four years of high school.

The basketball season is an intense and widely popular time of the school year. So, with an intense season comes intense games that call for intense fans. Intense is one thing. Crazy is another.

At the Lady Spartan Basketball Senior Night, you could hear "cheer battles" between the fans of WS and Lee. *Usually*, the screaming goes from our student section to the visiting school's student section but this time, we were screaming at a group of parents.

Now, I know what you may be saying. Kids will be kids, they will yell at anyone from the opposing school. But this time, we were defending ourselves from full-grown, (real job possessing) CEO, parents. Not only were these parents going crazy over the referee's calls, but they were also screaming at the players on the floor. There was even a bongo drum brought by an extreme parent, who played it (along with a tribal scream) during all of our free throws. Yes, that is very mature.

Sometimes parents are not yelling at the other team, but their own kids. I again use the example of a basketball game. I have heard parents scream at their kids for not making free-throws and for missing lay-ups and jump-shots and for fouling. They don't say things like "aw nuts" or "do better next time." Its more like "What the @*#& are you doing?" loud enough for the entire stadium to hear. It is embarrassing for the players, but also for the school to be represented like that.

I found this behavior humorous at first. Adults, who tell us not to be so loud, rude, and disrespectful act like this themselves. It puts a sour face on high school sports and what they are supposed to represent. Note to parents: if you find yourself about to pop a vein at your kid's game, remember, it's *just* a game.



Sara Kohli
This blurry photo, taken by a terrified Oracle photographer, is the only teatable evidence of Obnoxious High School Sports Parents in their natural habitat.

'Poetry Unplugged' debuts as new talent outlet for students

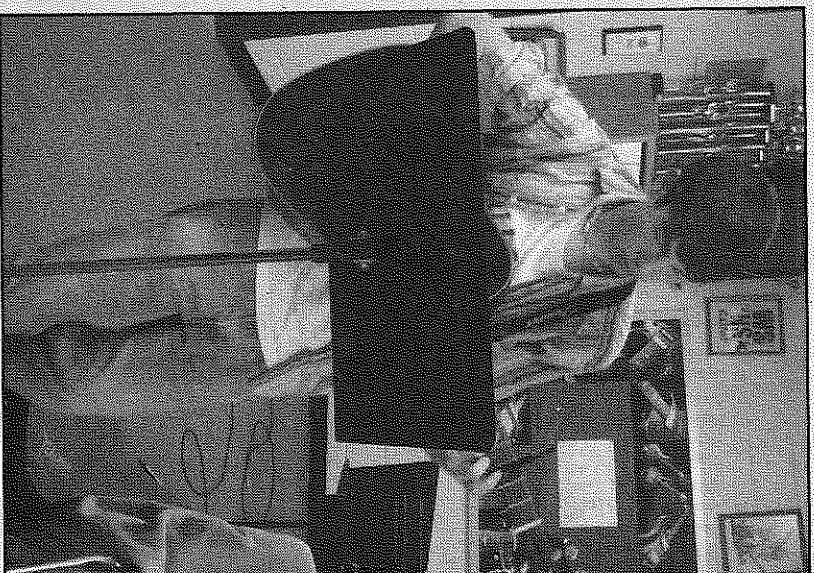
By Stephanie Aguilar
Features Editor

Hand-picked and possible future poets and guitarists are coming to Spartan Hall. Just as MTV Unplugged is a show for exposing guitar talents, Poetry Unplugged is a school-held activity showcasing the poetic and guitar skills of WS students.

On March 9, these forces will unite to bring WS a night of music and stanzas: Symposium, the literary magazine, and the Tri-M Honor Society. The process began with students submitting poems or auditioning with their acoustic guitars. The Symposium editors, along with the sponsors, picked the most talented students to perform.

"We read really good poems but unfortunately, not everyone could be picked," said senior Madha Nawaz, Senior Editor of the Symposium.

See **POETRY** on page 6.



Molly Cushing
Junior Paul Rowley prepares for his performance at Poetry Unplugged on March 9th in Spartan Hall.

Pizzaz sponsors 'Hypnosis' show; leaves viewers amazed, amused

HYPNOSIS from page 1. hypnotized volunteers of the night was not able to recall much of what she was asked to do that night before leaving the stage.

"All I remember was a bunch of people moving and shaking during one part, and my friends later told me that it was

because we were all pretending to be washing machines," said Jaded.

From trying to hide an imaginary \$100 dollar bill in an unlikely place on their body and suddenly finding that area unbearably itchy to smelling an amazing aroma coming from the peer sitting next to them

causing everyone to suddenly start hugging and smelling each other, the "Hypnosis" was a hit with students, staff, family and friends.

"Hypnosis" is not only a popular show, but hypnotist Jimi Gibson uses his hypnosis skills to also help people with their life problems like

losing weight, quitting smoking and playing better golf.

"It seems as though hypnosis can help anyone do anything," said junior Rana Zamani, who saw the 'Hypnosis' show for herself. "If he has a CD that'll help me in math, then I'd buy it in a second."

WS seniors register to vote in class

VOTING from page 1.

"Although there are other places [to register], what better setting than in a government classroom?" said Kaltenbaugh.

Those students who chose to register and met the necessary requirements of U.S. citizenship, reaching the age of 18 before the upcoming election in November, and knowing their social security number, experienced generally positive feelings about registering.

"[Registering] made me feel empowered," said senior Levi Dudge.

Others saw it as a step forward in their maturity. After all, the voting age of 18 coincides with the end of one's status as a minor.

"It made me feel like an adult," said senior Marianne Lindsay.

Other students kept registering in perspective, recognizing both its long term significance and short term rewards.

"It's exciting that I can actually participate in elections and the things we learn about in government class," said senior Lauren Hidalgo. "We also got sweet stickers for registering. No matter how old you are, stickers always make you feel good."

In general, 18 to 25 year olds participate in politics far less frequently than do the other age brackets. On the surface, simply getting citizens within this group to register to vote does little to alleviate their lack of participation. Perhaps registering has a far greater effect when held in government classes and the significance of the activity is amplified.

"This is my personal feeling," said Kaltenbaugh "but in the future I think the 18-to-25 age bracket will become more involved if they realize how issues affect them."

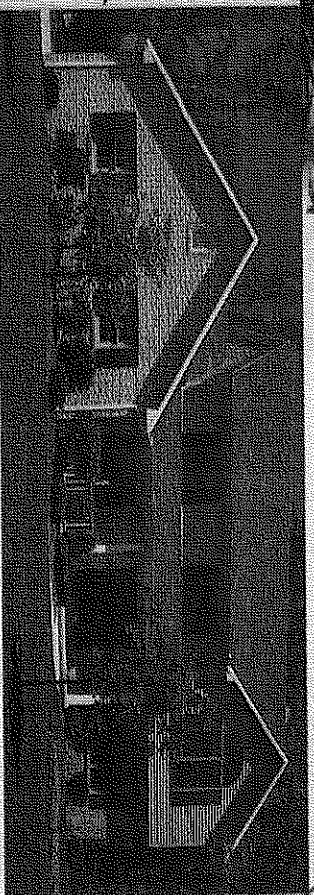
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Junior class preps for prom

The Class of '08 begins fundraising for their senior year

By Becky Coyer
Forum Editor

Prom is one of the most anticipated events in high school and the amount of participation from each class determines if their Prom will be in a fancy hotel or a cafeteria.

"We probably have a core of about 30 students who we can count on [to fundraise]," said junior class adviser and math teacher Beth Roop.

With help from the class council as well as a few volunteers, the junior class has raised just over \$7,000. This is a result of selling gift wrapping paper, thunder sticks, final four t-shirts, candy apples, raffling Redskins tickets at Spartanfest and most importantly collecting Glory Days receipts.

"Glory Days is a big thing that helps," said junior class president Giovanna Pino.

By collecting Glory Days receipts any day of the week other than Friday or Saturday and giving them to Beth Roop, Shannon Rapoza or any of the

junior class officers, 10% of the bill goes to the junior class. "Most people forget to get their receipts so sometimes we'll

go," said junior class vice president David Bae who occasionally goes to Glory Days with other class officers.

Along with some of the class officers, Roop is at Glory Days every Wednesday night for Wing Night with her family; she

always makes sure to get a copy of her receipt. Some juniors who help fundraise find it frustrating that many of their peers do not do their part.

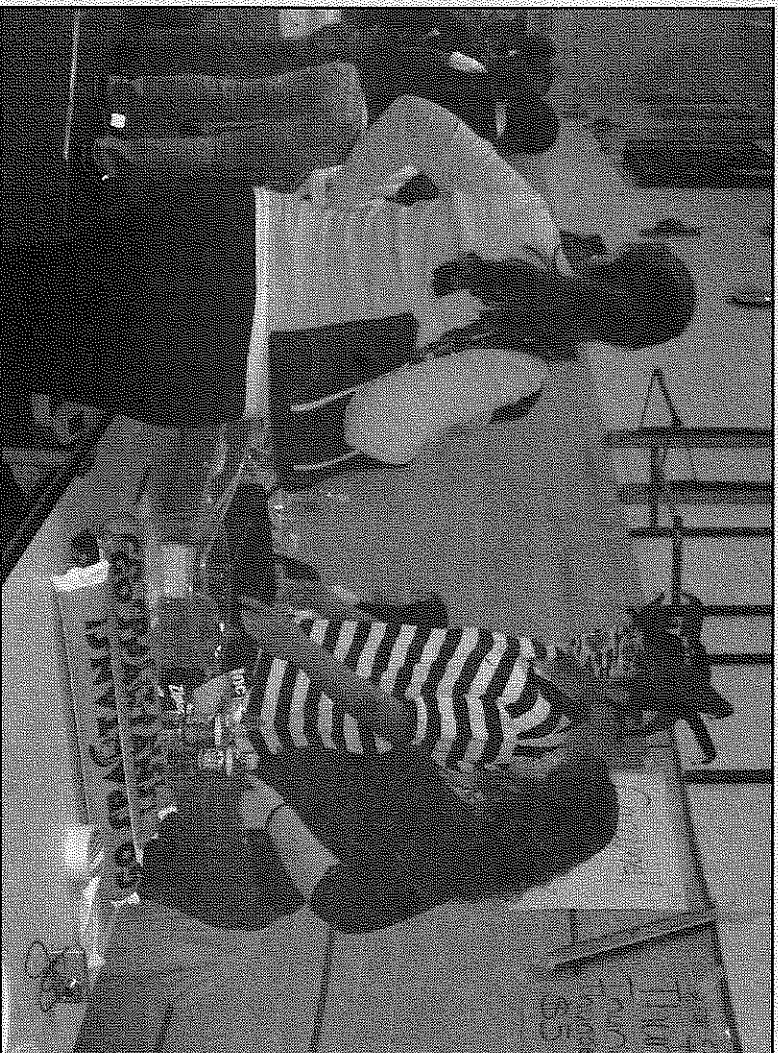
"They want a good Prom but they don't want to do what it takes to raise money," said junior Anna Yantz.

According to Roop it takes \$25,000 for a fun, fancy, and free Prom. With each ticket costing roughly \$25-50, the junior class is not too far from reaching their goal, yet still has a ways to go.

"We have a lot of plans for later and if people keep getting involved we'll be set for senior year," said junior class historian Katie Tinsley.

There are two car washes planned for June 2 and June 9 at the Walmart in Kingstovne for all of those willing to participate in supporting their class.

"Get involved and help raise money for our class," said Roop. "It's fun and it will help us to have a better Prom."



Juniors sold caramel apples and held a raffle to raise money for their class at Spartan Fest. *Sarah Kohler*

Students speak out against cat dissections

DISSECTION from Page 1. and treasure them. If [the petition] lets people know that there are a lot of people out there who don't agree with dissecting cats."

The petition is not to end the dissection process completely, but instead just to use a different animal other than cats. Before beginning to pass around his petition, he talked to Kinsley to try and explain why he was starting it.

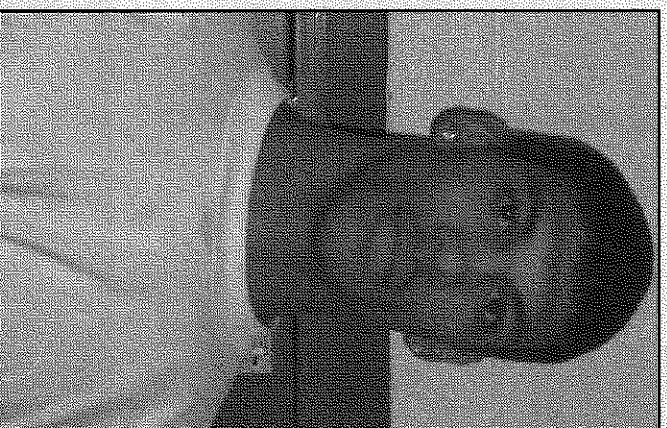
"He came to me, and was very polite and respectful," said Kinsley. "It was obvious that he was very bothered."

His petition has already gathered up signatures, and Carrera is deciding what to do next. This year, the dissections will continue.

"If the cats died by natural causes, then it's better," said Blaylock. "Humans donate their bodies to science all the time."

"Cats are household pets. People love them and treasure them. It [the petition] lets people know that there are a lot of people out there who don't agree with dissecting cats."

—*Lewis Carrera,*
senior



Libby Bursley
Lewis Carrera started a petition to try and stop cats from being dissected.



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Timber!!!!!!

Look out for pancake stacks and lumberjacks in new club

By Jake Serwin
ETC. Editor

A new club has taken root at WS.

The Lumberjack Club, brainchild of senior and "Head Jack" Meredith Luby, aims to celebrate lumberjack culture, specifically the jacks' favorite food – pancakes. Indeed, the only initial goal of the club, which meets biweekly on Thursdays, was the consumption of pancakes, but Luby decided to flesh out the idea to include the wearing of flannel, preferably plaid.

"I was also considering the 'Pancake Lovers' club," Luby said, "but that wasn't interesting enough. I have a deep love for flannel, and for pancakes."

To get the club approved, Luby needed a sponsor, which she found to be English teacher Jennifer Beach. Beach has experience sponsoring off-kilter clubs; she was once advisor to the "Asian Film Society," which had a sole purpose of watching kung fu movies after school. Beach's decision to sponsor the Lumberjacks was a simple one.

"I was not sponsoring anything else this year," Beach said.

The club's goals were the subject of much debate during the inaugural meeting. Among the activities planned are building with Lincoln Logs, hikes, a field trip (sans axes) to the National Arboretum, and a proposal (though unlikely) for maple syrup wrestling.

Despite the disagreements, all members approved the motion not to harm any trees.

"We're not going to chop down any trees because I think that's wrong," said Luby, "I'm kind of an environmentalist, and I just really like pancakes."

A more spirited argument concerned the term to use for the club's official food – pancakes or flapjacks. Senior and Flannel Vice President Sarah Mazzello is in favor of the latter.

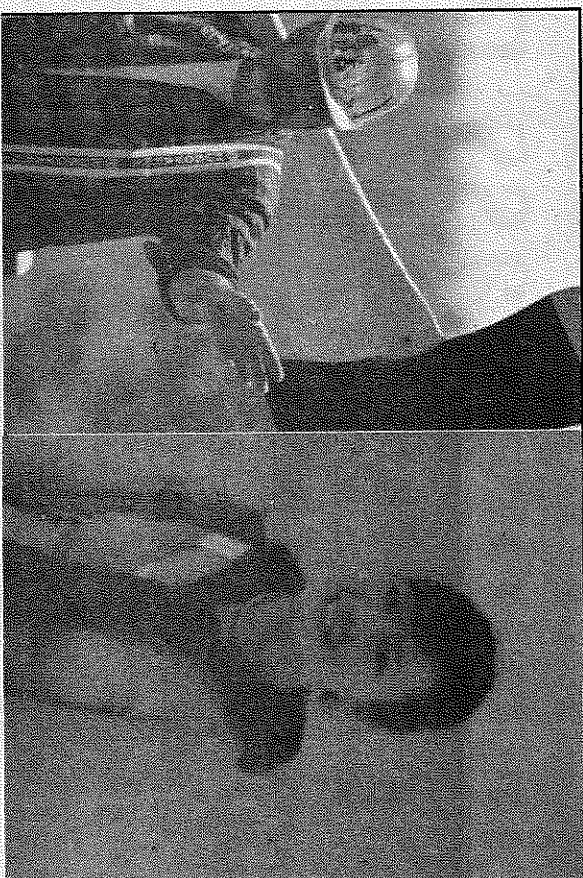
"We're absolutely calling them flapjacks," Mazzello said. "They are no longer pancakes."

Each of the club's members, like Mazzello, has his or her own position. Luby is "Head Jack," but there are Vice Presidents of Flannel and Maple Syrup, as well as an "Axemaster," whose duties have yet to be fully described.

The Lumberjack Club aims higher than syrup-swilling and log-rolling; there are plans for community service projects, as well. In keeping with the lumberjack theme, the club intends to collect blankets and Bisquick pancake mix to donate to the homeless.

Regardless of the group's eventual purpose, members are enthusiastic about the here and now. Like real lumberjacks, they are ready to adapt to any challenge, including starting a club with no precedent.

"It's not like anything is set in stone," Luby said, "I'm writing it on a piece of paper."



A Lumberjack (left) gets ready to chop down a large tree. Senior Meredith Luby (right) is pictured. She is the president of WS' new Lumberjack Club.

Molly Cushing

Unplug the poetry

POETRY from Page 4.

The main group in charge of Poetry Unplugged, Symposium, has been meeting every Thursday for the past month to plan out the occasion with the help of sponsors English teacher, Kathleen Majorski, English teacher Martha Beall, and music teacher, Amanda Ebst. There are also about four different committees, including the Steering Committee, which is involved in picking the performers, and the Publicity Committee that does the advertisements around the school.

"This is supposed to be the biggest event of the year and we're really hoping for it to be a success," said Navvaz.

So far there are 10 music acts and 25 poetry readings. Performing acts will include the quartet Take 4, guitarist Mollistar, and band, Felix Dias.

The cost of the presentation is \$3 in advance and \$5 at the door. There will be a Starbucks stand selling it's prestigious coffee and donated baked goods to raise money for the annual scholarship Symposium hands out at the end of each year.

"I think it's going to be an incredibly successful evening because the program is generated and planned by students for students," said Beall. "Music and poetry is the perfect combination for a perfect evening."

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Molly Cushing
Senior Jordan Hooper hopes the hole in his earlobe will grow big enough to fit a soda can.

A hole lot of piercings

Students experiment with unique ear fashion

By Bethel Habbe

News Editor

A friend of senior Jordan Hooper asked him what exactly was in his earlobe. He replied, nonchalantly, "five toilet paper tubes and a bottle cap."

Gauging, gradually forming a hole in the ear with a method similar to "Invisaline", is one type of piercing that students at WS experiment with.

Hooper plans on making his current bottom-of-a-Syrofoam-cup size hole as big as a soda can.

"I just want to be able to carry a drink in it," said Hooper smiling.

His parents never approved of his two year 'mission.' "They hate it. They think it's disgusting but they kind of gave up [on stopping me] though," said Hooper.

WS students try other, more conventional, ways of body piercing with protest or approval from parents.

Freshman Ummie Hasnain got her first earlobe piercing at age 3. The two doubles on each ear followed like dominoes years afterward and manifested with a cartilage piercing at age 12.

Hasnain explains that since her family is from Pakistan, "There're a lot of people who get their children's ears pierced at an early age."

Hasnain's seven piercings lining her earlobes and left cartilage have no real meaning in her culture, she "just like[s] earrings."

Sophomore Krissy Pistochini has yet to get any body part pierced.

"My mom set a certain age, like my birthday or something, when I'd get it done, but it just never happened," she said.

Pistochini insists that she's not afraid. "I'll probably [get them pierced] before I'm out of high school," she said.

A musical adventure overseas

By Kelly Sipple

News Editor

Seniors Jared Dumale and Jared Hornaday have been through a lot together. As best friends, they hang out all the time, but this summer, they are about to take on a whole new continent: Europe.

In an attempt to better their musical abilities, Dumale and Hornaday are taking their dream trip this summer. Even though they are unsure of where exactly they will be visiting, there is one event they are making sure they attend.

"We are going to the Open Air Festival in Wacken, Germany," said Hornaday. "It is one of the biggest Heavy Metal events and there will be everything from famous bands to unsigned local bands from all over Europe."

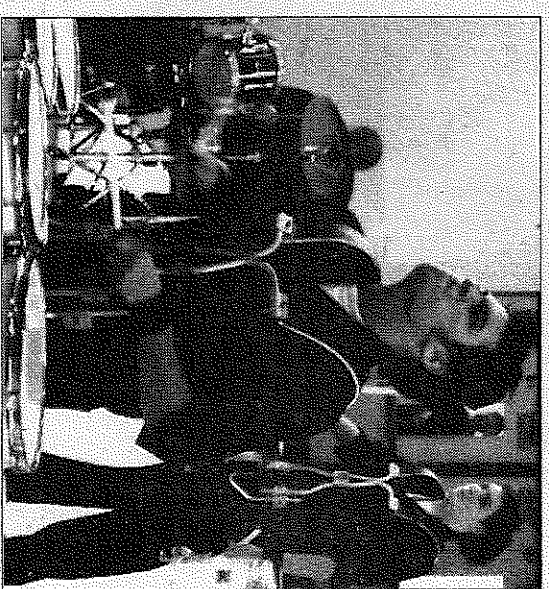
Hornaday and Dumale have both participated in bands outside of school. Dumale looks forward to the festival and improving his talent since his focus is on becoming a better drummer.

"We always try to sharpen our skills," said Dumale. "All my friends are musicians and they are the best [at music]. It's true that when you hang with the best you'll be the best."

The details of the trip, which will last around 15 days, have not been set. For this reason, they do not yet know how much it will cost and they are not certain of how they will raise the money needed to finance the trip.

For Dumale, the first musician in his family, this is a big deal.

"My family's always very supportive of what I try to do with my music," said Dumale.



Literouch
Senior Jared Dumale, in drumline above, plans to celebrate music on a European trip this summer.



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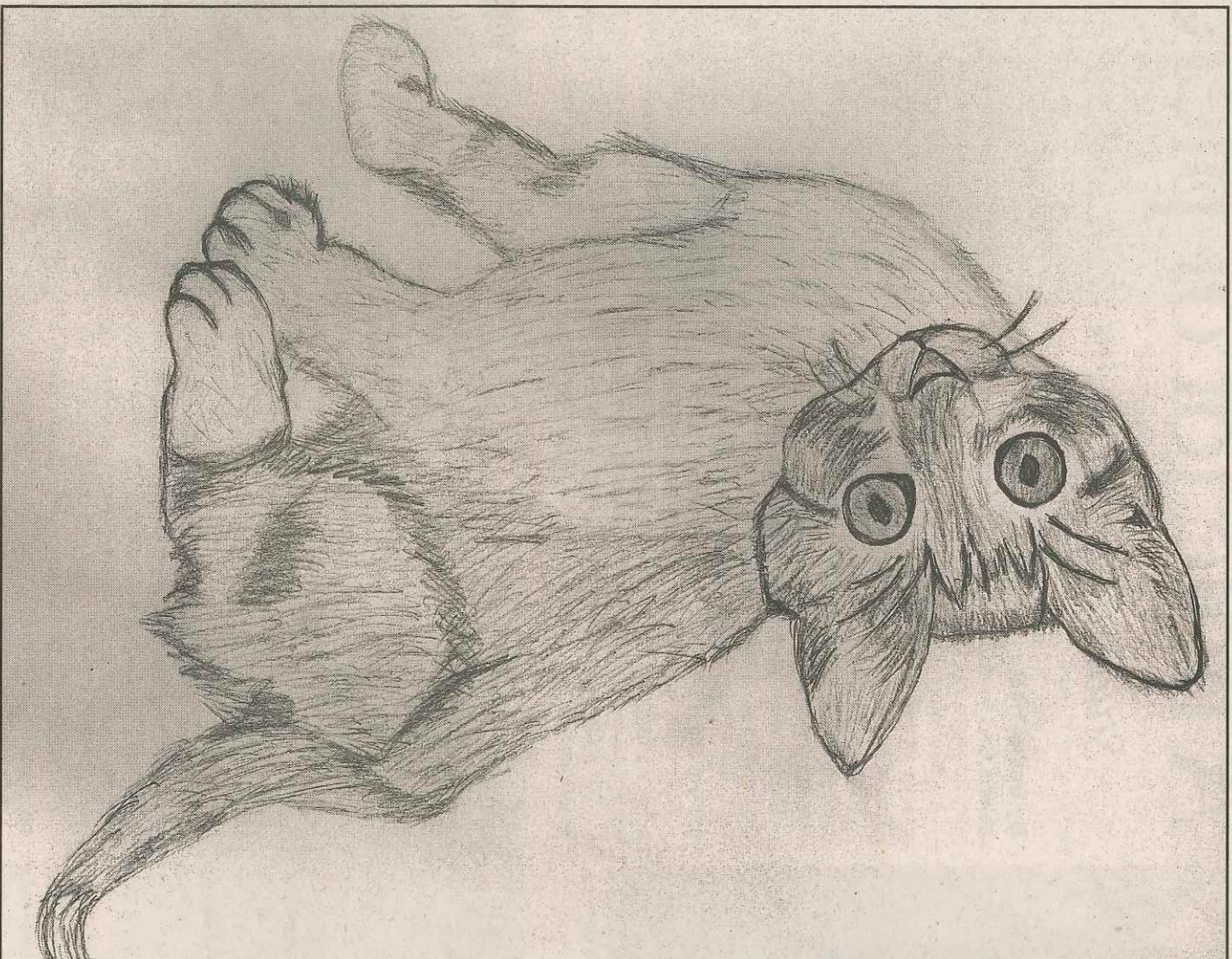
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Kitty

David Nelson, senior

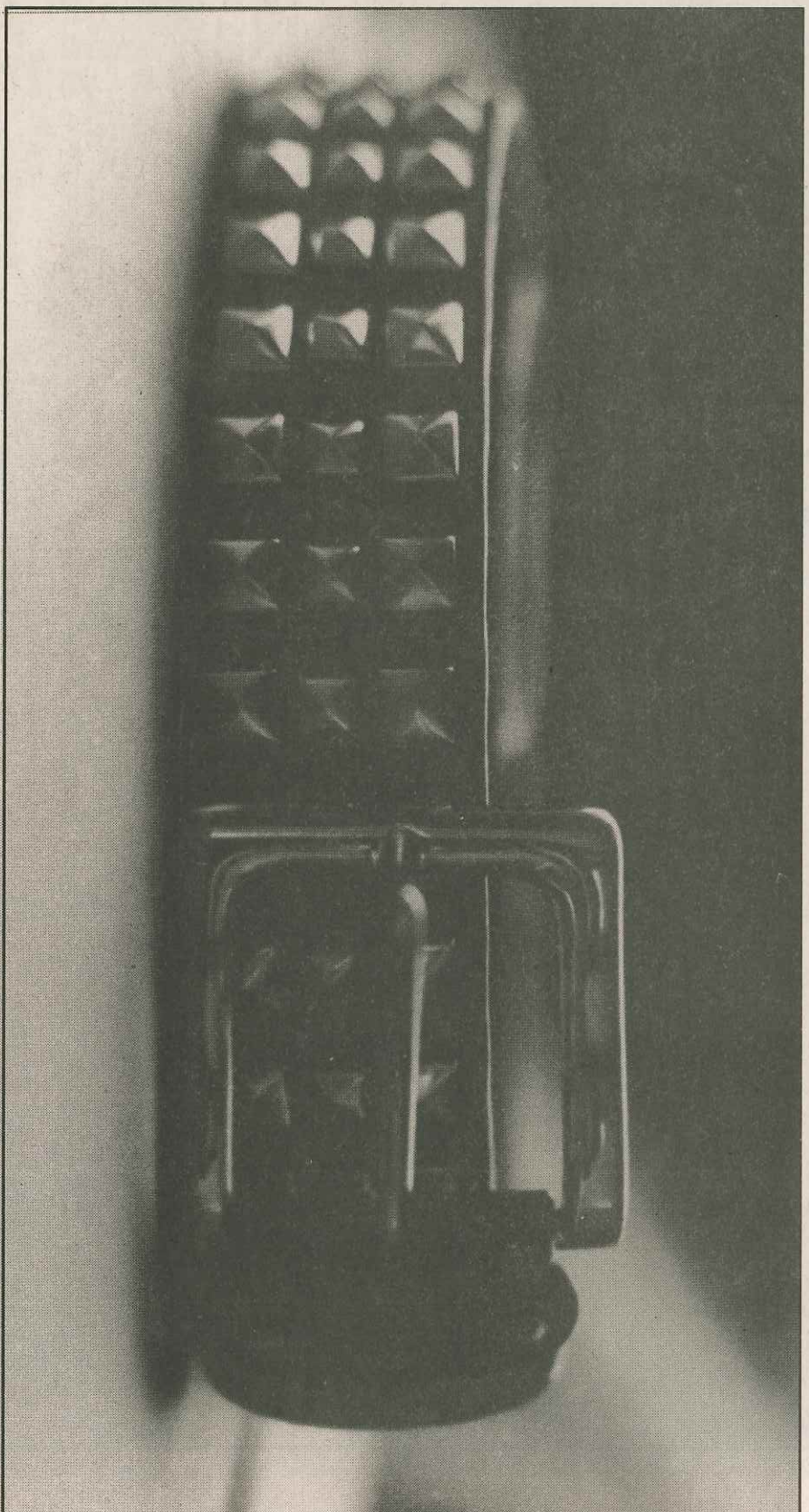
Music

If there's one thing we all believe in
 It's music to our soul
 Rap, Country, or Rock and Roll
 And it's something we can't control

If there's one thing we all love
 It's music to the mind
 We have to look and find
 To see what's our kind

If there's one thing no one has in common
 It's music that's our own
 Writers in the zone
 Or singers in tune and on tone.

Dave Hogan, junior



Alanna Sheppard, junior



Alanna Sheppard, junior

Pokerap

Yo

This is Penny Short

Thought I was gone?

Guess what

Don't think

So when you hear pokemon I know what your thinking

Those pokemon you better be seekin

And when you say you want to be the very best

I already am I'm better than the rest.

And when you hear these raps from me to you

Remember I can own you with Pikachu

Battle after battle it's what I do

I beat everyone like I know kung-fu

But there are some dummies who don't understand me

So I'll break it down in Spanish to the third degree

Soy el major de los mejores

Les gano a todos

Pero esto no es una prueba

Esto es realidad en lo major

Now that I got your attention

Get your pokemon read while I mention

This aint a test

It's reality at its best

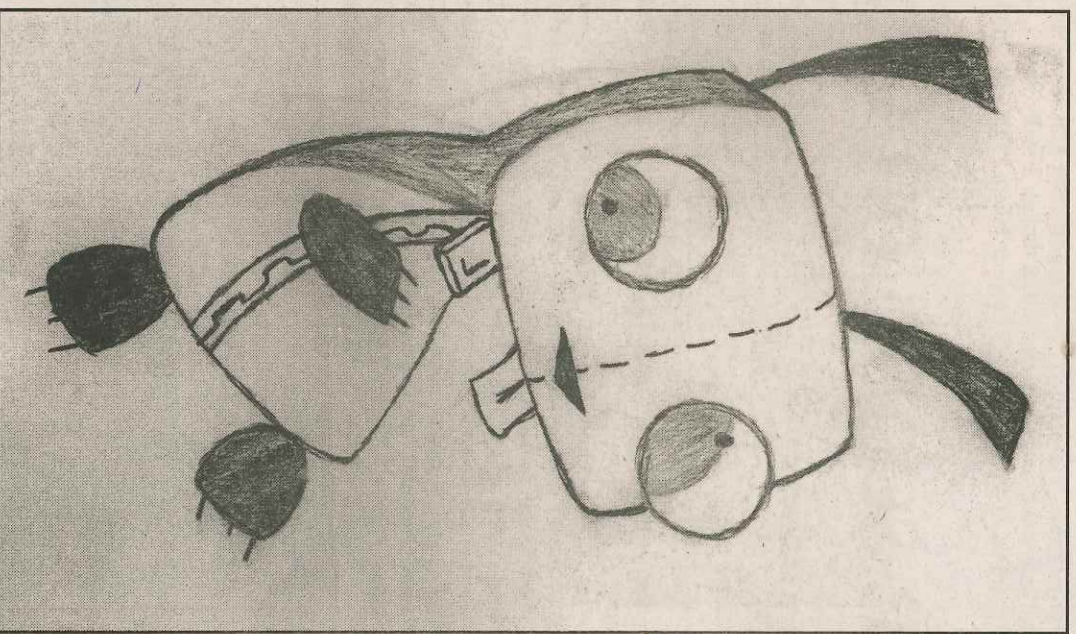
No I don't mess with those posers

Digimon is the worst I don't go lower

I get my pokemon at their best so I can go

How I got this good I just don't know.

Penny Short*



Bringer of Doom

David Nelson, senior

* Pennname for WS sophomore



Shadowland

Do not be fooled by this photo of happy children at Shadowland Laser Adventure. WS students have also enjoyed the recreational fun that laser tag provides.

Laser tag hits the right spot

By Cam Rushton
Sports Editor

Peering around the corner, a *beep* sounds in the distance. The heavy, mechanical vest upon your shoulders begins to vibrate and buzz out of control, signaling the end of the round. Laser tagging is quickly becoming a sensation among students, especially with the opening of a new laser tag arena on Franconia Road.

Situated directly off the beltway, Shadowland Laser Adventure Center takes the place of the old roller skating rink, which was also a popular place for students. One step above redundant video games, yet one step below the pain of paintball, laser tag is a fun way to hang out and cooperate with friends.

"I was hanging out with a few friends one night," said senior Patrick Neilsen, "and we decided to go and check out [Shadowland]."

After participants strap on their high-tech vests and handsets, the laser tag adventure commences in a 6,000 square foot, 2-level arena. The arena, which includes alleyways, mazes, tunnels and passageways, is simply

not a place for contestants to compete against each other. Instead, players can choose different games in which they have to solve numerous objectives of a mystery in the Adventure.

"The first time I went [laser tagging] was for my friend's birthday party," said junior Scott Kellner. "It's a lot more fun with a big group of people."

The Shadowland Laser Adventure Center offers various packages for large parties, including birthdays and corporate functions. These packages include catered food, snacks, and private function rooms. Plus, the prices to participate in a few games with a small group are very reasonable for a high school student's budget, ranging from \$7 to \$20, depending on the amount of games played.

"It's a small price to have a lot of fun," said Kellner. Forget the TV and forget the video games. Laser tagging is an excellent cure for boredom, and is at a reasonable location on Franconia Road. The special effects, dark lighting, and laser-enhancing fog are all attributes of the arena that will make you wish you would have thought of laser-tagging earlier.

"[Shadowland] is cooler than any other laser-tag place I have ever been to," said Neilsen.

A night to spend

By Zohra Alnoor
Senior Staff Writer

From \$40 manicures to \$200 hair-dos, prom is a big deal for most students, especially girls and they make sure to go all out for their special night.

But of everything girls could spend their money on, the most important item they buy is their prom dress, which they will try to obtain at almost any price.

"I found my [prom dress] online for \$400. I was just looking online one day, and I was like, 'That's so pretty. That's the one,'" said senior Trish Friederich.

Some seniors girls buy their dresses months before, when no one is even thinking about prom, in order to make sure that no other students "knock-off" their dresses during their big night.

"If I walked into prom and someone had the same prom dress as me, I'd slap

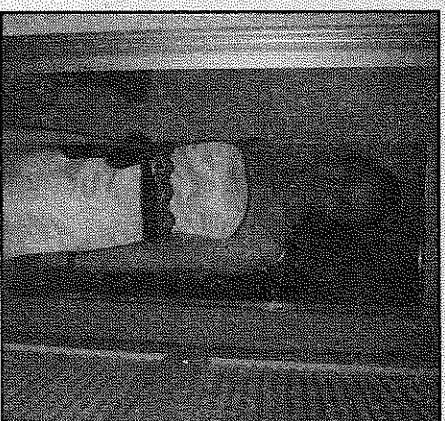
[her]," said senior Raquel Carrera. "I'd probably go back into the limousine or stand as far away from her as I could."

How much will one student spend to have a unique, beautiful dress that they would wear for five hours and most likely never wear again?

"I would spend as much as I needed to. Prom is important. It's always been a childhood dream of mine to be a princess, and wear pink and have sparkles. It's the American Dream," said senior Sammy Whittaker.

Students who try to be frugal when choosing their dresses, have a realistic budget and use it wisely to their advantages.

"I have an amazing dress that I bought from a vintage store in New York. It's gorgeous and looks so expensive even though it really wasn't," said senior Nahid Jahed. "Plus, its good because I



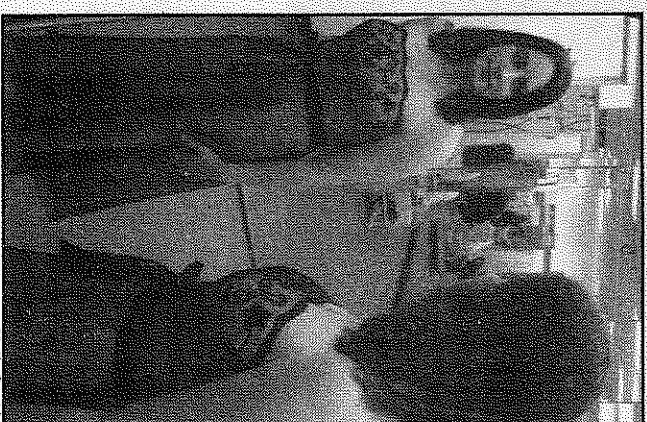
Courtesy of Tiffany Ip

Senior Tiffany Ip asks her friends for their opinions on a prospective dress.

know that no one else will have my dress."

From glamorous and pricey to chic and cheap, young high school girls spend their money, use "hook ups," and bargain shop for the perfect dress for their special night.

"I don't have a college fund," said Whittaker. "I have a prom dress fund."



Marilyn Cushing

Senior Bonnie Pedder starts shopping early for her perfect prom dress. Many girls don't care how much they spend on their dress, as long as they are happy with how it looks.

The scoop on Cold Stone

By Andreama Maxwell &
Libby Bursley
Senior Staff Writers

Sweet treats meet sweet sounds at the famous Cold Stone Creamery.

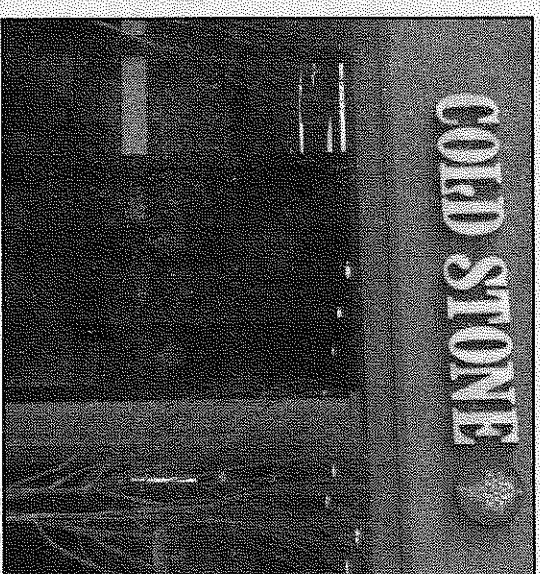
Cold Stone is renowned for its delicious personalized ice cream concoctions. The adventure begins with the difficult decision of choosing of an ice cream flavor, which range from dark chocolate peppermint or even cake batter to the classic vanilla. It is important for first timers to know that sizes are not listed as small, medium and large. Instead one must choose either "like it", "love it" or "gotta have it."

Next, it is time to decide what should be put into the designated ice cream flavor. The walls are adorned with signs that have lists of "original creations" that one can choose from. Our favorites are Birthday Cake

Remix, which brings back the distant memories of childhood birthday parties with cake batter ice cream, sprinkles, brownie and hot fudge, and Peanut Butter Cup Perfection, which truly is perfection with its chocolate ice cream, peanut butter, Reese's peanut butter cups and fudge. For those feeling a little more experimental options are available to mix favorite ice cream flavors with any of the mix-in choices, including brownies, cookie dough, candy, marshmallows, nuts, hot fudge and even fresh fruit.

The service is commendable with laughter and friendly banter amongst customers and servers. The jovial attitudes make it a treat to pay a little extra. Next to the cash register is a tip jar that seems abnormally full compared to most in snack shops. After dropping extra change into the jar be prepared to be serendad. The employees erupt into a chorus of their original tunes, making it a delight to tip them.

Now that Cold Stone Creamery has opened a new store on Burke Centre Parkway, a mere five miles from



Libby Bursley

The newest addition to the Burke Centre Shopping Center is the Cold Stone Creamery. A new Chipotle is also being built a few shops down from the ice cream parlor.

WS, it will surely become a local favorite for both the ice cream connoisseur and the amateur taster.

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As 6-year-old Opie on “The Andy Griffith Show,” Ron Howard already knew what he wanted from a career. After 18 seasons on television (he also spent 10 years as Richie Cunningham on “Happy Days”), and his first movie role (in “The Music Man”), Howard turned to directing, first on television, then on the big screen. A two-time Best Director winner (“Apollo 13” and “A Beautiful Mind”), Howard has racked up the nominations and awards, including a “Worst Film” Razzie nomination for last year’s “The Da Vinci Code.” The Journalism I class reviewed three of Howard’s films—“American Graffiti,” in which he starred, and “The Paper,” and “Apollo 13,” which he directed.

Combo genre really stops the presses

By Joe LaCroix
Journalism 1

We have all seen the double-genre films, whether it is the cheesy action/adventure or the predictable romantic comedy.

Those are the safe bets when it comes to fusing two styles together. Very few films are truly successful at the crossing of genres that are at complete opposite ends of the spectrum: the elusive comedy/drama. Ron Howard’s “The Paper” is one of the rare comedy/dramas that doesn’t cross the line of twisted (a la Quentin Tarantino), and doesn’t make the viewer feel bad for laughing.

Despite the god-awful background music that may as well have plagued every film from the mid-’90s, “The Paper” is a quick-witted comedy with brilliant high points as well as a serious drama where you actually care about the char-



MDB

acters. And the reason why you care about what is happening to the characters is because of the actors bringing those characters to life.

‘Graffiti’ features a shared experience

By Kat Davies
Journalism 1

Everyone wants his last night with friends to be unforgettable. The cast of “American Graffiti” experiences nothing less than memorable.

On Steve (Ron Howard) and Curt’s (Richard Dreyfuss) last night before college, they find themselves making choices that will affect their futures. Steve has been in a longtime relationship with Laurie (Cindy Williams), but wants to try seeing other people while he is away. This, of course,

upsets Laurie and makes Steve’s last night full of hard choices. Curt leaves in the morning, but is still hesitant on going. Considering the circumstances, he shouldn’t have such cold feet. Both boys make their final decisions that night.

Their friends, John (Paul LeMat) and Terry (Charles Martin Smith) also have wild nights. John is known as the “bad boy” and the fastest drag-racer in town. He also is the oldest. It is almost like he really can’t move on with his life. Coincidentally,

he ends up driving a 14-year-old around all night. Terry’s night is a huge change for him, as well. He is the “geek” of the group, but ends up with a blonde he picks up with his “new” car. She gets him to do things that no one would have ever thought him capable. But his choices are something he needed to experience for his own life-changing decisions.

“American Graffiti” truly depicts a night that soon-to-be college students may experience: realizing what they really want and making those decisions that will affect their future. Each character’s story is different, but they are connected throughout the movie. Each deals with a life they choose to begin. Or, in the case of John, the one he has yet to start.

In one of George Lucas’ first movies, the director takes a part of life that everyone experiences and makes it into a movie unlike any other. It is a great comedic drama that makes you think of what you want to do for your last night at home.



MDB

No problem with ‘Apollo 13’

By Becky Hundemer
Journalism 1

If you like Ron Howard films, then you should definitely take a seat and pop in the classic movie, “Apollo 13.” It’s a heartwarming drama about a crew stuck in outer space.

The best part of the movie is when the crew makes it back to Earth alive and in good condition. The Apollo 13 flight was intended to reach the moon, but on the way it experienced an unpredictable explosion. The explosion inflicted multiple problems, making it questionable if the crew could make it back home to their worried families.

Ron Howard, as the director, does an excellent job by not making the movie one of those typical “true story” movies that tend to end up looking extremely farfetched. The film seemed very realistic with the problems the crew faced and how they recovered from them.

The crew was made up of actors such as Tom Hanks as Jim Lovell, Bill Paxton as Fred Haise and Kevin Bacon as Jack Swigert. They are truly a one-in-a-million acting team, and make the film worth watching, especially since all are credible, experienced actors. Lovell’s wife, Marilyn Lovell, played by actress

Kathleen Quinlan, helps create the tension in the beginning of the movie by the fear of something going wrong. Quinlan does a wonderful job displaying the true side of watching your loved one leave and hope they will return.

The intensity of the movie first begins when Marilyn Lovell is lying in her bed alone, having a nightmare that a crucial problem has occurred during her husband’s mission. She dreams that he is pulled into space forever. After that, the audience is drawn into the movie until the credits roll. Even though the movie is very dramatic, Howard spices it up with a smidge of humor. “Apollo 13” deserves four-and-a-half stars and should be recognized a great movie all around. After watching the film, you’re left with a sense of pride that these three astronauts could suffer the greatest catastrophe in space and still make it home safely.

The real crew from the Apollo 13 mission should be proud of this depiction of their heroic efforts. The anxiety going on in your head while watching dilemma after dilemma will encourage you to watch the movie over and over. I suggest you go out and rent the movie, and if you can’t find it, then you can borrow it from me: I own it.

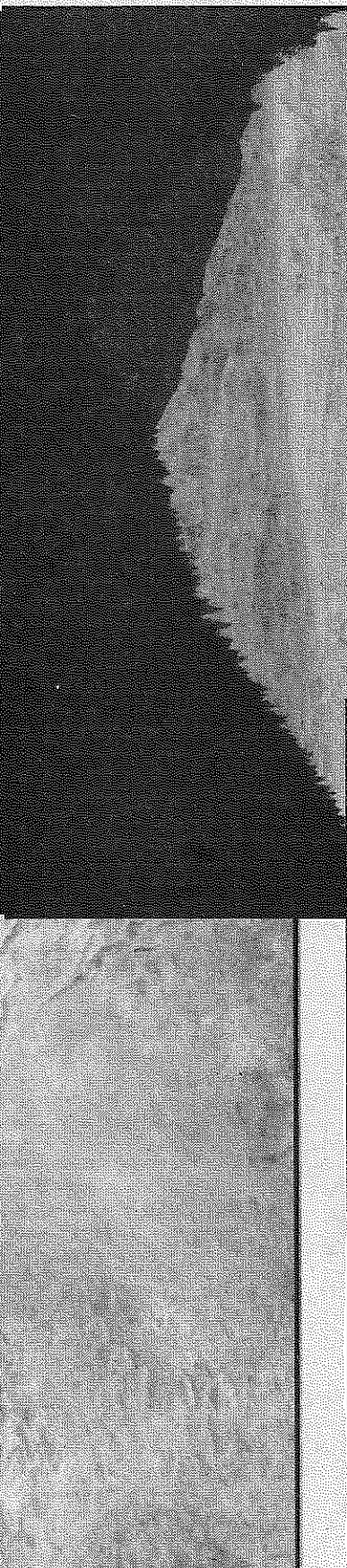


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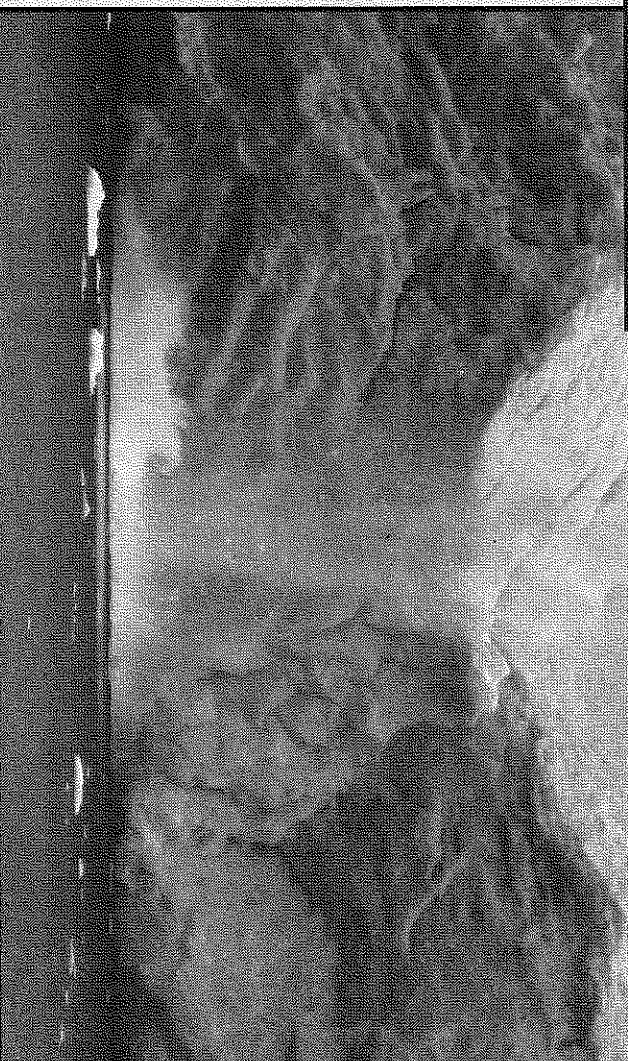
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Alaska



Flying into Alaska, I already knew we were in for the trip of our life by the glacier covered mountains we could see from the windows. Once we landed, we saw whales, sea lions, otters, hundreds of bald eagles, moose, salmon jumping up the river, and wild grizzly bears that came within ten feet of our boat. We also saw glaciers and the empty space where glaciers once existed. Simply put, Alaska is one of the most beautiful places on earth.

By Kelly Sipple



Dance laid around, done

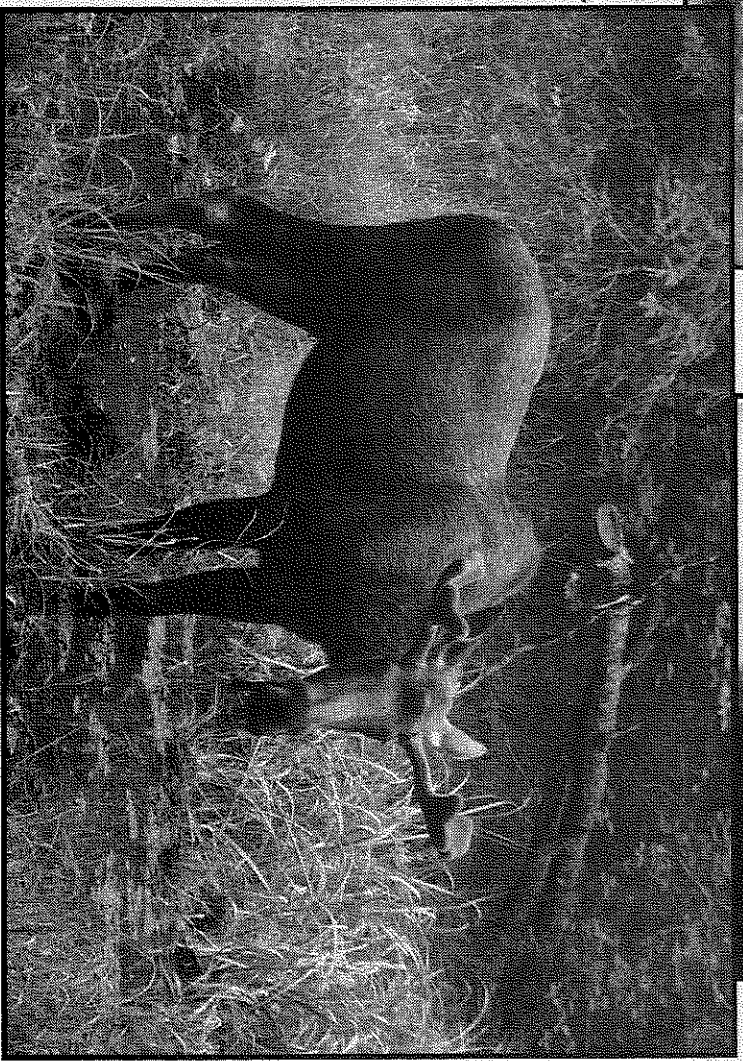
stayed around

This old town too long

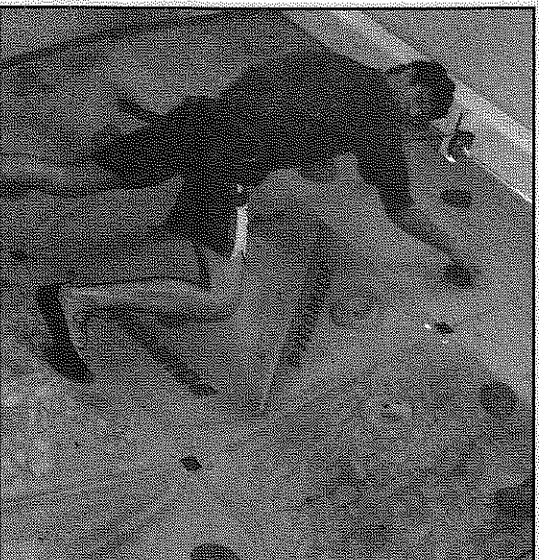
And it seems like

I've got to travel on

---Bob Dylan



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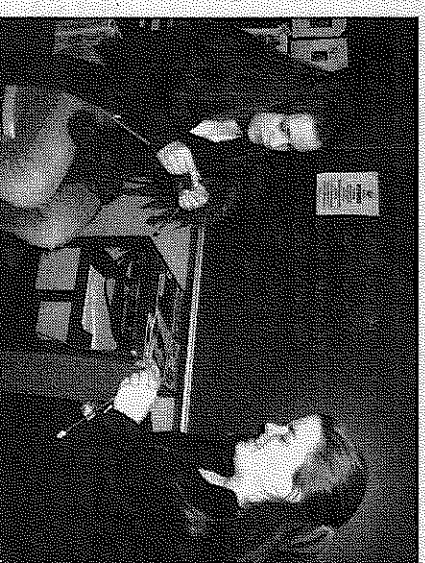


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Girl's lax showing the love

Team places second and raises money in first-annual Valentine's Day Shootout

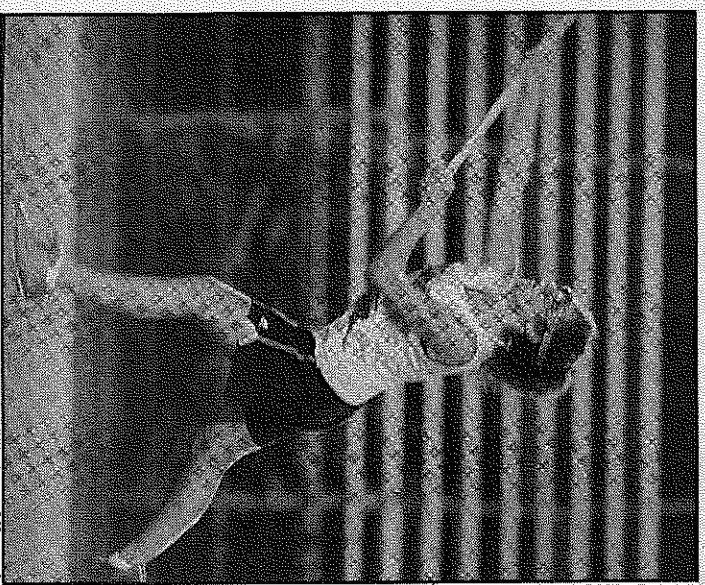
By Caitlin Kenney
Viewpoint Editor

On February 11, 12 teams decked in different colored T-shirts faced the brunt of cold weather, a mere 13 degrees, to face off in a much anticipated battle between lacrosse sticks.

WS hosted the first annual Valentine's Day Shootout, intended to raise money for girls lacrosse.

"I was freezing my butt off during the game," said senior Allison Campo. "I had to wear three layers of Under Armour with my jersey."

A lot of preparation went into planning such a short-notice event. Preparations for the shootout included hiring paid referees and insuring the tournament.



Liebowich
Senior varsity lacrosse player Brianna Gays tosses the ball to a teammate during a scrimmage. The lacrosse players hope the money raised by the shootout will pay for new uniforms.

Spartan Spotlight:

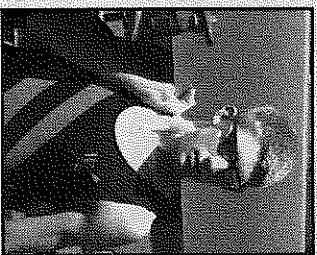
Matt Miller,
senior, crew

By Andreana Maxwell
Managing Editor

How many years have you been on the crew team?
This is my fourth year.

What is your role on the team?
I am one of the rowers and this is my second year as the boys team captain.

What is your favorite part of crew?
Well practices are much more fun than the regattas because practices are low-key and social, and races are very short and extremely physically taxing. A lot of stress goes into just five minutes of rowing on race day.



Liebowich

How was the off season training?
Good. It went a little long because the river is frozen.

How were Crash B's (the last off season spring competition)?
They went pretty well. We saw world record holders and had a good time in Boston as a team. It was a smaller group so it was more laid back and fun.

Do you plan on continuing your rowing career?
Likely in college.

Tryouts for the team actually happened a week after the event itself.
"The only way we could pull it off was because of the turf field," said lacrosse coach Brian Puhlick.
During the holiday break Puhlick received permission via e-mail to host a lacrosse tournament at WS. Twelve different teams across the region signed up to take part in the occasion.

"I feel that [the shootout] was a worthy cause especially after our faculty taking such a hard hit with the loss of Kathy Jarvis and, most recently, Carolyn Grace."

—Brian Puhlick,
Varsity Girls Lacrosse Coach

"I even had to drop a team in order to have even matches," said Puhlick. "We only had six weeks to pull it off and had to be off the field by 1 p.m. sharp."

Three teams played at the same time with in 5 yards of each other. Puhlick was pleased by the girls' performances and hopes that it translates into a great season.

Hosting the tournament before tryouts gave the potential teammates a chance to work together.

"I felt it was a good test to see how cohesive we were as a team how good we can play together," said returning junior Victoria Generazio.

The money made in the fundraiser not only went to help pay for the Florida trip, where the team stays and plays five games in Orlando, but the tournament asked for donations upon entering to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

"I feel that it was a worthy cause especially after our faculty taking such a hard hit with the loss of Kathy Jarvis and, most recently, Carolyn Grace," said Puhlick. "This organization helps give back to the families and community."

How was the first week of official practices?
The first week included less on-the-water rowing than we had hoped due to ice, but it was still great to get back on the water late in the week.

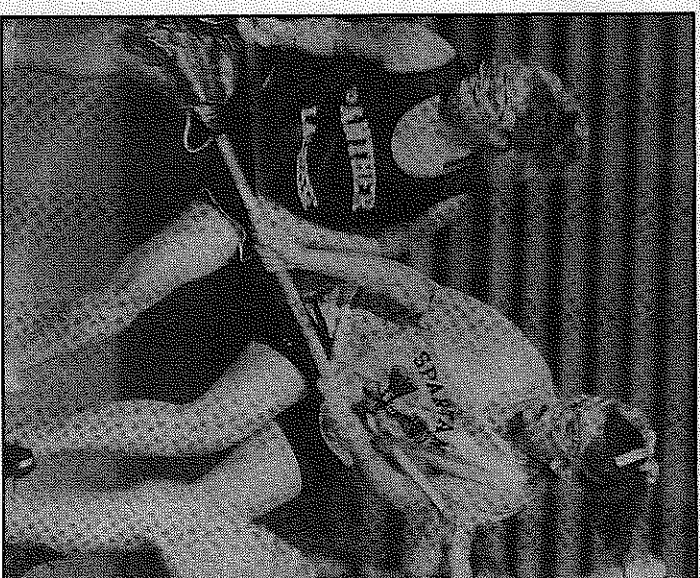
What does a typical practice entail?
First, we warm up with stretches and normally some running. Then we row either short sprint pieces on the course or longer pieces up the river.

What are your expectations for this season?
We are going to have a very athletic and lighter weight boat than normal.

How do you think this season will compare to last season?
We had a fairly good season last year and I am hoping this year will be similar.

What are your goals for this season?
To make all-met, make finals at state and to qualify for nationals.

Do you plan on continuing your rowing career?
Likely in college.



Liebowich

Junior girl's varsity lacrosse player Bonnie Latch fights off an opponent for possession of the ball during a scrimmage. The girl's lacrosse team recently placed second in a Valentine's Day shootout hosted by WS.

WS finished second in the tournament to state runner-up Robinson. Captains Alex Flammia, Julia Reppa, Lauren Stephenson, and Summie Ko led the team to the successful turnout. The girls hope to receive new uniforms and practice jerseys with a portion of

A lot of preparation went into planning such a short-notice event. Preparations for the shootout included hiring paid referees and insuring the tournament, when the tryouts for the team actually happened a week after the event itself.

the money raised. The tournament was an extension of fundraising efforts such as citrus sales and selling pizza in the sports lobby.

"The game was great practice," said Campo. "I liked that it was the first annual tournament because its fun to be a part of something so new."



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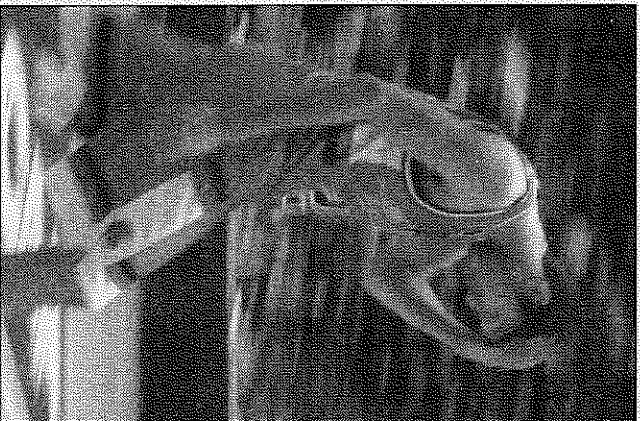
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Courtesy District

Senior Kosal Amin expresses his disappointment at the WS loss.

Boys stunned at basketball finals

By Katie Costello
Oracle Editor

Hordes of orange clad students stared in silent horror at the scoreboard. Until that moment, they had been an energetic mass cheering for the team that had not made it to the final four in 16 years.

The Varsity Basketball team made it to the final four at the Patriot Center on February 24. A special pep rally was held the day of the game to boost the team's morale and encourage students to attend and support the players. It worked, as a huge flood of spirited students entered the Patriot Center that evening.

"I think that was the most fans we've ever had in the history of sports

attendance at West Springfield," said senior player Tony Hall.

Not only did students wear orange to support the team, but also decked themselves out in funny outfits and vibrant body paint.

"I had my face, arms and legs painted, and I had short orange shorts, and an orange shirt tied around my head," said senior Sean Newmeyer. "I painted [senior] Brian Edwards' whole body orange and blue. It looked good."

The intense atmosphere was matched by an even more intense game. The lead that the Spartans had been maintaining throughout the majority of the second half dwindled as the clock ticked. Their opponent Wakefield was only down by one point with only .3 seconds on the clock.

It was then that controversy arose. "At the end they [the referees] added a second to the clock," said senior player Brandon Allen.

With the extra second Wakefield had the time to shoot as the buzzer sounded and make a basket, causing them to win the game.

"Everyone was looking around with their mouths open," said Newmeyer. "It was completely silent for like two minutes."

Though the game was played with determination and drive the loss was still a major disappointment for WS and its players.

"I was just shocked," said Hall. "We were 1.3 seconds away from victory. I would have rather lost by nine points than by one point in a buzzer-beat shot."

Lacrosse shoots for tough goals

Freshman team improving thanks to mandatory fitness requirements

By Cam McCallum
Sports Assistant

While everyone has been sitting around inside waiting for winter to finally give way to spring, the freshman boys lacrosse team has been battling the snow and ice and working nonstop.

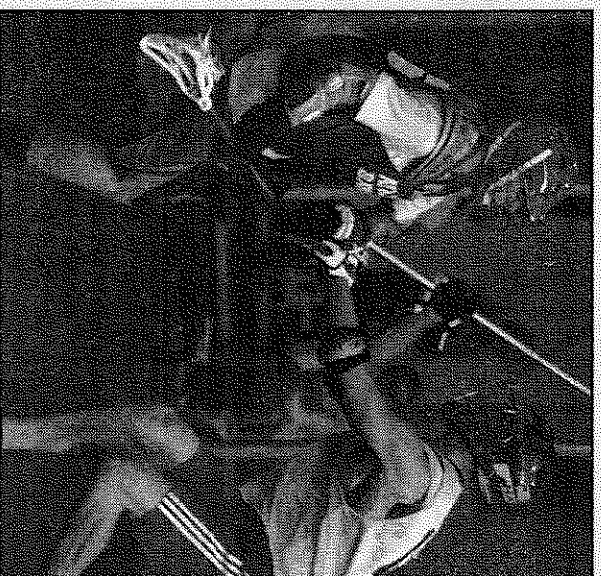
Lacrosse has evolved into a year round sport, and because the players have a chance to work out and improve all year long, expectations are high. Each freshman candidate is expected to be able to run a mile in under six minutes and bench press their weight. This new requirement is a heavy burden on the players.

"I'm pretty worried about it because I know I can't do it right now," said freshman Daniel Rodriguez.

Although players are not usually cut if they cannot achieve those benchmarks, they have to work extra hard throughout the season until they can.

"You keep working and keep trying until you can do it, and once you do that's it," said Rodriguez.

Although the fitness requirements may seem intimidating, coach Chris Brengel, who also coaches the Varsity team, put the rules in place for a reason.



Dave McGeogor

Freshman Hunter Bragg, left, plays in an off season tournament. The extra practicing has helped lacrosse players to excel in games.

Girls Basketball season comes to frustrating finish

By Krista Pedersen
Scopp Editor

For the past decade, Lady Spartan basketball has dominated the Patriot District, the Northern Region, and the Virginia state tournament. But for the second year in a row, the Spartans failed to bring the Patriot District title back home, and was eliminated in Regional Quarterfinals by a team they were slated to defeat.

Their season started off well, despite preseason losses to Edison and St. John's, who were both top-ranked teams in Virginia. The girls were ranked first after their first round through Districts, despite a surprise upset by Annandale. But at the beginning of February, things started to fall apart for the Lady Spartans.

On senior night, WS suffered a surprise defeat at home from Lee, whom they had beaten earlier, by three points. Six days later they lost to the defending district champions, the TC Williams Titans, and fell to second seed for the district tournament.

The girls easily defeated Hayfield and South County in the first two rounds. The biggest damage South County did against the Lady Spartans was when one of their players fell on senior point guard Triahna Harris, spraining her foot. Harris was unable to play again until the Regional

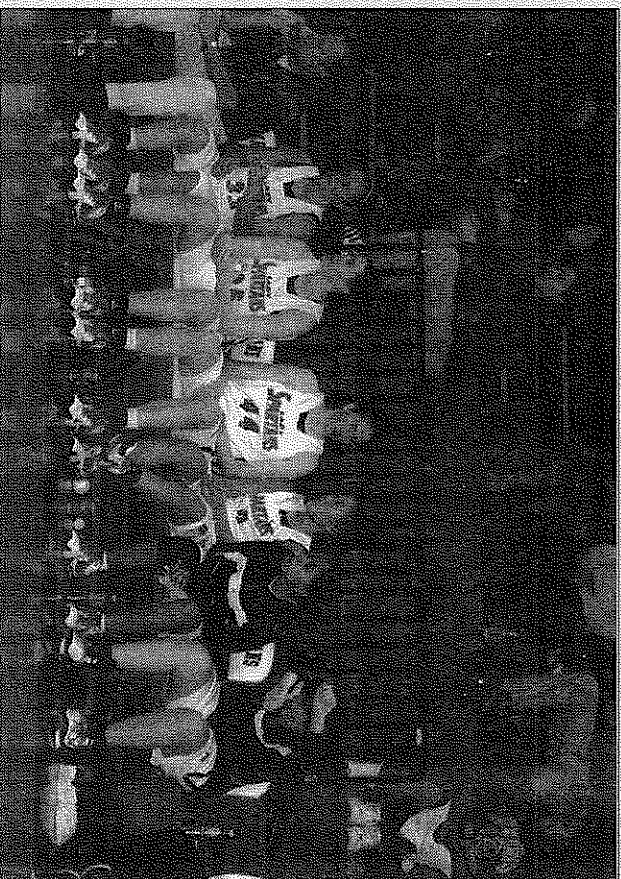
tournament. Sophomores Sam Landers and Christen Gibson would step in to fill the role.

"Tri getting hurt was a serious blow to everyone because her leadership on the court is a really important part of our game," said senior Caroline Nicholson. "Sam did a great job in [district finals] with the experience she came into it with."

The first quarter of the district championship game started out well for the Lady Spartans, from junior Lauren Massie's game-opening basket to their 11-9 lead at the end of the quarter. But at 6:32 in the second quarter, the score was tied at 13 when senior Sunnie Ko was shoved hard to the court by a TC Williams player, and no foul was called. The Spartan bleachers went crazy, and Coach Bill Gibson leapt to his feet to protest the lack of a foul. A referee deemed that Gibson's protesting was inappropriate and issued two immediate technical fouls against WS, ejecting Gibson from the game.

"I knew these officials from before, and one of them threw me out of a game last year," said Gibson. "If I'm not here [the girls] may be better off without me, [the referees] may call the game the way it should be called."

After Gibson's ejection, TC Williams scored five unanswered points, and WS would hold the lead only once more, by



Lifetouch

Girls Basketball feels the officiating contributed to their defeat in the Patriot District final. The Lady Spartans finished the season with an 18-7 record.

two points. Some Lady Spartan players attribute their 53-43 loss to TC Williams' star, sophomore Tierra Ruffin-Pratt, the Titans' rough style of playing, and the lack of calls in favor of WS.

"The game was pretty like physical and the referees should have done a better job but for some reason they just don't like us that much," said sophomore Christen Gibson.

Nicholson agrees with her teammate, and added that the Titans' five points after the technicals stopped the Lady Spartan's run.

"TC is definitely a rough team and has their own 'style' of play but I think

"As a program we have set goals we want to achieve. We use these requirements to help our players strive to be great. Great pride can be taken from achieving something you once thought impossible," said Brengel.

Coach Brengel has also used the off-season to help condition his players and prepare them for the spring season. Workouts were offered every Monday, Wednesday and Friday since school began in September, and Brengel believes they were a success.

"This has been our best off-season since we took over the program four years ago. We had more players active in the off-season than ever before, and a good off-season can better prepare you for the season. The more active you stay in lacrosse, the better you can be as a player and the better we can be as a team," said Brengel. Although Brengel understands some players may not yet be up to the task of completing their miles and bench presses, he is happy with the efforts of his players, and did not have to cut any underclassmen during tryouts.

"We look at players as what they can be, not what they are now," said Brengel. "We expect players to improve every day, and so far they are doing that."

"The game was pretty physical and the referees should have done a better job but for some reason they just don't like us that much."

—Christen Gibson, sophomore

the refereeing was ridiculous," said Nicholson. "All throughout the game our team was getting hacked with no fouls being called."

Jake Disagrees On hallucination and mice

One man's terrifying experience with 'Fantasia'

By Jake Serwin
ETC. Editor

I have had an out-of-body experience.

Or, perchance, Mother slipped a psychoactive drug in with my teething crackers the other night. To my knowledge, however, I only watched "Fantasia."

It left me nigh unconscious, spit pooling all around me. I had forged a perfect imprint of my handquaters in the leather sofa, in which I was currently drowning. "Fantasia" is a dangerous thing.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, the film knits a multisensory scarf of classical music and Disney animation — the kind of scarf that keeps you warm and cozy while strangles you. The experience is similar to synchronizing "The Wizard of Oz" and Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" (or is it "Bring It On" and the original Broadway cast recording of "Cats"?), only at the end you really want to buy Disney stock.

When the narcotic effect had finally subsided, I was filled with anxiety. Surely this substance had wreaked havoc on my nubile liver! After much couch-drying, I consulted the expert.

Dr. Andrew Rosenosen, Chief of Medicine at the Detroit Children's Hospital Bar and Grill, heads a research team studying the effect of "Fantasia" on adolescents.

"There is a significant correlation between viewing the film and liver failure," said Rosenosen. "What remains to be seen in the study is whether that correlation is positive, negative, or exists at all. Remember, ladies eat free on Tuesdays."

Becalmed somewhat by the doctor's words, I was able to collect my thoughts. This is not the first time a Disney film featured mind-altering chemicals. My experience brought forth memories of the time Dumbo got hammered, as well as the "Pleasure Island" debacle in "Pinocchio." I believe there is even an interest group in Vermont campaigning for the legalization of "Donald in Mathmagic Land" for medicinal purposes.

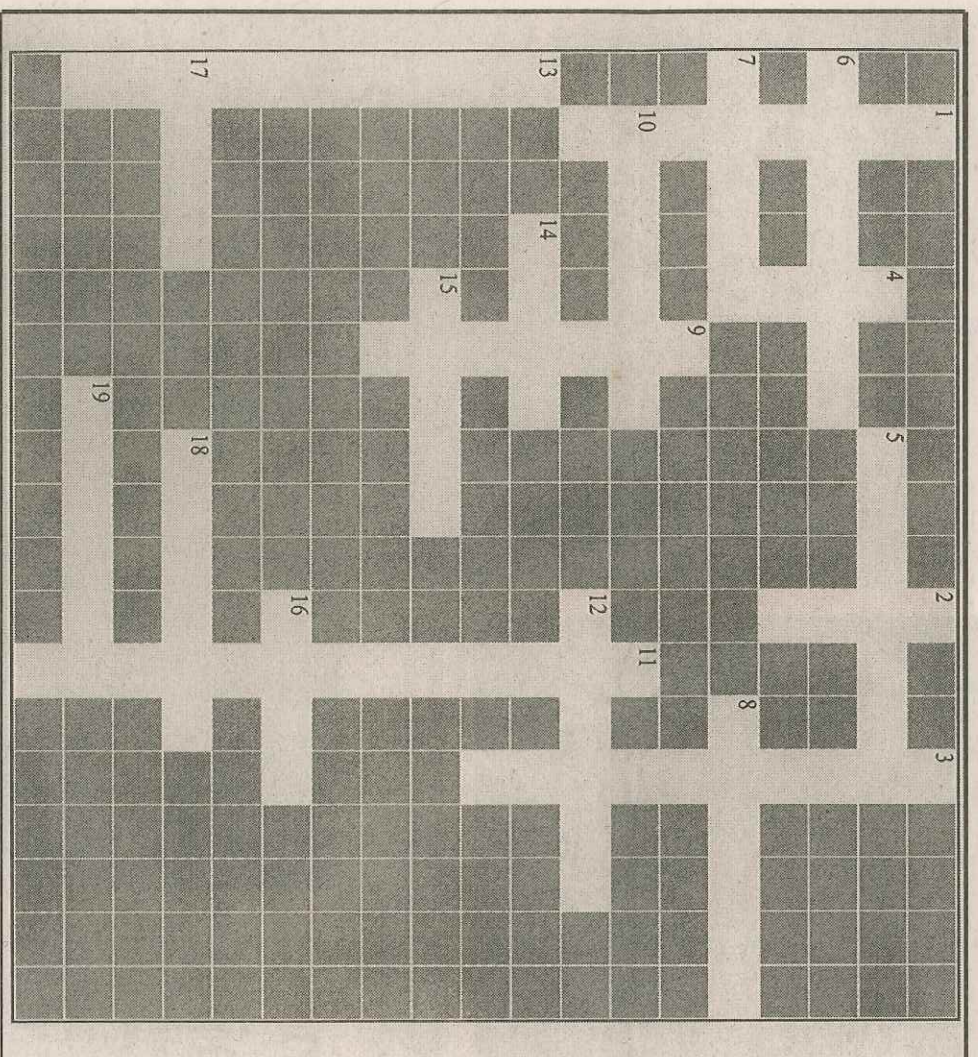
I spent the next four days stumbling around Springfield in a bathrobe and novelty Mickey's ears hat with the name "Lucille" stitched on the back. I was nearly crushed by a snowplow before I realized that the plow was, in fact, not a group of whimsical dancing mushrooms. Before I realized it was not a frightening depiction of dinosaurs bathing to the death, the cat



Clothed mice commanding butterflies may have a detrimental effect on adolescents' liver health.

There are lessons to be learned from my exaggerated misadventures. When watching "Fantasia," always have a designated driver. Never apply aftershave to a cat. And, for the love of science, stop drawing hippos in tutus.

A March-themed Crossword Puzzle





ACROSS

5. The _____ famine devastated the people of Ireland in 1845
6. In 2005 this was the 108th most popular name
7. This color is commonly associated with Ireland
8. The spring or _____ equinox is observed
10. He said, "I came, I saw, I conquered"
12. One of these is held on St. Patrick's day in towns across the world
14. This 40 day preparation for Easter is held by Catholics
15. This month celebrates man's better half
16. The Roman God of War, this month is named for him
17. An old Latin reckoning

DOWN

1. A four-leaved plant believed to bring one good luck.
2. A baby sheep
3. This little imp dresses in green and loves playing tricks
4. The month of March comes in like this large African cat
9. Find a pot of gold at the end of one of these
11. The NCAA basketball tournament
13. This month's blue-green birthstone

—Compiled By Rebecca Naramore

MARCH '06				
Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
9	10	11	12	13
Girls Varsity Lacrosse vs. Robinson @ 7:15 p.m.	Boys Varsity Baseball vs. Oakton @ 12 p.m.	Daylight Saving Time begins 	Girls and Boys Varsity Soccer vs. Stone Bridge @ 7 p.m.	Boys and Girls Varsity Lacrosse vs. Westfield @ 7 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.
16	17	18	19	20
Boys and Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Thomas Jefferson @ 7 p.m.	St. Patrick's Day 	Supreme Sacrifice Day	Boys Varsity Lacrosse vs. Mt Vernon @ 7 p.m.	Girls and Boys Varsity Soccer vs. Robinson @ 7 p.m.
21	22	23	24	25
Earth Day 	Girls Varsity Softball vs. Centreville @ 6:30 p.m.	Boys and Girls Varsity Lacrosse vs. Fairfax @ 7 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.	Girls and Boys Varsity Soccer vs. Woodson @ 7 p.m.	