



The BRAVOTTE

February 7, 2011 Volume 45 Number 9
West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152



Brooke Nelson

Stepping out
Seniors Ali Kazmi and Beth Clapsaddle joined the Lesoles Dance Project on stage to learn a few moves during the Black History Assembly last week. "Quote here, please," said YOUNITY sponsor Re-

Cameras installed for safety

By Megan Burpo
Viewpoint Editor

WS might not be getting a makeover anytime soon but the cameras are our newest accessory.

During winter break wires were pulled for the installation of 12 security cameras that will be located outside the school. Though there is no set date for this installation, it will be soon, as the school has been prepped. The cameras will be spread out around the perimeter of the building from the front of the school to the back parking lot near the press box. Twenty-one schools in Fairfax County already have placed security cameras outside their schools, so many people believe it was time for WS have them installed.

"There have been several incidents of break-ins and damages made to new equipment in the press box and trailers," said Principal Paul Wardinski. "The cameras are to insure the safety and security of students, staff, and the physical building."

As well as damages to equipment there have also been reports of student's cars being keyed, and vandalism to the outside of the building. Students do not need to feel uneasy about these cameras as they are only allowed to be outside the building in regulation to county's rules. Most students do approve of the cameras as they are only here to help.

"I think the cameras are a good idea if what is being stolen is really

important and this is the only way they know to stop it from happening," said senior Rachel Mundell.

There is a view that students have nothing to fear unless they do something bad themselves, so it serves to help our school more than hurt it.

"The fact cameras are there would hopefully prevent it and if not you then it would record it so they are helpful," said junior Alex Pastino

Though, not all students are as supportive of the cameras, thinking they are used for other purposes than just keeping our students safe. Many believe that these measures are just to stop students from skipping and monitoring seniors
See "Cameras" on Page 4.

Parking lot mistakes cause fiascos for students *When assigned spots are taken, negative reactions only create more of a mess*

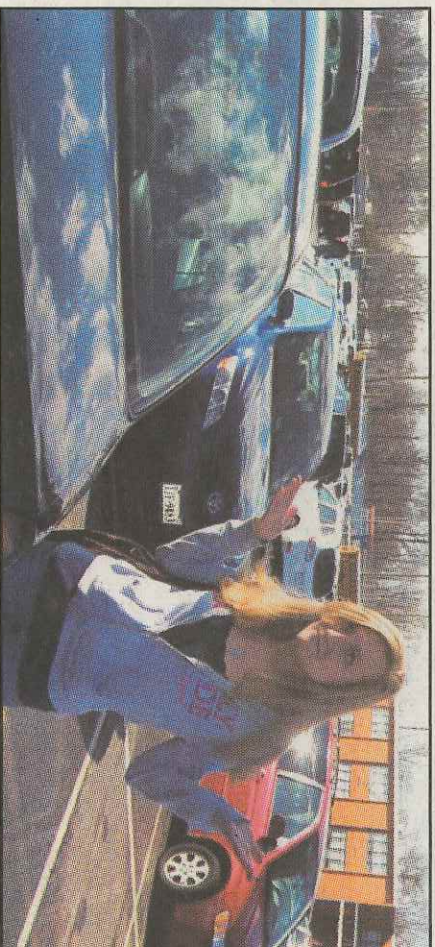
By Sam Goldwasser
Managing Editor

One of the privileges that seniors are most envied for is the use of the senior parking lot.

Seniors who pay get their own spots assigned to them for their personal use, and do not have to fight with other students for a parking space every morning. Unfortunately, not everyone respects this. Sometimes seniors are faced with strange cars or utility vehicles having taken over their spots.

"I'd say that people taking other people's parking spaces is a problem," said Safety and Security Specialist Mike Ukele, who deals with ticketing those who park incorrectly.

Ukele gives out two or three tickets per week on average, but a lot of the time the of-



Sam Goldwasser

Senior Vicki Knabe was faced with a dilemma one day when she arrived at school to find someone parked in her spot. Knabe was forced to park elsewhere and the delay made her late to class.

fender does not know they have messed up a system. Using the wrong parking spot is usually an accident, visitors or substitute teachers don't realize spots are assigned and end up displacing students.

"Sometimes the substitutes do not realize that there are guest spots and just park anywhere. They don't mean to park in the wrong place, they just don't know," said Ukele.

However, in addition to substitutes and visitors, there have been instances where people who should know better park in the wrong place anyway.

"Occasionally I'll catch the staff members creeping over the designated faculty spots into the student ones," said Ukele, "or some-
See "Parking" on Page 4.

Passing down knowledge *Juniors join mentoring program to help frosh*

By Anna Lehman
Entertainment Editor

WS is now offering a mentor program that teaches freshman skills and techniques that will help them maximize their best learning style.

With the combined efforts from Guidance Counselor Alex Gorman and Career Center Specialist Hannah Hurlburt, the creation of this new program that will benefit many students. Even though no mentoring program was previously available, having one now will teach underclassmen learning study techniques and other important skills.

Not only does the program help kids manage their time, but it also gives them an encouraging study environment and improves their understanding of the material. This mentoring program is principally for freshman who have been recommended by teachers because they need extra help with learn-

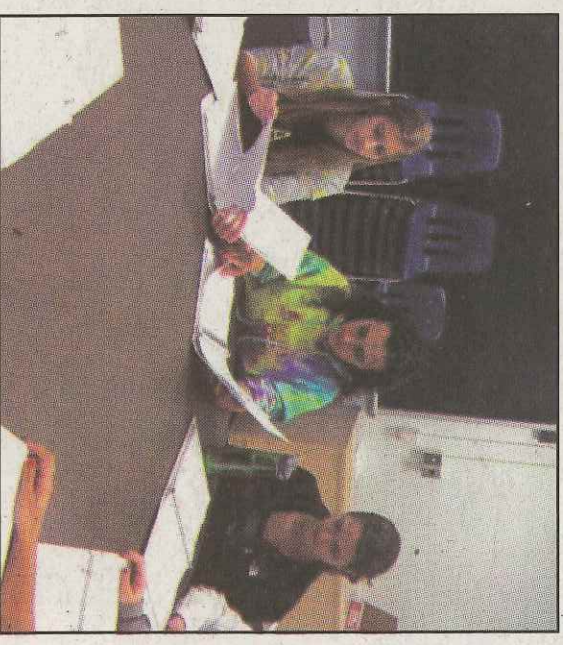
ing class materials.

"About 90 freshmen have been recommended, as well as 65 tutors. This will provide support for our freshmen class and when seniors go off [to college], some wish they had better time management skills," said Hurlburt.

The tutoring program offers is help to students to develop their study skills. The main focuses are time management, memorization techniques and test taking strategies.

Each of these techniques will assist the students improving in their school work. The freshmen will be mentored by juniors, some of which are National Honor Society (NHS) students who, with the generous help of Government teacher and NHS sponsor John Thorson, have been allowed to use their time tutoring as service hours for the honor society.

"I feel that this will help improve grades and will help
See "Tutoring" on Page 4.



Anna Lehman

Juniors Katelyn Lovan, Eleanor Lamb, and Taylor Goodman prepare for tutoring the freshman who are part of the new mentoring program. The group met in Spartan Hall for their first session of mentoring.

PART lessons' poor execution falls on deaf ears.



Old tunes meet new music halfway.



Girls Basketball program still runs strong.



PART lessons poorly executed

Spartans, it's time to do your PART... again.

This year, the administration added a new Spartan Time schedule on the first Monday of every month. These are not for students to do the homework they

were supposed to have completed over the weekend, or

take a well-deserved nap, but to focus on how to do our PART as Spartans. We have had four lessons so far, all with important messages on behavior towards others and ourselves, but no one would realize it with the way the lessons were conducted.

Take, for instance, the lesson concerning bullying. We realize the importance of this issue, especially in schools today; this is why students, as well as many others, were so shocked with its presentation.

Having to watch a student-made video, which kept the classroom laughing at the funny comments,

significantly dropped the level of seriousness on the subject.

Teachers are a big factor in making the lessons serious to students. Some do try to incite meaningful conversation, and get students to

pay attention and care about what they are learning.

Unfortunately, not all of them act this way. Listening to teachers robotically read out instructions about how to fill in a Venn diagram is not an efficient way of teaching what morals we should have. It just makes us more resentful that we are forced to sit in a classroom being treated as first graders.

We are not the only ones who feel this way; many students can attest to sitting in a classroom where teachers obviously do not want to be there teaching a stupid lesson. Some just go through the motions because they have to, but you can tell they think these activities are as stupid as we do.

Editorial

not all of them

For this latest PART lesson, students were asked to write down a hurtful comment that they have made or heard on a gray piece of paper, which was meant to represent a stone. These slips of paper were used to decorate a wall in the cafeteria to symbolize WS' zero tolerance policy when it comes to bullying.

After students crumpled up the stone, they tried to smooth it out and saw how their actions had a lasting effect on those they hurt. We know it was meant to be a creative visual, but was just seen as a cheesy exercise that paralleled one seen in a Disney movie.

Instead of forcing students to participate in mindless activities, watching movies that make bullying and harassment seem funny, or bribing with clips from "Glee," maybe encouraging students to have real conversations with their teachers that are not restricted to a monotonous prompt would be more beneficial.

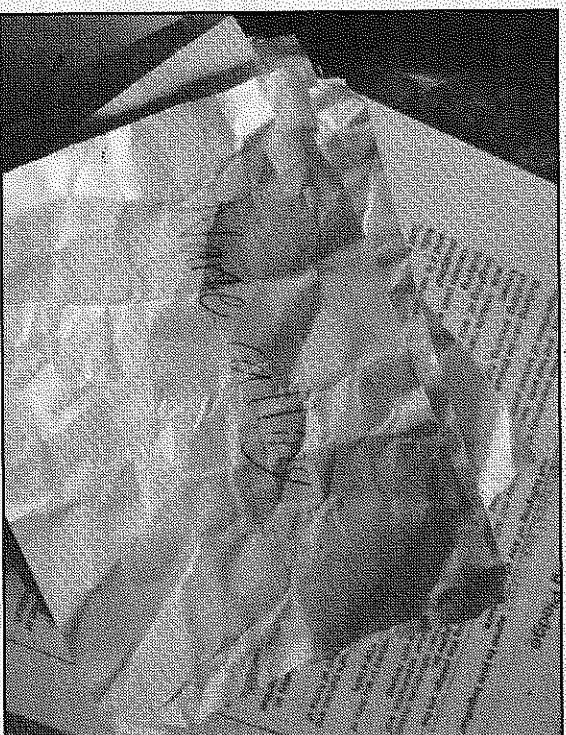
The last PART lesson had students make "stones" to show that people's actions have a lasting effect on those they hurt. Though it was a good message, the activity felt childlike to many.

If students could feel like they were being treated as adults, maybe in turn they would maintain adult conversations.

After all, making bullies do cheesy activities is not going to stop them from bullying any more than telling a smoker the dangers

of nicotine will make him instantly drop his cigarette.

Though the world should not work this way, unfortunately it does, and we should change our methods to ways that will actually encourage Spartans to do their PART.



Megan Burpo

Valentine's Day causes nothing but drama

Anticipation leads to break-ups and stress as February 14 approaches

By Lisa Williams

Oracle Editor

Pink hearts, red roses, chocolate boxes, and massive amounts of stress. Welcome to the holiday we call "Valentine's Day."

Singles hate it. Couples hate it. Everyone hates it. Celebrating such a holiday that puts so much unnecessary pressure on everyone involved only makes people resent it more.

For single people, it's been deemed "Single's Awareness Day," sometimes referred to by its acronym: SAD. It's a big honking reminder that these people are unattached and (for the most part) lonesome and looking. No amount of comfort food and sad Taylor Swift songs can ease the feeling of loneliness.

For members of couples, the pressures of gift-buying and date-planning can get overwhelming. Purchasing gifts for a significant other is never an easy task, be it around the holiday season in December, a birthday, or in this case, Valentine's Day, especially since around Valentine's Day there's the added demands to be "romantic."

Girls are really the ones who feel the pressures of V-Day. Boys are much more difficult to buy gifts for, since they generally don't enjoy the standard flowers-and-chocolate nearly as much as their female counterparts. Similarly, they are the ones who expect the most out of this "special" day.

Many boys denounce the holiday completely. Since they do not wish to appear "whipped" or, God forbid, "romantic," they



Heather Fringle

Valentine's Day, unlike most holidays popular in the United States, has no real historical value. The modern holiday we are all familiar with originated so card, candy and flower companies could thrive.

avoid showing excitement and prefer for the day to remain anticlimactic. Mostly they participate in the celebration because they feel forced.

WARNING: When a girl says she doesn't want a gift for Valentine's Day, for the most part, she is lying. Girls tend to want to sound cool, calm, and collected when it comes to the Day of Stress, and will try to alleviate the pressure. Girls overanalyze everything,

though, so feel out the situation and make sure that a gift is actually not necessary.

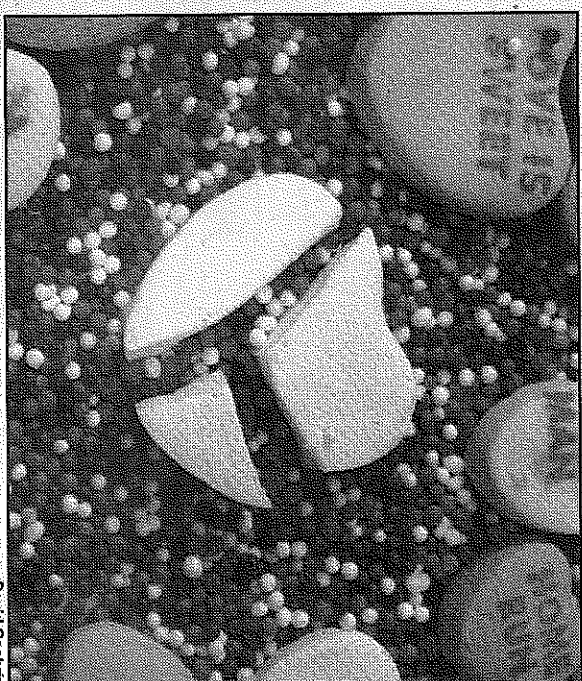
However, if you say that you don't want a gift for Valentine's Day, your significant other won't know if you mean you actually don't want a gift or if you're just being nice. If you say no gifts, mean it. If you don't mean it, don't say it.

The problems circulating around Valentine's Day all boil down to the differences in

While some couples can handle Valentine's Day, it can also leave people feeling alone and broken-hearted. For the most part, expectations are too high and couples feel too much pressure to enjoy the holiday.

relationship roles: one person over analyzes everything and implies things he or she won't actually say, and one person tends to overlook the signs because he or she interprets everything literally.

It's a popular day for relationships to end, probably because of all the pressure and miscommunication that looms around February 14. To lessen the stressin', try to just relax and enjoy the day.



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ORACLE

The Oracle is a student-run publication designed to inform and entertain the West Springfield High School community. We publish articles written with as little reporter bias as possible. Opinion is expressed in Viewpoint, Forum and ETC., and in reviews and signed 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 Schools. The Oracle reserves the right to reject advertising deemed inappropriate. Signed letters-to-the-editor and will be considered for publication, but could be edited for grammar, spelling and space.

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We're number one...or are we?

By Sara Lepley
Entertainment Editor

At Friday night games, while all the other fans around me are earnestly calling out cheers, I only seem to say one thing—"What?"

My knowledge of sports is basic at best. I am actually an athlete (I run for the school), but Track and Cross Country are about as straightforward as it gets.

My ignorance of sports such as baseball and football has naturally kept me far away from watching ESPN and visiting stadiums. This year, however, I took on the daunting task of actually attending Spartan games.

So on Friday nights, my new orange season pass in hand, I trudge over to WS to attend football games in the fall and now basketball games in the winter. Here is what I've learned:

Step One: Go with the flow. As a rule of thumb, cheer when others cheer. I am embarrassed to admit that on multiple occasions I have cheered for the wrong team. Apparently, the ball has to be going a certain direction to be considered good for our team. If you do happen to be in this situation, play it off like you're a super-fan, stand behind the Spartans even when they are down. Also, if a member of the team gets tackled, or in basketball slides across the court, do not overreact. Other fans quickly got annoyed with me pounding questions like "Is he ok?" "Why aren't they stopping the game?" and "That was so mean!" Expect to be reminded that this is a game and it will be physical.

Step Two: Stay as far away from the other team as possible. This seems pretty obvious, but at an away basketball game at South County, some Stallions nestled their way into the guest side. Hearing all their negative comments did not give well with my Spartan Pride, and our team's spirit was met with glares.

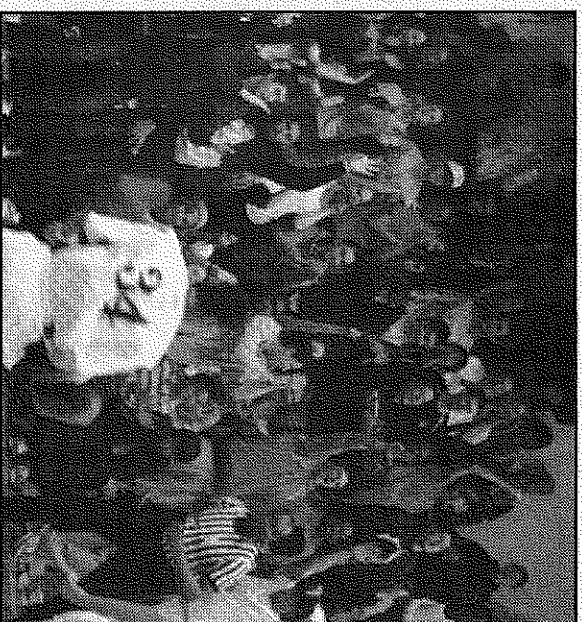
Step Three: Go even when the team might lose. It's all fine and dandy to attend games that predict a good outcome, or that garner a lot of spectators, such as the Homecoming game. It is at the games where a loss seems inevitable and the stands are empty, however, that Spartan Spirit needs to come into play. There is no science behind this, but I firmly believe that the more fans in attendance, the more motivation the team has. Cheering pumps adrenaline, and having the whole school watch encourages players to bring their "A" game for fear of embarrassment. A full stadium may not help us win a hopeless game, but, if nothing else, it might close the scoring gap.

Step Four: Learn the lingo. At the beginning of the football season I knew what a touchdown and an interception are, and that was about it. Now I know words like "Hail Mary" and "Bubble Screen." Just don't ask me what they mean.

Step Five: Go with friends. It makes the dull moments much more interesting. Games are a chance to hang out with your friends, and there's nothing like school-wide bonding during a freezing, rainy football game.

Step Six: If nothing else, there is the dance team. If, come second quarter, you are feeling severe migraines from all the ball switching, plays, and general confusion, remember in a few minutes the dance team will be performing one of their first rate routines, something you can just watch and appreciate. No thinking necessary.

Step Seven: Get into it. This is by far the most important. Feel the tension during free throws and the excitement when our team intercepts the ball. When you get attached to the game, it makes exerting the effort so much more worth it. Even with over 2,000 students at our school, everyone can recognize the players. The team is representing our school, so everyone is really a part of it.



Emily Goham

Even if students are not very familiar with the sport, it is important for our school teams to be supported at their games. Having a positive crowd encourages athletes to perform.

In the end, I have developed a new understanding of two sports, but even more, I have gained some much needed Spartan Spirit. It's fun to expand your horizons; maybe in the spring I'll even try learning baseball or lacrosse. There are a lot of attacks on our school spirit, but we have a lot to be proud of. Our school credentials extend past sports. We also have stellar music, drama and forensics departments that could use some Spartan Spirit. We should all support each other in all of our endeavors.

While you aren't going to find me watching NFL games or comparing March Madness brackets any time soon, you will find me at all the Spartan games cheering hard, hopefully, for the right team.

No school vacation means no appreciation

By Kelly Carlin

Oracle Editor

You know the feeling: crossing off the calendar days, planning how the celebration will go, and having all the anticipation while waiting for... Groundhog Day.

Some holidays just don't get the hype and recognition that others do and it's rightfully so. I mean, when was the last time that President's Day decorations were placed in malls? How often do people have festivities centered around Arbor Day?

These "special" days just don't get the positive reception that more mainstream holidays like Christmas, Halloween, and Thanksgiving get. Some of the holidays based on real moral and historical values are overlooked if there's no real way to celebrate. Even New Year's Eve gets more appreciation than holidays honoring political American heroes like George Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Most people only consider holidays important if they get presents or get out of school. To a lot of people, if it can be cel-



Monsters and Critics

Groundhog Day, observed February 2, lacks large-scale celebrations. Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog who controls the fate of this holiday, is probably unaware of the importance his role plays for Punxsutawney, Pa., the only town affected by this holiday.

ehbrated at a party, it's more important than if it honors those who have served or died in the military. On the other hand, some holidays just aren't worth the recognition. Groundhog Day is one of these, as it is only celebrated

High hopes for legalization

By Summer Claveau

ETC. Editor

We can't pretend like we don't have a pot problem here at WS. Our administrators, our fine Student Resource Officer and our Substance Abuse Counselor agree that actions need to be taken in order to help prevent this problem from increasing.

However, I ask the administration, angry parents and the federal government to explain this problem.

I would say that at least 65 percent of the people opposed to marijuana legalization drink their fair share of alcohol regularly. However, alcohol is much worse for your body, your mind and your relationships than bong trips are. We ended alcohol prohibition only to enter into marijuana prohibition, something that has yet to be overcome.

If marijuana were to be legalized, it could greatly help stimulate our economy through consumption taxes.

Another obvious fact is that our prisons and detention facilities are far overcrowded compared to the rest of the world. With marijuana legalized, a fair-sized percentage of inmates would not have to be locked up, due to the decriminalization of their actions.

Keeping "Mary Jane" illegal obviously isn't stopping people from smoking it. Not only do students here at WS smoke, but so do countless teenagers in Fairfax County and the rest of the United States, along with their parents, their parents' co-workers, athletes, and actors we idolize. Countless amounts of people continue to smoke pot despite its illegal status, and they continue to support the fight for its legalization.

The biggest problem with the never-ending attempt at a stoner revolution is that the arguments are not presented in the right manner.

Apart from some legitimate organizations, such as the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), most

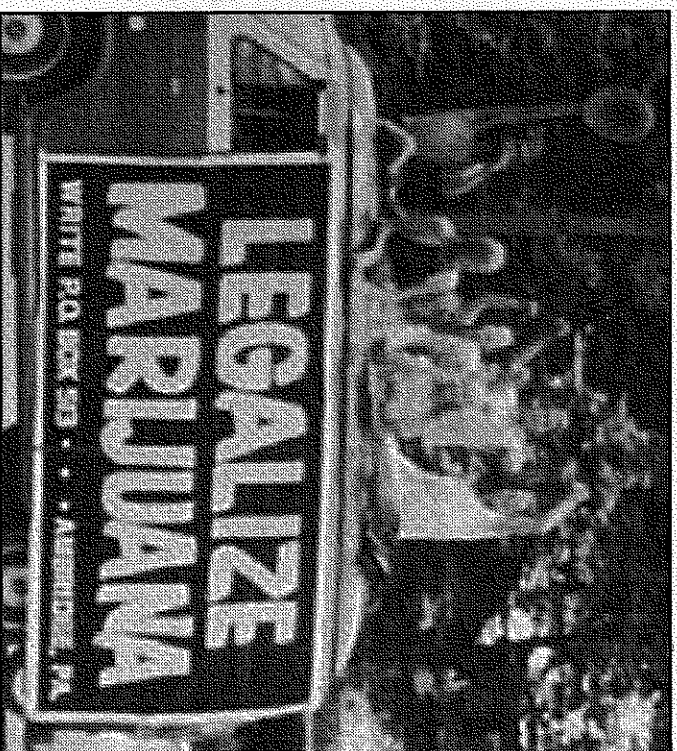
of the pro legalization websites are mere hippie blogs. The internet is the most important promotion tool out there. Psychedelic website layouts with pictures of the good old days when you could split a spliff with a cop are not good platforms to stand on when trying to convince people to push to legalize the drug they keep finding in their kids sock drawer.

Pot legalization is a very hotly debated topic right now, and legalization supporters must all start arguing efficiently and intelligently.

Big government who wanted to control the American Dream decided smoking pot is bad; once Americans started having extra money to spend recreationally, they cracked down.

I imagine their thought process went something like, "Hey, we're not making any money off this stuff. Let's make it illegal!"

Now, counterculture has made ganja smoking a lifestyle and it's evolved into something that



Economic Thought

Protestors from the '60s try to persuade the government to change the legalization laws so that smoking weed is no longer an illegal activity. Groups across America are working towards the legalization of marijuana and have been lobbying in Congress for more clinical marijuana dispensaries.

people view negatively. All of this American culture with American could be changed with the simple more happy, more just, and less in debt country. The time has come to mix



Adam Lehman

Guidance Counselor Alex Gorman talks to the group of juniors who later mentored freshmen. The program provides the freshmen with people to look up to and get advice from.

New program offers valuable study skills

“Tutoring” from Page 1.

me to learn better writing skills,” said freshman Gabriela Quezada.

Juniors were chosen as the tutors because this year will be the pilot year. Next year, these same students will tutor underclassmen, and after tutoring positions will be passed down from year to year.

“I know that this will definitely benefit both the freshman and the juniors, both will learn how to work together and become better in school,” said junior Arienne Tonsaint.

These skills are not only important for

high school but also for when students graduate and go off to college. Upon graduation and their entrance to college, many students wish that they had spent more time learning these important study skills and techniques. Being intelligent is important, but learning how to budget time and study efficiently is the only way to really improve grades.

“When I was] a freshman, it would have helped to have older students help me,” said junior Rebecca Lepper. “This is an important program not only to improve but also to have someone to look up to.”

Taken spots make for senior driver frustration and chaos in parking lot

“Parking,” from Page 1.

times juniors think it’s funny to park in a senior spot, even though they don’t have a tag.”

Having to deal with someone parked in the wrong place is frustrating to seniors who have paid the \$250 to call the spot their own, but the perpetrators do have to face repercussions.

In the event that the parking blunder is an honest mistake, Ukele leaves room for a one time error.

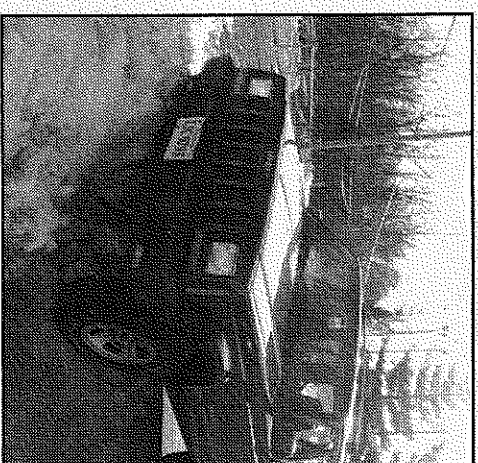
“The first time I’ll give a warning, call the person’s parents, something along those lines,” said Ukele.

After that, the consequences get more serious, since parking in another person’s spot that they paid for is not okay.

“If it happens again I give them a \$30 ticket. If it happens a third time I have them towed, with a fine of \$100,” said Ukele.

While the consequences the person has to face may comfort the displaced senior, he or she still has to find a place to park their car for the duration of the school day while waiting for the problem to be resolved.

“Students [whose spots are taken] can either park in a visitor spot or along the base-



Thomas Arian

Students are not only displaced by other cars, but also by mounds of snow in the winter. These students should park in visitor parking until the snow melts and it is safe to park in their spots again.

ball field,” said Ukele.

It is particularly frustrating when students who at school late and in a hurry. Having to deal with this issue when they are already rushing can be a bewildering experience.

“It made me late to class and I had to park in a random spot,” said senior Vicki Knabe.

Smile pretty for the camera

“Cameras,” from Page 1.

leaving at lunch time.

“The cameras are not put into monitor lunch times, though it doesn’t hurt,” said Wardinski.

Others are not as concerned that they are monitoring students but they think it wouldn’t work.

“The cameras are good for stopping intruders but not for students who want to skip,” said junior Chloe Grewe. “People who do bad things are going to do them anyway, having the threat of cameras won’t make a difference.”

The cameras are being installed now, as they are not part of the renovation WS is eligible to have in the upcoming years. The budget cuts are not a factor in the installation as WS has a minimal amount compared to the other twenty-one schools with cameras. Lake Braddock has 48 cameras around their perimeter though they are a larger school.

No matter the view each student has on the cameras, one thing is for sure that the installation of the security cameras will serve only to make our school a better place.

“I think that people will come to realize because of the cameras we will have a safer school and more secure county,” said Wardinski.



Platinum CCTV

This standard view of a parking lot through the lens of a security camera shows what WS has in store once the cameras are installed.



JV Security Services

Security cameras will be installed at WS in order to protect the building’s premises. The goal of the cameras is not, as many students believe, to catch seniors leaving at lunch, but to protect the school from potential break-ins.

Pot or not? DC votes ‘yes’ to medical marijuana

By Momo Sullivan

Viewpoint Editor

After a long battle among citizens and government Congress has approved the bill to make medical marijuana legal in Washington DC.

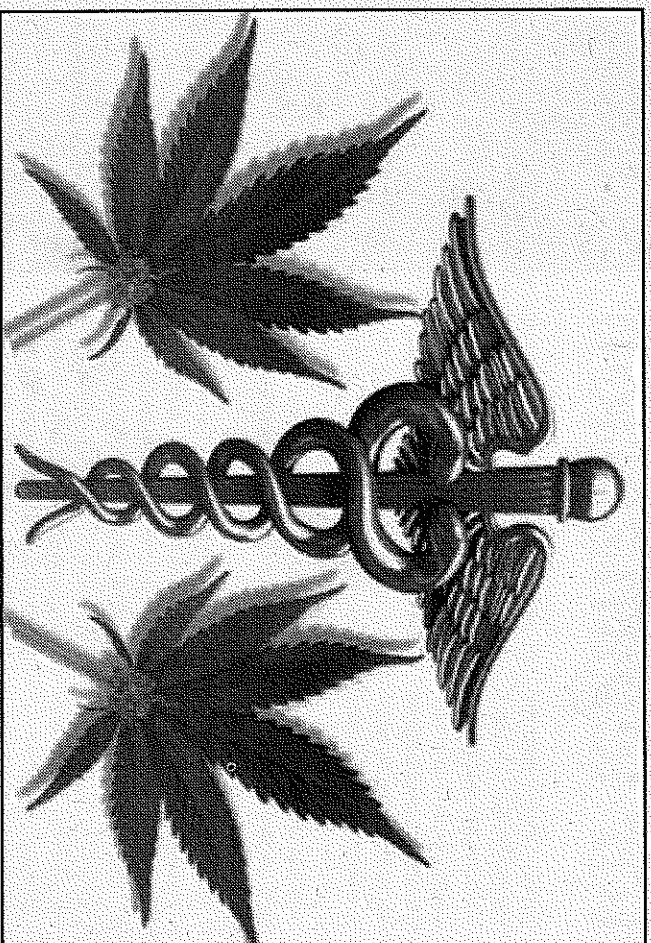
By legalizing marijuana for medical purposes, doctors will now be able to prescribe marijuana to patients for therapeutic reasons. Cancer, glaucoma, and HIV/AIDS are some of the chronic diseases that are benefited by and permit the use of marijuana for treatment. Patients will be limited to receiving up to four ounces of marijuana.

Some people find reason to believe that marijuana will help to relieve some chronic pain for a period of time more effectively than other prescription drugs that were previously legal.

“It’s a good thing to have the option, because people can’t abuse it since it is for medical purposes only,” said freshman Derek McMahon.

While some people agree with this reasoning, others do not concur. Those opposing hold the opinion that by legalizing marijuana, the illegal use of the drug will continue to rise. It will become more difficult for law enforcement to distinguish between those who are using marijuana for medical purposes and those who abuse the drug for their own personal pleasures.

“I think there are plenty of options for



Hollywood Medical Marijuana
Congress recently legalized medical marijuana in Washington DC. While some feel like this is a great step in revolutionizing medicine, others worry about the long-term effects that allowing marijuana use inside the law could warrant.

treatments, so I don’t think you need to use something that can possibly make you addicted,” said sophomore Abby Walker.

However, this bill which was approved by the DC Council was not passed in its entirety by Congress. While the idea of growing marijuana was up in the air, originally, Congress

declined the ability for individuals to grow it themselves.

“It’s a good thing that Congress is not allowing people to grow their own marijuana because that would be abused by illegal marijuana users,” said sophomore Emily Colon.

Instead of the home-growing option that

could create problems for government officials, Washington, DC will have licensed companies distribute the drug to patients. Each dispensary will be limited to the growth of 95 marijuana plants, in order to stay within the federal law prohibiting the planting of 100 plants by a single dispensary. They will be placed throughout DC for patients to purchase the drug. However, the locations of these dispensaries have to go through somewhat of a process.

These locations cannot be finalized until residents in the area have an opportunity to protest against having it near their homes. In addition, companies have to keep in mind that these dispensaries may not be within 300 feet of any school in the district.

“It’s a good thing to consider the proximity to the school because then no student could get it but the fact that they considered it isn’t realistic, since they would find a way to get it anyway,” said senior Kim Boeckmann.

Even though the marijuana bill has become a law in DC, some believe this law will not last long due to the possibility of an increase in the abuse of marijuana. Whether or not the use of the drug for treatments will be worth the trouble is still to come. The long term effects probably won’t be discovered for at least a few years down the road.

“I could see this law facing lots of opposition because people could find ways to abuse it,” said junior Michael Speer.

Club brings new buddies for all types of students

Friendships blossom as kids from different social circles are brought together

By Caitlin Stevens

Journalism 1

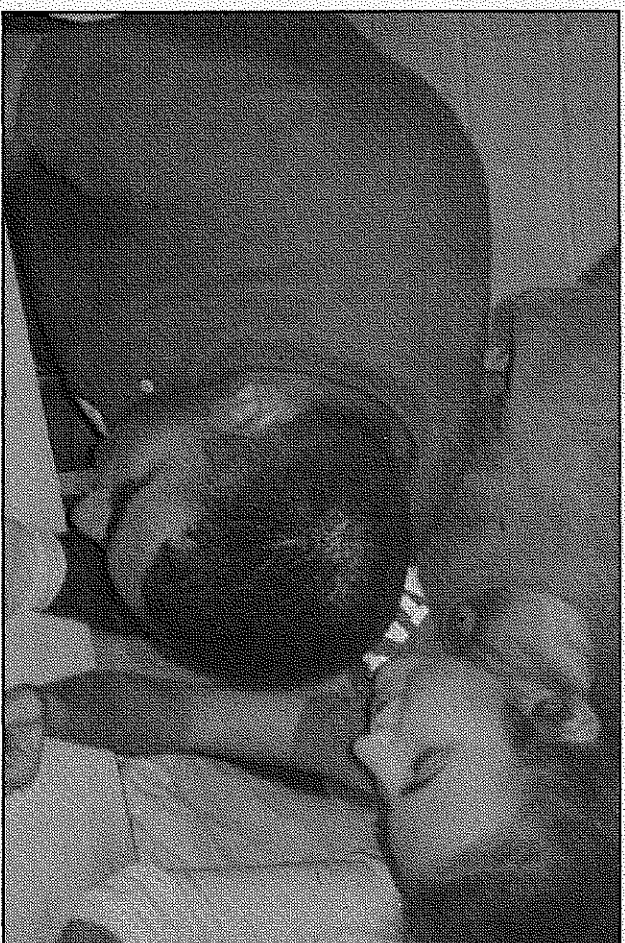
From volunteering to bringing food to those who don't have homes and helping veterans who fought for our country, Buddies Club members expanded their reach into the community this year.

The club's goal is for special education and general education students to get to know one another, in order to promote a positive social environment among all Spartans.

"The meaning of Buddies Club is that it brings students together who might not have come together before and it tears down differences and makes everyone come together as one person," said Special Education teacher Lori Posner, one of the leaders of the club.

Buddies Club provides a place for people to be themselves and make new friends.

"I can only speak for myself," said senior Madison McKenna, who is helping out this year with the club as part of her Capstone Project, "but Buddies Club and volunteering is very positive and rewarding. I can only assure that other students share those feelings."



Kristina Scollins

Seniors Josef Newton and Caitlin Arneson work on a project during a Buddies Club meeting. This club brings together all types of students in order to create new friendships.

The positive atmosphere of the club, which meets every other Wednesday in the cafeteria, starts with members celebrating

well.

"It energizes me to see smiles on the students' faces when they help out others and make new friends," said Kay Rizzuto, co-sponsor of Buddies Club.

Meetings often feature over 100 attendees, far more than when Rizzuto and Special Education Department colleague Tim Spicer came up with the idea two years ago.

"I think the club's influence has been even greater this year than it was in its first year," said Spicer. "We have more kids participating and I can see a more positive attitude in the students. I teach and the other students that interact with them throughout the day."

Spicer spends a lot of his spare time behind the scenes working with the local organizations to get special guest speakers for the meetings and to decide what projects to do.

Members agree that the benefits of the Buddies Club are far-reaching and long-lasting.

"It brings people together all over and helps people who need it, and does great things for other people," said junior Katie Goerlinger.

DeMarr celebrates holidays with VP

By Eleanor Lamb

Features Editor

While the vast majority of the student body was pushing through unwanted homework and dreading the upcoming school week, junior Anna DeMarr was excitedly waiting to meet Vice President Joe Biden.

DeMarr received this rare honor because her uncle, Darrell DeMarr, holds a position at the Naval Observatory, which manages the Vice President's home. Her uncle got an invitation to Biden's Christmas Party, and was allowed to bring a guest.

"It was a really good opportunity that not many people get to have," said DeMarr.

DeMarr was fortunate enough to join her uncle for this exciting occasion. The two of them traveled to Biden's residence in Washington, D.C.

"We waited in a line, and Biden was there with his wife, Jill, at the door. We shook his hand, then hers," said DeMarr. Although DeMarr had never met a famous person before, she was not nervous when she met the Vice President and his wife face-to-face. DeMarr had braced herself for meeting this important political figure of the time by running through their greeting many times in her head.

"I wasn't nervous. He has a bigger role to play in society, but he's still just another person," said DeMarr.

Though DeMarr was impressed by the casual, cozy feel of the house, she was especially struck by a hallway that opened up into the larger mingling room. The hallway was lined by pictures of Biden's family and work that they had done.

"His grandkids' art was on the walls. There was crayon work and photos of them," said DeMarr. "It made the Vice President seem more normal."

The hallway ended, opening up to a large room which was finely decorated for the holiday party and held many of the Vice President's favorite pictures. Along with famous historical paintings, the walls were adorned with family photos of his wife and children.

After meeting with the Bidens, DeMarr and her uncle enjoyed a party, which was located in a large room. A huge Christmas tree adorned the room, and the party was taking place around it.

"It had a very family oriented. I liked the homey feel of the house. It was comfortable, but it wasn't like a rich person's house," said DeMarr.

DeMarr was relieved to find that she was not the only teen there. There was a broad spectrum of guests, whose ages ranged from small child to young adult.

"A lot of people had their wives and kids. There were a couple of teenagers from Maryland, and we talked about school and sports," said DeMarr.

DeMarr had a pleasant time at the party and experienced the thrill of meeting someone famous for the first time at the Vice President's Christmas party. While she enjoyed meeting Biden, she wishes this will not be her last encounter with a famous person and hopes she will meet another well-known figure soon.

"I feel lucky," said DeMarr, "It was an experience to remember."



WorldNews

Biden often reaches out to his community through hosting gatherings, such as the holiday party junior Anna DeMarr attended in December.

Senior proudly serves his country

Cervantez displays his dedication by enlisting in US Army

By Rita Zevallos

Senior Staff Writer

Freedom is not free. Every year, around 180,000 people join the United States military to work, fight, and possibly die for the defense of our country and conservation of its ideals. Senior Jaymz Cervantez is one of them.

Cervantez recently enlisted with the United States Army. On August 1, he will ship out to Army Basic Training at Fort Benning, Georgia.

He is currently going through a rigorous training program that will prepare him for his job selection as an Airborne Ranger. In the future, he wants to go to Officer Candidate School so he can eventually become an officer.

"I plan on making the Army my career," said Cervantez.

Cervantez has wanted to join the Army since his childhood, looking up to his father, who served in the Army as well. Growing up on Fort Meade and Fort Jackson, he played soldier with his childhood 'military brat' friends and dressed up in his Battle Dress

Uniform. He has always pictured himself going into the Army as soon as he finished high school.

"I wanted to be in the Army because of the values that the Army teaches and runs by," said Cervantez.

The 'Army values' are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. They have been an intrinsic part of the Army since its beginning.

When Cervantez was sworn in, he acknowledged these values as he repeated an Oath of Enlistment. By doing this, he promised to protect this nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and to support the U.S. Constitution.

"It was a very powerful feeling to be saying that oath," said Cervantez.

Besides his commitment to the Army, Cervantez also looks forward to the opportunities for adventure, travel, and experience in the career.

His family is very proud of him. His father, in particular, is very involved, helping Cervantez train and prepare himself. Cervantez frequently wears his Class A

"I have grown up in the Army and have done more in my life already than most people will ever do. I would love...to do even more."

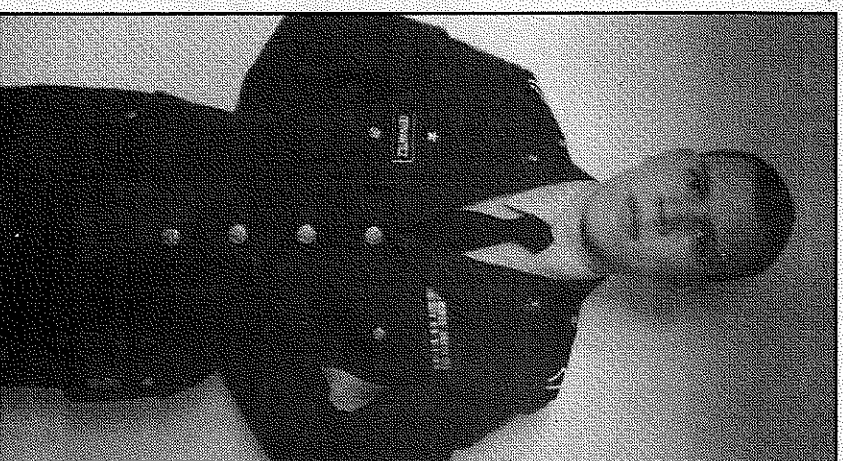
—Jaymz Cervantez, Senior

uniform when he has JROTC, and often gets glances or nods of approval from people who pass by him.

"I feel pride and honor when I put on my uniform and wear it," said Cervantez.

Cervantez believes the United States military has an important and necessary role in the world: it keeps peace and protects countries that cannot defend themselves. He is proud of the opportunity to become part of that effort.

"I have grown up in the Army and have done more in my life already than most people will ever do," said Cervantez. "I would love to continue to do even more."



Courtesy of Jaymz Cervantez

Senior Jaymz Cervantez enlisted in the U.S. military and plans on making a career out of his service in the Army. He is currently going through rigorous training to prepare.



7 SWE

MUSIC WASHES
DUST OFF

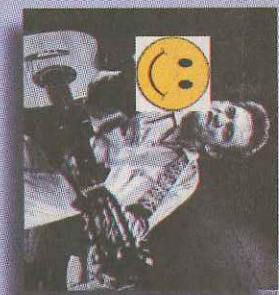
OLD

By Kelly Carlin
Oracle Editor

There's a reason something is called classic. Dictionary.com



defines classic as a thing of the highest quality, serving as a guide, or of historical renown. Classic movies, classic cars, classic rock. The reason things are defined this way is because there's no other way to describe them. To put it simply, they have class. In 1956, Elvis Presley burst on to the music scene and



rock and roll was born. Over the following thirty years, it would continue to grow and create some of the greatest musical artists to ever exist. These thirty years have substantial evidence but also cause me to beg the question: what happened to great rock and roll? The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin, The Ramones; there's a reason everyone knows these names. These people were visionaries, the stuff of legend. Artists like these defined what it meant to make music.



Without the classics, there wouldn't be any rock bands today. Modern bands take influence from those who first paved the way and created the genre. Every guitarist hails Jimi Hendrix, every drummer wants to be Neil Peart. It doesn't matter if you're 12 or 70, you can tell when something rocks. The originals take names like "the King," "the Boss," "the Chairman of the Board;" not every artist gets this honor. There can be only one King, and that name has been taken.



By: Anna Lehman & Sara Lepley
Oracle Staff Writers

M

Reusing, rephrasing, redoing. remaking. Welcome to the new generation of music.

Not to be confused with making a cover, sampling, taking bits and pieces of old songs and incorporating them into new music—and it is becoming increasingly popular in the music industry, especially in pop music.

Many listeners fear that using another artist's song as a base will cause the new artist to lose originality and just resort to filling in the blanks with a couple different lyrics. Skeptics are also concerned that the old song will be ruined by the new versions.

While these worries are not unwarranted, listeners should also see the benefits of sampling. Mixing is a way to merge two generations of music together and often blends different genres of music, such as rock and pop.

If you like the beat or melody of any Kid Cudi song, you might want to pick up a Band of Horses CD. Many of their beats have made their way into Cudi's music. Cudi payed tribute to what he regarded as one of his favorite bands through his song "The Prayer," a rendition of "The Funeral" by B.O.H. Cudi modernized the song by taking the guitar and piano riffs and introducing

Rascal Flatt

MUSIC

**TOP 10
Songs
of 2010**

“I want from the soul the everyday life.”
~Berthold Auerbach

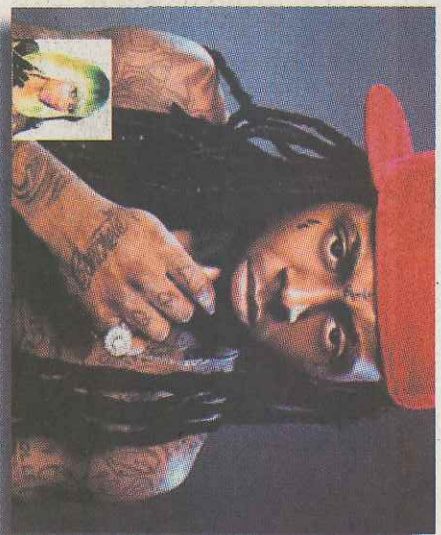


IXED

...some of his electronic beats and his own lyrics. As Cudi benefits by being able to use a premade beat, his popularity garners more attention for B.O.H., who people might not have know about otherwise. Even popular hip hop band The Black Eyed Peas, who've have been together since 1995, have figured out the secret to being different. The Peas have often intermixed old classics into newer ones, for instance songs "Pump It" made of off song "Misirlou" by Dick Dale.

Kanye West has become quite popular over the years for his bold songs that mix rap and hip hop, marking him as a music icon. Ready with the newest trends in music, West is not new to "copying and pasting" different generations as well as genres.

For example, his hit song "Stronger" is actually a mock up of synthpop and techno band Daft Punk's song "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger." West does an amazing job combing two opposite genres to create an amazing electronica-infused hip-hop love child. "Stronger" became West's third number-one single, winning a Grammy Award for Best Rap Solo Performance, proving that reusing songs does pay off.



Remember when no one could touch this with MC Hammer? Or dougie like Cali Swagg District? This is what the music industry has brought us: CHANGE.



"You don't know what good music is!" My dad constantly tells me this whenever he hears me singing a song from our generation. Most parents think that our music is not up to their standards; however, this is what



NEW

By: Danielle Mazzuchi & Amanda Pearson
Oracle Staff Writers



comes with progression. Nicki Minaj has been compared to the old school Lil Kim. Whether it's her lyrical flow or her style, Lil Kim has not backed down, especially in her retaliation with her Black Friday single. In mentioning Minaj's name, Oracleite Amanda Pearson is the first to jump for joy. Her obsession with Minaj has been posted all over her



computer screen, as well as temporary shrines on the whiteboard and a homemade sweatshirt that says, "I love Nicki Minaj."

It's easy to say that the music that has been passed down through past generations have made an impact on the music people listen to today. Everything from beats and lyrics to the way performers dress when they performing illustrates both the differences and similarities of their unique styles.

In class we bump new music like Minaj, Cali Swagg, Drake, and Wiz Khalifa. However, in having feuds between old and new school, we took a trip back in the day and started playing Notorious Big, Kid n Play, Boyz II Men, and Run DMC.



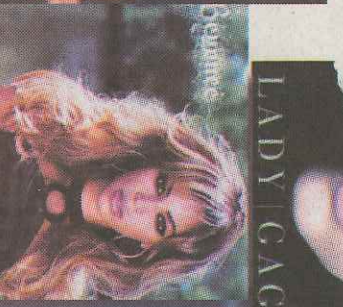
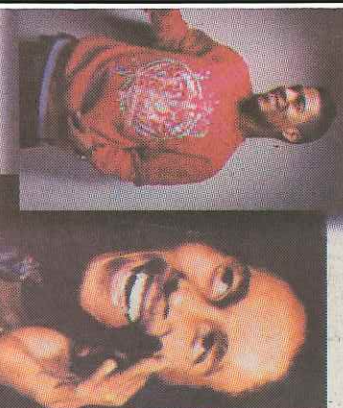
are



LADY GAGA



All For Nothing



Young siblings make bank

By Kyle Rushton

Oracle Staff Writer

Senior Andy and freshman Amy Young have realized that money certainly does not grow on trees.

Upon this realization, the siblings created a successful lawn mowing service about five years ago. Although their work slows down during the winter, they receive plenty of calls in the summer months from people requesting their services.

"We're busy during the summer, and September and June," said Amy, "but not as much during the school year."

The brother-sister duo controls the lawn service along with a few neighborhood kids who attend private schools.

Working with others is definitely more beneficial to their work load; this system allows them to split up the labor and fill in for each other when needed.

"If one person is busy then another person can step in and help out," said Andy.

The Youngs' friends and family help advertise their business by recommending the company and spreading information by word of mouth.

The service is a convenient one, in that Andy and Amy are able to choose when and how long they work.

"I can work as much as I want and it's fairly successful," said Andy.

The siblings are reasonably committed to their job and are able to efficiently balance school, sports, and their business.

Both Andy and Amy swim for their local swim team during the summer, which creates a challenge for their time management. However, their ability to prioritize their activities ensures their ongoing commitment to their customers.

"There have been many times that the lawns have had to take priority over their personal plans," said Carol Young, mother of Andy and Amy.

The quality of their work has definitely won the loyalty of many customers in their neighborhood, as they are very much thankful for Andy and Amy's service.

"Many of their customers have approached us [their parents] and told us how much they appreciate the kids and the job they have done," said Carol.

Depending on the yard size, the hardworking pair places a price of 20 to 25 dollars for each lawn they mow.

While others may spend the well-earned money the minute they place their hands on it, the siblings know better than to spend it all in one place.



Carol Young
Andy and Amy Young work hard mowing and trimming weeds for their lawn service business. The two have been working on lawns together for five years. Their springs and summers are the busiest times, but they enjoy the help of many kids in their neighborhood.

"I save it all up for when I go out with friends over the summer," said Amy.

After holding the business for five years, the Youngs have their system down to a science. Their lawn mowers have an automatic drive in order to help them mow easily and reduce the amount of elbow grease put into the work.

"We have two lawn mowers that we use," said Amy. "Andy uses my mom's van to transport them."

Amy is the only girl among a group of boys working to mow the lawns, but all of them work well together and get along.

"We know them and we've grown up with them, so we trust them," said Andy.

Sophomore displays superb memory

Leibrandt employs unique photographic memory in everyday life

By Sam Perlestein

Features Editor

Like a large portable filing cabinet sophomore Jenifer Leibrandt's photographic memory allows her to remember almost every thought and everything she has ever read.

Leibrandt's photographic memory not only helps her get the top grades in her classes but also helps her broaden her mind in the world literature. Leibrandt can't imagine life without this ability. However, it wasn't until the fifth grade that she noticed she was different.

"I quoted sentences from the textbook," said Leibrandt. Her teacher and classmates were shocked at this amazing feat and Leibrandt decided to embrace her new found talent instead of hide her difference.

She started to use her memory to help her read even quicker by taking two pages at a time in her mind like a picture. She could use that to help her read more than three books at a time. Now on average she reads roughly 28 books a month and in the summer she can read 40 a month.

With all those stories floating around in her head most would think she would become easily confused. Leibrandt has a busy schedule, with school and crew in the spring, but

with her photographic memory she never worries if she'll forget the story of any of the books she reads.

"I love how it allows me to read a book and then pick up the sequel maybe months or years later and still remember what I read," said Leibrandt.

But for Leibrandt, her photographic memory can also be a burden. Most people are able to quickly discard information that they don't want to remember, Leibrandt can't.

"When I read something and want to get it out of my head it is not [a gift]," said Leibrandt. "It makes it harder to think and it clutters my brain."

Her photographic memory may have some limitations but the benefits outweigh them greatly. Aside from school and reading, she also can crush anyone who dares to challenge her at memory games or puzzles.

"My parents have learned not to challenge me to those types of games," said Leibrandt.

Out of all the perks her memory gives her Leibrandt would still choose her ability to read quickly and remember everything more than the other perks.

"Everyone wants to escape to the world of make believe," said Leibrandt.



Courtesy of Jenifer Leibrandt
Sophomore Jenifer Leibrandt reads a book, one of many she works through a week. Leibrandt has the unique gift of a photographic memory, and can recall any information she reads.

Turkson and Assante go Goo Goo Goo for Ghana

Seniors' Capstone project turns into nonprofit organization for orphanage

By Nicole Brigham

Page One Editor

Most seniors spend their last year of high school worrying about college applications and hanging out with their friends. For seniors Nshira Turkson and Stephanie Assante, it has a lot more meaning.

The senior duo started a project that helps orphans in Ghana called Goo Goo for Ghana. What started off as a marketing project turned into their senior Capstone, and now a nonprofit organization.

The girls collected toys, clothes, and school supplies for children in an orphanage in Ghana. The project also had some special ties because Turkson's aunt is on the board of the orphanage.

They never expected a school marketing project to gain so much attention. The girls have been in local newspapers for their project already. Even though they never expected their project to blow up the way it did, they are excited that people support them.

"It got a little crazy, we didn't know it would take off like this," said Turkson.

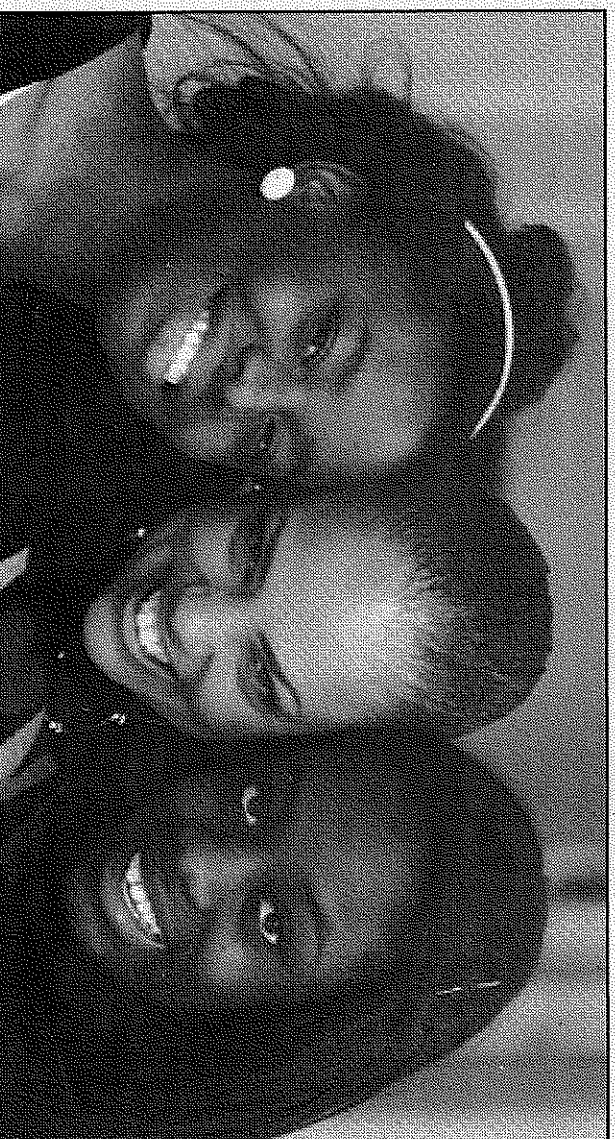
They got the news out about their project by posting it on the FCPS website, putting up flyers around the school, and spreading the word through their church. A big project like this takes a lot of the girls' time, it is a wonder that they can keep up with it all.

"I don't really sleep ever, that's probably part of it," said Turkson. "I also learned to balance things."

Now, not only are WS student donating, but the community is getting involved too. The girls have had so much success that their project keeps growing.

"Goo Goo for Ghana] has reached a lot of people, and is still continuing to grow," said Assante.

Since starting their project, they have turned it into a nonprofit organization they call Born With Love, which will help Ghana's poor families in addition to the orphanage they already support.

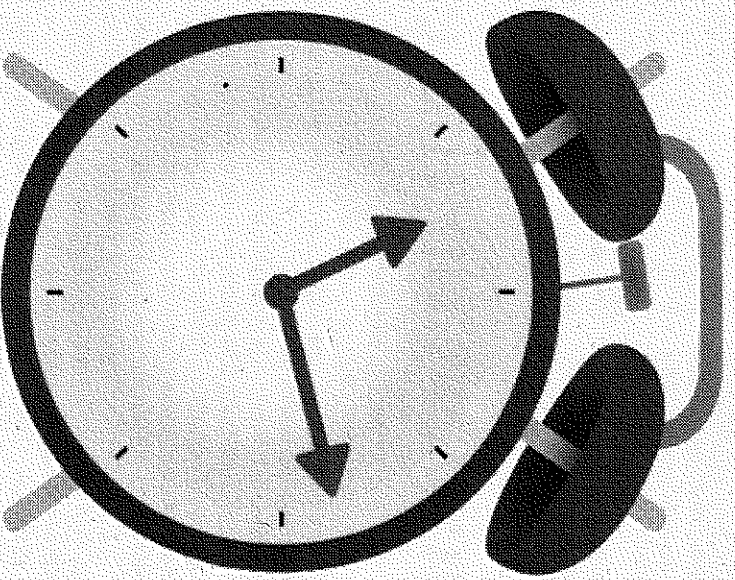
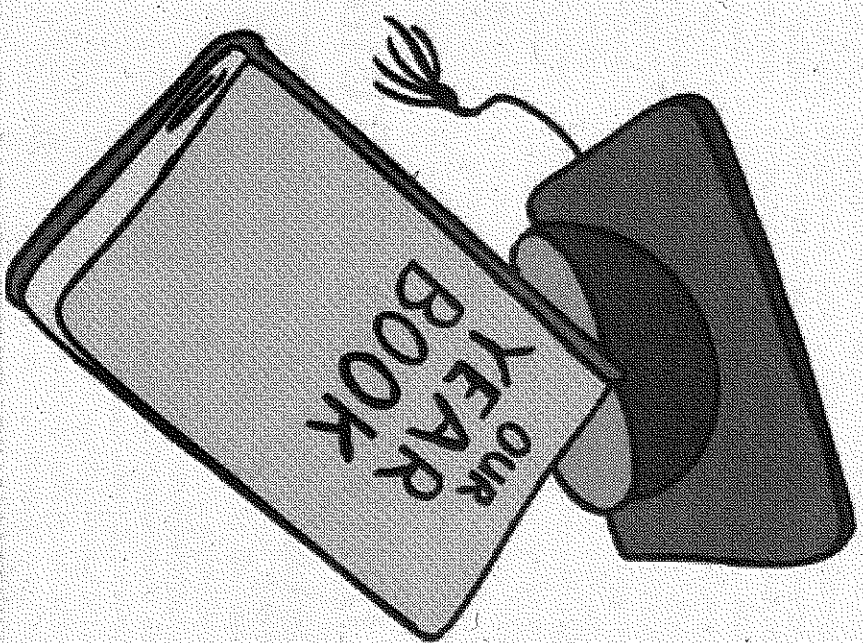


Courtesy of Vera Woodson
Seniors Stephanie Assante (left) and Nshira Turkson (right) pose with former Marketing teacher Vera Woodson. The nonprofit organization they founded called Goo Goo for Ghana began as a marketing project, but soon turned into their Capstone project and has been expanding ever since.

Turkson even took a trip to visit the orphanage the girls are donating these unfortunate children. As the girls go off to college they still plan to support their cause and keep Born With Love alive.

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‘King’s Speech’ leads Oscar race

By Kelly Carlin

Oracle Editor

It’s tough to be a king. Even tougher when you have a major speech to give and you can’t get a word out without stuttering. In “The King’s Speech,” King George has just that problem.

The buzz worthy movie (nominated for the Best Picture at the upcoming Academy Awards) features a stellar cast overcoming various stressful obstacles.

George (played by Colin Firth in his best form) can’t speak without a stutter. He’s also next second in line for the crown. On the cusp of World War Two, George must find a quick fix for his stutter in order to inspire and rally the people of England. His wife (Helena Bonham Carter) takes matters into her own hands.

Enter Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush), a speech therapist with unconventional methods. At first, George is hesitant to embrace Logue’s techniques at improving speech, but as the film goes on, he begins to see the light. The film includes a playful montage of George learning how to speak without his stutter, a scene that creatively illustrates his progress. As the movie goes on, Logue shows George that he indeed does have a voice and the ability to use it.

After various complications, George is met with a larger challenge: the throne. As King, he is forced to make a speech on the radio to inspire the people of England before the impending war. George is then met with his most difficult hurdle: the speech itself.

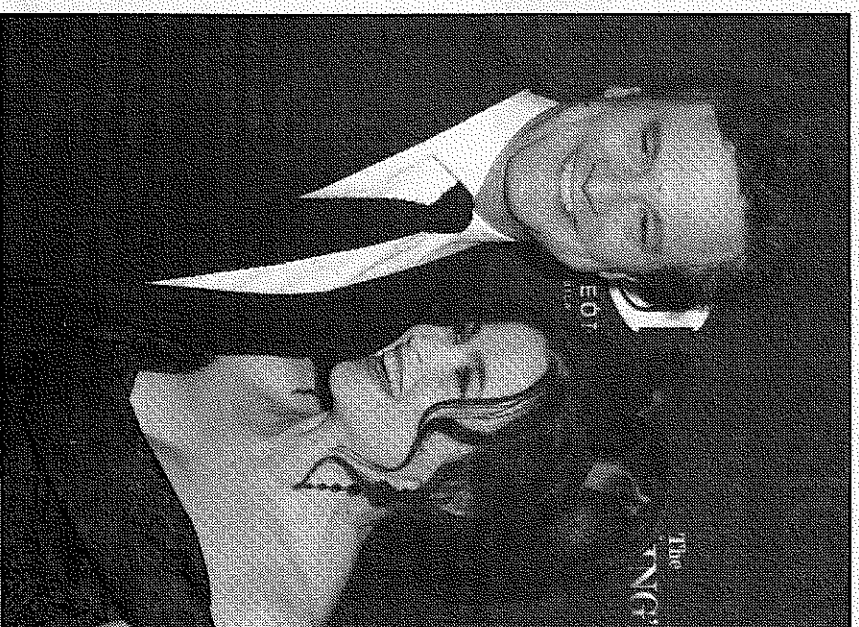
Unlike most period pieces, this movie was interesting to me and not just my grandparents. The film has no explosions,

intense action sequences or so called “razzle dazzle,” but it manages to keep the audience’s attention through magic of its own. The cast is impeccable. Colin Firth shines, letting the audience feel all of it right along with him; when he stutters, you struggle. You don’t feel as if are challenges are not authentic. Firth makes the character real and his own. Geoffrey Rush is also great. As the king’s foil, he brings the comic relief but also inspires Firth to reach his goals.

Director Tom Hooper also does his part to bring the film to its high points. The camera work is phenomenal and the film’s structure helps it to seem flawless. With emphasis on microphones, the element of speech brings the film to its elegant pinnacle.

The film is an impressive feat. “The King’s Speech” leads the Oscar race with 12 nominations, more than its biggest competitors “True Grit,” which earned ten nominations and “The Social Network,” which is tied with “Inception” for eight total nods. Colin Firth is the favorite for Best Actor, while the work as a whole has a fighting chance to sweep the awards ceremony.

While Firth won the Golden Globe for Best Actor, the bigger question is still to come: Will “The King’s Speech” take the Oscar for Best Picture? In my opinion, it deserves the crown.



Richard Goldschmidt

“The King’s Speech” stars Colin Firth and Helena Bonham Carter and the king and queen of England on the verge of World War II. Both actors are nominated for Oscars for their impeccable performances in the film, one of the year’s best.

‘Funny’ commercials miss the mark with viewers

By Rita Zevallos

Senior Staff Writer

Keep your hands off my mama, keep your hands off my Doritos.

Some commercials are more than just commercials. Some commercials will live for years on Youtube, in tweets, in pop culture references, and in inside jokes.

This is why, last month, TBS showed the ten funniest commercials of 2010, as voted by the viewers of Very Funny Ads.

The host was Isaiah Mustafa, known for his role as the “man your man could be” in the Old Spice commercial, which was ranked third of the year.

Here are a few of the highlights.

One of the best was a commercial for Huggies’ Little Movers with a cute toddler, wearing a diaper that looks like jeans, who swaggers around the playground cockily. Although I doubt the utility of denim diapers, it is an ‘awww’-inspiring image. The advertisement was ranked as number six.

Number ten was a commercial for the Kia Soul car, in which three hamsters sing that “You can go with this”—a cardboard box—“or you can go with that”—a bright lime



Platform

Isaiah Mustafa, more commonly known as “the man your man could smell like,” found fame with his Old Spice commercial that ran this year. In a recent special, Mustafa hosted TBS’s countdown of the funniest television commercials of 2010, which included his Old Spice ad.

green Kia Soul. Evocative of “Alvin and the Chipmunks,” it was worth a chuckle. Number five, an original advertisement for the Young Director Award website, featured a mother driving in a car with her daughter in the back seat when she is pulled

‘Liars’ keep viewers on the edge

By Sara Lepley

Entertainment Editor

It’s no secret that ABC Family constantly chugs out trendy, yet mediocre dramas that are a breeding ground for poor acting and desperate plot twists, but “Pretty Little Liars” actually has some potential.

The television drama is molded off the book series of the same name by Sara Shepard. The fact that the series has basis on a preset group of novels should give the show structure and direction, with a set beginning and end.

Despite complaints that the actresses do not look the way their characters are depicted in the books, the show itself adheres pretty closely to the original story. The majority of the plot and even most of the dialogue is taken directly from the books and ABC Family does a good job of not deleting or adding minor characters.

On a scale of 1 to “Forrest Gump,” the acting deserves about a three. The actors do a pretty good job with what they have to work with. In both the book and the show everything that comes out of Alison’s mouth is forced and awkward, especially since most of her quips come in the form of text messages. Shepard tried so hard to illustrate Alison as the vision of perfection with a touch of malice that she forgot that Ali is supposed to be a real person.

Acting aside, the show is pretty fun. It creates a guilty pleasure watch as we viewers observe the title characters stumble over the dramas and relationships that all high schoolers deal with, enhanced by the addition of “A.” There is so much going on in the plot that you won’t want to miss a beat.

More than anything else the show offers suspense. Lots and lots of suspense. The girls receive creepy messages from

over for speeding. The stereotypical police officer asks the girl whether mommy is in a bit of a hurry, and she mouths, “that’s not my ‘mommy,’” and shows him a sign that reads: ‘HELP.’ As the policeman pulls the woman out of the car, the daughter smiles: she is born to create drama.

Voted first was a commercial for Drench bottled water, made in the United Kingdom. A few guys have made a sort of rat maze for their pet goldfish, Mr. Memory. Whenever the goldfish becomes tired, they add more Drench water into the maze.

All in all, the commercials were nothing special. Although some were innovative, none of them made me laugh out loud, and they did not have the long-lasting quality that is necessary for the true top commercials.

I have to wonder about the judgment of the voters of Very Funny Ads, where most of the highly-viewed commercials feature either bikini-clad women or bodily functions.

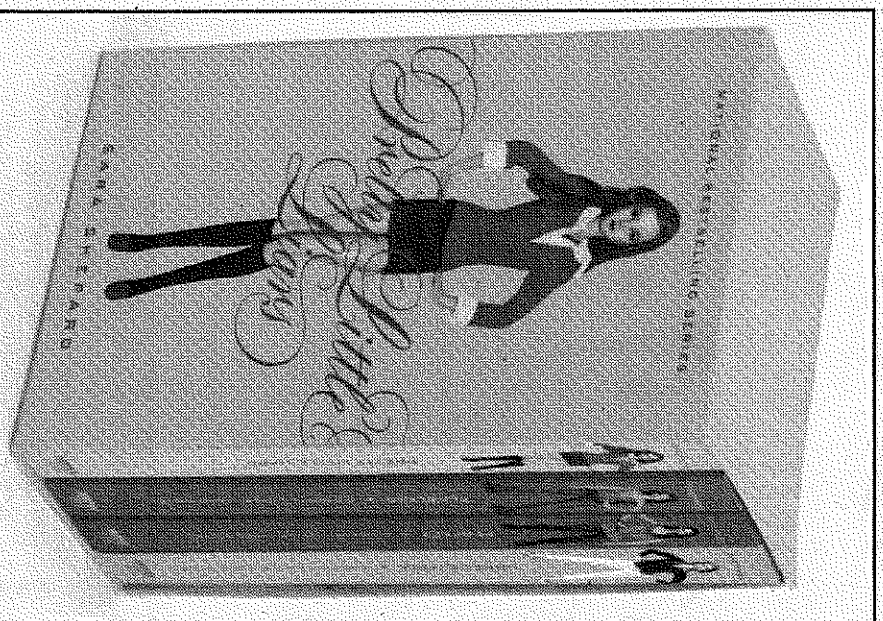
Perhaps the level of humor could be best epitomized by that of Mustafa’s jokes: “That last spot came from Denmark. Well, we’re not in Denmark, which is unfortunate, because I could really go for a Danish.”

“A” (whose identity has not yet been revealed in the show) via text, fortune cookie and lipstick messages on the mirror. It doesn’t hurt that it is a murder mystery, so there is always an aura of danger.

While it is debatable if the show or book series is better, one thing that shines in the show is the effects. I can’t vouch for lighting or camera angles, but I can say the costume designer deserves some serious snaps.

Not only are the wardrobes perfectly tailored to fit each character’s personality, but they are outfits that every girl can envy. The music is also pretty decent, even if it’s not what you have on your iPod.

The show may not be Emmy-worthy, but it’s something to look forward to on Monday nights and always gives fans something to talk about.



ABC Family has hit a stride with its second season of the popular mystery drama “Pretty Little Liars,” based on the book series by Sara Shepard, pictured above. The plot focuses on four high school girls with all kinds of drama (right).

Alpha Mom



ABC Family

Tradition never graduates

By Nicole Brigham

Page One Editor

She shoots and she scores! The WS Girls Varsity basketball team is dominating the Patriot District once again this year. From star scorers to an amazing team defense, they have the whole package.

They are proving to be a talented and hardworking team. Much of this is due to having such a dedicated coach. Bill Gibson has been coaching at WS for over 20 years. Last year, he retired as a teacher but continues to coach the girl's varsity basketball team. His team appreciates all of the time and effort he puts in.

"[Gibson]'s passionate about the games," said junior Emily Esau. Although he sometimes comes across as a yeller, it's all in good sportsmanship.

"[Gibson] pushes us hard, and he yells, but only to make us do our best," said freshman Amy Berglund.

So far the team has only lost one game, and it was a close one at 49-52. The teammates have their differences but they put it all aside to be the winning team they are.

"We are good and all like to play basketball, hopefully we go as far

as last year," said Berglund.

The fans are hoping the girls make it as far as last year as well. The girls made it to the Final Four and got to play in Richmond at the VCU Civic Center. The fans were so pumped they painted their faces and wore crazy outfits to support the girls. The fans also got to take a spirit bus to the Richmond game and sported Final Four matching t-shirts.

Varsity has 2 new freshmen on the team this year. Although they are new to high school, they are not new to basketball. Berglund has proved that freshman can keep up with the upperclassmen. The team has taken the new freshman, Berglund and Olivia Shipman, under their wings.

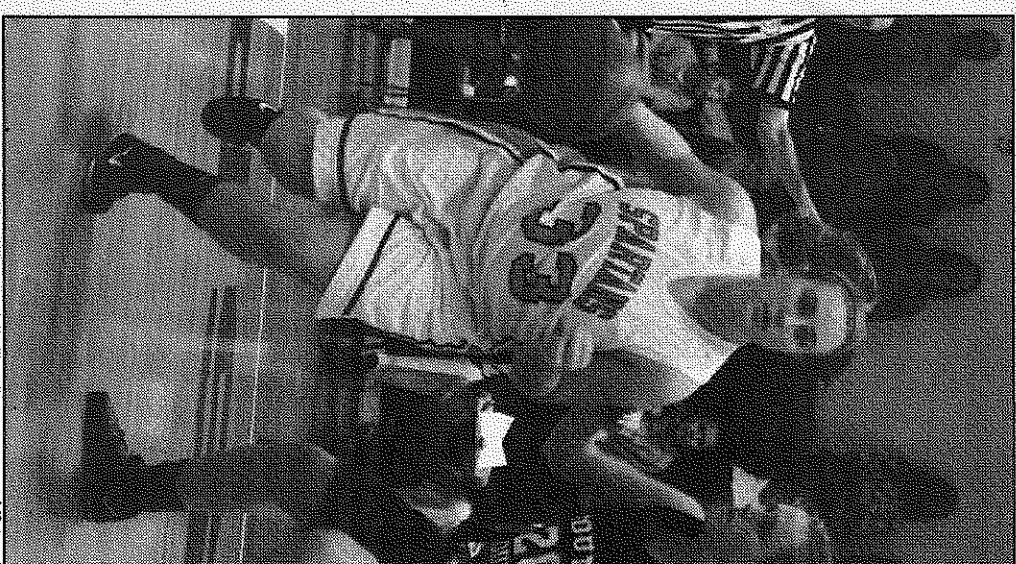
"They are doing really well, a little bit shy, but they are starting to break out of their shells," said Esau.

Being a freshman on a varsity team can be intimidating. The freshmen on the team this year are adjusting well and are an asset to the team.

"It's fun. We have to do some of the jobs no one wants to do, but that's part of being a freshman," said Berglund. "I look up to the older girls."



Junior Logan Battle fights for a basket during a game against Anandale High School. The Lady Spartans won this game 59-36.



Senior Emily Esposito dribbles the ball down the court in a game against South County Secondary School, which the Spartans won 56-30.

New equipment makes gym classes more durable Replaced floor and other recent additions give underclassmen more fun in PE

By Sam Goldwasser

Managing Editor

Physical Education used to be a class to be dreaded, but now thanks to our school's new equipment it is one to look forward to. The auxiliary gym used to be a dark, dreaded place that no student looked forward to being in. Now, there is a new floor, Nintendo Wiis, and stationary bikes in a line against the wall.

"I love the new floor," said sophomore Sara Junnah, "it feels so much softer on your feet when you run, and I fall less."

The bikes and Wiis give students who are not good at the traditional running/throwing/kicking aspect of gym class an opportunity to involve themselves in other ways.

"The new equipment provides us with more opportunities to have fun in class. I actually enjoy gym now," said sophomore Ola Alashammami.

Students have gym teacher Shari Frank and the PTSA to thank for the new and improved equipment. Frank wanted to improve the quality of her classes and took her proposal to the PTSA.

"I wrote a grant proposal to the PTSA for the Nintendo Wiis and they came through with the money to supply them."



Students in the Auxiliary Gym now have the opportunity to use new stationary bikes during their PE classes.

said Frank. The new equipment does not just add fun for the students, but gives them a way to enjoy sports without worrying about

ridicule from their peers.

"They [Nintendo Wiis] give students a different way to interact and be active during class," said Frank.

The new Wiis also provide students with virtual sports equipment. More students are able to participate in an activity at the same time, then they were before the Wiis came to our school.

"The Wiis were great for archery," said Frank, "because some kids could do archery on the Wii and others could use the actual bows. Our school has really great archery equipment."

Frank makes sure she uses the new improved equipment as much as possible, incorporating and adding it to her lesson plans.

"I have students use them to play things like badminton and tennis," said Frank.

Students who are no longer in gym remember a time before the new bikes, floor, and Wiis. It was a time when there were hardly enough basketballs or volleyballs to go around.

"I saw all the new equipment the other day and was really jealous," said senior Eileen Hager. "I kind of wanted to go back to gym just so I could play with a Wii during class. That is so cool."

New Frisbee club flies

By Thomas Ariaie & Andy Gholson

Oracle Staff Writers

It's 175 grams of pure fun.

Ultimate Frisbee is quickly growing into a new trend for students to participate in after school. They meet on the practice field after school to play with each other for about an hour.

"I play Ultimate Frisbee because it is fun and my friends introduced it to me," said senior Tyler Knickerbocker. "We have a lot of fun every week. There's never a day when we don't play."

The club keeps attracting new members because of its laid-back atmosphere, relaxed rules, and camaraderie. People come for a variety of reasons and on a nice day you could typically find upwards of 30 people playing. Students tend to play pickup games and work on perfecting their techniques.

Ultimate has different ways to throw a Frisbee than just the standard backhand. Depending on how the opposing team's defense is covering you, one could throw a hammer (a pass thrown overhead, almost like a baseball) or a forehand.

"I go because is fun to play, it is good exercise, it keeps you in good shape, and sets a precedent for the rest of your life of staying

in shape," said senior Ultimate Frisbee Club member Matt Rigsby.

Ultimate Frisbee has seen a lot of growth in the last ten years, and is one of the world's fastest growing sports. The Ultimate Players Association, the governing body for the sport in the United States, has seen its membership increase 168%, since 2003 to 30,000.

Currently, students just play after school with other kids that are in the club. However, the club is looking to play with other schools in the area.

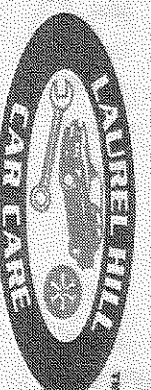
"I'm excited to possibly pursue competition against other schools. I think we can put our team against any other team due to the chemistry we have built during our weekly practices," said senior Jason Tate, president of the Ultimate Frisbee Club.

Even after high school, students would be able to continue playing Ultimate Frisbee. College teams are becoming more and more intense with their competition and number of teams that play. There are over 700 collegiate teams throughout the nation, and this number is constantly growing as the sport starts to receive more attention, fans, and players.

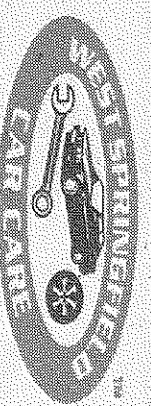
"[Ultimate Frisbee] is good competition and a great interactive sport," said senior Robert Miller. "It's the game of the future."



Senior Paul Belisle jumps to catch a frisbee during a game at a club meeting. The Ultimate Frisbee Club meets every Wednesday on the football field. The game is a fun way for students to blow off steam and play together after school.



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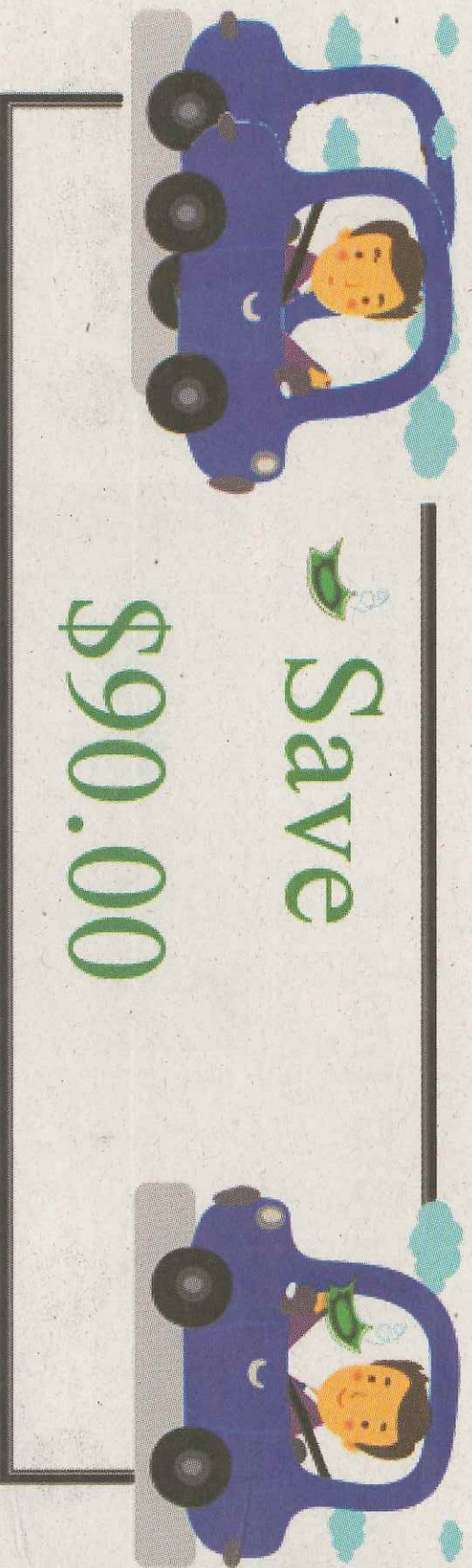
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