

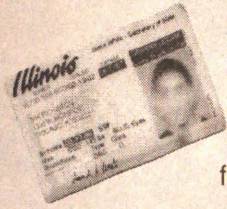
Wildcat Chronicle



West Chicago Community High School

Volume 35, Issue 5

February 2004



New driving restrictions

How will teens react to recent legislation barring teens from driving with friends? PAGE 3



Immigration

Learn about students who are We-go immigrants. PAGE 9



Mexican Folk Dancing

Learn about Mary Carmen Osorio's love for the dance. PAGE 11

Prairie State Exam reveals weaknesses in student body

By Sam West

Although the results of the Prairie State Achievement Exams showed that roughly half of last year's We-go juniors ranked in the "below standards" or "academic warning" categories, both Supt. Dr. Lee Rieck and Principal John Highland aren't surprised.

In fact, they expected these results. Highland attributed the scores to the school's population.

"Any time the population of test takers goes up, the test scores go down," said Highland, adding that it is logical that the scores would also be lower next year, as well.

The other reason why scores were lower is because there is a large amount of students who speak English as a second language, said Rieck.

"It's a very unfair test

for those students who don't speak the English language," Rieck said.

He likened the results to an English-speaking American taking a lengthy test in German.

"We (Americans) are not going to score

curriculum taught.

"If people look only at the test scores," said Rieck, "then they miss all that."

Rieck encouraged people from the area to come and visit the school, to see what We-go is really like.

He said that those in the Chicago area who have a bad image of West Chicago don't have the whole picture.

Highland echoed these sentiments, saying that the scores are an injustice to schools.

"The thing that is disheartening about this is that schools are judged by this test," he said.

Highland also noted that We-go offers many outstanding programs and activities that are not accounted for in the PSAE. Students can also be good test takers or bad test takers, Highland said, and therefore the test does not accurately show the intelligence of the students.

Because the test does not measure a student's growth, Highland said that he is passionately against judging the school based on the test.

"I'm more concerned with showing the growth and progress from one year to another in our curriculum," said Highland.

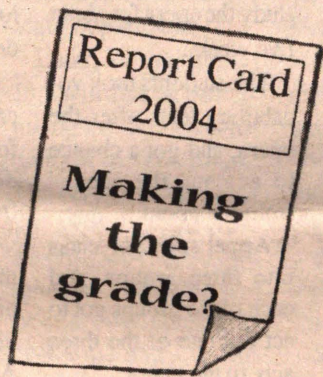
There was one area of academic growth, however. The report cards showed that students scored better than the other subjects on the social studies section of the test.

In fact, only 38 percent of the student body was below standards or at the academic warning level. Rieck said that he

as well no matter how bright we are, because the test is in a foreign language," said Rieck.

Moreover, Rieck said that it is unfair to judge a whole school based solely on test scores.

The test results do not take in to account all of the programs the school offers and the type of



Chronicle editor writes beyond high school

By Kellie Virnich

Community High School senior and Chronicle editor Sam West had his first professionally published article in "Access Learning" magazine's February issue.

"Access Learning" featured West Chicago last year for the government simulation.

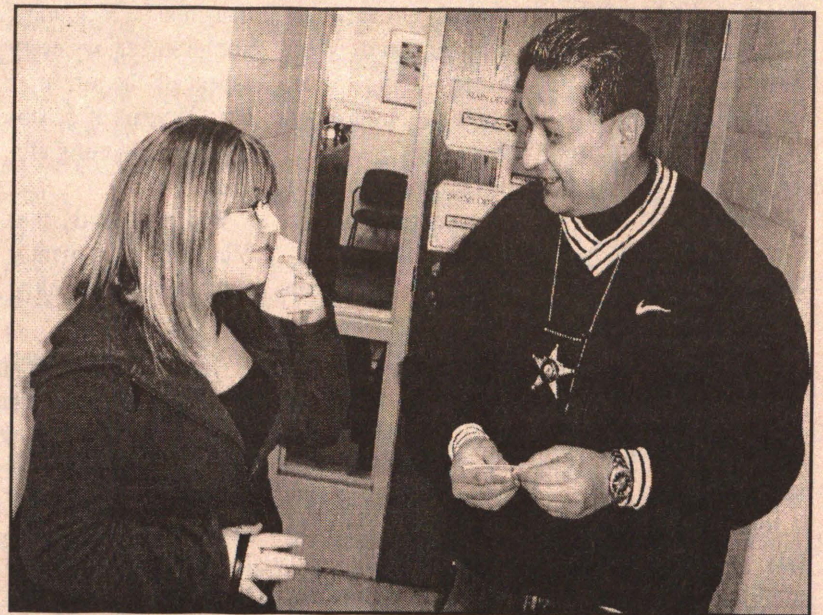
West's government teacher, Mary Ellen Daneels, didn't hesitate in asking him to write the article when Access Learning asked for a student submission.

"There were many students I could have chosen to write the article, but I knew that Sam was one of the best the school had to offer, and that he would represent us well," said Daneels.

The article reveals West's strong opinions about students getting to know their views on political subjects

"I'm glad I got the opportunity, and I really think I got my message across," said West.

Read Sam's article on page 10.



Officer Zepeda, shown here examining junior Nichole Cagnina's I.D., was almost let go because of budget cuts.

Staff Photo

Zepeda keeps job amidst budget cuts

By Kyle Bullis and Mary Beth Selby

We-go almost swept officer Mike Zepeda into the ongoing river of budget cuts that the school is facing, but decided to have him stay in the end.

Last year, the school board initiated a plan to cut about \$1.8 million in school expenditures because the school had sunk into deficit spending, meaning that the amount of income was less than the amount the school was spending.

In an effort to fix this, the Board of Education looked for every way possible to skim away at expenditures without sacrificing too much.

School spending needs to be "minimized without impacting the students," said assistant superintendent of business Gary Grizzafi.

Some of the factors that contributed to the budget overhaul included an increased salary for teachers due to contract negotiations and the costs of different insurance policies have gone up.

The school board is not allowed to raise taxes for the school anymore because of the tax cap, said Grizzafi.

When looking for ways to lower expenditures, the school board focuses on trimming away at programs not critical to the school, such as certain extracurricular activities and programs.

"We want to retain the core delivery of our academic services," said Grizzafi.

The school board also looks at releasing other staff members besides teachers. Zepeda was under consideration for release for the 2004-2005 school year.

"I felt hurt, but I had no control over the situation. I am just the employee. These are times to make tough decisions, and the school is looking at the big picture for cuts," said Zepeda.

At first he only heard rumors of losing his job. When Highland admitted cutting Zepeda's position, he said the cut had nothing to do with Zepeda's job performance.

"I felt about the same as anyone else would when told they would be cut," said Zepeda.

However, after Zepeda had been informed of his position cut, the board received

numerous messages and e-mails petitioning for Zepeda to stay at the school.

"I must have really made an impact on some people, so that was nice," said Zepeda.

A week later at the Feb. 3 Committee-of-the-Whole meeting, the administration announced that Zepeda would not be cut.

For the past three years Zepeda has worked as a school resource officer, monitoring halls, talking to students, and writing reports. Zepeda will now have the choice to continue with his contract for the full five years unless his position is cut sometime in the future.

To him, working at We-go has been important.

"I've loved working at We-go, I love the kids, I enjoy watching them grow, and I try to act as a mentor and role model. I enjoy helping them with important choices and decisions. Some kids are reluctant to approach police officers, and I try to make it easier for them to go to adults for anything, just by being there for them," said Zepeda.

McCarthy catches coaching award

By Kellie Virnich

West Chicago High School's baseball coach, Dan McCarthy, received the award for Assistant Coach of the Year from the Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association (IHSBCA).

The judges unanimously voted for McCarthy, who wasn't even aware that he had been nominated for the award.

"The fact that it was an anonymous vote between the nine judges makes it even better," said McCarthy.

John Walters, the varsity baseball coach, nominated McCarthy, but didn't tell him about it until a week before he found out that he won.

"He is invaluable as my assistant," said Walters. "His knowledge of the game is unmatched."

The award ceremony took place on Feb. 7, at the Hickory Ridge Marriott Hotel in Lisle, part of 10 annual awards given by the IHSBCA.

McCarthy gave much credit to Walters for his award, as well as the other coaches and students he has worked

with, both at West Chicago and the other schools he coached at, including Ottawa Marquette High School, Downer's Grove, Joliet Catholic, and West Chicago's rival, Naperville North High School.

Five of those students later went on to play in the major leagues.

"My job has been made much easier, and so rewarding, because I have always been surrounded by so much talent," said McCarthy, whose overall game record of 479-218 speaks for itself.

He also believes that having coached for so long has contributed to his winning the award.

McCarthy played baseball through high school and college, bringing Lewis University to the National Championship in 1974 under the coaching of a man that he still admires to this day, Gordie Gillespie.

When he was in high school, his own coach, Frank Mariani, was inducted into the IHSBCA Hall of Fame after his team became regional

champions for the first time in over 20 years.

Coaching others in something he loves seemed to be a natural transition for McCarthy, and he still enjoys every aspect of the job after over 25 years of coaching Illinois' young athletes.

Walters said that McCarthy is a mentor and role model for all of his student athletes.

"He has touched many athletes' lives, including mine," said Walters.

McCarthy worked for several years with the assistant coach who won the award last year, Leo Michalak, and said that it was a great experience for him.

In addition to coaching, McCarthy also teaches several marketing and consumer education courses and is West Chicago's High School's director of student activities.

Ladies hold Bunco Bonanza fundraiser

By Kellie Virnich

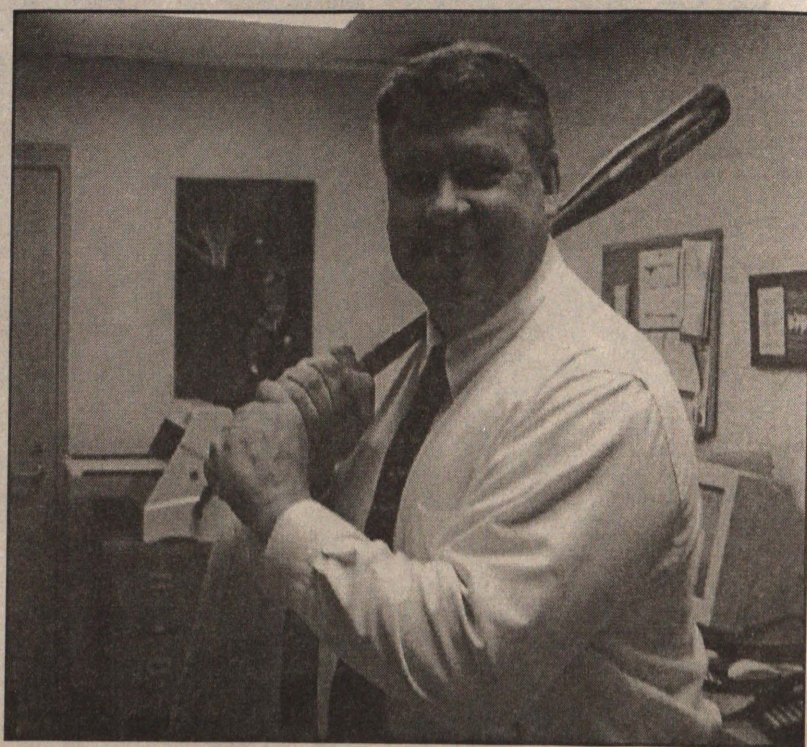
The After Prom Committee Ladies' Night Out is hosting Bunco Bonanza at Community High School on Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. in commons.

All profits from the fundraiser go towards "All Night Long," an adult-chaperoned after prom alternative from 11:30 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. Its goal is to be a substance-free event and a safe place for students to go after prom.

The entrance fee of \$20 includes games and refreshments, and those who would like to attend need to register ahead of time at the school.

Though most of the 80 women who attended last year were mothers of high schoolers, anyone is welcome, including students and staff, said Donna Yorkmark, a committee member.

While the main purpose is to raise money and awareness for "All Night Long," it is also a time for local businesses to advertise their mer-



Staff Photo

Dan McCarthy's coaching career hasn't struck out; he just won the Assistant Coach of the Year award.

French student make preparations for opera

By Andrea Bradley

French 4 students hit a high note during "Samson et Dalila" at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Teacher Marjorie Appel prepared the 14

students by having them study the opera for about five weeks.

The students took vocabulary tests after the opera, and got a chance to act out the scenes from the opera.

Appel split her class into three groups, and each of the groups got to act out one of the three acts in the opera.

She also supplied the students with the opera's script, so the students were able to follow along.

The opera is based on a Bible story about a man named Samson who receives powers from God.

The story goes throughout his life while he loses his powers and regains them again.

"Studying Samson and Dalila has been

pretty fun. I did learn a lot of vocab," said student Sarah Hasse.

The District 94 Education Foundation paid for the trip, so the students were able to go free of charge.

The foundation gave the students an opportunity to study a different kind of music, said Appel.

"I'm really glad I was given the opportunity to see the opera because I really learned a lot, but also got a new experience," said student Melissa Prusko.

Appel enjoyed the play and thought that the opera house was beautiful. Every year, Appel takes her French 4 class to an opera.

"It is a different way of learning French," she said.

Big turnout foreseen for the turnabout

By Mary Beth Selby

Turnabout will be a blast this year, or at least the senior class predicts so.

"It's just going to be one big jam for all classes," said representative Alyssa Campagnoni.

The theme for the dance is winter blast, which the student council feels will be appropriate for the season.

Campagnoni said that

in the past, turnabout hasn't always been a great event. The senior class wanted to turn that image around and encourage all grades, their own included, to join the fun.

"Most others (turnabouts) have been for the freshmen. (This year) won't be the same," said Campagnoni.

In addition to the dancing, the senior class

(See Dance page 3)

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The Wildcat Chronicle is the student newspaper at West Chicago Community High School. It is a public forum for freedom of expression and encourages readers to express their views. The Chronicle publishes eight times a year, with the student editorial board making the decisions concerning the paper's contents. Unsigned editorials represent the views of the majority of the staff. Letters to the editor are welcomed and will be published as space allows. Letters must be signed, although the staff may withhold a name upon request. The paper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar and clarity, and may refuse to publish a letter.



Photo courtesy of Eduardo Montoya

The members of Aviation Club are interested in learning how to fly planes like this at the DuPage County Airport.

Aviation Club gets clearance for activities

By Andrea Bradley

Aviation Club has big plans to spend a \$500 grant given to them by the Aerospace Education Foundation.

First, sponsors Ed Montoya and Annie Rubino plan on buying new parts for their flight simulator.

They want a new set of power rudder pedal controls, and would like to buy a better yoke, which is the equivalent of a car's steering wheel.

Now, the flight simulator has no foot pedals, but the sponsors would like to have one to make the simulator more realistic.

The simulator is a life-like experience that allows kids to fly an airplane. The simulator helps with landing and, departure skills, and gives important information to the students, said Montoya.

The second part of the money will go into buying airplane kits that have enough supplies to

make 25 models. The club will decide on what kind of models they would like to build.

There might be a competition between models once the students are finished, said Montoya.

Rubino is excited about the money because they really needed it. The club does a variety of different things, and the money will help subsidize the cost of the activities.

Besides being a club sponsor, Montoya is taking private lessons to learn how to fly.

"It's been a dream ever since I was a little boy. I wanted to be a military pilot," said Montoya.

His plans have changed, but he would still love to fly. He also enjoys sponsoring the club because it educates students about aerospace.

The club gives kids an opportunity to explore a new world. A student may walk in having no

knowledge on airplanes or rockets, but after the meeting, they could realize that they love it. Montoya wants to let kids know about aerospace so they can find hidden interests.

The sponsors try to have varying plans for different groups of people.

One week they will learn about rockets, and the next they will spend time learning about pilots.

The group does many different activities for all kinds of interests.

In the future, Rubino plans to take another field trip to the DuPage County Airport, where the club members will receive free rides from volunteer pilots.

"Last year was really fun," said Rubino.

In addition to the field trip, Rubino would like to participate in a space flight reenactment. The reenactment is expensive, so Rubino would like the club to raise more money.

JSA gets taste of D.C. with Winter Congress

By Brittany Rose

West Chicago Junior State of America will be participating in the annual Winter Congress in Washington D.C. on Feb. 27 through Feb. 29.

JSA participants from around the country will split themselves up into the House of Representatives, Senate, and committees in a government simulation. The students will create their own bills and resolutions, and vote on them.

Shawn Healy, JSA adviser, hopes to sort out funding for the trip, instead of the students paying like in the past.

"It's a huge barrier. I don't want us to be an organization where only

rich kids can be in it," said Healy.

While in D.C., Healy hopes to visit Howard University, the Holocaust Museum, and the State Department.

Later, in the spring, JSA will also be participating locally in a competition in Oak Brook. The event will start with the primary debates. There will also be speeches, crossfire between two opposing opinions, and closing statements.

Also available are "Thought Talks," where students can discuss controversial topics and the election of mock leaders and senators from each state.

"I'd really like underclassman to be representing. I want us to be an organization from seniors to freshmen all the way through," said Healy.

Eileen Reedy agreed, and said, "I think other people should get involved because it's so fun. It's not every day you can go and debate."

Two years ago JSA was created by Rebecca Duran and Jeremy Rose.

Students interested in the new idea began to meet informally after school. Eventually they took the idea to Principal John Highland and JSA was established.

Meetings are Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. in room 179.

French film on club's agenda

By Kellie Virnich

For their next activity, International Club will see the French film, *My Life In Pink*, at school on Feb. 24.

The club was going to a foreign film festival at College of DuPage, but the movie is rated R, so the trip was canceled.

"This club really teaches you to respect and appreciate other cultures," said Amy Axelrod, a new member

of International Club.

Instead of officers, the title of ambassador is given to older club members, who welcome foreign exchange students and informally spread news and awareness about the club.

When the faculty decided to combine all the language clubs, they lost several members, but each activity is getting more student attention than the last, said adviser

Sarah Bellis.

Though many of the events in International Club involve languages that the school offers, students don't need to be taking a language to join. They are always looking for members.

Bellis encouraged students to join, even if they have never been to a meeting before.

International Club meets Monday mornings in room 303.

Test...(Continued from page 1)

was surprised at the results, and said that he could not speculate as to the reason why the social studies scores were higher than the reading and comprehension.

"I think it is something that we need to sit

down and talk about," Rieck said.

Highland said that he didn't know why the scores were higher, either.

"You would think that the reading and comprehension scores would re-

flect the social studies scores, because social studies is a lot of reading," he said.

Highland gave credit to the social studies teachers for the higher scores, citing the teachers' instruction.

Dance...(Continued from page 2)

brought in KISS 103.5 FM to be the DJ.

Representative Rich Visser said that any class can organize the dance, and the seniors decided that they would run turn-about this year as a fundraiser.

The raffle consists of prizes from the community, including various donations, gift certifi-

cates, CDs from KISS FM, and even refunds for their tickets.

Senior president Jackie Vavrek said that the seniors would like to start a landscaping project that, hopefully, other student councils will continue in the future.

But as for the dance, "ladies can ask the man

of their dreams," said Campagnoni.

Tickets go on sale Wednesday for a week. The first two days are only for seniors to purchase tickets.

Ticket can be ordered in advance at a cost of \$7 but it costs \$10 at the door. The dance begins 7:00 p.m. on Feb. 28 and continues until 10:00.

New Illinois law not popular with teenage drivers at We-go

By Sam West

Just because you finish driver's ed. doesn't mean that you can immediately haul your friends to the mall, according to the Illinois Secretary of State.

Recently, the Illinois Graduated Licensing System underwent a revision barring new teen drivers from carrying passengers under 20 years of age. Beginning Jan. 1, new drivers can only carry one passenger under age 20 at a time for the first six months

of driver certification.

The revisions aim to reduce the amount of distraction in the car for teenagers, which will in turn protect the teen drivers and everyone else on the road.

Mitch Bridges, a current driver's ed. student, said that the new law is dumb because it eliminates the option of carpooling.

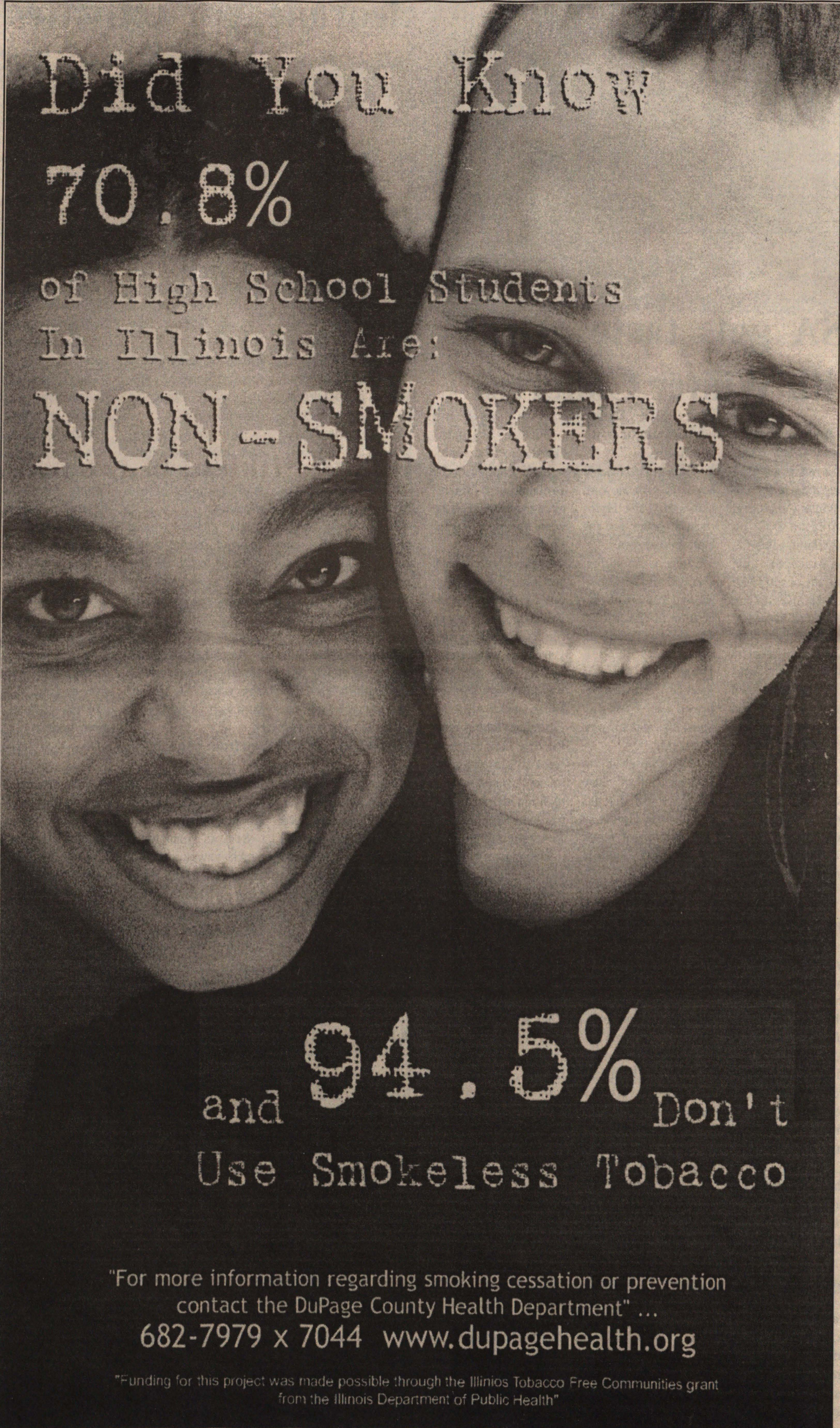
"Being a sports player, I wouldn't be able to get rides or drive my friends to practices and games," Bridges

said.

Although Bridges praised the intent of the law, he said that the end result is worse than the current situation.

Others believe that the law is unfair to those teens who drive well, and punish all teens for the inequities of a minority.

Jim Guter, band director at We-go, said that the state government cannot create a blanket statement about every teens driving habits. (See Driving page 5)



Did You Know

70.8%

of High School Students
In Illinois Are:

NON-SMOKERS

and **94.5%** Don't
Use Smokeless Tobacco

"For more information regarding smoking cessation or prevention
contact the DuPage County Health Department" ...

682-7979 x 7044 www.dupagehealth.org

"Funding for this project was made possible through the Illinois Tobacco Free Communities grant
from the Illinois Department of Public Health"

Director brings chaos to stage with "Straw Hat"

By Brittany Rose

Chaos is running rampant in the auditorium this month, but all the action will be on stage.

On Feb. 19, 20, and 21, West Chicago will perform "An Italian Straw Hat," about the chaotic fiasco when a straw hat is eaten by a horse, and a new one needs to be found.

Makeup for the play will be with brighter colors and bolder shapes rather than normal stage makeup.

Students raided the prop rooms and added ribbons and bows to costumes, building their own character, in contrast to the normal street clothes used in "Glimpses," last year's winter play.

Many inspirations for the look, theme, and music of the play have come from Cirque Du Soleil.

"It's an outrageously funny farce," said Charles Berglund, the director.

Berglund has been directing plays for Glenbard North High School for over 30 years.

"We're lucky to have such an experienced director," said Mary Hafertepe, who usually directs the plays and musicals. "I think it's really important for students to work with directors with more than one approach."

Many aspects of Berglund's directing are different than the thespians are used to. Before practice, there is a five

or 10 minute warm up including stretching and tongue twisters.

"This play you have a little more room to roam and discover your character," said senior Steve Nota. "He (Berglund) told me to be like a grumpy old Gollum character," Nota said. "You just have to work with it."

Fadinard, played by junior Kevin Roloff, agreed.

"This play is a little more open for students to interpret," he said.

This year there is also a new assistant director. William Vega works in



Staff Photo

Thespians Kevin Roloff and Steve Nota rehearse their lines together.

the bilingual department and decided to volunteer for the job. "It's a lot of learning as all the behind the scenes things that go on," said Vega. "I hope

to help out in the future. I think it will be really cool to do other productions since this one is so unique."

The play starts at 7:30

p.m. and is \$2 for students and \$3 for adults. Tickets will be sold in commons the week of opening night and at the door.

Nationally renowned LifeSmarts team ready for new season

By Elliott Tinnes

After representing the state of Illinois in last year's national competition, West Chicago's LifeSmarts team is looking for another nationally acclaimed season.

With the Feb. 26 state competition approaching fast, coach Don Zabelin and company will have to be quick to hone their skills in the "Ultimate Consumer Challenge."

Although last year's team lost one of their top members with the graduation of Brian Nelson, the remaining four members are still returning hopefuls. Among this year's returnees will be Jake Bermudez, who led the team as captain.

"Jake did extremely well for us. He has a gift to size up questions and be quick to the buzzer," said Zabelin. "When three or four people all know the answer right away, speed to the buzzer matters. Jake has that ability to process questions quickly."

Along with Bermudez will be another clutch member in Aaron Becker. Becker is

another very competitive, all-around player according to Zabelin.

However, it will take more than just Bermudez and Becker for the road back to Orlando. Every year, Zabelin's business classes compete in the online LifeSmarts tests. The top 10 scorers are separated into two teams, both of which compete at the state level.

That does not mean, though, that LifeSmarts is limited to business students. Anyone who wishes to vie for a spot on the team needs to speak with Zabelin.

LifeSmarts covers five major areas: personal finance, health/safety, environment, technology, and consumer rights and responsibilities.

The LifeSmarts team's success, according to Zabelin "brings a lot of prestige to the students, as well as the school itself." With the national title looming in the not too distant future, West Chicago's LifeSmarts team will have the chance to renew this prestige.

Go West to find Student of the Month

By Bridget Geraghty

Sam West mapped his way to January's Student of the Month.

What are your accomplishments during your time at We-go?

I am currently head drum major of the marching band, and before that, I was assistant drum major for two years. Also, I am president of the band. In addition, I work as editor in chief of the Wildcat Chronicle and news editor. I am a member of the National Honor Society, too.

What are your accomplishments outside of school?

I became a member of my church's staff-parish

committee last year, and I was asked to write an article about student involvement in politics for a national magazine.

Who is your favorite teacher in high school?

Mr. Zimmermann. He taught his classes with a great, dry sense of humor, and I laughed each day during class, no matter what the topic.

Also, Mr. Zimmermann was the one person, who, through his fun and educational geography class, inspired me to explore my interest, or obsession, with geography.

What is your favorite activity in high school?

That's marching band.

I love the feeling of leading a band that produces good music. Standing on a ladder and waving the arms isn't all a drum major does. I like the challenge of marching band, and I have Mr. Guter to thank for helping me become successful in band.

Where do you plan to go to college and what do you want to major in?

I am currently stuck. I will either attend Ohio State, Rutgers, or University of Miami. Geography and journalism are my focuses.

What do you want to do for a living?

I could be a cartographer, I could teach ge-

ography or journalism, or I could defy all odds by not having a job and living with my parents at age 40. In other words, I don't know what I want to do for a living, but I have ideas.

What is your favorite pastime?

Looking at and reading maps and taking road trips to places that I have never been.

Why do you think you were chosen as Student of the Month?

I think I was chosen based on my leadership capabilities in my school activities and because I do, for the most part, get good grades (Mrs. Tunt knows what I'm talking about).

Yearbook clinches second press award

By Doug Sieder

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association honored We-go's yearbook "The Challenge" for the second time in two years.

Yearbook adviser Patty Santella said that yearbook received the award mostly because of their writing in the yearbook.

"I am proud of the staff, this award belongs to the staff because they literally work all year around," said Santella.

The yearbook staff works all year, even comes in during sum-

mer, winter, and spring breaks to work on the yearbook.

Santella said they spend so much time on the yearbook and for all that time they spent working the staff deserved the award.

Yearbook's goal is to try to cover every single event from the first day of school until the last day of school.

"We have to cover 2,200 students and we don't want to cover just a few students," said Santella. "We want to get the diversity of the people in the school."

Driving... (Continued from page 3)

It would be hard to restrict all teens' driving abilities based on one group of bad drivers, which Guter called the minority.

He likened the poor driving habits of teens to the driving habits of elderly folk.

"If you're going to drive, then what is the difference between you and an 85-year-old driving two miles per hour down the road?" Guter questioned.

Sarah Swatsworth said that the law cannot measure the maturity level of teen drivers, which she said is the de-

termining factor in teenagers' driving abilities.

She disagreed with the new law because she said that teens will be less responsible with friends in the car, no matter what age they are.

Restricting 16-year-olds from driving with friends will have no effect because friends are distracting at any age, Swatsworth said.

"It has nothing to do with experience," Swatsworth said. "It's all about having friends in the car."

Our View

Blagojevich has chores for teens

Doing community service for your town is an act of volunteerism. Out of your good nature, you could go clean up garbage on the streets or help in a retirement center. Doing so shows that you are a person who likes to help out, and that's fine.

Gov. Rob Blagojevich has proposed that all high school students in Illinois should be *required* to do 40 hours of community service to graduate high school.

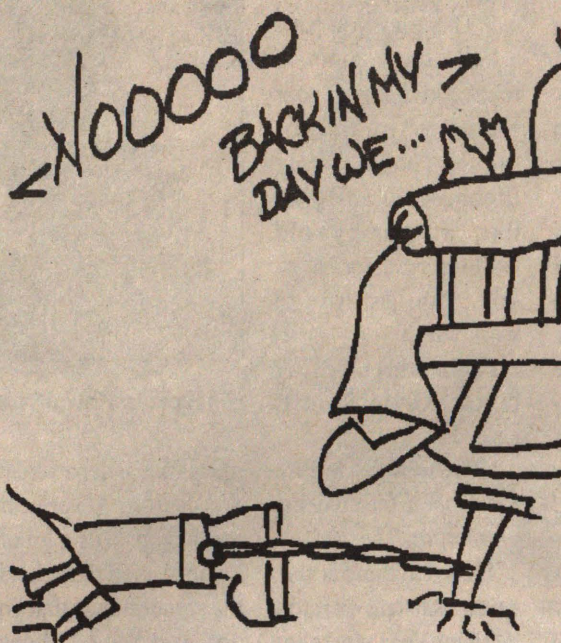
Think about the oddity of this proposal. Blagojevich is basically stating that all students should be forced to do volunteer work.

Forced volunteerism. Isn't that an oxymoron? Blagojevich's reason for the proposal was, in essence, to bring out the good nature in adolescents through community service.

If you listen closely, you can probably hear the whining and moaning of every single high school student in the state. Why is that?

Forcing teens to do community service, and 40 hours no less, comes off as being much more of a burden than any sort of enlightening experience, and that's why Blagojevich's proposal is ridiculous.

Teens may get some experience in helping around the old folks' home, or cleaning up trash, but that's



probably the only things they'll walk away with after high school through community service. Let's face it: you can't change a teen's values by making them do chores. That's essentially what community service is.

Sure, community service is more helpful and productive than making your bed or vacuuming the house, but most high schoolers aren't going to see it that way.

The only people who will see this as a good thing are students who have already done volunteer work or have otherwise planned on doing it.

For instance, members of NHS are required to do community service.

Doing community service voluntarily is a very good idea, and it's something more people should consider doing.

It keeps cities clean and really helps the people who need it.

Attitude is another thing that could blow this proposal up in Blagojevich's face. Teens who are looking at the requirement as a punishment rather than a helpful idea will likely not treat their work as a great experience.

They'll probably mope around and go with the paces, counting down the hours until they can be freed from their handcuffs. Will this new plan help the town? Probably. Will it accomplish the ultimate goal of teaching teenagers the value of helping in your community? Don't count on it.

Curfews cause more problems than they solve

Curfew. That's a word that many teenagers can relate to. While it technically means that teens under 17 can't stay out past 10:30 p.m., to most teens it means control.

Curfew has become an increasing problem in the U.S., and not just because more people (besides teenagers) are deciding to go against it.

Cities in a few states, such as New Mexico and Georgia, are now just starting to introduce curfew laws.

The main reason they are being installed is because the cities want to cut crime.

That means, according to this reason, that after 10:30 p.m. a switch in a teenager's head flips to "Crime," thus allowing them to go out and steal, vandalize, and do all of the other stuff teens do had it not been for curfew.

Hopefully, you've noticed the sarcasm. This kind of stereotypical reasoning is close-minded, and that's putting it nicely.

Plenty of crime occurs by people over the age of 18, if not the majority.

On top of that, many teens hanging out past 10:30 are likely in a rush to get home before they get snagged

by the ever vigilant police officers who hunt curfew breakers like dog catchers hunt stray dogs.

The strangest thing about curfews is that there's an automatic assumption that teens are capable of crime only after 10:30. Guess what? Everyone's capable of any crime, any time.

Why cities are so uncomfortable with teens staying out late is puzzling, but all teens can do is protest, which will probably result in a few arrests.

Older individuals are capable of committing crimes after 10:30 as well, but you won't find a city ordinance prohibiting middle-aged people from staying out late.

Luckily, some cities in the U.S. (Vernon, Conn., for example) have put bans on curfews, and have watched as the crime rate either stayed the same or, in some cases, lowered.

If this isn't proof that teens staying out late isn't the problem, nothing is.

Lawmakers are so convinced that teens are a major problem that they overlook the fact that teens are not responsible for every crime in the area.

Teens should be able to stay out as long as they

please, and it should be the parents that determine what their child's curfew is.

If the parent says the kid can stay out as long as they want, then lucky them.

A teen's failure as a child is their parent's failure as an authority figure.

When it comes to controlling teenagers, it should be up to parents and not up to officials who have views on how teenagers spend their time when they hang out.

On the other side, teenagers need to learn to respect the areas that they live in if they want a crack at getting curfew banned, because if crime rates were low then curfews would deteriorate.

Curfew is pretty much a control issue, because nobody is comfortable with those pesky booze drinking, joint smoking, car stealing, spray painting, hard partying, trash talking, trouble causing teenagers having their way with a neighborhood that is otherwise crime free and flawless in every conceivable way.

Maybe lawmakers should try to focus on crime as a whole and stop trying to shut away teenagers indoors, because they have lives too.

Pete Rose doesn't deserve Hall of Fame bid

Pete Rose has admitted that he bet on baseball while he managed the Cincinnati Reds and now he wants to be reinstated to major league baseball and be a candidate to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Rose holds the record for most career hits with 4,256 and his statistics show that with no doubt he should be in the Baseball Hall of Fame. No one else in the history of baseball has gotten more than 4,000 hits.

However betting on baseball is one of the worst crimes you can do to the game, and that is why the MLB banned him from baseball for life.

He should not have the opportunity to be in the Hall of Fame.

The commissioner of baseball Bud Selig should not even consider Rose. Rose just admitted to committing one of the worst crimes in baseball, after lying about it for 14 years.

And now just because he admitted what he did was wrong he thinks he should be allowed to be in the Hall

of Fame.

ESPN reported that ABC interviewed Pete Rose on Dec. 20, and Rose said that betting was the last thing on his mind.

Yet on Dec. 26 ESPN reported that Rose was seen betting at the horse track.

At the 2002 Baseball All Star Game Rose told a national television audience that he did not bet on baseball.

ESPN also had a mock trial to see if Rose was innocent or not. Rose once again said that he did not bet on baseball and once again lied to the world about what he did.

Rose even lied about how bad his gambling problem was. He said he would only bet a few times a week, but they found records from his bookie that he bet almost every day.

When Rose was managing and betting he would call up managers and see how their players were feel-

ing and then he would place his bets.

Rose even cheated at betting. Someone like that has no right to be in the Hall of Fame.

Rose lied about his gambling problem for 14 years until about two months ago when he told the media that he did bet on baseball.

Why would he just come out after 14 years of lying and admit that he did bet on baseball while he was managing the Reds?

Could it be that Rose wanted people to buy his new book which coincidentally was released at the same time?

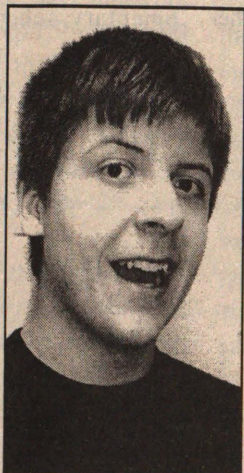
Rose was one of the best players to ever play the game of baseball, but he should not be remembered among the other great players who never committed crimes.

He committed one of the worst crimes you can do to baseball, and the game of baseball has no room for losers and cheaters.

Point/Counterpoint

Bush's plan calls for pseudo amnesty

By Kyle Bullis



President George Bush has proposed an act that states if there are any illegal immigrants working in the United States, then they can apply for permanent residence.

Just like amnesty, this act is giving illegal immigrants more incentive to jump the border than enter the country legally.

I'm not saying that Bush should go the completely opposite direc-

tion and initiate a nationwide crackdown on illegal immigrants, because that would be a disaster.

Congress can deny all they want that this isn't amnesty, and while it isn't *technically* amnesty, it does something quite similar.

What happens is that illegal immigrants can apply for a temporary worker permit, and then through that they can apply for permanent residency.

There it is. Permanent residency.

So while, okay, it isn't necessarily amnesty (which states that all illegal immigrants in the country are

now legal), it does allow people who entered the country by breaking the law the chance to get the slate wiped clean, as if nothing happened. That's where the problem lies.

It doesn't matter that it isn't a blanket amnesty policy, but nevertheless it's giving illegal immigrants a chance to stay here, all because they willfully broke our laws.

The program is supposed to discourage illegal immigration (how it plans to is a mystery to me), but it seems that it's giving illegal immigrants a free ticket to our country.

Bush in essence created a loophole in the country's system.

The thought process will now shift from not getting caught to applying for a temporary worker program and staying in the country for the rest of your life.

Illegal immigration only seems to be controversial because we pity those who have to enter this country or face hardships, but sometimes you just have to stick it out, right?

Apply for legal citizenship, and you'll get here in time. It's much better than getting on the U.S.'s bad side the instant you enter the country.

Illegal immigration is a growing problem in the country because we're so lenient on it.

Threatening immediate deportation if caught would be a great incentive for getting people to enter the country legally.

Granted, the new policy *does* deport illegal immigrants if they aren't admitted for permanent residency within the six years they are allowed to stay in the country as a temporary worker.

Constantly adding loopholes to the system does not solve the problem, and Bush, along with future presidents, needs to take some serious steps to stop illegal immigrants from getting into the country themselves.

For instance, many companies are more willing to allow illegal immigrants to work there because they are more willing to work for less than minimum wage.

Making this practice illegal would give companies no more incentive to hire illegal immigrants over legal citizens.

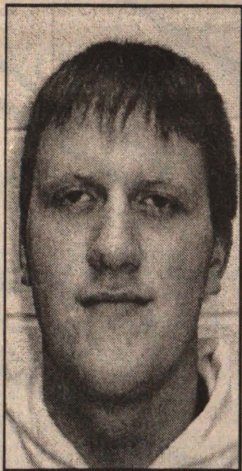
I doubt illegal immigration will go away entirely unless we fortify the U.S. in a giant titanium box, but we can take steps to limit the ever increasing flow, because too many immigrants can be a problem as well.

The U.S. still needs immigrants to keep the country going, but it also needs to take the incoming immigrants steadily.

Bush's plan simply isn't doing that.

The plan is a step in the right direction

By John Jennings



President George Bush's new act may not be the best answer to the immigration problem, but it is not as bad as some think. This new act does not give immigrants more incentive to jump the border.

Bush has made it perfectly clear that this is a one-time only deal. The act will not change anything.

If immigrants want to come to America to get

jobs, they are going to cross the border anyway, either legally or illegally.

Immigrants have been crossing the border for years, and will risk being in the country illegally.

So there is no more incentive for immigrants to cross the border.

Also, this new act is not amnesty. While it might have the same type of results as amnesty, the act is

something totally different.

Amnesty is where you give every illegal immigrant in the country a pardon to live in the country legally.

This new act is only for immigrants who are working in the country, and it does not mean that they are in the country legally.

First of all, this new act just means that they can apply for visas or permanent residence without being deported.

Not all of the illegal immigrants who come forward are going to get these visas.

Bush's new act is not just a "free ticket" into the United States.

The workers that come forward will have to go through years and years of paperwork and things of that nature, and they still might not be allowed to become permanent residents.

This new act does not give these people a clean slate. After the act goes into effect, these workers will become documented, and the United States government and the Immigration and Naturalization Service will have a better idea of how many illegals are out there.

Anyway, who says that there will be many illegal immigrants that come forward?

If they come forward, then they will no longer be able to get the same kind of work. They will either become permanent residents or be deported.

If they decide to stay in the United States as permanent residents, then they cannot work for below minimum wage, meaning less of them will have jobs.

For the most part, illegal immigrants are able to find work in this country because they will work harder for less pay. So, with the question of being able to find work, who knows how many will actually come forward?

Also, we don't have to live with this act forever. If Bush's plan doesn't work, it can be repealed. If it doesn't work out, it does not mean that we have to stick with it for 20 years.

Bush is not just "adding a loophole." He is merely trying to fix a major problem with a feasible solution. Granted, it might not work out, but we might as well give it a chance. I think that there are other ways to solve the problem, but for right now our solution to the immigration problem is Bush's new act.

Government simulations offer great learning experiences

This article was submitted and published in the February 2004 issue of "Access Learning."

By Sam West

As it stands now, Americans 18-24 years old are least likely of all Americans to vote in a presidential election.

Young voters must realize that their vote counts and they can make a difference in current government affairs.

But this is not a hopeless situation. Various forms of curriculum, including multimedia projects, can be implemented in the classroom.

This encourages young folk to get interested in upcoming elections.

At West Chicago Community High School in West Chicago, Illinois, the government classes, required for all seniors, consist of an interactive legislative session.

In this session, students are required to research bills,

become informed of many issues in today's politics, and learn about the world around them. Then, they declare themselves democrat or republican.

After weeks of research and preparation, the students participate in committee hearings.

These hearings are where each student presents a bill on any given topic (in the form of a speech and Power Point presentation), and his or her colleagues vote to pass it on to full session or to fail it.

If the bill is passed in committee, it moves to full session, where, in front of all 200 or more government students in the school, the bill sponsors present their bill and encourage their colleagues to vote for the bill.

Students vote based on their personal political views, and during debate, they become impassioned and excited about government.

As a student involved in this process at West Chicago, I feel that I can learn for myself what issues are and how to respond to these topics.

Government class encourages me to go out on my own and research national headlines, to investigate who is running for president, and to think about how I can make a difference in national events.

I am not limited to the teacher's opinion or the teacher's way of thinking about these issues, as I have the freedom to make my own choices.

Many of my colleagues at school feel the same way. In fact, this is the only time I can think of in the school day where more than 200 students get up and say what is on their minds and what should be done about a certain situation.

Everybody takes everybody seriously, listens to each other's arguments, and with the help of daily research, everyone makes an informed decision on whether or not to pass a bill.

The simulation is just like legislative sessions in Congress in Washington, D.C.

(See Government page 10)

The difficulties with growing up in

By Maria Perez

Looking back at the home videos my uncle brings back from Mexico, I have to ask myself if the places that I see on the TV really was where I spent part of my childhood. But I know I've got the memories to prove it, which I'd like to share.

Guanajuato

I was born in the state of Guanajuato in Mexico. For a couple of years I lived in Mexico City with my mom before we moved to Las Jicamas Guanajuato, a small ranch, where my grandma Ma Seinaida lived.

Las Jicamas is the place I remember the most. I have no pictures to remind me of my childhood at the ranch because all family photos and all family documents were

left in Mexico. I haven't even seen my birth certificate or any baby pictures of myself yet.

Keeping things clean

We didn't have a washing machine so my mom had to wash our clothes by hand. My mom had a cement washboard next to the side door of our house on a pile of stones.

I remember watching my mom wash the clothes once. She would take a bowl, fill it with water from a bucket next to her, and dump it on the clothes.

She would then take a pink bar of soap and rub in on the clothes, scrub the clothes, and hang them up to dry when she was done washing the clothes.

No junk food?

One thing I didn't have a lot in Mexico was junk food. The whole time I lived in Las Jicamas I only had one bar of chocolate.

We didn't have any grocery stores in the ranch and to get to the near-

est town with a market place we had to take the bus. No one owned a car on the ranch and I only saw a small truck once.

The only thing we had on the ranch were small stores owned by people that barely sold anything.

Also, meat and other food was expensive for us.

I mostly consumed beans and other foods that didn't spoil very quickly.

Doctors and medicine

On the ranch there were no doctors and the nearest doctor was miles away from our ranch. So if anything happened to us at the ranch no one could help us.

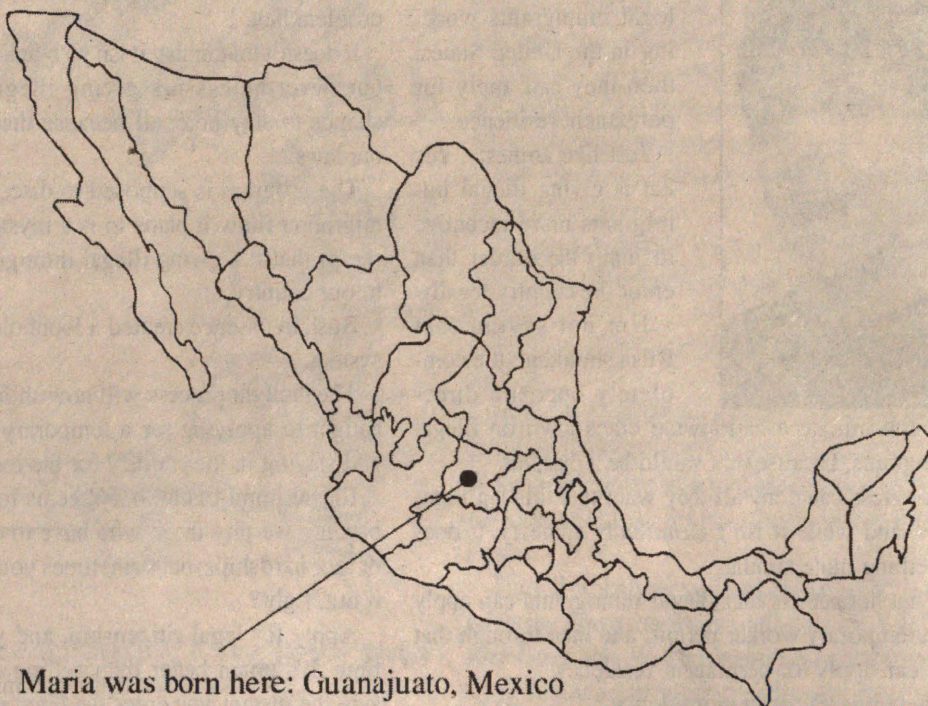
Most families kept

medicine and needles in their house. Still, I never got my vaccine shots until I

husks and a scorpion stung her. My mom sent my brother

est level of education we had on the ranch was elementary school. The

school required that the girls wear black shoes, with white socks, a plaid skirt, a white blouse and a blue vest. The punishment at school was that



Maria was born here: Guanajuato, Mexico

went to school in the U.S.

My sister Paola learned the hard way that she had to be careful where she stuck her hand. One night my sister was playing around with my brother Maurico and my youngest sister Gabi. She stuck her hand into a pile of dry corn

to get the antidote for scorpion poison from my aunt's house and gave my sister the shot herself. We were very lucky that my aunt owned antidote or else my sister wouldn't be alive.

Education at work

The high-

the teacher slapped the students hands with a ruler, so I tended to behave.

ESL teacher looks back at heritage

By Doug Sieder

Ina Kalnajs came to the United States not really knowing what to expect, but she learned over time the values, opportunities, and how lucky people are in America.

Kalnajs came to the United States in 1950, with her parents and brother. She was born in Germany though her parents are from Latvia. She now teaches English as a second language at We-go.

Unpleasant birthplace

Kalnajs was a refugee in Germany during World War II, and was born in a refugee camp.

Her mother worked for the Latvian government and had to leave the country because the Nazis might have tried to kill her because of her job.

After the war a church in Green Castle, Ind. sponsored Kalnajs's family to come and live in America.

During that time America was letting refugees into the country if they could afford

to come on their own.

When Kalnajs came to the country she was only 4-years-old, but she still knew that she was going into a new culture and new language.

After growing up in America, Kalnajs realized how American and Latvian cultures were very similar.

"The importance of education, learning leadership, and to never give up the cause were the same ideas both countries had. Also, don't forget where you came

from," said Kalnajs.

America the beautiful

One of Kalnajs favorite

parts in America is how people can be different and



Photo courtesy of Ina Kalnajs

Whenever she can, ESL teacher Ina Kalnajs visits her parents' place of birth in Riga, Latvia. Here she stands with her husband.

part about America is the opportunity. She believes that if you work hard and get an education, you can be successful.

Another one of her favor-

it's okay. Kalnajs also said that students should always take advantage of the opportunities they get here in America.

Kalnajs loves to visit her

homeland, but she doesn't plan to live there because her family lives in America now.

"I love Latvia and to go there and see my own heritage, and the thrill of walking down the street and understanding what I had studying about in school," said Kalnajs.

As a child in America, Kalnajs went to regular public school Monday through Friday and then on Saturday she would go to Latvian school, where she would learn all subjects in Latvian.

Kalnajs said when she travels to different countries, she realizes how lucky people that live in America are, how Americans are open to new ideas, and that change can be made peacefully.

She also believes her background helps her teach ESL students. When

in school as a student Kalnajs did not know English, but was put into English-speaking classes.

Even though she did not have a hard time picking up the language, she believes that other students coming to the country should not have to learn the way she did.

"When I was in school children thought I couldn't read because I did not speak fluent English, and I don't want that happening to my students," said Kalnajs.

Look to the future

When asked what she hopes to do 10 years down the road, Kalnajs responded that she hopes to still be teaching English and to see all of her students succeed.

She also hopes that all her students will find the good things about their own cultures and other cultures as well.

Mexico

Recess was a bore because we didn't have lunch but we could buy small snacks that the school sold. We didn't have any type of playground at the school but we were allowed to roam the campus.

One thing that happened to me at school that I'll always remember was the day when I sliced my finger.

I was standing next to a girl who was sharpening her pencil with a razor blade and she missed the pencil and cut my index finger instead.

The rest

of the event is a bit hazy for me. All I remember is the teacher dragging me outside where she rinsed my cut under a faucet, and then talking to my cousin with my finger wrapped in a bandage. Eventually my finger healed and now I have a scar.



Photo courtesy of Suhag Parikh

On a recent visit to India, Suhag Parikh takes a moment to stand in front of the Taj Mahal.

English through the tube

By Elliott Tinnes

Those who say watching TV is a waste of time have not met Suhag Parikh.

Born in Baria, India,

Parikh learned to speak English by watching television every day.

Of all the things one has to adjust to after nine years in another country: food, school, weather, friends, and customs, Parikh claims that learning a new language was the hardest.

Ironically, the tool that is often blamed for the erosion of a generation is what

helped this teenager assimilate into a new culture.

"I did learn English in Baria, but not much," said Parikh. "After I came here I learned English in a month by watching TV."

In India, Parikh's family owned a large business called Vinodal Maniloh Parikh, which manufactured and sold clothes.

Even with a family business in their homeland, Parikh and his family moved to America for a better education.

The family, including Parikh and his four other siblings usually travel back to his homeland to visit family every two years.

According to Parikh, though, it is always better to go in the winter.

"We don't usually go in the summer," said Parikh. "It gets to be about 120 degrees."

While Parikh enjoys life in both India and America, he still admits that things here are a little different for

him.

For one, he does not speak English at home.

Even though many people speak languages besides English at home, very few speak Gujarati, Parikh's home language.

Those who do speak Gujarati are usually found in Carol Stream, said Parikh.

Besides speaking a separate language, Parikh and his family do not celebrate many of the more traditional American holidays.

Christmas, Thanksgiving, and holidays of that sort are non-existent in the Parikh household. Instead, the Parikh family celebrates holidays such as Diwahli, a Fourth of July type celebration.

For Parikh, life in the states has been a long transition. It is never easy to jump into an entirely new culture, but with time, Parikh has been able to fuse together both Indian and American culture.

New dreams start for illegal immigrants

Lives will change if a new act passes through Congress

By Maria Perez

A new program may help illegal alien students achieve their dreams.

The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was set up to help the immigration status of illegal alien students.

Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch (R) will introduce the DREAM Act to the Senate in the spring, and Utah Sen. Chris Cannon (R) will introduce the Student Adjustment Act, another version of the DREAM Act, to the House.

There are about 50-65,000 students that graduate out of high school per year that can't go on to college or universities because their parents came here illegally and therefore they are illegal aliens.

The DREAM Act would address the issues by letting the state decide which illegal alien students are going to be allowed to pay in-state tuition and other education benefits. The act also lets students with good character apply for visas and therefore can become part

of the community. It would also reduce the number of

be paid back and taxpayers get to benefit from the

it unfair to punish illegal alien students if they have

Also the DREAM Act is viewed as a way to reward

To get visas the students would need to prove that they came to the U.S. before they were 16-years-old and were in U.S. for five years and managed to graduate from high school or college.

Illegal alien students are unsure what they are going to do if the DREAM Act doesn't pass. The illegal alien students would have to pay out of state tuition, which is higher for students paying in state tuition.

Also illegal alien students are limited to menial jobs that lack insurance or even pay. Without a social security number they can't get car licenses, open a bank account, get credit cards, or even work legally.

Critics argue that the DREAM Act would only attract more illegal aliens to he U.S. Among those critics, Dan Stein, executive director of the Federation of Reform of Immigration in the U.S., stated in a press conference that the illegal alien students should return to their countries and learn there since they are citizens there.

Opponents say illegal alien students would take away college slots from the students that are legal here.

The DREAM Act was set up to help illegal alien students currently enrolled in school in the U.S. There are points which make this act both successful and unsuccessful.

Pros

- The bill would help 50-65,000 illegal alien students currently enrolled in high school or colleges get visas or complete their education.

- States can decide which illegal alien students can pay in-state tuition or are allowed to get other benefits.

- The act is expected to reduce dropout rates, save money on criminal justice, reduce people on public service, and increase the number of people that pay taxes.

- In three or four years it is estimated that education investments would be paid back and taxpayers will benefit for many years afterwards.

- It would allow illegal alien students in high school to have the same opportunities as other students, and those who graduate the ability to seek further education.

- Gives visas to illegal alien students that have lived in the U.S. for five years and came before they were 16 years old because their parents brought them here without a choice.

Cons

- The act would attract more illegal aliens seeking education benefits.

- The act allows illegal alien students to finish their education if a state decides they can. The act does not say work visas will be granted, meaning they won't be able to get a job since they're illegal.

- The U.S. would need to provide bilingual services and bilingual city services for the illegal aliens.

- The act assumes that the illegal alien students are going to pay back the community or stay in the U.S. afterwards.

- It also sets Hispanic students who are getting good grades apart from the other Hispanic students that are here illegally.

- The act discriminates against illegal alien students that are failing high school, and illegal alien student's parents stay illegal.

- The act does not address what happens to illegal alien students who came here when they were 16-years-old or haven't lived in the U.S. for five years.

drop out rates. Within three to four years the education investment is predicted to

DREAM Act for many years afterwards.

The DREAM Act makes

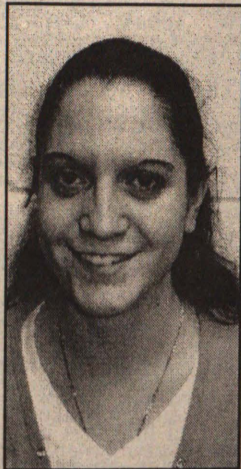
managed to excel in school and gives them same opportunities other students have.

the illegal alien students for managing to make it through school in the U.S.

Random thoughts, by Kellie Virnich

Blondes: Getting to the root of the problem

By Kellie Virnich



All people with freckles like to read. Every Asian person is into politics. If these statements seem ridiculous, it's because they are.

Just as ridiculous as saying that just because a person has blonde hair, he or she can't have any common sense or think about anything deeper than another shopping spree.

Blondes, especially women, have always been perceived as less intelligent because of their hair color, and the word is also used to describe non-blondes in dense moments, like asking obvious questions or not understanding what's going on around them.

The media has also supplied us with countless blonde figures (again, mainly women) to back up this generalization.

This has never been commonly thought of as prejudice, but to the people whom it affects, it may seem just as hurtful.

We have always been taught not to judge on appearances, and something as trivial as hair color should certainly apply.

We have to stop thinking of our light-haired counterparts as "blondes," and start thinking of them as people.

No one is perfect. Everyone has moments of stun-

ning unintelligence and clumsiness, often attributed to our "blonde streaks," but if we all have them, why do we focus on those of actual blondes?

Possibly because there are so many more brunettes than natural blondes, and it's almost effortless to bully a minority.

Or maybe it's payback for blondes having a reputation of being prettier, sweeter, and altogether more desirable. Or the fact that the media focuses on blonde silliness, and has been drilling it into our brains since birth.

Being blonde is really just having light hair, no better or worse than any other hair color.

But we've turned it into something hurtful and insulting.

One childhood toy most girls cannot deny having owned was a Barbie. Blonde, leggy, big chested, and always smiling, this "perfect" toy was probably not the best role model for young girls.

Of course now they have politically correct Barbies, like doctors and veterinarians and businesswomen, but the main idea has stayed since it was first made in 1959. Pink everything, blonde hair, and beauty is all a woman needs.

Modeled after the blonde bombshells of early Hollywood, they are simply men's ideas of perfection. Though there are brunette and redheaded Barbies, as well as those from non-Caucasian races, the original blonde is still most popular and abundant by far, showing young girls that this is what they should look like.

Ironically, if Barbie were life size, she wouldn't even be able to walk upright or menstruate because of her disproportional, and apparently ideal, body

(www.angelfire.com).

Television and movies also portray blondes as less brainy than their dark-haired counterparts.

Though Elle Woods proved herself to be just as good a lawyer as any conservative brunette in "Legally Blonde," she displayed her stereotypical obsessions about looks and clothes throughout the film, plus the fact that she only went to Harvard for a guy.

And we all love Phoebe from "Friends," but she is certainly refreshing our labels in her clueless and flighty behavior.

And "Daria," a show about a sarcastic and judgmental social outcast in high school, has very few blondes, almost all of whom are on the cheerleading squad, the captain of which is Brittany, the biggest ditz of them all who, on occasion, accidentally stumbles across the revelation they were all looking for.

These examples further drive the idea into our minds that blondes must not be very intelligent, and when they are, they don't mean to be.

Everyone knows that these portrayals are not realistic, but it just seems natural to tease a friend for being blonde.

Still, you have to stop and think about it from their perspective. Everyone makes fun of something about them they can't help, so they just play along and use it as an excuse for being human. They may never really feel equal as long as they're blonde. They are judged and underestimated for being who they are.

That is, by definition, prejudice. And prejudice of any form hurts. So the question really is, why would you hurt a friend for something as trivial as the color of their hair?

Government (Continued from page 7)

The interactive government classes, such as the one at West Chicago, spark students' interest in politics and encourage them to participate in upcoming elections.

Students run for elected positions such as Speaker of the House, majority and minority floor leader, caucus leader, or rules committee member.

At West Chicago, students are eager to step up to the challenge of becoming involved in the political process and leading their peers in the simulation.

Interactive government classes inspire students to become active members of American politics.

In fact, Rich Visser, one of my colleagues in the legislative session at West Chicago said that the reason he cares about politics is because of the government class at West Chicago.

"Government class made me care about politics, want to be informed about a candidate, and then go out and vote," he said.

Apart from the simulation, daily government classes at West Chicago rely heavily on technology and multimedia.

West Chicago government even has its own web site with information about the class, links to political web sites, and even a discussion board about current events and issues.

It is accessible at <http://www.district94.dupage.k12.il.us/socialstudiesdept.htm>.

These discussion boards are basically online debates between students. They post their ideas on issues, and respond to others.

All students use civil discourse when on the board and most posts are educated and well reasoned.

These posts make students wonder what other people think about a particular topic and help them better understand national and world issues.

On the same web site, there is a link to a quiz that matches students to a presidential candidate (<http://www.selectsmart.com/PRESIDENT/>).

The comparison between a student and a candidate

gives the individual student an idea of who to vote for in future elections.

The quiz motivates students to participate in the political process.

When students took the quiz in class, shouts of surprise and interest could be heard echoing throughout the classroom.

From what I gather, not many of the students in government would otherwise think to match themselves with a presidential candidate.

This quiz is a unique opportunity to learn something about a candidate, and oneself, and I think that most of my classmates have learned about themselves, in the process of learning about a presidential candidate.

In class, students were inspired to access their matched candidates' official web site and learn more about the person and how, if elected president, he or she would help the country.

The access to the official web sites leaves the door open for students to e-mail the candidate questions or comments about issues and politics, a link between candidates and the young voting crowd.

My government teacher, Ms. Mary Ellen Daneels, said that this is exactly the goal of the West Chicago

government curriculum.

She likened the class with a car: teachers build the car, but it is the students who are responsible for running and maintaining it.

"We build the car using the technology," Daneels said, "and students drive it."

What this nation needs to boost the voter turnout of young Americans is more programs like the legislative session at West Chicago Community High School.

Too many young people have no interest in government or politics, and I believe it is because they do not know what kind of difference they can make in society.

How do most kids learn about government, politics, and the effects it has on American society?

Very few, if any, other schools than West Chicago implement the legislative session as their government course.

I think that in order to get young people interested in politics, this type of curriculum must be instated. Not only does this course for high schoolers interest them in world and national issues, but it also encourages them to participate in the political process.

The legislative session is a way for students to learn about politics in a fun, fascinating, and easy manner.

Got something to say? Write a signed letter to the editor and send it to Ms. Kuehn's mailbox or to room 319.

Keeping in step with dance

By Kyle Bullis

Sometimes a life-changing hobby can come by accident, and that is what happened to junior Mary Carmen Osorio, a member of Ballet Folklorico Quetzalcoatl.

Her group, along with 35 other members, dance Mexican folk dances.

Unlike other dances, this style of dance has a unique twist.

"Each dance tells a story which isn't apparent to the viewer," said

Osorio.

The dances are generally centered around love, mating, and the celebration of life.

"When you dance, you have to act like you're in love," said Osorio.

She and her dance group dance at competitions and walked away with seven awards and one medal early in her career.

In November she danced with her group to a sold out crowd at the

Paramount Art Theater.

Osorio plans on turning her love for the dance into a full-time career.

"I love dancing. It is my therapy. It makes me feel like I'm brought out of my shell," said Osorio.

Another student atwego, Angie Blanco, is also a member of Ballet Folklorico Quetzalcoatl. Blanco started her dancing career earlier than Osorio, getting into the style towards the end of 7th grade. Blanco is in it for

the "cool" aspect.

"I started dancing just because it looks cool when the girls turn," said Blanco.

She enjoys working with her fellow dancers and sees signs of improvement.

"We are slowly becoming more organized and we are getting to know one another more. Overall we are a strong group," said Blanco.

Blanco said that she is more into the entertainment value of dancing and doesn't plan on turning her talent into a career.

"If the opportunity comes along I'll take it,"



Photo courtesy of Maricarmen Osorio
Maricarmen Osorio has danced for many years and enjoys traditional dance.

Dameron covers all music as Artist of the Month

By Bridget Gerrity

Andy Dameron gets a kick out of singing, and you can't take that away from him. You can't take away February's Artist of the Month, either.

Are you a soprano, alto, tenor, or bass? I am a tenor.

When did you start singing? I started sophomore year.

In which musical organizations do you perform in school? I perform in concert choir, chamber choir, jazz band, and the spring musicals.

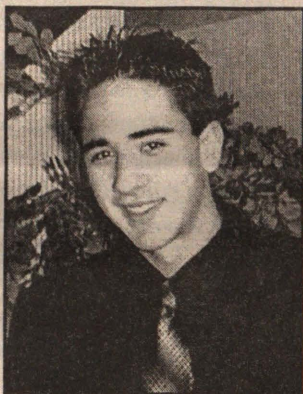
Which music group(s) do you like performing in the best? The musicals, then chamber choir.

How many years have you performed in the various school music organizations? I have performed

in all of them three years.

What kind of music do you like performing best? I love mixing acting and singing, so probably the musicals.

In what other activi-



Andy Dameron

ties have you been involved with in school? Out of school? I was in football and baseball freshman year, but still play baseball every year in the summer. Also, I was in forensics junior and senior year, and thespians

sophomore through senior year.

Do you plan on continuing to sing after high school? Absolutely; as much as I can.

Which vocalists have influenced you the most? With jazz, Frank Sinatra. Otherwise I try to have my own style.

Does anyone in your family play a musical instrument or sing? Almost all of my family sings or plays some sort of instrument, including several professional musicians, such as my grandfather who has had his own dance band. He played the trumpet and sang, and has sung in several known barber-shop quartets. He also knows many famous singers from the San Diego area and has gotten to know Frank Sinatra.

College Column

Final decisions do not mean unending commitments

By Mary Beth Selby

As college letters finish rolling in, students really feel the stress. At least the stress of commitment.

The college acceptance letters tend to narrow the choices students have for schools, but what happens when a student is accepted into their choice schools? Many students seem to be in this situation at this time of year.

"Kids are just trying to make their decisions now, but they shouldn't stress out about it. People get frustrated trying to find that perfect school, but there is no such thing. It all depends on where you

are comfortable," said counselor Maura Bridges.

Often times kids have choices narrowed down to two schools and feel stressed trying to choose between them. Bridges say that most students believe the school they decide to attend is like signing a four-year contract.

Bridges has two suggestions for such a dilemma. First of all, one needs to visualize their choice as only a choice for the next year, because transferring schools is an option if one doesn't feel comfortable.

Secondly, making a list to of the pros and cons for

each school and ranking them would help to see if the pros outweigh the cons at one school rather than the other.

Besides actually choosing a school, some feel worried about the financial cost of an extended education. In response, Bridges said not to worry about the finances yet because scholarships are still available and she encourages for students to have their parents fill out the free application for financial student aid (FAFSA) form.

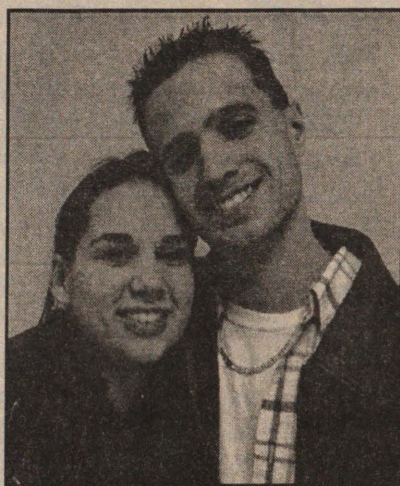
The final tuition costs of the school could also be a deciding factor.

Q&A: What does Valentine's Day mean to you?



Jennifer Linsenmeyer
Sophomore

Sighing in class, hoping you're not the only loser who doesn't receive a valentine. And when you are, you sit in the corner not the least bit surprised.



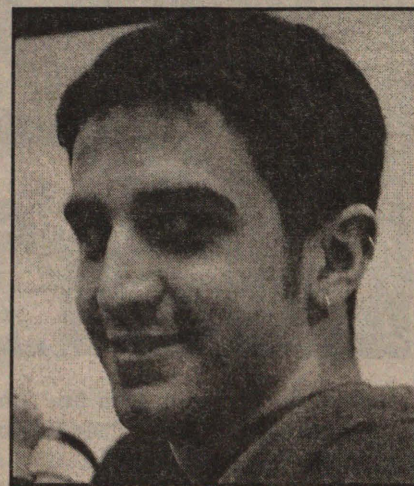
Pat Virnich and Diane Keck
Seniors

We actually have to pretend like we're in love.



Carol Fortman
Sophomore

I'm a hopeless romantic so I always kind of looked forward to it but I try not to get my hopes up.



Steve Nota
Senior

A large, large hole in my wallet.

ñ Noticias La vida Americana contra las costumbres Mexicanas

Por Maria Perez

Estefania Ballines y Linda Ortiz vienen de dos mundos diferentes pero tienen las mismas cosas en común su cultura, vivir en los Estados Unidos, y la enfrentacion entre su cultura Mexicana y la cultura Americana.

Ballines nació en los Estados Unidos y sus padres han vivido en los Estados Unidos por 18 años. Antes de su nacimiento, Ortiz nació en México y se movió a los Estados Unidos cuando ella tenía dos meses. Los padres de Ortiz han vivido en los Estados Unidos por 19 años.

"En unas maneras mis padres aceptan la cultura Americana. Nosotros celebramos Navidad, el cuatro de julio, y Año Nuevo," dijo Ballines.

Ortiz dijo que su familia mantiene sus tradiciones viejas que a ella parecen antiguas. Además Ortiz admitió que sus costumbres son diferentes

de sus padres. Sus padres creen que una mujer tiene que ser una ama de casa y los hombres tiene mas libertad.

"Aquí es diferente, los mismos derechos se le dan a los dos sexos," dijo Ortiz.

Ballines ha aceptado la cultura Americana. Ella come comida Americana en la escuela, acepta algunas de las costumbres, celebrando tradiciones Americanas, y le gusta la música, la moda, y el idioma Americana.

Sin embargo, Ortiz tiene resentimiento a la cultura Americana porque los americanos pueden tener mas libertad cuando son adolescentes. Ortiz fue forzada a aprender ingles por sus padres porque la pusieron en clases de ingles. Pero, sí hay ventajas de saber ingles. Ortiz admitió con ingles ella puede tener un buen trabajo. Incluso Ortiz tiene que ayudar a su

familia a traducir.

"A veces tengo que traducir para mis padres porque ellos no saben ingles," dijo Ortiz.

Todavía Ballines admite aunque su familia sabe de la cultura Americana y han vivido en los Estados Unidos por muchos años, a ellos les importa su cultura Mexicana más porque tienen conexiones fuertes a México.

Ballines todavía tiene familia en México de los lados de su madre y padre. La familia de Ballines todavía van a México cuando se mueren o enferman familiares, o nada mas para visitar.

Sin embargo Ballines admitió que ella no ha ido a México para visitar en seis años porque cuesta mucho para su familia de cinco viajar allá. El trabajo de su padre y la escuela también impiden el viaje.

Mientras Ortiz ha visitado a México cada

dos años ella ha ido a Puerto Vallarta, Aguascalientes, Cabo San Lucas, y Guadalajara.

Con las conexiones que Ballines y Ortiz tienen a México sus culturas se quedan fuerte. Ortiz dijo la casa, celebra tradiciones Mexicanas, come comida Mexicana tradicional, y sigue la religión Mexicana yendo a misa en español.

"Mis padres me ayudan a mantener mi cultura por que ellos tienen comida Mexicana tradicional y celebran tradiciones Mexicanas," dijo Ortiz.

Ballines todavía sigue las tradiciones Mexicanas también, como celebrando las quinceañeras, comiendo comida tradicional, y siguiendo la religión.

"Yo voy a misa cuando hablan español para que mis padres puedan entender la misa mejor," dijo Ballines.

Ballines admitió que sus padres todavía no hablan ingles aunque sepan palabras básicas. Ballines dijo que sus padres encontraron difícil aprender el lenguaje por su salud y ellos empezaron a trabajar a

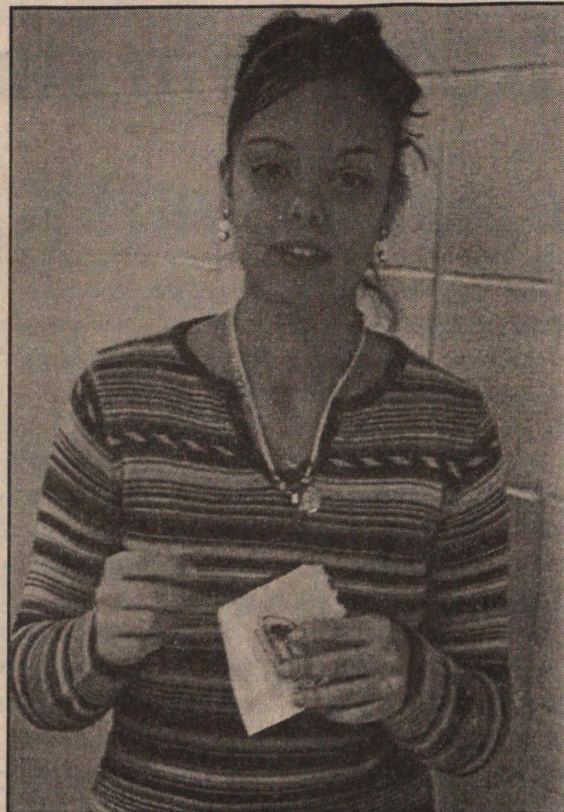


Foto de personal
Estefania Ballines aprende de la comida Americana en la escuela.

una edad joven entre que paraban de ir a la escuela en los Estados Unidos.

A través de aprender ingles en la escuela Ballines ha aprendido de la cultura Americana. Ella ha aprendido de la cultura por los estudiantes y por las tradiciones Americanas de la escuela. Ballines admitió que ella trata de actuar como los otros estudiantes para encajarse ñeque se refiere

que aceptando su cultura.

Ballines dijo que su cultura cambiaría para adaptarse a la cultura Americana y que le enseñaran a sus hijos en el futuro sobre ambas culturas. Ortiz admitió que les daría a sus hijos la libertad que tienen los adolocentes americanos, pero ella no ve su cultura cambiando en el futuro porque ella se asegura de mantener su cultura.

American life and Mexican customs collide



Staff Photo

Linda Ortiz keeps up with her American friends while still holding true to her Mexican heritage by reading a Spanish magazine.

By Maria Perez

Estefania Ballines and Linda Ortiz come from different worlds, but they have some things in common: their culture, and the face off between

Mexican and American culture.

Ballines was born in the U.S. and her parents lived here for 18 years before her birth. Ortiz was born in Mexico but moved to

the U.S. when she was 2-months-old. The Ortiz family has lived in the U.S. for 19 years.

Ortiz said that her family keeps their old traditions but she thinks that some are outdated. Her parents believe that women should be housewives, while men are allowed more freedom to decide what they want to do with their lives.

"Here it is different: the same rights are given to both sexes," said Ortiz.

Another custom that Ortiz finds difficult is that her parents have to approve of her husband. She she argues that in the U.S. girls can date and marry whoever they want.

Ballines has embraced the American culture by eating American food, accepting some of the American customs and holidays, and enjoying American music, fashion, and language.

"In some ways my parents have embraced the American culture too. We celebrate Christmas,

Fourth of July, and New Years," said Ballines.

Ortiz feels some jealousy toward the culture here because American teenagers are allowed to have more freedom. Ortiz's parents forced her to learn English when she wanted to stay in bilingual classes to be with her friends. Even though she was reluctant to learn English, Ortiz admitted that there are some advantages. Being biligual will help her get a job one day.

"Sometimes I have to translate for my parents because they don't know English at the stores," said Ortiz.

Ballines has to deal with English even though her family has lived in the U.S. for many years. They still care more for their Mexican culture since they have strong ties to Mexico.

Ballines still has relatives in Mexico on both sides of her family. They still go back to Mexico when her family members get sick or die.

However, Ballines admitted that she hasn't been to Mexico in six years because travel is costly. Work and school also prevent travel.

Ortiz visits Mexico every other year to visit her grandparents, aunts, and old friends.

By still visiting Mexico and seeing that their family members still practice the Mexican traditions, both Ballines and Ortiz keep their culture strong. Ortiz said that she still speaks Spanish at home, celebrates Mexican holidays, eats traditional Mexican food, and follows Mexican religion by going to Spanish mass.

"My parents help keep my culture because they have traditional Mexican food and celebrate Mexican traditions," said Ortiz.

Ballines still follows the Mexican traditions, like the quinceñeras girls have on their 15th birthday, eating traditional food, and their religios faith.

"I go to mass when they

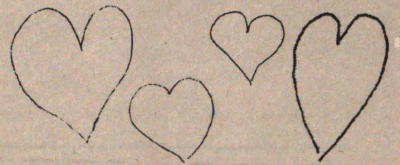
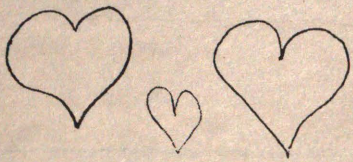
speak Spanish so my parents can understand it better," said Ballines.

Ballines admitted that her parents still don't speak English though they know some basic words. Ballines said that her parents found it hard to learn the language. They began working at a young age rather than going to school.

By learning English at school, Ballines has learned about the American culture through the students and holidays off school. Ballines said she tries to act like the other students to fit in at school even if that means mimicking their culture.

Ballines said that her culture will change to adapt to the American culture and that she would follow her parents example to teach her children about both cultures.

Ortiz admits that the only thing she will do is give her children all the American freedoms she has and work to maintain her Mexican culture.



OTHER THAN VALENTINE'S DAY?

By Sam West

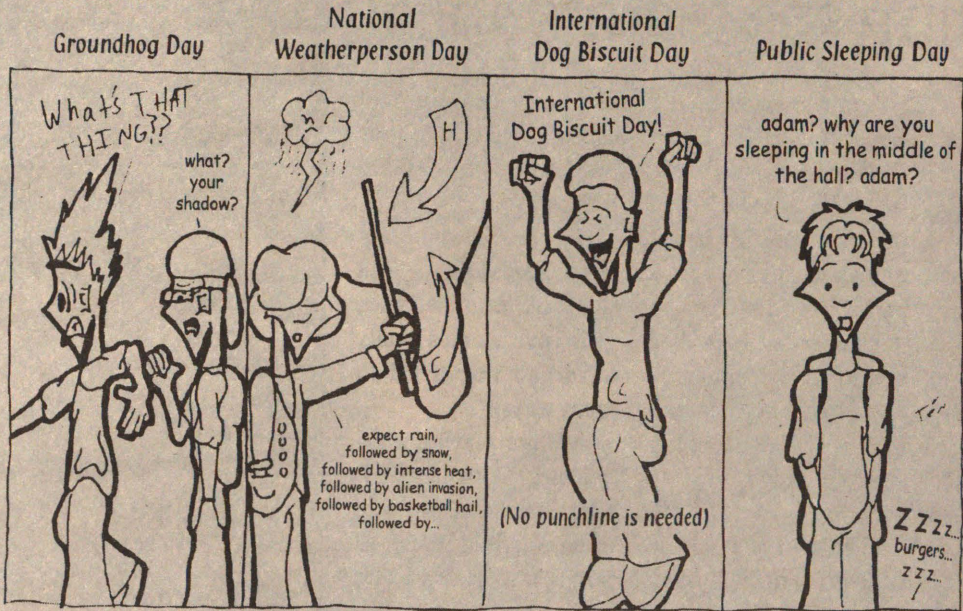
This country is full of useless and annoying holidays, not the least of which is Valentine's Day.

In fact, the U.S. has a holiday for almost everything, and many happen in the month of February.

Groundhog Day is on Feb. 2. If the groundhog sees his shadow, winter will keep its hold on the world for another six weeks. Needless to say, most of the groundhog's records show "Sees Shadow."

But what about the holidays that you don't hear about every day? There are plenty of them, and they occur on almost every day of the month.

It is a little-known fact that Feb. 4 is Create a Vacuum Day. To celebrate this holiday, you can suck an egg into a bottle. The bottle's opening should be just smaller



than the egg. You have to boil and peel an egg, then drop three matches (carefully, of course) into the bottle and put the egg on top of the bottle's opening. The egg will be sucked into the bottle because the higher air pressure outside the bottle will push the egg in, where there is lower air pressure.

Tune in to the Weather Channel on Feb. 5, because on this day you can

celebrate your favorite meteorologist. Don't miss the local weatherpeople, such as Tom Skilling on channel 9, Steve Baskerville on channel 2, and Jerry Taft on channel 7. It's National Weatherperson's Day!

The 11th is National Inventor's Day, which honors Thomas Edison.

All you have to do to celebrate is invent something useful. Actually, if you invent something

useless, it is sure to be acceptable in the spirit of the holiday.

We all know about the 14th, but the 15th is National Gumdrop Day. Make some yummy gumdrops so that you can get the full experience! If you don't want to make them, go buy some and have a feast. Oh, but these are not the only useless and/or annoying holidays.

Feb. 21 marks Love Your Pet Day, where pet-

owners are encouraged to do something nice for their animal. Give the dog a bone, make a nice, comfy bed for the cat, or just sit and play with your pet rat.

This next holiday is sure to please: International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day on the 23rd. What kind of celebration does this entail? You can make your own dog biscuit. All you

need is felt, wiggle eyes, and scissors (remember to be careful). Eating your own dog biscuits is not recommended.

Take the day off to catch up on your sleep on the 28th. This is Public Sleeping Day, the day of promotion of all things tired. But keep in mind the "Wildcat Chronicle" is not responsible for getting you in trouble when you are caught sleeping in class.

MURDER, ALCOHOL AND GANGSTERS: THE VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE

By Kyle Bullis

St. Valentine's Day is supposed to be a day where you hook up with that special someone and have a romantic time.

Hearts, Cupid, kissing, and romance are all things that come up when thinking of Valentine's Day. What you don't think of is guns, murder, and the Mafia.

However, that's what was on the mind of Chicago in 1929 when one of the most infamous mob murders ever took place: The St. Valentine's Day Massacre. In that time period, gangsters Al Capone and "Bugs" Moran were fighting for control of Chicago.

Capone, being the most famous gangster of all time, figured that the best way to get to Moran was by cutting through the ranks of Moran's gang.

Once Capone got up to the big fish, Moran, he devised a brilliant scheme to take him down. In 1929, Prohibition was in effect and that meant bootlegging was a big en-

terprise for gangsters.

Both Moran and Capone controlled pretty much the entire bootlegging market, and offing Moran meant big profits for Capone.

two of Capone's men, both of them wearing police uniforms and driving a stolen police car, pulled up to the exchange and told Moran's men to face up against the wall in the

warehouse. Everybody in the town, including the police, knew that Capone was responsible for the massacre, but he was con-

veniently tucked away in a mansion in Miami and he denied any responsibility for the attack. Unfortunately the main target of the massacre, Bugs himself, arrived at the exchange a little late and when he saw the cruiser he sped off.

That isn't to say that the massacre wasn't a success, but it didn't pack as much of a punch as Capone had expected. In fact, the publicity Capone received after the massacre actually marked the downfall of Capone's career. The publicity did spark a little compassion for the infamous criminal, and Capone was seen almost as a hero; a clever, witty, brilliant man.

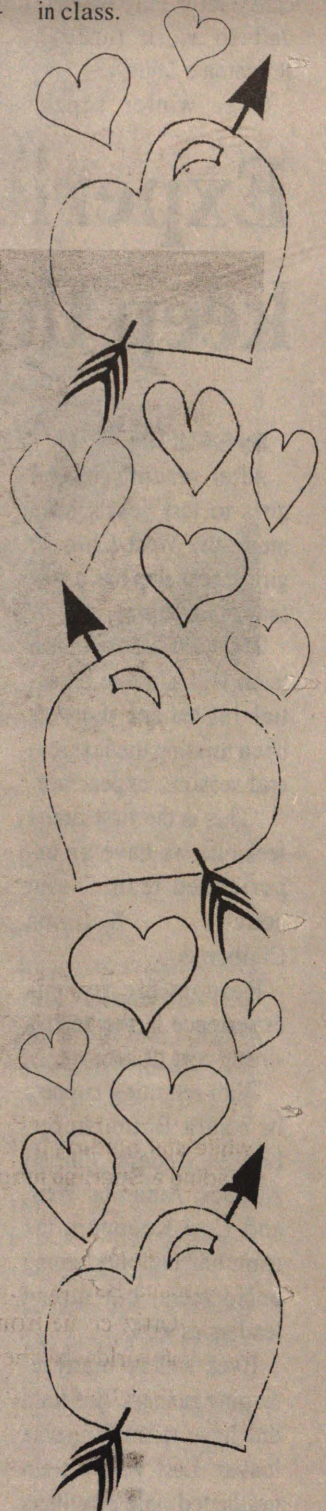
Capone had always been the man in gangster crime, and the St. Valentine's Day Massacre proved that Capone was willing to go to whatever lengths it took to take down his enemies.



During a routine exchange of beer between seven of Moran's men and their buyers behind an abandoned warehouse,

Moran's men, thinking this was just a routine bust, put their hands up to the wall and were re-

Hopefully, other people will have a better Valentine's Day than Moran's men did.



An injury-plagued season has not hurt the team's spirit

By Mary Beth Selby

Girls basketball has high hopes as they prepare for the regional competitions.

The basketball season has been rough as the team periodically lost games and players due to many injuries.

But with a record of 12 wins and 10 losses, the team still has hope of doing well in the regional and sectional tournaments.

Lauren Johnston was injured early on in the season, and then Dana Hernan was kicked just above the ankle.

Hernan still played in a few games, but she wasn't a very effective post player because she had trouble pushing off her foot and switching directions, said varsity coach Kim Wallner.

This loss was a real blow to the team, especially after they already had to work through Johnston's injury.

Over winter break,

Hernan played in the Benet/Naperville North Tournament and, for the first time in eight years, the team won the championship. They went a perfect 5-0 to win it.

Wallner believes they gained a lot of confidence from that tournament and that it was a stepping stone for better things to come.

"The season is so long, it's hard to maintain confidence," said Wallner.

Most of their confidence was shattered with the loss of two athletes, both because of their companionship and contribution of skill.

"We haven't had the entire team the whole time. It was difficult when Lauren first got injured and it took a while for us to work out plays without her. Then she came back and we had to try to work her back into the plays. Then Dana was injured, so we've never really had time to focus solely on certain things

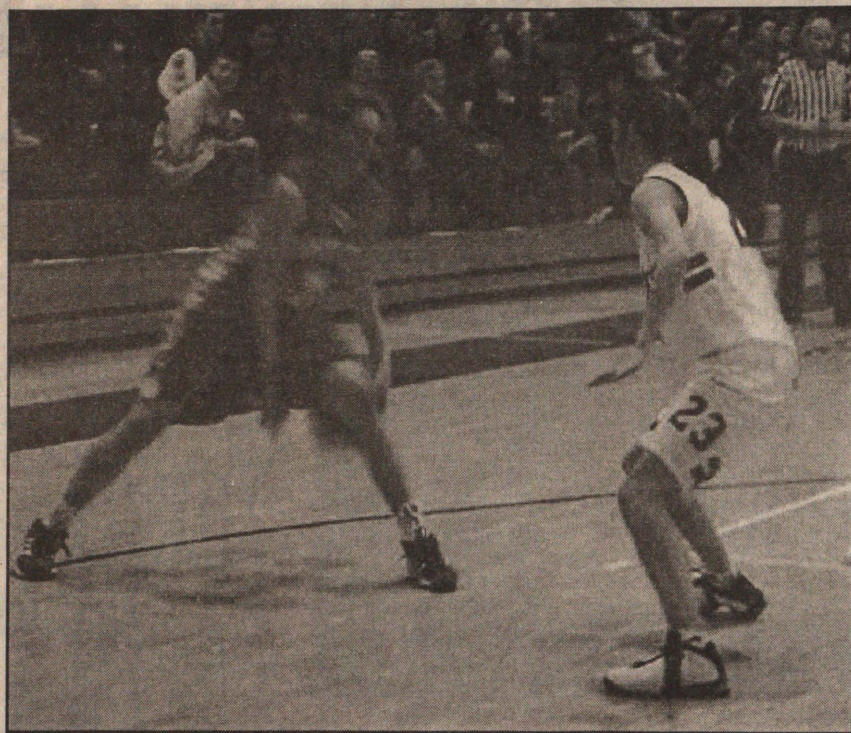
that need improvement because we've had to adjust our plays," said Wallner.

Despite the constant team adjustments and shattered team unity, the girls have worked really hard and improved in many ways.

"We are playing good defense, we are rebounding better. We have held teams to less than 40 points in a game," said Wallner.

However, improved offense and greater consistency is what Wallner believed would help to prepare the girls for the regional and sectional games. Wallner was pleased when We-go was placed in the eighth seed for the regional competitions, which they would like to win.

Beyond this season, Wallner knows that the players she has now will know what to work on for next year. She just hopes they will not have to face more injuries.



Staff Photo

Shaina Sullivan (above) and the rest of the team is hoping to get over their injuries before sectionals.

Small mistakes have caused losses for the wrestling team

By Isaiah Ly Buado

We-go's wrestling team has done fairly well during their season, but the team has had difficulties due to some fundamental mistakes.

"We're a little disappointed at how we've played at meets, but we've really improved since the beginning of the year," said head coach Marty Molina.

Molina said that the younger wrestlers always stood up to the challenge, fearlessly taking on difficult tasks.

But that hasn't been enough to win the number of meets that they wanted to. Several matches were lost due to inexperience and "rookie" mistakes.

Also, the team has been undermanned and many

members of the team are new to the sport of wrestling.

On top of that, they are going up against some very good teams that have been training for many years.

That doesn't say that the freshmen group is bad. They have a winning record for the most part, which is one of the best in the school's history.

When looking back they see the things that they can improve upon. They saw what they made mistakes on, and then tried to correct them for the next match.

Using that, they have learned from their mistakes and will continue to hone their skills for this year and for years to come.

JV and varsity have done well too, but the

team has had to forfeit several matches at meets just because they don't have enough wrestlers to compete.

"Wrestling takes discipline and hard work. We need more people, though," said Adam Pineda.

Pineda, Tony Sosa, and Brad Murison did well at many of the meets this year. They have been very steady in their wrestling and the leadership that they provide.

They help keep the team together, and the younger wrestlers look up to their leadership and dedication said Molina.

Molina said he's looking forward to upcoming years when the freshmen and sophomores start competing at the varsity levels.

Experience and depth keep the girls on track

By Elliott Tinnes

After sending several girls to last year's state meet, the West Chicago girls track team has a new season underway.

This year, however, the team will add one essential ingredient that has been missing the last several seasons: experience.

"This is the first time I feel like we have an experienced team," said coach Katerina Claiborne.

Responsible for this experience is the team's strong core of seniors.

With returning runners in Laura Baumrucker, Lauren Anders, Christi Adduci, Amanda Weir, and Cori Koeppen, the team has not only strong performers, but strong leaders as well.

Even with so many returning runners, the team did have to suffer some losses. Last year's team graduated state qualifiers

Katy Kostal and Lauren Cwiak, as well as Dominique Scott and Aimee Beutke.

But with 75 girls on the team, picking up the slack should not be a problem.

The team's balance between events will strengthen it even more.

According to Claiborne, the team has not only a strong group of long distance girls, but a great group of sprinters as well.

Even more reassuring to the team's potential is the growing group of long and triple jumpers.

With Scott gone, Claiborne hopes that these jumpers can rack up points for the team off the track as well as on.

Last year's team ended the season on a strong note sending four individuals, as well as the 800-meter medley, to the state meet.

While none of the run-

ners made the final round, they made a strong showing nonetheless.

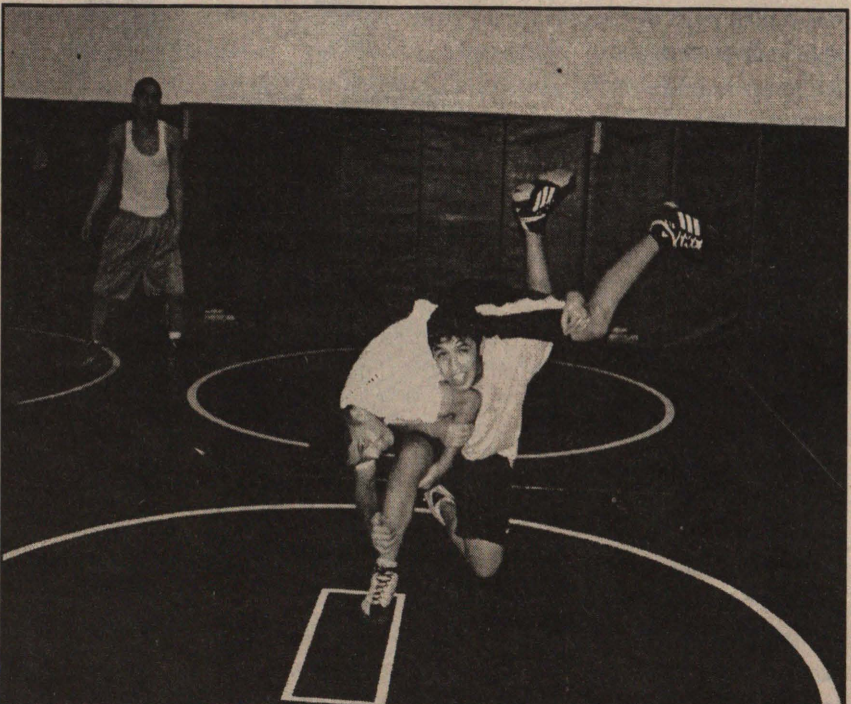
This time of season also tends to be one of the more difficult for the girls, in terms of practicing.

As winter sports come to a close and spring sports begin training, space to practice becomes an issue.

Normally, outdoor practices are a reasonable option, but sub-zero temperatures have kept the girls inside on several occasions.

According to Claiborne, one grueling exception took place when the girls ran practice outside in one-degree temperatures.

The eclipse of winter also brings about changes in the team's personnel. The team often loses several girls to the soccer team, but regaining their numbers after the basketball season.



Staff Photo

Dago Reyes (top), Jorge Marin (bottom) and the rest of the wrestling team hope to keep improving for the rest of the season.

Preparing to go to sectionals is main goal

By Mary Beth Selby

The boys track team wasted no time on regrets for senior losses and have an enthusiastic mind for a victorious season.

"We're going to miss guys, but there are some juniors that can step up. They had a really dedicated off season. I'm excited to see what will happen," said coach Paul McLeland.

The distance team contains a strong senior core of runners, including Mike Smolucha, Rich Visser, and Jason Becker.

In addition to the senior leadership, Smolucha gave credit to the junior runners' great confidence, noting that their dedication will hopefully carry into next year.

"We're all working on getting back to being fast. We worked on endurance in the off-season, and we want to get our one- and two-mile speeds back so we run hard," said Smolucha.

As the team physically prepares for the season, they are also setting goals to work towards.

McLeland said they had broken many significant records last year for sectionals, and he hopes they can have some more record-breaking performances this year.

"We want to possibly place in the top three teams and earn more points at sectionals," he said.

All in all, the boys track team wants to send as many members as possible to the state competition, such as Jeff Raymond and Mike Savagnago for jumping events, and a handful of runners.

Jumping coach Paul Omi is also very optimistic about his new group of jumpers,

"I've seen a lot of potential. We have more than ever before. They seem more focused and serious. They have a

good attitude," said Omi.

He intends to help channel the boys' attitude, helping them with their performance to improve their talents.

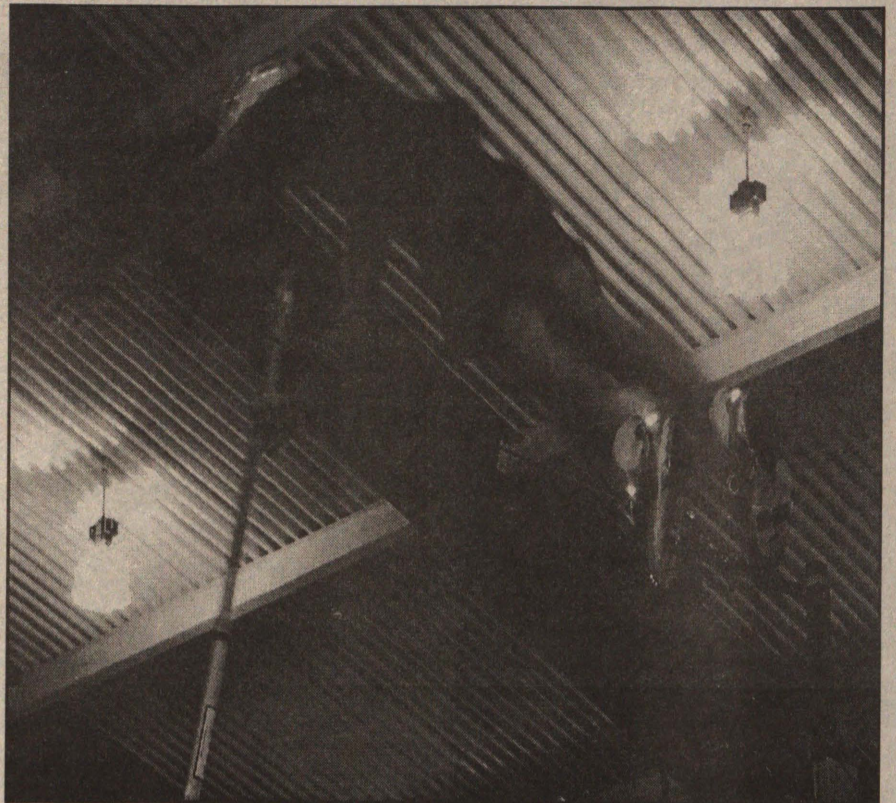
However, in order to make it through to the state competition, the team needs to get through sectionals.

"I hope guys don't burn out by the end of the season. When it gets to the outdoor (season), some guys will get lazy, and start slacking off. We just need to stay focused and have fun. I think we can do good things as a team," said Smolucha.

McLeland also hopes that the team's dedication will last through the season.

Both coaches and team members encourage any boys not currently in an active sport to join the track team.

"They have nothing to lose, and we could always use more people," said Smolucha.



Staff Photo

This year, the boys track team has the potential and talent to break some more records at sectionals.

Athlete of the Month

Parents are the main influence and inspiration for Tom Grove

By Doug Sieder

This month's Athlete of the Month is basketball player Tom Grove.

Who inspired you the most during the year?

Many people have inspired me. However, I would have to say my parents have inspired me the most. They always push me to try my hardest.

Do you play any other sports?

Yes, I play golf and basketball.

Which sport do you enjoy the most?

I like each sport I play for different reasons. There isn't one that I like more than the others.

What plans do you have after high school?

I plan on attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Right now, I do not know what I am going to major in though.

Do you plan on playing any sports after high school?

Not competitively. However, I do plan on playing an intramural sport in college.

What is your best sports memory?

I would have to say winning regional championships in basketball and baseball.

What are your hopes for you senior year of basketball?

I would love to win a



Photo courtesy of Tom Grove

Tom Grove is looking to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign next fall.

regional and sectional title.

What coaches have helped you achieve your goals throughout high school and how did they help you?

Coach Lasky, Walters, and Gimre have all done so much for me throughout high school. They have all pushed me and taught me how much hard work can help you achieve your goals.

How many years have you been playing basketball?

I have played basketball ever since I was in the third grade.

What is your favorite sport?

I enjoy watching football games, but I enjoy playing golf, basketball, and baseball.

Have you achieved any awards in those sports?

Both our basketball and baseball teams won regional championships last year.

Also, I was the regional winner in last years I.H.S.A.'s three-point shootout competition.

Do you do anything special before any of your games?

I always eat a bag of snacks before my games.

Boys swim team meets goals and keeps improving

By Maria Perez

As the boys swim team improves this season they keep setting goals for next year.

Head coach Eugene Spivak said that the boys swim team is doing very well this season. The boys are getting into shape quickly and improving their times.

Jeff Lesniak, Erick Nelson, Brendon Soleman, and Drew Weigand are doing well in their events.

Improvements with the team include everybody coming to practice every day, working hard, lifting weights in the morning, and swimming harder said Spivak.

This season Spivak said that the swim team is right where they need to be. They have met the goals they set up for this season and the swimmers are improving and getting faster.

The boys swim team has managed to win a few meets this season and they have had a couple close ones.

"I expect everyone on the team to get their best times, and their best results at conference and sectionals," said Spivak.

Next year, Spivak expects that everyone will return for next season because the boys swim team only has one senior.

Also, with the boys coming back next year, the team is much improved for next few seasons.

Spivak expects that the swim team will start next season with faster times and with some good senior leadership.

He wants the juniors on the swim team to become senior leaders for next year and help out the others.

Their goals for next year are to improve as a

team. Also the boys swim team will work to move up in the DVC conference and in sectionals.

Spivak wants to make sure that the underclassmen become better leaders for the team so that they can take over when they become seniors.

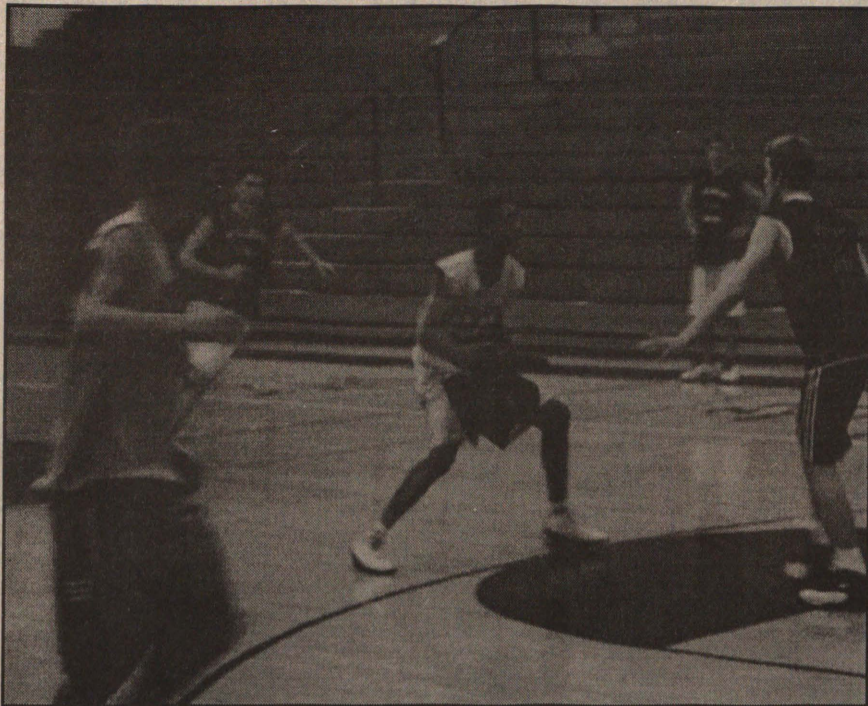
Spivak hopes that the boys use the discipline that they have learned from being on the team in home and in school.

He also hopes they use the hard work they learned on the team in other parts of their lives.

Spivak encourages other boys to join the boys swim team because it is physically good for them.

It helps them get strong, have better cardio endurance, and gives them discipline.

Spivak said that they could gain self-esteem, get into shape, and have confidence.



Leo Baylor (middle) and the rest of the varsity team hope to make it to regionals for the second straight year. Staff Photo

John's Jive

Nudity runs rampant during halftime show

By John Jennings

After Superbowl Sunday, the FCC's phone lines have been ringing off the hook.

In a weird battle to out do the person before them, all of the following have occurred in the last few weeks.

First, Shaquille O'Neal went on a swearing spree. In a live interview after a game that his team won, O'Neal criticized the officials and the calls that they made.

During the interview, after he started swearing, O'Neal was told that he was on live television. He then responded with another expletive. Not exactly basketball's finest hour.

Later on that very same day, there were two more shocking incidents during the Superbowl.

As fans watched the halftime show, P. Diddy and Nelly came out. During his song Nelly grabbed his crotch a good half-dozen times.

But the main event started when Justin Timberlake and Janet Jackson came out to do their routine.

As the number came to a close, Timberlake caused a "wardrobe malfunction" that I am sorry to say, gave a new meaning to the phrase "boob tube."

After this display of

skin, CBS immediately went to commercial and by the time that they returned to the halftime show, the smoke was all that was left of the extravaganza.

What viewers did not see was that during the halftime show, one of the people in the stands slipped onto the field.

After the show was over and the lights came back on, he proceeded to strip into a revealing thong, and streaked across the field for a good 30 seconds before a Patriots player tackled him.

This guy has a repertoire of streaking to his credit. Over the last year or two, he has streaked at some major sporting events advertising a casino on the tattoo that runs across his back and chest.

The final event to occur in this span involves legendary college basketball coach Bob Knight. Knight is known for his tirades and tantrums.

He has thrown chairs across the court, sworn at referees and media alike, and has made too many crude gestures to count.

In this, his latest of many confrontations, Knight and a high-ranking administrator, from the same school Knight coaches at, got in a little tussle and both said things that I can't repeat.

Both have said

publicly that they regret being a part the altercation.

After all of this, my only thought is, why do these people need all the attention? Is it not enough to be wealthy and famous? Do you have to go on national television and make a fool out of yourself?

I did not really mind the whole Jackson thing, but I know a lot of other people out there did.

Many ex-professional football players and commentators were outraged about the disgrace that Nelly and Jackson brought to the game.

The weird thing is though, practically everyone thought the stalker was a riot.

I think it really says something, though, that the most entertaining thing about the Superbowl is not the game, but the half-hour-long halftime show where there was nudity a plenty.

As for future Superbowls, I think that simplicity is the key. Get a good singer to sing the national anthem, but not a famous one.

For halftime, just stick to the cheerleaders and the marching band.

Get rid of all the other unnecessary stuff because sometimes simple is better.

Regionals is the top priority for boys basketball team

By John Jennings

Though the boys basketball team has cooled off recently from their 5-0 start, they still have put up a respectable record considering the tough conference they play in.

The team has a record of 10 wins and 10 losses. Head Coach Kevin Gimre said, "10-10 is not a bad place to be. Of course, we would like to be better, but not everything goes your way."

Varsity players Nick Lelito and John Doeseckle both agreed on how their season has gone. "It has been a bit disappointing, especially in conference, but we are still going strong," said Lelito.

The high points of the season were winning the Thanksgiving tournament at Marmion, and starting off the season with a perfect 5-0 record, said Gimre.

Some of the disappointments have come in the

many close games that the team has lost.

There have been a few overtime losses, and many last second baskets. Also, the loss to Glenbard North after leading by 22, was especially disappointing, said Gimre.

Finishing the year strong in conference is one of the team's big goals to close out the rest of the year. They want to have as much momentum as possible heading into the state tournament that's played in March.

Winning regionals is a shared goal for both Doeseckle and Lelito. As for next year, Lelito said, "I really hope that we can win regionals and sectionals and then get to super sectionals. Also, beating West Aurora would be a great feat."

"Next year, I hope that we can win first in state," said Doeseckle.

Gimre said that the team could especially improve on their defensive re-

bouncing.

"I think that we need more team unity and also our inside game is a little weak at times," said Lelito.

Doeseckle agreed. "I think that our inside game can be one of our weaknesses," added Doeseckle.

Overall though, Gimre said, "The team has been very aggressive. They are good shooters, and they have worked hard all year." The team's guard play and shooting has been the team's strengths throughout the year.

Expectations for the rest of the year are to keep working hard and improving, and to continue to work towards a better record and to make it back to regionals.

The seniors on the team have done a nice this season, said Gimre. They have provided a lot of leadership. Also, the bench players have done a good job filling in and carrying the load.

Managers prove to be strong asset to the boys swim team

By Maria Perez

Boys swim team managers Rachel Rivera and Ashley Olson have a bigger impact on the team than anyone would have expected. During their time as managers, the team has made a lot of progress.

"The team has definitely improved since last season," said Rivera.

Rivera said that their job as team manager is to write down the times of splits, individual competitors' laps, and that way the team can double check their times.

This way, they can know how to pace themselves during meets and learn from their mistakes.

Rivera and Olson put the results from meets in a computer where a program sorts out the times for the coach. This helps the boys swim team to remain organized.

Olson said their responsibilities besides taking down and reporting the times, are to encourage and motivate the rest of the boys team, set up for

the home meets, and they also need to be at every practice and every meets.

"We help motivate and encourage the swimmers," said Rivera.

Rivera said that by being the manager of the boys swim team she gets to travel with the team to away meets and she gets treated like a part of the team.

"I enjoy being able to laugh with the guys and understanding them. Also being able to hang out with them and going to their pasta parties before each meet," said Olson.

Olson said that before each swim meet, it is good a good idea to eat pasta and carbohydrates.

Therefore the swim team gets together at someone's house to eat pasta and play games.

Rivera and Olson were both swimmers for the girls swim team. They volunteered to be the managers for the boys swim team this year.

Since Rivera and Olson are good friends they de-

cidated to do it together.

Rivera said that through being the manager for the team she got an idea on what happens out of the water, and what coaches go through.

Olson said that she likes knowing that she is partly responsible for the improvement and that she is helping as a manager.

As a manager, Olson gained friends, responsibility, and she achieved an understanding that in order to get somewhere she can't be lazy.

Also Olson would rather be working as a manager for the swim team rather than being at home doing nothing, and Olson said that she needed to start taking responsibility for something else.

"I know the swimming aspect because I've been a swimmer for four years, but being on the sideline is really cool, because it's cool to see the swimmers improving and encouraging them during the races," said Rivera.