



## LifeSmarts takes state title, looks toward Philadelphia nationals

By Kym McDaniel

LifeSmarts members captured a victory in the state competition and will advance to the national competition in Philadelphia in April.

Don Zabelin, LifeSmarts state coordinator and CHS team adviser, selected two teams of five students for the state competition.

Morrisonville, Schaumburg, and West Aurora also competed at the March 9 meet.

Team one includes seniors Dan Dyrda, Nick Gorski, and Jared Vasiliauskas, junior Kevin Michaelson and sophomore Paul Warkins.

Team one will proceed to the national competition on April 25-22 after defeating Schaumburg in the final round at state.

"We will continue buzzer practicing and not just knowing the answer, but being quicker too," said Zabelin in preparation for nationals.

In LifeSmarts competitions,

students are asked consumer education related questions.

The LifeSmarts competition first has an individual round where questions are asked to individuals on the team, then a team round where the team may discuss the answer and a third round is the challenge round where the first team to hit the buzzer may answer.

Though Schamburg defeated CHS in their second match's overtime by only one point, CHS came back with "an obvious victory" in the final round, according to the team.

This year, CHS held the state competition.

"There are all these different areas of questions, other than consumer education," said Zabelin. "I have students who are stronger than others in different areas. They balanced out with students who have specialties in different areas."

Zabelin was especially impressed with LifeSmarts new-

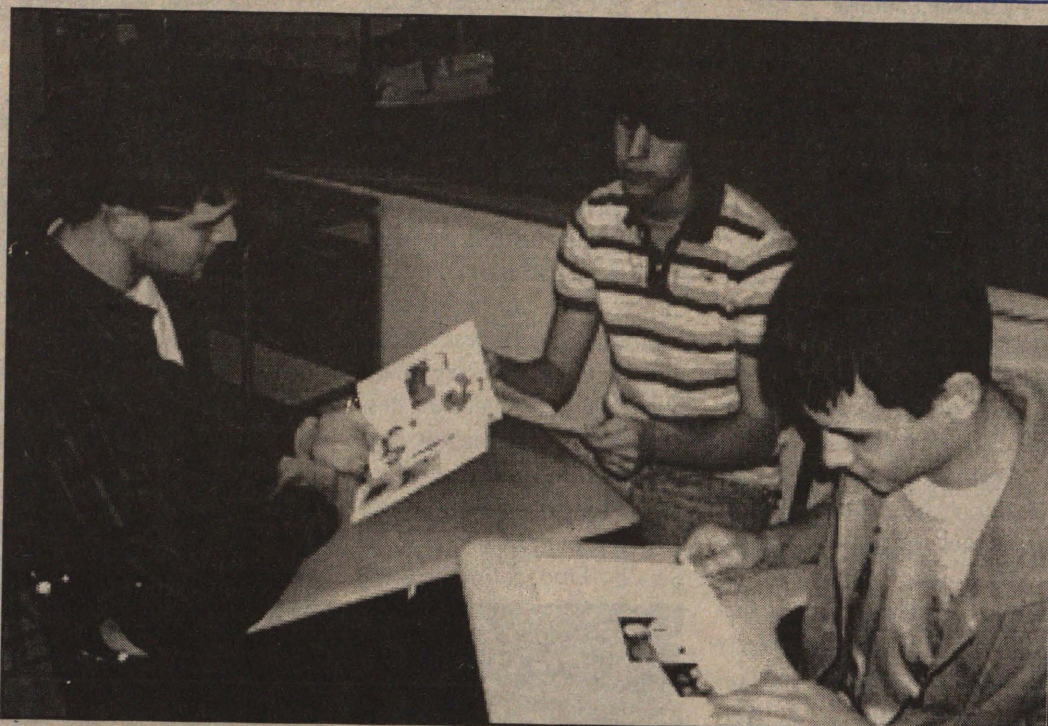


Photo by Kayla Harris

Coach Don Zabelin and his state champion LifeSmarts team, including, from left, seniors Dan Dyrda and Nick Gorski and junior Kevin Michaelson, will take their consumer education knowledge to Philadelphia in April for their fifth straight nationals appearance.

comer Gorski's performance. Gorski, who had been ill for several days prior to the competition, had no practice with the buzzer system, but even Zabelin, who said that he shows little emotion during events, admits to admiring how well Gorski played.

"It was just amazing to see the ease with which Nick performed," Zabelin said. "I

knew the other boys would do well just because of how much experience they had had, but this was Nick's first time using the buzzers at all."

Other areas covered in the LifeSmarts competitions are consumer rights and responsibilities, financial management, technology, health and safety and environment.

Dyrda, who specializes in

health and safety, as well as environment questions, enjoys LifeSmarts for getting to meet new people and competing, while fellow new member and Vasiliauskas' specialty is economics.

"I was obviously excited that we won state and get to go to nationals," said Vasiliauskas. "Philadelphia, here we come."

## Teacher dismissals expected; world studies cut

By David Thomas

Seven teaching positions are expected to be cut at the April 4 Board of Education meeting, eliminating 13.6 jobs total.

The Board tabled the decision at the March 21 meeting, needing more time to make such a drastic change.

The cuts are another step in reducing the school's deficit. In conjunction with the previous budget cuts, the school is projected to save \$1.1 million.

According to Supt. Lee Rieck, the salaries and benefits of employees are paid using two-thirds of a "sensible" school budget.

However, in a budget situation, Rieck said that the num-

ber of teachers being employed at the school must be looked at.

"We're looking at both administration and teaching positions. It's one of the more painful parts of the job," said Rieck. "We're talking about valued colleagues who are having their

ments: Social studies, science, physical education, math, English, bilingual, and the library. Math is also losing a long-term substitute and the guidance department will lose a part-time counselor.

A domino effect resulted,

without tenure.

"The unfortunate situation is that the domino effect of tenure/bumping has all landed in the same department this year," said director of human resources Kim Chambers.

"Although there is only one position being suggested for reduction in English, the cumulative effect is that four new staff are being recommended for release."

Many factors affect whether or not a teacher is cut. Those factors can include class size, core subject areas, seniority, and teacher evaluations by supervisor.

But many, both staff and students, are questioning the

Board's judgment.

"The Board says it has to save money. But it's the same Board that hired them," says Teacher Association president Barbara Laimins. "If they knew they had no money, why did they hire them?"

The reduction in teachers would also increase class sizes, which, according to Laimins, would be detrimental to the students' ability to learn.

"Increased class sizes are bad for any classes that have writing portions to them," said Laimins. "Any cuts in P.E. would bring classes to 45, and right there, you would have a safety issue."

(See Cuts page 2)

*"The Board says it has to save money. But it's the same Board that hired them. If they knew they had no money, why did they hire them?"*

*--Barbara Laimins*

lives interrupted."

Teachers were reduced by one in each of the following depart-

especially in the English department. There, tenured teachers bumped teachers

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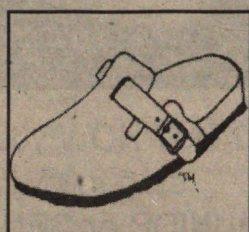
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### News

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### Centerspread



Take a look at the trends taking over We-go, pages 8 and 9

### Features

What is a Quinceañera? Find out, page 11



## German variety show lets students 'act out'

By Cristina Sarnelli

What do Scooby Doo, the Power Rangers, and Willy Wonka have in common? They were all themes of the 2006 German variety show.

German 2, 3, and 4 students performed their skits on March 10 during second and third hour. German 2 students performed infomercials which included one about a Band-Aid, one about toothpaste, and another about college.

German 3 performed skits revolving around the theme of a PBS telethon and a Scooby Doo murder mystery, and German 4 performed skits revolving around a Willy Wonka theme and also incorporated German 2 infomercials in-between.

German 1 students watched the plays so they could get a feel for what the plays will be like when they have to perform them next year.

Each play must incorporate a word of the year, which is selected by the German 4 class. This year's word was tierkörperbeseitigung meaning "animal corpse processing."

"My class came up with the word of the year, and we picked it because we were looking for a word that was funny when pronounced in German and had a strange meaning. We

were going to choose a word meaning bachelor pad, but we felt tierkörperbeseitigung had more possibilities," said senior Ismail Hassan.

At the end of the variety show, awards were given out for the performances. Some of the awards that were given out this year include best actor: Junior Jon Glenn, best actress: Senior David Kelsey, who played Pamela Andersen; best props: Super Universität; best costumes: Power Rangers; best use of sound: German 4; best use of the word of the year: Scooby Doo; most talented:

German 3 band; best choreography: Scooby Doo; best infomercial: Super Universität; best overall: Scooby Doo.

Each play had to incorporate a special talent such as playing an instrument. Juniors Matt Miller, Brad Rathe, Michelle Dimas and Rachel Hellman made up the Umpa band.

Dimas also performed a Power Rangers skit and explained how she and her classmates put it together.

"First we had to decide on an idea for our play. Then we wrote the script, memorized the lines, decided on costumes

and props, and practiced... a lot," she said.

Hassan explained how his class went about preparing for the plays.

"Once we set our theme, we thought about props to make the plays look realistic. When we broke up the class, we had to devote an entire group just to prop building," he said.

Overall, Hassan felt that the plays were successful.

"Considering we only had three practices as a whole group, I feel we did pretty well. I think the underclassmen have improved a lot more than we did at their age," he said.

The plays have been around for 30 years and have undergone a lot of changes, according to German teacher Terri Strohm.

"Our German plays started out as scripts that were already written. I got student feedback on the plays, and over time we decided that the students should write their own scripts and incorporate their own talents, which has made the plays what they are today," she said.

Strohm was especially pleased with this year's show and said, "It was probably one of the most problem-free years we've had. I'm very proud of the students and already looking forward to it next year."

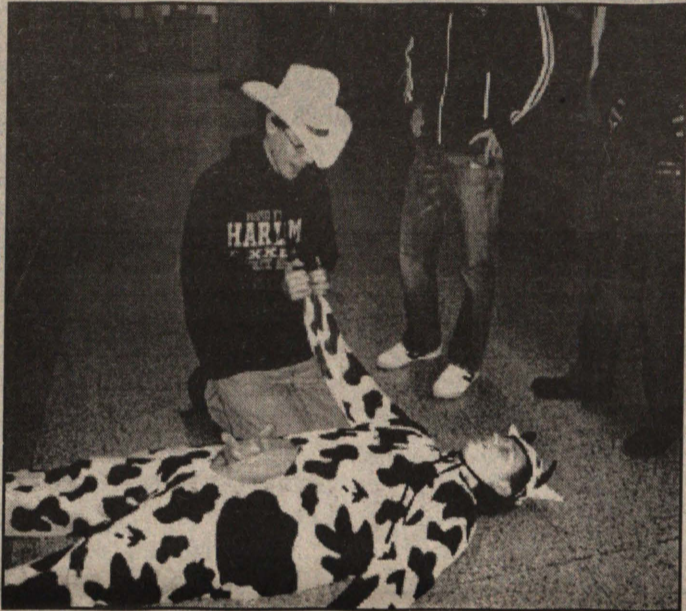


Photo by Cristina Sarnelli

During the German variety show, groups use unique props and costumes to spice up their skits, like junior Jeff Bicek and sophomores Brendan Dyrda, Brian Hummer and Tom Werle.

### Cuts...

(Continued from page 1)

Also, Rieck said some extracurricular activities may be cut. However, he could not name specifics.

In addition, the sophomore interdisciplinary class has been eliminated for next year because of low enrollment.

According to Principal John Highland, every class has an "arbitrary" enrollment number to meet.

Enrollment for freshman interdisciplinary class, global studies, is also a concern.

"We're going to try to bolster those numbers. We're doing what we can to maintain this," Highland said. "But it's really driven by the choice of the students."

Teachers are disappointed over the cut.

English teacher Timothy Courtney, who also teaches a section of world studies, said that there are many benefits to interdisciplinary courses.

"The class makes students more aware of connections," said Courtney. "They start to see patterns; patterns of thought, history, human experiences."

Courtney is currently working on a dissertation on interdisciplinary studies.

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## February's Student of the Month award goes to avid football fan

*Student of the Month is based on a solid academic history, commitment in extra-curricular activities, and community involvement. Students must be nominated by at least one staff member, and the final selection is made by the Student Activities Director and a committee made up of additional staff members.*

**By Kellie Virnich**

"You can turn painful situations around through laughter. If you can find humor in painful situations... you can survive it." This Bill Cosby quote is one that Charlie Blanchard, February's Student of the Month, has used to get through the difficulties he has faced already in his life: Losing his father, aunt and grandmother in the past two years.

"I've gone through a lot of tough times in the past few years, but I'd say I've managed to get through them pretty well," Blanchard said. He said that though his family has always lived nearby, he sees them more often now, looking on the bright side of the situation.

Blanchard also crushed his hand in the fall of 2005 when he dropped 225 pounds on it while working out, but was still able to finish his career as a four-year starter on the school's football team. Some of his favorite memories include beating Plainfield and Wheaton North.

He said, "We have never gotten very far in post-season, but I'll always remember when we beat some of the more difficult teams." Blanchard was also the recipient of the prestigious Randall Jacobs Award.

Another fond high school memory Blanchard has is attending girls soccer games with fellow senior Jim Siekman.

"I love watching soccer, and the team has very few fans. Jimmy and I are the girls soccer team 'superfans,'" he said.

In addition to maintaining

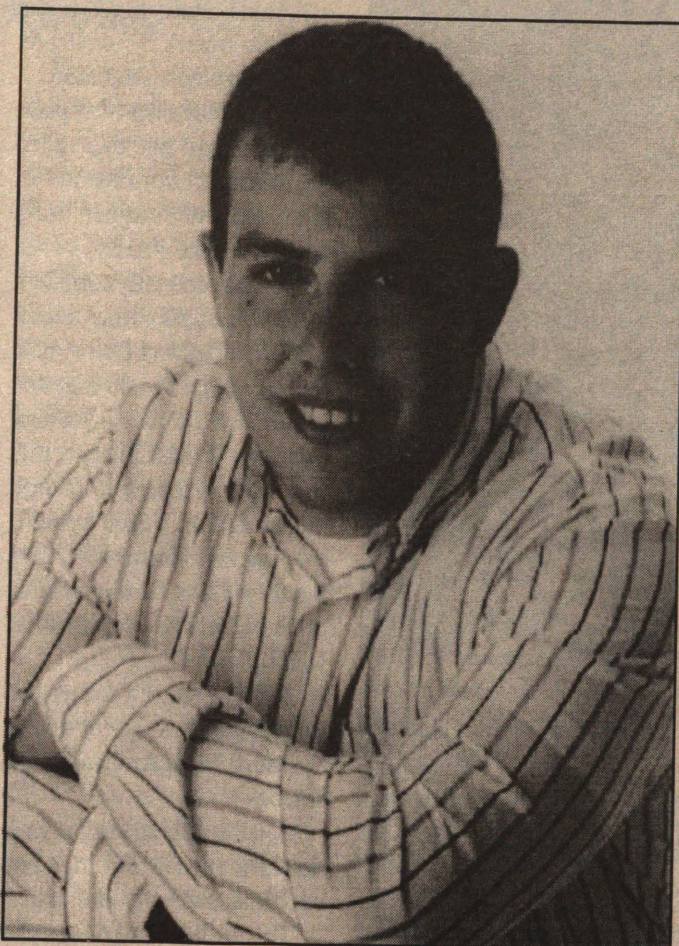


Photo courtesy of Charlie Blanchard

**Overcoming some major obstacles while maintaining good grades, a positive attitude and sense of humor is why Charlie Blanchard was named February Student of the Month.**

over a 3.6 GPA, Blanchard volunteers at several organizations like the West Chicago Youth Commission, Crop Walk and St. Mary's Food Pantry.

Though he doesn't plan on pursuing broadcast communications, Blanchard recommends the class for students who want to have fun while creating a product. He said that it was his favorite class for this reason, as well as having teacher Steve Kellner.

"It was probably my favorite class because, while we got work done, it was still pretty laid-back," said Blanchard. "Plus, Mr. Kellner's sarcastic sense of humor toward everyone made the class pretty interesting."

Purdue University has accepted Blanchard into its pharmacy program, but he is unsure of what he wants to do in the

future. He knows he wants to get married and have kids, and would also love to go to a Chicago Bears Game or see them win the Superbowl.

"Have fun; don't take life too seriously. That's the mistake I made, and we're just too young," said Blanchard, who is especially glad to leave the drama that comes with high school. According to Blanchard, he lost most of his shyness in high school, and is more "out there," but also more responsible, not getting into usual teenage trouble. He has even broken his habit of going to Pizza Now nearly every day.

Even with the recognition of Student of the Month, reserved for some of the school's best representatives, Blanchard considers himself "a good person, but nothing amazing, basically just a nice guy."

## School film fest returns

**By Kym McDaniel**

Submit a film to the film fest on April 21 and have the chance for everyone in the community to view your film.

In its second year, the Wego student film fest is seeking submissions ranging from 2 minutes to 15 but must adhere to school codes.

According to English teacher and event organizer Brian Turnbaugh, the film fest might contribute to Wego 2 Africa.

"It will be the best of all worlds: A fun time, a cheap date, and a great cause," said Turnbaugh.

Even though only nine students submitted films last year, Turnbaugh expects more entries this year as technology improves and wishes to keep the fest more of a showcase than a competition.

"The applause alone is the greatest gift a filmmaker can get at this level," said Turnbaugh. "This year I am sure we will have more entries

as last year brought out more students to make films...we had a decent turnout of over 150 people last year."

Senior Davy Taylor submitted a film last year with junior David Thomas.

"I am planning to submit again this year. We are spoofing a bad movie, or a short documentary. Something like science theater," said Taylor.

Although Taylor is not looking for a career in film, he likes the film fest and sees it as a "fun way for people to express themselves as long as the movies are good or funny."

There are no limits of entries that can be shown, but if necessary the films with the best values will be shown.

Turnbaugh suggests submitting something different and not trying to shock the audience with "gore or acts of idiocy."

The festival is April 21 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and tentative admission fee is \$2.

## Ferrer: "Hispanics need to close education gap"

**By Kellie Virnich**

No Child Left Behind Coordinator Lourdes Ferrer enlightened the Board of Education as to why Hispanic students around the school may be underachieving at the meeting March 7.

Ferrer's speech consisted of 16 recommendations to improve results from Hispanic students not only on the Prairie State Achievement Exams, which correlate directly to NCLB, but to their general academic and future success.

"This school does a wonderful job in trying to assimilate its Hispanic students," Ferrer said. "But we have a large Hispanic population now, and it is only going to get bigger, so we have to address our problems and weaknesses while we can still change them."

Ferrer's suggestions spanned many aspects of both the school and community, bringing parents of the specified students in as a concern as well.

"Many parents do not realize the basic facilities available specifically for them. They cannot help their children if they don't know all the opportunities they have," she said.

Though school board president Tony Reyes had concerns about the effects the hypothetical changes would have on the school's already stretched budget, Ferrer said that many of her initiatives would cost little to no money to implement.

Some of these suggestions

included making political leaders aware of the school's unique situation, creating alliances with the elementary and middle schools that feed into CHS and changing the attitudes of staff and students to integrate Hispanic students, not isolate them with different classes and teachers.

More than once, Ferrer invoked the parents' importance to their students' success in the classroom and in life. She touched on the many difficulties these families have supporting their children, not only because of the language barrier, but also a possibly inferior education and an entirely different culture to contend with.

She said, "Many of the students here have already exceeded their parents academically, and are also living in a completely different world. We need to try to close the gap between the generations."

She also said to implement anti-drug, anti-gang and pregnancy prevention programs directly targeting Hispanic teens. According to Ferrer, these students were "especially vulnerable to these kinds of behaviors," because of the struggles they have faced that most other teens would not have had to endure.

*For more on Hispanic student achievement, see page 10.*

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## FBLA heads to state

By Katie Taylor

FBLA members are heading to the Future Business Leaders of America state conference in Decatur March 31 well prepared and plenty confident.

"I hope they all get first place so that we can take them all to the national conference in Nashville this summer," said adviser Maria Wirth.

Wirth is especially confident in the business ethics team, made up of juniors Dan Amos, Steve Skrzypczynski and Joe Majchrowski. Since it is a new event for West Chicago this year, the boys spent extra time preparing their presentation by working with former business teacher Cass Streicher and other business leaders in West Chicago.

"It's a new event for us and those three have a very strong business backgrounds," said Wirth.

Majchrowski agreed, saying that he is excited to compete at state and hopefully nationals.

"I'm really excited because we are definitely going to win," Majchrowski said. "I better

start packing for Nashville."

Other members competing at state are: seniors Amy Axelrod, Dan Visser, Chris Jelen, Elena Suarez and Martha Kaczmarczyk; juniors Annie Caputo, Allison Romanelli and Ken Klein; sophomore Paul Warkins; and freshmen Rebecca Cisowski, Kristen Kotche and Hanna Colliander.

They will be competing in accounting 1, Java programming, Java interview, word processing 2, economics, business communications, computer applications 2, business calculations, introduction to business, word processing 1, and FBLA principles and procedures and public speaking, respectively.

Warkins and Cisowski are also involved in battle of the chapters, competing against other state chapters by answering questions about FBLA.

"I'm really excited, especially because I know the whole team is going to be cheering for us," said Warkins. "State is going to be amazing."



Photo courtesy of Mary Ellen Daneels

Teachers and administration, like social studies teacher Candace Fikis and English teacher Jason Kling, above, faced off in a sumo wrestling tournament Feb. 27. The event helped raise money for the community leadership class'Wego 2 Africa project, which is building a school in Angola, Africa by raising \$10,000. Principal John Highland was the winner, beating bilingual education teacher Jamie Garcia in the final round. More than \$1,500 was raised from the event, bringing the total amount raised since the beginning of the project to about \$6,000. Teachers were chosen by students and staff donating money to their favorite picks in commons prior to the event.

## Local library holds contest for new logo

### Staff hopes to give building new image

By Kym McDaniel

The Carol Stream Public Library is looking for a change and it needs a student with artistic abilities to help.

The library is trading in its old logo for something new that still focuses on the community.

Assistant director Christina Stoll said, "We want a logo that represents the community. We want to have the opportunity to involve the community while best reflecting the value of the library. We would like some help in that development."

Students can submit a logo design to the library April 2-15.

The community will then vote on the best logo. The library used the old logo for three and a half years.

The winner will receive a \$25 Barnes and Noble gift card.

"We want the community to tell us (what they want in a logo). I encourage all participants to come visit the library and the website, meet the staff and see what we have to offer," said Stoll.

All submissions must be on a white background, no larger than 8 1/2 by 11 inches. The library suggests less detail and some colors since the logo would not reproduce well in a

small format. Student name, phone or e-mail and school name should be included with the submission.

The Carol Stream Library likes to have a logo because according to Stoll, it represents the visual image to remember the library by.

Senior Eric Lauer, who has taken numerous art classes throughout his high school career including art 1 and 2, painting, and studio art said, "I would love to create a new logo. I am pretty skilled in Photoshop and I know how to make logos for businesses."

Lauer added that new art of any kind would improve the image of the library.

"From what I remember, the building is kind of dull. But the (new) logo will get the community involved in the process and make the library more involved with the people instead of having the people involved with the library," he said.

All designs will be on display for the community to vote on in May.

All students interested in contributing should drop entries off at 616 Hiawatha Drive, Carol Stream, during business hours or e-mail Stoll at [cstoll@cslibrary.org](mailto:cstoll@cslibrary.org).

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# Great Prom

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## Preparations for prom and after-event begin

### Student council organizes dance

By Brittany Blanchard

Take a gamble on romance with the junior class as they prepare for this year's casino night-themed prom, "Let the Good Times Roll."

Ticket sales for the dance at the Carlisle will be on sale April 3-13 for \$50 in commons during all lunch hours. However, seating will not be assigned during ticket sales but will instead be granted on a first come, first serve basis at the dance.

Junior class president Katrina Means said the junior class is very excited about this year's festivities.

"We've put a lot of time and effort into fundraising for this prom and this year's theme, 'Let the Good Times Roll,' has provided endless opportunities for creativity throughout our planning and preparation," Means said.

Voting for the prom song is taking place March 20-24.

Prom king and queen nominations will be accepted April 3-7 in commons during all lunch hours. Final voting will take place April 10-13.

Additionally, All Night Long tickets will be on sale every Tuesday and Thursday in commons from April 3-13. Tickets will be sold for \$20 for the event that will again be held at GameWorks in Schaumburg.

The fee includes private party admission to GameWorks, luxury bus transportation, which all students must take to the event, unlimited game play on virtual games, a limited swipe card for carnival games, unlimited food and drinks and access to six caricature artists.

Buses will leave from Entrance A at midnight and return to the school by 4:30 a.m. All Night Long is available to all juniors and seniors, regardless of whether or not they attend the dance, as well as their dates.

Originally, the All Night Long After Prom Committee planned to alternate between Bowling Green and GameWorks as locations for the event, but decided to hold the event at GameWorks again this year in accordance with student interest.

"We surveyed the students on the bus on the way home last year to get their take on it," said All Night Long After Prom Committee chairperson Becky Koltz. "The students spoke, and we listened."

Senior Jessica Crawford, who attended the event last year, is excited to be returning to GameWorks after prom this year.

"Last year GameWorks was a lot of fun so I'm glad the committee opted to hold the event there again," said Crawford.



Photo courtesy of David Thomas

Every year students travel to Washington D.C. to participate in Winter Congress, a convention sponsored by the Junior Statesmen of America. They argued for and against congressional bills written and submitted by students with other schools in the Midwest, Ohio River Valley, and Southwest. In addition, the students attended a keynote address by Christian evangelist Pat Robertson and toured the capital, including the White House and Washington Monument. Pictured here are, back, from left, Sen. Dick Durbin, adviser Barbara Laimins, freshman Tara Breinig, junior Alex Breinig, senior Joe Malandrucolo, Sen. Barack Obama; front row, sophomore Austin Pietrobbon, Jared Vasiliauskas, junior David Thomas, junior Gerik Wysocki, adviser Jeremy Rose, and junior Zach Hund.

## Spanish students excited to host European teenagers in exchange

By Leah Kuzmicz

Nineteen students from Spain will have the chance to sample life in America when they arrive as part of the Spanish exchange program.

For 11 days the Spaniards will attend school with hosts and visit many places.

This year's group of exchange students is the largest number ever hosted at once and will arrive April 22 and leave May 2.

Spanish teacher Tara

Dellutri has coordinated the Spanish exchange program for 10 of the 15 years of its existence, and loves every minute of it.

"These students have a great opportunity to form friendships, and the chance to learn about another way of life is so valuable," said Dellutri.

The exchange students and their hosts will be going to Navy Pier, Millennium Park, and the Museum of Science and Industry.

Every other year the Spanish exchange has a trade with Costa Rica and Spain. This year students will be hosting Spaniards and traveling to Costa Rica.

"I am just really excited to see what it is like having someone else live in my house from a different country," said freshman Lizzie Gola.

There will be a welcoming reception for the exchange students on April 25 in the library after school.

## Band, orchestra, choir travel to Walt Disney World to perform

By Kym McDaniel

Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Goofy were not the only ones on display in the Magic Kingdom parade.

Band students, along with choir and orchestra, performed several concerts at the vacation hot spot March 1-6.

The students also attended a clinic at University of Central Florida with the head band director at the college.

"We worked on our general playing music and concepts...the clinic was great and the parade was an exciting musical experience," said band and orchestra teacher Steve Govertsen.

Orchestra also played on a stage in Tomorrow Land at the Magic Kingdom.

Choir and chamber choir had a performance at Cosmic Ray's Starlight Café.

"We rose up through the floor, which was pretty cool,"

said junior Carl Kerschner.

All groups were also allowed to visit the Magic Kingdom, MGM and Epcot.

*'I would go back in a heartbeat if I ever had the chance.'*

*--Sean Rubin*

"I had a lot of fun. We went to Disney during the off-season so the lines were much shorter than they usually are," said Kerschner, who found it funny that fellow students thought they wouldn't get wet going on Splash Mountain.

Junior Sean Rubin, who attended with choir, agreed.

"(The best part of the trip were the) illuminations, nightly light, fire, and fireworks show set to music at the

Epcot Center," said Rubin.

Rubin also said that it was "an emotional time" for the choir because they watched the show just before leaving on the last night.

"I'll never forget it," he said.

Sophomore Mike Dalton said, "The best part of the trip was just running through the parks. On the last night (some friends) and I sprinted from Epcot's laser light show to a monorail, to the front of the castle at Magic Kingdom where we saw fireworks, so we saw two shows in one night."

Though band is not planning a trip next year, many said it was a good experience.

"I would go back in a heartbeat if I ever had the chance," said Rubin.

The students held several fundraisers to raise money for the trip, including selling cookie dough, candles, holiday greenery and catalog sales.



Photo by Cristina Samelli

Music students mixed business with pleasure when they traveled to Florida. Choir, band and orchestra performed, but were also able to visit various attractions in the area.

### Correction

West Chicago Police Department social worker Donna Swanson was inadvertently omitted as a source in February's

"Local family devastated by house fire."

The Chronicle regrets the error.

## Our View

# PSAE does not accurately test students' abilities: Improved testing is needed

As juniors prepare for the upcoming Prairie State Achievement Exams, one question comes to mind: Do the PSAEs truly measure the capabilities of high school students?

The PSAEs test English, science, math, and reading skills. Juniors have been practicing for these tests in their English, math, history, and science classes so that they can learn the "tricks" to doing as well as they can on the exams, which are taken in April. But that's just what's wrong with these tests: There are "tricks" to getting the right answer.

First of all, the test is timed, and there are many lengthy passages that are hard to read in the time limit. Juniors have been practicing strategies for getting as much information from the passages as possible in the fastest possible time so that they can finish all of the questions before the time is up. Many of them find it hard to complete the reading and questions in time.

So if the Illinois State Board of Education wants to get accurate results of how students are doing, why rush them?

At least give them enough time so that they can actually get through the reading and be able to think questions through instead of having to nervously look up at the clock to see how many seconds are left to answer a series of questions. Putting a short time limit on a test also puts pressure on students.

Pressure can cause some students to get nervous which could in turn cause mediocre test results that could have been well above average.

Plus, not every student has the same reading pace. Some read faster than others. Those who read slower have even less chance of completing the reading and will either not finish the test or have to end up guessing, lessening their chances of doing well.

With this exam there are no second chances. It's a one time shot, and if you mess up, you mess up. This is

another reason why juniors are nervous for the exam.

It doesn't seem right that the students who end up feeling terrible the day of the exam have to accept a below average grade because they couldn't focus as well. It doesn't seem right for the students who are actually quite intelligent to have to accept a below average grade because they aren't the greatest test takers.

How can one test measure the ability of a student? That's like giving a really good athlete who can score 90 percent of the time one shot to make the goal, and he misses. Does that make him a bad athlete just because he couldn't make the shot that one time? Of course not, but the way this test is set up sure makes it seem like it.

If the State Board really cares about student academics and their futures, then they should create a reasonable test that accurately tests student intelligence.

# Cheers for changing sport status

Finally, cheerleaders and dancers are rightfully considered athletes at our school.

For the 2006-2007 school year cheerleaders and poms can be exempt from P.E. as long as they participate in competitions.

According to guidance counselor Jill Holubetz, to be considered a sport at Community High School, a team needs to have physical activity and participate in competitions.

Band members have long since been exempted from P.E. because they march and compete every year.

Students shouldn't automatically disregard cheerleaders and poms just because their sports include skirts and dancing.

According to dictionary.com, a definition of a sport is a "physical activity set by rules or customs that are often engaged in competition."

In cheerleading and poms, according to Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA), there are team rules and regulations for competing, which include judging criteria, sportsmanship, deductions and disqualifications among other general rules.

Cheerleaders also must "stunt" which involves lifting and making human pyramids out of teammates holding each other up. Gymnastic ability is a must on the UCA's judging criteria form.

According to uta.fi.com, good cheerleaders must

have strength and coordination to stunt safely and correctly with other cheerleaders.

Cheerleading also includes gymnastics, muscle training, strength, and dancing. Cheerleaders and poms practice 2-3 times a week for two hours, and longer if necessary.

According to pepquarters.com, most pom and dance requirements for performance include turns, leaps, kicks and jumps for at least three minutes. That is three minutes of non-stop moving, which is around the same

amount of time a track runner would run the 800 meter run. Therefore, since track and field is considered a sport, then it is only fair that cheerleading and poms also be seen as sports.

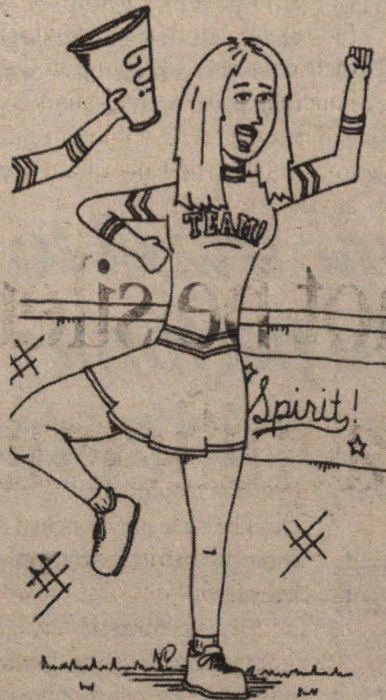
Statistics show at the National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research, cheerleading had more serious injuries for women than gymnastics or track in 2005.

At the chicagotribune.com, statistics show that 209,000 people ages 5 to 18 were treated for cheerleading injuries from 1990-2002.

Dance Production, an elective for P.E. that requires try-outs to be accepted into, performs a dance show at the end the semester each year. Therefore, it would make sense that poms and cheerleaders would be granted P.E. exempt in addition to being considered official athletes.

According to gsu.edu, a 135 lb. female who dances for 30 min. will burn 193 calories, compared to the 161 calories a 135 lb. female would burn playing softball. These statistics show that dancing and cheerleading compete with other sports on a physical level.

It's about time that the school recognized cheerleading and poms as a serious sport in the school, and the administration should be commended for the move.



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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. Letters to the editor may be e-mailed to Laura Kuehn at lkuehn@d94.org or delivered to Room 319 before or after school.

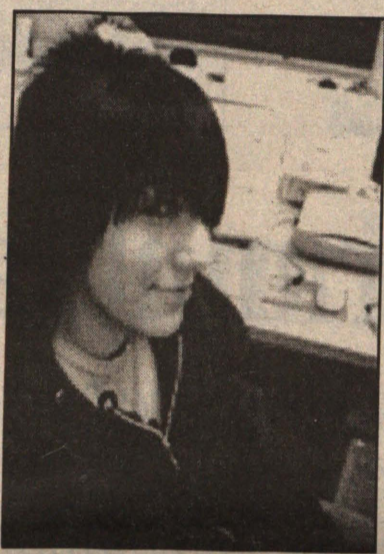
## The Catholic Church cares more for its reputation than children

### Cover-ups of sexual abuse are unacceptable, especially when children are at risk

By Ellyn Fortino

After many painful years of criminal investigations, scandalous exposés, civil lawsuits and alleged church reforms, why are we still seeing cases of clergy sex abuse and cover-ups by high church officials?

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) lashed out against Cardinal Francis George calling his actions in recent priest abuse scandals "secretive, deceptive and irresponsible."



The group had enough when the archdiocese publicly admitted George did not act on the advice of an internal review board to remove a Chicago priest accused of abusing young boys.

About four months later, the Rev. Daniel McCormak of St. Agatha's Church was charged with molesting two boys. The priest was recently charged with molesting a third boy, an offense that occurred after George was advised to remove the priest.

We hear news reports about war, rape, domestic violence, senseless acts of murder and random acts of terrorism. And if that was not bad enough we have learned of terrible crimes committed by ministers of the gospel, the very gospel which teaches its believers to care for God's little ones.

What are these "little ones" to believe now when this

holy figure in their lives they were taught to trust is now the person who haunts their once peaceful dreams?

No victim is more defenseless than an innocent child being preyed upon by an adult, especially an adult in a position of responsibility and respect. According to the Daily Herald, archdiocese spokesman Jim Dwyer said George felt he could not remove McCormak without firsthand information, which he said was not available at the time.

Whether it was a pedophile priest, a school teacher or a Boy Scout official, responsible adults and their institutions should not be able to avoid accountability for their acts.

George may not have had the firsthand information he was looking for. However if he thought about the innocent victims rather than the reputation of the Catholic Church, he possibly could have prevented McCormak from molesting that third innocent boy.

Religion is supposed to help people find meaning and purpose in their lives.

How are believers supposed to find this meaning and purpose when the ones teaching them are not setting a proper example?

George and many others like him have been able to hide behind the cloth because Roman Catholics have allowed them to. Many Catholics in the Chicago area have continued to give money to the church, knowing full well that it ends up paying lawyers' fees and victims' settlements.

Maybe it is human nature, especially where faith is concerned, to continue going through familiar motions content to wait for an end to the misery. But this decay seems beyond the point where it will simply repair itself.

Something good that has come out of sex abuse allegations is not only awareness for children and parents involved with the Catholic Church, but it gives future generations a choice whether or not they want their children to grow up in the Catholic faith and hopefully do something about it.

If people aren't willing to put themselves on the line and test their own faith, they shouldn't expect anything to change.

## Music should not be silenced on Chicago's Magnificent Mile

By Katie Taylor

The jazzy saxophone melodies and exciting beats made by bucket boys that have long been an exhilarating tradition on the Magnificent Mile are being silenced due to new amendments to Chicago's Street Performer ordinance.

The City Council crackdown will apply to street performances on Michigan Avenue and in Millennium Park. The amendment will prohibit performances on a four-block stretch near Water Tower Place because residents complained that the noise of the street performers was too disturbing.

Where street performers are actually allowed to play, other restrictions were made. The City Council ruled that noise cannot exceed the conversation level within 100 feet of the performance area, and performance related sound must not go above 80 decibels.

However, according to dangerousdecibels.org, normal city traffic is measured at about 85 decibels. Therefore, if these residents cannot handle the noise of street performers, they surely cannot handle living in the city. Especially a street with busy traffic, i.e. Michigan Avenue.

Also, 80 decibels is too quiet for the effect that street performers need to be able to draw in large crowds. A washing machine makes about 80 decibels of noise!

The sound restriction is simply ridiculous and unfair because without large crowds, street performers can't make very much money.

Residents should have thought about noise when moving onto Michigan Avenue. Being one of the busiest shopping spots in the city, there is going to be noise. They moved into an established neighborhood, knowing full well what Michigan Avenue was like. The street performers were performing on the Magnificent Mile long before these complaining people bought their condos. Moving there was their choice.

Without street performers, visitors who come to the Magnificent Mile won't feel the true, lively Chicago shopping experience. One of the characteristics of Michigan Avenue that makes it wonderful is the fact that people can perform along the public way.

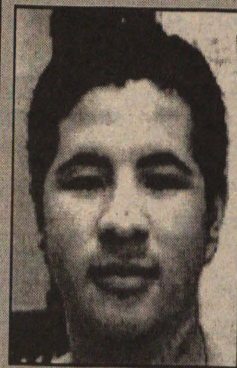
What would Michigan Avenue be without the lively bucket boys, or a saxophone player performing "Meet The Flintstones"?

Michigan Avenue is a public place. It belongs to the public. Not the residents.

If these people want quiet, they should move out of the city to the suburbs, unless the sound of a washing machine is too much to handle.

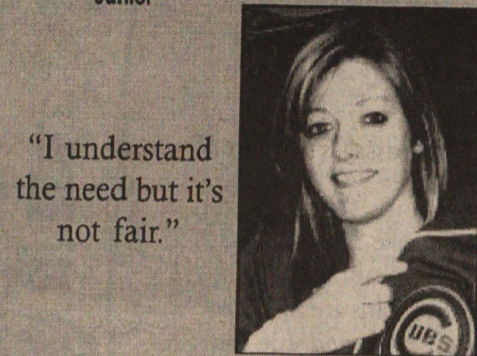
## Question & Answer

Do you think the proposed rewards and penalties for the PSAE are positive?



Victor Mendoza  
Junior

"It's a fair reward because right now we don't have anything, and we should be rewarded."



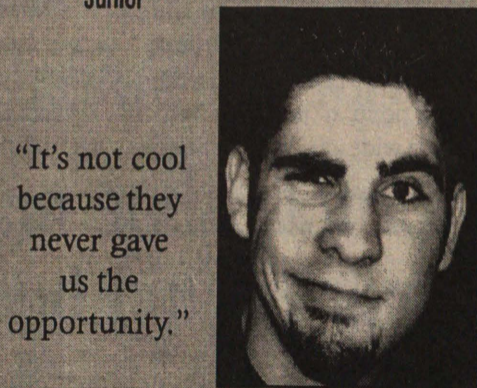
Danielle Romano  
Senior

"I understand the need but it's not fair."



Ben Warren  
Junior

"I think it is a good idea but we should try hard anyways."



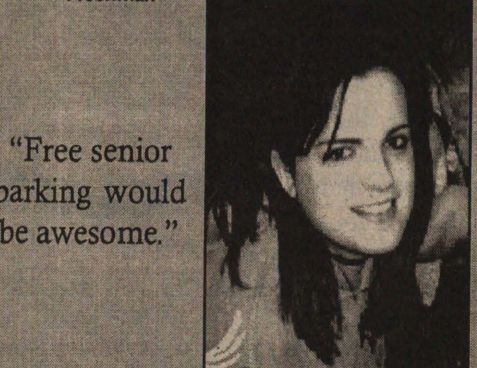
John Taylor  
Senior

"It's not cool because they never gave us the opportunity."



Tim Griffith  
Freshman

"People should get rewards because they aren't blowing it off."



Abbi Grigaitis  
Sophomore

"Free senior parking would be awesome."

## Tearing it up with fashionable jeans, hot hip huggers, and brand name boot cuts

By Katie Taylor

Jeans have been a staple in the American wardrobe since the days of Levi-Strauss. Ankle, loose, straight, boot cut, baggy, slim fit, boy cut, bell bottom, stretch, flare, carpenter, original, classic, skinny, and low rise are just a few styles Americans know well.

A new style has hit the halls of Wego that may become as popular as the ultra-tight look of the '80s or the bell bottom of the '60s. The trend of the 21st century is the ripped jean look. That is, jeans that come with holes already in them.

Thanks to popular stores like Hollister and Abercrombie & Fitch, ripped jeans are available in every size and style. But they come at a price.

These destroyed designer duds can cost up to \$80 at Abercrombie and Fitch. Some students think this is too expensive, but worth the style points only if they can be bought at a lower price.

"I really like my ripped jeans. I bought them because they were on sale, not just because of the holes," said junior MaryPat Flanagan. "I wouldn't buy them for a super high price."

Holes are becoming more and more popular in stores, which offer a wide variety of destroyed

denim.

According to Abercrombie.com, eight out of the 11 styles of jeans advertised for women and 12 out of 15 styles for men came "inconsistently

ing varies on each pair to preserve individual character." Therefore, those that buy these destroyed jeans can feel like they are buying a unique pair.

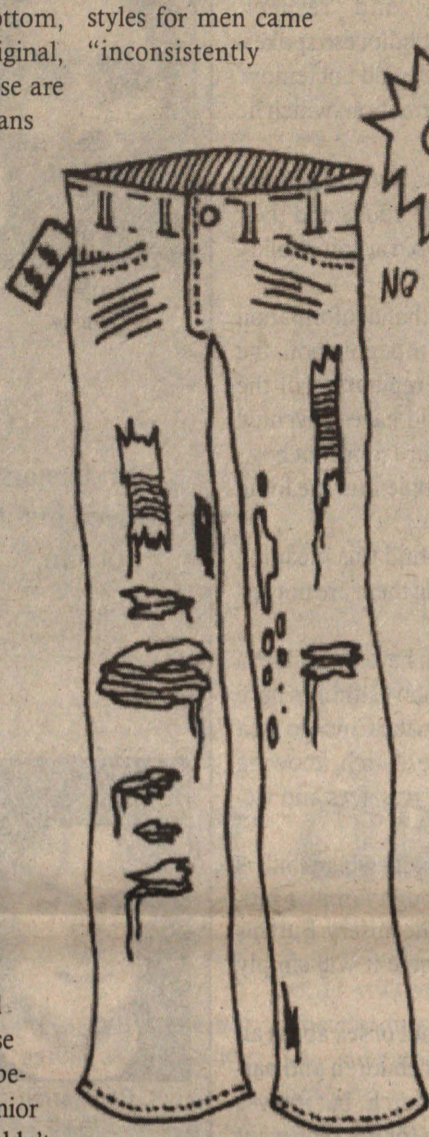
Some students claim that the ripped jean style makes them feel "cool" because of the way they look.

"The holes that they make are specially put there to look good," said junior Scott Staiton. "Real holes, you know, the kind that just happen if you fall or something, just don't look as good. The ones that they make look cool and I like them."

The holes in these jeans are actually specially made and placed. Designer jeans are made to stay the way they look forever, according to rip-your-own-jeans.com. Jeans that have their own rips will likely continue to grow and fray and eventually the jeans will become unwearable, where designer jeans will have that worn-in look that is still functional.

Some students are choosing to ignore the fad, and stick with jeans that don't have holes.

"I'll keep my clothes all in one piece, thank you very much," said freshman Patrick Taylor. "I wouldn't pay those ridiculous prices for a product that already has holes in it."

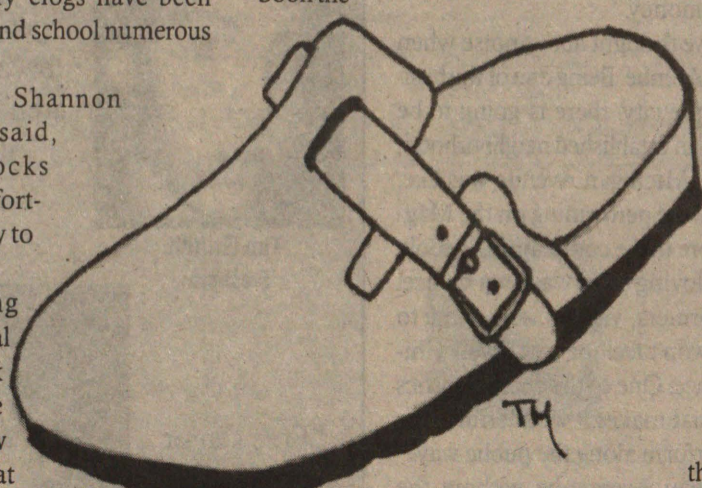


scarred with handcrafted abrasions."

According to hollisterco.com, the "destruction details and shad-

as the shape of the feet, greater comfort would be possible. As a result the first shoe with a contoured insole to be used by shoemakers in the production of custom footwear was designed.

Soon the



popular shoe was exported all over Europe.

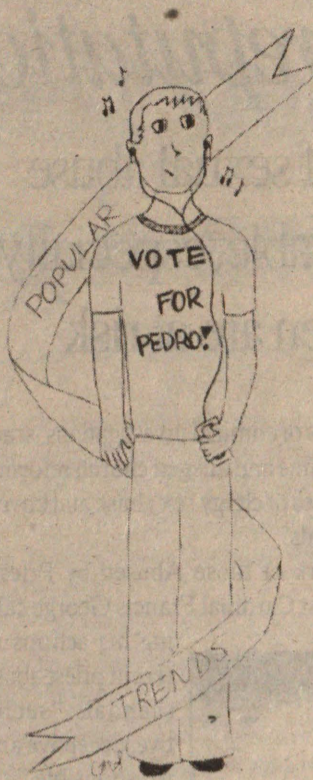
"I could care less that everyone else wears them," Fleming

said. "It's all about the comfort."

Thanks to Margot Fraser, the shoes found their way to the U.S. in the 60's. Fraser experienced immediate comfort with her first pair of Birkenstocks. Additionally, she found that the chronic foot pain she had endured for years vanished within months after she returned home to California. Convinced of its health benefits, she began importing Birkenstock footwear in America.

By the beginning of the 80s, Birkenstock became a household word throughout the country.

"They're really cute and they match a lot of my outfits, I wear them with everything," said freshman Molly Pfeifer.



It's obvious there are popular trends happening every day. Check these out around school.

## Charming and

### Dooney and Bourke purses are stylish because of their cute patterns and durability

By Ellyn Fortino

From heart-covered purses and bowler bags decorated with charms to crocodile stamped duffels and candy-colored barrel bags, Dooney and Bourke handbags are a trend quickly sweeping across the halls.

From the classroom to the work place, to the mall, women of all ages are hauling around these monogrammed purses.

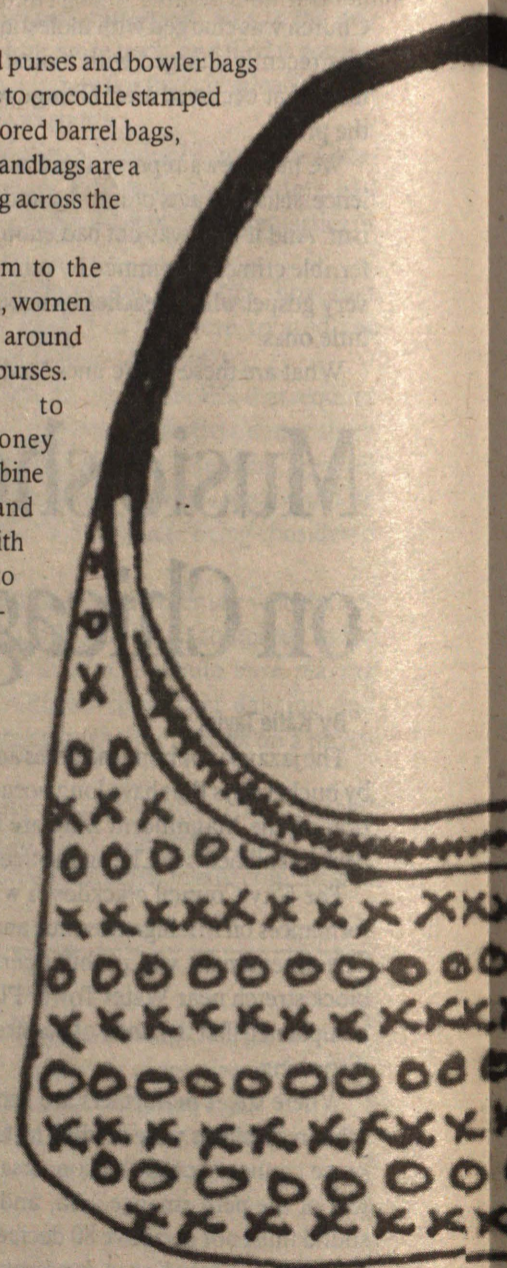
According to bagsforme.com, Dooney and Bourke purses combine "superior materials and fine craftsmanship with traditional designs to create enduring, functional fine leather goods built to weather the years with a timeless, classic style. Dooney & Bourke handbags improve with time and wear to become a distinctive expression of their owner's unique style."

And with promoters like Lindsay Lohan and Jennifer Lopez, who couldn't resist?

"I love my Dooney and Bourke purse," said junior Tiffany Kirschke.

"I think that they are in fashion because they come in a variety of fun patterns and colors. I wore mine on Valentine's Day because it has hearts on it."

Dooney and Bourke purses and accessories are sold in many



## German shoe makes its way over to America and becomes popular trend

By Terri Molo

The Birkenstock fortune started in a small German village over 232 years ago. Now, boys and girls alike are modeling them around the school.

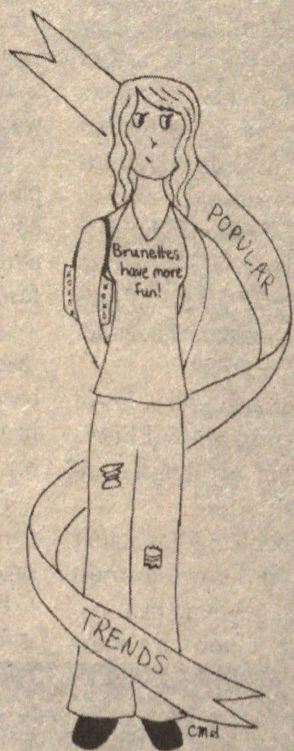
The comfy clogs have been spotted around school numerous times.

Senior Shannon Fleming said, "Birkenstocks are so comfortable and easy to slip on."

According to the official Birkenstock website, the shoes follow a concept that changed footwear forever. Although the soles of feet are curved, shoes had always been flat inside. Birkenstock discovered that if the shape of the shoes were the same



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## d built to last

high-end department stores such as Marshall Field's, Nordstrom's, Macy's and Bloomingdale's.

Dooney and Bourke purses are not easy on the pocket. They can start from \$125 and run to a whopping \$235 or more.

"Dooney and Bourke purses are a stupid waste of money," said junior Harmony Bouma. "I don't think you should spend tons of money on something you keep your money in."

Junior Kevin Michaelson agrees that money should be spent on more important things.

"I think it is outrageous that people are buying these ridiculously priced purses that are ugly to begin with," he said.

"People should buy something that makes them different and not the same as everyone else."

Spending a few hundred dollars on a purse may not be appealing to everyone.

Knock off purses, which start around \$20, are almost identical to Dooney and Bourke and are a better choice for those people who wish to get a bargain for their buck.

"I honestly don't see what the big deal is about high fashion purses. Why not just get a knock off and save yourself some money?"

Michaelson said.

Kirschke disagrees.

"I think that these purses are definitely worth the money," she said. "They are well made and they last long. You can trust that they won't fall apart or break unlike some of the knock off purses."

## Though expensive, many teens buy iPods because they are easy to use and reliable

By Andrea Bradley

White headphones are taking over the halls as iPods become more popular for teenagers and adults alike.

The mp3 players have become a hit around the school since the winter holidays, and the population of these music players is only growing.

In fact, so many people were after the new brands of iPods that Apple, their creator, failed to keep up with the demand.

Why were so many people after these expensive music players?

Some were excited about the new innovative size of the iPod Nano. Others were eager to watch videos on the new, also smaller, iPod video. Some just wanted to listen to their music without having to carry around a bunch of CDs.

Either way, students around the school took to the new trend faster than Apple could produce the trend itself.

Junior Linda Do said that it seems like there is an iPod owner in every hallway.

"I don't understand why they

are better than other mp3 players," she said.

"I love my iPod. I am addicted to it. I have had

that I haven't listened to it," said senior Chris Jelen.

Other fans of iPods may not listen to their MP3 player every day, but senior Jose Blanco said it makes vacations a lot easier.

"I take my iPod in the car whenever I know I have a long trip. It makes the ride a lot less boring," he said.

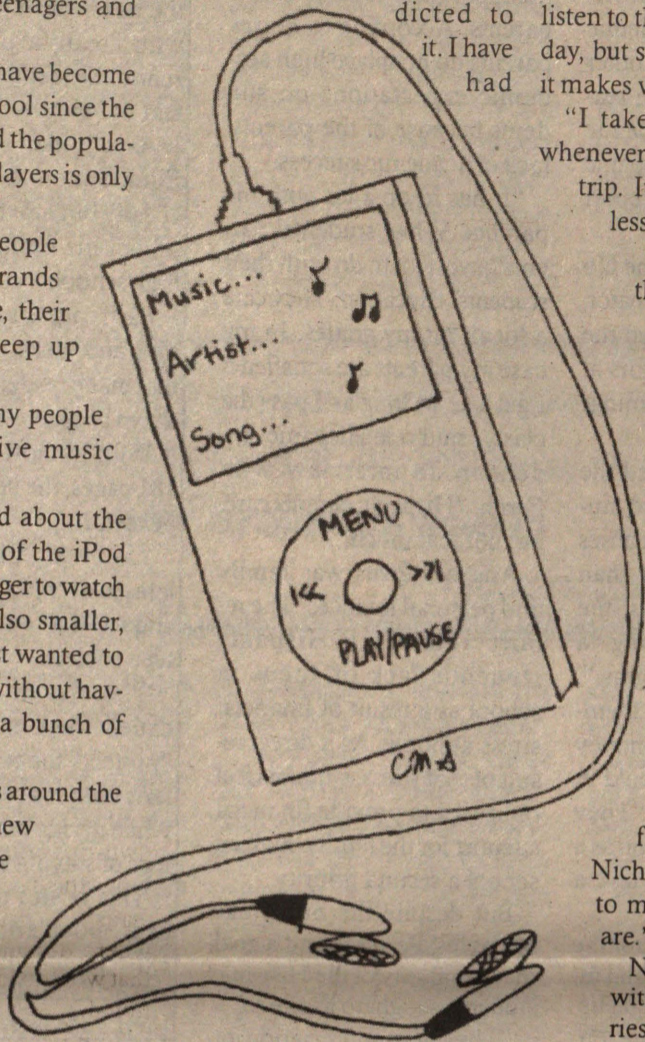
Even drivers can enjoy their iPod with the new version of the iTrip.

The iTrip, which a salesman at Best Buy referred to as the top-selling accessory for iPods, plugs easily into the iPod, allowing an owner to play music through any FM radio, including the radio in their car.

"An iPod wouldn't be an iPod without the iTrip," said freshman Kyle Nichol. "It lets you listen to music where ever you are."

No matter if an iPod is with or without accessories, iPods remain to be

one of the biggest trends around the school.



my mini for almost two years and there has not been a single day

## Shirts with "attitude" allow students to express themselves in a humorous way

By Kayla Harris

From hot pink mohawks, to wearing four belts at once, teens have always found clever ways to express themselves.

The newest outlet for expressing one's individuality is through shirts called attitude tees, humorous tees, and message tees, depending on which store you shop at.

Retail stores such as Abercrombie and Fitch, Hot Topic, Spencer's Gifts, and Hollister Co. offer a variety of the t-shirts displaying sexual innuendoes, political stances, humor and obscenities.

Students at CHS have jumped on the bandwagon for numerous reasons.

Senior Justine Egert, who owns a "Life is Better Blonde" tee from Hollister, thinks the t-shirts are so trendy because they let students express themselves.

"If people are shy, and they don't like to talk, they can talk through their shirts," Egert said.

Junior Scott Staiton agrees. "The shirts show their personality. It's not just a boring logo."

Senior Efrain Heredia follows the trend for the same reason.

"I'm advertising myself, not a brand," he said.

Others follow the trend because they think they're funny.

Senior Eric Wiechert, who is known around the school for his "You are so off my Buddy List" tee, thinks the shirts are popular

Tees like the "Define Girlfriend" and the "Not With Stupid Anymore" shirts from Hollister provide teens with an easy way to display their love lives-or lack of- to everyone around them.

Junior Audrey Thar does not understand why the shirts are so popular. "People think they're funny and they're clever, but they're not. I don't get why people wear them."

The growing popularity of the t-shirts does not seem to be dying, either.

Sports teams and clubs at CHS have embraced the fad, creating their own shirts with inside jokes. Extracurricular activities like the math team, cross-country and gymnastics have personalized shirts.

The Photo Club created several of their own shirts, one of them stating, "Develop Your Imagination."

Whether for a sport, club, or personal statement, attitude tees give teens the opportunity to display their thoughts, jokes, or whatever they want through their shirts.



because it makes others laugh. "I find them funny and I try to get other people to laugh," he said.

Some boys even use their shirts to talk to girls. "It's a good conversation starter with the ladies," Station said.

Heredia feels the same way. "It's an ice breaker with the girls," he said.

## Report shows inadequate academic achievement among Hispanic students

By David Thomas

A lack of English proficiency and parental academic expectations, along with other issues, were cited as the reasons for inadequate academic achievement among Hispanic high school students, a report found.

Dr. Lourdes Ferrer, the No Child Left Behind coordinator, researched and presented the report to Illinois educators at a Hispanic Outreach Seminar March 3.

The findings displayed the perspective of Hispanic students in regards to what causes Hispanics to test lower than their white counterparts, the number one finding being "a misalignment of paradigms."

"Many students see themselves as making more money in the U.S. than they could in Mexico," said Ferrer. "They see high school graduation as a great accomplishment and a source of pride."

In gathering research for the report, Ferrer observed and interviewed more than 150 Hispanic students who are enrolled here.

The report was commissioned to show the district's commitment in making sure

*'Hispanic students see high school graduation as a source of pride.'*

*--Lourdes Ferrer*

"no Hispanic child is left behind." It also shows that the district is facing the reality that "there are significant achievement gaps between the Hispanic student population and their white counterparts."

The report cites the results of the 2005 Prairie State Achievement Exams (PSAE), in which Hispanic students had a 35 and 37 percent proficiency in reading and math respectively. White students had 69 percent proficiency in reading and 68 percent in math.

But there are problems that extend beyond test scores.

"There is a generational, linguistic, academic, and cultural gap that deters Hispanic parents from providing the kind of support that their children need to experience academic success," said Ferrer.

Apart from the language gap, the report also focuses on the parents. According to Ferrer, parents do not place high academic expectations on students because of the parents' lack of academic success.

"It has to do a lot with the parents. White students' parents have a lot to do with their students' education. They care a lot about my grades. In my case my parents are satisfied if I get a C, as long as I pass the class," said one Hispanic student in an interview with Ferrer. "Hispanic parents care, but not that much."

Another focus was family and personal finances. The report related a Hispanic student's lack of focus in school as a result of financial stress at home. As a direct result of that stress, students feel obligated to provide financial support for the family, making school a second priority.

But despite the numerous obstacles, Ferrer found a goal that a majority of the Hispanic students sought to aspire to.

"They have appreciation for being in the United States and a strong determination to 'ser alguien la vida,' that is, to be somebody in life," said Ferrer.

Ferrer believes that there is hope for the Hispanic students to succeed, saying "we have all that it takes to make it."

Ferrer presented the report to the Board of Education, and also gave a list of recommendations. They included retrofitting the school's physical appearance to "promote understanding and appreciation for the school cultural diversity" and holding workshops to steer students away from gangs and drugs.

Another recommendation would implement an English Proficiency Acceleration Plan to increase the scores of Hispanic students on the IMAGE test.

"The Board is very interested in this report," said Supt. Lee Rieck. "The Board President has asked to identify students who can be helped easily, given the budget cuts situation."

Rieck also said he believed the report accurately reflected the views of the Hispanic students in the high school.

"There will be some follow-up to this report. We're probably going to have a group of people look at the recommendations and decide from there," said Rieck.

## 'Inventing Elliot' provides turns and twists for readers

By Leah Kuzmicz

"Inventing Elliot" is an intriguing book with many interesting turns and suspense gripping each page.

The book is a nice read and the pages seem to go by fast, with a realistic plot of a high school student who live in fear of being bullied.

As a junior high student Elliot Sutton is bullied mercilessly but moves to another school his freshman year in high school.

Each page has new information and lacks the dry parts that make readers want to put down books.

With 18 short chapters and 181 pages, the book stays suspenseful.

"Inventing Elliot" also relates to everyday life with the cliques that exist in today's teen society.

There is an elite group called the Guardians who "protect" the school by regularly bullying certain students while giving others the privilege of staying unharmed.

This relates to real life because popularity and cliques exist not only in books.

The Guardians also have their mindset on the book

"1984", and think that they should base their lives off of it. They make a lot of connections that are used throughout the book, and in the end affects Elliot's decisions.

Author Graham Gardner uses good transitions and utilizes flashbacks into Elliot's past and intrigues the reader to know more.

Gardner also uses a lot of symbolism to show Elliot's past without revealing it completely.

As the book unfolds, it tells a story well known to most teenagers: A young man trying to fit in. It shows that books

can actually relate to the readers instead of having an ideal situation that everyone would want to be in.

The book is not very complex, more of an easy, young adult read. But the ending is abrupt, leaving readers confused about Elliot's future.

"Inventing Elliot" may leave readers somewhat pessimistic because it deals with many of high school's more gloomy facets.

The book is not something to read on a sunny day. Instead save it for a gloomy, rainy day to fully experience what Elliot is feeling.

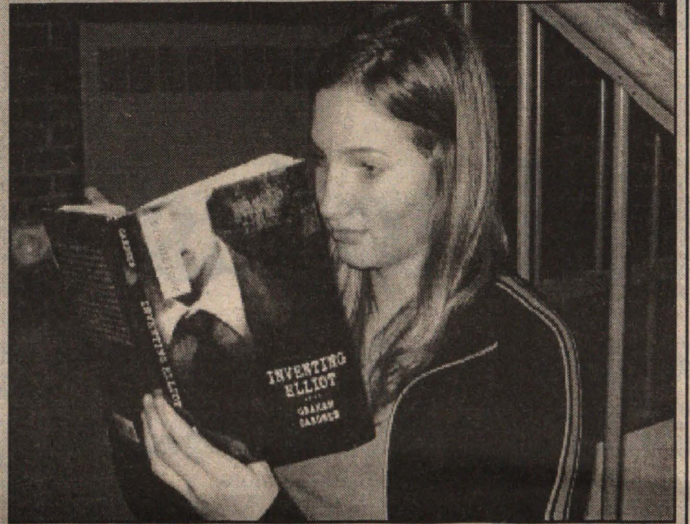


Photo by Terri Molo

Suspenseful "Inventing Elliot" is a pageturner for reporter Leah Kuzmicz.

## College Column...

### Seniors urged to ask to college students for honest opinions about life at their school

By Kellie Virnich

Though visiting campuses and listening to tour guides is a good way for teens to get a feel for prospective universities, it is often helpful to get the opinions of students already in college. They are more likely to be honest about dormitory conditions and the quality of cafeteria food than any website or pamphlet.

Dianne Keck, a 2004 graduate currently in her second year at Purdue University in Indiana, has never regretted her decision to go to an out-of-state school.

"I didn't want to go somewhere that everyone else was going, and I really wanted to get the feel of living on my own," said Keck. "I couldn't do that if I went to a school where I could come home whenever I wanted to."

Keck encourages students look at a school for much more than what it has to offer academically. Job and volunteer opportunities, religious affiliations and food and fitness availability were a few of the other aspects of a campus

that she said students should look for.

She said, "If you have a minority religion, or want to be in a specific atmosphere, you really have to make sure that the schools you are looking at offer that."

Before accepting a place at Purdue, Keck stayed in the dorms for a few nights, and highly recommends the experience if possible, saying that it "immerses you in the setting" and lets students see what attending the school would really be like.

Some students, however, dislike being far from home. Matt Boes, who graduated in 2002, has attended both Iowa State University and Illinois Institute of Technology, and preferred being in-state. While he enjoyed the freedom from his parents' rules, he wanted to be able to come home if he needed to.

"I needed to go home for a funeral for a few days during the year. I was in Iowa, then, after only a week and half back at school, had to go back again for training for my job at the

time," he said.

Boes now lives in an apartment between the IIT campus and his parents' home in Winfield, and said that he functions much better closer to home.

"To be honest, I like having my mom close to do my laundry and feed me if I don't feel like making anything," Boes said. "With my own place, I can be independent when I want to, but still go home when I feel like being a lazy kid again."

Staying close to home is not only an option for lazy teens, though. Many students who attend community college before or instead of going to a university live at home for the sake of either money or convenience.

Boes also said that students unsure about whether to go away to school really need to make a concrete decision, since transferring back and forth between schools wastes both time and money, and that students who do so risk having to retake classes for credits that do not transfer.

## Transition to womanhood; a fairytale experience



Photo courtesy of Jocelyn Heredia

Many Hispanic girls consider their Quinceañera an important event in their lives. Jocelyn Heredia recently celebrated hers.

### Mr. Wildcat contestants charm their classmates as well as judges

By Terri Molo

The Mr. Wildcat competition ended with a standing ovation for Quin Barclay who was crowned Mr. Wildcat 2006.

Barclay, along with fellow seniors Tyler Dameron, Dan Dyrda, John Kammes, Eric Lauer, Eric Mariano, Steve Migliorato, Davy Taylor, Dan Visser, and George Visser, were judged on talent and a question and answer session in formal wear.

The competition took place March 10.

"It was really interesting to see all the original talents the boys thought up," said senior Danielle Pappas.

The boys' talents ranged from standup comedy to memorable musical numbers.

Barclay wasn't scared for the talent portion, but he was nervous for the question and answer session.

"I've been playing guitar for such a long time," said Barclay, "and it's the one thing I'm really good at."

Senior Laura Conard attended the show and was happy

with the results.

"I think that Quin is an outstanding guitar player. It takes a lot of talent to do that, so he deserved to be Mr. Wildcat," Conard said.

Barclay was surprised when he found out he won.

"One of the cheerleaders told me to try out so I did, but I didn't expect to win," said Barclay.

After a short intermission, the boys paraded in their formal wear escorted by the varsity cheerleaders to engage in a question and answer session.

While most contestants presented their cheerleader escorts with flowers, Davy Taylor presented Mallory Sanzeri with a stapler, which caused much delight in the crowd.

Last year's winner, Miguel Tapia, presented gift bags to Barclay and the two runners-up: Taylor and Lauer.

Tapia then hovered the crown over the contestants' heads, placing it on Barclay's.

Teachers Dave Jennings and Anthony LaRue hosted the production.

By Kayla Harris

For most American girls, turning 16 is the point at which they are now considered young women. For junior Jocelyn Heredia, however, her 15th birthday represented her transition into womanhood.

In Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American traditions, the Quinceañera, or 15th birthday, is viewed as one of the most important events in a young girl's life.

Heredia and her family felt the same way.

"I'm the only girl in my family, so having one was particularly special to my par-

ents," Heredia said. "Having a Quinceañera is every girl's dream."

Heredia turned 15 on April 24, 2004, but held her Quinceañera on Feb. 21.

"Having a Quinceañera means you're not a girl anymore; you're on the way towards becoming a woman," she explained.

Preparing for Heredia's Quinceañera took about six months, while the family sent out invitations, reserved a banquet hall and contacted a church.

Heredia doesn't know how much the entire celebration

cost, but said it's not unusual for some Quinceañeras to cost up to \$30,000.

Senior Marlene Escalona said her Quinceañera cost \$15,000.

"My godparents decided not to pay at the last minute. My parents had to pay for the whole thing," Escalona said.

Traditionally, friends and relatives help pay for the celebration by purchasing items like the girl's dress or by covering the costs of the food.

Some girls decide not to have

After arriving at the church, Heredia sat at the foot of the altar while she listened to a priest deliver a sermon.

"The priest asked me if I consider myself a woman," she said. "I said I was neither a little girl or a woman, just like the Britney Spears song."

After the sermon, Heredia presented flowers to a picture of the Virgin Mary.

When the church service ended, Heredia and the rest of her family prepared for the traditional celebration which

was held at a salon, or banquet hall, in Naperville. "We had dancing, music, and a lot of food,"

Heredia

said. "Dancing was definitely my favorite memory."

Traditionally, the girl has her own court, comprised of damas (maids of honor) and chambelanes (escorts).

Heredia chose cousins and family friends to be the chambelanes.

"I didn't have any maids of honor because my family felt they would steal the spotlight," she said.

Dancing is also an important part of the celebration.

Heredia said she didn't feel like she became a woman overnight, "but I'm walking that path," she said.

*"Having a Quinceañera means you're not a girl anymore; you're on the way towards becoming a woman."*

*--Jocelyn Heredia*

a Quinceañera, and use the money for a vacation or gift.

"My sister, Xiclaly, chose not to have a Quinceañera," said senior Jessica Pedraza. "Instead she decided to buy a computer and go to Wisconsin Dells."

Heredia's godparents, or padrinos and madras in Spanish, paid for her dress, which cost over \$400.

Like most traditional Quinceañeras, the most important component of Heredia's was the church service, or la Misa de Quince años, which was held at St. Mary's in West Chicago.

### Trumpet player hopes to go far as a jazz musician

Each month a different fine arts teacher will select Artist of the Month. Music teacher Steve Govertsen as Artist of the Month.

By Julie Youngwith

The passion and determination senior Sara Earhart has garnered for trumpet playing has earned her a spot as March Artist of the Month.

Earhart began playing the trumpet seven years ago when a friend convinced her to take it up and she has pursued it ever since.

"I like the freedom of expression I get when I play the trumpet," said Earhart.

This trumpet player is not only involved in the school band, but she is also plays in the College of DuPage jazz band.

Earhart plans to major in jazz studies at Elmhurst College and hopes to become a jazz musician in Chicago someday.

This student is very dedi-



Photo courtesy of Sara Earhart

Sara Earhart is inspired by many jazz musicians, including George Eubanks, a fellow musician at College of DuPage.

cated to her music, practicing an hour every day outside of school as well as with a private trumpet instructor weekly.

Not only involved in music, Earhart also devotes her time to being a stage crew member for several of the

school plays.

Earhart is inspired by many jazz artists, including Miles Davis and Orbert Davis.

Recently, Earhart received an Outstanding Soloist Award from the school music department.

## Latino Caucus raises PSAE awareness

By Ellyn Fortino

As one of the school's most significant Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) sub groups, the bilingual population is becoming more aware of their importance because of the efforts of the little known Latino Caucus.

The group, currently made up of about 15 students and a few faculty members, has joined with the PSAE campaign to promote awareness to all students.

The Latino Caucus is an open discussion group that talks about important Latino issues such as culture and their significance in the community and school environment.

"We need to promote awareness to the Latino population because they are a big part of the school," said Welcome Center director Miguel Arroyo.

Posters hanging around the halls written in Spanish help motivate students to take

their education seriously.

"The posters do not directly talk about the PSAE or the Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English (IMAGE) test. We want there to be a buzz among students and we want them to say 'what's that for?'" said Arroyo. "The posters get kids geared up and informs them at the same time"

Although the penalties and rewards regarding the passing of the PSAE are uncertain, students are urged to take the test seriously.

On a recent PSAE pre-campaign assessment administered to juniors, 47 percent of students believed that the PSAE was a practice test or bubbled in "did not know."

"Students need to know that the test is not a blow off," said director of curriculum and staff development Judy Minor. "This is a very serious test."

The PSAE test scores are important because they determine whether high schools make the adequate yearly

progress (AYP). If AYP is not met, the school is one step closer to becoming a state run school.

Consequences may include loss of electives, stricter classes or replacement of administration and teachers.

PSAE prep worksheets have been distributed to juniors in classes such as English and American History, and Principal John Highland plans to speak to juniors before the test held on April 26 and 27. A parent meeting offered in both English and Spanish will also be available.

Arroyo urges students of all nationalities to come and help out with the efforts of the Latino Caucus. The Latino Caucus meets after school regularly in the Welcome Center.

"We hope to educate students how to improve not only in school, but also in the community. We also talk about Latino culture," said Arroyo. "You don't have to be a Latino to help out. The PSAE affects everyone, not only Latinos."

## Latino Caucus informe de PSAE

Por Ellyn Fortino

Como una de las clasificaciones más significantes para el Examen "Prairie State" (PSAE), la población bilingüe de Community High School ya se pone al tanto de su importancia a través de un movimiento poco conocido, el "Latino Caucus".

El movimiento que incluye unos 15 estudiantes y unos profesores se ha unido a la campaña PSAE para que todos los estudiantes bilingües sepan del examen.

El "Latino Caucus" es un grupo abierto que conversa de los asuntos de importancia a los latinos, tales como la cultura y lo que aportan a la comunidad escolar.

"Tenemos que promover el conocimiento (de la importancia del examen) a la población latina porque ellos son una parte muy grande de la comunidad escolar," dijo el director del Centro de Bienvenida Miguel Arroyo.

Hay carteles en los pasillos escritos en español para motivar que los estudiantes tomen en serio la educación. "Los posters no hablan directamente del PSAE ni del "IMAGE" (Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English). Queremos que haya onda acerca de ellos y que los jóvenes digan "¿De qué se trata eso?" dijo Arroyo. "Los posters sirven para animar a los chicos y a la vez para informarlos."

Aunque los beneficios y los castigos de salir bien o mal en el examen PSAE no se saben exactamente, se urge que los estudiantes lo tomen muy en serio.

Durante una encuesta reciente que se hizo entre los estudiantes del tercer año (juniors), el 47% creyó que el examen era una "práctica" o contestaron que no sabía qué era.

"Los estudiantes tienen que saber que este examen no se hace en broma (un "blow off")." dijo Judy Minor, directora de currículo. "Es un examen muy serio."

Los resultados del PSAE son muy importantes porque determinan si nuestra preparatoria cumple con su progreso anual adecuado (AYP). Si no se llega a la medida de AYP, la prepa da un paso más hacia estar bajo el control estatal. Las consecuencias pueden incluir perder las clases optativas, tener clases con contenido más rígido o un cambio de facultad.

Las hojas preparatorias para el PSAE se han entregado a todos los juniors o en sus clases de inglés o en las de historia americana. El director John Highland piensa hablar con los juniors antes de las fechas del examen, el 26 y 27 de abril. También habrá una reunión para los padres cuyos estudiantes hacen el examen, en español tanto como en inglés.

Arroyo urge que los estudiantes de todas las etnicidades vengan a ayudar con los esfuerzos del "Latin Caucus", que se reúne en el Centro de Bienvenida después de las clases.

"Esperamos educar a los estudiantes no sólo cómo mejorar sus estudios, sino también cómo mejorar su comunidad. También hablamos de la cultura latina. No tienes que ser latino para ayudar. El examen PSAE afecta a todos, no sólo a los latinos."

## Aviation Club soars to new heights with grant for rockets

By Julie Youngwith

Aerospace Education Foundation granted the school \$250 grant to purchase model air-powered projectile rockets to be used by bilingual physical science and psychics classes as well as aviation club.

The Aerospace Education Foundation is designed to educate America about science, technology and national defense by awarding educators across the country with small grants.

The Community High School Education Foundation decided to grant the science department a matching grant to fund projects that make real-world connections to what students are learning in the class.

"I am so excited for this grant because aviation club is a non-

funded club and without these grants we wouldn't be able to do all the things we do," said aviation club adviser Annette Rubino.

Recently, aviation club constructed a model plane from scratch and held a contest to see which plane could stay in flight the longest.

The rockets are chemical-free and the students will use the pressure from bicycle pumps to launch their rocket at a target.

The rockets will provide a great opportunity for the students to see the effects of Newton's Laws in real life," said Rubino.

The science department has ordered the rockets and expects to receive them sometime in March.

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## Block after block of cliché cop drama

*Shootouts and Willis fail to separate '16 Blocks' from generic police shows*

Visuals: B  
Story: C  
Acting: D+  
Overall: C-

By Nick Gorski

No one expects much from the movies in these late winter months. Filmgoers must wait until summer for the releases they really want, like the upcoming "Pirates of the Caribbean" sequel, the new "Superman," or "The Da Vinci Code." Studios instead release lame films, like "Big Momma's House 2," with little hype in February and March. Such is the case with Bruce Willis' latest, "16 Blocks." The film, directed by Richard Donner, is a brutally generic cop movie, with just enough chasing and shootouts to keep viewers seated until the end.

Willis plays Jack Moseley, a "burnt-out cop," who just before leaving for the weekend is given one more assignment.

He must pick up a witness from jail and escort him a mere 16 blocks to the courthouse. Then he can go home. It sounds easy enough, but Eddie, played by Mos Def, is set to testify against some of the city's prominent law enforcement officials, who are also Jack's colleagues. And the crooked cops are not about to let him make it to the witness stand.

Dozens of cops embark on a manhunt for Jack and Eddie, making those 16 blocks hellishly long. Jack, meanwhile, decides that he's had enough of all the corruption, and will

stick with Eddie to the end. During this time, the two become buddies, and Jack learns of Eddie's ambition to escape the streets and open a bakery in Seattle. All he wants to do is bake birthday cakes for people. "Every day is somebody's birthday," he says.

As cheesy as that is, Mos Def's performance as Eddie

Eddie, which forms the movie's basis.

The same cannot be said for Willis. He fails to make the audience care about what happens to Jack, who isn't really anything more than a lame, uninspired alcoholic.

Willis is famous for his manly persona, excelling at shoot-out movies like this one. But

special guest star.

Eventually, we see a classic stalemate between the good guys and bad. Jack and Eddie are stuck on a bus, surrounded by armed corrupt cops. Jack negotiates on a cell phone, and using some trickery, they escape.

In the end, Eddie gets out of the situation alive and makes it to Seattle to open his cake shop. Jack is revealed to have a moderately shocking secret, but he ultimately does the right thing. It is a positive ending, and a pretty satisfying one, considering the fact that the movie definitely doesn't raise expectations too high.

"16 Blocks" is not good. It is not worthy of a recommendation on any level, especially for Bruce Willis fans, who may be very disappointed.

It isn't exactly eye-gougingly awful, but it fails to distinguish itself or make viewers really remember it. But it's no more a waste of time than watching cop shows on TNT.

THIS MOVIE IS UNDER ARREST...

FOR BEING CLICHÉ!

is a bright spot in this boring film. The underground rapper proves to have solid acting skills. He is lively and sort of funny, bringing chatter and friendliness to the pairing of Jack and

he doesn't really seem to care about "16 Blocks", perhaps because of its boring script. The movie seems like nothing more than an episode of "Law and Order," with Willis as its

## 'O.C.' running high on character, low on villains

By Katie Taylor

With its attractive young cast, creative plots, and wild drama, "The OC" became a guilty pleasure when it premiered in 2003.

After an equally impressive second season, "The OC" is now following up with a season that gives the impression that the writers have written themselves into the proverbial corner.

As the kids of "The OC" finish up their senior year, Marissa (Mischa Barton) finally became re-admitted to classy private school Harbor in the wake of shooting boyfriend Ryan's (Ben McKenzie) brother Trey (Bradley Stryker). Seth (Adam Brody) found a new interest in marijuana thanks to Marissa's sister Kaitlin (Willa Holland), who returned for a short time from boarding school.

Also, Seth's mother Kirsten (Kelly Rowan) is back from rehab for alcoholism, and Marissa's mother Julie (Melinda Clark) has found herself completely broke after the death of her rich older husband, Kirsten's father Caleb (Alan Dale). New character Johnny (Ryan Donowho) died after a drinking episode, leaving Marissa, his love interest, depressed about his death.

Whew!

It sounds like a lot, but frankly, the third season has been boring.



Drawing by Nick Gorski

"The OC" has always been known for good plots and drama. But the absence of a villain is hurting the show.

Episodes seem to drag, with little action and dull endings. The conflict between characters never lasts more than one episode, and nearly every installment ends with a "Seventh Heaven"-like moralistic lesson.

Some controversy needs to be brought back to the previously wild "OC".

The first problem is the lack

of a villain. Caleb, the wealthy and callous scoundrel, died of a heart attack, and Julie, who was previously Orange County's local evil gold-digger, has lately been portrayed as the misunderstood yet likable widow.

The writers tried to incorporate a new villain, Taylor (Autumn Reeser), as an annoyingly

preppy boyfriend stealer, much disliked by Summer (Rachel Bilson). However, only a few episodes after introducing her, they made her into a loveable geek. The writers don't seem confident in their scripts.

The writers need to write in an evil villain to create conflict between characters.

In addition to that, the rela-

tionship between Ryan and Marissa needs to come to an end. The sexual tension between them kept their characters more interesting in past seasons, and made for entertaining television. However, their interaction has come to a standstill, especially with Johnny's interest in Marissa and Ryan's obvious crush on Sadie (Nikki Reed).

In spite of this, there has been some decent writing this season. The evolution of the main characters, Marissa, Ryan, Seth, and Summer, has been a breath of fresh air. In the middle of college searches, the stress they experience in applying and doing interviews is both realistic and innovative for a Fox show.

Also, the loveable quality of everyone's favorite quirky geek Seth has stayed intact through all. His humor and ingenious creation of "Christmukkah" (a mix of Christmas and Hanukkah) is what makes "The OC" fun to watch.

Although there have been some disappointments, this season still has much to promise with the possible reveal of Ryan's love child.

Those out there who love "The OC" will keep coming back for more, especially with the promise of more excitement and extravagant drama. Because that's the way it's done in "The OC."

## An ideal lunch spot that is close to home

Atmosphere: C+  
Service: A-  
Food: B+  
Overall: B

By Leah Kuzmicz

Turner Junction, found on West Chicago's Main Street, is quite the treat for an afternoon lunch.

The little restaurant lets customers seat themselves, and gives off an at-home feeling. A selection of five booths that would fit four comfortably or seven tables that can fit about six comfortably, offer ample choices for seating. The jukebox in the corner of the restaurant provides a selection of music for diners.

While sitting down, a waitress brings out a menu and chips and salsa. The chips are very warm and crisp, and are the perfect treat for starting out a meal.

The salsa, being very spicy, would even make veteran salsa dippers cringe. There is a wide variety of food, depending on the time of day.

For breakfast, they have a wide selection from traditional pancakes, french toast, and three egg omelets, to a Mexican breakfast. Breakfast is very affordable and you can get anything for under \$9.

The lunch selection has many choices varying from hot dogs, cheeseburgers, and sandwiches. All sandwiches are served with salad, french fries, and a pickle.

The menu is displayed in both Spanish and English, and all the main dishes are under \$10.

They also have tacos, tortas, tostadas, gorditas, huaraches, tacos dorados, sopes and burritos available any time of day.

For just \$1 a guest can order a taco, with a choice of meat in-

cluding steak, liver, spicy pork, ground beef, or tongue. The taco is served with tomatoes, lettuce, sour cream, and whatever else anyone could possibly want.

The food was delicious but the portions were small. The tacos have a soft shell around it as small as a child's palm. However, the tacos can fill a stomach up because they are compacted with the meat.

The steak was grilled, not burnt but very rare. The chicken was also grilled, with spices on it.

The sandwiches were served with many sides, and were all very delectable. The cheeseburgers were very juicy and rare, and grilled to perfection. The bun was soft and fresh. The sides were not too huge but the proportions were okay.

The staff is very warm and welcoming and they politely chat with customers when it is

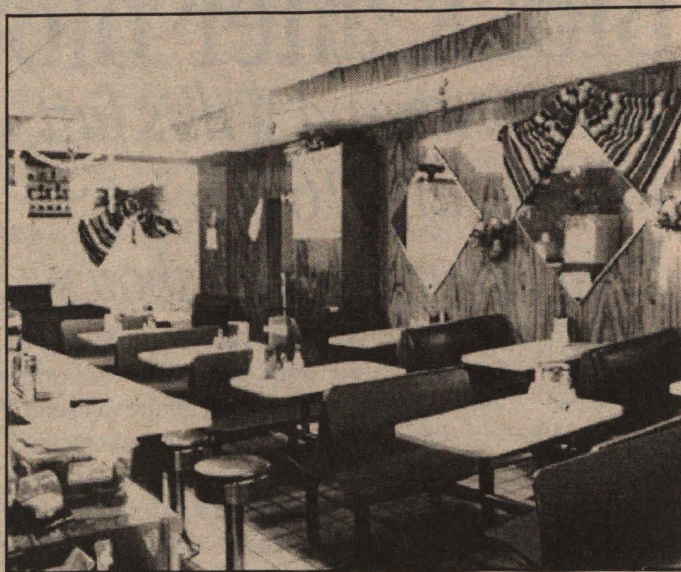


Photo by Leah Kuzmicz

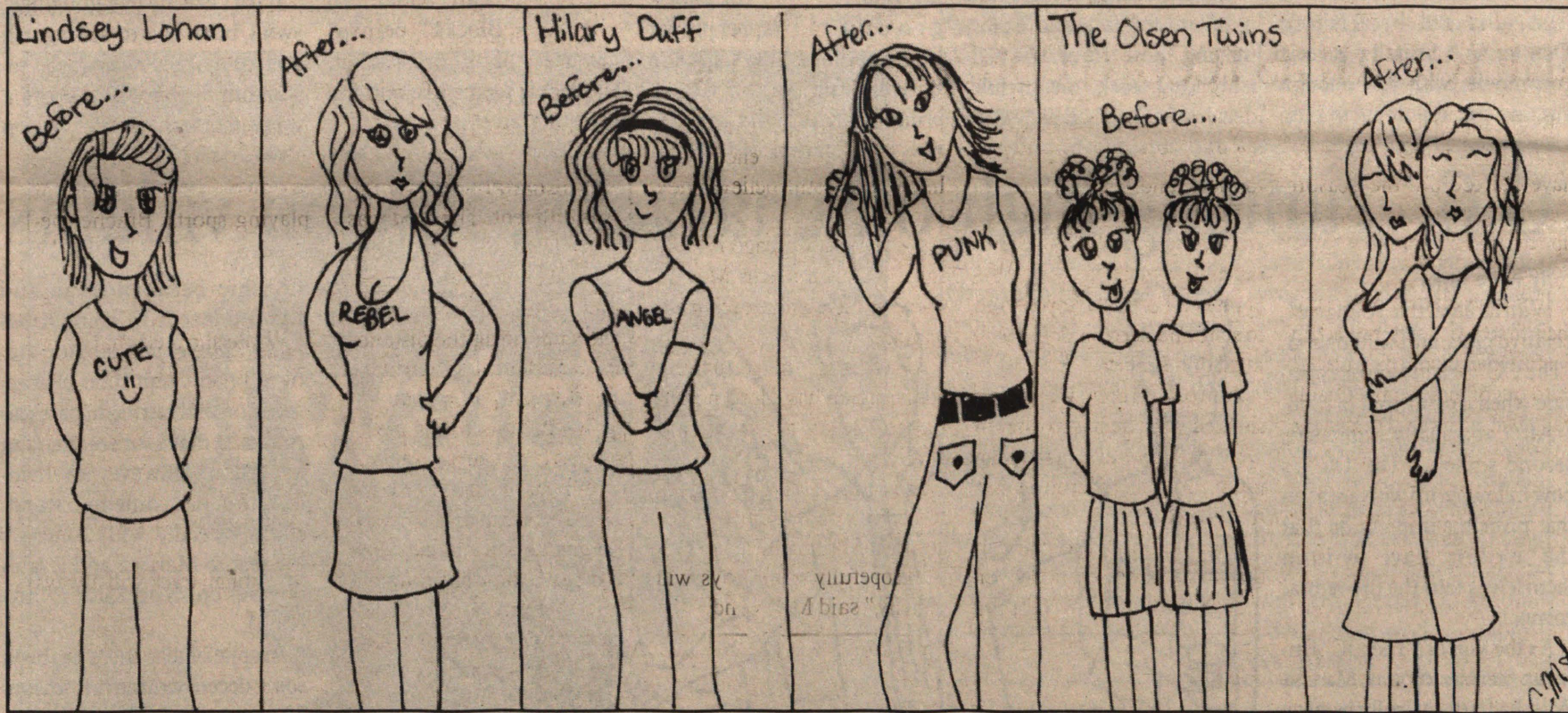
With a cozy atmosphere and a jukebox, Turner Junction is the ideal restaurant for people looking for a good lunch spot.

time to order.

Overall, it is a very exciting restaurant to be at and with all the festive decorations and lighting guests could manage to have a great night out, or a great way to start a day.

Turner Junction is located at 212 Main St., West Chicago. Hours: 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 7 a.m. to midnight Friday; 6 a.m. to midnight Saturday; and 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday.

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE DISNEY GIRLS



## Why America needs to see the story of Mohammad and Islam

By David Thomas

A few months ago, the movie "Kurtlar Vadisi Irak" (English translation: "The Valley of the Wolves") debuted in America. Unless you're an American-Islam culture expert or a big Middle East cinema buff, you've probably never heard of this movie.

But if you were a native of Turkey, chances are you'd be a fan. The movie "Kurtlar Vadisi Irak" is the movie spin-off of the TV show with the same name. Both of them are hits in Turkey; think of it as their "24."

In the movie, ex-secret agent Polat Alemdar seeks revenge against an American commander in Iraq whose actions were so horrible, it

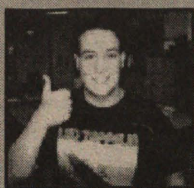
caused Alemdar's friend to commit suicide.

There are two scenes in the movie that are worth mentioning. The first is the American commander, played by Billy Zane (how did they get him?), massacring an entire wedding reception, almost inspiring the bride to become a suicide bomber. The second is a subplot involving a Jewish doctor (Gary Busey) who removes the organs of Iraqis captured by Zane's character and sells them to the rich living in Western cities.

There's even a point in the movie where Busey's character argues with Zane's, saying that shooting the captives spoils the organs.

It is obvious that this movie

is completely fictitious. But aren't we doing the same thing here in America? Yes, I know we do not depict all Muslims as terrorists and suicide bombers. But what kind of messages are we sending the Middle East when we say



"All Muslims are not terrorists" and then say "No, Dubai. You can't have our ports."

What kind of messages are we sending to ourselves if all we see of Muslims are clips of them burning down embassies and shouting "Death to America"?

Fortunately, I have a solu-

tion. We need to make a movie about Islam.

But this movie cannot be any movie. It would have to take place away from the world of post-9/11. No mentioning of terrorists or suicide bombers or Osama bin Laden.

The movie has to mirror "The Last Temptation of Christ." In "Temptation" Satan tempts Christ (as he's nailed to the cross) to dream about life as if he were a mortal man. But in the end, Christ survives the temptation and dies on the cross. In "Passion" we saw the horrific punishments Christ went through at the hands of the Romans.

It is only fitting to show the Prophet Mohammad in the same light. We have to show

that, not only was the Prophet a messenger of God, but he was human and struggled with feelings of doubt.

America needs this movie, because if all we're seeing of Muslims is on the five o'clock news, then we're only playing to the stereotype that Americans only care about themselves, and we're giving more ammunition to the people who say that America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are really a war against Islam.

We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to turn the other cheek (in light of "Kurtlar Vadisi Irak") and make a movie that celebrates the true Islam.



Photo by Leah Kuzmicz

Juniors Ken Klein, left, and Jim Foreman, right, push each other at practices and lead junior varsity teammates like sophomore Doug Selby, back.

## New members help strengthen boys track team as record continues to rise

By Leah Kuzmicz

The boys track team may have started off the season roughly, but they are building up the speed necessary to be noticed.

The boys started off losing their first two meets, but at the Fenton Invitational they placed third out of nine teams. Coach Paul McLeland said that there are many boys that have contributed to the team.

Senior George Visser, a long distance runner, has won all of his one and two mile races.

Junior Ken Klein is unde-

feated at the high hurdles, and is a fierce competitor according to McLeland.

Junior Jim Foreman has been competing in pole vault and has taken first place in almost every meet. Foreman hopes to go to state and keep on doing well in all of his meets.

Junior Mike Deimling showed what he has to offer in all of his sprints and in the long jump. So far, Deimling has reached 20 feet.

The team hopes to place in the top six of conference. Even though the boys know that the

DVC is one of the most competitive conferences in Illinois, they still believe they can meet their goal.

Since West Chicago is hosting the DVC meet on May 26 they will have a home team advantage.

Visser, the only returning state runner, has a lot a potential to qualify for state, said McLeland.

However, McLeland hopes to have more than just Visser compete at the state level.

"Hopefully more boys will qualify," said McLeland.

## Athlete of the Month

# Speed earns award for Visser

Each month a different coach will nominate an athlete for Athlete of the Month. Boys' track coach Paul McLeland chose senior George Visser.

Visser is March's Athlete of the Month for his contributions to the indoor track team.

By Andrea Bradley

Senior George Visser hopes to continue chasing his goals after high school.

Visser has participated in track since he was in seventh grade and plans to continue participating at either Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., or at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, next year.

Visser runs the 3200 meter, 1600, 800, 4 by 800, 4 by 400 and the 400.

Of the six events that Visser participates in, the 1600 is his favorite.

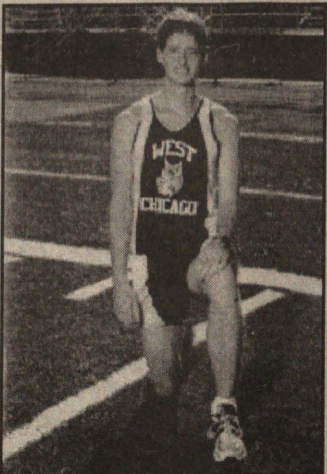


Photo courtesy of George Visser. Visser is currently undefeated in the mile and two mile events.

He is undefeated in the 1600 and the 3200 race this season. His record for the 1600 race is

impressive, standing at 4 minutes and 27 seconds.

Visser says that his biggest supporters are his brothers. His twin brother Dan refers to George as a good sprinter, but an even better distance runner.

Although Visser is backed by family support, Visser also feels pressured at times to win.

"Occasionally pressure will get to me, but I try to relax and that's when I have my best races," said Visser.

The team also helps to take pressure away from the races. Visser believes that members involved in track are "a group of hard workers who know how to have a good time."

Though Visser works hard in track, he prefers to run cross-country in spring.

## Coach's Corner

# Lithuanian coach brings spirit to team

By Kellie Virnich

When track coach Vaida Bracher accepted an athletic scholarship to Lewis University, she had no idea how much her life would change.

Bracher grew up in Lithuania, a country northeast of Poland. She said that her family was "always as close as can be," and that there was never a still moment in her childhood.

"Growing up in Lithuania was wonderful," said Bracher. "My family was very sporty, and I don't remember a time when I wasn't playing sports."

She named her mother as her main inspiration athletically, saying that she was a great coach and motivator.

When Bracher first came to the United States to run track for Lewis, the culture shock affected her almost immediately.

"Absolutely everything was different. The food was completely different, plus there were so many people, and I didn't know anyone," she said, citing the distance from her family as a struggle she still deals with today.

Bracher has found many aspects of her move in a positive light, though. She married Terry Bracher soon after graduation and they now have an 8-month-old daughter, Victoria. She tells the story of how she met her husband whenever she can, and still finds it amusing.

"I went into the place

where he worked, and he had [the Lewis University] calendar out on his desk," said Bracher. "The page with my track team was open, and he recognized me and we just started talking."

Her love for track has also granted her a job at the school teaching girls both indoor and outdoor track. This is Bracher's first year at CHS, though she applied to coach the boys team last year, she became pregnant and decided not to take the job.

She said, "I am so happy that I get to coach other girls in something I am so devoted to. I love them all very much."

Bracher's favorite aspect of coaching, she said, is teaching her team new things, but she hates the whining that occasionally accompanies the hard work they put in.

Maturity and social skills are two of the benefits of playing sports, Bracher believes, and she said that track has made her into what it is today.

While she feels that natural talent has a lot to do with success in sports, she uses the "practice makes perfect" philosophy on her players and wants them to demand hard work out of themselves too.

"Though track will always come first, I also play tennis. I am constantly trying to improve my technique, and I want my girls to do the same," she said.



Photo by Leah Kuzmicz

Girls track coach Vaida Bracher motivates her team at an after school practice.

## Kurtz Klassic win helps unite team

### Girls events remain strong

By Terri Molo

Focusing on teamwork has paid off for the girls track team as they took first place in the Kurtz Klassic, a competition between six teams.

Senior Danielle Romano noticed that the teamwork shown throughout the races earned the Wildcats their first place finish.

"We have a lot of new girls this year and when we combined the new talent with the old we came out on top," said Romano.

"You can't really say one event did the best. Running events and field events are totally different. We use all our own talents and abilities in the events we're good at, and with a lot of teamwork, we succeeded at the Kurtz Klassic," she added.

Coach George Petmezas agrees that teamwork is important, but believes that winning is not everything.

"I really want the girls to have a good time, learn team work, and look out for each other," he said.

In the beginning of the season the team did team building activities to help the girls bond and become a stronger team.

Petmezas said, "We have a really strong varsity team, but our weakness is we don't have

many underclassmen. We really need freshmen to join."

Senior Lauren Buscemi is one of the stronger varsity members. She has been doing well in the high jump this season.

As for sprinters, senior Mallory Sanzeri and junior Kelly Tinnes are at the top of the list. Tinnes, who also runs the mile, recently broke her record resulting in a mile ran under six minutes.

Practices are composed of stretching as a team then the girls branch off to do individual workouts.

They work on improving personal records, distance, speed, jumps, and endurance.

The coaches want to help the girls work on beating personal records, finding goals to beat and hopefully qualifying someone for state.

Senior DeAnne Fitzreider is excited about the season.

"There are a lot of new teammates and fun people this year. It's my last year on the team and I just want to have fun and help the younger girls get better so they can keep the team great," she said. "We have good runners and were trying to make it to state. It's a fun group and we all get along," she added.

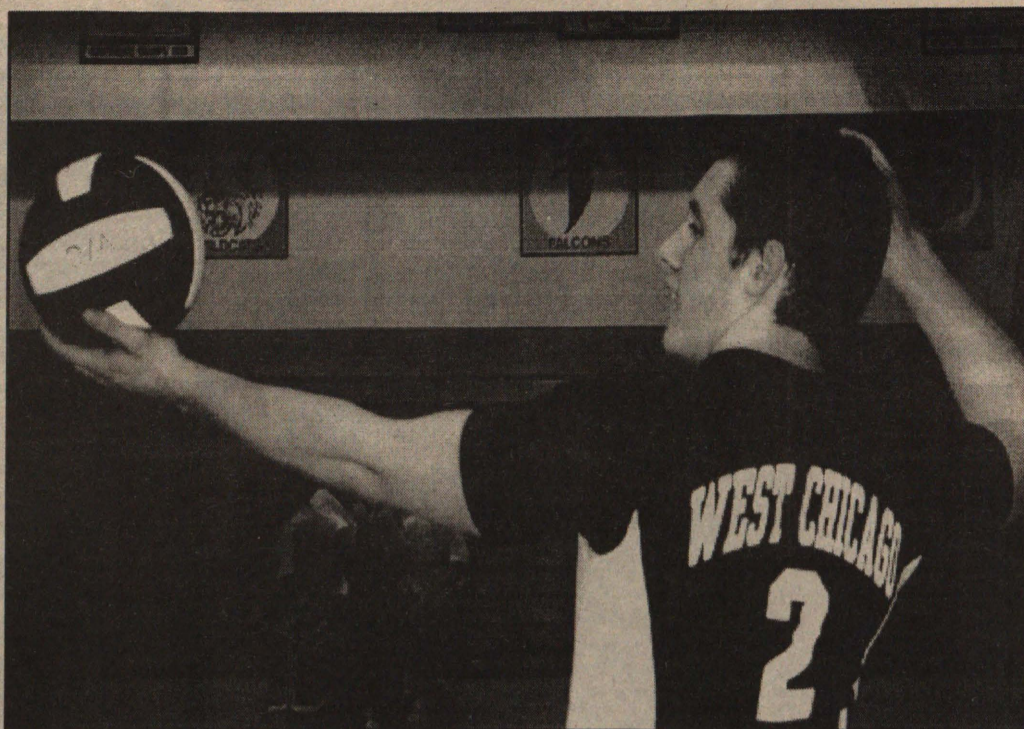


Photo By Kayla Harris

Senior Steve Vlasvich prepares to serve during an after school practice. Coach Kris Hasty believes Vlasvich will be a key blocker for the team.

## Team hopes to set new name for themselves by taking over the DVC

By Kayla Harris

Tryouts have ended and the boys volleyball team is confident about the upcoming season.

Despite losing outside hitter Derek Jensen, who graduated in 2005, head coach Kris Hasty is excited to see what the new season will bring.

Nothing but positive comments was heard from the team.

"We have a good mix of seniors and juniors. We have good leadership," said senior Eric Lindner, defensive specialist.

Hasty hopes to win the DVC conference, in which they were

1-13 in 2005.

"I hope they can be competitive in the conference. They're deeper in talent and everyone is contributing," she said.

Senior Joel Barker, libero, also feels positive about the 2006 season.

"We had a lot of guys play club this year, which really helps," Barker said.

One obstacle, Hasty said, is the competition faced within the squad.

"It depends how well the group can gel together as one team," she said.

Senior Steve Vlasvich, opposite hitter, has no doubts that the team can unite and win this

season.

"The team really gets along and we play well together," Vlasvich said.

Key players are seniors Brian Brewster, outside hitter, Ryan Foytik, setter, Lindner, and Vlasvich.

"Steve will definitely be a key blocker for the team," Hasty said.

Junior Eric Sorgatz will also be essential for the team's success.

Varsity will play in their first tournament Friday and Saturday at Hoffman Estates.

The team's first home game is April 6 against Glenbard East.

### Andie's Angle

## Spring brings new hope for Chicago Cubs fans

By Andrea Bradley

With the MLB season nearing, fans will soon find their way home to the north side of Chicago.

Cubs fans will once again stand outside of Wrigley Field trying to find tickets to a game, which will be sold out after the first two weeks of the season.

No matter how many World Series titles the Sox may win, most Chicagoans will still bleed Cubby Blue.

After the 16-1 season of the White Sox, Cubs fans started cheering for the south side, but still, after 97 years of endless hope, fans are headed back to Wrigley.

Although the Cubs may have not won a World Series since 1908, 40,000 fans continue to fill Wrigley Field every game, every season.

So why do so many baseball

fans turn to the Cubs? Their games are simply more exciting. Although the voices of Len Kasper and Bob Brenly can be obnoxious at times, they still announce when the other team



scores. They are impartial to the other team. When they talk, they rarely refer to the Cubs as "us" or "we", they simply call them the Chicago Cubs.

As for Ken Harrelson and Darrin Jackson, the only thing they can focus on is the White

Sox. No offense guys, but I prefer to hear when both teams score, especially when I can't see a homerun ball soar over left field.

Now of course you have the Cubs announcers who sometimes call plays the wrong way, but they at least make an attempt to announce the games correctly.

The announcers are not the only reason why more people decide each year to wear blue and red. The stories of the bad luck brought to Chicago in the form of a goat have Cubs fans believing that they are cheering for the underdogs.

According to the myth, a man and his goat were kicked out of the stadium during the fourth game in the 1945 World Series in Chicago. Apparently the man and his goat smelled, giving the owner of the Cubs,

Philip Knight reason to kick them out.

Since then, the Cubs lost every chance to earn the World Series title. Fans believe that it was the goat owner, William Sianis, that sought revenge through the form of a curse.

Of course the story of the goat is nothing more than a scapegoat itself, but it does not stop Cubs fans from waiting for the day that the curse of the goat will be broken.

The anticipation of a World Series title is strong enough to win back the Cubs for the 97th year in a row.

Not to mention, many of the reasons why the Cubs turned to the White Sox are due to the White Sox themselves.

White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen lost fans over the baseball break with rude comments about former White Sox player

and Chicago hero Frank Thomas.

Also, the White Sox have been less than impressive during spring training. While the Cubs have been winning game after game, the White Sox seem to be blowing off the training, acting as though none of it matters.

Guillen was even forced to yell at the team on a television broadcast for their lousy playing. He told the players they needed to get their act together.

Like always, the Cubs are already showing off their heart for the game, gaining attention from fans who have started to lose hope.

Although the Sox did gain fans, and their attendance is predicted to go up this year, the Cubs fans will remain the majority in Chicago until the Cubs begin to lose their excitement.