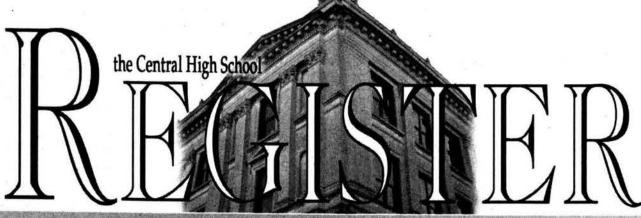
December 16, 2004



PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL **JOURNALISM** 

# tudent behavior downtown forces restrictions on teens



Freshman Rayne Henderson (left) and sophomore **Genesis Grant wait outside the Downtown Food Mart** 

Due to some student behavior in downtown businesses, restrictions have been set up concerning the number students allowed and certain times students can enter

Connie Prososki owns the Downtown Food Mart, which does not allow teenagers under the age of 18 in the store. When she bought the store, she said, there was no restriction. After a while, Prososki said, she started to have a problem with shoplifting.

Prososki then decided to enact the first restriction, only two teenagers allowed in the store at a time. Then, she said, students

eventually fighting and causing other disruptions. She said she called Central in 2001 and

asked the administration to ask students to

"I have kids," Prososki said. "I didn't want to kick all those kids out."

She said after that she started the new restriction, which restricted all teenagers under 18 between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., there were no more problems.

"It's become an non-issue for us since we put the sign on the door," she said.

Freshman Rayne Henderson and

started to congregate outside of her store, sophomore Genesis Grant both have a bus stop in front of the Downtown Food Mart.

> Henderson said she was disappointed when the Food Mart enacted its restrictions, because sometimes she has the urge to buy something. So instead of buying something at the Food Mart, Henderson said she goes down the street to another grocery store.

"They think if you walk in with more than two people with your book bag, you are automatically stealing," she said.

Henderson said she thought other people who are over 18 and allowed in the store steal too, so the restriction has not helped and is unfair.

"That's discriminating," Henderson said. "Just because they're older, that's stupid (that they are allowed in)."

Prososki said although she does have pictures of some Central students who have allegedly shoplifted, not all students are

"There are a lot of good kids at Central,"

Principal Jerry Bexten said he received a complaint from a downtown business, but would not name which one. Since that complaint however, he said he hasn't

Continued to Downtown on Page 4

# Lockdown drill positive, Bexten says

BY MOLLY MULLEN

The words "Code Red" were heard over intercom. Immediately teachers turned off e lights and told their students to sit down, vay from the windows. They locked their

Each teacher took a red or green card om an envelope and slipped it under he door indicate whether the room was safe or not. reen meant "all-clear" and red meant the om needed special attention.

Central was under lockdown.

If there was a particular disturbance uring the school day like an intruder or a large fight, principal Jerry Bexten would get on the intercom and inact a lockdown on the school. This was the first lockdown drill Central had ever practiced.

Junior Laquita Gates said it was likely entral would have a real lockdown in the future and it was good to practice the procedure

"When it does happen, we'll know what to do and we can take it more seriously," Gates

She said she was glad something could help Central prepare for something like an intruder. "You never know," she said.

Junior Matt Martin said he thought the drill was a waste of time.

"I don't think it is important," Martin said. I don't think anything like that would happen

He said the school had a great security staff and would catch any intruders or stop any fight before it got to the point of a lockdown. Martin also said Omaha was not a point that terrorists were looking to attack.

Senior Ira Mitchell said Omaha may be under attack someday from terrorists and procedures like lockdowns were important o protect the future of Central, the students,

Continued to Lock on Page 4

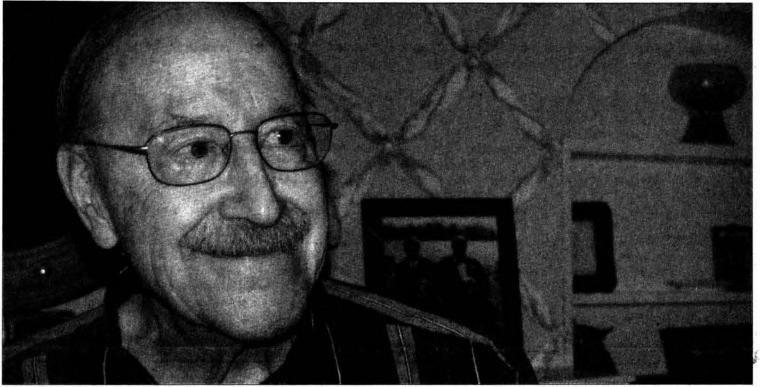


PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

After donating a large sum of money to the project, Lee Seemann (class of '38) was given the chance to have his name on the stadium. He said he had to think about it because he and his wife like to donate quietly.

BY MOLLY MULLEN

As he was floating in the freezing water for hours, watching the sun set, he knew he was going to die.

Luckily an English ship came along and rescued him and his fellow crew members after their bomber plane went down in late World War II.

He was taken to a hospital and was nursed back to health by a doctor he knew from Omaha

He eventually came the most decorated World War II vet in the Midwest.

"It shows what a small world it is,"

It was also proved what a mall world it was after the stadium Seemann always wanted when he graduated from Central in 1938 was named for him in November this

"I played football and basketball and we

didn't have a stadium," he said. "I wondered why and I always thought it would be neat to have one."

He said when Heritage Services first approached him about having his name on the stadium he had to think it over for about a week.

"We (Seemann and his wife Willa) don't like so much publicity," Seeman said. "Some people like that, they like seeing their name.'

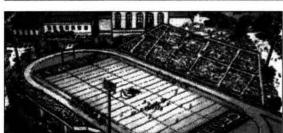
He said he eventually came to the realization that someone's name had to be on the stadium and agreed to make it his.

"I am proud that they picked us," he said. "I am proud to have my name on the

He was in ROTC at Central before continuing at the University of Santa Clara. Being in ROTC in college allowed him to

Continued to Stadium on Page 3





**ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF DLR GROUP** 

A front view of the stadium entrance (top) in a computer rendition. A artist's drawing of the stadium field (bottom) when it is completed.

# Junior's essay results in free trip to nation's capital

BY MOLLY MULLEN

This spring junior Keelend Smith will visit Washington D.C. n an all expense paid trip by the Anti-Defamation League.

"(When I found out) I was very excited," Smith said. "I was selected to represent Central in Washington D.C. and that means

He said he didn't have much confidence he would be the one get picked because a lot of students requested applications. Smith said to be chosen he had to write an essay and get a

eacher recommendation. In his essay he wrote about why he thought he would be a good candidate and why the trip to such places as the Holocaust Museum and the Vietnam Memorial would mean so much to

"I had a strong essay and a good teacher recommendation,"

He said he had a lot to offer the other people going on the

"I have a good background to bring to the group and new comments to bring to the table," he said.

Smith said the group will be meeting a few times before and after the trip in early march to discuss their knowledge and experience with prejudice.

He said he didn't think there was a racism problem at Central, but there was in Omaha.

"It was just being in the wrong place. It usually happens when I go out to west O," he said. "It's anything from being ignored to mumbling comments."

He said it doesn't happen in north or south Omaha as much because there are more minorities than West Omaha.

He said he wants to learn about other people's struggles in D.C. and wants to come home and tell people about his experiences. Smith learned about the trip through a prejudice elimination

Response counselor Karen Cirulis has been involved with the workshop for the past few years.

She said there were around 12 applicants from Central.

"Keelend was one of the original 12 in the workshop," Cirulis

said She said it was a one-day workshop to discuss the topic of diversity in the country. There she informed the students of the Washington D.C. opportunity.

Counselor Ron Moore has been the facilitator for the workshop for three years and wrote the letter of recommendation for Smith.

"Keelend is really trying to break the cycle of being or feeling oppressed," Moore said. "He wants to improve himself and in turn help others."

Moore said Smith has had that attitude since they met two

He said the only change was he was growing more mature and was looking for more ways to express it. He said he hoped Smith learns from the trip.

"I hope that he would view the ugliness of the world affairs, but realize that those things don't have to continue," he said.

Other students atending are juniors Abigail Prest, Audrey Madison and Miranda Margrave.

### Vietnam vet praised for service

BY CLAY LOMNETH

On Nov. 17, Vietnam veteran and Central alumnus Greg Kulm was honored by Central for receiving the Purple Heart for his service in the Marine Corps, and for being named the Purple Heart veteran of the year.

Kulm was injured in Vietnam on April 21, 1969, when a landmine severed both of his legs. While he was in the hospital recovering, Kulm received the Purple Heart.

Jeanne Kulm, Greg's wife, said he could not attend the ceremony because he was in the hospital.

The ceremony at Central was held outside near the Vietnam Memorial. JROTC instructor Lt. Col. Mike Melvin was at the ceremony. He said it went well, despite the weather.

Melvin said he has known Kulm for about three years. Kulm had helped give out awards at the annual JROTC award ceremonies for cadets. Melvin said when he found out that Kulm had been named the Veteran of the Year, he was extremely pleased.

"I wasn't surprised," Melvin said. "He's always been very energetic and very involved. He's one who's always there and ready to take up any challenge."

He said the plaque that Kulm received would probably be put in the JROTC trophy cases once some of the trophies are taken out. Melvin said he thought the JROTC cadets were very impressed and proud of the award, and that most students would feel the same

Melvin said it was important for students to notice the plaque because it was important for all students to know what alumni have done.

"If you look back at history at Central, you see a number of students who have gone on to great things," he said. "Greg (Kulm) is just one of

Purple Heart secretary Don Kemper and current commander Bob Evans were present for the ceremony.

Evans said it was very important for students to think about their country, and that was what he hoped would happen when Kulm's plaquewas

"We're hoping by hanging the plaque it will get students to start thinking about patriotism," he said.

Kemper said he agreed patriotism was important and said it was something to be proud of. He said one cannot be too young to be patriotic. In high school, Kemper said students

Continued to Heart on Page 5

STUDENT LETTERS...7 NDERSON MOVIE REVIEWS ..... 8 BBOTT. **MUSIC REVIEWS ..... 9** EEMAN "FARENHEIT 451"... 9 OCKDOWN VACHA. ALLINGTON CUTLER. 10 ROTC BASKETBALL URPLE HEART. PLIESS. **OLUMNS** SWIMMING 12

HALLGREN

DITORIAL



"Polar Express"

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This senior shows her true self through various art forms.



· CONTACT

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Club members

learn technique 's

BY YASMINE NUWWARAH

Rock Climbing Club began

The club, sponsored by head

departm

meets t

a month

Thursd

climb at

South YMCA.

club foc

fourth year at Central with a smoo

to rock climbin

### NHS cleans in winter months, repair gardens

BY ANDREW REINWALD

On Dec. 18, students from the National Honor Society (NHS) helped clean up The Omaha Botanical Gardens

The garden clean-up sponsor, Jean Whitten, said she and the NHS students go to the gardens every fall and help

"We've been working at the botanical garden on and off since I came here in '96," Whitten said.

Whitten and the students usually go on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m.

The students participated in this for their required community service projects.

They will also help out in the spring, cleaning up after the debris of autumn and winter. One of the biggest events at the

botanical gardens in the spring is the Spring Fling. "It's a fund-raiser for the garden,

"Whitten said. "They sell plants, have tours and have kid's activities." She said this volunteering opportunity used to be available to her freshman biology class, but she

eventually offered it to the NHS students only because many of the freshmen did not have access to cars. She said the NHS students already

do a lot of community service in the area as it is On the 18th Whitten and the NHS

students will be helping the botanical gardens with its rose bushes and preparing them for the winter. 'Working outdoors is fun," she

said. "Some people like it and some

don't; it's not mandatory."

### JROTC finds different way to raise cash

BY YASMINE NUWWARAH

JROTC took a different approach to fund-raising this year by selling dog tags to its cadets.

"Everybody does candy," Lieutenant Colonel Mike Melvin, head of

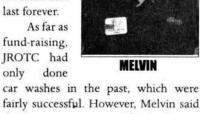
the IROTC department. said.

something different that last forever.

dog tags were

He said

fund-raising, JROTC had only done



fairly successful. However, Melvin said there was more potential for the dog tag After receiving a flyer in the mail

does work nationwide, Melvin said he presented the idea to the students. The JROTC sold approximately

from JROTC Dog tags, a company that

70 dog tags to over half its members, Melvin said.

Each dog tag cost \$5 and cadets had the option of two different styles for the tags

For their money, buyers received the dog tag, a silencer, and a chain. For another \$1, many cadets had their names or a nicknames engraved on the back of the tag.

Profits from the sale will go to funds for the JROTC's drill team, color guard and marksmanship team.

Melvin said because of the success of the sales, he hopes to sell the dog tags school-wide second semester.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 16, 2004



Vickie Anderson grades papers for her Spanish 3 class. It will be her last year grading papers because she will either become president of the Nebraska State Education Association or retire and stay a smaller part of the organization.

# Teacher runs for association president

BY MOLLY MULLEN

After 36 years of teaching, Spanish teacher Vickie Anderson is planning to move on to a new career.

"As much as I still love teaching, it is time to do other things in my life," She is running for the president

of the Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA). She said she was president of the

local chapter and is now the vice presi-

"(The NSEA) promotes public education in the state of Nebraska, provides professional growth, helps in negotiations, protects contract rights, does lobbying efforts in the state Legislature and in the local school board,"

She said she has been a part of the NSEA for 32 years as well as the president of the Omaha Education As-

'You name it, I've done it," she

She said if she loses the election in spring to Carol Grice, one of the National Education Association directors, she will retire from teaching.

If she wins she will be taking a leave of absence, but will not be teach

"I'll be just as busy next year as I am this year," she said. She said she will run for a three-

year term as president and can run

If she becomes president she will get a government salary as opposed to the volunteer position of vice presi-She said being president of the

NSEA had always been her goal.

It all starts now.

"I have always thoroughly enjoyed the education employees I've worked with throughout the state," she said. "I want to share my commitment and expertise with them.'

Reading teacher Donna Noll said Anderson had always been active in association politics, but it wasn't until they worked on congressional candidate Peter Hoagland's campaign 12 years ago that she actually got involved in the process.

She said even after Anderson leaves, she will stay a part of Central. "Central High has been a big part

of her life," she said. "She has a huge commitment to Central." Junior Tim Bertino said he can

see her 36 years of experience every

day in class. "She's been teaching for so long she knows what students will and will

He said she can control her classes very well and that comes from experi-

not learn," Bertino said.

"It will be very hard for anyone to fill her shoes," he said.

He said she has a good personal relationship with her Spanish National Honors Society students.

#### solely on teaching its members the climbing technique. Members are taught how to wo with the ropes and practice differe methods for climbing different

WHITTEN

climb uphill.

walls. "It's not just running up a wal Whitten said.

The club attracts about 10 to students at each meeting and there approximately 20 to 25 students w

actively participate. Members pay \$1.50 every to they go rock climbing with the club. order to provide for the money need to rent the wall.

Whitten said the club was recen offered the opportunity to use the re climbing wall at University of Nebras at Omaha.

She said although the price w relatively the same, it offered a new w for the club to practice on.

### 'Coats for Cold donated to help winter charities

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Starting Dec. 1, the Stud Democrats Club organized a coat dr that lasted two weeks.

The - Student Democrats done a coat drive every year since sponsor Donna Noll said.

She said because of the weather, this year's coat drive was call "Coats for the Cold." "The main reason (for the

drive) is so that everyone can ha warm coat for the winter," she said Every year, Noll said, the

hats, scarves and mittens are collect in a bog box at the 'C'. Each year they go to a differe

place. She said last year the coats w given to the Open Door Mission.

"We do different places every year Noll said. "Whoever needs the coats

Freshman Anne Newman member of Student Democrats. said the reaction from students usually been indifferent.

Newman said she made promoting the coat drive and spoke homerooms about it to get the w

"It's getting really cold ou Newman said. "It'd be really nice people who couldn't afford coats cou get one for free."

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MUSIC

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# Upcoming Eve

December

20-31 (MON.- FRI.) Winter Recess

No school for students.

January

#### 4-6 (TUE.-THUR.) Road Show Auditions

11-13 *(TUE.-THUR.)* Final Exams

The exams begin at 7:45p.m. Students should bring all the appropriate materials.

13 *(THUR.)* First Semester ends

Report cards get sent home today.

14 (FRI.) Semester Break

No school for students.

17 *(MON.)* Martin Luther King Jr. Day

No school





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# chs helps World War II vet become most decorated

STADIUM' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sh school before joining the army.

"You had to go back then. No matter what you had to he said. "In World War II, we had four million Americans

He said he excelled at ROTC at Central and decided to ir in college. In 1937 when Seemann was a junior, he and drill team, then called the crack squad, went to Kansas for national competitions.

"We were all juniors and we won national championships military ROTC in 1937," he said.

He said Central beat teams above high school like West

What a thrill. 20,000 people in this stadium standing clapping for five minutes," Seemann said. "When you're that's pretty good."

He said along with the crack squad, the football team pretty good as well.

Seemann said Central only lost one game all year to incoln school by one point and still harbors old feelings

"We should have won," he said. "We were the better

He went from captain of the best crack squad in the on and the best center football player in the city to the st decorate World War II veteran in the Midwest in a

Seeman said he didn't even know he was the most trated until the 1990s

After graduating form Santa Clara, he said he went ectly into the military as a bomber.

"I was excited," he said "I had a lot of ROTC training." Seemann said fighting the war from a bomber jet was an

He said gaining air superiority over Germany was what ned the war against Hitler and it was so close in the other ection that without the air power America may have lost. "If you don't have air superiority you might as well go

He said fighting the war was scary. It was different from war in Iraq because of the casualties.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Seemann holds a replica of his old B17 bomber he flew over England from 1942 to 1945 during WWII.

"We (the America Armed Forces in England) lost 30,000 men like me," he said. "We used to lose thousands everyday and you can imagine how many were injured."

Seemann said his war experience along with the medals might also be a reason he was approached about the stadium.

Seemann and his wife, Willa (class of 1943), have been donating since the early '80s. He said he liked giving to different organizations that live off of donations.

"It is a good feeling to have enough money to do what you want to do and have enough left over to help other organizations like Central," Seemann said. "When you can't spend it and your family has enough what are you going to do with it? You're going to give it away."

a stadium at Central and thanks to donations from people like Susan Buffett, students will soon get to enjoy it. He said the those who died.

as the stadium as well as various improvements in the

"If Susan Buffett didn't give money to Central, things wouldn't be the same at all," he said.

Athletic director Paul Pennington said naming the

stadium for a hero like Seemann was a good idea.

"I think obviously it was a good choice," he said. He said it was amazing all of the great people who had come out of Central such as Seemann.

"I have been here 34 years and there have been heroes, business giants, Nobel Prize winners and philanthropists," Pennington said. "He (Seemann) was a graduate of '38. I wasn't even born until '49. I have only

seen a small portion of Central's rich history." Principal Jerry Bexten said naming the stadium for Seemann was part of the fund-raising effort and he liked the fact it was named for him.

"He is a pretty remarkable man," Bexten said.

He said technically the stadium belongs to Heritage Services right now and won't belong to Central until all the land is exchanged in the fall.

The area the portables are on now will go to Joslyn Art Museum and the stadium will belong to Central.

Freshman Teneko Penn said he liked the fact that Central could honor an alumnus who served in World

He said he respected people who served in the military and felt great Seemann was chosen to represent

"It's good to acknowledge people who serve," Penn

He said he liked the fact it is named after an alumnus instead of a random donator.

Junior Paige Kendrick said she thought it was cool to see someone so successful come from Central.

"He did something good for the country," she said.

"He represented Central well." She said she hoped people would also remember

He said it is nice to have things like air conditioning and and acknowledge all the people from Central who served in World War II, as well as the other wars and especially

### Substitute counselor tries to affect teens in short amount of time

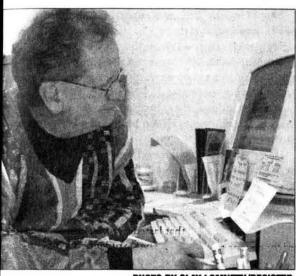


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Substitute James Abbott works on the computer in guidance counselor Angela Meyer's office.

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Long-term substitute James Abbott was contacted by Central to take over for guidance counselor Angela Meyer while she was on maternity leave.

Abbott has had experience as a long-term substitute, substituting at Burke two years ago.

"They called me up and asked me if I could do what I did at Burke," Abbott said. "I said yes. It's a way of getting myself out into the community."

Abbott said he got the chance to speak with Meyer briefly, and she gave him schedules, notes and other suggestions for

He said during his stay here, he would help students make strategies for their futures. Abbott said he did not expect to affect many students,

rather he would prefer helping out a few greatly. "What I'm trying to focus on now is to find a number of individuals I can affect in the six weeks I'm here," Abbott

Abbott, a retired lawyer, had experience even before that, he said, when he taught as a guidance counselor in a New York school for around three years.

He stopped teaching there, he said, because he was tired of what teaching had to offer for him.

"Doing what I was doing was too easy for me," Abbott Principal Jerry Bexten said Abbott's experience would

help him on the job. "He wouldn't be here if that wasn't the case," Bexten

Bexten said it was the guidance counselors who lined up

Abbott's subbing schedule. After working at the school for three years, he went on

to study and practice law for 20 years. He retired from that to work for a company making sports games for the Internet.

After a while, he said, he gave up on that to work on photography and print making.

Guidance counselor Jodi Petersen is Meyer's co-worker.

She said she had gotten to know Abbott briefly.

"He has the credibility and the experience to qualify for the position," Petersen said.

Sophomore Skyler Houston talked to Abbott regarding his grades, he said.

He said Abbott's advice would help him.

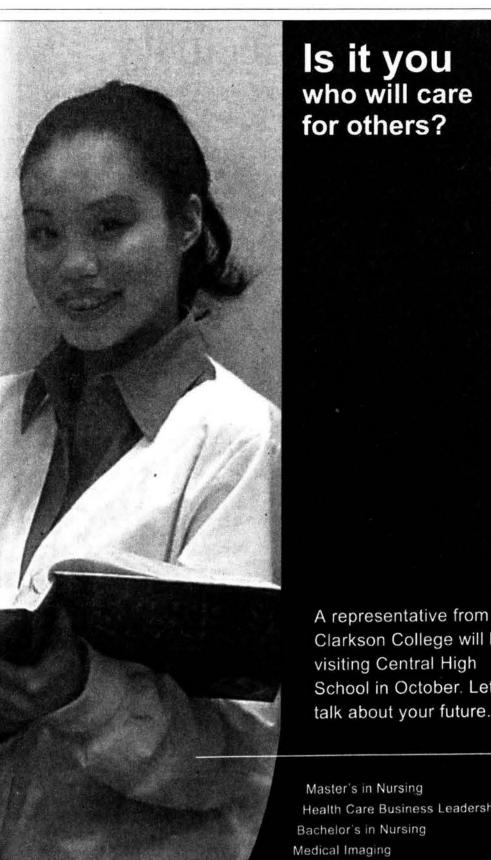
Houston said he thought most counselors were the same, but Abbott seemed like he cared a little more, because he asked more questions.

"He gives you straight forward information," he said. Abbott said he kind of enjoyed being a guidance counselor

again, because he was able to get in touch with students. But, he said, he would not start the job again.

Abbott said that some of the differences between now and 30 years ago are were the way students dress, and said that when he was a counselor, students would never wear low

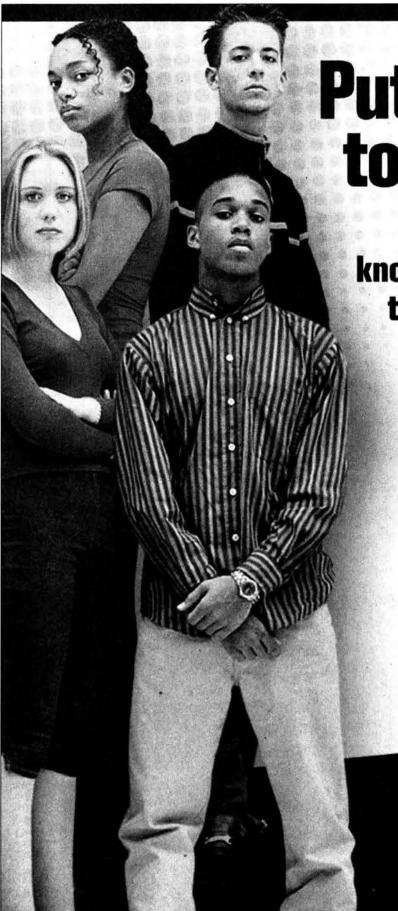
"(I like it) only to the degree that it's interesting to see kids 30 years later," he said. "It's not a career I'm starting



### Is it you who will care for others?

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# First lockdown practices security, safety

#### LOCK' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

teachers and staff.

"First of all, we're downtown where a lot of stuff can happen," Mitchell said. "Omaha could have the next 9/11. Look how close we are to Offutt (Air Force Base)."

Mitchell said he felt more prepared in case of a lockdown since the students knew the procedure, but he felt locking the doors and turning off lights wasn't enough.

"People are going to do what they decide to do and a locked door won't stop them," Mitchell said.

Security personnel Dale Wuster said during the lockdown he checked the first, second and third sides of the fourth floor. His job was to see if all the rooms had green cards outside the door and to make sure there were no students in the hallways.

He said one of the biggest issues that would concern a lockdown was students constantly letting strangers into the building.

"We (security) do a pretty good job of catching them quickly," Wuster said.

He said even though students think they're doing the right thing by letting someone in, it could be someone unwelcome in the building. The time between the intruder entering and security catching them could be long enough for damage to occur.

"We only have one controlled entrance and that is the three side," Wuster said

After Wuster saw it was all clear in his area, he radioed back to base. In this drill, base was Bexten's office, but it could potentially be a police officer.

"This is the first time we've ever done this. It is a drill; we need to practice," Wuster said. Bexten said Central should have started practicing lockdowns a long time ago.

"It's been in our crisis plan for some time," Bexten said. "It seems like a pretty simple thing

Bexten said he planned on having more

"Not as often as fire drills," he said. "When you practice things you get more comfortable with them and they become more automatic."

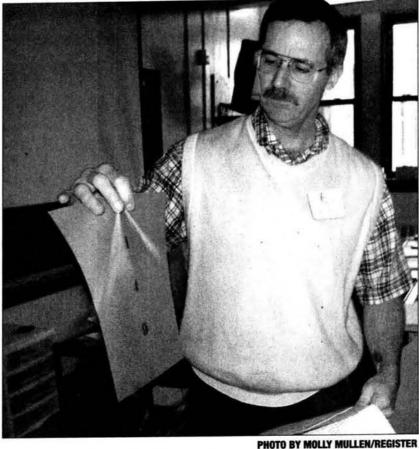
He said as long as he has been at Central there had not been a problem calling for a lockdown and had not heard of one in the past

Student resource officer Jesse Stokes said over the Thanksgiving weekend teachers and faculty were trained on subjects such as bullying and lockdown procedures.

He said the drill went really well. The idea of the green and red cards was thought up by the administration, but was used in many districts across the country.

Stokes said the length of the drill depends on the situation

"It could be for anything from a gas leak to an intruder," Stokes said.



Social Studies teacher Rick Behrens chooses the green card from the folder to slide under his door. This signals all-clear to security.

# Teacher spreads messages of tolerance in classes

Pathways teacher Pat Wallington remembers sitting down at the small Iowan

part of her 22 hour bus ride. However no one came to take her order as the servers flocked to the other customers.

"They didn't say anything, they just completely ignored me," she said.

She was still waiting for someone to take her order as others had all ready received their meals and eaten them. She said she began to realize the disregard as everyone else who

had traveled with her got back on the bus.

"I realized then that they didn't

intend to serve me," she said. "After that, I developed an aversion towards anything Iowan for awhile.

Wallington told of her experience with diner, feeling hungry after completing racism to her Pathways class every year. She

usually begins the story talking about her life in Tennessee before being offered a job at Central from Dr. Eugene Skinner. On the way to Omaha over 30 years ago from Memphis, Wallington took this bus ride.

She said she told former Pathways teacher Matt Schaffer who in turn told the students in the class while they were teaching it.

"We used the illustration

to show how unfair it was to develop a bias against Iowa for this one time in a diner,"

She said she uses this story to demonstrate tolerance, and explain to students that a grudge should not become an ongoing escalation. She said that many can relate to a story similar to this.

"We all have a story of that sort," she said. "We have to recognize it for what it is and move on.

She said that has been some improvement across the country since her experience on the bus.

"We have improved, but we're certainly not where we need to be. A lot of changes need to still occur," she said. "There will always be that nucleus of haters who would drag us back to those years or before."

She said she thought prejudice still lingered in Omaha.

"It exists here, I know that for a fact,"

she said. "It's probably not to the same extent that it used to be.

She said she thought Omaha has progressed, and issues with it are worse in other areas of the country.

"When I encounter it here, it's not as blatant as other areas of the country," she said. "Most indicators are very subtle."

After the bus incident, her husband and she visited a restaurant in Omaha where she encountered something similar to her previous experience. She said they sat down to eat and placed their order, yet didn't

She addressed the manager on the issue when others in the restaurant who came in later received their food.

She said the manager was apologetic, but she hasn't gone back to the restaurant

### Owner says limits | prevent stealing

#### DOWNTOWN' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

received anymore.

If he did receive any more complaints, he said he would then have to take action, making statements to the student body about how they should behave and represent Central of campus. Bexten said he thought the restrictions downtown were not necessarily fair, but he said, it was like school, where rules were made because of a few students, not the ones who followed the rules.

"It may not be fair because it restricts everybody, but! can understand why a business owner would make a decision

Prososki said students who come in the store before and after the restriction times give the employees no problems a

"After 4 p.m. we don't have a problem," she said.

Prososki also said there were students who cooperated with the restrictions, as opposed to fighting or still trying to

"We had some kids that were very polite that get their stuff and leave," she said.

Prososki said that the problem with students lessened when the downtown bus routes changed. Still, she said, sh will keep the restrictions because she is not losing a profit

"Between all of those kids that came in, they're probable not even spending \$10," Prososki said. Also, she said, her employees feel safer. Prososki said that

before the sign was put out, employees were often threatened by students and were "stressing out." "We don't have any problems with them (anymore)

she said. "They don't argue with us." Manager of the Homer's Music Store downtown End

Ziegler said he had set no restrictions on his store regardin "Any age is welcome as long as they are not visible

intoxicated," he said. Ziegler said that he only makes customers leave their

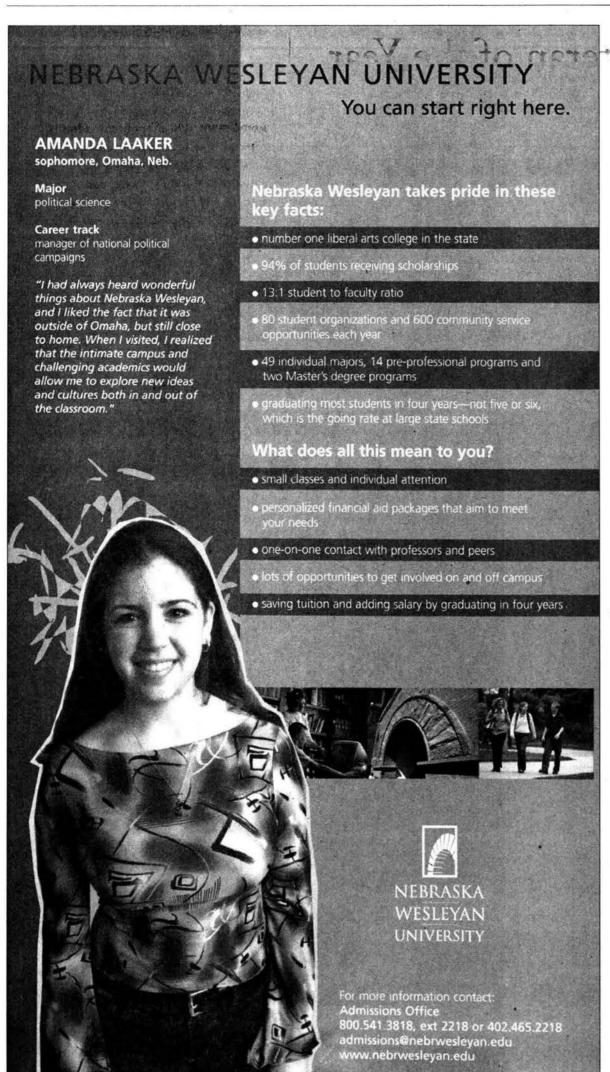
bags at the desk if the alarms go off when they walk He said his restrictions are for all of his customers, not jur Shoplifting, he said, was an ongoing problem that all

retailers need to deal with. "I've caught more adults stealing than kids," he said

Ziegler said he would never set restrictions on who is let inside the store, except those who are disturbances and those who have already be caught shoplifting.

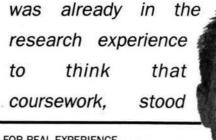
Henderson said she thought instead of restriction teenagers, the businesses should hire more people to watch

"They wouldn't have those problems anyway i they had more people to work there," Henderson said.

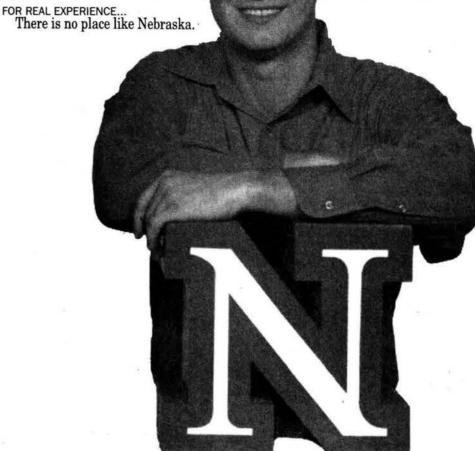




Preston Mesick, a junior engineering major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Millard North graduate, earned a prestigious Homeland Security Scholarship early this fall. The scholarship supports the development and mentoring of the next generation of scientists as they seek to reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism. Mesick credits his early access to research work at UNL. "At the end of my sophomore year, I



middle of my second at Nebraska. I have that, along with my out on my application."



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# IROTC tested by National Guard for knowledge, skill

THE REGISTER

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

The Junior Reserve Officer Training professionalism was as well. orps (JROTC) completed a yearly inspection hopes of keeping the same level of results hat gave it its yellow star last year. The yellow ar is the highest possible award for JROTC.

Before the inspection, senior Erik ervellon, the commander of the Eagle attalion, said he expected nothing but perfection, and expressed his faith in the bilities of the other cadets.

"(We were) looking to maintain the level excellence that last year's staff set forth," rvellon said. "It will show that we are very dicated with our tradition of excellence."

The dedication paid off. The cadets were ormed at the end of their inspection that inspections. y had done exceptionally well, and that they ould be retaining the yellow-star status.

Servellon said he was pleased with the sults of the inspection, congratulating the adets on their hard work.

"I'm happy, very ecstatic," he said.

Servellon said he was especially impressed y the drill team and BFI briefings, two parts f the inspections that took months of work.

In order to prepare for the BFI briefings, nany junior and senior officers were required make Powerpoint presentations on their duties and responsibilities.

Junior Jeremy Smith, a secondary staff JROTC, said the test required a great deal of preparation, especially for the junior and

"As an upperclassman, it's a lot more tressful than as a lower-classman," he said.

ling

an important factor in the inspections, but

"We have military bearing in all these tests," he said.

Servellon said he also took personal responsibility for the actions of the other

"The Battalion CO (commanding officer) is responsible for all the battalion does or fails to do," Servellon said.

Members of the National Guard carried out the student inspections on Dec. 9, following an earlier inspection of the school's JROTC program as a whole.

The overall outcome of the assessment was based on the results from both

Senior Kyle Kenkle said the inspections were based on every cadet's knowledge of hisor-her badges, the overall appearance of their uniform, and their ability to carry out specific

"I think it's pretty cool," Kenkle said. Kenkle works as a record keeper, keeping a training schedule and recording physical fitness information for other cadets.

The majority of the students who were tested missed only a period of class, but officers and those in leadership positions were gone for the majority of the day, arriving at 7 a.m. and finishing 8th period.

Teachers' abilities were also reflected in the tests, said Sergeant Major Dwaine Sutter, who has been teaching JROTC at Central for five years.

"They will verify whether or not we are



PHOTO BY ZACH PLUHACEK/REGISTER

Junior Sopnil Battarai (left) and sophomore Mark Wilder prepare for Color Guard practice before inspection by the National Guard.

teaching them what we are supposed to be cadets had improved greatly since the change. teaching," he said.

Sutter said the format of the inspections had changed recently, giving inspectors the ability to change the star and ranking of the battalions involved.

Sutter also said the effort put forth by the expectations.

"I've seen a greater improvement overall in their enthusiasm," Sutter said. "A lot of it

comes down to our senior staff members." Servellon said he agreed with Sutter, noting that the cadets had exceeded their

# Foreman plans early completion despite setbacks

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Out of his eight years of experience, Gene Neemann, foreman Total Fire Protection, said installing the fire sprinklers in Central is the hardest work he had ever done.

"When they made this school, they made it to last," he said. They made it very thick and hard and we've drilled through all of

He said he'd been working on Central for a year and ten months d commuted with much of his staff from Tecumseh daily.

Neemann said the work he did for Central and other schools ch as Milliard Elementary was very important. "No one has ever died in a building that has been sprinkled,"

He said he liked the work he did for places in Omaha like Wal-

art and Sam's Club as well as hospitals and schools. He said he worked with all the other subcontractors renovating the school because everything had to be done in a certain order to

"We follow the pathway of the other trades," he said. "They have to run the heating and steam lines before I can run the pipe." First year fire sprinkler apprentice Alan Schmeigelow said

learning how to install pipe was not difficult. "Gene is a very good teacher," Schmeigelow said. He said Neemann knew he would work well with Total Fire

Protection and he didn't need much direction. "He just tells me what to do and I can go and do it," he said.

Fire sprinkler apprentice Jonas Larson said Neemann's biggest job was setting everything up so they could do their work. "He deals with all the office people and talks with the other

He said he made most everything run smoothly and on schedule. Neemann said he hoped the project would be completed in early December instead of Dec. 24.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

**Gene Neemann of Total Fire Protection has been** working on Central's sprinklers for almost two

### Decorated Vietnam soldier named Veteran of the Year

**'HEART' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

ould acknowledge the flag in passing with a wave or a salute. Most important, he said, was to say the Pledge of Allegiance

"Patriotism has built up this country," Kemper said. "If

didn't have patriotism, we wouldn't have unity." Principal Jerry Bexten said he received a call from Jeanne ulm. She told him her husband had been selected for the Purple Heart Veteran of the year.

Bexten said it was important for students to be patriotic,

"We owe a lot to the men and women who have fought in our armed services," he said. "Part of what these men and women fought for is the freedoms we enjoy."

The way to show patriotism, he said, was respect for the American flag. Bexten said students do not necessarily need to would be," Stacy said. the Pledge of Allegiance, but should at least be respectful.

Bexten said it was important for people to learn about their country's history. By studying history, he said, people can find out more about the present. Bexten said he had experience

with history because he was a former history teacher. "People have an obligation to know our history," he said.

Public affairs officer for JROTC Will Stacy was also present for the ceremony. He said that despite the wet and cold weather, many cadets showed up.

"We actually had a lot more cadets than we thought there

"It's part of the school's heritage," he said. "It's a good

memorial towards him (Kulm)." Both Greg Kulm and Jeanne Kulm are Central alumni from the class of 1968. Jeanne Kulm said it was very important

students were patriotic.

#### **COLLEGE CORNER**



INFORMATION COURTESY OF THE COLLEGE BOARD

Gordon College

Where: Wenham, Massachusetts Admission: 76% of applicants admitted Type: Private four year liberal arts college **Undergraduate Enrollment: 1,481** 

Popular Majors: Theology, Biology and Performing Arts

**Application Deadlines: Priority Date** February 1

Brown University

Where: Providence, Rhode Island Admission: 17% of applicants admitted Type: Private four year university and liberal

arts college **Undergraduate Enrollment: 5,868** Popular Majors: Engineering Technologies, Interdisciplinary Studies and Social Sciences **Application Deadlines:** January 1

University of South Dakota

Where: Vermillion, South Dakota Admission: 83% of applicants admitted

Type: Public four year university **Undergraduate Enrollment:** 4,811 Popular Majors: Computer Sciences, Business and English

Application Deadlines: N/A

University of South Carolina at Spartanburg

Where: Spartanburg, South Carolina Admission: 64% of applicants admitted Type: Public four year university **Undergraduate Enrollment: 3,387** Popular Majors: Psychology, Health

Sciences and Communications

**Application Deadlines:** August 15

February 15

Creighton University Where: Omaha, Nebraska Admission: 91% of applicants admitted Type: Private four year university **Undergraduate Enrollment: 3.554** Popular Majors: Protective Services, History and Health Sciences

**Application Deadlines: Priority Date** 

ecause, he said, they need to support the armed forces.

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**EDITOR IN CHIEF** 

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# EDIT()RIALS

CHS, the new Las Vegas?



# Teen gambling pointless

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of

the Register staff

money anyway.

Playing at poker at lunch is one thing. Shooting dice in social studies is another. Gambling isn't a major problem at school, but playing cards and casino games at school happens all the time.

There are special occasions like in math class where the teacher will allow a free day and bring cards for the students to play with. It's fun and not disruptive. But in some classes students are

creating make-shift craps tables in the back of class or rolling dice down the aisle while the teacher is talking. The fact that a teacher even needs

to stop class to take away some kid's dice because he keeps shaking them during a lecture is embarrassing.

Most students don't do anything like this. They play games at lunch or after school and act respectfully during

But nearly everyone has had to sit through a class where the teacher had to reprimand classmates because they turned the science class into a casino. It is almost amazing they don't even think they're doing anything

Some of these gamblers look at the teacher like "What's your problem?" It almost seems like they don't even know they're doing anything wrong.

A recent study indicated that 8 percent of teenagers

already have developed a gambling problem or addiction. If students can't even wait until after the bell rings at 2:50 or even for lunch, there has to be a problem.

Playing a hand of Texas Hold 'Em at lunch is fun. There are so many people, the chairs make a huge circle so big people can hardly reach the table. Teachers walk by and watch, half interested in the hand and making sure there isn't any exchange of money.

> Playing with friends on time that doesn't belong to a teacher is completely different than whipping out dice when the teacher steps out to talk to another teacher or blow his nose.

There is no reason to play at school during class. Most of the time the teacher catches the students before they can win any

With a lot of the kids that gamble at school it almost looks like any ego thing. Like they're saying "I gamble when I want, where I want."

It isn't true, and much of the time these students aren't even gambling. They are just jingling a pair of dice in their hand long enough to get it taken away so everyone in class can make a mental note that this student did in fact have intentions to shoot them in class.

Wherever a student is gambling probably isn't a good decision seeing as how it's illegal for a minor anyway.

### Brother's condition alters views

I'LL BE QUIET

04-05 REGISTER STAFF BOX

It has been awarded Gold and

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A Column by Zach Pluhacek

I used to use the term "retard" loosely until I realized fellow classmates, Leo was forced to switch schools. just how much this word can hurt.

My little brother Leo was born with hydrocephalus, a disorder that caused the fluids in his skull to not drain

Now, he has a tube running inside his body from his way as Leo's classmates.

head to his stomach, and a shunt on his head, and while the hydrocephalus is no longer a problem, its effects still

The immense pressure that built up in Leo's head caused permanent brain damage that would result in a learning disability and a loss of a great deal of his fine muscle control.

Leo was a "retard."

Up until high school, I just thought of this as something he had to deal with, and that he would be just fine as long as he acted like every other kid.

But Leo didn't want to act just like every other kid; he embraced his difference, and didn't try to hide it.

Consequently, Leo came home every other day crying because one of his classmates had called him a retard, or "Football-head", Leo's nickname.

No matter what happened, I honestly thought that Leo was just being a baby and trying to get attention from

The Omaha Central High School

The staff strives to uphold the

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accurately as to items of interest and

principles of journalism in all its

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and Scroll and the Columbia Scholastic

in-Show winner for large newspapers at

the JEA/NSPA national conventions in

San Francisco, Boston, Phoenix, Dallas

and Washington D.C. The Register staff

is also responsible for the publication of

the Edge feature magazine, which has

won first place Best-in-Show award for

Pacemakers, which is considered the

Pulitzer Prize of high school journalism.

It has also won many Cornhusker

The Register has won multiple

The Register is a seven time Best-

Press Association (CSPA)

specialty publications.

awards from NHSPA.

importance

proceedings.

After years of being teased and tormented by his

Register seeks to inform its readers Silver Crowns from CSPA for its overall

It was then that I realized just how serious the situation had gotten.

I became deeply concerned, not only for Leo's wellbeing, but also for the possibility that I had acted the same

> Did I call other kids retards? Did I pick on undeserving classmates?

I came to the realization that what I had done in the past didn't matter anymore, and that what I really eeded to do was change.

My attitude towards disabled people changed.

Yasmine

Nuwwarah

Columnist

Andrew

Reinwald

Columnist

Junior Staffer/

Zach Pluhacek

Junior Staffer/

Nic Samuelson

Visuals Editor

Matt Deabler

Adviser

Columnist

Assistant Arts/

I was no longer the kid who poked fun, but the one who tried to

stop others from doing it. Despite this change, I still lacked a chance to truly

make a difference. The chance came around that summer, when I began

volunteering at University of Nebraska Medical Center, with a program called Camp Munroe, which provides recreational therapy for kids with disabilities.

Leo had been a camper there for several years, and I had heard of the program through him.

I signed up to work there for two weeks, but ended up liking it so much, I stayed for four.

I am now on the staff at Camp Munroe.

Molly Mullen

Columnist

Clay Lomneth

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Malisa Militzer

Tess Mandell

Columnist

Lauren Crist

Columnist

Arts Editor

Dede Hearity

**Assistant Arts** 

Assistant News/

JoAnna LeFlore

Sports Editor/

Reporter

Editor in chief/

# Student learns at young age M not to follow hurtful crowd

A Column by Lauren Crist

"Leg spasm," my friend said thrusting her leg onto the adjacent chair where Alex was about to sit.

"Can you move your leg?" Alex asked.

I froze. I hated intervening at times like this. It had been quite a few days I a row of my best friend constantly giving up her chair for Alex and sitting somewhere else was

exchanged exasperated glances with Alex as another array of musical chairs occurred. My best friend let Alex take her seat before sitting NO APOLOGIES NECESSARY down in the chair that my other friend had reluctantly

getting old.

moved her foot off, again. I hadn't really been mean to Alex's face. Yet, I hadn't really defended her either. It seemed much easier simply not to do anything at all. So I did, and didn't correct others who talked about her or bullied her

They picked on anything, among their favorite topics were: clothes, annoying, hair, annoying, personality, annoying and drinking out of a straw. One day while I was sitting in the cafeteria, I actually heard a conversation about

"Do you see the way she always has a milk carton for lunch?'

"Oh, I know, it's so annoying, and the way she always drinks it out of that straw ... "

"Isn't that dumb?"

That's when I realized we had no reason for criticizing her really. People were just bored and desperate for someone to scapegoat. Plus, she was new to the school, which didn't help her situation much. Not to mention, 7th grade bullying was unbelievably cool at the time.

Not that she wasn't a bit unusual at times. She sometimes spoke off topic, or acted a little different than everyone else. However, she had never really given anyone a reason to dislike her

Puzzled by this, I decided to pose the

question of dislike to my friend, who always had an answer for everything (even when she knew nothing about it).

"Oh. well, I dunno. There's just something about her, she's just so annoying, you know."

I pretended to agree even though I indeed did not know, but I didn't want to seem disagreeable.

I still couldn't help think that "annoying" was just an easy way of really avoiding the question.

That was everyone else's excuse as well. The thing about someone being deemed "annoying" is that there was no justification needed behind reasoning. Someone could be perfect and still carry the

emblem of annoyance. So then my group of friends all developed this sort of unseen fear of being labeled annoying. It caught on like the anti-Alex disease going around. We all tried our best to avoid Alex and any of "annoying" habits.

I only justified not liking her because no one else liked her. Then I realized that was the reason no one else liked her either. It didn't have anything to do with Alex.

To make matters worse, my best friend didn't seem to catch on to the Alexitis spreading.

She rolled her eyes when everyone else was mean to Alex, let her have a seat when no one else wanted to sit by her and talked to her when she

At the time, I didn't really mind much as long as I didn't have to do anything.

Then, people began to avoid her and she soon carried the familiar title of annoyance. When the leg spasm trick was finally tried on my best friend, I glared at the girl and stalked off, tripping on chairs on my way off. I was annoying for about a week before people began to tire of the game.

When one of the boys in school who had an aura of utter coolness stood up for Alex, the constant gossip subsided to occasional grumbles. I was glad it was at last over, and I got to know each other better over the year.

### Faith questioned after mom rushed to emergency room

A Column by Dede Hearity

I am the kind of person who tries to look at things positively, with Faith that God will make and told him everything that was going on in my it all better. Once in a while faith that God will mind, and Travis, who is always saving me, told make it better turns to hope that God's will would be done.

for about the third time that week. My father, being just as pigheaded and thick-skulled as the rest of the Hearity family, decided it was time to take her to the hospital.

My mother has always been in good health. My dad on the other hand is a smoker and my family always figured dad would be sick before mom ever was.

Maybe it is just the idea of our mom, who is a strong, smart, nurturing, loving, caring and independent woman, is what kept the thought of her ever being sick out of our minds.

That or the fact that she has always been

The day my dad took my mom to the hospital

was a shock to us all. When my dad was called he told me, "I am on my way home and you or I will have to take up your mom's night gown to her."

This was a punch in the stomach. I wanted

But I could not cry.

I had to be strong for my younger brother and dad. The confusion and shock wore off and then came worry.

"What is going to happen? Why are they keeping her? What is wrong? She can't die. God ,you have to make this right," were just a few of the thoughts in my head. I know I was most likely overreacting, but at that time my world was upside down.

I talked to a friend Nicholle about it and she gave me the "I am so sorry, everything will be okay" speech. I later called another friend, Ashley, and she

assured me that it would all work out, but that I know why people hate it when they talk

about someone they love being hurt now.

After calling Nicholle and Ashley I tried calling Travis, the guy who I turn to because he always knows what to say and when to say it. He told me all about his day and took my

mind off of every thought in my head. I have faith in God, but I want my mom to be

with me forever. I could never imagine getting married and

her not being there to fluff my dress or tell me to stop babbling, about how worried I am that I won't be a good wife.

I just started crying. Everyone else was in bed. I was up in my room and it was okay to show weakness in the dark with no one to hear me.

After crying for a while, I called Travis back me that he didn't know what to say.

Finally, I got what I wanted, someone who On Nov. 14, my mom was having chest pains was being real. Telling me not only did he not

have the answers, that he has never been in this situation. had no advice, but to bring it to God. After calming down and finally thinking bed looked good, I let him go and feel asleep.

The next day I had school, but that day was different. I wanted to be at

home with my little brother, just sitting down and watching movies with him. Only few knew my mom was in the hospital

and I didn't want anyone else to. It was my thing, one that no one else could understand besides

The day drug on and I really do not remember much if any of it.

All I know is that I had a paper due the next day and needed to focus on it. I just could not bring myself to work. I ended

up talking to friends and ignoring what was in my mind for now because we had no idea if my mom would come home that night. My dad kept calling to see if we heard

anything from mom. The answer was always no. He went to visit her and found out that she had to stay for more tests and that the heart doctor figured nothing out that day. My dad then sent me to take up her clothes

and stuff for the next day. My little brother went with me. We found our way to her room and she looked so weak and unlike herself. I knew right than that I would never want to

see my mother like that again. My little brother sat in the corner while

we talked for a few minutes. I couldn't take it anymore I had to get out of the room. After attempting to work on my homework,

around 11 p.m. I called Travis again to talk and to get my mind off of my mom. It worked. I got to school late and wandered through

the day like nothing was wrong. I went home to another night of not knowing anything.

My dad was gone and I remember calling, asking where he was and if mom was with him. The answer I got made me so happy. My mom was coming home.

I knew God's will would be done, but I didn't want it to be bad and God granted me that hope.

We still do not know what is wrong with my mom, but I know I can yell at, talk, or cry to God no matter what.

It also taught who I can turn to no matter what happens and that my friends, God and my family are amazing.

Central.Journalism E-MAIL 124 N. 20th St. Omaha, NE 68102 MAIL 402.557.3357 402.557.3339 FAX

Mark Arehart (10)

# Winter traditions keep family close

NOT GONNA LIE TO YOU

Even though I have hay fever and aldn't stop itching, the hay bails re always the best part.

Thanksgiving vacation with my nily always seemed kind of Norman ockwell, but the day after is unique

Thursday, Thanksgiving day, my andparents,

and I at the dining m table with dles and a turkey with and uffing

A Column by Molly Mullen Friday, my parents, sister and I all to Santa's Woods tree farm out in

We drive for 45 minutes out to this ttle farm. We pass the reindeer cages nd the cabin. We are first greeted by ne woman in the parking lot with the indeer puppet and are waved into a arking spot.

lair. It looks the same every year.

Whenever I get out of the car, I ange to step in the pot hole full of urky water and freeze my foot off all ternoon. My sister and I run to the ate of the farm and grab large poles sed to measure trees.

We pick up one each, take them both hands, get a running start, dig e pole in the ground and go flying

I can't remember how long we've en doing it, but as long as I can member we play with those poles day. One end is painted red so en someone finds a tree the people rking there can drive by and saw it

I can only imagine how many mes we tricked those guys when ey saw the red poles bobbing up and wn from behind the trees.

While the men cut down the ees, my sister and I run to the giant ay bails across the farm and play make elieve. I don't remember doing this when I was younger so I think it is a ewer tradition. One of us always ends p falling through the cracks between ails, getting itchy and scratchy.

sually me. I have bad hay fever and I she adds to every year. tch for days afterwards.

We go inside and drink hot hocolate that is way too hot and spill alf it walking up the stairs to look t the kids making stupid ornaments with crayons and construction paper.

Every year someone gets to choose the tree. I have cheated my way into getting my tree nearly every

I always want the Charlie-Brownlooking tree. The uneven, half-dead, small gangly one that no one wants to

> I always tell them that's the one I want and they laugh and walk by. I follow elling them how ttached I am to t and how I've named it already. I sound like a kid at the pound

attached to a puppy. Last year I picked a short fat tree that my parents hated. It had nettles that droop instead of hold ornaments. I named it Emilio and had my sister take my photo hugging it to show my parents how much I loved it.

It worked and we took it home. I think out of all the trees I pick out most of them fall down in the middle of the night and break some ornaments because they are so lopsided.

We took Emilio home and set it up, adding ornaments and multicolored lights. Each person puts up the ornaments that belong to them. Every year my sister has more than me and I have less and less. Mine always seem to break. My parents let me put on some of theirs so we can all finish at the same time.

I think my sister is just claiming all the ornaments that don't have a name on them as hers.

My parents tried to put it in the corner of the room so the giant gap in the back-side was more concealed.

My mom put her angel on top she made ten years ago while "The Chipmunk's Christmas" and "Manheim Steamroller" played in the background.

Then she went up and got all the Christmas decorations from the closet. They aren't the gaudy type like those giant light-up Santas and sleighs people put in their yards.

Most of them are homemade. Since I have all the bad luck, it's Like my mother's door wreaths that

The one that primarily goes on the front door is the sock reindeer wreath. It's an old ratty sock with a red ball glued to the nose and googley

It looks very arts and crafts.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LAUREN CRIST/REGISTER

### **Holiday shopping out of control**

**EDITORIAL** 

The OPINION of

the Register staff

A whopping \$176 billion will be spent this winter on Cheech and Darth Vader. holiday gifts, according to recent estimates from a credit card

OHNU

And that's only the teenagers.

A conservative average for Christmas shoppers is a \$100

Buying presents for Christmas and Hanukkah and all the other holidays has gotten completely out of hand.

At Central alone over 50 percent of people polled said they spend more than \$100 every holiday season, many saying they spend a lot more.

The holidays have become way too commercial, but that's not the issue.

It's fun to buy and receive gifts from friends and family, but it is almost ridiculous spending \$25-\$50 on every present.

Generation Y has the most money for any young generation. Marketers and big businesses recognize the fact that teens have more money than ever before and unlike many adults don't plan on saving it or investing it in the stock mar-

Nearly everything is marketed to students. Even some car commercials blatantly advertise to the youngest audiences hoping that they can manipulate their parents into buying a brand new Hummer for their 16th birthday.

And its working. Sales are going up, especially during the

Everyone gets conned into all the early morning specials the day after Thanksgiving. Target even gave free famous character wake up calls for their two-day sale from people like

They are doing everything to get teens out and buy. Students flocked to the stores in herds to get all their shopping done for the sale.

They think they're saving money with these sales and when they walk out of Westroads with a \$400 receipt they feel somehow accomplished.

> It is a disgusting amount that people are spending, especially in the

> During the Christmas season the rate of shoplifting goes up so after those two days of supposed sales, the prices are jacked to make up for all the

stolen stuff and the majority of the country pays amazing amounts until February.

The entire idea of making gifts must have died for most of this generation after making Christmas cards out of construction paper did in the second grade, because it seems that most people just go out and blow their paycheck in 20 minutes at Village Point instead of using the money on anything meaningful.

The hottest gift this holiday season is gift cards. That is the worst gift anyone can dream of.

It is a quick way to give money, but it has no thought and no meaning. It is so easy to spend loads of money these days and especially with the Internet and Ebay, every single present is at the majority of the population's fingertips.

Spending is out of control for teenagers with all the manipulation of the business world. Teens can do better.

Think before you buy. Put your money to better use.

STUDENT POLL

Do you play casino games (poker, craps etc.) during

the school day (free periods or during class)?

# REGISTER YOUR OPINION Do you think downtown businesses should restrict teenagers?

"I think they should only let a certain number of teenagers in. They shouldn't ban them."

Jamar Triplett (12)



"No, because all teens aren't the same."

Dekaye Stanfield (11)



"No. It should depend on how good or bad you are." Jessika Williams (9)



"Yeah, but I think they should be able to get a second chance."

Chaz Walters (9)



"It should depend on the age group and how mature the person is."

Deontae Williams (9)



"No, because they're denying service."

Trisha Latenser (11)

### LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES, POLLS, CARTOONS

#### **5.0 scale harms GPA**

When I was a freshman, I took Honors U.S. History. This put me on the 5.0 scale for GPA. Because of this I have ad to take mostly honors and AP classes even though realisically my GPA could only be a 3.4. I know many colleges cut off the GPA after 4.0. I think somebody should have told me reshman year about the 5.0 scale.

Tommi Lee Ripton (11)

### School food needs to be changed

Central needs Burger King. Today I sold my meatball dwich for a \$1. I didn't like it, so I sold it. I think Central stead of remodeling the school, should add a Burger King. Justin Henke (9)

### Courtesy not shown at 'C'

I don't understand what people don't get. You do not and where you please, then get an attitude when you get ked nicely to move. And there's so many people standng by the "C" that it's making other people late. It's called ommon courtesy, so move.

Alisha Lamb (12)

### Off-campus lunch preferred

Dear Editor,

I want to know why we can't go off campus for lunch. ome people don't like school lunch and would rather eat at Burger King or Subway. Other high schools get to eat off campus, so why can't we?

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR WANTED

Letters to the editor are gladly accepted in room 030, via e-mail to Central Journalism@OPS.org or can be placed in Mr. Deabler's mailbox in the main office Letters must be factual and contain the author's full name and grade. Incorrect or unsigned letters will not be printed. The use of pen names is not allowed.

#### **Restrictions on downtown needless**

Dear Editor,

I think it's very stupid to put restrictions on how many students can come into downtown businesses. I don't think it should matter. They are bringing them business so why be picky on how you get money? Do they think all kids are troublemakers?

Paul Clechomski (10)

### Stadium name should be considered

Dear Editor,

I think that the stadium should be called The Eagle's Nest. I mean, it's only appropriate, since we're the Central Eagles. I'm sure others share my opinion.

STUDENT POLL Do you spend over \$100 for holiday gifts? YES NO 45% DODAMAR

256 polled

### Portables should be gone

YES

48%

52% NO

Portables, that God-awful word. I hear it and cringe. I think they are a very stupid idea because we have to go outside through the rain, snow, hail, etc. I think they should have done more construction over the summer rather than making us go through that.

Allison Denton (11)

#### Money could be used better

I think the addition of air conditioning to our school was nice, but not needed. The money could have been put to better use, like remodeled restrooms, new carpet in the classrooms, and maybe even laptop computers for every student.

They tried so hard that Jones ended up in

It was so out of left field and didn't seem to fi

It was supposedly the funniest part of the mon

It isn't like the story line exactly sparked;

Jones is in love with a rich guy, but thinks

She spends the next hour and a half trying to

Asian prison on drug smuggling charges.

but it made the plot unnecessarily dramatic.

# Second 'Bridget Jones' offers only old laughs, disconnected plot



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIRIMAX PICTURES

Renee Zellweger returns in a repetitive sequel of "Bridget Jones' Diary."

BY MOLLY MULLEN

"Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason" was even worse than "Bridget Jones' Diary," and considering the first movie wasn't worth seeing, this film was

The jokes weren't even new. The show opens with Renee Zellweger who plays Jones standing in an airplane.

The scene ends with her flashing her backside to the camera.

This is the exact same shtick as the first movie when she slid down the fire pole giving the video camera a view up her

Why pay the ridiculous price for a ticket to see the same movie twice? It wasn't funny or edgy the first time and it wasn't funny or edgy the second.

"The Edge of Reason" takes place four weeks after the first film, but short of a new location it is the same middle-aged fat girl who complains about love

and getting older.

**MOVIE REVIEW** 

BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF

REASON'

Starring: Renee Zelweger

shocking.

The tag line is "Same Bridget, new diary." They don't even try to hide the fact there is nothing new to

the movie other than a new journal. Who cares? Why sit for two hours to hear

It almost seemed like the writers ran out of all

material for the first film and were trying way too

someone more annoying and depressing than people in real life?

The only interesting part of the film is the

Although it follows the same formula as "Bridget Jones' Diary" in having a

him back and moping around her apartment eat Ben and Jerry's because she's depressed for leav twisted ending, it still is

Not only is this an exact replica of the first more Still, the last two minutes can't save the first hour but it is copying every chick flick made in the past

hard to find a new angle.

all with the rest of the movie.

philosophical questioning.

cheating and dumps him.

The only decent quality of the movie was



J.M. Barrie (Johnny Depp) meets the family that eventually becomes the characters in "Peter Pan."

MOVIE REVIEW

'FINDING NEVERLAND' Starring: Jonny Depp

### Depp offers insight, truth to fairy tales

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Anyone who wants to dislike Johnny Depp because of the fad he's created since "Pirates of the Caribbean will fail to hate him playing creator of "Peter Pan."

"Finding Neverland" is more magical than the play it depicts. It is amazing enough to make the entire audience cry.

The drama and sad parts don't come form the actual plot and dialogue, but the characters.

Depp portrays J.M. Barrie. He is a playwright with an imagination that everyone in the film and watching it

Barrie is seen on of those silent geniuses that find a way to be happy when everyone at the time was surrounded by sadness.

The movie has a constant childlike

There are plenty of dramatic parts in it to turn the film into a biography rather than a story. There is death, illness and the suggestion that Barrie's imagination took him in the direction of Oscar Wilde.

"Finding Neverland" was the first charming and unique film to come out of Hollywood in a long time.

It is definitely worth seeing twice. Go once to watch the movie for the story and go again to examine the character. It seems like two different movies.



The engineer of the "Polar Express" nearly falls off when the train skids off the track on ice. This was only one of the animated action scenes.

# **New film mirrors classic book**

**MOVIE REVIEW** 

**'POLAR EXPRESS'** 

Starring: Tom Hanks

BY ANDREW REINWALD

Imagine waking up Christmas morning and realizing all of your dreams have come true. This is the reality for the main character of "Polar Express."

It will not disappoint the fans of the popular Christmas book by Chris Van Allsburg. Aided by spectacular special effects, an excellent plot line and a wonderful

cast this movie truly captures the real emotion of Christmas. The adventure begins on Christmas Eve when the main character, played by

Tom Hanks struggles to re-ignite his belief in Santa Claus. After he realizes that there would be many physical limitations to Santa if he

existed, he almost decided that Santa is not real. And as he lies down in bed, disappointed with the whole notion of a Santa a huge steam engine pulls in front of his house.

before him and before long he meets the persnickety train conductor, also played by Tom Hanks. Hank's voice matches the conductor character so well, it's

The main character is unaware of the great adventure

almost perfect. Hanks does very well in all the roles he plays in Soon enough the main character finds himself in trouble,

but that doesn't matter because the danger factor in this movie is only an illusion; you can even sense during the movie that no one will actually

There's always a feeling of security, you know that nothing bad will really Maybe that's a good thing, this movie is aimed at younger children, but it's

enjoyable for the entire family, not just one age group. Throughout this entire escapade, the main character finds new friends,

voiced by Jimmy Bennett, Eddie Dreezen and Nona M. Gaye. After passing through all the perils of the Arctic Circle, frozen lakes, caribou etc, Sabara's character and his friends find themselves on the way to the North

Through this whole movie you will be amazed at the beauty of the special effects, many times you will forget that the movie is entirely computer animated. The train, the mountains, the children, everything looks very realistic.

According to The Polar Express official web site, the production staff

tried as hard as they could to make the scenery like Van Allsburg's oil painting

Most of this movie was created by a process known as motion capture in which an actor's live performance is captured digitally by special computerized

The actor basically becomes a human blueprint for creating virtual The Polar Express is the first film to be entirely shot in motion capture. This

technique has been used in other movies such as Forrest Gump. One of the most enjoyable scenes in the movie is when the singing waiters

are pouring hot chocolate for the children and doing dance routines at the same

The whimsy of this movie will make any child and many adults fall in love

The sound track is remarkable, making the movie flow

No matter what part of this movie you see, you will be able to tell that this is a story about Christmas.

The music in The Polar Express evokes feeling from the very beginning even until the end. Everything about this movie is inherently Christmas, right

down to the musical score. In fact, the only problem with this movie is that it can be very child-oriented

Some of the scenes including the main character and his friends almost

seem mechanical they are so picturesque. To some people the characters seem to have an inhuman "shine." But

besides some of the cheesiness, this is a great family movie without question. Kids will enjoy this movie; some of the movie's comic relief is aimed toward children. This is one of those movies that everyone can enjoy; it doesn't matter

Good Christmas movies like this are rare. Many Christmas movies fall short of what they actually intend to portray, relying on cliché and outdated themes.

The new style of animation and colorful casting made "Polar Express" one of the rare instances where the movie was much better than the book it

This is the best Christmas movie of the year.

Colin Farrell plays Alexander Great in this all-star laden mov

MOVIE REVIEW



Starring: Colin Farrell

### Action makes 'Alexander' ..." this year's epigne

BY MALISA MILITZER

Not only did the Macedonia conquer hundreds of people dur the sweep across Eurasia, but now the are conquering the box offices acr the States. Nothing could compare the spectacular history of the Gr Alexander the Great.

The newest action "Alexander," written by Oliver St and Christopher Kyle, is the narrated by Ptolmey played by Anthony Hopkins, of the life. and death of Alexander the Great history-lovers everywhere it serve

three hours of ultimate awe. Ireland's finest male star, C Farrell, played the lead role Alexander magnificently. He ne missed a chance to show the pow of the emotions Alexander felt, bo before and during his time as king a emperor of Rome.

By watching the movie, one gat respect for the real heroes portray by the actors. There is a huge amou of sadness, happiness, lust, love a anger pressed into the viewer.

The movie and the plot in whi it was based on was truly moving a definitely worth seeing many tim after and again.

### Central High Alumni

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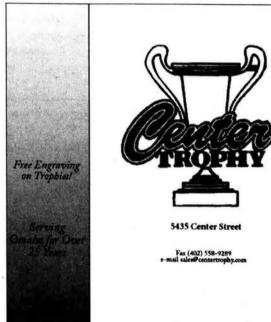
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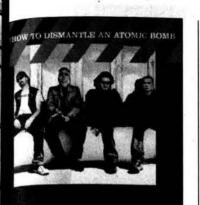
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THE REGISTER



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**ALBUM REVIEW** 

HOW TO DISMANTLE AN **ATOMIC BOMB'** By: U2

eati eavi

### 2's new album nixes love with lassic sounds

BY CLAY LOMNETH

For those who doubt U2 still has ability to still put out a great album all these years, "How to Dismantle Atomic Bomb" should shatter all

The album is classic U2 style. The gs are about peace, love and faith, as

One would think U2 would run out deas on these subjects, but the new ord proves it won't anytime soon.

For longtime U2 fans, "How to mantle an Atomic Bomb" is not a or leap in a new direction. U2 has jously found the formula for an ellent album, and it stuck to it.

The songs are touching and sad at es, other times rocking and uplifting. first single from this album was tigo," an incredibly catchy song that are to become one of their classics, ed on the radio years from now.

The album may disappoint if the er is expecting an album of songs like "Vertigo."

After that first track, the rest of album calms down a bit, and the ver songs carry the album the rest he way.

The very last song, "Yahweh" is a ect ending of an incredible album. With lyrics such as "dark before n" and "pain before a child born", song is uplifting and leaves the ner with an urge either to listen the album again or find another U2 m. Nothing can top U2 except for

"How to Dismantle an Atomic mb" shows U2 can still put out a at album these days, one of the very bands that still have the ability to do

It has the ability to sell millions of ords and fill seats at concerts, and the songs U2 puts out every single e, its abilities make it obvious why.

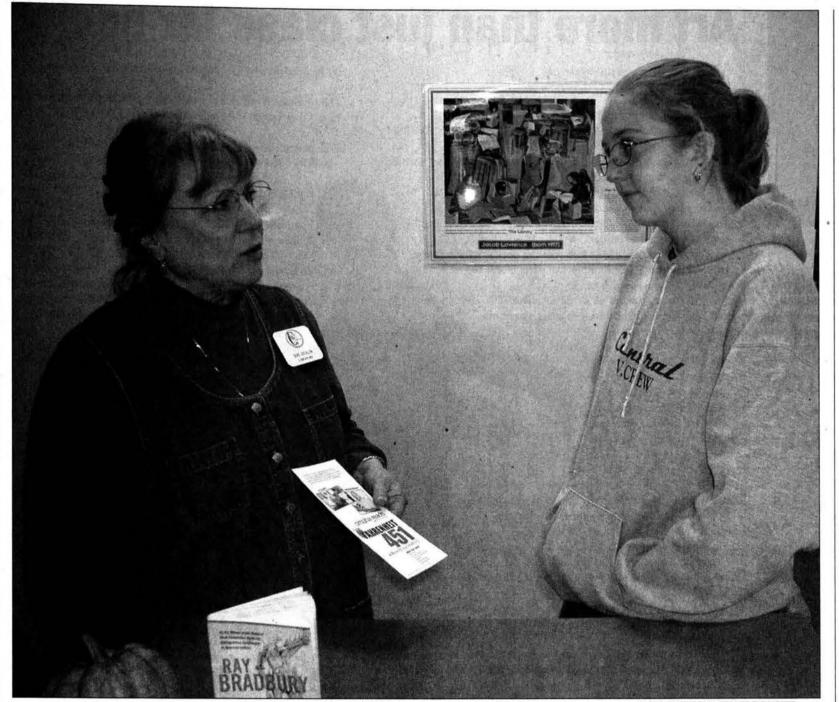


PHOTO BY TARRYN KELLER/REGISTER

Librarian Sue Deviln (left) explains to senior Amanda Stastny the effort to get everyone in the city to read Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451."

# 'Fahrenheit' gets big CHS reaction

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Junior Navonna Johnson said a world without books and banned knowledge isn't impossible with the lack of students who read outside of school.

In the book "Fahrenheit 451" the author Ray Bradbury envisioned such a world.

The Omaha Public Library began in effort in October to try and get as 451" she said. many Omahans as possible to read and discuss the book.

Johnson said it is important book to read.

"It has a good lesson and good morals," she said.

She said whether or not people like reading outside of school, there is always a book that everyone can enjoy.

"It just goes to show that books are really a big part of America," she said. Johnson said it really stressed the importance of reading and thinking for

"I really liked it. It was just different than a lot of books," she said.

Johnson said she passed on her copy to a friend and would like to see other students reading it. CHS librarian and book club sponsor Sue Devlin said all but one copy of the book was checked out.

"I bought five or six for the event," Devlin said.

She not only members of book club are reading it, but English teachers who bring classes to the library have students check it out.

"I think people enjoy it because it's so much like today," she said. She said people draw analogies from the book to find its importance in

**MUSIC FOR THE MIND** 

A Column by Yasmine Nuwwarah

today's society. She said the "Fahrenheit 451" program has encourage more people to read

and is helping the problem of low readership. Peggy Freislinger, the community relations manager from Barnes and

Nobles bookstore, said it is completely sold out of copies of the book. She said there has been a positive response to the book.

She had the books out on display and had posters advertising Ray Bradbury since October, but had to take the book off display since they are temporarily sold out.

"We'll be keeping it (the posters) up as long as Omaha is reading "Fahrenheit

She said Barnes and Nobles has also been sponsoring group discussions at their Oak View and Crossroads Mall locations.

"We have are holding teen and adult events," Freislinger said.

She said librarians held a book discussion for teens. Linda Trout, the special projects coordinator form Omaha Public Libraries, said there has been a wide variety of responses to the book.

"Some read it and disliked it," Trout said. "We also had a lot of people who thought we were pushing the film 'Fahrenheit 9/11'."

She said a lot of people liked the book as well as the discussions and special events such as the celebration of Ray Bradbury's birthday and World War II prisoners of war.

"The book is important," she said. "The whole concept of not having books and new ideas presented to us shows the importance of them."

She said the idea of getting an entire city to read one book started in 1998 in Washington and since then over 200 cities have joined the effort.

She said Omaha decided to read "Fahrenheit 451" by voting.

"We asked the public to submit recommendations, and then a committee chose six out of 120," Trout said. "Around 2,000 people voted and chose this

She said this spring all libraries in Nebraska will join together to try and get the entire state to read "My Antonia."

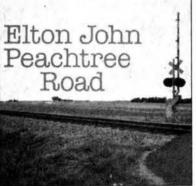


PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL RECORDS

**ALBUM REVIEW** 

'PEACHTREE ROAD' By: Elton John

### 'Peachtree Road' fails to compare to old EJ styles

BY MOLLY MULLEN

It is difficult to finish listening to Elton John's new album, "Peachtree Road" because it nearly ruins the image of the old Elton.

There isn't a single rock and roll song. He doesn't take any chances

The only difference between songs are the lyrics and he didn't even write them. If anyone expects to hear a hit off this album, they will be let down.

The piano in the first three songs sounds similar to his stuff from the It starts out with an almost trickling

sound and then he pounds on the keys to turn the feeling of the song before he starts to sing. Although it sounds a little like his

old stuff, it isn't remotely like "Tiny Dancer" or "Daniel." The music sounded like the few songs that were on the album "Goodbye

Yellow Brick Road" that no one ever listened to and never materialized into Although the piano was obviously

well played and sounded like classic Elton, he definitely seemed to play it safe with each song, like it was formulated.

All the songs started the same. He may have changed keys or tempo, but they had that light rock sound he had been falling into since the '80s. All the time anyone listens to this they will be begging for him to bring back some of his old rock and roll.

The energetic sound of "Crocodile Rock" will be missed when every single one of 12 songs has the same drab sounds

The only change he did seem to take is producing his own album. It didn't seem to do him much good because there was very little publicity

There's a good reason not many people have heard that Elton John has a new album out.

# Violent video games steal hours from student's daily life

As the words "Game Over" flash across the screen, I snap out of my trance. it, it was just a game?

Video games have been marveled at as far back as the release of the first arcade ne, "Pong" in 1958. From Atari to Sega to Nintendo to

ystation, it is clear video games have been and are to this a dominant element of entertainment in society. With many consoles and the subcategory of video games to ose from, it is hard to believe boredom still exists.

I received my first console, a Nintendo Entertainment tem (NES), at the age of six. I remember playing it for the time and thinking I was a god with the supreme power ontrol the movements on the television screen.

I was immediately addicted. I would spend hours in upor in front of the television, pounding away at the tons on the controllers. Passing the video game section at the store, I would ctically drool as I walked by.

The joy of video games is mainly from the wide range of game play one find. There's fighting games, role-playing games (RPGs), shooters, action/

adventure games, and puzzle games. There is such a variety that if one game gets old, it's so simple to find a completely different game to play.

My favorite game is probably "Perfect Dark" on the Nintendo 64. First person shooters have a certain attraction for me. Maybe it's the fact that I get to kill hundreds of people with no repercussions in real life, but then that's part of the fun in any video game.

> For the time you play video games, you get the infinitely entertaining opportunity to be a vampire or a boy chosen to save the world or a plumber fighting Satan reincarnated as a turtle

Not to mention if you find a really good game, you can spend plenty of time playing it after you've beaten it, maybe restarting and beating it all over again. Take for example, "Perfect Dark," a game in which every level has a piece of cheese hidden somewhere for you to find, which, needless to say, can take up a lot of time if you're

motivated enough. There are always the video games that provoke a few laughs as well. It is pretty funny when you spend half an hour looking for holey cheese in a video game only

to find it was in the second stall toilet the whole time.

Then there's "Cats," the horribly translated Japanese game and a classic inside joke for gamers. The conversations are hilariously incomprehensible, with characters saying things like, "someone set up us the bomb" and "all your base are

One of the first video games I owned was "Mario is Missing," a video game in which Mario's brother, Luigi, visits cities all across the world in search of Mario. In each city, the player has to learn about famous sites and artifacts in the city, such as the Bolshoi Ballet Theater in Moscow or the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City.

Granted, there are a fair number of "mature" games, if you will, like the Grand Theft Auto series which is probably not the kind of game you want to be giving your 10 year old for Christmas. However, with the number of games out there, you could play for more than five years and never run across anything that might be deemed inappropriate.

Gaming is not limited to consoles, however. Arcades attract plenty of nerds and other socially inept characters like myself. So while my brain is rotting on caffeine at the arcade, I can take comfort in the fact that I am making friends, which is yet another positive aspect of video games.

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**PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER** 

Them movie freshman Zacary Cutler worked on won an award from Wrigley's after-school program.

### Freshman wins award for film

BY DEDE HEARITY

Freshman Zachary Cutler was honored last month in Chicago for a movie "Going Down to Neverland" that he worked on as part of the Omaha Crew.

Although Samantha Tsuji received the Winter Fresh After School Program Award, Cutler got a personal award for his work with editing, boom and audio.

He got involved with the competition because of an after-school program he participated with this summer. The movie won by just five votes.

He said when he and his mother found out she took pictures and they started celebrating.

"She (his mom) was very proud," Cutler said. He said the movie was about a woman who died in a plane crash and had to choose between heaven and hell.

No one else from Central was included in the filming process, but Cutler did not go at it alone. He was part of a crew of eight other people.

In the crew, Tsuji came up with the plot and idea of the movie made through the Dreaming Tree Film Company. Cutler said the reason the main character was a woman

was because it was more emotional with a woman. "All the men who tried out didn't do as well," Cutler said.

Cutler was sent to Chicago to receive his award. "It was wonderful, four days partying," he said.

While in Chicago "Going Down to Neverland" was played on a big screen.

Cutler and his friend have been discussing ideas for the He said he really enjoyed making movies, but wasn't

sure if he wanted to pursue a career in film.

# Art more than just class for senior

BY JOANNA LEFLORE

She sings, she dances, she paints and she has even started a book

Senior Anna Vacha has accomplished a lot during her high school

career, but painting is her main area of focus right now. Vacha has been a part of many Central activities. They include CHS Singers, leading the school play for 2002 and A Capella.

She takes Advanced Placement Studio Art at Central and her teacher Larry Andrews said she was a very advanced student. "She is a strong painter," Andrews said. "She has a good

sense of color and technique." Vacha said she had been into painting since she was a young girl. Her parents influenced her five siblings and her to be

creative when they were younger. "My parents didn't allow us to watch TV" she

said. "We were either painting, playing games or creating our own stories."

Vacha said watching television was not a choice for her. She said she used to rebel against it as she got older, but later learned she does not watch television because there are not a lot of good morals that come from it.

Vacha said she has been heavily into painting for the past year. She said ever since she participated in the Marie Walsh Sharpe Seminar, her outlook on painting had changed. The seminar was held in Colorado Springs, CO.

Andrews said it was a high honor to be chosen as one of the 60 teens in the nation to participate in the seminar. Vacha said she was the only person from

"I used to be so worried about planning a painting," Vacha said. "But being at the seminar taught me to just

Her instructor at the seminar was Susan Ocaffrey, an art teacher at Chicago Art Institute. She was a big influence to her,

"She was very out spoken," she said. "She motivated me a lot."

Vacha said she had a great time getting to know the other students from across the country. She said a lot of people stereotype artists.

She said some people think all artists act the same.

"They say that all artists dress the same and they all think the same," Vacha said. "But I don't think that's true."

Her biggest influence in her life was her aunt. Vacha said her aunt acted and danced on Broadway and now was a voice teacher at Columbia University.

If Vacha was not painting, she was singing or dancing. She participated in productions with the Omaha Theater Company for

Vacha said she participated in the annual production of "The Nutcracker" for three years. She began taking classes at age 12, but lately it was becoming too

much. She said it was something fun for her to do, but it took up a lot

Her favorite part was seeing the experienced dancers put on the

"The best part is watching the professionals dance," Vacha said. "I wonder if they can do the hardest turns and twirls that we learn to

Vacha played the roles of an Arabian dancer, snow beauty and a maid for "The Nutcracker."

Vacha also sings for CHS Singers and A Capella here at CHS. Last year she tried out for the Weselayn Honors Choir which is a very high honor. She made the auditions for the choir and made her voice lessons instructor Sharon Smith very appreciative of her accomplishment.

"Things really went right for her that day," Smith

said. "She did her excerpts perfectly." Smith said she was really surprised that Vacha made the choir because most students who make it were qualified for the All-State choir. Those made All-State were usually the ones who made Wesleyan's Honor Choir. Vacha had not tried out for All-State last year, but she still made the auditions.

Vacha also has many other projects currently in progress. She said she taught herself to play the piano and the guitar. She also writes songs in her spare time.

Her goal for the holidays is to complete her short children's book that she started two years ago. She has already sent it into a few book publishing companies. Two replied to her attempt and gave her advice on what to do better.

> Vacha said she plans to work on the book more during winter break. She is doing all the illustrations for the book her self.

In February, the Nebraska Scholastic Art Awards will be held and Vacha may have four or five entries into the competition, Andrews said. He said it is not easy to get entries into this preliminary

She has received numerous awards for participating in the Nebraska Scholastic Art Awards. She earned one gold key, two silver keys and two honorable mentions in the past three years.

She also received a "Best Artist" award from Marian High School (where she attended her freshman year).

She also was honored for dancing and artistic skills when she received a Nebraska Young Artist Award her junior year.

Recognizing all of the activities she does, Vacha said she had always been a busy type of girl.

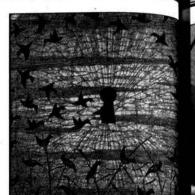
"I balance things by planning," Vacha said. "But I've been busy since I was in the 7th grade. My whole family is always doing

Although Vacha participated in many activities, she said painting was her main passion right now. She said she has been frustrated for the past two months with

trying to balance painting into her schedule. "Art is just something she has to do," Andrews said. "If a day goes

by and she can't paint, it frustrates her. Art is like breathing for her."

PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER In addition to dance, senior Anna Vacha paints, sings and writes.





'Key' By: Son, Ambulance

### Indie CD fail Saddle Creek

BY ANDREW REINWALD

The fans of the popular lo Indie band, Son, Ambulance will disappointed with its latest albu "Key." Mediocre guitar rifts coun with absolutely mind-numbing lyn Son, Ambulance fails to impress.

With songs that aim to be an and lyrics that try to be tragical hypocritical, "Key" just ends sounding whiny and makes the listen want something that isn't so vague a tedious.

On Son, Ambulance's sub p vocals are Joe Knapp and Erica Peterse who also plays bass, with Corey Brow on drums, Daniel Knapp on piano a Dylan Strimple on lead guitar.

Even with the popular sin Connor Oberst's help with with some of the lyrics, Son, Ambula tends to be continually lackluster.

Although at the beginning so songs start out strong, when Kn starts singing it all goes downhill fi there. Some of the songs would even bearable if they weren't so indifferen

But despite the uninspiring guit playing and singing, Daniel Kna shines through, even after having play the same measures of music aga again and again.

Perhaps what he plays lends to monotony of this CD, but at least the are a few people in this band who kno how to use their instruments.

# 'Closer' confuses audience with lack of resolution to sad story



**PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIA TRISTAR** 

Julia Roberts (left) and Jude law share their first kiss and biggest mistake in the film. It would eventually leave both characters miserable and lonely.

BY MOLLY MULLEN

This was not the regular chick flick love story. Do not see this with your mother and expect a tear jerker.

"Closer" takes its well-known cast of Jude Lay, Natalie Portman and Julia Roberts out of their regular films like "Alfie" and "Anywhere but Here" and throws them together in a film just short of pornography.

It has a terrible plot. Two people meet and fall in love. He finds another girl. The better half of the film revolved around jealousy and revenge.

Portman's role entailed her playing a stripper in an uncut, steamy scene at a nightclub. It went on for far too long. Sitting with someone else or sitting alone one is bound to get uncomfortable seeing the innocent actress in next to nothing.

It almost seems wrong to take the teenage star of the new "Star Wars" trilogy seriously as a seductive stripper.

The language and drama makes any teen who sits through this film hope that it was not based on real life events. The vulgarity and graphic descriptions of everyone's love life plus the breakups and problems make every adult seem like a lonely mess.

Every actor did an amazing job. Roberts played the quiet artistic genius that every man wanted but only one could have. She played it well, acting her age yet still edgy.

Law played the run-of-the-mill womanizer people have grown familiar with ever since the 2004 remake of "Alfie." He played it well. Every scene he minimized his dialogue and went completely off of body language, particularly his eyes.

The way he stared at the woman he supposedly loved at the moment told the audience exactly who he really wanted.

One side of law's character that wasn't shown in "Alfie" was his

ability to show emotion. Near the end his character had a break dow His crying scene wasn't that of ordinary Hollywood, where the came zooms in on the lonely lover, silent with a single tear falling down cheek without smudging any makeup.

That isn't real life.

**MOVIE REVIEW** 

Starring: Natalie Portman

In "Closer" he screamed and wept and couldn't breathe. His turned red and his eyes became bloodshot. He didn't look perfect

looked like a mess. It was the best scene in the w

The ending was a complete surprise. That was cause there was no real ending. Half the cast was broken and alone while the other half found a way struggle through a relationship with no love in it. It w

It left no hope for love anywhere. The moral w

"Don't expect love to work unless you intend to lie." Abuse, stripping, strong language and intense drama made t movie over-the-top. It would have almost been more dramatic or east

to sit through had it been more subtle.

It was all about deception. Two couples that are all sexually connected and hide it poot That's it. That's the entire movie.

usual in a movie about love and sex. The men ended up in what seem like a competition to ruin the other's life and take away whatever w an they were with that day.

It seems like the guys were the focus of the film for once. It was

Each man didn't love the woman he was with until she left or stolen away.

Only then did they appreciate her for more than just fun. If one can look past the extremely graphic images in "Closer." acting makes it worth watching.

# head of the Times

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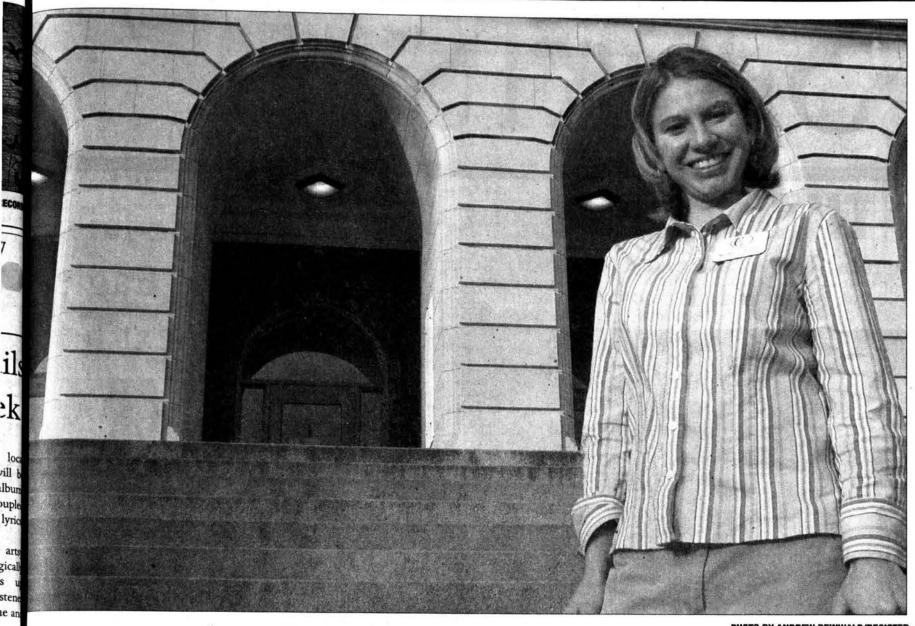
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THE REGISTER

cial studies teacher Michelle Pliess became the new girls varsity soccer coach. Players say her experience playing soccer helps her coaching.

# ew coach teaches by example

BY ANDREW REINWALD

rill

Honors Geography and sociology teacher Michelle eiss just got some good news. As of Nov. 9, Pleiss was the girls varsity soccer coach. The former varsity coach White resigned from the position to take more time th the club soccer team he coaches.

Pleiss said the application process was fairly simple

I acknowledged to Mr. Pennington that I wanted job, and then I had to talk to Dick Lohmeier, the ad of OPS athletics. From there it was just a bunch of

But Pleiss was no stranger to the game or the mmates. She had been the assistant coach under White three years, and she said knew many of the girls since shman and sophomore year, and work

"I've played it for 18 years, and since I was five years I've been drawn to it," she said. "It's a wonderful sport; ry competitive sport in which teamwork is a necessity,"

And many of the players agreed that Pleiss was the person for the job. Last year's varsity captain, senior sa Berzins, said even as assistant coach she was on a er level with the girls than White was.

"She did really well," she said. "She incorporated her February. Pleiss said she was looking forward to a lot of playing ability in Mr. White's drills. It was nice to see the actual drill and not have him verbalize them."

Pleiss said she believed her energy and knowledge of the game would raise team morale and build unity. Berzins said Pleiss had more playing experience and was much closer to the team than White was. She said when the team was learning the fundamentals, Pleiss was always a lot easier to talk to on a personal level.

"I think I know it (soccer) very well because I've played it for so long and because I love it, I hope to pass my enthusiasm on," Pleiss said.

She said there wasn't going to be many drastic changes between White's and her coaching techniques. Pleiss said that she planned to focus more on improving during the season and having a good time with the team.

She said their practices would be different, but that was to be expected and their fitness techniques would different as well.

"I believe that we might have some different ways of approaching the game, however our goals of achieving success through winning, teamwork and having fun are the same," Pleiss said.

She said she's extremely excited for conditioning and beginning of the soccer season, which begins in late

things, but especially practices, improving fundamentals, games and the state tournament.

"My favorite thing about this upcoming season is being able to work with such a great group of girls," she said.

Berzins and the other teammates said they were looking forward to the season as well, but they were also aware of things that were going to change during the

Junior Jenny Rue said Pleiss was less likely to yell and focus more on playing as a team and trying their best.

"She (Pleiss) knows what she wants and she can do what it takes to get it done," Rue said. "It's very easy to

Both Berzins and Rue said the team setting will be a lot more positive without the fear of being yelled at.

"I think it'll be tough at first because we kind of thought of her as a big sister, and now she'll have to be more disciplined and make tough calls," Berzins said.

Pleiss said she did not want the girls to change their opinions of her, but hoped they would still respect her and understand that she's in a different position and had to make different decisions now.

"I hope they still know it's me," she said.

Basketball

# Girls lose to East in opener

BY TESS MANDELL

He said he was expecting

That is exactly what girls varisty head coach Chad Townsend received in the Eagles'

In the first game of the season, the Eagles struggled on passing, Townsend said.

"Our passing horrendous," Townsend said. "They intercepted pass after

Statistics showed that the Eagles produced 33 turnovers. "Turnovers killed us,"

Townsend said. Central didn't see its first points until Bellevue East was

already up by six. Senior Allison Rutherford hit the first shot for Central about two and a half minutes

into the game. In the first quarter, with the score at 11-4, senior Casey Bigsby committed a foul sending Bellevue East's standout senior Cheville Herring permanently

out of the game with an ankle

injury. Bellevue East's junior Becky Marsh produced a three pointer at about the 4:30 mark in the first to give the Chieftains a dominating 10-point lead.

Central never took the lead, and the chieftains ended the first quarter with a strong 27-13 advantage.

Although Bellevue East outscored Central in every quarter, the Chieftains produced the most points in this first quarter of play.

"It was tough," Townsend said. "They had a lot of weapons, and we didn't help ourselves for some reason.'

sophomore Central's Jasmine Johnson uplifted the Eagles with a three-pointer in the third quarter to make the score 47-31.

Johnson added the final points for Central at 2:25 with a three-pointer. She finished with 16 points (more than 33 percent been preparing for Central's

three three-pointers.

"We knew they were a good team, but we had to play hard," Johnson said.

Townsend said 77-47 loss against Bellevue East team needed to improve on rebounding and passing.

> Bellevue East's head coach Scott Jensen said the key in his team's win was "depth more than anything."

> Chieftain junior Yvonne Turner agreed.

"We worked together as team and slowed them all down." Turner said.

Yvonne Turner said that another key in the team's win was defense and pressure. "We knew that they liked to

run, and we had to play tough," Townsend said. Townsend However,

said Bellevue East did not do anything that suprised them. "With a team that good

and when we give them three or four chances, they're going to score," Townsend said. The Eagles knew Bellevue

East had a good team. "We knew about Yvonne

(Turner) and Cheville (Herring) and that they reached a lot and took passes in the air," sophomore Central Jasmine Johnson said. Townsend said he thought

Johnson, senior Amber Hamilton and junior Brianne Tapley were the key players throughout the

"We also had some young players that had to step in early," Townsend said.

Behind Johnson, senior Anadrian Booker (10 points), senior Brittany Arvin (8 points) and junior Cherylle Leffall (6 points) were the next threepoint leaders.

Unlike Central Turner said the Chieftains concentrated on

"We need to work on our defense more than our offense,"

Jensen said his team had

# Russell, Valentine help boys defeat Chieftains in first game

BY TESS MANDELL

With a 25-point fourth quarter, the varsity boys ketball team clinched a demanding 69-36 home over Bellevue East on Dec. 3.

"We all played as a team for our first game," or forward Derrick Russell said. "And that helped

Russell, who had 18 points and produced 9 unds, said Bellevue East only had one "big man," or Chad Simon.

Head coach Eric Behrens said going into the ne he knew about Simon and senior teammate

The team watched Bellevue East beat Benson the at before Central played them. Behrens said Simon received 23 points from that

"We saw them play Benson," Russell said. "And It we had a good chance to beat them (Bellevue

Behrens said the team had been working hard all ek for the opening game.

"We practiced hard like any other team," Behrens "And at the game, we had to compete and rebound

well and play hard."

Although the Eagles hadn't played a game yet, Bellevue East's head coach Jason Ryan said he knew what he was getting into.

"We knew that Central was extremely talented and one of the best in the state," Ryan said. "We battled and fought hard."

Statistics showed that Bellevue East produced 21 turnovers making it difficult to make any type of

"We just struggled with their (the Eagles') pressure," Ryan said.

Ryan said that Central rebounded very well also. "We're just trying to improve every game and improve every week," Ryan said. "By February, we can be a very good team."

Behrens said that Russell led the team with nine rebounds, and Valentine had 11 assists. "BJ is one of the best in the state," Ryan said.

Behrens said that the game wasn't just about the "The non-scoring stats were the best," he said.

Behrens also acknowledged senior John Skanes and junior Rodney Grace. "They (the Eagles) were very talented, quick and

athletic," Ryan said. "Especially when we turned the ball over that many times."

The Bellevue East Chieftains didn't make their first basket until Central made it to the 10-point

Although the Chieftains tried to catch up, they never got closer than a 3-point deficit after Simon made the score 14-11 with about 10 seconds left in the

However, Valentine hit a 3-point basket when the buzzer sounded to help the Eagles finish out the first

quarter strong 17-11. Central doubled its opponent's points by the second half, and by the end of the third, it led by 14.

Valentine and Behrens said they both agreed that despite the win, the team needed to work on transition defense, taking better shots and talking more on defense.

That's the plan.

"We just need to keep it up and work hard in practice," Russell said. "Working as a team during practice feels like it helped during the game."

He said he hoped to keep up the good work and to continue winning all the way to state this year as a



PHOTO BY TESS MANDELL/REGISTI

Sophomore Ben Kline takes the ball at Central's win over Bellevue East. Central nearly doubled the Chieftains in points.

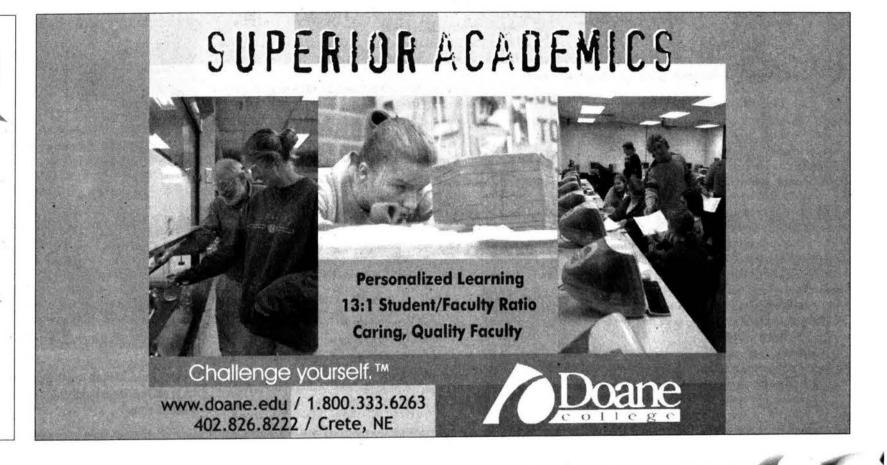
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THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

# IN THE WATER

The swimming and diving team fights to compete with year-round programs. Despite this fact, multiple swimmers qualified for state after the first meet.



Mercy High School freshman Julie Jasnowski takes off for her backstroke during a practice. Jasnowski is a part of Central's swim team because Mercy does not provide one.

### **Swimmers improve times in loss to Millard North**

BY TESS MANDELL

If the swimmers were asked why the Dec. 7 swim meet said. was so difficult, they would all say the same thing: it was Millard

Head Coach Lynne Slobodnik said she realized Millard North was a hard team to beat.

"There's never any way to be ready for Millard North,"

Slobodnik said most of Millard North's swimmers swim year-round whereas many Central swimmers do not.

"Out of Central's 50 swimmers, six of them swim year round," Slobodnik said. "We were prepared for the meet, but we just have no year-round swimmers.

Senior Natalie Shaw, who swam in the 100 freestyle and the 400 relay, said none of the swimmers enjoyed this meet like they

"Millard North is good enough that we all hate this meet,"

Shaw said Central's swim team performed decently, realizing

at it was Millard North

Individually, senior Brittany McClure said she thought she had last year, her and senior Andrew De Lashmutt.

'We now have three individual state qualifiers," McClure Lashmutt finished second.

McClure placed first and qualified for state in the 100 butterfly and 100 breaststroke. She said she achieved a personal best in the 100 butterfly.

"You've got to swim your own race," McClure said. "Don't worry about the competition.'

Slobodnik said in addition to McClure, a couple of other swimmers qualified for state as well: senior Sean McCall in the 50 freestyle and 100 backstroke along with senior Kim Norvell in the 500 freestyle.

Slobodnik said sophomore Sara Hallgren received secondary cuts in the 200 individual medley and 100 butterfly.

Senior Elisa Berzins said in terms of the season so far, the divers have done decently.

"Usually, the first couple weeks are really hard to get back into it," Berzins said. "But the season started out really well."

She said most of the divers who showed up at the beginning

of the year will leave mid season.

She said Central has the same two divers this year as they

"This year, I hope to finish 7th or higher," Berzins said. Although Berzins was striving for the top 10, she said she thought De Lashmutt could easily win it all.

"There's not much for competition," De Lashmutt said. The two Central divers only had three Millard North

competitors, two females and one male. Although Central obviously came out on top, De Lashmutt

said he believed he could do better. "I did all right," De Lashmutt said. "I wouldn't say great."

Judges for the diving part of the meet were Aja Wurth, Steve Guinn and Dan Murphy. Wurth and Guinn were the diving coaches for Omaha Public Schools.

Wurth and Guinn both said this diving meet was more fun

"It's always good to have fun," Wurth said. "Making the

meets fun is more relaxing compared to state." Wurth and Guinn both said they were very pleased with the

way the Central divers performed.

"Drew's inward one and half pike was outstanding, and Elisa is doing a great job of sticking with her dives," Wurth said. Berzins said she finished 13h in state last year and De "Her back one and a half was her top scoring dive."

# Sophomore qualifies for state after season's first meet

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Swimming for around eight years, sophomore Sara Hallgren had a good chance at state because of her fast swim times so far, swimming coach Lynne Slobodnik said.

Hallgren competed in many events, including the 50, 100, 200 and 500 free styles, 100 breastroke and butterfly, 200 individual medley (IM), 200 medley relay and 200 free relay.

Out of all of these, Hallgren said she preferred the 500 freestyle and the 200 IM

She said she thought her fastest time was the 500 freestyle.

"In the past two years I've dropped a total of a minute from my time," she said

In the very first meet on Dec. 7 at Norris, Hallgren placed automatically in state in the 200 medley relay and placed second in 100 butterfly, 200 IM and 200 freestyle relay.

Hallgren said she did not expect to do as well as she did in the first meet, but was pleased she did

Swimming coach Lynne Slobodnik said she was pleased with how the teams swimmers did on their first meet. She said several swimmers qualified for

"Today we did really well," she

got her best times yet, and said she had a really good chance at state.

"By the time we get to state, she'll do great," she said.

Hallgren was on the swim team last year, and Slobodnik said she was looking forward to having Hallgren on the following years.

"She's one of our up-and-coming (swimmers)," Slobodnik said.

As for what Hallgren can improve on, Slobodnik said she had already improved since last year, but could always do better.

"She can improve anywhere," she

Hallgren said at one point her parents considered sending her to Marian for their good swimming team. She said there most likely was not a chance of her going there now.

"I'm doing well at Central now," As for Hallgren, Slobodnik said she she said. "I don't think there's a point of moving."

She said she hoped to have a chance at state, especially for individual events. Right now, she said she said she needed to improve her 100 butterfly times.

She said she would do this by practicing more and pushing herself

"I could improve on anything," she



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Sophomore Sara Hallgren rests after a lap in the pool. In the first meet of the year, Hallgren swam her best times in her four events, and placed automatically in state in one of them.

### Captain practices, prepares all year for metro swim competition

BY MOLLY MULLEN

He said he acts as if every practice is the state competition. Senior Sean McCall is the fastest swimmer on the team, going to state last year and hoping to better this season. "I sprint every practice. Even if it is not a race," McCall

said. "The more you sprint, the easier it is to get up to speed." He said he's been swimming since 7th grade because his parents wanted him to do extra curricular activities. He chose it

because he couldn't run very fast and wasn't good at basketball, so swimming seemed like a good sport to get involved in. McCall said to prepare for state and metro, where he didn't place last year, and to improve his times this season he

does more work outside of practice. "I do a little more workout stuff like I go home and lift

weights," McCall said. "I'm stronger than I was last year." He said because he is stronger it was easy to match and beat his times from last year

Swimming coach Lynne Slobodnik said what helped McCall was the fact that he swims all year. In the off-season he works with another team.

McCall also attends all the practices during the week. He goes in the morning before school at 5 a.m. and after school. "He gives his all in everything we do," Slobodnik said.

She said he has a good attitude towards swimming and

never complains at practice.

Slobodnik said he won many invitational last year and thinks he will succeed more this year both at individual competitions and at state.

"He shows leadership," she said. "We use him as an example to show the correct stroke to freshmen and sophomores." Slobodnik said McCall would even help the junior high

students who also practice at Norris Middle School. She said unfortunately McCall doesn't have plans to swim after high school. He plans on taking difficult classes in college

and doesn't think he will have the time. "It's really too bad," she said. "He could be a great college

swimmer.' Slobodnik said the University of Minnesota and University

of Nebraska at Lincoln had good swim teams. Junior Ian Danielson said McCall exemplified good leadership skills because he did everything so well and worked

"He's good and he's not afraid to say it," Danielson said. He said McCall is best at the 50 freestyle and has already qualified for state with his time after only one meet.

"That's the hardest to qualify for," Danielson said. "Most people try for it and the time is low."

He said McCall helped him work on his 50 freestyle. "He really is the captain of the team," he said.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior Sean McCall leans over the water on the starting block at practice. He qualified for state in the 50 freestyle and 100

# Hype fails t take Eagles to next level



A Column by Tess Mandell

Just so no feelings are hurt, Central is ag school. I love Central.

Now for the truth.

Central's athletics tend to get overral Don't shoot me, but it's the truth, and the to

We can be placed so high in the rankings be so widely recognized, but it doesn't change fact that we never seem to place anymore.

It's like we're the new computer of '80s. We thought we were the big hot shots throughout the years, newer and better me

Now our used-to-be-great computer slowly slipped. Central is in its slipping stage soon it's going to be sliding. I have a friend from Elkhorn, and I've f that lately when I meet up with her, her so

has received yet another state title. Last t some girl cross-country runners placed at s Since when has Elkhorn become a recogn athletic school? Central used to be a recognized ath

school. So how come our girl cross-cou runners don't place at state? How come we always a promising school, but never a win You want proof that we're only a promis

school? We don't win anymore. We don't impressive records, and we don't proincredible games.

What might come to mind is this football season. Sorry, please don't shoot me

I realize that we played hard teams. Mill North, Bellevue West, Creighton Preparathe all really good teams. We played them hard. the games were close. Central was consider such a potential team because the games we

However, we lost those potential games. potential teams don't win trophies. Poter

It's the really good, standout supe sweep-it-all teams that take state. And those good, standout superior, sweep-it-all school busting out throughout Nebraska. They see be popping out everywhere

The newer, richer schools are grabbing the attention, and before Central can real this school is not going to be the same winning athletic school it used to be. B Central realizes it, it'll be going from slipp

How many football games did Central barely lose? Nearly half. No matter how close game is, it's the final score that counts. And final scores for Central are becoming less and in the Eagles' favor.

Actually, it's kind of depressing. If happened to barely lose every single gam you know what our record would look like would look exactly the same as the team that terribly shutout every single game. Even tho our team could have the potential, we'll have same record as some schools that were po blank awful.

Even though Central didn't lose ev single football game, the Eagles partly saw scenario with this year's football team: a lot of close, barely-won-it games. But all those so-d games don't make the 5-4 season record look

Don't kill me though because I realize w the football team went through. I know wha feels like to barely lose a game, especially the ones where you deserved to win. No matter w the excuses are, it's hard to finally realize the loss is still a loss.

However, despite my whole spiel. I a really good feeling about this year's basketball team. More than ever, this team make it past the first game at state. This t can actually be ranked and still have the ab produce a good record.

It's like this year was one big dark s night, and now the sun is coming up. And really bright.

I've watched these guys practice. And m importantly, I've seen the way these guys inter They are a team. They are close. If the going tough, this team will just get closer.

If this team can pull together this school they pull together each other, good things come. I can feel it.

So keep that in mind: good things