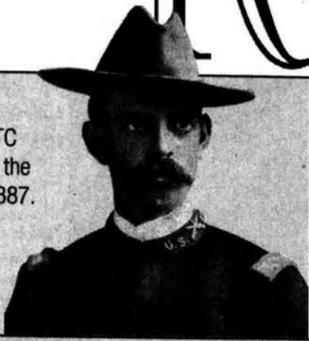


### A LOOK BACK

After 120 years at Central, JROTC has changed considerably from the cadet corps first organized in 1887.

NEWS, PAGE 5A



### THAT HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Are teens putting aside the spirit of giving in favor of greed and expensive presents?

OPINION, PAGE 9A



### SWIMMING

The team resurfaces this year with seniors who hope to lead Central to State.

SPORTS, PAGE 15A



11 TIME NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

A HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

### DAY BY DAY: FROM DISASTER TO MIRACLE

**Mon., Oct. 2, 7:30 a.m.**  
Lane leaves for work having shown no symptoms of heart trouble.

**Oct. 2, 4:45 p.m.**  
Lane loses consciousness at a security seminar and is taken to St. Joseph Medical Center. On the way, his lungs fill with fluid and he "codes" - his heart stops and he must be revived.

**Oct. 3, 10:10 p.m.**  
Lane's wife receives a call from Central informing her of her husband's difficulty breathing. Lane is checked into the hospital in serious condition.

**Oct. 3, 10:45 p.m.**  
Lane codes again in the ER and is hooked up to a ventilator and put in a drug-induced coma, then is transferred to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

**Oct. 4, 10:45 p.m.**  
Lane is taken off his ventilator and awakens, behaving normally.

**Oct. 5, 5:30 a.m.**  
Lane codes again and must be put back on the ventilator and back into a coma.

**Oct. 5, 10:30 a.m.**  
Lane codes for a fourth time. Two stents are placed in an artery in his heart.

**Oct. 10, 10:30 a.m.**  
Lane awakens and is moved out of the ICU and into the Cardiac Care Unit.

**Oct. 16, 10:30 a.m.**  
Lane is moved to Immanuel Medical Center. He stays as an inpatient for a week, then is moved to outpatient status.

**Oct. 23, 10:30 a.m.**  
Lane leaves Immanuel, returning three times a week for physical therapy. By December, Lane is down to two sessions a week working on fine motor control. By January, his therapy is complete.

**January, 10:30 a.m.**  
Lane will take a "stress test" to determine whether or not he needs bypass surgery.

# the Journey Back

BY BOB AL-GREENE

He parked his car and walked into the building when he began having trouble breathing. Russ Lane had noticed no signs of heart or health problems beforehand, but he was about to be dealt a blow which could easily have taken his life.

### "I CAN'T BREATHE"

Lane, 63, a member of the security staff, suffered two heart attacks and a stroke on Oct. 2 while attending a seminar at Marrs Middle School.

"I couldn't catch my breath," he said. "Just couldn't breathe."

Lane told co-worker Joe Venditte, who was also in attendance at the seminar, to call an ambulance, then lost consciousness.

Venditte said he remembered sitting at a table at about 8 a.m. when Lane came up behind him and grabbed his shoulder.

"He said, 'Joe, I can't breathe. I can't breathe,'" Venditte said. "I could tell by his face he was having a heart attack."

Venditte said he recognized the appearance of a person having a heart attack from his time working security at a hospital.

He said when he saw this on Lane's face, he immediately started shouting for someone to call 911.

In the time before the ambulance arrived, Venditte said, he tried to help Lane catch his breath by getting him to sit down.

When that didn't work, he had Lane lie down on his back. He said Lane kept repeating he couldn't breathe until his voice faded and he rolled onto his side.

When the squad arrived, Venditte said, they put an

Continued to Lane on Page 3A



2006 0-800K

In a heartbeat, Russ Lane's life changed. Now, after a near-death experience, he works to rebuild the abilities two heart attacks and a stroke took from him.

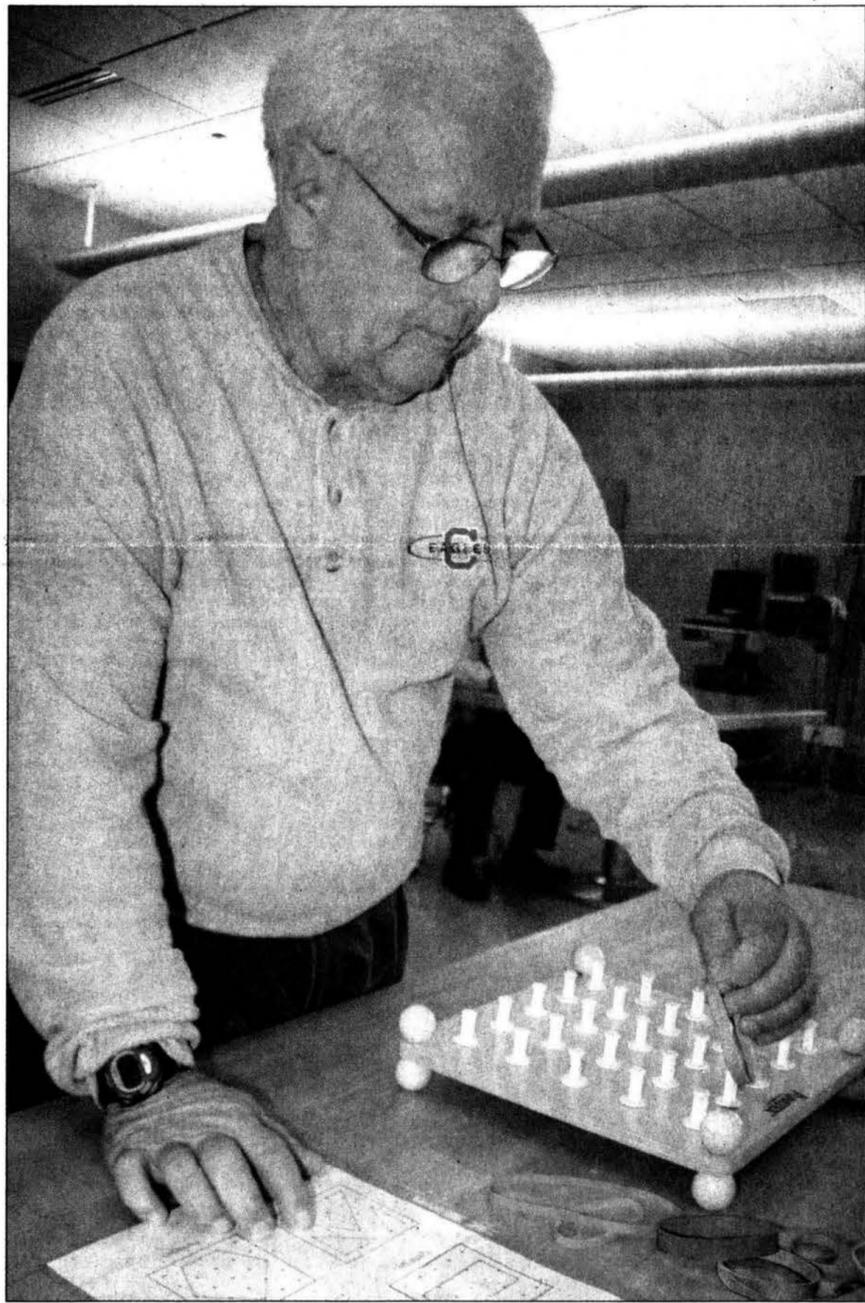


PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

### INTERRUPTED BLOOD FLOW: WHEN STROKES AND HEART ATTACKS STRIKE

A HEART ATTACK, or ACUTE MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION, occurs when the blood supply to part of the heart is interrupted.

The resulting oxygen shortage causes damage to the heart tissue. A collagen scar usually forms in the place of the dead tissue, weakening the muscle forever.

Heart attacks are the leading cause of death for both men and women internationally.

A STROKE, or CEREBROVASCULAR ACCIDENT, occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted.

As the brain ceases to receive oxygen, the effect is much the same as during a heart attack - brain cells die, impairing function.

The leading causes of strokes and heart attacks are the same: advanced age, hypertension (high blood pressure), diabetes, high cholesterol and smoking.



INFOGRAPHIC BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

INFORMATION COURTESY OF ENCARTA.MSN.ORG

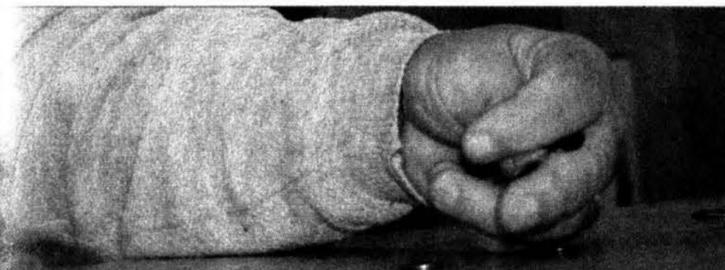


PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

(ABOVE) Lane focuses on picking change up off a table and placing it in a coin purse. He said he still has problems with numbness in his arm and hand. (RIGHT) Lane stretches rubber bands into patterns on a peg board. This tested both strength and coordination in his left hand, which was dominant before his stroke.

## District proposal draws criticism from Legislature, proponents of LB 1024

BY BOB AL-GREENE

The united superintendents of 10 districts present their plan for the future of education within the state, but senators say it doesn't fix any real problems

"We cannot fix what we don't realize," OPS Superintendent John Mackiel said.

Mackiel, along with representatives from 11 other county districts, met on Nov. 28 to find an alternative to the Learning Communities Reorganization Act, LB 1024, which would have split Omaha Public Schools (OPS) into three districts.

The act was passed quickly by the Legislature in the spring, but was halted by an injunction on Sept. 18. The new plan, which was agreed upon by 10 of the 11 representatives (Bellevue Superintendent John Deegan is no longer connected to it), allows school district lines in Douglas and Sarpy County to remain unchanged, while moving within the districts towards two major goals: integration and

Continued to Mackiel on Page 6A

## Coach reflects on loss of father

BY BOB AL-GREENE

"I guarantee you," Head Varsity Football Coach Jay Ball said, "every time I run out on that field, he'll be with me."

Ball's assistant coach, his father Jerry, passed away on Nov. 20 of a heart attack while he slept.

He was 67 years old.

Ball and his father were on a trip to Green Bay, Wis. to see a football game, which Ball said was a tradition for him and his father.

When he woke up at 6:30 that morning, Ball said he found his father dead in the bed next to him.

He said his first thought was to call 911 of course, and then to call his mom and try to explain what had happened.

Ball said men in his family have a history of heart problems, with many not making it past 60. Jerry's own dad passed away at 58, so Jerry considered himself lucky.

"He used to say he was the oldest living Ball male," he

said. He said they'd been going to Packers games since 2001, and had been joined by friends since 2003. Tickets were provided by Central alumnus Ahman Green, who Ball had coached at North during Green's sophomore year. Ball was Green's running back coach that year, and Green invited them over to his house while they were in town.

"Dad got a kick out of that," he said.

Ball said he got back to school on Nov. 29, and said the staff had been extremely supportive.

"People have been great," he said.

He said his father had taught in the district for 32 years, and many staff members at Central had taught with him.

"That tells you a lot about the district," he said. "It's a large district, but not that large."

He said students also were close to him because he taught

Continued to Ball on Page 7A

## INSIDE



### How to be Happy

With teens stressing out over school more and more, some students find ways to fight for their happiness.

PAGE 8

### Drama

"My Fair Lady" showcased Central's acting talent, but there's even more below the surface.

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## Political clubs design plans for coat drive

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

Two political parties worked together for one goal: help the poor.

Teenage Republican Club sponsor Dwaine Sutter first approached Tim Shipman, Student Democrat Club sponsor, about combining efforts for the annual coat drive.

"We want to show that Republicans and Democrats can work together to help those in need," Sutter said. "We have to be careful though."

He said there are a lot of details that have to be considered.

The president of Teenage Republicans, senior Erin Bottger, talked to people in Student Democrats to set the whole thing up. However, they still

have to come up with a definite plan and talk to all the members of the two clubs.

"We need to find the best opportunity for the coat drive," he said.

Sutter said it will help the coat drive considerably that more people will be working on the project. All ten members of the Republican club will participate in the drive.

Teenage Republicans is relatively new. It only started two years ago, when Bottger approached Sutter and asked him to be the club's sponsor.

Junior Elizabeth Rockwell has been involved in Student Democrats since her freshman year.

She said the goal this year for the coat drive is to get at least two vans full of winter clothing, although she said they will probably only get about one and a half vans.

Last year the club came up with only half of that.

Junior Britanni Avery said she thinks the coat drive is a good cause.

"But they should do more coat drives than just around Christmas," she said.

This year the coat drive will focus on students. Instead of giving the coats to organizations like the Open Door Mission, the coats will go to Central families.

Forms for requesting winter apparel were handed out in all home rooms. The form requested the name, age, gender, size and what winter clothing the person needed. The form was also available in Spanish.

The donation started on Dec. 4 and ended on Dec. 15. The coats were dropped off by the "C" in Student Democrat's sponsor Rita Ryan's room and in Shipman's room.

## Presentations on parenting held at CHS

BY MAX LARSON

"Common Sense Parenting," hosted by Tom Dowd, was a presentation made available to curious parents and students during parent-teacher conferences in the auditorium.

Presented three times that day by Dowd, who worked at Boys Town for 34 years, four types of parenting relationships were explained, which he said are authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and permissive-neglecting.

He said parent-student relationships are based on achieving equilibrium between love and justice.

Authoritative was the best, he said, with a balance between the two.

He said authoritarian is high on justice but low on love, like drill instructors in the military.

Permissive is high on love but low on justice; a neglecting parent has neither strengths.

Dowd said all of these relationships are also applicable between teachers and students.

He said it is important parents provide children with rewards rather than remove privileges, which should not be confused with rights, he said. Smaller punishments are better than larger ones.

"Don't take away," he said. "Have them earn something."

He said this is called positive reinforcement.

In this method he said it is vital to maintain consistency and patience, to not give in and hold strong with punishment and reward systems.

He also said parents should give their children support.

They should think of what their children should be praised for, and ask themselves the last time they praised them for it.

Children should do the same for their parents.

"Kids often don't realize that they can out-teach their parents," he said. "And it starts young. Kids teach parents to be negative before they can teach to be positive."

# CALENDAR



Senior Amanda Fisher removes weeds from the Botanical Garden's grounds. She also raked leaves and with her friends put the weeds and leaves in a truck. She was one of the many National Honor Society members to volunteer their time to help the environment.

PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER

## Students help clean community

BY ALI HODGE

"The idea behind it is that students who have the benefits of life such as academic skills, leadership, etc., should give back to their community," Jen Stastny, head of Central's National Honor Society (NHS) said. "I want these students to volunteer and become contributing members of their communities."

NHS volunteered at the Botanical Gardens downtown, helping clean up weeds on the side of the parking lot and making Christmas ornaments for the birds.

This is just one of the many projects NHS has taken on to help the community. The purpose of the organization is to create leaders out of some of the top students at Central, Stastny said.

"My hope for NHS is that it is truly an honor for students who have achieved academic success to be in NHS, but it is also important for them to demonstrate good character and leadership skills," she said.

The students arrived at 9 a.m. at the Botanical Gardens. There they split up into two groups.

One group stayed inside and made Christmas ornaments made out of pinecones, peanut butter

and bird seed.

The other students went outside where they raked weeds on a hill by the parking lot and loaded them in a truck to be used in the Japanese gardens.

"It's a good thing," senior Lindsay Schultz said. "On a regular basis, I would never come here. It's a good experience."

Schultz and some of her classmates said NHS was a good organization to be involved with.

"It gives you volunteer hours and all colleges ask for that," senior Chardenay Davis said.

Senior Kate Hartig, a NHS officer, said it is a very good organization and it looks good on transcripts.

But Hartig had some other motives for being involved.

"I want to make the world a better place," Hartig said. "I'm not looking for the distinction of being in National Honor Society. I want to help out."

All of the students involved worked at the Botanical Gardens until noon, then they were scheduled to help out later that afternoon at a local bike shop.

Stastny said members of NHS had been

helping out at this bike shop for two weeks, and more than likely they would spend a lot more time there.

Stastny said the bike shop was a community project where people could come and learn how to repair bikes.

She said some other events NHS has been involved with included helping make blankets for patients in the psychiatric ward at Immanuel Hospital, working at Central's math contest and working with the Knitting and Crocheting Club making scarves and helping Habitat for Humanity.

Stastny said she thought it was important for her students to work outside of school, as well as at events in the school. Members have to participate in group events and gain 35 hours of individual volunteer hours in which they may help out with an organization, help out through school events, or become an office aide.

Stastny said her goal was to create leaders out of high school students.

She said she hopes by doing some of these things they will learn to represent Central well. She also hopes they will become volunteers the rest of their lives because it is how she believes they can make positive changes in their community.

## Upcoming Events

December

### 23 Winter Break Begins

School will resume two weeks later, Jan. 8, at regular time. This year the semester finals will be held before winter break, but the semester won't end until Jan. 12, four days after the students get back.

### 28-30 Metro Basketball Tournament

The Eagles travel down the road to the Quest Center to play in the Metro Holiday Tournament. Last year the team was knocked out of the running by Bellevue West. The games are determined by seeds and all the times for the games will be announced on the week before.

January

### 2-3 Metro Wrestling Tournament

The Central wrestling team will take on local teams in the holiday tournament. Last year, Guy Smith took home a Gold medal in the State Tournament. This year the team looks to some of its younger players to make an impact early in the year.

### 9-11 Road Show Auditions

Road Show auditions will be held for anyone who wishes to be a part of this year's annual Road Show. Performances in the past have included individual instrumental music performances, solos, one-man shows, group plays and performances from Central's band and sophomore vocal class, Bel Canto.

## CHEETA Club uses projects to help animals

BY KIM BUCKLEY

For the members of the Central Education for the Ethical Treatment of Animals Club (CHEETA), it's all about the animals.

Sponsor Cat Kennedy said CHEETA Club started the year off with a trip to the IMAX to see a documentary on tigers last month.

She also said the club was thinking about having a fund-raiser that would help endangered species. She said the club was sure of all of the details, yet.

Kennedy said the club is also going to try and take a field trip to Hearts United, which is a no-kill shelter.

"Most of us believe that the way our society treats animals is an indication of how civilized a country is," she said.

Kennedy said another project the club has done over the past several years was handing out pamphlets to students.

She said the club handed out the pamphlets to raise awareness that the animals are not always treated well.

She also said the club handed out orange bracelets from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as well as collected food for the Red-Cross animal pantry.

Kennedy said last year club members collected food for the Hurricane Katrina animals, and on Earth Day they collected food for the Coalition for Animal Protection.

She said CHEETA Club has had several speakers come and talk to the club over the past several years.

Kennedy said people from the wild life sanctuary, the humane society and the zoo as well as a vegetarian chef came to talk to the club.

She said what she wants the students to get out of the club is to be sensitive to animal causes and to treat all animals humanely, whether the animal was a domestic pet, farm animal or a wild animal.

"We (the club) just want people to be humane toward all living creatures," Kennedy said.

## FBLA focuses on practicing, investing

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) is focusing on one specific concept of business this year.

Their topic is investments. The club members, almost 30 in number, are creating investment projects.

Each student researches a special business and decides whether the business would be a good investment. The students will then report their research and findings to the other group members.

Students will also tour different companies.

They will participate in competitions, both group and individual ones. They will also go to seminars and listen to speakers, who know a great deal about business, club sponsor DeLayne Havlovic said.

The group will compete in other business-related competitions as well.

But, the business group does not only focus on business-related topics. Every semester the group members volunteer their time for the benefit of the community.

This semester they are bell ringing for the Salvation Army.

Next semester, Havlovic said they might help Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Havlovic said the club teaches students about business practices.

"You learn a lot about business and working together," he said. "It (working together) is a necessity (in the business world)."

He also said because of the club many business connections are made. Also connections to college organizations are created as well.

The Register (USPS 097-520) is published seven times during the school year. Monthly in September, December, January, February and March, and bimonthly in October/November and April/May by Central High School, 124 N. 20th St., Omaha, NE.

Periodicals postage paid at Omaha, NE. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Register, 124 N. 20th St., Omaha, NE 68102.



HAVLOVIC

# STILL BEATING

They may still be the leading cause of death among men and women internationally, but heart attacks are survivable. With the proper safety measures some are even preventable.

## Lane continues building toward 'miracle' recovery

CONTINUED FROM 'LANE' ON PAGE 1A

oxygen mask on him immediately and got him away. "If I didn't know he was having a heart attack," Venditte said, "he would've died."

### HIS HEART STOPPED, AGAIN

On the way to the hospital, Lane regurgitated, filling his lungs with blood and giving him pneumonia. He also "coded" for the first time while in the ambulance (his heart stopped and he had to be revived). He was taken to Saint Joseph Hospital and admitted in serious condition.

Cookie, Lane's wife, said she received a call from a Central secretary about 8:10 telling her Lane had been having difficulty breathing, but she didn't yet know how serious the situation was.

When she got to Saint Joseph, she got to see her husband in the emergency room, but did not get to speak with him. He coded again in the ER and had to be put on a ventilator and in a drug-induced coma. Cookie said Monday evening was one of the two most serious times Lane had at the hospital.

One of their sons, Russ Lane, Jr., said he was at the hospital, with Lane in the coma, the doctors suggested family members from out of town be called, notified and asked to come. Lane, Jr. said this was seen as a bad sign, as a sign his father might not make it out of the hospital alive.

Lane was awakened again two days later and Cookie said on Wednesday evening he seemed healthy and aware, teasing and joking with the others in the room.

The next morning, however, he coded again and had to be put back on the ventilator. That afternoon he coded for a fourth time; his wife said this was the second low point.

He was put back in the coma and two stents were placed in arteries in his heart to keep the blood moving.

When Lane suffered his stroke, it caused bleeding in his brain. Though neither he nor his wife could be exactly sure of the type, the bleeding typifies a hemorrhagic stroke. Cookie said doctors were concerned whether to give Lane drugs to thin his blood. She said if they had waited, her husband would have died.

Lane, Jr. said he was glad his father was unconscious for an extended period immediately after the attacks. He said it was a blessing because it meant he felt no pain as chest compressions were performed and he was electro-shocked to get his heart beating again.

On Oct. 10, eight days after his accident, Lane was taken off the medication keeping him unconscious and he gradually awakened. He was transferred out of the Intensive Care Unit and into Cardiac Care, where he stayed until the following Monday, when he left Saint Joseph

and was moved to Immanuel Medical Center as an inpatient. He was discharged as an outpatient Oct. 23, three weeks after his attacks.

Lane, Jr. said Lane's fellow security workers had called every day since the accident to keep apprised of the situation. He said in addition to that, both Principal Greg Emmel and Athletic Director Darin Williams visited the hospital the day Lane suffered the attacks to show their support. Cookie said they were there within an hour of the accident. Lane, Jr. said in such a traumatic situation, it was greatly appreciated and helped the entire family cope.

"That spoke volumes of their character," he said of Emmel and Williams, "and the character and culture of Central High School."

### "IT'S A TRUE MIRACLE"

Lane said when he awakened, he had very limited use of his left side. He said he cannot remember the time he spent conscious on Wednesday - his memory has an eight-day blank spot in it. Since waking up, though, his condition has greatly improved. He said his leg has recovered much more quickly than his arm. The limited use of his left hand has been a large problem, since it was dominant.



PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

Russ Lane laughs after completing a half-hour session of occupational therapy. When Lane woke up from a drug-induced coma eight days after his accident, he was unable to move much of his left side.

After being discharged as an outpatient, Lane had to return to Immanuel three times a week for rehabilitation.

He then bumped down his sessions to two a week and then down again to just a single hour-long session of occupational therapy, one of three types Immanuel offers (the others are physical therapy and speech and comprehension).

He said occupational therapy mainly deals with fine motor control; this includes fitting keys into tiny holes, picking coins up out of a change purse and putting them down on a table and making designs by stretching rubber bands around a peg board.

"Occupational therapy focuses on outcomes," Joan Shields said.

Shields, the occupational outpatient therapist Lane worked with in the past months at Immanuel, said the hospital treats a variety of conditions through physical therapy, and said most rehabilitation cases fall under one of two categories: neurorehabilitation, for patients with brain or spinal cord injuries, and orthopedic care, for cases dealing with physical problems such as knee or hip joint injuries.

Depending on the severity of the injury, she said, there is a wide range of patient conditions.

She said it can get as severe as total paralysis.

Shields said family support is one of the leading factors contributing to patient recovery, though it is hard to predict or control.

"It makes a huge difference," she said.

She said two other factors were motivation and attitude and concentration on doing home exercises.

Lane, Jr. said the paralyzation on the left-hand side of Lane's body was a huge adversity.

He said despite that, he has seen improvement literally every day in terms of his father's movement, comprehension and speech. He said apart from a few things like driving, Lane is now able to do all the things he could before Oct. 2.

"It's phenomenal," he said. "It's a true miracle."

He said in addition to showing his father's strength and perseverance, the case was an example of how following doctor's orders, from therapy down to diet, can lead to recovery.

"That's a lesson I'll take away from this," Lane, Jr. said. "If we follow directions, we see you can improve."

Lane's wife said many of his doctors expressed amazement he made it through at all.

She said one doctor in particular told them in all of his years of service, he had only ever seen two patients in the condition Lane had been in, and both of them had passed away before making a recovery. She also said one of the physical therapists told Lane they couldn't take credit for his swift recovery.

"He simply said, 'We didn't do it,'" she said. "It was your will."

### "I'VE GOT A LOT OF FAMILY"

"Day by day, it gets better," Lane said. "(I am) very, very fortunate to be alive."

He said since he has been gone from Central, though he has talked over the phone with his fellow security staff members and kept in touch with Emmel, he misses the students and working on the things he used to.

This would have been Lane's 11th year at Central, but he said the only way he could come back to his former job would be if he could recover completely and be able to do everything he could before the accident.

He said he is, however, still working with cardiologists, so his plans have been limited. But he is now finished with therapy, and sometime in January he will be given a "stress test" to evaluate his heart, lungs and especially brain to determine if he is properly recovered. He said based on that test the decision will be made whether or not he will need to have bypass surgery.

Lane said as he has endured his health problems, his family has helped him keep his attitude positive. He has nine children (four daughters and five sons) and 25 grandchildren to keep him company and provide crucial support.

"I've got a lot of family," he said. "They've been real supportive."

Lane also said he was grateful for all the flowers, cards and kind words he had received.

"My whole-hearted thanks goes out to all the well-wishers," he said.

## Defibrillator ensures safe atmosphere

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

A middle school student died and his death could have been prevented.

Defibrillators have been given to every school in the Omaha Public School district.

In the school year of 2002-2003, a boy at McMillan Middle School was pronounced dead after he collapsed after basketball practice.

Later, it was announced that a defibrillator could have saved his life.

As a result of his death, Central received a \$3,000 grant in August of 2003 to purchase a defibrillator and to train staff members how to use the machine. The machine cost \$1,800.

Recently, the Red Cross changed the standards and upgraded the defibrillator. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is performed differently than how it was six months ago.

The machine had to be reset so it would tell the person using it what the correct procedures are.

"Before it was 15 compressions for every two breaths, and now it's 30 compressions to every two breaths," school nurse Jennifer Conahan said.

A defibrillator delivers an electric shock to the patient, in effort to stop the ventricular fibrillation, the situation in which there is electrical chaos in the heart's condition system which leads to minimal or no blood flow.

No one at Central has had to use the machine yet, but Conahan said it is a precautionary measure.

If the defibrillator is used within the first three to five minutes, the chance of long-term survival goes up by more than 50 percent.

Over 900 people die every day from the various heart problems caused by coronary heart disease such as sudden cardiac arrest, which rarely shows any signs until it's too late.

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# RAISING THE FLAG HIGH

Central's JROTC might have officially been established in 1920, but a cadet corps was introduced to Omaha High School more than 30 years before that, at the end of the 1880s. With a rich history backing it, the program continues today to prove itself to be one of the very best. A lot can change in 119 years, but its values stay the same: dedication to service, duty, honor and patriotism.

## Class incorporates life skills, retains ties to military

BY BOB AL-GREENE

"If you look at history," Lt. Col. Mike Melvin said, "our ancestors always felt an obligation to defend their homes, their states, their countries."

Melvin, the Military Science Dept. Head, has been with the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) for the past six years, said currently JROTC's curriculum is only about 35 percent military, while the rest teaches life skills such as study habits, personal finance and first aid. The program as it exists today is a much different organization from the first corps of cadets, but the values and tradition of excellence have remained the same.

According to the 1899 yearbook, Omaha High's (which is what Central used to be called) first military company was formed in 1887. Though it was technically only a corps of cadets with no army involvement, arms were provided by Thurston Rifles. The corps was disbanded after its second year, however, and it was not until 1892 that Congress passed a bill mandating an officer from Fort Omaha to organize and instruct the male students of Omaha High School in military drill.

That officer was Lt. Julius A. Penn of the Second Infantry, who took over for the 1892-93 school year. In his second year gray uniforms were provided for the cadets, and the first competitive company drill was held. Company A won the competition and its commander, Capt. Ralph Connell, was named senior captain. The victorious company was presented with a flag by the female members of the class.

The drum corps was organized under Professor William Wedemeyer, director of the Army band at Fort Omaha, in 1894-95. That year Capt. Karl Connell of company C won the drill competition. Connell would go on to develop the gas mask in 1912.

The National Defense Act was passed in 1916 and authorized the creation of JROTC departments nationwide, but according to documents provided by Melvin,

Central did not have an official JROTC until the 1919-20 school year. It was put under the instruction of former Army Lt. Frank H. Gulgard, who retired from Central in 1953, 34 years later.

Melvin said since the time when it was first organized, the program has changed tremendously.

Both the cadet battalion and the official JROTC were mandatory four-year programs for all male students during the early part of the 1900s.

"If you were a male," Melvin said, "you were in the corps of cadets."

In the 1930s, it became a recruiting vehicle for WWII, and it stayed that way until the 1950s, when war like Vietnam became less popular.

Today, he said, JROTC has nothing to do with recruiting or any military obligation whatsoever. Though speakers from branches of the military come in to speak, he stressed there is no recruiting done, simply presentation of information.

Melvin said the student populace's perception of JROTC is a reflection of society's perception of the military. He said after 9/11 there was an upsurge of patriotism and support, but as the Iraq war has gone on and become less popular, the program has perhaps begun to be associated with that. He said, however, with such a diverse school, students learn early on to respect everyone regardless of color, race, creed or choices. He said negative comments are few and far between.

He said he enjoys teaching JROTC most because of its hands-on nature and the chance it provides to deal with people and teach acceptance, tolerance and self-discipline, now he said was the most important part. He said the purpose of the program now is to teach students to respect themselves and others, and said the members of the relatively small department become a family and lifelong friends.

There are four levels to JROTC in the Leadership Education and Training (LET) program, and the curriculum builds on itself each year. In LET 1, instructed by Sgt.

Maj. Dwaine Sutter, students might learn about past forms of democracy and respect for the flag, then in following years students learn about the Constitution and American government, before eventually, in LET 4, they are given controversial topics to debate in mock trial settings.

Sutter, who is in his seventh year at Central, said when he originally came to the program, there were only 100 to 125 members, but since then the number has inflated to reach 176 this year. He said the curriculum has progressively gotten better and students have taken to it as a result. He said this is the first year every member of the battalion has had his or her uniform on for the tri-annual inspection, and said he speaks for student leadership.

"This is the best year," he said. "By far."

He said consistent excellence has also drawn students, and the growing number shows popular opinion. He said the ultimate goal of the program is to reach enrollment of 260 students, or 10 percent of the students in the school.

He said LET 1, which he teaches, has no military focus and instead is based solely on character-building and leadership.

"We offer more one-on-one advice," he said.

He said all of JROTC's jobs play an integral role of accomplishing the goal needed to build towards the inspection at the end of the year and prove Central has a successful program.

Melvin said the hierarchy of the student battalion staff is composed of a student battalion commander, an executive officer and functional areas: there are two support officers (S4) and a public affairs officer (S5). Melvin supervises and consults with the staff at Monday morning meetings, but he said the students run the battalion and work hard to prepare for events and inspections.

"They're here a lot," he said. "They work a lot of hours, mostly after school."

## Corps retains highest commendation in tri-annual inspection

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

After an inspection from the United States' Government, the Junior Officer Training Corps (JROTC) was able to maintain its hold on ranking amongst the best JROTC programs in the country Dec. 11.

This award means a lot.

Every year JROTC is inspected by army officials.

The goal of the Brigade Formal Inspection (BFI) is to evaluate each high school's program of JROTC. The BFI has been occurring triannually for years at Central.

"They make sure that you are fulfilling your curriculum," JROTC instructor Sgt. Maj. Dwaine Sutter said.

All JROTC students are inspected, regardless of rank.

Sutter said preparations for the BFI are extensive and it takes a lot of hard work. Students have to prepare uniforms, be knowledgeable of the curriculum and they have to show the proper respect according to rank.

"They have to call me Sergeant Major, and it (the title) depends on who it is," Sutter said. "They have to say the rank because it gives respect."

The inspection occurred in the gym throughout the day. The students were in formation so the inspector could see any problems with uniforms. The inspectors also asked questions.

Every three years the inspectors give the school a new level of honor for its success or failings. There is, in order of increasing rank, the white star, blue star and the yellow star.

"The white star means that you need a lot of work," Sutter said. "You could lose the program within the high school."

Central has had the yellow star, honorable with distinction, for several years. This year it received the yellow star again. They scored 976 out of the possible 1000 points.

A school had to score at least 960 points in order to receive the yellow star.

"There is a lot of stress when it (the inspection) happens," Sutter said. "How well the cadets perform is rated."

Sutter said it takes tremendous coordination between the battalion commander and the battalion executive.

The battalion commander, senior Alicia Bender, gave a brief to the inspectors. The top officials also reported to the inspectors. They had to give all of the information extremely meticulously.

"I just have to make sure my battalion is prepared and fully ready for the inspection," Bender said. "I need to give them a sense of urgency about the yellow star."

Sutter said inspection involved a lot of time and effort from many people. "They had to go through a lot of before and after school preparations," he said. "A lot of work was put in by the staff as shown by their ability to come before and after school to maintain the yellow star."

He said the students put in two to three hours per day, four out of the five days per week. They spent many hours doing briefs to get them perfect. Other JROTC students cleaned out the inventory room, organizing everything for the inspection.

Junior Elvis Servellon was in charge of organizing the inventory room. He said he wanted to make sure everything was in order. But, throughout the entire preparation period, the cadets still managed to have fun. While cleaning up the inventory room, the five or so cadets were making jokes and laughing most of the time.

The week before the inspection every staff member stayed at school until 6 or 7 p.m. cleaning up.

The staffed worked on speeches as well as preparing everyone for the questions the inspectors would ask them.

The commanders of S4 made a LOI, which is a master list of sorts of everything the JROTC needed before Dec 1.

Junior Renee Wilder said she thought Central would get the yellow star.

"I have to wear the uniform correctly, know the chain of command and the different ranks," Wilder said. "Cadets from each level have to prepare questions (for the inspectors)."

She said the staff was working really hard.

To make sure nothing wrong happened, the students avoided wearing the uniforms for awhile before the inspection. They said they didn't want their uniforms getting dirty before the inspection.

Before the inspection took place, Sutter said if the program did not receive a yellow star, he and the staff would take the results and see the deficiencies and see that they didn't happen again.

But, he said he thought the program had the capabilities to obtain the yellow star. Bender also said she thought there was no doubt that the JROTC program would retain the yellow star.

Sutter said he enjoyed seeing the dedication and the responsibility to the program to maintain the yellow star.

Bender said the inspection was extremely stressful for her.

"I'm responsible for all we have to do," she said.

She said there's always that possibility they could fail, and she said the week before the BFI everybody becomes nervous.

Every year the inspectors are different. The inspection team comes from Colorado. They are usually either active members of the army or national guards.

"They all like different things," Sutter said. "Just try to do the best you can do because it's difficult because the inspectors have their own nuisances."

After the inspection had been completed, the inspectors met with the top officials in JROTC and critiqued their effort.

Sutter said the inspectors can't give yellow stars to every school.

"The competition is competitive," Sutter said. "The inspectors have to be nit-picky and distinguish between the yellow star and blue star schools."

## 1939 graduate dies of cancer, leaves behind legacy and reputation of service

BY ALI HODGE

Proud JROTC alumnus Rolland Otis Jr. was a military man all his life, from his time as a JROTC student in high school, to his time as a young man in the military during WWII and the Korean War to finally a member of the Central High School board cleaning up the WWII memorial.

Otis died in April of last year due to pancreatic cancer.

"He was wonderful," Otis' wife of 57 years, Dottie said. "He had a great sense of humor. He had integrity. He cared about his country. He cared about his family. He was a very special man and I miss him terribly. He knew he was going to die and he died with courage. He taught the whole family to live and die."

Otis graduated from Omaha Central High School in 1939. As he wrote in his memoirs, "The Best I Can Remember," he loved Central and was involved with football, writing gossip columns, going to social events such as dances and hanging out with friends.

Otis was also involved in JROTC, in which he was very successful and loved. He rose to the rank of captain. He also tried out for the Crack Squad and made it.

He wrote this was one of the proudest moments of his high school life. Being a part of the Crack Squad, Otis wrote about how he and his classmates performed for the Road Show. He remembered their rifles were polished so that the chrome shined, their uniforms were pressed and their routine was practiced to perfection.

"We practiced a routine that consisted of flipping our rifles in a military fashion," Otis wrote. "Flipping them in the air, much like a baton and grounding them in unison on the stage floor, which was dramatic."

Otis wrote even in his old age, he remembered the final salute of the routine called the Queen Ann salute. After high school, in 1943 while WWII was going on, Otis and some of his friends joined the Navy and went to school together. He wrote he was never in harm's way during that time. Otis recounted his time spent in the Navy and at Doane College where he studied geometry, chemistry, physics and other classes of the like in order to go into flight training.

He remembered he had to run a mile every morning and his hopes of becoming a pilot were cut short when the Navy transferred him to V12, which meant he would be a deck

officer.

In 1945, Otis wrote, he was sent to Notre Dame to study to be a shipman.

"This was an intense time," Otis wrote. "Lots of exercise and study."

Otis remembered some of the many things that happened to change history while he was at Notre Dame, such as Roosevelt's death and the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After he attended Fort Schuyler to continue his training, Otis started his work on battle ships. His first assignment was on the USS Ajax and then went on to work on other ships in the areas of Hawaii and San Francisco.

He recalls in his memoirs some Japanese ships he saw and the creation of the United Nations. After the Navy, Otis went on to attend college at Grinnell in Iowa. There he met his wife, Dottie Otis, and they were married on Dec. 8, 1948.

Dottie Otis said she attended Grinnell and majored in speech.

"I got a degree in speech," she said. "But all I wanted to do was get married!"

Dottie said she and Rolland were married for 57 happy

years before he died. She said he was a very good man who was proud to be an American as many in her generation are. She said one way he supported his country that was in very bad shape was cleaning up the WWII memorial that was in his very bad shape.

"He didn't think that was good," Dottie said.

Dottie said her husband collected money from his friends and spent time refurbishing the memorial to make it suitable for display. She said him refinishing the memorial was an example of his personality. She said he was passionate and had integrity.

Dottie said her husband was a very caring man and she hoped teenagers would follow in his footsteps. She said she hopes teenagers learn to be respectful and kind because it pays off in the long run. She also urges the nation to respect troops in the war like her husband did.

"Freedom is such a precious thing and I'd like the whole world to have what we have," Otis said.

Otis, who was happy up until his death in April of last year, wrote in the conclusion to his memoirs, "It has all been wonderful. I honestly do not want to do it all over again. I think that's a good way to feel."

## 120 Years of Excellence

A timeline since the beginning

1887

A military company was organized by the high school, with arms being borrowed from Thurston Rifles. The company was disbanded, however, at the end of its second year because of a number of accidents which took place during a sham battle in the summer.



M.J.R. ARNO TRUESLEN, 1914

1892

Congress passed a bill which called for an officer to organize and instruct the boys of Omaha High School in military drill.

Lt. Julius A. Penn took charge of the program for its first few years, during which there were no uniforms. Later, Penn gave lectures on military subjects when it wasn't possible to drill outside.

At the end of his third year, Penn was transferred to Montana and Army Lt. Clements became the head of the corps.

1894

The Cadet Officers' Club (COC) was established.

The purpose of the COC was to bring the officers of the battalions in closer touch with each other and to transact the four companies. The COC sponsored the school musicals as well as "hops" or dances, at the end of the year.

A few years later "non-coms" were dropped from membership due to the large size of the club.

This was also the year Karl Connell led Company C to win honors at the drill competition, as his brother Ralph had the year before. Karl Connell would go on to invent the gas mask in 1912.

1901

The first cadet encampment was held at Ashland.

It was an honor for cadets to attend, and some girls were invited for a day to watch real military life.

Other cadet encampments took place at Weeping Water and Auburn.

1916

JROTC was established as a national organization with the passing of the National Defense Act. Initially, there were only six units nationwide.

JROTC would not become official at Central until the 1919-1920 school year.

After its introduction to Central, as before, all of the male students at the school were required to be a member of the corps of cadets.

The National Defense Act required that the school had to maintain 100 students over 14 years old to have JROTC.

1930s

JROTC was well-established at the school and was becoming more and more like its present form.

Because of World War II, JROTC was looked at as a recruiting platform for the military.

The program at this point was no longer mandatory for all males.

1937

The cadets were reorganized by the War Department into an ROTC regiment.

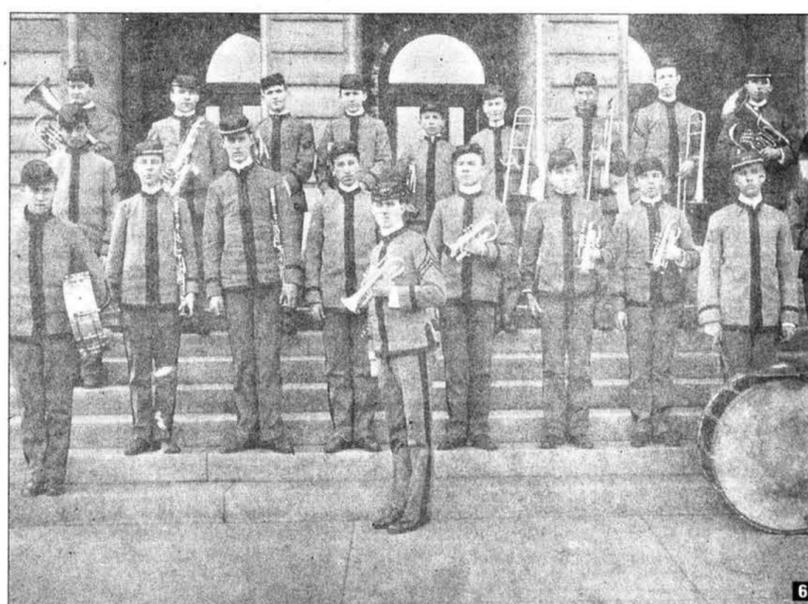
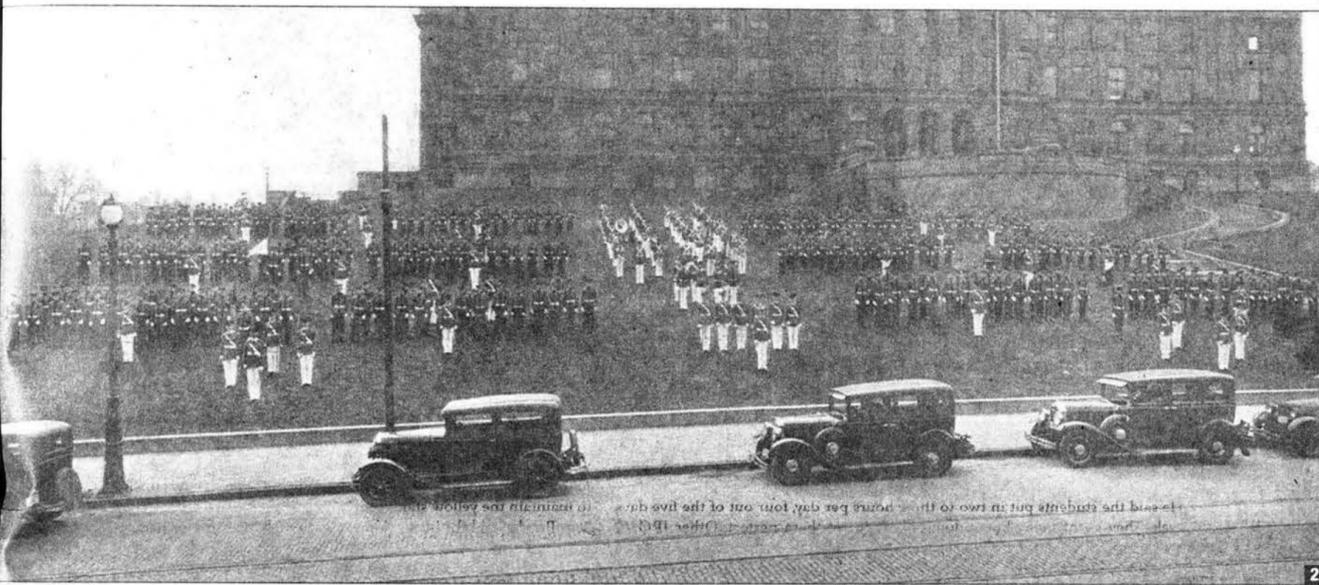
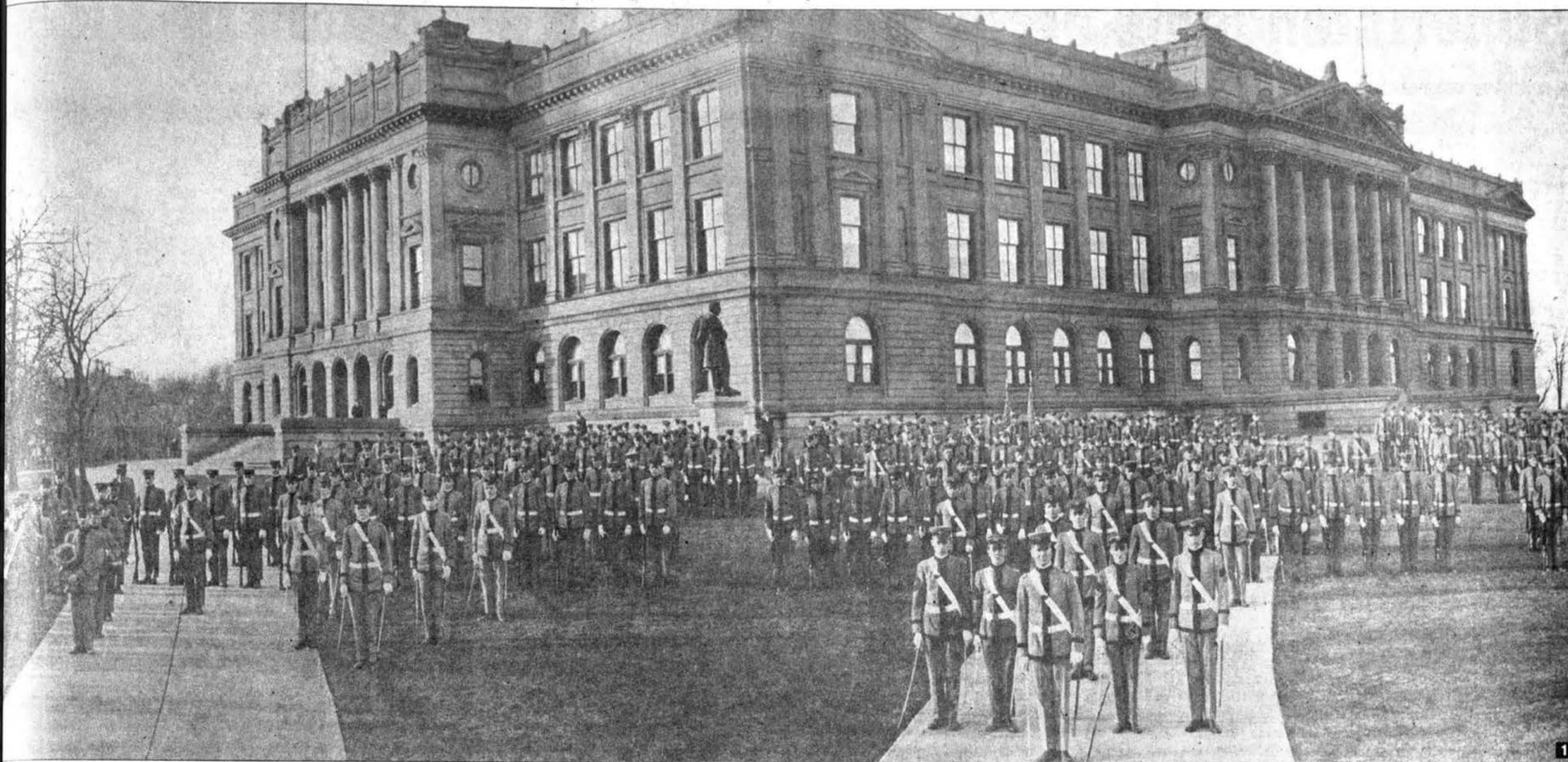
This regiment eventually went on to become a battalion consisting of four regular companies and a freshman company before being restored to a regiment with seven regular companies and band.



HON. LT. JOANNE BERGMAN, 1945

1941-45

America entered World War II after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor killed over 2,000 people and destroyed eight battleships. The war drew to a close when the United States dropped the atomic bomb "Little Boy" on Hiroshima in August. Japan officially surrendered a day after another atomic bomb named "Fat Man" was dropped on Nagasaki a few days after the bombing of Hiroshima.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF 1904, 1905, 1914, 1920, 1931 O-BOOK

1. The Regiment, 1914. In the early days of the cadet corps, before it became an official JROTC program in the 1919-1920 school year, it was mandatory for all male students, explaining the high enrollment numbers. Notice the statue of Abraham Lincoln at the building's southwest corner. 2. The Regiment, 1931. Towards the end of the decade the program began to be used as a recruitment organization as WWII began. Notice the brick road in the foreground, as Dodge had not yet been paved. Also notice the make and model of the cars. 3. 1st Lieutenant and Adjutant Walter Kenner, 1905. Uniforms were first provided to the cadets in the 1893-1894 school year, resembling those worn by soldiers during the Civil War. The uniforms were gray in color and included "mudpie" hats, as seen here. 4. Commandant Frank A. Cook, 1904. The first commandant of the corps was Lt. Julius Penn from Fort Omaha, who instructed the students in drill and military topics. 5. Commandant Frank H. Gulgard, 1920. Gulgard was the first commandant of the official JROTC, formed after the passage of the National Defense Act in 1916. He stayed at Central for 33 years, retiring almost a decade after the end of World War II, in 1953. The 1920 Register Annual called Gulgard "a man of unusual foresight, quiet attitude and marked ability as an executive." 6. The Cadet Band, 1914. There was often an ROTC band among the military companies in Register Annuals. A drum corps was first organized under Professor William Wedermeyer, director of the Army band at Fort Omaha, in 1894-1895.

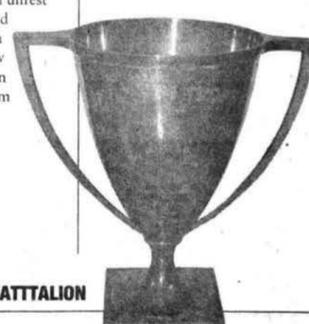
## 120 Years of Excellence

A timeline since the beginning

1950s	1963	1965-75	1973	1986	1990s	2003	2005
JROTC became a course which taught military subjects. Because of the growing opposition to the Vietnam War, a decade later, JROTC would no longer be used as a recruiting tool.	The Vitalization Act was passed, allowing JROTC to open up to other services, including the Navy and Air Force. It also replaced most of the active duty instructors with retirees. The retirees worked for the schools, and the cost was shared.	The war in Vietnam started as a way to prevent communism from spreading to other countries in Asia. Before the war was official, there was a buildup of military advisers in the country by President John F. Kennedy. It was his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, who sent the first troops to Vietnam. In 1973, female students were finally allowed to join JROTC. The courts ruled that it was discriminatory for JROTC to disclude the female population.	The first JROTC summer camp was held. The summer camps were closely related to the encampments but had little support from the Defense Department. About 20 years later, Congress inserted provisions into Title 10 of the United States Code allowing the Army to finance camp-related travel. Before this, cadets all had to pay for their expenses. Because of the updated code, there was a large increase in the number of number of students at the summer camps.	Maj. Gen. Wagner took over the cadet command at Central and started making changes. One of his goals was to centralize and standardize JROTC. He did this by creating another division which was split up into separate branches and gradually expanded. He also imposed an inspection with military rating system. He imposed a higher standard for the JROTC instructors by raising the standard of qualifications and enforcing them.	JROTC began to most closely resemble its modern format. The curriculum changed to the point that only 35 percent of the curriculum applied strictly to the military. The courses now focus on life skills like time management and organization skills, study habits, American government and debate.	The current war in Iraq began as Saddam Hussein was overthrown, by an American-led coalition. Even though Hussein was removed from power, combat continues. There has been a history of civil unrest between Shiites and Sunnis in the region and there is now heightened tension between the Muslim sects.	The JROTC Battalion received three new plaques at its annual awards ceremony. Members of the Central High Alumni Association created and paid for the plaques.



THE KING'S HUSSARS, 1965



DAVIDSON TROPHY FOR MOST EFFICIENT BATTALION

# Superintendents agree to changes in education finances

CONTINUED FROM 'MACKIEL' ON PAGE 1A

cooperation and shared principles and guidelines. Mackiel said the new plan exceeds the goals of OPS' original annexation plan, One City, One School District. He said he never would have agreed to a plan which did not at least meet the original integration goals of One City, One School District.

The two-county cooperation which has surfaced, he said, is a new accomplishment and has tremendous potential. He said where before there was no authority to involve all counties, there can now be an elimination of what he called unhealthy competition.

"This is the first time... in this nation," he said, "(that) superintendents from two counties have come together and said 'mandate by law' on integration."

Mackiel said integration will be divided into three or four forms: general integration within OPS, integration as a result of magnet schools, and voluntary integration by choice for students. He said there will also be focus schools with few or no students in their attendance areas. Districts would be assigned specific numbers of seats and then have the opportunity to fill those seats with their own students.

He said the superintendents he met with recognize changes are in order to the financial system as it exists. The finance section of the plan states the intention of school officials to work with the governor and Legislature to address finance issues within three to six months.

"What happens is," Mackiel said, "this issue affects all of the state."

He said OPS would never submit pieces of legislation which are strictly self-serving and pointed out one of the guiding principles identified in the plan, that sharing of resources throughout the metropolitan area can lead to improved student accomplishment.

"We can never forget... student achievement," he said. "This truly is all about increasing the academic success of youngsters."

State Sen. Ernie Chambers, who wrote the addition to LB 1024 which proposed the controversial three-way split-up of OPS, said he had yet to read the new proposal, but said it was clear to him the superintendents had no specifics. He said they presented no ways to close the achievement gap and no plans to teach and train educators for the future of the district, and though their statements sound good, there is never any analysis.

Chambers called the integration plan (which would only be provided to students who contribute to the socioeconomic diversity of the receiving school) thoughtless, insensitive, a sham, a hoax and an insult to poor children. He said when most schools are built in white communities, they have easy access while blacks have substantial distances to travel. There is virtually no movement by whites, he said, while black children are branded automatically as low-income when arriving at new schools.

He said those involved with the proposal have failed to

look at the underlying problems with the districts, comparing the situation to a doctor diagnosing an appendicitis on sight instead of asking his patient where the pain is. He said many problems have been created by white racism and segregation. He blamed voluntary integration for the problem as well and said it is unrealistic to expect voluntary integration to fix the situation, as the proposal does.

"That is insane," he said.

State Sen. Ron Raikes, one of the chief architects of LB 1024, said all he has seen of the new district plan proposed by the superintendents is a trend of backing away from the Learning Communities Act instead of commitment. He said LB 1024 addressed a number of issues, including the non-equalized position of Westside and the ability of that district to recruit into OPS. He said he was amazed the new plan does not address those issues since he thought they would be so controversial.

"If you're asking if this plan is better than LB 1024," Raikes said, "then I say no."

He said though, like Chambers, his knowledge of the new plan has been limited, he sees a need for larger commitment and focus on educational opportunities, funding and especially a strong formal structure. He said he was concerned since he has not yet heard that commitment from the superintendents from the 11 districts.

Chambers said every legislator he has talked with since the proposal was introduced has expressed amazement at how little it compensates for adversities facing the districts. Chambers compared it with a shell game in which there is much movement and activity, but nothing really moves.

"None of it is going anywhere," he said of the plan's future in the Legislature. "None of it makes any sense at all."

One of the major contributing factors to the conceived problem with race in schools, Chambers said, is residential segregation, a result of the commonly accepted theory of white flight. He said when children are put in a hostile environment and are branded as impoverished, they have no chance of achieving to potential.

"We know they are not wanted there," he said. "They are not welcome there. We know this. Our children know it." He said this doesn't occur to representatives of the districts because they are arrogant and let their arrogance impede their judgment.

Mackiel said it is important to recognize the achievement gap for at-risk students, and said formidable economic constraints impact these students' lives in terms of health and nutrition, making education seem that much less important. He said not all students receive unequal opportunities lead to unequal outcomes, but only now is something being done.

"What we've done for far too long is complain," he said. "We're long on rhetoric and short on action." He cited No Child Left Behind as an example of the wrong method to take in identifying student achievement or failure. He said that behavior is the wrong approach.

"(It's wrong) to simply say, 'No child left behind,'" he said, "and then walk away and say, 'And if they are, it's the teacher's

## WHAT'S IN A PLAN?

### MAJOR POINTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS' PROPOSAL

#### VOLUNTARY INTEGRATION PLAN (VIP)

The VIP would be under jurisdiction of the Learning Community Committee detailed in the proposal, and priority of placement in the program would be given to students who "contribute to the socioeconomic diversity of the receiving schools."

#### FOCUS SCHOOLS

The Learning Community Committee would by law have to develop focus schools, which are built in areas with no attendance area. Seats are given proportionally to the cooperating districts so they fill the school with students from around the metro area.

#### HIGH NEEDS COORDINATOR

This coordinator would evaluate programs for closing the achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students. One of the guiding principles of the statement was the recognition of such a gap: "We cannot fix what we do not recognize."

#### DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

All 11 affected districts in Douglas and Sarpy Counties would sign written agreements to freeze their boundaries as they existed on March 1 of this year. This would put an end to any past annexation or break-up plans.

#### BUSING

Any inter-district movement would be provided only to students who contribute to the socioeconomic diversity of the receiving school.



INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OFFICE

INFOGRAPHIC BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

Mackiel said the idea for a cooperative meeting between superintendents came after communications broke off in August. Several superintendents, he said, refused to meet anymore, but Mackiel said some districts continued outreach and conversation quietly during what he called very difficult times.

"(We decided) we can find an educationally-grounded answer," he said. "Let's put history aside finger-pointing, grievances. If we can end in a place where we can agree, we've succeeded." He said when viewing the situation from a step back, it becomes apparent everyone is committed to the same thing with the same powerful enthusiasm.

"Never have we had a conversation," he said, "about the possibilities. That's never happened." Chambers challenged OPS' policies on integration as a whole.

"I don't even see integration as a viable option in our society," he said. He said he agrees with the districts that diversity in preschool is a good thing, and that diversity is

undoubtedly higher in junior and senior high schools, but said the districts don't want to talk about elementary schools where children are achieving the least and experiencing the least diversity.

"They are failing miserably," Chambers said. "Criminal in fact."

He said inherent educational value is not a direct result of integration, and said when mixing races in schools it was seen as a means to an end, but it eventually became an end itself.

"It became the Holy Grail... and people ignored education without the mixing of races," he said. "Integration was a discussion... but it's a dead-end argument."

Mackiel said at this point, however, it will take legislators putting politics aside to finish the job. He said politicians compromise education, but he said the superintendents believe it is possible.

"Number one," he said, "It's an endpoint. Number two is the beginning of a long legislative process. We believe it's the beginning of something great."

# Officials hope to deter theft with new security precautions

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

School officials, hoping to ensure a safer school environment in the wake of a string of school shootings this fall, have taken a number of new precautions.

Less than 1 percent of serious crimes occur on or en route to school and 90 percent of public schools say they have not experienced a serious crime. Even so, Principal Greg Emmel said many things have been done to protect Central students and the staff. He said the school revised the crisis plan earlier this year. Assistant Principal Dionne Kirksey and Resource Officer Matt Kelly are in charge of revising the crisis plan since they are more familiar with the plan and the school. The main revision of the crisis plan was getting rid of the different color codes.

"It's important telling the staff what is happening, instead of saying it is a code red," Emmel said.

Central still does the traditional security procedures like the monthly fire drill. Every in-service teacher day the staff discusses safety and security plans. Emmel said it was important to make sure the staff is aware of the plans. They have table-top exercises where the teachers and administrators think of school issues, and then they break up into small groups and have scenarios of what could happen. There was a meeting Oct. 2 where they discussed school shootings because it was occurring nationally

almost every other day.

"We talked about what we would do and every person's role, whether you're a teacher a security guard or an administrator," he said.

Numerous steps go into making a safer environment for the school.

"A lot has to do with talking and asking questions and reviewing scenarios," Emmel said.

He said he utilizes the intercom to review safety concerns.

"We need to communicate with everyone," Emmel said.

The administrators meet weekly and review things that tie to the subject of school safety. Recently, windows were added to all doors. Emmel said he felt it was a good decision because he said anyone should be able to see into the classroom and see that everything is okay. Also, he said it would be easier for custodians on the weekend to see everything is fine.

Furthermore, all exterior windows were nailed shut to prevent people from getting into the building who didn't belong. Emmel said it would prevent people from getting hurt. If someone threw an object out the window, no one would get injured since the windows would be closed.

"Basically it's a theft and intruder prevention," he said.

Emmel said his main goal was to keep the classes as secure as possible. This is the reason why Central has so many security cameras. Even more

cameras are being added inside and outside of the building.

Cameras are placed around the entrances especially. The Central High Foundation is working on a lighting project that would illuminate Central at night.

"It's beautification, but also a security (and crime prevention)," he said.

Emmel said he wants to remind everyone they share in the responsibility for everyone's safety.

"Someone could have a little information that could prevent a disaster," he said. "For example, if a student drops a note and another one picks it up, will they turn it in if it is a threat?"

He said everyone should worry about safety, and if anyone has any information they should tell officials, take action and turn in the information.

"Everyone shares the responsibility of keeping our eyes and ears open and communicating with each other," he said.

He said everyone needs to take this responsibility seriously. He said he can never be lax on security as long as anything could happen, and everybody always has to be ready for everything. Also, the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) is working with the Omaha police department by having a police officer on school grounds.

"I'm glad for the resource officer program," Emmel said. "I fully support it and believe in it, but I wish for a second police officer."

These precautions are especially needed in a time when students bring guns into schools without

any notice. Just recently a Northwest student brought a handgun into the school and accidentally shot himself in the thigh and finger. School officials said they were thankful no one else was hurt, but there have been talks of installing metal detectors in OPS high schools. Emmel said he doesn't think Central would receive any metal detectors, although meetings and talks have been occurring about their installation.

"I'm not sure it's moving in that direction so quickly," Emmel said. "It is being studied."

Emmel said he needs to focus on what will happen in the next few years. If incidents happen in OPS or Central, then he said maybe metal detectors would be needed, but he said it's difficult to know whether metal detectors will be installed.

"With 2,000 students a day, how would it work?" Emmel said. "We need to ask if it is feasible, if this is the time and if it's smart."

Emmel said he doesn't think anyone will make a quick response and say to install detectors.

Another safety precaution taken recently was the removal of the benches by the entrances into the basement. This was decided when former principal Jerry Bexten was in control of the school.

"They wanted to open up the hallways as much as possible," Emmel said.

"Central is a safe school, but it can never be safe enough," he said. "You can never rest, never be satisfied with the safety of the school, and I'm always listening and looking to make the school safer."

### NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY

#### BY THE NUMBERS

In schools across the country, there are a recorded:

190,000 fights or physical attacks without a weapon per year

11,000 fights with weapons per year

7,000 robberies per year

4,000 reported incidents of rape or sexual battery per year

98,000 acts of vandalism per year

78 percent of schools with some type of formal school violence prevention

37 percent of schools reporting 1-5 crimes per year

20 percent of schools reporting six or more crimes per year

INFOGRAPHIC BY ASTRIKA WILHELM THE REGISTER

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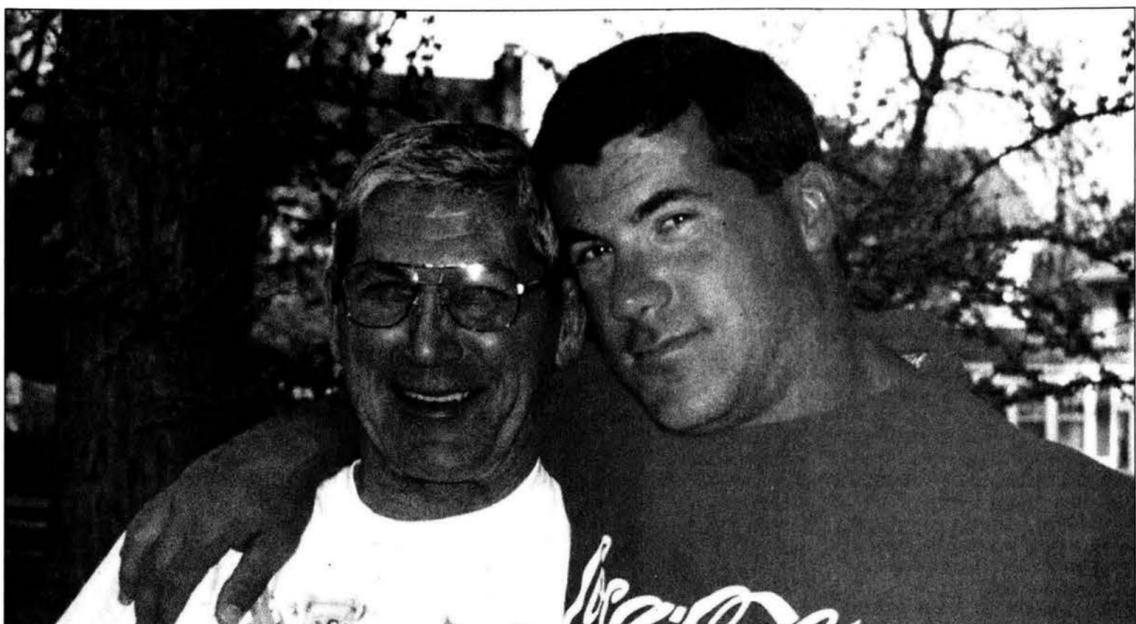
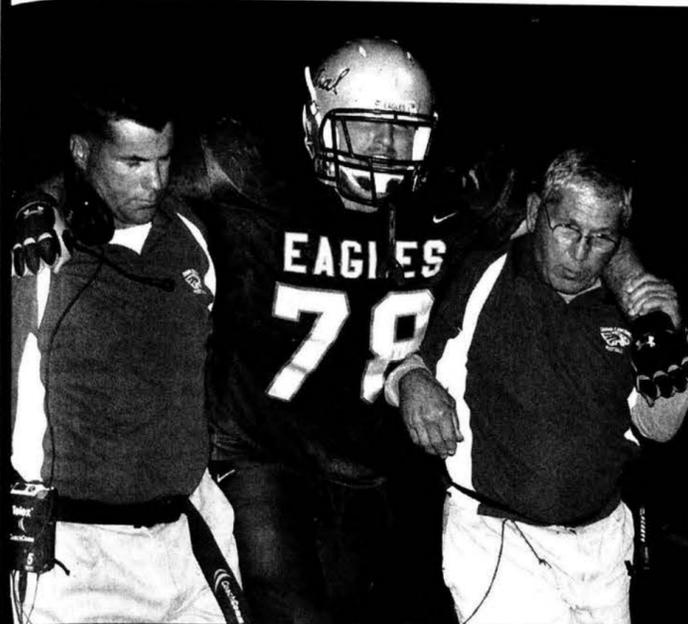
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PHOTOS PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER, COURTESY OF JAY BALL

**LEFT** Varsity football coach Jay Ball and his father, assistant coach Jerry Ball, help defensive tackle Dustin Ziesel off the field during the game against Millard South. "That was the greatest thing ever," Ball said of his time coaching with his dad. **(RIGHT)** Ball with his father in one of the photos he prepared for a slideshow he presented at the funeral. Other photos included the pair at their first Green Bay Packers game in 2001 and photos of Jerry from his time in the military.

## Ball cherishes memories of time spent coaching with father

CONTINUED FROM 'BALL' ON PAGE 1A

Ball said his dad used this to develop a career and build a life around. Ball said the most important lessons his father taught him were how to treat people and to always do things the right way. He said his father had a tremendous work ethic and was probably the hardest-working person he ever met. "He didn't have to be asked to do things," he said. "He just got things done." He said he admired how his father always knew someone doesn't have to talk to say a lot, and said his actions spoke very loudly. He said this was exemplified in the way he had always treated his wife and three children. He said though he used to be tough on his kids when they were in school, he mellowed after they graduated high school and gave him his five grandchildren. "He loved those grand kids," Ball said. Ball said his father came to coach with him after retiring from coaching at Bryan in 2003 and got to coach during Ball's last two years at South and his first at Central. He said his dad had always wanted to coach for 50 seasons, and he ended up close to that number at around 46. He said coaching with his father for the last few years of

his life was a truly memorable experience since football had always been such a huge part of both of their lives. He said he remembered being 4 or 5 watching from the sidelines during one of his dad's games and said that was probably when he decided he wanted to be a coach. He said getting to coach alongside with his father was even better. "That was the greatest thing there was," he said. He said when the team was on its way to a game, he and his father would ride on the bus with the players. "Looking over at my dad, (in the seat next to him), I'd think 'This is pretty damn cool,'" he said. "This is pretty cool." Ball said his father's passing would affect the future of the football team in several ways, notably that it would be losing a great coach. He said Jerry always taught the students to give their best effort and instilled in them the idea they might as well do things right the first time, teaching them to be good teammates. He also said the players would be using the memory for motivation to always work harder, dedicating their upcoming season to him. He said the players understood how close Ball and his father were, and said though Jerry was only at Central for a year,

he made a lot of impact. He said he got phone calls from the players when they found out what had happened, and had gotten a lot of respect from them. "He was an excellent coach," senior defensive tackle Dante Alexander said. Alexander said the entire football staff and team was brought to the auditorium on that Monday morning to be informed of Jerry's passing. Alexander said he'd talked to a lot of other players on the team, and Jerry had been a big inspiration to all of them. Alexander said he learned most from Jerry about playing on the line of scrimmage. "He taught me a lot about football," Alexander said. "And I knew a lot, but he taught me more." Ball said he himself will not be leaving Central any earlier because his father's passing. He said he plans to stay at Central until retirement, and the experience has made him realize how necessary it is to appreciate life. He said he still likes talking about his father, no matter what. "As much as it hurts," he said, "That's my dad. And I'm proud of him."

Close friends, colleagues remember man as loyal, intense, close to son

## Close friends, colleagues remember man as loyal, intense, close to son

BY PATRICK BREEN

"The first thought was shock," Tim Bond said. "I couldn't believe it. Jerry could do anything. I thought we could fix it. After a bit, I realized we couldn't." Jerry and his son Jay annually took a trip with close friends, Lonnie Tapp and Tim Bond, to Green Bay to see the Packers play. Jerry loved the Packers since he was young, and instilled that love into his son. "The whole Ball family likes the Packers," Bond said. "It's a family thing. There is a whole lot of love for football." The bond developed between the coaches reached beyond football. "He was a very special man," Bond said. "He was always there for advice, and his knowledge went past the game of football. He could build strong relationships." Tim Bond coached with Jerry Ball as assistants in 1976 at Omaha Tech High School. They continued to grow as friends as well as colleagues. "Jerry was a great man, great friend," Bond said. "He was loyal and anyone who knew him, loved him."

And when coaching, Bond recalls Jay Ball always on the sidelines with his father, learning and understanding the game. Bond said the two held very fond memories of Tech High. "Jay used to baby-sit my kids," he said. "I have known them for the longest time." When Bond accepted the head coaching job at Bryan High School, Jerry followed. When Jay Ball went to coach at Omaha South, Bond was worried he'd lose his assistant. "Jerry was a very loyal guy," Bond said. "I knew he wanted to join his son, but he wouldn't leave me." In 2003, Bond retired from coaching at Bryan, and Jerry joined his son at South. "It was one of Jerry's dreams," Bond said. "They always had a very close relationship, and now they'd be on the same sidelines." The tandem coached at South until a job at Central opened up. Jay applied at his alma mater and got the job. Jerry followed him there to be his assistant. Bond said Jerry and Jay affected each other. He thought they helped each other become the best they could be.

"Jerry had a tremendous impact on him (Jay)," he said. "I think he learned a lot from Jerry." He also said Jay kept his father involved and in love with the game. "And without Jay," he said, "I don't think Jerry would've kept coaching. They were always there for each other." Bond said he and Jerry maintained their friendship throughout Jerry's coaching changes and years. He said they became like family, and he looked forward every year to the trip to Wisconsin. It was tradition they would go to Vince Lombardi's house. Lombardi was the coach of Ball's favorite team, the Packers, when the team took home its first Super Bowl win. "Jerry rubbed off on you," he said. "He influenced everyone. His enthusiasm was contagious." Bond isn't sure if they will continue to go to watch the Packers without Jerry, but knows Jerry would want them to. He said Jerry and Jay Ball were a perfect pair. "They played, taught and coached the same," Bond said. "With the same heart and intensity."

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# District summit unites teachers, Omaha parents

BY KIM BUCKLEY

It was another opportunity for the parents in the community to get involved with the school.

The summit meetings held by Omaha Public Schools (OPS) was designed to help bring the parents in the community and teachers together in a discussion.

The meetings took place on Oct. 17, Nov. 9 and Nov. 16 at Metro South, Lewis and Clark Middle School and Metro Community College.

"We were trying to centrally locate them in the city within the OPS district," Leon Golden, from Student Community and Relations, said.

Golden introduced the speakers at the meetings. He said the speakers were chosen by their expertise in the field of the topics of discussion.

He said for instance Steve Nelson, who talked about the student handbook and student conduct, was the student community and relations director who dealt with rules and school policies. He also said Pinewood Principal Pam Johnson was a perfect fit for the topic she spoke about, building relationships between the schools and parents.

He said the district has held three meetings and the process was being put on hold during the winter break. He said that was to evaluate the effectiveness, attendance and participation in the three meetings. He said those were a part of the determining factor in whether or not more summit meetings would continue to take place.

He said the district wanted to start the summit meetings to bring different topics from the district to the parents in the community. Golden said the summit meetings were also to help set up dialogue between the school district to the community with any issues, concerns or questions the community might have.

"The way we (the district) like to do it is to have an agenda to go in with," Golden said.

He said the agenda gave the topics to the community beforehand so that the community would know what the district was going to talk about at the meeting. He said at the summit meetings the district encouraged dialogue back and forth from the community and the panelists with suggestions for improvement, with new issues and new ways to improve what policies the district has already been able to establish.

"It's just important to have everyone understand what they can expect from their district and their children," Golden said.

He said it was also important for the community to understand how the district is run and to know what the district is talking about.

He said the other two summit meetings didn't go as well as they would have liked. This was because of the low number of people in attendance.

"The numbers were small, so hopefully getting better advertising or getting the word out about the meeting would hopefully get more community people to attend," Golden said.

He said the summit meetings would hopefully get the parents in the community to understand what they want to focus on regarding their children.

He said, for instance, a parent would want to focus more on the grades or the future career of the student.

He said that way parents could come prepared to ask the questions they want to at Open House or parent-teacher conferences.

He said the summit meetings were also there to help parents understand the curriculum and the credit and grading systems of the school district.

Freshman Audrey Vacha said she would be interested in attending one of the summit meetings.

She said it would be interesting to see what is going on in the school district.

She said there could have been more advertising with the other summit meetings. She said the advertisements should be something that could be easily understood if glanced at.

"(The advertisements) could have been more catchy," Vacha said.

Pinewood Elementary school counselor Lisa Serensen was also in attendance and spoke at the summit meeting.

Serensen is an alumna of the class of 1975.

"We (Pinewood) are presenting on building a positive relationship with families," Serensen said.

She also said that Pinewood was working on building connections.

She said she thought the summit was a good idea because it would continue to provide information and outreach to parents and families in an effort to increase academic achievements.

"We're all a team working for the good of the students," Serensen said.

# HOW TO BE HAPPY

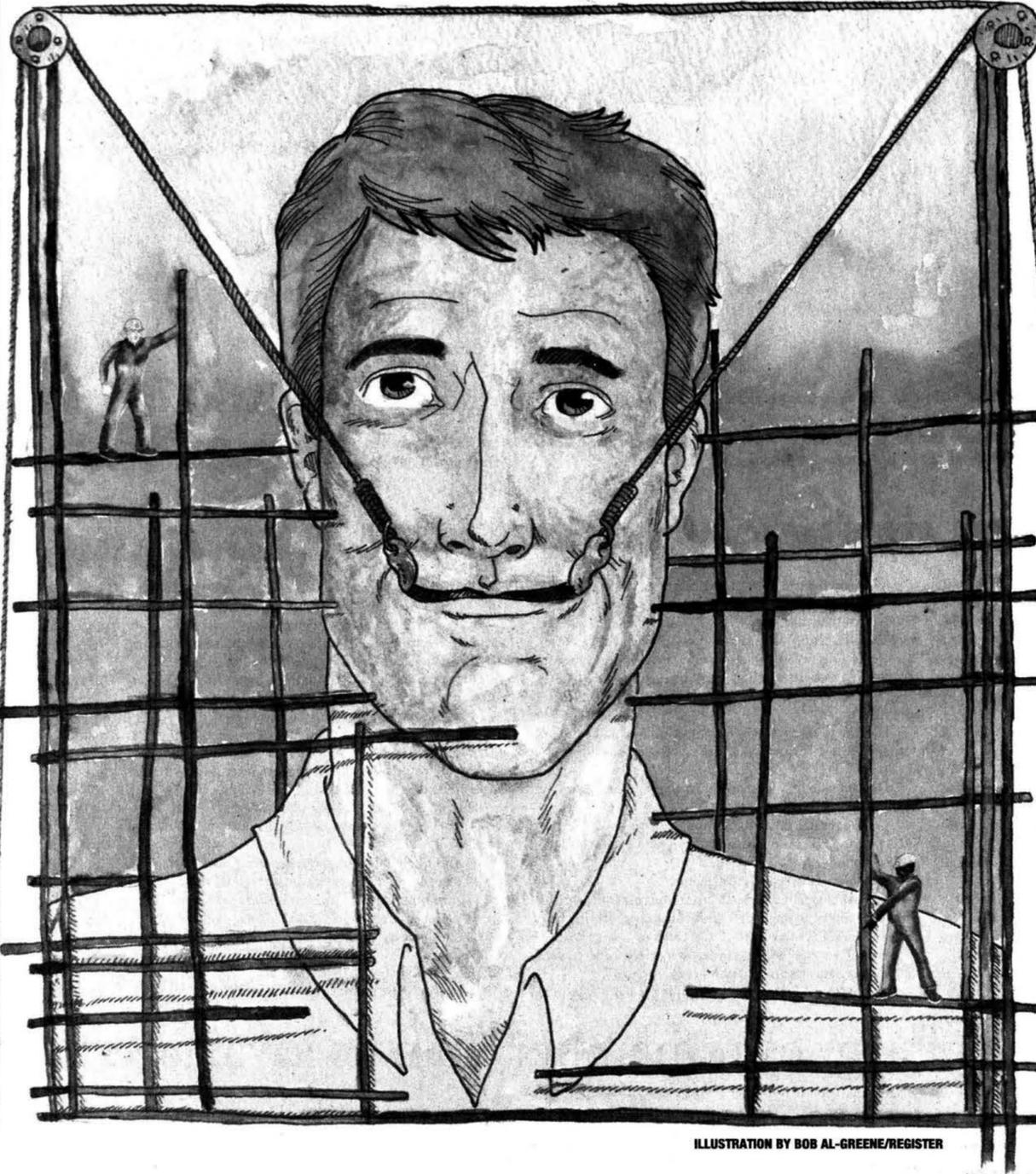


ILLUSTRATION BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

## Be it over homework issues, getting into college or problems at home, stress cuts deep into the daily life of teens. What are some ways to cope?

BY ALI HODGE

We all know the feeling.

The dreaded, painful, sinking feeling of stress.

Even though at the time there may seem to be no end to the weight of troubles, students are finding ways to try and make themselves happier in a situation that may leave them feeling helpless.

"I think students should ask themselves if what I'm doing right now can make me the best person I can be today," Iris Hagood, a therapist for Rizzo and Associates said.

Hagood, who has worked with many teens, said that there are different levels and intensities of stress and each student deals with their situation differently.

"The mental aspect of stress, which is the feeling part, leads to the physical part such as under eating and overeating," Hagood said.

Hagood said if students don't deal with the basis of their stress, no amount of breathing, yoga and meditation would help them. It is like a band-aid, she said. If one keeps putting on band-aids they will never truly heal the wound underneath.

Sophomore George Yin said one of his cousins, who was having a hard time, tried to relieve her stress by using drugs irresponsibly. By trying to use her drugs as a bandage, she ended up dead.

Hagood said dealing with the basis of stress is an important part of moving on. If drugs, yoga or exercise are being used as a cover up to make someone feel better, in the long run, it may only make things worse.

Hagood said she believes much of the stress teens have is due to problems at home. She said if students' parents are fighting, if there is lack of love in their household or if there is an unrealistic level of expectation, sometimes the students will carry that pain from home with them through their day, causing stress.

"I think the important people in our lives influence our day," Hagood said.

She said although parents, guardians and problems at home have the most to do with students' stress, sometimes there are other aspects as well.

Hagood said many times in students who don't have family problems, the basis of their stress is in themselves.

She said sometimes students are unbalanced in their schoolwork, their extracurricular activities and their social lives.

Hagood said being over involved outside of school can cause students to be unprepared academically, which causes stress. The same applies for a student who only focuses on schoolwork. She said teens need balance in their lives in order to try and avoid a burnout.

She said students should be involved in extracurriculars for a purpose. She said they should ask themselves if they are fulfilling their purpose or wasting

their time.

Hagood said teens need to find their center. She said they need to live for themselves, live up to their own expectations, set their own standards and embrace uniqueness.

Hagood said if teens could like who they are, make good choices and monitor themselves, they would be less stressed.

She said if it is personal problems causing the stress, she encourages them to go to the root of the problem and deal with it.

"They shouldn't be afraid to talk to a teacher," Hagood said. "They shouldn't be afraid to talk to a counselor."

Yin said he thinks school is full of pressure and students do get too stressed.

"I think teens need to deal with stress in a healthier way," Yin said.

He said whenever he gets stressed, he has a variety of things he does to try and get his mind off of his problems.

Yin said he hangs out with his friends a lot and whenever he is feeling overwhelmed. He said he tries to have a good time and that usually takes his mind off of things.

Yin also suggests that reading, exercising and listening to music are good things to do to calm down.

Freshman Emily Angelloz said whenever she feels stressed, she makes it a point to talk to her friends. She said that by talking to people, her stress level always decreases.

Hagood said finding friends who support one another is an important part of staying away from stress.

"One of the things they can do is find their support system... someone they feel comfortable talking to," Hagood said.

Hagood said it is important to surround yourself with people who bring each other up during a difficult situation rather than tear one another down.

Angelloz said she recalled a friend who went to therapy because she was feeling bad about her body.

"Everyone wants everyone to look perfect," Angelloz said. "But you can't."

Hagood said a stressful part of high school is the constant need to be in the "in" crowd.

She said teens need to learn to love themselves and not worry about what other people think of them.

She said finding friends who are supportive and who will accept them as they are is very important.

Hagood said it is important for parents and teens alike to learn to deal with stress. She said what they need to understand is the way teens learn to handle stress now is how they will handle stress when they are adults.

# Community leaders hope to end crime in North O

BY BOB AL-GREENE

If teens are more scared of the cops than the criminals, then how can there be safety and security for a community?

This was but one of the questions raised at the open forum, "Helping Prosperity in North Omaha," held Monday, Oct. 27 in North High's auditorium.

The forum was organized by Central graduate Jessica Womack. Introducing panel of speakers from the area, Jessica explained how the idea had come about.

Jessica said she had heard lampooning of North Omaha on the radio, which strongly criticized the crime ridden area. She said she was shocked.

"I was irate," she said. She said she called her mother to relate the story and ask if North Omaha was really as bad as the radio program made it out to be. She said her mother calmed her down and told her there were problems with the community that needed to be solved.

"There were no solutions," Jessica said. She said that was the reason to have the forum: to get answers, suggestions and solutions from members of the community. "There are people here who want to see change happen."

The panel was composed of four members: councilman Tom Suttle, funeral home owner James Thomas-Caston, Jessica's mother Alicia Womack and gym owner Mark Anderson.

Suttle said he hadn't had much experience with the area before but applauded his fellow panel members for taking the initiative. He said people had tried before to plan change, but were too afraid to go through with anything. He said that mind-set was reflected by members of the panel who did not show up, such as Correction Officers.

"All things start with a small step," he said. Suttle said they had the opportunity to plan ways to create business and economic wealth in the area where businesses are often subject to break-ins and violent crime. "Power," he said, "is in the people who want change."

Anderson, owner of Ball's Performance Gym in North Omaha, said his business in 2007 will begin offering 200 scholarships to community members under 14 in partnership with OPS.

He said teens who don't have anywhere to go are more likely to become involved in criminal activity.

Thomas-Caston, from the Thomas Funeral Home, said her business has never been open in North Omaha since 1950 and had never seen as many violent deaths as it has in the last 10 years.

Thomas-Caston said she sees a need for participation in the roughly 80 churches, and said religion would help young people learn how to process fear.

The reality of the situation was personified by the owner of clothing store George's Place, who told of a recent break-in. Though there were no injuries standing on the corner by her store, she called the police to report it.

"We can't expect the police to be there all the time," she said. "We have to clean our own backyards first."

The audience agreed the hot line Crime Stoppers is a joke to adolescents. Teens are simply scared of the police and of retribution from criminals and are unable to act, they said.

Many agreed the best way to combat such behavior was to teach kids how to deal with the criminal element.

"They (criminals) are more afraid than you are," said Alicia. "They're scared you're scared. It's all based on fear."

Other suggestions from the audience included Diversion Program for minors and using Homeland Security laws against the criminals. One of the audience members compared the situation to slavery.

"Fear kept us in bondage," he said. "We're in bondage in our own community."

The most forceful voice was of an audience member who took the stage and would only identify himself as "Chubby" and said he lived and operated many businesses in North Omaha.

He said he was tired of seeing action taken.

He proposed his ideas to reform the North Omaha community in two parts - the education system and the police system.

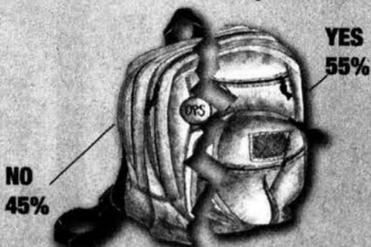
His first point was to change Omaha schools. With no technical schools in Omaha anymore, he said, students come out of school without specialized skills.

He also said the prison systems need reform so criminals must pay for their victims instead of being imprisoned in a pool of identical criminals.

"We're missing the boat here," he said, begging people to consider his plan. "We could be the start of changing the whole United States."

### STUDENT POLL

Have you or anyone you know ever been in therapy or used an unconventional way to relieve stress?



Do you think school puts too much stress on students?



275 polled

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2006

# OPINION

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER



## TANNING

The trend continues to grow in popularity despite the negative health effects.

PAGE 10

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## I CAN RELATE

A Column by Max Larson

## Depression of friend affects junior's views

For a person with depression, the affliction touches everyone he knows. Friends, family, anyone he might be close to; they all are forced to stand under the depression's shroud. While they may not bear its entire weight, there is constant tension.

At one point, I was very close to a girl who had depression. And, as in many cases, you couldn't tell by just looking at her. She blended with friends and led a focused, otherworldly life.

Finding out was very strange for me. I met her before she was depressed, and then we drifted apart, but not on sour terms, so we became friends again. Her depression went back to root during our time apart.

When she told me about what had happened, I couldn't have been more shocked. This was one of the last people I would ever expect to see sad.

It never occurred to me to doubt her sincerity regarding the magnitude of the situation. I had known depressed people before, and I thought of it as something that cleared up with pills.

Most of the time, it seemed like her withdrawal must have been a joke, or her diagnosis a mistake. When we were around each other, there was no hint of the sadness she spoke of. It was like being with any other person I was ever close to.

The more time we spent together, the more brilliance I saw in her.

But more and more frequently I was introduced to her low points. Late at night, or when she was alone, however depression found ways of revealing itself.

Gashes appeared on her wrists regularly. She talked of never wanting to wake up again and she would "accidentally" take too many pills.

On many occasions, I would wake up early in the morning to a phone call. She would be bawling on the other end of the line, saying between sobs that she didn't want to live anymore.

I didn't know how to react at first. I just broke it down into the most basic pillars of understanding I could manage.

Why didn't she want to live? She didn't know.

What was wrong with her life? Everything.

What were the positive aspects? Nothing.

Was it really so terrible that she wanted to die? Yes.

Was anything worth it? No.

It didn't make sense. I just wanted to scream, "Why can't you be happy? You're fine. You're fine just how you are. You must know that. You have to know that you have something to live for."

How could someone who emitted so much radiance feel so horrible at the same time? It was a frustrating concept to grasp, and it took me a long time to do so. My comprehension was limited, expanding only with time.

If anything, she meant enough to me that I would want to stay alive, so why couldn't I be enough for her? She might have said she cared, but if it wasn't even worth staying alive, then how honest could she be?

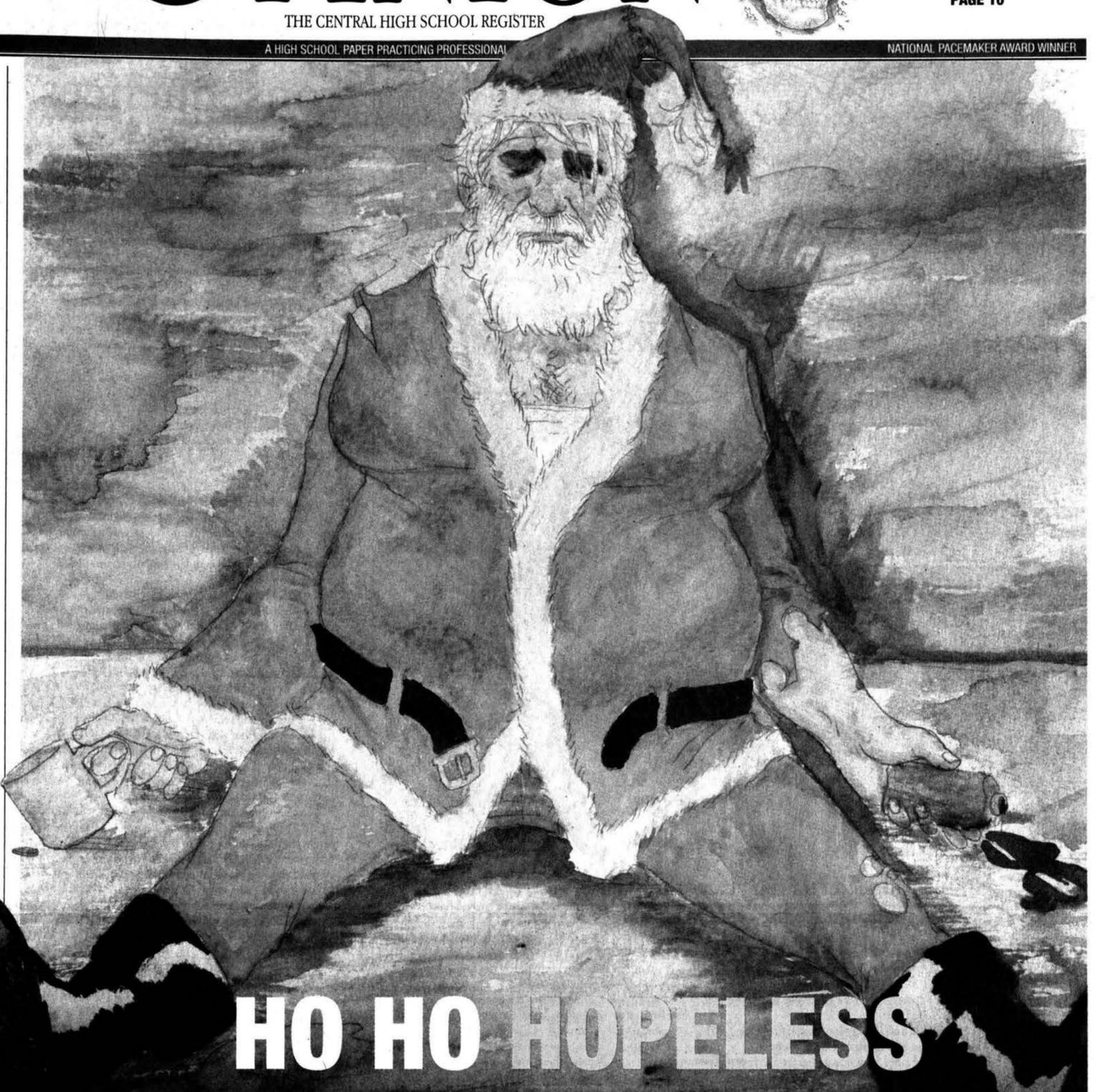
Sometimes I debated in my head whether she was truthful or just pleading for attention. Maybe she was putting me on. I couldn't see myself being that important to anyone. I also refused to believe that a pain so great, a restless, hungry sickness, could exist inside this happy, thriving girl.

Then I would see her again, and the dark scars on her wrists and legs would remind me that sorrow could be deadly. But, in seeing her, she would be happy and the scars would appear to be only imaginary. This shifting of moods placed me in a recurring state of indecision and confusion.

It isn't easy to be close to someone who wants to hurt herself. Never knowing if someday she will just end her life casts a dark cloud over the relationship, like never knowing when a bomb might explode.

But it never became that bad. She spoke of dying, but never reached the breaking point. I could make her feel better whenever she came near it. It's hard to explain, and I never really knew what I was doing.

I felt helpless. What are friends for?



# HO HO HOPELESS

All matters of religion aside, the spirit of giving and goodwill towards men is being left by the wayside by the current generation of greedy teens

'Tis the season to be jolly. Well, maybe that's an exaggeration. 'Tis the season to be lazy, gluttonous and ignorant.

We all know Christmas is coming up. Even if we're not Christian, it's hard not to be bombarded by the signs everywhere. Green and red ribbons adorning the pillars in the mall. A tiny statuette that waves or says "Ho-ho-ho" when a customer at Walgreen's passes in front of it. Slightly frightening cutouts of little worker elves in store windows. The country is gearing up for its favorite holiday and has been since before Thanksgiving. But why?

Doesn't it seem like everyone is just going through the motions? "Yeah, I've got to get my Christmas shopping done," says some dead-eyed mother. There's no magic in her voice, no excitement, no sing-song spirit as she and the 100 other moms drag their screaming 6-year-old darlings through the toy aisle. They wouldn't admit it, or they might not phrase it the same, but these people have forgotten the holiday before it's even arrived.

Yes, it might sound preachy: "Remember the true spirit of Christmas, Charlie Brown." But it's true. The world needs its holidays, and they're being sucked from the grasp of the people.

These aren't exactly the happiest times people can remember. There's a war going on right now halfway around the globe, and it's killing our brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, sons, daughters, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers. The war has never been less popular, but that doesn't mean it's going to end tomorrow.

Meanwhile, on our own shores, we have our own epidemic: poverty. Remember that war? The one right between the War on Drugs and the War on Education (er...).

20 percent of people are consuming almost 90 percent of the goods, but we're supposed to sweep that under the carpet until we can turn the corner, stay the course and smoke 'em out. You can hardly call it fighting a two-front war when money spent on basic water and sanitation is only 1 percent of what the world pumps into the military. Less than 1 percent

on basic education.

The wealthiest nations on Earth have the widest gaps between the rich and poor of any industrialized nations, but is that what matters to people in this season of giving?

Hardly.

Walk into the average classroom and the students aren't talking about the 39 percent of homeless people in the United States under 18. They're talking about the new Playstation 3, which costs a nauseating \$600. People spend almost \$100 on individual video games, but there still has to be someone outside at Baker's ringing a Salvation Army bell?

And as all this horror in the world continues in an endless cycle of pain humanity inflicts on itself, and the season builds to a head, the same familiar voices will begin to pop up again.

You know them. The talking heads, the same type of people who would pass by that bell ringer in a second.

This year they'll be claiming there's a war against Christmas again, or shouting about a liberally-controlled media that isn't playing "A Christmas Story" on TBS enough. The word "values" will pop up to say hello, but like all the other words out of their mouths, it will be empty. Hollow.

Nobody should have to count on a face on a television screen to tell them they don't have enough spirit or faith or brotherly love. It's something that person has to experience for themselves and decide to pursue.

This is not a religious or spiritual matter so much as a human one. And no one can expect to fix all the world's problems just because it's the right thing to do. But with the state we're in today, there's no reason not to extend a holiday wish, however preachy it might sound.

So do your best not to ignore or forget all those less fortunate than you on Christmas day. Thanksgiving may be a month past, but it's never too late to care.

After all, 'tis the season.

## EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

## New security features can only increase safety of school

All of the doors at the school have gotten windows installed in them and all outside windows have been locked shut for a good reason.

The safety of both the students and staff at the school should be of the highest importance.

School officials are doing the right thing.

This was a wise decision made for the right reason.

With gunner shooting some of the students at the school in Colorado and the Amish schoolhouse making the news, now was the best time to install the windows.

When attention about the safety in schools is in the minds of all of the country, this was the correct steps.

Before the windows, the teachers and staff would have to slip a green or a red card underneath the door if there was a lockdown. This way, teachers won't have to find the lockdown card in their desks and waste time slipping it under the doors of the classrooms. They can get themselves and their students hidden from view as

safely as possible as soon as possible.

The teacher can immediately take cover without having to worry about slipping a card underneath the door.

Now, because of the windows, the administration can just look through the windows to see what is going on, making any lockdown more efficient and faster for the security at the school.

The money used to pay for the windows was well spent by the school. The administration is doing what it can to ensure the safety of the people in the school.

Even though the ID badges were a safety measure, more could have been done to make the students safer.

Putting in windows in the doors is a step in the right direction. They are thinking about the possible situations that could happen.

Some might say the odds of a shooter coming at Central are really slim and installing the windows was a waste of money and unnecessary.

It's happened in other parts of the country and putting in

windows in the doors can help make sure it doesn't happen at Central.

If a shooter ever got inside the building, security could use the windows in the doors to find the gunman and save lives.

The administration needs to prepare for every possibility because part of their job is to make sure students can learn in a safe environment.

When there are three shootings in the country in just one week, one has to get more concerned about the safety of students. It was only natural school officials are taking steps to ensure the safety of the students even more.

Some would say that installing windows would not stop a gunman from coming into the school and killing people.

That is true, but the purpose of installing the windows is to prevent as many deaths as possible in such a situation.

The school put the money to good use in putting the windows in the doors.

People should stop whining about it and realize school officials did the right thing.

ILLUSTRATION BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or of the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, RATIFIED DEC. 15, 1791

# EDITORIALS



Greg Emmel  
PRINCIPAL  
Matt Deabler  
ADVISER  
Bob Al-Greene  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

## BURNING FOR BEAUTY

There's no secret tanning can cause cancer and ruin healthy skin, yet teens ignore the warnings to pursue this fleeting trend

Have you ever walked through the hallway and realized somebody with a face of a pumpkin walked right on by?

Nobody's face should be the color of a pumpkin, should it? Well...

Skin should not take on a leather and fake appearance. Is her body image that messed up that she does not even realize how orange her body is?

Tanning has become more and more popular within the last few years.

Teens are not listening to or seeing the warning signs. On an average day in the United States, more than one million people tan in tanning salons.

Seventy percent are Caucasian teens and women. Nowadays one has to be extremely tan to have "the look." So running around looking like pumpkin is the new "look"? What ever happened to the renaissance era when being pale and having a really high hairline made you the babe in town?

Nowadays it's, "Hey let's have a leather- orange face!" How long will it take for the society to realize this is not ones natural skin color.

Not to mention all the health factors.

The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2006, there will be 60,190 new cases of melanoma in the United States.

There are about 7,910 deaths per year from melanoma.

Eighty percent of skin cancer appears in the face, head, or neck.

Not to mention premature wrinkles.

The UV light is a known risk factor of melanoma. So if you have an odd looking mole, you better get it checked

out. Tanning beds are pretty much just cancer in a box. Hey, who doesn't want skin cancer?

Some states are try to make it illegal for teens to tan in a salon without parental consent. Even the FDA discourages use of tanning.

There is no such thing as a safe tan. People these days are obsessed with having a Barbie Caribbean glowing tan. Face it one cannot look naturally orange

So, if Jane Doe is that insecure about her body image and thinks she will look better with that awesome orange tan, is this right?

If Jane Doe were to tan everyday for some amount of time for the next five years. More than likely she will be diagnosed with skin cancer within the next 20 years.

What if one was kicked out of a tanning booth because they were freakishly orange, but still clocked in the next day?

Do you think one would be to addicted if they did this? What if all across America tanning addiction centers opened up? That would be pretty ironic.

Is it just body self-perception that people are doing this to themselves?

If ones perception is never being tan enough and already taking on the appearance in leather textured and orange face, then uh oh.

Do not be so vain! Realize what leather orange face would look like in 30 years. Or is one that addicted that she is going to a tanning bed until she is 90?

Are teens really that addicted that they go and sit in a UV radiation-invested lamps for a time out of their day?

So get over the craze and take care of your skin.

EDITORIAL  
The OPINION  
of  
the Register staff

## 06-07 Register

The Omaha Central High School Register seeks to inform its readers accurately as to items of interest and importance.

The staff strives to uphold the principles of journalism in all its proceedings.

The Register is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), the Nebraska High School Press Association (NHSPA), the Journalism Education Association (JEA), Quill and Scroll and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA).

The Register is an 10-time Best-in-Show winner for large newspapers at the JEA/NSPA national conventions in San Francisco, Boston, Phoenix, Dallas, Washington D.C., Seattle and Chicago.

The Register staff is also responsible for the publication of the EDGE feature magazine, which has also won a first place Best-in-Show award for specialty publications.

The Register has won multiple NSPA Pacemakers.

The Pacemaker is considered the Pulitzer Prize of high school journalism.

It has also won many Cornhusker awards from NHSPA.

It has been awarded Gold and Silver Crowns from CSPA for its overall work.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Register staff and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Central High School or its faculty.

Signed editorials are the opinion of the author alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Central High School or the Register staff.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. They can be sent to the Register at 124 N. 20th St., Omaha, NE 68102 or via e-mail to Central.Journalism@ops.org.

Letters must include the author's full name and grade. The use of pen names is not permitted. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters will be edited for length, clarity, taste and accuracy.

Misrepresentation of fact will not be considered. Advertising information is available by calling (402) 557-3357.

If there is no one available, please leave a message. A staff member will call you back.

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## Junior trespasses with no consequences, much guilt

My heart was stuck in my throat. No matter how hard I swallowed, the red pulsating organ stayed, choking me. I couldn't say anything. I knew I was done.

When my friends suggested a night out and about, I innocently thought we would be just cruising in one of their cars, maybe attempting to bowl or play midnight Frisbee. I never thought I would be sneaking into some new unfinished house on what looked to be a vacant lot.

At first thought, the idea was ingenious. Lets just play cards and hang out in a newly developed suburbia. In our folly, we sped off in my friend's car. Singing along to popular radio songs, we must have looked like lunatics on the highway.

I was decked out in black. From the tips of my black dress shoes to the black ski mask pulled past the brink of my chin.

When we got to the house, we slid in through the dog door. Our shoulders barely fit through the tight squeeze. Once we crawled our way in we just stood. Half-stunned, half-excited and fully scared. After two minutes of standing in wonderment, my friend pulled out the tennis balls.

Still afraid of being caught, I repressed my fears and took a ball and ran. The game of dodgeball isn't too original, but the risk of pain and throwing combined makes it fairly popular.

My ears heard a slight click, followed by a few more clicks and then a door clunk open. For a few seconds we all were frozen in time.

Eons after eons we stood like deer in the headlights. Just waiting for the semi to decapitate and maim us.

Then, after our wits came back to us my friend yelled for us to jump into this small hole. Tightly packed like sardines, we each struggled to get comfortable.

The footsteps clapped against the concrete basement. He was coming towards us.

A ghost-like light was scanning the corners of the room. The flashlight shone on my friends and I felt the bright burning light swivel to my side of the cramped compartment. Out of last desperation, I didn't move. I hoped that the some unseen force would shield me from his eyes. I remember his gruff voice.

"Come out. Come out now!"

Still none of us moved. I don't know if I was

frozen with fear, or if I was still trying to come up with an escape plan.

The man was old. He had to be pretty close to 60. He had a deep voice and his mustache was turning the shade of rust, which would eventually turn to silver.

"I'm not mad. Just come on up."

As we each lumbered out of the hole in the basement, he chuckled. The laugh sounded like that of a mad man. The scenarios ran through my head.

He could kill us each. Chop us into little pieces and lower our bloody dismembered bodies into this dusty hole we just came through. Or he could call the cops. We would be taken off to jail, where each of us would face the phone call home from the angry parent. The ride from the jail would be slow and full with his glares.

I hoped for the dismembering.

In his half-amused voice, he told us to sit ourselves down on the couch. My body was tense, my eyes locked up. My eyes welled up

clenched my fists.

I asked myself why I decided to do this. It wasn't going to be that much fun.

I remember his next few words.

"Well... I guess now is the time I kill ya."

My mind went blank. Tears started to grow in the corners of my eyes. He laughed, again. He smiled. His next words were just as distinctive as the first. His bulging eyes glanced at my friend and new found buddy. Just like me, his face was blank with only a straight-forward stare.

"Just kidding you guys."

We had just broken into his house. We were playing dodgeball with a tennis ball in his basement. We heard him come in. We ran to the only place we thought we could escape. And he still wasn't mad.

His name was Frank. He proceeded to laugh and tell us stories of his youth.

I relaxed. I felt the lump in my throat lessen in swelling and I was finally able to talk.

He was worried that we were vandals, but decided we were too young and scared to be criminals. Frank was nice. Something completely unexpected.

In the end he told us to be careful, but the house down the street was going to be empty for the next few weeks. That would be the first house we broke into. And also the last.



**FAKING A SMILE**

A Column by Patrick Breen

## Threat of religious oppression more real than some may feel

A woman in Colorado was denied her day in court when she refused to take off her traditional Islamic headdress while testifying so the judge could look her in the face and be sure she was being honest. Her case was thrown out because she defied that judge.

On the surface, it would certainly seem she was treated unfairly, and was the victim of the story. And it would not be difficult to sympathize with her.

But it would be a lot easier if her case wasn't so endemic of a broader, much more extreme problem facing western civilization today.

And that problem has a name. Jihad.

No, I'm not saying this woman was a terrorist, some undercover sleeper agent on a mission. Don't be ridiculous. I'm saying there's another end of that spectrum. A much more dangerous end.

Across the world, in Ethiopia, a war has been declared on the Christians of that nation by the extremist Muslims of their neighbor, Somalia. Entire villages of people are disappearing being forced to flee their homes as waves of militant jihadists storm across the border, converting by force. Violent force.

When the holy war reached our shores on Sept 11, 2001, it became the common misconception that "they hate us for our freedom", and that's what this current jihad is about. Originally, the story was different; right after the attacks, when everyone was grasping for an answer, the public was told the attacks were retaliation for our military bases in their Holy Land, Saudi Arabia. I'm not sure I would justify a barracks by murdering 3,000 innocent people in one shot, but that was the story.

In truth, the reason for the attacks was much worse. You see, it might not even have been in retaliation for anything.

Centuries ago, when the Muslim empire extended from Persia to the Rock of Gibraltar, their civilization was possibly the most advanced in the world. With universities, medicine, marketplaces, massive armies and navies. And the purpose of those armies and navies was to do what any empire wants to do: expand. This included conquerin' a-plenty, often of Christian or Jewish lands and their people.

The Muslims ruled these minorities through a system of complete subjugation. Religion was the dividing factor then as race was up to integration in our country. The non-Muslims were given a name: dhimmis. And they lived perpetually as second-class citizens. They were a conquered people. And all was right with the world.

But then the uneducated, disgusting, hoggish peoples of Northern Europe (you know, us) started gaining power. Started winning battles and spreading their own advancing culture, touching unheard-of continents. And the Muslim empire dissolved. Since white Christians have been winning for the last few centuries, we've kind of forgotten we were ever

something other than the dominant force on the planet.

But the Muslims haven't forgotten. And jihad is their way of reminding us. It is their tool of expansion for today. This is not an inference or a presumption of my part; it is fact.

All you have to do is look at the situation in Ethiopia, at the proactive stance being taken by the would-be conquerors. Their hope is to gain back the world, and they see it as a matter of religion, not governmental boundaries or skin color.

So it comes down to it, do we wait and take the chance no matter how small, that they reach us or an ally next? It's as easy a choice to make as seems. On one hand, part of me wants to fight them. Fight them now, fight them hard.

That part of me is ready to say something I never

expected to say: whether he knows it or not, George Bush might be right. We do have to fight them on their own ground. They're looking for a fight, and they don't care where they have to go to get it. They want to expand into an empire again, and put quite simply, we cannot let that stand.

There are better ways to tell them that than through cowboy diplomacy and strictly unilateral efforts, but the beacon of Western culture, it is our job to protect the oppressed.

I want peace. I really do. God, I just want to stop the fighting, and a war of ideologies doesn't appeal to me any more than backing off. But if we want to keep winning for the next few centuries, if we want to be able to go out after dark or live in a society devoid of religious persecution, if we don't want to be the conquered peoples, dhimmis again... you can finish that sentence.

Sucks, huh?

That's why it's important to tell that woman in Colorado to take off the burqa in the courtroom, and make her understand the law of the land precedes religion. We have a separation of church and state in this country, and if you're going to live here, you're going to have to get used to which is more pressing. You'll always have freedom of religion, but justice is blind. We're all the same in her eyes, and we're not about to start making exceptions just for the heck of it.

But many judges might not have taken the initiative to throw the case out.

There is a wave of appeasement in this country because people are afraid to look like they're the bullies even though they're the ones being bullied. Every time there is some political cartoon, or comment from the Pope or even works of art which Muslims might find offensive, there is an uproar, often leading to violence and as a result we are making the decision to censor ourselves. No more free expression anywhere.

There will be nothing left to make us individual. We're backing down before we've begun.



**EAT YOUR SARCASM**

A Column by Bob Al-Greene

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
COLUMNS  
REGISTER YOUR OPINION  
POLITICAL CARTOONS

# OPINION

I just wanted to say that I think big games against North are a blast! They are full of energy and excitement.

Catherine Carter (9)

## BIG ISSUE: UP IN SMOKE

With a smoking ban in effect in Omaha and cities across the nation, it seems these are hard times for cigarette companies. But is it any harder for teens to get their hands on tobacco?

### Dangerous trend of cigarette use rising with adolescents

Teenagers will do a lot of things in school just to fit in. Adolescents are most vulnerable at age to peer pressure and perceptions, advertisers know this. They can, and will plot entire campaigns and convincing the youth market to their product.

The most obvious culprit is the cigarette companies. Other industries, like fast food, for example, might employ the same tactics with the same results, but some respond better to being on a thin white cig than they do on a 1000-calorie quad.

But what if it was possible to bump that little stick of death and turn it into something just as disgusting as the cigarette?

Thicken it, lengthen it, fill it with more disgusting black leaves and chemicals? Super-size it, if you will? There's no way that would appeal to the market.

Right? Well, don't count on it. They're called cigars, in case it isn't obvious, and even though they're bigger, grosser equivalent of they're coming more and more popular.

Cigar smoking in general has been going up increasingly since 1983, especially among women and adolescents.

In 2001 alone, there were a projected 3.8 billion cigars produced in the United States (that's billion with a C).

According to a study conducted by the American Cancer Society, 15 percent of high school students admitted to smoking at least one cigar in the last 30 days.

That might seem a bit low, but it's a few percentage points behind adult average, which is also rising steadily. And 7 percent of middle school students.

That includes sixth graders. There's an entire untapped market that companies are starting to get their hands on.

The list goes on. Imagine Morgan Freeman on a billboard for Marlboro's; who wouldn't find that a little questionable? The truth is that unless something is done to stop it, the trend of cigar smoking in teens and young adults could blow up and become another epidemic. Legislation to warn consumers about the dangers of cigars, not just their relatively miniscule cousins, must be enacted and enforced, along with an education campaign, or we risk losing the future before we know what's at stake.

With those numbers in mind, consider that cigar smokers are up to 10 times as likely to get laryngeal, oral, or esophageal cancer as nonsmokers.

Even second-hand cigar smoke contains high amounts of carbon monoxide, ammonia and of course, nicotine, which is by no means hard to find in cigarettes, either.

But one average cigarette contains 8.4 milligrams of nicotine and tar, according to the National Cancer Institute. And an average cigar contains between 100 and 200 milligrams. Sometimes, almost 450.

There's no other word for that incredibly large amount of highly addictive nicotine entering a human body than poison.

And yet, disinformation about cigar smoking and its effects is more common than the truth. That's because while cigarette packs are required to have health warning labels and messages from the Surgeon General, cigars slip outside that particular net and the truth isn't as in-your-face as it might otherwise be.

Cigars carry a much smaller stigma; they're for celebration, for a dad after his first son is born or a baseball player after winning the World Series, to be broken out with the champagne.

Those who would try to justify consumption of cigars in any age group would cite the fact that many cigar smokers do not inhale, because the smoke is more noxious. If it never makes it to your lungs, you can't get lung cancer.

No, but nicotine can infuse with your saliva and be drawn down your throat, giving you cancer of the esophagus and voice box.

Or you can get cancer of the mouth and have to have your jaw removed. Does that sound like fun? Even worse, publications like "Cigar Aficionado" glamorize smoking to an extraordinary extent by having some of the world's biggest celebrities appear on their covers, like Michael Jordan, Pierce Brosnan, Kevin Spacey, Kurt Russell...

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Legislation to warn consumers about the dangers of cigars, not just their relatively miniscule cousins, must be enacted and enforced, along with an education campaign, or we risk losing the future before we know what's at stake.



### Ban is right for health of city

The city of Omaha has just voted and approved a smoking ban that made almost all of the restaurants in the city smoke-free.

The smoking ban in restaurants is a good thing. The voters made the right choice.

And if people think it won't affect teenagers, they would be wrong. The smoking ban will more than likely discourage teenagers from smoking in the first place. If the ban stops teenagers from smoking illegally, then it's a good thing.

And the smoking ban would make it harder for those teenagers who are smoking illegally to hide it. If it's harder to hide smoking, more teenagers would quit smoking. Teenagers will be affected positively by the smoking ban.

The smoking ban has taken a lot of heat from restaurant owners and smokers. Smokers and restaurant owners in Omaha have been complaining about the smoking ban in restaurants that will take place in a couple of months. They fail to look at all of the benefits of having the smoking ban.

There was a study done by Roswell Park Cancer Institute that showed the workers and patrons in New Jersey were exposed to more than nine times the level of pollutants than New York, which has implemented a smoking ban throughout the city.

Another study done by Harvard School of Public Health showed that toxins plummeted by 93 percent in areas around

restaurants where there was a smoking ban. The study also showed there were no profit lost overall for the restaurant owners.

Restaurant owners don't need to fear for the profits they think they'll lose because of the ban. They might have a minor loss in profits in the beginning, but overall the restaurants will not lose any money. In fact, the Harvard study showed a small gain in money.

It's about time there was a smoking ban in restaurants. In fact, the smoking ban should have happened earlier.

More and more cities are implementing smoking bans, and even other countries are doing the same. Countries like Ireland are even making the entire country smoke free. Making public places is beginning to be a trend, and smokers should just get used to it.

Are the smokers in Omaha really that selfish that they don't care about the health risks second-hand smoke can cause?

Are they really more concerned about having to go smoke outside a restaurant that they disregard the health of the others around them?

Probably not, but it sure seems that way from the way they are complaining.

Second-hand smoke is unhealthy. There is not any doubt about it. The level of pollutants put in the air because of smoking is also unhealthy. The ban is a good thing.

EDITORIAL  
The OPINION of  
the Register staff

### Students lack proper social skills

Dear Editor,  
My opinion on how I feel about student social skills is, no matter how many times they are reviewed during periods one through four throughout the year, students will keep on talking to teachers and doing the same things they were doing at the beginning of the year. What I'm trying to say is these skills are not taught to everyone.  
Dorsey (12)

### Mix it up' day fun, beneficial

Dear Editor,  
I wish we could "mix Things up" more often. It's really fun to get to talk with other people and I don't get why there needs to be a certain day. People should leave their cliques more often.  
Wallace (11)

### New final schedule good idea

Dear Editor,  
I think it is a good idea to have finals before winter break because I remember freshman year and how everyone came back and didn't remember anything.  
Cardenas (10)

### 'Mix it up' day helps make friends

Dear Editor,  
Great idea! Mix It Up day was a huge success. Throughout the whole of my lunch period people were continuously running around the table to table sharing questions and meeting new people. There should be more days like it. Thanks!  
Anderson (9)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR WANTED

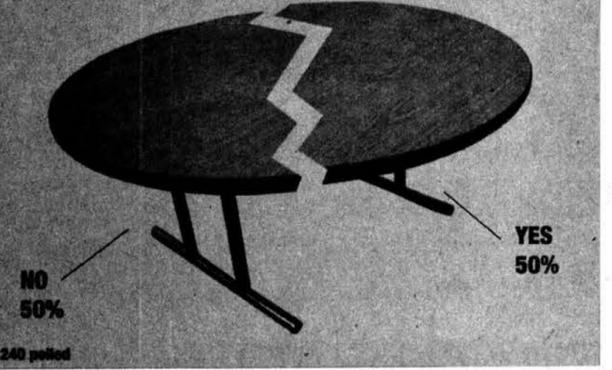
Letters to the editor are gladly accepted in room 030, via e-mail to Central.Journalism@ops.org or can be placed in Mr. Deabler's mailbox in the main office. Letters must be factual and contain the author's full name and grade. Incorrect or unsigned letters will not be printed. The use of pen names is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

### Big rivalry games offer excitement for all

Dear Editor,  
I just wanted to say that I think big games against North are a blast! They are full of energy and excitement. Even though there is a slight danger involved, the energy makes the game lots of fun and makes me excited about Fridays.  
Catherine Carter (9)

### STUDENT POLL

Was "Mix It Up" day a success?



### Lunch hours need to be improved

Dear Editor,  
Mix It Up day was awesome. I didn't think I would meet anyone new, but I did.  
My friend Brittany and I walked all around the courtyard. Some people thought it was weird that two freshman were walking around.  
But it was still tight.  
Emily Angelloz (9)

### Social skills every day occurrence

Dear Editor,  
In my classes, there seems to be a general scorn for Social Skills day. However, most of the teachers are behind it. They realize its merits and value. My teachers tried to make it interesting for students by having kids act out a scenario applying the skill to situations relevant to high school life. I think the students get offended that someone would be so presumptuous as to tell them that the way they act is inappropriate or wrong. Social skills are valuable and needed, but I think it was tiresome for people to have them all in one day, though that is not really an excuse for not paying attention.  
Rachel Woolard (11)

### Criticism is unwanted by junior

Dear Editor,  
You know what bugs me? Negative criticism! Teachers and students give out non-constructive and often times negative criticism on art! It does not help the artist! What it does do is irritate the artist! So I think that there needs to be a stop on this!  
John Handlos (11)



### REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Does the smoking ban affect teens positively or negatively?



"Positively, because teens should not be smoking."  
Brenton Donaldson (12)



"I think it does positively. It affects everyone. We can make the world healthier and cleaner."  
Tori Skipper (9)



"Not really. We usually have to hide the smoking anyway. It's not going to affect teens at all."  
Shane Kock (11)



"Negatively, because most teens smoke, even if it says not to. And also because smokers and non-smokers should have the same exact rights."  
Samantha Kratochvil (11)



"It affects them (teens) positively. If you start banning it now, people won't start smoking."  
Michelle Vu (11)



"Positively. It's bad for our health."  
Kaity Walgrave (10)

# STANDING IN

Under the direction of John Gibson for the past six years, the drama department has produced several musicals. But to make a successful performance, enthusiasts might choose to take a different route than the fall

## New sound, lighting equipment modernizes musical

BY KIM BUCKLEY

With the growing world of technology, the drama department is getting more modern.

The drama department used new equipment to make the fall musical, "My Fair Lady," as good as possible.

"It's one of my goals to keep the department fresh," Drama Dept. Head John Gibson said.

Gibson said the new equipment was rented, but the department would eventually like to buy the technology. He said the technology will be rented again for the upcoming Road Show.

"I don't want to buy it (the technology) until I'm proficient in it," Gibson said.

He said the new technology made the jobs of the people working with the lighting and sound easier and gave them the opportunity to get creative with lighting and sound.

He said they used computer-operated lights for the play. Gibson said by operating the lights by computer, they didn't need to change all of the lighting manually. He said to rent it cost about \$100 per light for a week. Senior Sonya Rhine was in charge of lighting and said it was fun and interesting to work with the new equipment.

She said to control the lighting they used a plain slider board that had a small computer. Rhine said the way the lighting worked annoyed and confused some of the people in the audience though. She said the way the lights spun around on the floor before landing on where it needed to seemed weird and unnecessary because it was more like lighting used for a special effect. Rhine said the musical was one that needed simple lighting.

She said the department did all it could do for the play in terms of lighting.

Rhine said if the drama department had the finances and training to do it, it would have used a program that was hooked to a laptop computer.

She said if it had used the computer program, the department could have done more in terms of lighting for the musical. Rhine said it wasn't especially confusing to learn how to use the slider board, but there was a problem with hooking the system up.

She also said the wires and cords got unplugged a couple of times and had to be reset and put back up. Rhine said putting the lights back up required a lot of people to help.

Rhine said hooking the system up was a problem because they tried to run it through cords and the soundboard, but they realized they had the wrong end so they had to get a new cord. She said after they got the new cord they then had to run the cords up to the lighting and balcony because they realized they couldn't run it through the soundboard. Gibson said they also used a new type of microphone. He said they used professional microphones, which went on the side of the actor's face. Gibson said to rent the microphones was about \$100 a week as well. He said with the microphones it was easier for the audience to hear the actors.

Junior Sarah Potts, who was one of the leads in the play, said the new microphones were kind of a hassle because the actors needed to watch where the cords were.



PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER  
During rehearsal senior Crystal Rameriz (left) and junior Sarah Potts perform a scene between Henry Higgins' mother and Eliza.

However, she said the new microphones were an improvement from the ones used in previous plays.

"They (the microphones) didn't go out as much and they wrapped around the ear so you didn't have to worry about speaking in a particular direction," she said.

Potts said the microphones never lost their feed, and the actors could always be heard.

Senior Janice Baker and Junior Adrienne Anderson were in charge of sound for the musical. Anderson said the previous year the department used full body microphones, which she said weren't as up to date as the ones used in this year's musical. She said the body microphones didn't work as well.

She said they got the microphones a week before the show, but planned the play out by using the body microphones. She said the only problem they had with the microphones was a rented one used by sophomore David Rubio, who played the role of Mr. Doolittle.

Anderson said at the first show the microphone had a replaced battery, and they believed a connection went bad.

She said he had to use an old microphone, which shorted out at some points during the performance.

She said other than that, there were no problems with the microphones.

Gibson said some of the strong points of the musical were the willingness of the students to work hard and accept blocks and directions well. He also said he thought Lyn Bouma, Colin Brown and himself worked well together.

He said around six to eight musicals are looked at each year. The play was chosen based on the talent of the students, if they wanted to do it, and the capability of the department being able to do it financially and if they want to take on the size of the

show.

"It ('My Fair Lady') was a wonderful show and we had the talent to do it," Gibson said.

Potts said when the "My Fair Lady" was chosen, she had never seen the musical, so she didn't know what to think about it, but then she watched the movie and liked it.

She said she really liked the dry and sarcastic humor in the movie because it was the kind of humor she enjoyed.

Gibson said there were always things to be improved. Gibson said technology moves so fast that there were always things to be worked on and improved with lighting and sound.

However, students were not able to see the play with a student activity card because they were able to in previous years.

They needed to pay for a ticket in order to see it.

Gibson said this was the first year the students weren't allowed to attend the play with just an activity card. He said having to pay for the ticket didn't limit the number of people in the audience.

He said the reason was because \$5 was cheap to see a show and cheaper than to see a movie. He also said he wasn't the person who implemented the new policy. He said six weeks of work was put into pre-production. During those six weeks the cast rehearsed, rehearsed, rehearsed. Gibson said they sang, danced, and built sets for the play.

Sophomore Crystal Overgaard was in charge of the makeup and costumes for the musical. She said makeup was a big thing because it brought out more of the characters because the face says more.

Overgaard said to make the actors look good it took about an hour and a half to do hair, makeup and costumes.

She said for costumes they wanted clothing that looked old. This was because some of the characters needed to look as though they had been out on the street.

Overgaard said she had two assistants with her who were down in the makeup and costume room helping her do quick costume changes, retouching the makeup on the actors and making sure that the actors were on time and dressed appropriately for the scene.

She said they used charcoal to make dirty faces, a gray sponge, cake makeup for basic foundation as well as dark browns, grays and blacks and bright colors for the lips. Overgaard said for example when Eliza was going to go to the ball she needed to be clean and presentable. She said if Eliza wore dirty makeup that would give the wrong idea to the audience.

"She actually needs to look as if she's going to the ball and not just coming off the street," she said.

Gibson said when casting the play, he kept in mind the talent of the people, their singing and speaking ability, their looks, the loudness, their reliability and their ability to follow instructions. He said he had two assistant directors this year, senior Amanda Pintore and senior Crystal Ramirez. He said they asked to do it, and wanted the job. He said Ramirez and Pintore worked on dialogue and blocking with the actors.

## Junior's enthusiasm for acting plays big role outside of school

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Junior Delaney Kunz was born and raised to be around the theater.

She was already interested in acting when she was only a toddler.

Kunz said ever since she was 3 years old, she took dance classes.

She said when she was around the age of 5 or 6 she took drama workshop classes and started acting.

She said she got into acting because her mother is an actress.

Kunz said her mother has been acting for 20 years, taught drama classes and workshops and has worked at the Shakespeare Festival.

She said her mother co-owns the Bridgit Saint Bridgit Theater, or the BSB.

Kunz said the BSB was where she performed as one of the three witches in "Macbeth" earlier in the school year.

She said her character was stabbed and died during the performance.

"We had to be very carefully choreographed so the

dagger was a good distance from the stomach," she said.

Kunz also said she had to act emotionally and physically to make it look as though she had been pierced through her stomach.



KUNZ

She said she had sometimes thought of becoming a professional actress when she was older.

Kunz said acting was a hard job to keep up professionally. She said it was pretty hard to make a living just from acting.

She said acting professionally was harder than some people think it is.

She said from her experience, the hardest part of acting, in general, was cooperating on all levels with the actors and the director.

Kunz also said the week before the show opens, called tech-week, was the hardest time during the play, which involved setting the lightboard, costumes, cues and memorizing all of her lines.

She said the most exciting part of acting for her was the opening night of the show, when all of the work finally comes together.

"You feel that exhilarating rush of playing your part, acting for the audience," Kunz said.

She said it was really rewarding for her to hear the applause

of the audience and know the hard work was appreciated.

"It's exciting to get the audience's reaction to your character," Kunz said.

She said she loved acting because it was a nice release and a very interesting way to relieve stress.

She said there was also a sense of community in the theater, and she got to meet new people and get new experiences.

Kunz also said there was also an exhilarating rush when she acted on stage.

She said her favorite role was the part of Melinda Loomis in "Inherent the Wind." She said it was a very humorous role, and it was an interesting show. She said she was proud to be a part of that show. Kunz said the hardest role for her to play was the role of Meg the Mouse in "Twas the Night Before Christmas" at the Rose Theater.

She said it was a main stage play with an audience of 900 people and packed houses on some of the nights. She said she got one of the lead roles in the play which meant a lot more lines. Kunz also said because she was a lead she had more responsibility.

Kunz said there was also the stage makeup and mouse ears for a costume.

She said the first plays she did were based on fairy tales and children stories. Kunz said she also did some shows at the Rose Theater before the BSB.

Kunz said it was exciting for her to die on stage when she played the part of a vampire victim in "Dracula."

She said it was the first play she performed in at the BSB when she was around 11.

Delaney's mother, Amy Kunz, said she decided to enroll Delaney in the drama workshops because those classes didn't focus on acting as a career. The classes focused on using imagination, having self-confidence, being part of an ensemble and communication with others.

"It's (the classes) a whole different focus for young people," she said.

She said her daughter really loves literature, especially Shakespeare, and being able to act out some of those characters and emotions was an exciting way to express art for her.

"It's fun to be able to share that with the audience," she said.

She said her daughter has been around the theater since she was a little girl. She said people at the theater have been able to see her daughter grow up and have served positive role models.

She said her daughter has become more independent with her acting and prefers to prepare for an audition on her own before running it past her mother for advice. She said she thought that was great because it helped her daughter grow stronger as an actor.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE WILHELM/REGISTER  
Senior Aaron Smith-Shull practices his part of Mr. Higgins during the rehearsals of "My Fair Lady." He was one of the leads along with junior Sarah Potts.

### CAST & CREW POLL

What is the hardest part of organizing and producing a production in high school?



"What is hard is when one person doesn't follow through with their responsibility in the musical."

John Gibson  
Director



"Time constraints. If we had more time it (the musical) would have been better."

Janice Baker  
(12) Sound



"I think the hardest part was just getting everyone to cooperate ..."

Amanda Pintore  
(12) Asst. Director



"The dialogue and memorizing the lines with the accents ... it takes a lot of time to put it both together."

David Rubio  
(10) Actor



"Getting enough time for it because it's a commitment."

Clara Etzrodt  
(10) Stage Crew

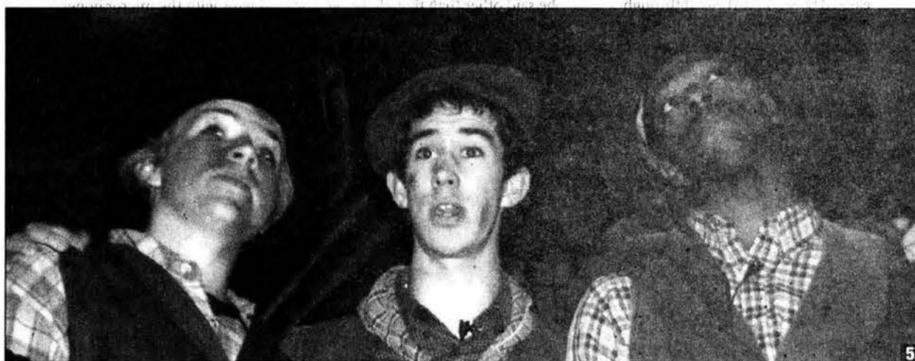
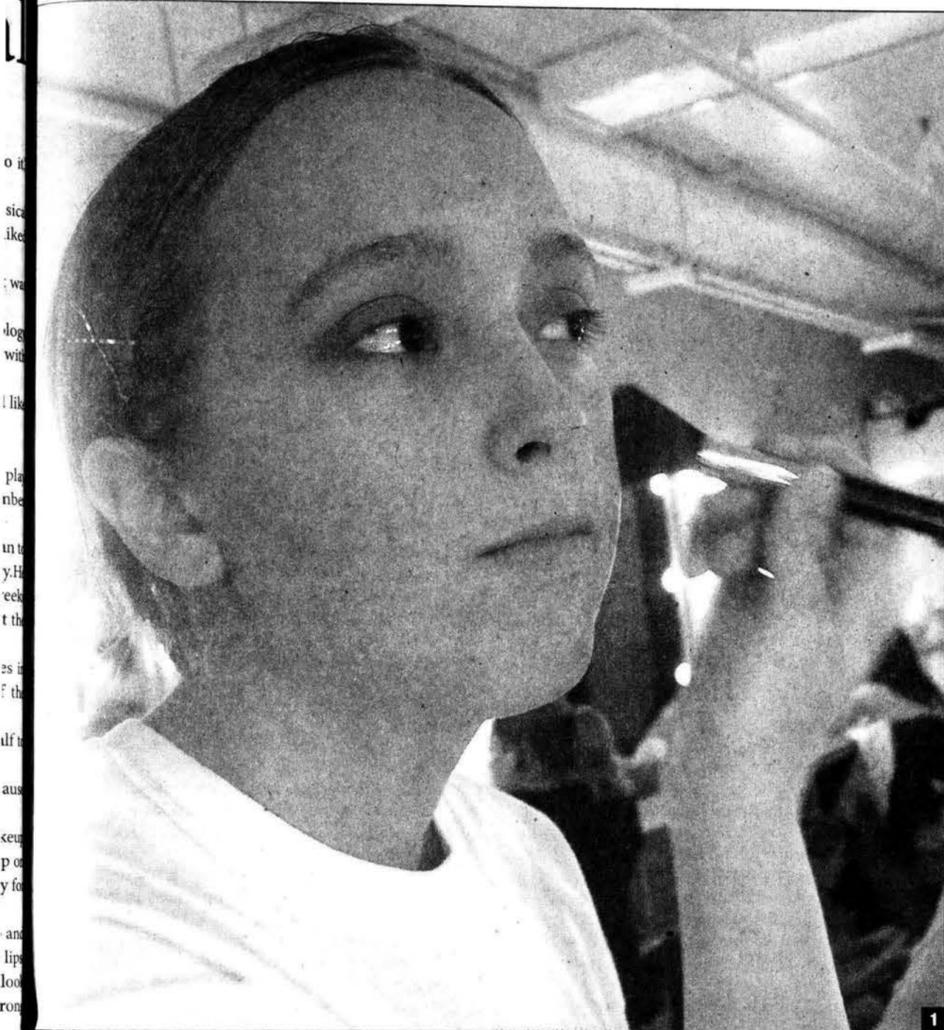


"Not knowing my character and having to do kind of improv."

James Pauley  
(11) Actor

# THE SPOTLIGHT

he drama department has flourished with a number of engaging ce it takes talent both on and off the stage, and some drama al play. Just how big is drama at Central? Bigger than you think.



1. Sophomore Dana Bottger applies on her makeup in the costume and makeup room before one of the performances. 2. Junior Sarah Potts sings in the "Ascot," the second scene of the play during rehearsals. 3. Junior Jennifer Baratta plays the viola in the pit orchestra during rehearsal. 4. Junior Sarah Potts, who played the role of Eliza, rehearses the scene after the governor's ball, one of the plays most emotional moments. 5. Practicing the opening scene in "My Fair Lady," junior Patrick Kilcoyne and seniors Matt Waszak and Dantae Potter strike a paused pose to end the scene. 6. Student teacher Chris Bertschinger demonstrates to his students with junior Alyssa Rathbun how to effectively pretend to fight another character in a production during Advanced Drama. He went through each of the many groups' performance and critiqued them.



## REGISTER YOUR OPINION

**What was the best school production you've seen at Central?**



"I really liked the last one, "My Fair Lady." The cast was really great. They had good dance numbers."  
Sarah Emsick (9)



"I haven't seen any. I don't have any time."  
Edgar Cervantes (10)



"When we had the plays in the cafe because it was made by students who were graduating that year."  
Tammy Fickler (12)



"I've only seen one, "My Fair Lady." I thought Sarah Potts and Aaron Smith-Shull did a good job, and I thought they cast the people really well."  
Catherine Karne (9)



"My Fair Lady." I liked the pit orchestra. They played well and it went along with the actors' singing well."  
Elijah Skolfield (9)

## Former student enjoys being part of behind the scenes for Nebraska Shakespeare tour

BY ALI HODGE

The auditorium lights dimmed on Nov. 4 as the actors of Nebraska Shakespeare on Tour proceeded to walk out on stage and pick up their instruments.

The sudden crisp sound of the electric guitar and tambourine mixed with their voices made the crowd silent immediately.

An auditorium full of chattering honors English students quickly took their attention off of their conversations and turned to the stage.

The actors threw the crowd into a quick moving, modern abridged version of Shakespeare's masterpiece, "The Taming of the Shrew," as if they had done this for many years.

The story of "The Taming of the Shrew" is one of Shakespeare's well-known poetic tales.

It followed the story of Bianca and her less than impressive sister, Katharine, and Bianca's quest to find a husband for Kat so that she will be allowed to marry herself.

Thrown into that simple story line were Bianca's suitors, their hardheaded and over-protective father and an

arrogant man who was given the job of taming the shrew. Like many of Shakespeare's works the play had an outstanding plot, a fantastic script a good share of sexual content and plenty of sarcasm.

It is something Quinn Corbyn, an alumni and road manager of the crew, said she enjoys and hopes will happen every year.

Corbyn said the crew went on a four-week tour of Nebraska, performing that year's production for middle schools, high schools and community events.

Corbyn said the second and fourth week of tour, the group only performed in the Omaha and Lincoln areas.

The first and third week, they travel in other parts of Nebraska.

She said she and the actors were on the fourth week of performing and Central was one of its last stops to make until next year.

She said by this time the actors, who all have degrees in theater from either UNO or Creighton, had performed this play at approximately 40 different schools in Nebraska.

They said during that time they had obviously become very familiar with the play and each other.

Actor Vince Carlson, who played the roll of the tamer,

said he and his colleagues have performed the play so many times they do not even warm up any more.

Carlson said he did not get as nervous as he usually did before a performance because he was so comfortable with the script and his fellow actors.

"There's a nervous energy that you get which is good," Carlson said. "Every time you perform it's good. Then you perform well."

Carlson said he and his colleagues usually arrive at the school an hour and a half before every show to set up props and costumes among other things.

Setup included checking the sound system for some of the soundtracks the cast uses, unloading the simple set, instruments and props and laying out the costumes and makeup.

The cast got into costume 15 minutes before they had to perform.

Each character had a very simple, modern wardrobe, which didn't require a lot of makeup since each person played more than one roll.

The script called for many roles, but with only six actors, it was cut short to fit the time limit and the amount of people.



PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER  
Actor Steven Knox puts his wig on backstage before performing for the honors English classes. The costumes were made to be simple and modern so the actors could slip in and out them quickly since all of them had multiple parts to play.



**James Bond, played by Daniel Craig, hangs on to a crane suspended hundreds of feet in the air while chasing a terrorist. The 21st installment in the 007 series, "Casino Royale," showed Bond's first mission as a "Double-O" agent and revitalized the genre with a much different style from past films and a new actor as the lead.**

## New Bond movie revitalizes genre

BY ALI HODGE

Who needs car chases?

Certainly not the latest installment in the 007 series, "Casino Royale," which took a different path from its predecessors by emphasizing a physical Bond, a Bond who would rather shoot you when you think he doesn't have a gun than try to eject you from his Aston Martin.

The film introduced a new look to Bond, something much more sensitive and strong, without taking much away from the classic James Bond legacy.

The movie was filled with everything Bond, from the scandal, sex and sarcasm, right down to the theme song.

Action packed scenes, exotic locations and beautiful women were all anticipated parts of the movie.

The film would not be complete without the engaging storyline, misleading characters and, as always, one sarcastic beautiful woman. The beautiful woman in this latest Bond installment was Vesper, played by Eva Green.

The film followed James Bond on his first mission with his new Double-O rating.

Bond took on his new boss, a banker for the world's terrorist organizations and himself as he fought to uncover and destroy terrorists through many gun fights and one high stakes poker game.

Appearing in locations such as Madagascar and Italy, the film had a beautiful set as well as talented actors and a good storyline.

Hearing the film took the audience back to the beginning of the Bond series, audiences may have been skeptical, but if anything, the movie turned out better than some others.

Daniel Craig did a fantastic job bringing another new face to the character of Bond, portraying him as a scarier person with a bit of a temper rather than the deadly gentleman Pierce Brosnan, the most recent Bond, brought him out to be.

Craig displayed his talent in many moments of the movie which demanded a wide variety of emotions, all of which he delivered well.

In this movie, James Bond was a more physical and self-reliant character.

Without the frequent appearances of "Q" and "M," Bond was a much more efficient and dangerous person than in previous movies.

This film didn't have the all-star cast that the last movie, "Die Another Day" had.

The audience was constantly introduced to new musicians and actors, which was an appreciated change.

Unlike some of the other films, director Martin Campbell brought out a more vulnerable side of James Bond that could only be found at the beginning of his career.

In this film, Bond was subjected to an emotional

rollercoaster as he learned what was acceptable and what was not for his life as a spy.

The movie followed Bond's emotional journey as well as his mission as he made mistakes, fell in love and was backstabbed.

The movie portrayed a much more real side to Bond without losing his character and the hint that some day he would turn into the spy we all know and love.

And what would a James Bond movie be without the murder and explosions that make it unsuitable for young audiences?

The film took on a much more eerie effect when it came to violence, especially in a scene where Bond was tortured by the villain, Le Chiffre, played by Mads Mikkelsen.

The scenes were darker and with the absence of a lot of the sarcasm, it created a much more real death on the screen.

It showed the character's reactions to the murders, such as Vesper breaking down in the shower after witnessing firsthand the brutal reality of Bond's life, even helping him as he choked a man to death.

Scenes like this gave it a much more emotional impact. It was something the audience had seen very little of in previous James Bond films. Other than the violence, the movie was filled with hidden emotion and horror which only added to its appeal.

The movie ended on a high note, obviously leaving room for a sequel, leaving the audience with the feeling they hadn't seen the last of James Bond.



**NOT A STEREOTYPE**

A Column by Kim Buckley

## Junior sees covered-up art as censorship

Censorship is almost never justifiable. That doesn't mean it isn't happening in schools across the country right now.

A teacher in Texas got suspended because she took her students to an art exhibit which featured some pieces of nude art. The action taken against the teacher was uncalled for. The principal even approved of the tour before the field trip and it was unfair for the teacher to get the entire blame and be punished.

I remember hearing that a teacher even went so far to cover up a statue of a woman who was half-naked right here in Omaha. It was just a statue for crying out loud. That action wasn't necessary. Nudity in art has existed forever. One cannot deny that some of the most famous pieces of art that exist contain nudity. There is nudity even in works featuring scenes from the Bible.

Those exhibits of art are a part of the history and culture of past civilizations. Not allowing students to see those pieces of art takes away from the history of the time period and the students miss out on seeing an important part of other cultures. Those cultures weren't being immodest by showing nudity in art, but saw the human body as beautiful and a piece of art. Their works of art say a lot about their way of life, and helps us understand the past.

Children are not going to be sheltered through life, and if parents truly have a problem with their kids seeing the art then they should excuse their child from going on the fieldtrip to the first place. They should not cover up pieces of artwork so other people cannot see them. Is society really getting to the point that a simple school field trip to an art museum can cause a controversy? It looks like it.

Parents are so scared of their children seeing something inappropriate they want to put works of art under bed sheets, hidden from sight.

It isn't just artwork that is being removed from schools. The "Harry Potter" books are being put on the list of banned books in elementary schools because some parents disapprove of them. I was lucky to have a teacher who decided to let students listen to the second "Harry Potter" book instead of banning it.

Going to an Egyptian art exhibit with my father when I was younger was one of the most interesting experiences in my life.

The recording my father paid a few extra dollars for talked about some of the pottery, and it mentioned how the heart, intestines and other body parts, which were taken out when a person was mummified.

It was my favorite part of the exhibit. I would go back to the exhibit just to hear the recording again. The recording told the facts, but in a way that was humorous. It let me deal with that information in a mature way. Looking back, I shudder to think about the beautiful Egyptian pottery being covered in white sheets, with a recording giving incomplete information about ancient Egyptians and their culture.

## Cursive entertains with phenomenal performance at local venue

BY AARON QUIRK

The lights went dark and there was a shuffling on stage as the band members took their places. Then there was the sound of vocals and suddenly a blue spotlight illuminated the lead singer.

The concert couldn't have been better.

It was Tim Kasher of Cursive, the hometown hero band of the Saddle Creek Label.

Cursive played a sold-out concert on Nov. 9 at Sokol Auditorium to start off the band's new tour.

Cursive played with three other bands, The End Of The World, the Cops and Jeremy Enigk.

The End Of The World was more of a slow-paced band, but gave a spectacular performance. The crowd seemed to enjoy it.

At the beginning of the show, the stage crew had some major problems with the speakers, which crackled over the music. The problem was solved quickly, however.

The next performers, the Cops, were a rapid-fire band, which allowed the crowd to really get into the music. The Cops kept the audience moving constantly.

Enigk then followed the Cops. His music was very slow and his lyrics were deep with meaning. The crowd didn't really care for the performance because it came to hear a faster, more intense band.

After the end of Egnik's performance the lights went on and it was time for a short intermission so the stage crew could get all of Cursive's instruments and microphones set and modify the sound system.

After about 30 minutes it was time, the time that the crowd had anxiously waited for.

The spotlight hit Kasher as the sound of singing filled the room, and the audience anticipated what was coming.

After about 30 seconds, there was a massive blast of instruments pumped out of the speakers and the spotlights all focused on the stage, casting it in strong yellow and orange hues.

Cursive had arrived in full.

The band opened with the first song from the new album, "Happy Hollow," then went on to the songs fans knew as classics.

After the end of the fantastic set, the audience wasn't quite satisfied. The crowd cheered louder and louder, hoping that Cursive would come out and play just one more song. And to their surprise, the band didn't just play one song, it came back with three more, the finale being the last track on "Happy Hollow."

The crowd seemed happy at last. The screaming fans got to hear Cursive play live and even get a few new bands they liked in the meantime.

Overall the concert was a big hit with the audience. Despite the early technical problems, it all seemed to work out.

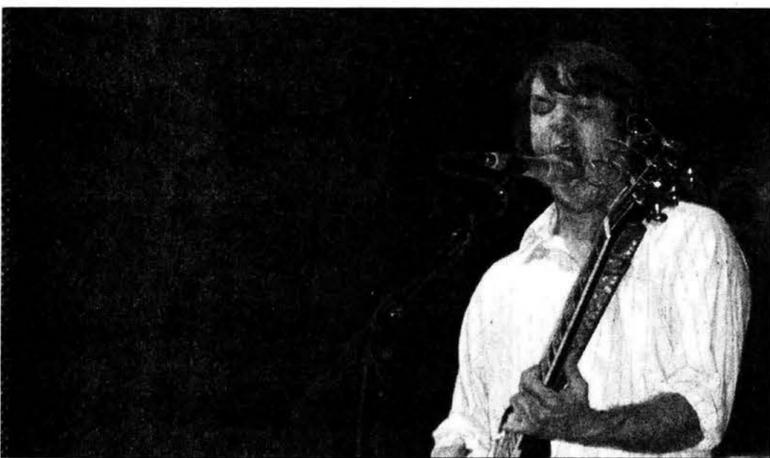


PHOTO BY AARON QUIRK/REGISTER

**Cursive frontman Tim Kasher sings during the Omaha band's concert at Sokol. Three bands played before the fan-favorite took the stage and played to a soldout auditorium.**

### CONCERT REVIEW



"Cursive"

Key Song: "Into the Fold"

## Band scores finalist spot in international contest, trip to London

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

How would you feel if you had the opportunity for a free trip to London and the chance to compete against bands from around the world?

That's what happened to the band MLK and the Dreamers.

Hundreds of bands from around the world entered into a contest sponsored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

The contest was called "The Next Big Thing." After judges reviewed all of the entries, they picked 20 semifinalists, which included MLK and the Dreamers.

It is composed of eight students, five of which attend Central, including senior Tyler Magnuson, junior Max Larson, sophomore Evelyn Taylor, junior Emma Ferber and senior Kevin Rooney.

"It was great just because we got to meet other bands," singer Magnuson said.

Magnuson said he never expected the band to be chosen as a finalist or even a semifinalist.

The contest started several months ago. Magnuson saw the band contest and entered a song.

"BBC thought (our song) stuck out," Magnuson said. "We were so energetic."

He said when he first found out the band had been chosen, he was in disbelief. He said he hadn't even remembered entering the contest.

Magnuson said when he told the other band

members they had been chosen, they thought he was joking.

For several days, Internet users voted for what they thought was the best band.

At the start of the voting, MLK was in the top five, but at the end they were number nine. Over two million people had voted on-line, according to BBC's official website.

The judges announced they had decided to pick seven finalists instead of six because of the multitude of talent that abounded in the contest.

The judges then chose seven from the 20 semifinalists chosen groups to be finalists.

MLK and the Dreamers was chosen not only on the number of votes they received but what the judges thought as well.

The finalists went to London to record their songs, and it was also a chance for the judges to pick the winning band. BBC paid for the entire trip for MLK and the Dreamers.

They were in London from Dec. 2 to Dec. 9 to record their songs.

While in London, BBC officials took the band to shows and to a recording studio, the same one the Beatles recorded in. The band also got time to explore the city.

"We didn't grasp fully the concept," Magnuson said. "Our parents made a bigger deal than we did."

The song the band entered in the contest paid

tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., the late civil rights leader. The song repeats over and over again he was a great man.

Other groups who made the list included Sweet Cherry Fury from Brazil, The Skagz from the United Kingdom, Silva from Armenia, Nic from Malawi, Mishkini, a refugee from Ghana and Stefan Abingdon from the United Kingdom.

Magnuson said his band made friends with every other band, except for the winner.

"We thought the bands were going to be stuck-up, but they weren't," he said. "The reason why we weren't friends with the winner was because she didn't speak any English. It was a language barrier problem."

MLK and the Dreamers was in third place according to the poll on BBC's website for most of the competition.

Publicity for all of the bands was great.

They were mentioned in many different media sources, including *The Beat*.

After members of the band arrived back in Omaha, they had a press conference in Central's courtyard.

Magnuson said the goal of the band was to have fun.

"The (other) bands wanted to win, but we didn't expect to win," he said. "We didn't want to win." The winner of the competition was Silva.

"We had a lot fun," he said.

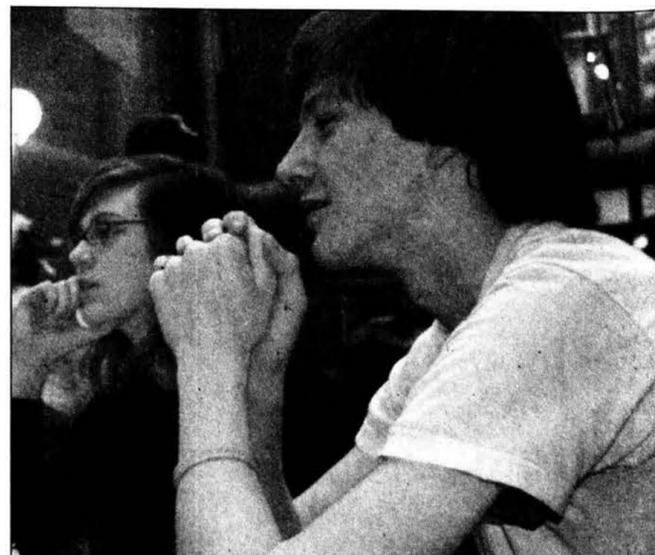


PHOTO BY STEPHANIE WILHELM/REGISTER

**Sophomore Evelyn Taylor (left) and senior Tyler Magnuson speak at a press conference held in the courtyard about their band, MLK and the Dreamers.**

# DIFFERENT STROKES

Members of the swim team look forward to a strong year despite graduating leaders and a major injury. The Eagles return with five State swimmers who hope to go all the way.

BY PATRICK BREEN

Despite losing senior Scott Kielion to a broken arm and torn tendon, returning experience lead a second-year swim coach and young swimmers towards the State tournament.

"Everyone was really angry," junior Emilio Barrientos said of the loss of Kielion. "Scott was in a car accident and broke his arm and tore a tendon. He will be out for about seven months, way after our season is over."

Other teammates agreed that the loss was a major disappointment and they felt bad that he would miss out on his final high school season.

"Scott was really good," junior Claire Hansen said. "He was really a great guy. It definitely hurt the boy's team."

Last year, seniors Ian Danielson and Lindsey Anderson led the team to the State tournament even though no one from Central took home a medal. This year the team have seniors Sara Hallgren and Maggie Baumann to take the team back again.

The team's first meet was on Dec. 7 at Omaha Burke. The Bulldogs beat both the girls' and boys' teams. Despite team losses, the individual performances were strong.

Hansen finished well in the 200 freestyle, shaving a few seconds off her time, but said she felt she could have done better.

"I did alright, but I've been concentrating on the 200 freestyle and the 500 freestyle," she said. "I didn't do as well as I could in the 500."

Junior John Johnson also finished well, in the top three of each of his swims.

He said other players swam well, and the team came back with a win the following morning at an invitational.

The boys team finished second at an invitational that invited 10 teams. Johnson said this year the team can become one of the strongest teams in the state.

"Everyone gets along," Hansen said. "We have all come together. It makes it easier when you swim with your friends."

Even though the team lost its best boys breaststroke swimmer, the team still has a high level of confidence.

"It's a really mental game," Barrientos said. "You always have to believe you can win. Confidence is a key."

After losing two senior State swimmers to graduation last year, members of the team hope younger swimmers will step up and fill a place.

"We have some good young swimmers I'm really impressed with," Barrientos said. "If they work hard, they can be great."

This year the Eagles return five swimmers who have competed at State. Seniors Baumann and Hallgren and juniors Hansen, Johnson and Barrientos all competed in the State tournament last year.

None of the Central swimmers took home medals, but swimmers said they learned from the competition and will continue

to improve and work for a State title.

The team practices every day after school, and although some students may complain, they said the work would pay off.

"We practice every day," Johnson said, "but it teaches us discipline and will make us better."

Because of the number of swimmers, the team divides up into two groups.

The varsity and junior varsity split up and practice at different schools. The teams travel to two different middle schools to practice.

Barrientos said head coach Meredith Kinman was motivational. Barrientos was a sophomore when the team switched coaches from administrator Lynne Slobodnik to Kinman.

"Kinman is fun and teaches us," Barrientos said. "She helps us, tells us that we are the only ones who can beat us. (She said) we have to be mentally strong."

In her second year of coaching, Kinman said she has become comfortable with the students and practices. She said she believed the team had enormous talent.

Like Barrientos, Johnson said he sees a major difference between Slobodnik's and Kinman's coaching style. He said Slobodnik was a little more laid back. She could encourage the team, but wasn't as strict as Kinman.

"(Kinman is) great," Johnson said. "She really gets you to swim hard. You have to give more than 100 percent to win."

Kinman agreed she was strict. She said it helps the team stay focused.

"With hard work and determination," she said, "we can definitely place in State."

Kinman teaches the team through principals and fundamentals, said Hansen.

Johnson said she was very positive, fun and swimmers could really relate to her.

"She knows a lot about swimming," she said. "She makes her tough practices bearable."

The team started its practices in early November, and students said the early start would benefit the team. They practice swimming techniques, fundamentals and determination to improve.

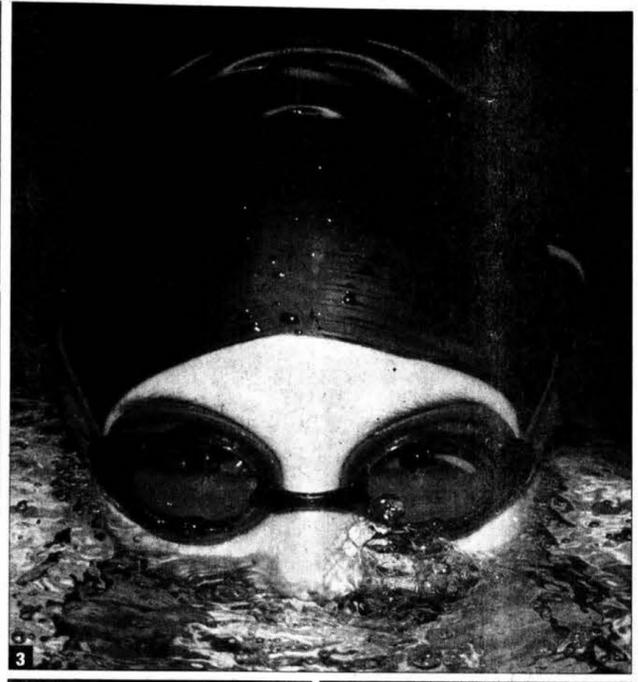
Hansen said one of the most important things for her to improve is to become more aware of her speed and pace.

"I have to practice concentrating on distance, and trying to get a pace," she said. "If you start off to strong, then you'll be too tired to finish the same."

The team will continue practicing and preparing for another run at districts and State.

The team's returning players have experience and motivation to become better and overcome an injury and loss of graduated seniors.

"We need to find the keys to winning," Johnson said. "Commitment can make us a better team."



Senior Maggie Baumann does the breast-stroke at an Eagles' practice at Norris Middle School. 2. Coming up for air after a long practice, Junior Emilio Barrientos is one of the five returning State swimmers. 3. Baumann swam in State, coming up short of a medal last year, but hopes with practice she will bring one home. 4. Young talented swimmers like sophomore Carl Miller add depth to the experienced swim team. 5. Junior Claire Hansen swims freestyle, her best event, and plans on competing in State for her final two years at Central.

PHOTOS BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2006

## SPORTS

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SOMEONE'S GOTTA SAY IT

A Column by Ali Hodge

## Screaming fans irritate sophomore

I find myself, yet again, surrounded by a crowd which cries itself hoarse shouting encouraging catchphrases as Central's basketball team approaches the final minutes of its game.

Everyone around me looks as though they had decorated themselves with whatever was lying in their garage that happened to be purple and white and here I sit in my simple jeans and a sweatshirt, flute in hand as I shift uncomfortably in my seat in the pep band section. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for class credit, that's for sure.

My skin and hair don't take on any color that they shouldn't and I just happen to notice that, unlike everyone else, my undergarments are appropriately placed underneath my clothing, as they should be.

How is it that I'm being completely normal and I still stand out? I can't usually say this, but, I'm right and everyone else is wrong.

I have always wondered why it is I hate sporting events. Maybe it is not that I hate sports, but rather the tradition of plastering my face with paint, polluting my hair with dye, decorating my neck and wrists with beads and attending a game that doesn't really excite me in the first place.

On the other hand, maybe it's that I absolutely cannot stand watching people run up and down a court bouncing a ball. They're good at it, no doubt. I know I couldn't do it. But why would I want to? It looks awful!

Maybe it's the mixture of the entire evening. Maybe it is the fact that I am sitting on dirty bleachers covered in nachos, or hotdogs or boogers or something when I could be elsewhere on a Friday night doing something I enjoy with my friends. Or maybe it is because these games take entirely too long, or the fact that it is entirely too hot in this gym.

So maybe I cannot pinpoint what it is that I hate about sports events, or rather, I have so much to pinpoint, I can't choose. Either way, I never really have a good time.

Without realizing it, I am subconsciously drowning in my mental efforts to try to understand sports.

Why do they always have to bounce the ball? Why did that guy just do that? Ouch, that must have hurt!

I sit in the stands as the team takes a time out. The crowd around me, which had been standing and jumping and giving me a severe headache, sits down. For the first time in an hour I can look my friends in the face when I talk to them instead of looking up their noses.

"Come on, Ali!" yells one of my friends as he hits me in the shoulder. "Get into it!"

Get into what? I think to myself. There is nothing to get into. I, for the first time all night, wish the deafening cheering was back only so I don't have to hear him nag at me.

I'm about to say something smart-alecky to him when he and the students around me jump up and start cheering very loudly.

The brief moment of relative silence leaves like a gust of wind, and I'm left behind holding on to my smart remark I had wanted to throw in his face.

What just happened? I don't even notice the time-out was over. In fact, I'm not even sure I was aware what was going on was a time-out. And after the time-out... what the heck just happened?

So I'm left with what I'm sure is a dumbfounded look on my face as my classmates in ridiculous costumes are parading around with complete understanding of everything that is going on.

How can they, looking like that, know more than me? I hate this.

My friends around me stand up again to get a better look at the game that had resumed. I can't very well be mad at them for it because this is what they are here to do. They paid to see some people they don't know run up and down the same court for an hour.

I swear, if I wasn't in the band, I would be so isolated from sports that I wouldn't even know what a basketball was.

## BUILDING A DYNASTY

With a mix of returning heroes and fresh faces, the Eagles are working hard to spark the old magic that took them to the top at State last year

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

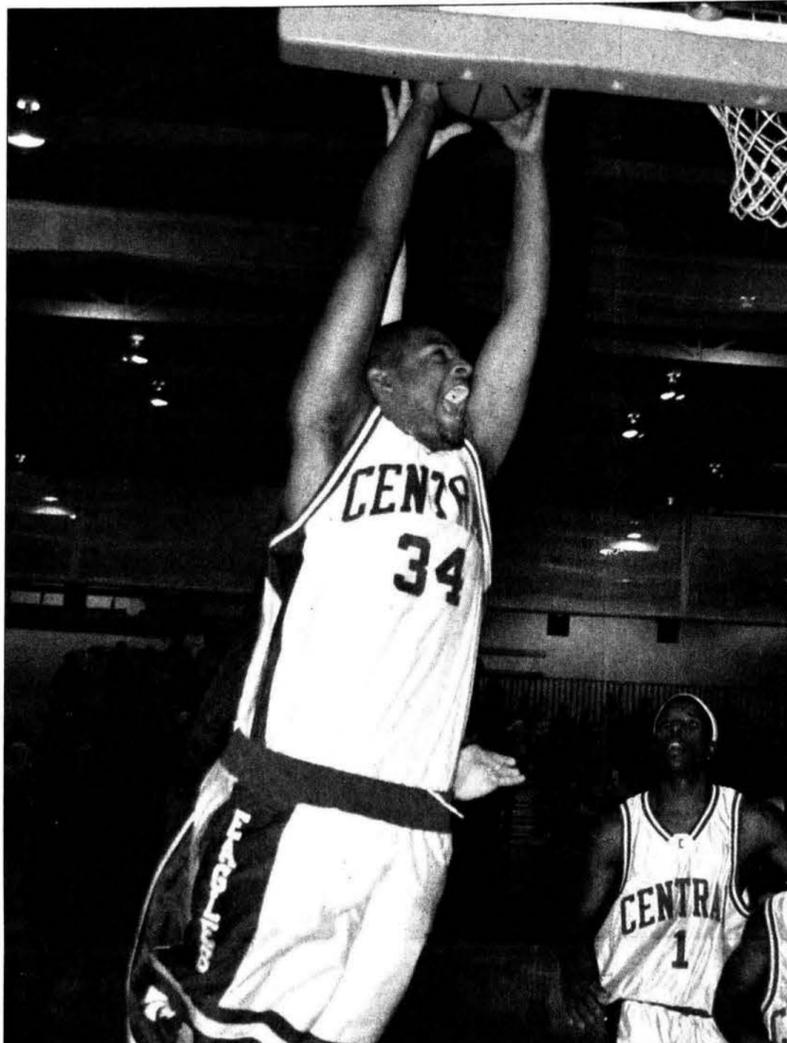


PHOTO BY PAT O'MALLEY/REGISTER

Senior Alex Deleon goes up for a second half lay-up against the Millard West Wildcats. The Eagles went on to win in a blowout, 85-49. Junior Josh Jones led the team with 23 points.

## Boys open season with crushing victory

BY PATRICK BREEN

Rebuilding from a State Championship, the #1 ranked Eagles began a new season with a victory over the Millard West Wildcats.

"It looked like everything was dropping for them (the Eagles)," Wildcats Head Coach Rick Hook said.

Expected to be a blowout by local sports commentators, junior Josh Jones scored 23 points in the 85-49 win over a team with no returning starters.

Replacing graduated 6'6" center Rodney Grace, the Eagles ran a four guard system that used speed and agility to break down a slower Wildcats defense.

The dominant presence Grace provided inside was missing, but 6'4" junior Lorenzo Wilson and senior Alex Deleon gave some height to a team with mostly guards said the Eagles' head coach.

"Rodney was real good," Eagles Head Coach Eric Behrens said. "He put up 14 points and nine rebounds a game. We definitely need that inside presence, and Alex Deleon and Lorenzo Wilson add that height."

Millard West was the first on the board, but it was the only lead the Wildcats would have all night, and they would only hold it for the next 20 seconds.

Jones took the next possession into his own hands, driving to the hoop and laying up his first points of the night.

The Eagles fouled multiple times and junior guard Ronnell Grixby was forced to sit the second half of the first quarter. The fouls were a change in momentum for Millard, the Wildcats head coach said.

Fouls and missed shots plagued the Eagles, but the team stumbled to a 12-9 lead.

A fiery speech from Eric Behrens got the team motivated for a better quarter.

The second quarter was a complete turnaround for the Eagles. The team cut down on the fouls and scored 30 points in the quarter.

"The press got things going our way," Behrens said.

Deleon said they gave it their all, and the pressure forced key turnovers and Millard West

"We expect to win State," senior Ben Kline said.

The basketball season has started with success, and high expectations for the boys varsity basketball team are rising even higher.

The State Champions are focusing on any weaknesses they have, especially because of the loss of some key players.

Coach Eric Behrens said the team this year has many good players who were on the team last year. However, the loss of several players like Rodney Grace and Tim Kanger has undoubtedly affected the team. Behrens said the team is still good and they have the possibility of winning state again. He said the team needs to work on its free throws especially.

"We've got a young team," junior Ronnell Grixby said. "But we have some experience and we have a lot of good players."

Behrens said last year's and this year's varsity teams cannot be compared because there are different players. When every year is different, he said, nothing is comparable.

"They're different. You can't compare the new players with the old players," said. "We're just going to improve and address our weaknesses."

Behrens said last year's defense could have been better, so this year's team will work on that issue, making sure the team is the best possible.

Kline said the team is working on better teamwork, rebounds and motivation, all of which are crucial elements in whether the Eagles will take home another State championship.

Grixby said the entire team acts as one player. He said all players work together to win the game.

He said the team still practices about the same amount as last year's did.

Behrens said he feels this year's star players, Kline, Grixby and junior Josh Jones would do well during the season.

These three were also star players last year.

"It's a goal to win State," Behrens said. "Although it's not an expectation."

Kline said the team will work harder than last year because of the good players the team lost from last year because of due to graduation. He also said this year's team has a good offense and depth.

"We're good at shooting," he said. "The team is extremely quick and we can outrun the other teams."

He said Behrens will continue to use the same offensive and defensive techniques from last year because they were so successful.

"Behrens is a leader, obviously, 'cause he's coach," Kline said. "People look up to him since we won State, and most guys have seen his ideas and think they're good."

Behrens said it's hard to predict what the team will achieve this year, but he said there are a lot of good things the team has going for them.

Kline said there is a lot of pressure from the student body.

"They want us to win," he said. "They would be disappointed if we lost. Our team would be disappointed."

Kline said even if the team doesn't win State this year, next year's team will work even harder and concentrate more on team unity.

The season has started out well for the team with already five wins and no losses, and it looks as though they're preparing to build another dynasty for the largest school in the state.

mistakes.

"To have the press be effective," he said, "you have to give a 110 percent. You can't slack off. Through layups and outside jumpers, the Eagles sprinted to a 15 to 6 run, and all 15 points were scored by Grixby and Jones.

"Central is the most athletic basketball team in the state," Hook said. "They're tough to beat."

He said the Eagles shot the ball well, and that forced his team to cover close.

"They're very hard to cover," he said.

The Eagles used perimeter shooting to open up the lanes for drives, and scored most of the 30 second quarter points in the paint.

Deleon was one of the key players to back-up center Wilson.

"I came here for a reason," Deleon said. "I'm here to do what (the Eagles) did last year. We won a State Championship."

The Eagles passed well, opening up lanes and shots for teammates.

"They are pretty good shooters," Hook said, "and that forces you to cover them close. As then they like to drive and kick out for baskets. They're very hard to cover."

Hard-nose Eagle defense forced bad passes and turnovers for the Wildcats. Senior Jeremiah Blackson helped on a double-team forcing a turnover and making a free-throw to help the Eagles double the Wildcats score, 42-21.

At half the score stood 42-23, and the Eagles never let go of the large lead, ending the half at 59-38.

With the lead in firm control, Behrens brought in his backups. In the fourth quarter, Millard West scored only once against the Eagles starting lineup.

The 85-49 victory started the season with a win and the team followed up the victory with another at an invitational the following day.

The Eagles continued their run against rival Omaha North, beating their rival 81-72.

After a 5-0 start, the Eagles are practicing shot selection, turnovers and defense to improve their games.

"The pieces are there," Behrens said, "we just have to put it all together."

## Lady Eagles lose to Wildcats in fourth quarter of opener

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

The first game of the season for the girls varsity basketball team seemed to be promising in the first quarter, when the Lady Eagles were ahead of Millard South by several points. However, in the end Millard managed to issue blow after blow until it had won with a final score of 57-65.

The Eagles made several key mistakes. Senior Alicia Bender said it was first-game jitters.

The game started well as sophomore Kailah Bailey scored and put Central up by four points. But Millard kept on fighting, obtaining point after point, barely trailing all the while.

Senior Rachael Dryver made a three-pointer, which was followed by senior Jasmine Johnson scoring on a lay-up. It was after this point in the first quarter problems seemed to arise for the Eagles. Millard scored two points. Bender stole the ball, but stepped out of bounds. The Eagles managed to get the ball back from Millard West, but Brittney Ruffin threw it out. Central was down by three, then a free throw put them down further.

Things started looking good for a brief moment as senior Amber Hamilton made a miraculous three point basket. Then Bailey scored two more, making the score 12-7, Eagles in the lead, with only two minutes in the first quarter left. Alicia Bender scored, but Central fouled the Wildcats on the next possession.

Still, the Eagles maintained their lead.

By the end of the half, however, the Wildcats were gaining.

"We were in trouble," Bender said. "We didn't execute (our plans) as much."

The second half started out well for Central as Hamilton scored two free-throws. But less than two minutes into the quarter, Millard and Central were tied at 20. Time passed slowly with nothing happening but switches in possession, and the tie climbed to 24 apiece.

The third quarter was even harsher for the Eagles than the second. Central was fouled multiple times and Millard West kept scoring.

With only 16 seconds left in the third quarter, Millard managed to score another two points, leaving the Lady Eagles trailing 47-42.

The fourth quarter was the toughest one for the Eagles. Three minutes in, Central was down by six points but made a remarkable recovery with only five minutes left in the game. The Lady Eagles got close to Millard with a score of 50-53, but Millard wouldn't let its lead go and with only a minute left, Central fell behind by 10 points. Bender made a desperate play for some points, trying to win the game, but only managed to score another two, ending the game at 65-57, with Millard the victors.

"If only we got more rebounds, we could have had the chance to take the game over," Bender said.

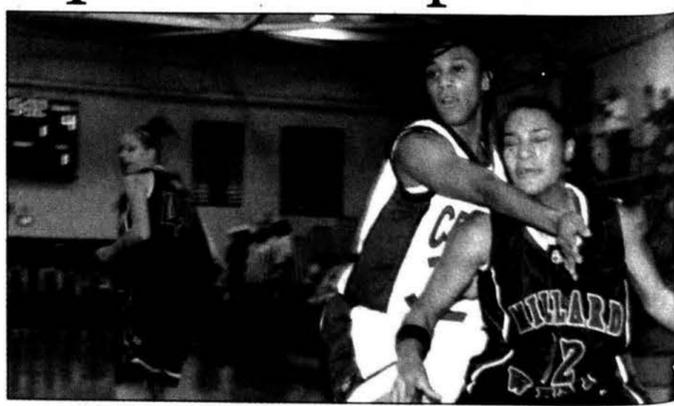


PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

Senior Jasmine Johnson blocks off in inbound pass fouling Wildcats' Andrea Ruffin. The Eagles kept the game close, but couldn't pull off the upset, losing 65-57.