

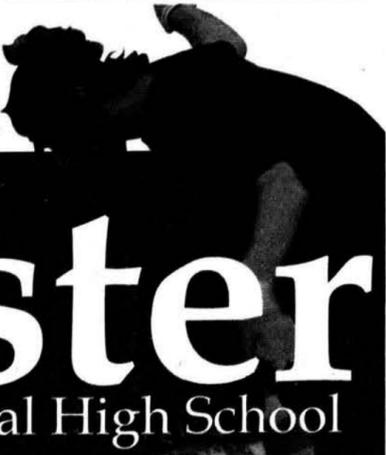
Smiling Pasta

The Register reviews some of your favorite pasta restaurants. See page 12B

Rosenblatt
Students voice their opinion about the future of Rosenblatt. See page 8A



Born to Skate
Students turn interest into hobby. Freshman Jeff Fowler loves skateboarding. See page 18B



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the register

Central High School

11 TIME NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

A HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

On the go...

news



PHOTO BY MICHELLE RIEGER/REGISTER

Junior doesn't let hearing problem slow her down

Junior Alyssa Bell participates in volleyball, volleyball club, and music. She also manages a steady GPA and honors classes despite being partially deaf. For more see 4A.

Students start club to create fun, stress-free environment for students

Students started club to show students how to play 'Stress,' a game Joshi Rackliffe said is a game perfect for releasing stress in a competitive, fast paced way. For more see 4A.

Students donate blankets to Linus Project

Students in Clothing 1-2 classes take two days to make blankets for the Linus Project, a program designed to bring comfort to kids in need. For more see 2A.

opinion

Issue of merit pay for teachers up for debate

The issue of whether or not teachers should be paid by how well their students do in school is up as a major discussion point. For more see 6A.

Should STD testing in schools be considered?

For the safety and health of students, some suggested the idea of STD testing in school. The Register looks to see if this is a good idea. For more see 7A.

registration



PHOTO BY KIM BUCKLEY/REGISTER

Art classes produce award winning artists and recognized students

Central artists did the best in the district at Nebraska State Visual Arts Competition. For more see 13B.



Sophomore leads Eagle drumline

Rio Longoria plays snare drum in the marching band. For more see 11B.

sports



Seniors sign to different Universities

Seniors from Central's award winning athletic program sign to different Universities. Prater twins sign to play for University of Iowa. For more see 19B.



PHOTO BY MICHELLE RIEGER/ REGISTER

Nearly three years ago, his sister took the late bus, but never came home. Today, Junior Justin Harris uses her memory to motivate him. In his heart, she is not gone.

Family copes with loss of daughter

Justin Harris, a junior at Central, and his family worried for months wondering if their family member, Amber Harris was safe. After learning the horrible of her death truth nearly two years ago, the family now copes with the loss of a daughter and sister; learning to live on.

BY MICHELLE RIEGER

Nov. 29, 2005 was one of the most unnerving days of Justin Harris' life. His 12-year-old sister, Amber Harris had gone missing.

"I just thought she was at a friend's house or something. We stayed up all night because we thought she was going to come home," recalls Harris.

After tutoring other students after school, the student of Beveridge Middle School, took the late bus home. The thing is, she didn't come home.

School bus surveillance tapes showed Harris wiping her face off. She wasn't allowed to wear makeup so she was wiping it off before she arrived home. This showed that she had every intention

of going straight home.

Original police reports said she was not thought to be in any danger.

Justin Harris found out she was missing that day.

"We thought she would come home because she took the bus. We called the school, she wasn't there," said Harris.

At first, Harris just thought she was over at a friend's house. 6 p.m. came around and still no sign or call from Amber. The family looked for her, but had no luck finding her. That was when the Harris family decided to call the police. The search began for the missing 12-year-old girl.

Continued to 'Remembering' on Page 3

Eagles Basketball team takes State, finishes three-peat

BY PATRICK BREEN

The whole year could be summed-up into one hyphenated word.

"Three-peat. "When we inbounded the ball," junior forward Paul Simms said, "and I saw the time go off the clock, all I could say was three-peat. Three-peat."

The Eagle faithful broke out into cries and yells, and the bench stormed their starters gathering round each other after the culmination of another State Title.

A hard fought season and State Tourney leaves the Eagles with a sweet taste of victory.

"It feels good," head coach Eric Behrens said. "It was tough. We began the season with such high expectations, but we did it."

The win over Bellevue West clinched the title. But the losses earlier in the season, Behrens said, helped the team prepare for state.

"The losses were good for us," he said. "They showed us our deficiency in areas. We had to fix up a lot of what we had."

But looking back on the season, one might not notice the three losses, but rather the big wins.

The Eagles posted a 25-3 record averaging over 80-points per game and keeping their opponents below 60.

Not all was in the cards dealt to the Eagles at the beginning of the year. In fact, the Eagles looked like they were going to have some trouble.

Before the season began, the Eagles lost two major players. Creighton recruit senior Josh Jones and junior Doug Knickrehm. The Eagles were preseason favorites, but Bellevue West, which had been to the finals for three straight years was looking for their first upset.

The championship team is comprised of all senior starters. Guards Chris Griffin, Ronnell Grixby, Josh Jones and Forwards Lorenzo Wilson and Donald Jones lead the team.

Jones, a Creighton recruit, led the team and Class A in scoring averaging nearly 20 points a game.

"They (the seniors) played well," Behrens said. "Four were there last year, and they were all ready to play."

For the first time since the late 90's, a Class A basketball

Continued to 'Three-peat' on Page 20



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Seniors Josh Jones, Chris Griffin, Ronnell Grixby and Lorenzo Wilson await the beginning of what would be their State win.

Teens drawn to make a difference in elections

BY PATRICK BREEN

After so many years being pegged as the "jazy generation" in politics, young people are now showing up everywhere.

"We want to make an impact," senior Elizabeth Rockwell said. Rockwell is one of the many students at Central trying to make an impact on the upcoming Presidential Elections.

The youth is spreading.

Besides the younger candidates in various political positions, the people trying to get them in power are increasingly the more youthful generation.

The potential of having a say in the future of who leads the country is all of what voting is about. Many want to know more about a candidate for president and to even better get to see the candidate in person.

When Illinois senator Barack Obama came to Omaha many went to see him in person, to learn what he was all about.

That was the case for Central students, senior Ozzie Oneyuku and junior Luke Hawbaker, who were one of the many students that went to see Obama speak at the Civic in February.

But these students not only went to watch, they volunteered. Hawbaker said that rally was exciting and fun.

There were over 10,000 people in attendance at the rally, and volunteers were definitely needed. Hawbaker got involved volunteering for Obama making phone calls and then was told that he could help at the Civic.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Junior Luke Hawbaker cheers on Obama at the rally at the Civic. Hawbaker and others are very involved in the elections of the future.

Inside

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Vol. 122, No. 3, 20 pages



A Bold Move

Style showcases individual fashion.
See page 11B



College Corner

Langston University

Location: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Type: 4-year public

Majors offered in: Business, Education and Behavioral Sciences, Physical Therapy, Journalism, English, Foreign Languages, Nursing and health professions, visual arts, Agriculture and applied sciences, and Science

Application dates: TBA for 2008-2009 school year

Tuskegee University

Location: Tuskegee, Alabama

Type: Four year private

Undergrad enrollment: 2,467 of the student population are undergrads.

Majors offered in: Aerospace, Environmental Science, Medical Technology, Veterinary Clinical Sciences, Liberal arts and education, Business and information, Agriculture, Engineering and Architecture.

Application dates: March 1 for 2008-2009 school year

Tennessee State University

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Type: Four year public

Majors offered in: Criminal Justice, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Technology and Computer sciences, Health services, Public Service and Urban Affairs, Agriculture, Consumer Sciences and Nursing.

Application dates: May 1

University of Kansas

Location: Lawrence, Kansas

Type: Public four year

Undergrad enrollment: 20,298 of the student population are undergrads.

Majors offered in: Journalism and Mass communications, Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Architecture and Urban Design, Business, Education and Social Welfare.

Application dates: April 1

CALENDAR

April

3 District Music Contest

Students in music programs will participate in the district music contest on the third starting at 7 p.m.

7-11 Spring Recess

Spring break will be from the seventh to the eleventh. Students and staff are not required to come to school.

12 ACT

Students can take the ACT at several Omaha locations. Please see the guidance department for more information.

24-25 Spring Play

The drama department is hosting the spring production, which will be performed in the Central auditorium at 7 p.m.

29-30 Soccer Districts

Come support your Central soccer team at districts which will be held at Central at 7 p.m.

May

1 International DECA Competition

The International DECA competition will be held in Atlanta, Georgia this year.

3 2008 Prom

Prom is held at Central and begins at 7 p.m. Remember that underclassmen are not allowed to attend unless escorted by an upperclassman.

7 Track and Field Districts

Support the members of track and field by attending districts.

15 Last day for seniors

Be sure to get your yearbook signatures from your senior friends before the fifteenth.



PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/ REGISTER

Senior Terrell Mayhue ties blankets that are to be donated to The Linus Project, an organization that takes donated blankets to give to children who are seriously ill, or in foster homes or orphanages. This is the first time Central has donated to the project.

Clothing one students create, donate blankets

BY ALI HODGE

Students in Clothing 1-2 took a step outside the classroom to help children in need by donating blankets to the Linus Project.

Students took two days from their regular routines to help tie blankets, which were later sent off to the Linus Project as a donation from Central.

"The idea is that it's comfort for the children," said Linda Milliken, teacher of Clothing, CAD Fashion and Teen Parenting. "It's really a neat project."

Milliken said she found out about the project from a flyer she received from Bryan High School. They were advertising a quilt day they were going to have to promote donations for the project.

She checked into it and decided that it was something her Clothing 1-2 classes could enjoy, but also feel good about being a part of while learning something at the same time.

Milliken said all materials her classes used for the project were donated by herself and a few other teachers. She showed her class the web site of the National Linus Project to get them more interested and to excite them about their contributions.

The blankets the classes made were simple tie blankets made from a fleece fabric. She said she chose this type of blanket because it was quick, which was important especially since she set aside only two days to complete the project.

Milliken said most of her students don't have sewing machines at home, so the classic tie blankets were a good

thing for them to learn since they will now be able to make them on their own time.

Project Linus is a national organization created in 1995. It's goal is to create as many blankets for in need children and they rely mainly on volunteers and donations.

As of December, they have an overwhelming support system and despite this, they have not been able to hand out 2,293,340 blankets and have 209 chapters of the organization all over the country, one being in Omaha.

Blankets donated to Project Linus, whose name is created after Linus from the popular cartoon Peanuts, are given to children who are critically injured or ill in the hospital, foster children, children in orphanages, or other traumatized children.

Providing these tokens of comfort is their first goal, said the national web site, www.projectlinus.org. Their second goal is "to provide a rewarding and fun service opportunity for interested individuals and groups in local communities, for the benefit of children," said the web site.

Community involvement is important to the organization, which is why they have so many chapters around the country, including in Omaha.

With awareness of the project increasing, more high schools are getting involved. Bryan annually hosts a quilting day where students can gather to make quilts and other types of blankets for the project.

Milliken said she believes the project sends a good message to her students and is worth the cost of the materials to donate. She looks forward to continuing on this new tradition in the future.

Students trying to influence future

Continued from 'Making Changes' on Page 1

The helping doesn't end there. Students both last year and this year leafletted in hopes of getting others elected.

Leaf-letting is where the students go around to houses, usually an entire neighborhood, and leave leaf-lets about a candidate's background.

And with a much heated Presidential Primaries in the Democratic Party, the extra help is always appreciated.

The primary race between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama is tightening.

Neither are posed to get the 2,025 delegates needed to secure the nomination.

And if Florida and Michigan's votes do not count, it is guaranteed to leave a dead-lock.

Thus, securing a super-delegate vote at the Democratic

Convention.

On the Republican side of the political divide, John McCain has won the nomination and awaits news of which rival will join him in his bid for President of the United States.

"It will be a great election," Rockwell said. "There are some good candidates running."

Besides the help through the calls and the leaf-lets, some students will also be able to vote.

"It's exciting," she said. "I hope we get a lot of the young voters out there."

Once the final debates are over, and the primaries tallied, these teens may make the biggest difference in the general election.

For being called the 'lazy generation,' these teens seem to refute the slander.

With actions rather than words.

Merit finalists await final news

BY PATRICK BREEN

Once one is at this level. It's hard not to just be over-anxious.

This year, Central has the honor of holding three of the nation's best scholars. After passing the semi's, these National Merit finalists now wait to find out if they have received one of the top awards in the nation.

"It's an award where people from the college board look at your PSAT score, your grades and activities and they decide if you are one of the top students," National Merit Finalist Astrika Wilhelm said.

Wilhelm is one of three seniors to receive the award. Seniors Benjamin McGuire and Sarah Ferguson also garnish this title.

As finalist they hope to go through the selection process and hopefully beat out some of the other 15,000 finalist to become National Merit Scholars.

The long process began some months before.

The news came along that the three were nominated as Semi-finalists.

The finalists said they were excited to find out.

But then several more months went by before they would find out about making the cut.

"I found out in the first week of the month," Wilhelm said. "I was excited."

The amount of time needed to get to this level of Academic and extracurricular achievement is almost never-ending.

Last year the school also sent three students to the finalist stage, but didn't see any make the top National Merit Scholars.

This year though, it might be different.

The group this year are some of the brightest students Central has to offer.

For instance, Benjamin McGuire, an extremely intellectual student is also involved in National Honors

Society where he is one of the leaders.

Astrika Wilhelm is also actively involved in NHS, has a fantastic G.P.A. and is involved with activities outside of school.

And Sarah Ferguson might be the most recognizable of the group.

Ferguson is the only student in Omaha to post a perfect ACT score of 36, and perfect SAT score of 2400.

But the national competition isn't based only on academic success.

It's also based on what you do outside the classroom, in one's everyday life.

Whether its volunteering or clubs, or even sports, the committee wants to know.

All the rigors aren't for nothing though. The students who made the National Merit Scholar level would receive a scholarship to help towards college.

Probably a good thing, since all three are looking to attend prestigious, expensive, schools.

National Merit Scholarship Corporation gives out more than \$51 million each year for undergraduate study. A considerable donated increase from when the group started in 1955.

In 2007, the group saw over 1.4 million entrants and inducted only some of the top students from the 16,000 semi-finalists nationwide.

Also in 2007, the state of Nebraska sent in over 7,000 entrants and saw only 116 earn the semi-finalist rating.

The grades.

The athletics.

The clubs.

The hardest part may not be maintaining a level head while being so actively involved. It may not be acing all the tests, or staying active in your clubs.

It could be the waiting.

"Now, (we) just wait to find out," Wilhelm said. And the wait begins.

Teachers take leave for 'new bundles of joy'

BY KIM BUCKLEY

While most of the attention of the media is focused on the rate of teenagers who are getting pregnant, it is clear that students are affected when their teacher becomes pregnant.

Both students and teachers at this school know that it can present a challenge when a teacher becomes pregnant, especially when it gets to the third trimester.

Aerobics teacher Meredith Kinman found out she was pregnant back in February.

While she was originally going to keep the news a surprise to her students until the end of her first trimester, one of the members of the swim team overheard her mentioning that she was going to have a baby.

She decided to tell her students the news of her pregnancy sooner than she had planned to.

When she heard the news Kinman said she was happy, very excited and relieved because this was the second in vitro she has had. Kinman had been trying for about the last three years to get pregnant.

She said when she told her aerobics classes they were excited about the news because they knew that their teacher had been going through fertility treatments and that she had been trying to become pregnant for a long time.

While it is common for women to take maternity leave from work, expecting fathers are able to take a paternity leave after their baby is born.

Math teacher Brett Larson took a week and a half off earlier in the year when his wife was pregnant. Around three years ago Larson took two weeks paternity leave for the same reason.

"It's hard on the students," he said. Larson tried to remedy the problem by planning in advance before taking that leave. He said he made lesson plans and looked over the notes so they were detailed enough so the sub could help out the students.

Larson said being gone that long was especially hard on the upper-level math classes he taught. He had difficulties finding a sub to help explain the material to his students.

Larson said the hardest part was knowing that his students were going to be affected by his absence and could be struggling with the material.

Larson said it was a challenge to keep the students up to speed with the material and learning while he was gone.

At this point in time Kinman said her pregnancy doesn't affect the students that she has.

However, next year will be a different story.

At the beginning of next year Kinman will have to take time off before and after labor and be on maternity leave.

A sub will have to watch over those classes until Kinman returns.

Larson said he believed that it was very important for him and the family to take that time off after his children were born because it was taking the time to get to know and welcome the newest member of the family.

While Larson had to help take care of his newborn children, he also had to take care of his wife.

He said it was difficult trying to balance those different parts of his life.

Even coming back after paternity leave, Larson said, was difficult.

He said that he tries to get work done at school so when he's at home he has time for his family.

While it means having to stay a little bit later on some days, Larson said he tries not to grade papers or make his lesson plans at home.

"It's a give and take," Larson said. Kinman said she has the hardest part of being pregnant so far has been taking all of the medications and taking shots.

Right now she has not had any morning sickness.

Kinman said at this point in time she's mainly been trying to concentrate on eating healthy and not gaining too much weight during pregnancy.

All of Kinman's sister have had a kid and Kinman said she's excited to have kids alongside her sisters.

She said she is also excited to just have a child as well as start a family and start a new phase of her life.

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Aca Deca team takes third at State Competition

BY PATRICK BREEN

The team had prepared for this very moment for over nine months. They had studied rigorously trying to topple the giants that had crowned themselves king a year before.

And the Central Academic Decathlon team was close. From just a year before down 10,000 points. They closed the gap to 3,000. A makeable margin in which the team, with lots of effort might be able to overcome.

But the Central Eagles' Aca Deca team fell short just a few thousand points of where they wanted to be.

"If this was the score we had last year," coach Vicki Deniston-Reed said, "we would've won (it before)."

Aca Deca is a class that chooses some of its brightest to compete on the team. Individuals study certain subjects, this year being the Civil War, and then become prepared to test over anything and everything they learned.

The competition was very tough this year and Deniston-Reed said that all team performed well.

The Aca Deca team finished third in State for the second straight year, as the Omaha Burke Bulldogs took home the State Championship for its second consecutive title.

Creighton Prep took home the second place trophy with the top

scorer in the state.

But Central saw some of its own amazing scores. Seniors Kevin Mitchell, Ellen Danford, and Emma Philips took home metals to keep the meet close.

"I think we had a good year," senior Benjamin Thomas said. "Everyone hopes to win, but it didn't happen this year."

Despite the loss, the Eagles created a successful year on the strong senior leadership of most of the members. The teams consisted of 10 seniors and one junior.

The competition started on Fri. with the Speech and Impromptu tasks, and concluded on Saturday morning with the tests on everything from Language and Literature to Art.

All sections, the Eagles did well in.

The top scorer from Central was senior Ellen Danford who placed third overall for the entire state in the Honors division. Another stand-out senior Emma Philips won a slew of metals taking home third overall for the varsity division.

As for next year, the team looks to returning starter junior Paul Fey and some young talent.

"We have some extremely strong talent for next year," Deniston-Reed said.

To wind down the year, the team will be preparing for an Economics Challenge.

After all, there is no rest in the world of learning.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER
Senior Ben McGuire was one of the many Aca Deca students to take home medals. Although the team finished third overall, the team was proud of their accomplishments.

Teens honored for leadership at Central, in community

BY CATLIN RICHARDSON

In 2008, three participants of the Youth Leadership of Omaha at Creighton University with the AIM institute, were selected from Omaha Central. Sophomores Alexandria Tran, Stephon Washington, and Peter Bock received a phone call and written information about their selection.

The program focuses on community knowledge, leadership skills, career and volunteer opportunities with a class of forty students across the metro area.

Starting on January 25 after school was an opening retreat. On February 12, an Omaha Growth and Development Bus Tour unit started. March 12 was a Justice and Government topic. Health and Human Services started on March 27. And on April 11 and 12 was a Closing retreat and on May 5 was their graduation.

Washington, talks about his winnings for the Youth Leadership Program.

"I really didn't think it was going to be too fun because I don't really like to do anything. I'm just so lazy and I want to sleep all the time," he said. "But once I joined, it was a lot cooler than I thought."

Washington was interviewed right before winter break. He was asked about leadership and why he thought he was a good leader.

"I just want people to succeed. And if they can't do the things I can, I really want to help them," Washington said.

Washington's grandmother was the first one who told him about the award. In the program, students learn about different cultures and how businesses work. Being in this program can help with the student's career paths. Washington says that he really wants to be a computer technologist, if football isn't in the cards for him.

"I want to go to college, but somewhere warm." Washington really wants to attend college in Miami or California.

Washington has made many friends from different schools participating in this event from schools such as Bryan, Millard North, Omaha North, Papillion-Lavista, and Bennington. Washington is also really good friends with Peter Bock, another Youth Leadership winner.

Bock talks about his reward on this leadership program.

"At first, my English teacher gave our entire class an application form for this program. I threw it on my mom's desk when I got home, and she really encouraged me to apply. She said that it would be a great opportunity and I could really benefit."

After Bock was one of the finalists, he said his family was very proud and was very excited. The face to face interviews consisted of general questions such as, major goals in life, and leading other people.

"They asked me if I could be anywhere in the whole world for a day, and I chose Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, at a Nebraska game." The students had their first meeting on January 25. "The first event we went to was kind of like an ice

breaker. We got to know each other and it broke the awkward silences. It was at a cabin in Gretna at the 4H center." Bock has also made many friends in the organization as well as Washington. Besides being a Future Leader of America, Bock enjoys playing video games, and hanging out with his friends. He is also on the Junior Varsity Baseball team at Central. The last youth leadership winner at Central is Alexandria Tran.

Alexandria Tran is a Sophomore like the two other boys.

"Well, my favorite part would have to be learning about Omaha, and that I have met so many new people. Like I can say, 'I know people from Millard North' and stuff like that. There are just so many branches, I know so many people from different schools." According to the three participants, meeting new people and making friends is one of the best parts about Youth Leadership. "I really hate missing school."

"Like, especially during mid-terms, it's very hard to catch up on school work, that would probably be the hardest and my least favorite thing about it." Tran says about the program.

The Youth Leadership program is an amazing opportunity to learn about Omaha and to interact with other people in the Metropolitan area. Bock, Washington, and Tran all say that Youth Leadership has been a great experience.

Harris remembers his sister, good times

Continued from 'Teen Struggles' on Page 1

The search for Amber Harris was a long, strenuous task. The community of Omaha came together to search for the missing girl.

"Day by day I just wondered if she's alive or close or safe. My mind was everywhere from one extreme to the next," said Melissa Harris.

Melissa Harris, Amber and Justin's mother, believed the city of Omaha and especially the news media responded very well to the situation. At one point in the search for Amber, 333 volunteers showed up to help the Klaaskids Foundation look for any signs of the missing girl.

In May 2006, after nearly six months of scouring through the city of Omaha, police found human remains in Hummel Park. DNA testing and an autopsy later identified the remains as belonging to Amber Harris.

According to KETV.com, Harris died of blunt force trauma. "The worst part was wondering how anyone could hurt her and why they would hurt her," said Melissa.

Justin tries not to dwell on it.

"Sometimes I just have to accept it because I know she's in a better place," said Justin.

Justin describes his relationship with Amber as close. They had many things in common including their short-tempered behavior and quirky laughs.

"We were the closest, we had the same attitudes. We had a lot of things in common. We'd always crack jokes. We always got along," reminisced Justin.

Melissa also said they were very close. Her favorite memory of them together was when they would laugh and talk before they went to bed. Justin also remembers when they all, as a family, went to Ocean's of Fun together. He said it was just a relief to go on vacation with his whole family.

Remembering the irreplaceable memories is what helps both Justin and Melissa to help cope with their grief.

"I try not to let it get to me. I just try to think of the good memories. I know I can't do anything to make her come back. I just try to think the best of her," said Justin.

Justin also said that talking with his mother helps him deal with his grief. He said his mom was the one to have her, so she really knew what he was going through.

"I talk to my mom about it. She helps me out the most. She knows what it feels like," said Justin.

"Justin and I have always been close. He does confide in me about how he feels about things now," said Melissa.

Melissa Harris said their whole family has gone to counseling.

"Everybody deals with the loss in their own way and it takes a lot of family support," explained Melissa. "Normally you would think a family that has lost a child would bring a family closer together, but in actuality it can also tear them apart."

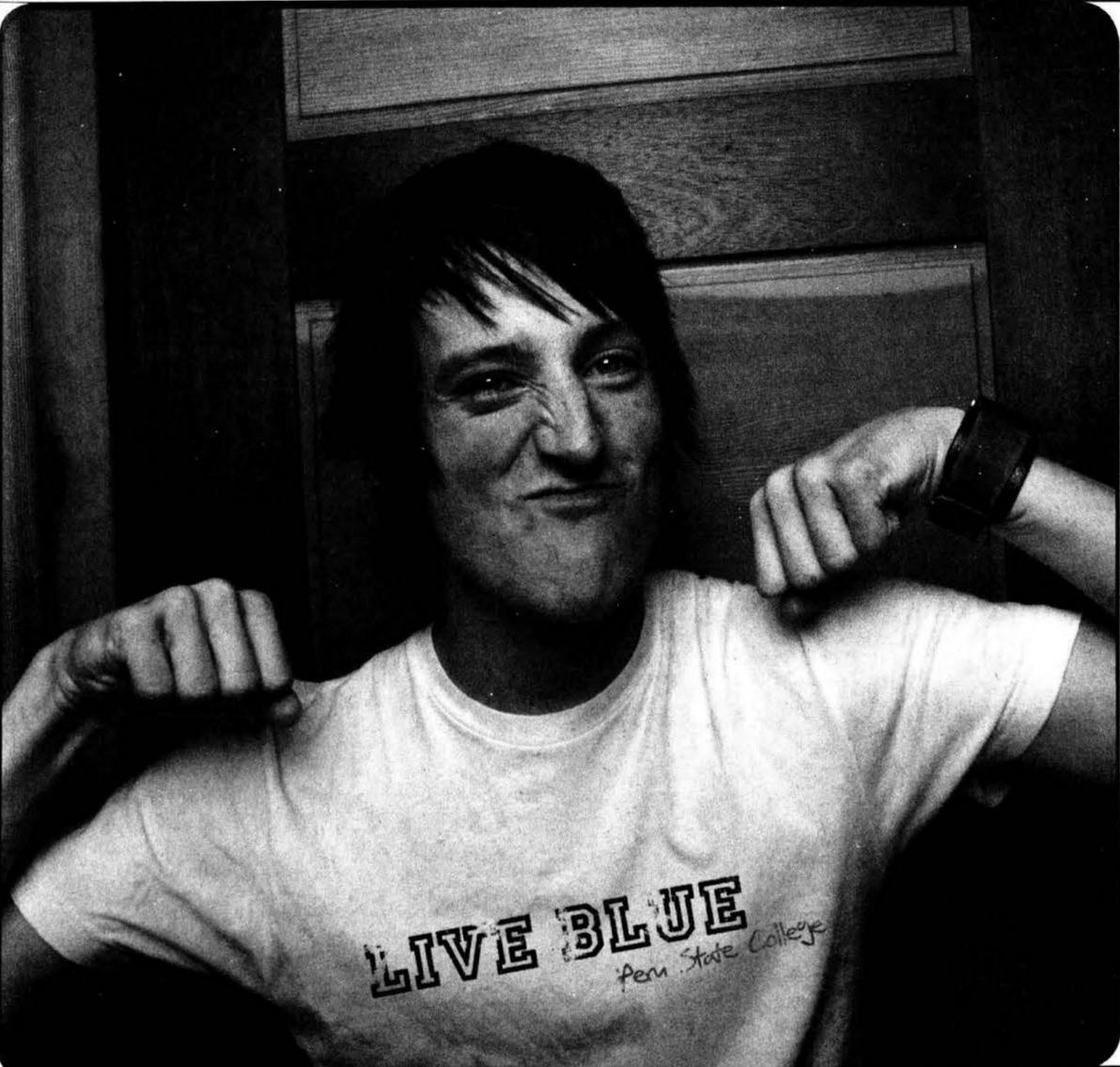
Justin said one of the qualities that Amber had that made her so special was her singing voice. Justin's Myspace page reflects his love for her.

"She had a good voice. She could sing really well. She was the best little sister I ever had," said Justin.

Justin still has a place for her in his heart.

"I lost my little sister. Still to this day I can't believe she's gone. But she's still in my heart," Justin said.

Justin and his family were able to answer some questions when Roy Ellis, a resident of the neighborhood she was last seen in, was charged with the sexual assault and murder of Amber Harris.



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PHOTO BY MICHELLE RIEGER/ REGISTER

Junior Alyssa Bell practices her violin in her living room. When her parents found out she was deaf they were worried she wouldn't be able to enjoy or play music. She has now been playing the violin for nine years.

Lack of hearing doesn't slow student

BY MICHELLE RIEGER

At first glance one would never guess she was partially deaf. Her schedule consists of three honors and one AP class. Her GPA is steadily standing at a 3.5. She plays volleyball in the winter and tennis in the spring. Every other sport on the club volleyball she plays in the summer. This includes soccer, more tennis, more volleyball and basketball.

"I've been partially deaf ever since I was born," said junior Alyssa Bell.

Bell's parents did not initially know she was deaf. She was diagnosed when she was 16 months.

"They knew something was wrong with me, but they didn't know what," explained Bell.

Her parents noticed she wasn't responding when they would walk into a room, say her name and she wouldn't turn around.

"She had no idea I was there," said Adina Bell.

Bell started school at an early age; she was two years old. She had to go through special schooling to teach her to communicate with her

parents and peers.

"My parents got a lot of good help. They've always had instructors helping them or telling them what to do. We moved to Omaha to get better schooling," said Alyssa Bell.

Because Bell is partially deaf she needs hearing aids.

"I never really thought of myself as different. I didn't really realize other kids weren't wearing hearing aids," Bell remarked.

Bell said classmates weren't really mean to her. She has always been the most talkative compared to the rest of her classmates.

"Yeah I was pretty loud actually," added Bell.

Despite the fact that she was loud, she had trouble understanding what people were saying.

"It wouldn't come to me as fast. Like if someone was telling me not to do something it would be twice as hard for them to actually teach me that it was wrong," explained Bell.

One wouldn't think her lack of hearing abilities has held her back. She has excelled in academics and athletics.

Bell adds, "Yeah it's always going to hold me back. Even with hearing aids I'm not going to receive all the information a regular person can."

Poet encourages students to write every day

BY KIM BUCKLEY

On March 10, professional poet and author Naomi Shihab Nye spoke to a roomful of students in the library as a part of a book tour she is doing.

She spoke about her experiences as a writer and how they have changed her. She read a couple of the poems she has written and then took questions from the students gathered to hear her.

Librarian Sue Devlin said she arranged for Nye to speak at the school through the Bookworm in Countryside Village and the Metro Reading Counsel.

"I felt she was very approachable and she had a lot of energy and enthusiasm for what she does," she said.

Nye was a little late arriving because she had just come from speaking at South High and

had lunch there. Earlier in the day she spoke to students at Bryan.

She told the students she when she saw the school she was excited because it looked legal and it caught her eye.

While this was the poet's first time in Nebraska, she told the students she has wanted to visit the state for a long time.

Growing up, Nye said she was interested in what people thought in different countries. She said she then wanted to find poems that appeal to teenage readers.

"One thing I learned early on was there were many different styles of poetry," she said.

Nye urged the students to use the libraries to the maximum and to write at least three sentences in a notebook each day.

"I think she inspired students to write every day," Devlin said.

Nye has written anything from prose and

short stories to essays and stories geared towards teens.

The poet also talked about her experiences in the Middle East. She said when she lived there she saw the hospitality the people had there and it's sad that it is not the main image of the Middle East that is expressed in the media.

Perhaps the most famous poem Nye is known for is "A Letter To Terrorists." The poem has been translated in Arabic, and Nye said she believed it has a large life on the Internet.

She told the students she wrote the letter after Sept. 11, 2001 because she felt sorry for those Middle Easterns who would be stereotyped because of the attack. As the daughter of a Middle Eastern father, Nye said she felt so strongly about the issue that she felt she wouldn't do it justice without expressing her feelings.

However, she said, at times it's helpful to stand back from your experiences.

Stress Club reaches out to teens

BY ALI HODGE

"The original concept came from a card game called 'Stress,'" said technology Jodi Rackliffe, sponsor of the school's newest club, Stress Club.

This might be a surprise as it is looked upon as a club that teaches kids to release their stress, but in actuality, it's something far more entertaining.

Rackliffe said during her lunch duty she noticed a group of kids at one of the lunch tables playing card games. It was obvious they loved to do this since it was what they did everyday.

She said they were always playing Speed, so she offered to teach them a new game.

The students, most whom she has in her classes, were all up for the idea and eventually learned to love the new game she taught them called 'Stress.'

Stress is a game with the set up of Solitaire, the pace of Speed, and an ending similar to Spoons. At least three decks of cards are needed.

In their individual hand, each person sets up six piles, like in Solitaire and puts a stack of cards in the middle of the game circle. The goal of the game is to lose your cards, then at the end grab the smallest pile.

Everyday, Rackliffe said, she saw them start to play Stress rather than Speed. They loved it so much they decided to start a club being as they thought it could benefit other students as well.

It was true that card games relieved stress and they the pun off of the name of the game was

appropriate.

When they pitched the idea of the club to Rackliffe, who they said should sponsor it since she taught the game to them, she said she couldn't refuse.

The club is designed as a way for students to meet new people, relieve stress, and learn a new past time that is entertaining.

It is already formed from a group of good friends, freshmen Molly McVay, Emily Nolan, Sara Dann, Faith Snyder, September Symens, and sophomore Matthew Kohler. All of which sit at the same lunch table and play cards together everyday.

They are welcoming to new people, Rackliffe said. And they are passionate to start the club and make it fun for others who want to learn the game and love to play cards.

"They really took charge," said Rackliffe. "They were kinda the facilitators in the teaching process of the card game."

Rackliffe said in the first meeting that they divided the participants into two groups: one group for people who didn't know how to play the game, and one group for students who did.

In the one meeting they've had so far, everyone seemed to have a good time, she said. The Stress Club has only had one meeting as of March 20th.

They plan on meeting every Monday in room 329 from 3:00 to 4:00.

"It's fun," said Rackliffe. "And it's a way to release stress in a competitive, fast paced way."



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PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Senior co-President of D.R.E.A.M. Club carries in senior Michael Lynch from outside. The group is a new one, with a relaxed atmosphere that hopes to bring social diversity to the fore-front and show off

Dream Club shows off Central's diverse student

BY PATRICK BREEN

Central High School is the most diverse school in the state. With over 2,400 students, many with different backgrounds, the school is the melting-pot and poster child for OPS.

And one of the groups that celebrates this school's unique population is a small group of students that make a large impact.

D.R.E.A.M. Club is an organization that celebrates the multitude of races and ethnicities that the Big C has to offer. Formerly known as Social Diversity Club, the club meets often to share a plethora of ideas.

D.R.E.A.M. stands for Diversity, Respect, Equality, Acceptance Movement.

Copresident, senior Phil Lomneth said that groups main purpose is to help the students of Central realize the differences and embrace them.

"We want to educate people," Lomneth said. "We want to create a respectful atmosphere at our school."

The other senior copresident, Rachel Farhat and Amy Wall.

And the goal is something they have worked hard to accomplish.

This year the group has been very active doing several school activities and workshops. The club orchestrated a "Mix it up week."

"The goal was to get kids involved," Lomneth said.

The group meets every other Thursday and has a range of members. For the events like the planning of "Mix it up Week," the club would see around 15-20 members. For regular meetings though, Lomneth said it would be a little smaller with mostly the copresident and extremely active members.

Another event the club got students involved in was "Inclusivity." This is something that most of the members were involved in.

"It was a great experience for everyone," he said.

"Inclusivity" was an event in which the students learned about different discrimination and "isms."

"It educated everyone about the use of 'isms' and how they hurt society," Lomneth said. "Classism, sexism, racism, everything."

And what's the best part about this club designed to make Central a better place?

"The best part," Lomneth said. "I think the work we do in the school. It's meaningful. We want to be really proud of our school."

And the impact they make is a big one.

Although the copresident and the bulk of members are seniors, Lomneth hopes the club will continue to be active for years to come.

Science Olympiad performs well at competitions

BY PATRICK BREEN

There aren't any pole-vaulters or down-hill skiers in these competitions. But that doesn't mean the competition was any less fierce.

For the second time in the school year, Central's Science Olympiad team competed in the scientific form of the Olympics.

"We performed well," coach and E-Science teacher Jeff Fredrickson said. "(We) took home seven out of a possible 12 medals."

The events took place at the Henry Doorly Zoo, and the students participated in the events.

While team members joked about mutant penguins, the team performed quite well.

The team members mostly came from the E-science class and the Science Olympiad club after school.

E-science is a class built mainly around experimentation and testing. The class prepares the students for the competitions, and makes them easier to do, while under pressure.

In the competitions, students pair up and compete in

different categories from boomilever to destruct and rebuild with instruction tests.

To some this may sound easy, but the tests were harder than one would think.

"It was some tricky stuff," sophomore Olympian Josh Hackett said.

In the latter competition, team members are separated into separate rooms and then one takes apart something and writes instructions so that the team member in the other room could put it back together.

The one team to do it the fastest wins.

Hackett performed well with senior Jomarcell Nguyen in that competition, and also did well in the boomilever, which is based on holding weight with a little product as possible.

The class allows the students to prepare for these competitions.

"It gives you the time to do all the stuff," Fredrickson said. "Even other competitions like C.S.I, Physics and Chemistry Field Day."

The Science Olympiad was a success for the students and the added wins will bring more members for the next school year.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Senior Jomarcell Nguyen, a member of Science Olympiad, lights up some chemicals in E-science.

Credit cards prove to be tiresom, dangerous to teens

BY MICHELLE RIEGER

This little piece of plastic can either save you or rob you of all your money. It's called a credit card.

Credit and debit cards are now so widely used by Americans used that anything from vending machines to gas pumps accept them.

According to an MSN money report, about 51 percent of Americans own two or more credit cards. In a research study by Demos, people between the ages of 18 and 24 saw a 104 percent rise in credit card debt between 1992 to 2001.

Thirty-one percent of high school seniors use a credit card according to a 2005 study by Jumpstart Coalition for Financial Literacy.

A survey by Junior Achievement WorldWide found that five percent of 13-14 year olds have a credit card.

Now teens are getting credit cards and into debt.

Junior Andrew Pauba is one of those teens.

He decided to get a credit card in November because he had a job.

Most parents would probably not want their children to have a credit card at such a young age. But Pauba's parents felt differently.

"They wanted me to have one in case of emergencies", Pauba explained.

He said it is a lot of responsibility because it's so easy just to buy anything. Like most other Americans with credit cards, Pauba said it will probably end up hurting him in the future. He explains his spending habits as 'bad'.

"I mostly spend my money on food", said Pauba.

American consumers spent about \$51 billion on fast food alone in 2006 according to carddata.com. This is compared to \$33.2 billion only one year earlier.

These 'bad' spending habits can lead to much distress and headache in one's future.

Junior Haleigh Tomasek got a debit card over the summer.

"I feel better about using a debit card rather than a credit card because I know that the money is already being used and I don't have to worry about paying the bill later on", said Tomasek.

Tomasek said she feels safe using a debit card. She said it teaches her to manage her money pretty well. She said she constantly checks to balance in her account so she doesn't go over.

"My mom works with credit and debit card machines and she knows what goes on so my parents knew it was safer to have a debit card rather than a credit card", explained Tomasek.

However there are still dangers to using a debit card. There can be resulting fees and overdrafts. And putting the lost money back into an account can be stressful and difficult.

There are even more dangers in using a credit card. The user can use it anytime they want.

Tomasek plans on getting a credit card when she heads off to college.

"I plan on getting one when I go to college in case of emergencies. I plan on going out of state and if there were something to come up, I could use it," explained Tomasek.

Teens are now using the plastic money more than ever.

CHEETA club host pet food drive

BY WYNTER DAVIS

The Central high Cheeta club recently had a Pet Food Drive for the Emergency Red Cross food pet pantry to help abandon animals.

"It's when a family has a disaster like tornados, their house burns down, or something would get flooded. They don't have enough money to feed their pets and don't want to abandon them," said Cat Kennedy, sponsor of Cheeta club.

People could have brought cans or bags of dog and cat food. The club dealt with a vast majority of pets mainly stuck to dogs and cats. They didn't get into any exotic animals.

Kennedy said that the drive lasted for most of the month of February.

The purpose of this club is to raise awareness of animal's issues and get a spirit of service and volunteerism.

There are 15 members who have signed up for Cheeta club. This years officers are, junior, Nadia Al- Apsy and junior, Stephanie Palmer. The club meets in room 247 after school on the third Tuesday of each month.

The club doesn't focus on doing the same activity every year. They try to do one kind of assistants to animals. But they have done the Food Drive a view years back.

Kennedy said one year they've done a drive to help the animal victims of Hurricane Katrina. Similar to the Pet Food drive.

Next on their agenda on March 29, they will be having a Vegetarian Chef Guest Speaker come and meet with the club.

He will come and talk to the club about the importance and values of being a vegetarian. How dishes without meat can still be nutritious.

Then on April 5th, the Cheeta club, on Saturday field trip to No-Kill Shelter Hearts United in Auburn, Nebraska.

The shelter deals with not putting animals done and keeping them until they can find a good adoptive home and shelter from the cold winters.

Teens have chance to land job at job fair

Teens have a chance to land a great job at an upcoming job fair. It will be held at Omaha Public Library's W. Clarke Swanson Branch on April 7, 2008. This is located on 9101 W. Dodge Rd. It will run from 12-5p.m..

Omaha Public Library's Third Annual Teen Job Fair is for teens ages 16-19.

Teens should dress as they would to a normal interview. They should also bring a black pen, their Social Security number, names addresses and phone numbers of their school, former employers and at least three references.

Employers from all over Omaha will be there accepting applications. These companies include: Omaha Scheel's All Sports, Omaha and Papillion Hy-Vee Stores, Culver's, Shopko, UPS, YWCA Omaha, Gallup, Omaha Steaks, Great Escape Theatres Omaha 16 and many more.

For more information teens can visit omahapubliclibrary.org for more information regarding this event.

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Merit Pay

All students have had an amazing teacher that has taught his or her subject so well that even with the three months of summer vacation, you do not forget a single thing of what he or she taught.

On the contrary, all students have had a teacher who was so horrible that you did not learn a single thing while in their classroom.

It would seem unfair for that teacher who goes the extra mile and is very passionate about his or her subject to get the same amount of money in a year that a horrible teacher receives, and it is.

Merit pay, also known as pay-for-performance, is defined as a raise in pay based on a set of criteria set by the employer. This usually involves the employer conducting a review meeting with the employee to discuss the employee's work performance during a certain time period.

Merit pay is a matter between an employer and an employee (or the employee's representative), states US Department of Labor.

The state school board is now allowing Nebraska teachers receive a minimum raise with their income. The only way they may be able to receive this raise is judged off of their students' test results on their grades. So far teachers have not agreed with this law because they see it as unfair and a way to show certain teacher favoritism.

While merit-pay systems have generally failed, it is not because of the system, but because of critics that don't believe merit pay will work.

How do you know if something doesn't work until you try it?

Here's the thing: the education system in America is nowhere compared to other countries, especially those in Asia.

Merit pay would be a way to keep the best teachers we have. It is also a way to keep up the quality of the teachers. If the best are paid the most money than they will stay in the teaching profession and the teachers who are not teaching their students a single thing will leave.

Though some people are afraid that having a merit-pay based system for teachers would make the work environment competitive. Studies have shown that is not the case at all. In fact, it is the opposite.

Studies have it that the state showed Texas Educator Excellence Grant program drew a pleasing response of the teachers in the 1,148 schools. They received bonuses and were awarded. It also said that huge rate of turnover of schools in the plan each year will make it difficult to achieve success over the long haul.

Addition to school districts they were given bonuses far less than the spending fee of \$3,000 to \$10,000. This range was recommended by the Legislature- trying to spread money among more teachers, the districts gave average maximum bonuses of \$2,263 says red orbit.

Merit pay is not just about amazing test scores.

It is about having teachers improve their students education and being rewarded if they are actually teaching their students something.

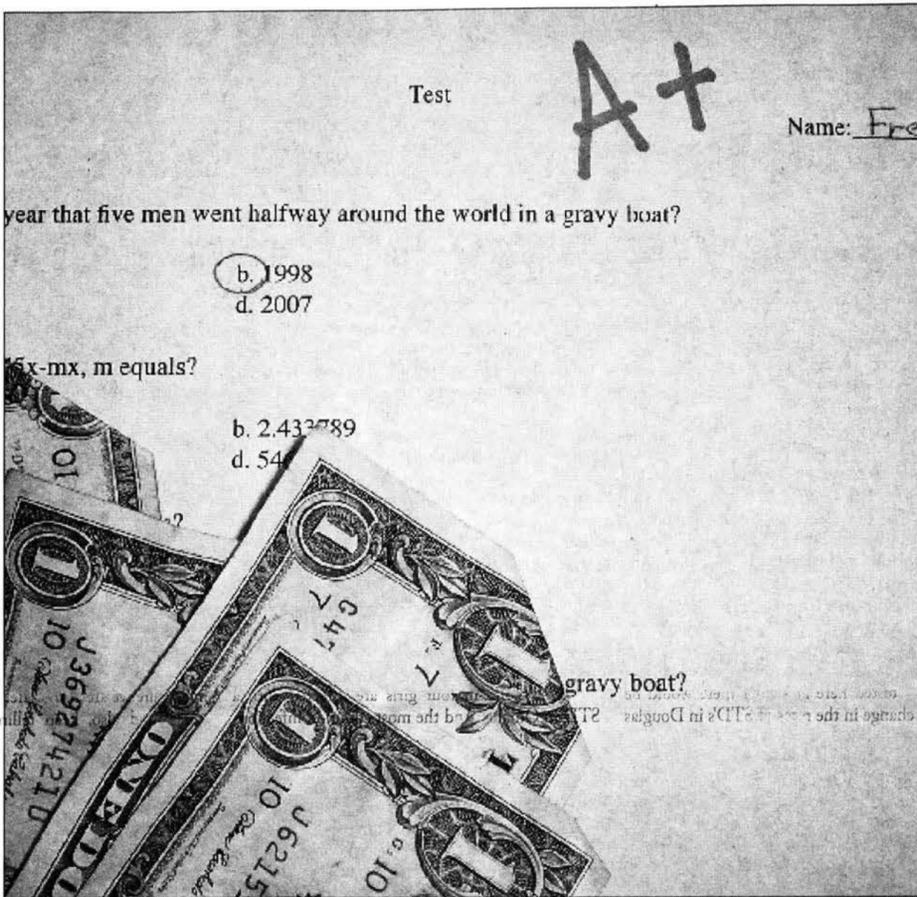
It isn't about punishing teachers, it's a way to ensure that the students in the United States get taught by the best.

It is a way to pay the better teachers more than the one's that don't teach at all.

The Gray Issue

Pro

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EDITORIAL
The OPINION of
the Register staff

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of
the Register staff

Inability to vote proves frustrating for underage citizens

"Why Young Voters Care Again," read the cover of Time Magazine. I picked it up and smiled. Just the thought of my generation making an impact on our changing country makes me immensely excited. Inside I read with growing enthusiasm about how nearly half of Barack Obama's support comes from American voters under the age of 30.

I read about how as many youth are raising their voices for this year's presidential elections as they did the year it was legal for eighteen-year-olds to vote; especially since younger support since that year has certainly been lacking.

I'm seeing before my own eyes the importance of my generation blossom. I'm watching in our country fan out. And nothing to me is more frustrating.

It makes me excited to be apart of a revolution that won't soon be forgotten. But the sad part of it is that I can't really participate other than rallying peers to vote. I was born at the wrong time by only a few years.

At 16, all I can do is sit back and watch how the political changes that are happening in our country fan out. And nothing to me is more frustrating.

I respect politics, I'm interested in the presidential candidates, I want to see the best come to our country. I know more of what each candidate stands for than many who are twice my age.

When someone says, "Barack Obama sucks!" Or "John McCain is awesome," I ask them why. They usually can't answer. That doesn't make for a good discussion,

that's for sure. I know of what goes down in the white house even when it's not an election year. I know what the problems that face our country are, and I have heard how each claims to mend them.

I've taken notice of campaigning strategies: Hillary appeals to those who loved her husband and Obama takes on a rock-concert/celebrity approach when he rallies.

Of course there are other candidates and much more to them than fast stated observations, but in short: I really wish I could vote, and if you ask me, I'm qualified.

I'm not complaining about how it's not fair that I don't get to vote! And I'm not demanding to know how 18-year-olds are different than I even though I'm well aware that they're not. I think it's wise to have an age limit on voting and I think eighteen is a sufficient age.

What I'm upset about is something I'm not even sure could be addressed as a problem.

I'm upset that something huge is happening and I should be involved in it, but due to the fact that I was born in 1991, I can't be.

Nevertheless, I love following the presidential elections. Call me crazy, but it is far better than something like "American Idol." And what can beat Obama coming to Omaha?

I got to see first hand a man that could possibly become America's next great president.

Sitting far above the stage next to my 18-year-old boyfriend, however, I couldn't help but envy all those, including him, who could vote this time around.

They were here to see the man they could actually support, which was a lot better than I could do by just "being with him in spirit."

I was impressed at the democratic support that showed up for him and I was even more impressed, and proud to be apart of, the large majority of high school and college students who were there rising their voices for their country.

I loved how it was a social event as well as something that carried a lot of impact.

I loved that I could be there with my boyfriend and other friends that were sincerely interested in it as well.

The entire thing was undoubtedly good for our generation. I was just upset that the only way I could participate was cheering in the crowd.

It just feels different this time, this election I mean. It feels like our country has been going down a path and now we are presented with an opportunity to go a different way.

Perhaps redeem ourselves. The thought of that is certainly exciting. I just wish I could be part of it.



REBIRTH
A column by Ali Hodge

LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES, POLLS, CARTOONS

Central is a consistently safe school

Dear Editor,
I feel Central is an extremely safe school. I have never felt at danger here. Overall, the atmosphere here at Central is a positive and safe one.
Lea Farho (9)

Education only way to succeed

Dear Editor,
I feel extremely disappointed that 40% of puples do not graduate. I think that educational disipline is the one true way to succeed in life.
Rebecca Doty (9)

School should be more strict, tough

Dear Editor,
The school should be stricter on all students of each grade, so they can graduate from high school.
Precious Temple (9)

School should be more strict, tough

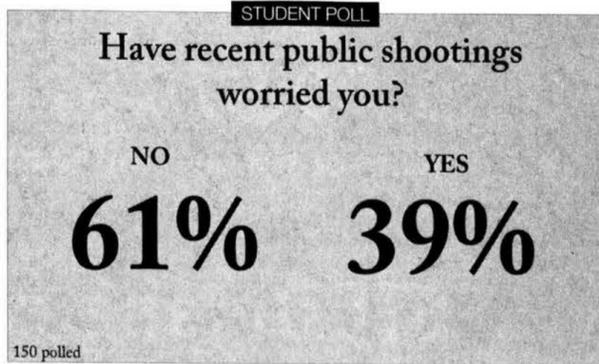
Dear Editor,
What in the world! 40% of students don't graduate on time? That's really pathetic; it's almost one half of the second most populated high school in Nebraska. That statistic is even more pathetic when you realize the freshman class is larger than the senior class. Students need to take education more seriously. It's a priveledge.
Crystal Huynhcao (10)

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 Ms. Parker'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.

Strict laws cause criminal behavior

Dear Editor,
The 40% of students who don't graduate on time isn't the teacher's fault. It is the student's fault for not doing thier work and messing around all the time.
Alisia Mills (9)



Disappointing dropouts annoy student

Dear Editor,
I feel it is truly pathetic that 40% of Central students do not graduate on time. Some people that sit at my table at lunch are in the percentile. I feel bad for them, makes me cry at night.
Christopher Rolling (12)

Strict laws cause criminal behavior

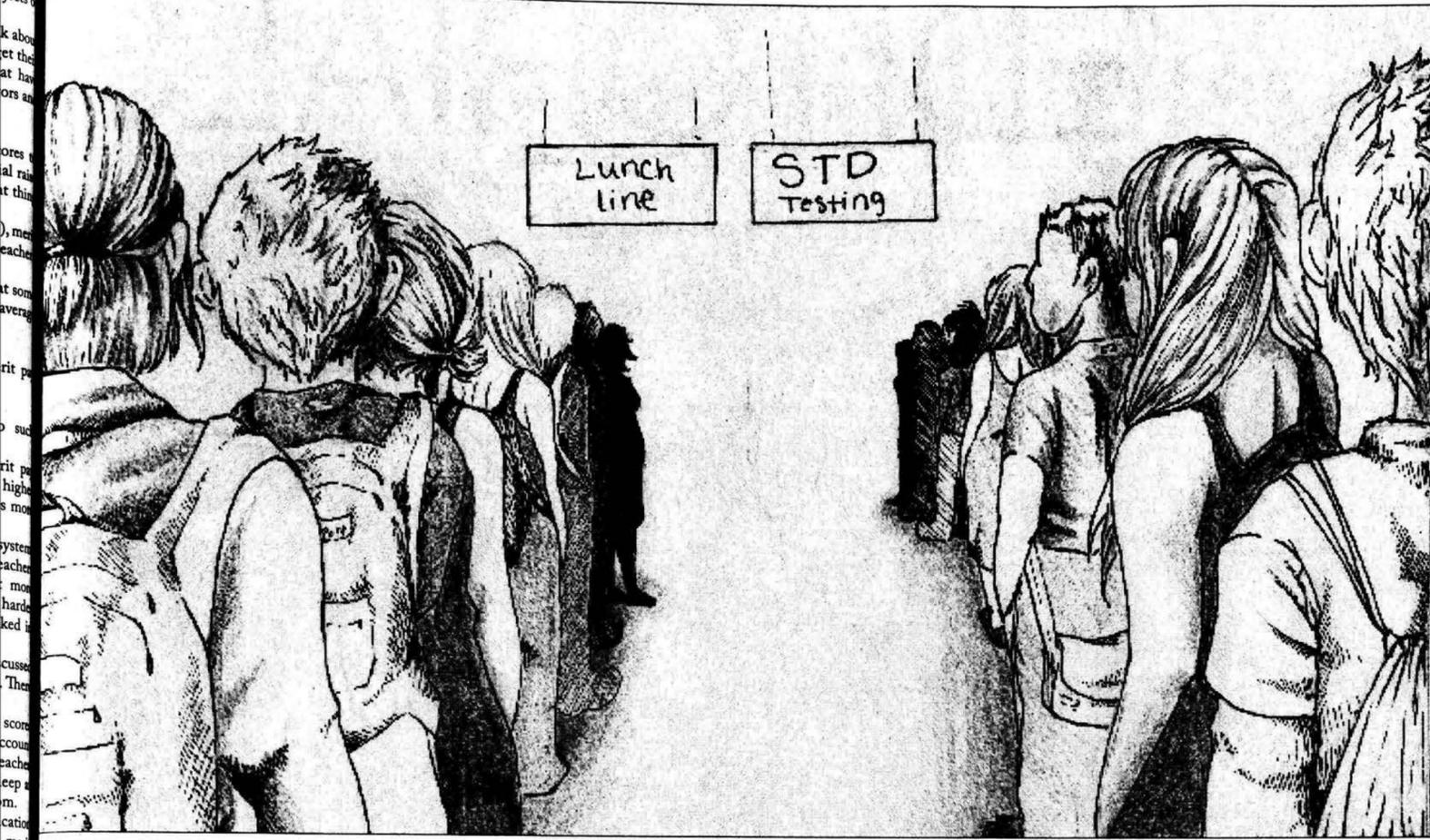
Dear Editor,
School is already safe enough. The past events are just times where extremely unfortunate events have occurred. Gun control is what needs to be reviewed.
Molly Anderson (10)

Motivation to blame for lack of grads

Dear Editor,
I feel students that don't graduate on time is due to lack of motivation. I see many students go to class and do not do anything but still show up. There are many ways to make up credits and it's not hard to do. You just need the motivation.
Noel Jimerez (12)

Simple problem with simple solutions

Dear Editor,
Forty percent of Central students don't graduate on time because they don't come to school to learn.
Peter Bourrage (9)



CARTOON BY ANITA HODGE

War takes toll on National Guard's daughter



IT'S MY TURN
A column by Alana Brunow

The controversial topic of war stirs up many strong emotions for many people. How do you think it would feel to wake up every morning and wonder if one of your close family members is still breathing? Well, every morning that is one of the first things to cross my mind. My father rejoined the army about a year and a half ago. Before I was born, he had been in the military before. Now, in the Army National Guard, he is a medic and a guard soldier.

My dad was deployed to Iraq in early August, a month before we expected. I have not seen him in months. The last couple of weeks he was in the states was an emotional rollercoaster. We spent a majority of the time moving my dad, stepmother, and siblings' belongings to the new house, where they were to live at Offutt Air Force Base. Every morning, we would wake up, eat breakfast, leave the house at 10:30am and make trips to and fro all day and then come back home around 2:00am. My dad and I spent almost the entire last three days he was in town moving.

Keeping in touch is one of the most difficult things to do. Once in a great while, I get a phone call or an e-mail from Baghdad, the phone calls are almost completely blocked out by static

Keeping in touch is the most difficult things to do.

and the e-mails are generally kept short and sweet. Recently, I have had almost no communication with my dad or my dad's side of the family.

My brother, Val, my sister, Samantha, and my stepmother, Kate all live on the military base. I miss everyone more than I ever thought I would. For unknown reasons, it is unreasonably difficult to send or receive packages or letters by mail. Things get sent back sometimes and in many cases, they just don't make to their destination. The last time I visited my brother and sister was in the summer.

I am not the only one having a hard time with my dad gone. My eight-year-old brother and my twelve-year-old sister are struggling emotionally as well. Being such vulnerable ages can't help the situation. The only parental support they have while my dad is gone is Kate. Luckily, the other families on the base are supportive and understanding.

Supposedly, my dad is supposed to be coming home in May, but dates are often changed at the last minute. I love my dad and I want him to come home, but I honestly do not support the war at all. I wish he had not gone over there. The reasons the United States are invading Iraq are completely illegitimate. Kate sends photographs of my father in Iraq to me every once in a while. They are frightening to look at. When you have proof right in front of your eyes that this war is really happening, the scary reality of it sinks in fast.

Most of the children I've seen in the photos are missing shoes. Almost everyone dresses like you and I, with the exception of the women, who are covered from head to toe. Some people are trustworthy, and some are not. It is the same, even with soldiers. In some photos, my dad is shown with homemade weapons confiscated from the opposing side.

The way their towns and cities are set up is very industrial. Many buildings are worn down and most paths of travel are dirt roads. Their main source of water is a man-made area and there are many wild animals such as dogs running around.

People really do die every single day on both sides. Car bombs are almost as common over there as car accidents are over here. Millions of families are missing their dad, mom, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandfather, niece, nephew, cousin, neighbor, or another loved one. Hopefully, this war will soon end. The soldiers will come home to their families and I will be grateful. From then on, when I wake up in the morning, the first thought to run through my mind may differ from that of recent mornings.

STD tests should be available in schools

Getting tested is one very important decision every young person should make. It is so significant because your very life depends on it! Either you die or live, and living is one everyone should choose. So getting tested at school should be an option for OPS students.

This topic is very controversial. Simply because OPS is barely allowed to talk about sexual education. We've come so far with allowing sex education.

But there are those parents who refuse to let their child hear about sex because it is totally forbidden.

So going above and beyond and actually taking action in getting tested would be a big step for our school district. This would be very beneficial to all students.

There are plenty of young people who are going around and infected other people knowingly and unknowingly. This is so unfortunate for the young people of Douglas County.

We have some of the highest rates of infections in the nation! The total population in Douglas County is 492,003. In the 2006 census, 813 females were reported to have chlymdia within the 15-18 age group.

For the ones who do know they have a STD, they might have the access to go get the right medication. Another possibility is that they may not know where to and how to get help. Having testing at school would be very beneficial to them.

The students who are not aware of they are infected with a STD need the most help.

There are plenty of people who do not have

any symptoms at all of having any infections. Those are the ones keeping a continuous pattern going of multiple sexual partners and giving them a STD.

There are barely any relationship within high school that are monogamy which is another reason why th STD's keep going.

Where will it end?

Young people need to know it is okay to get tested regularly for STD's. Fear is the biggest reason why people don't get tested.

They may fear the results because they know they have something, or they may just be prideful and say " I KNOW I don't have any STD's!"

Getting the job done would eliminate all the possible reasons of not going.

If we had the access to get tested here at school there would be a dramatic change in the rates of STD's in Douglas County.

The procedure would be easily accomplished by getting a certified or registered nurse to come to Central.

There would be a way to set a confidential and secretive appointment. The student would come in to get the "test." The parent would not be notified about getting tested if only the student wishes.

The parents will not know because some students who are sexually active are not able to talk to their parents about it.

There are tons of parents who aren't comfortable with talking about the three letter word that allows reproduction, satisfaction, heartbreaks, and STD's.

There are also those parents who might flip out

and keep them on punishment for 30 years!

So lets just face it. Stopping young people from having sex is something that will not be and cannot be done no matter how much we try to avoid it or try to brush it under the rug.

So why not just do it the right way? Why not teach the students that if having sex is a option they choose, do it safe with using protection.

Protection such as condoms, female condoms, foams, diaphragms, and even abstinence are they ways that students can protect themselves from getting STD's.

Its also very important to get students to understand that getting tested reguarly is safe to.

There has been a recent study in Omaha Douglas County that the rate of STD's are climbing more and more year by year. This is all getting way out of hand and ridiculous!

Every one in four girls are infected with a STD in Omaha. And the most common infections in Omaha among young people in omaha are chlymdia and gonorrhea.

All these rates can be lowerd by allow OPS to test young people during school.

It's said that most teens are most comfortable going to get tested along with friends. Friends come along for the support. If this is true getting tested at school is the right place to get tested.

After all, we do spend majority of our time here. This is our home away from home.

Most people who get tested go to Charles Drew. Not because they are low income families but because they now they're parents will be upset if they found out about their 16 year old son catching a STD.

The school board would go crazy if they heard this idea. But it is just another idea. Someone has to make a stand against this epidemic is young people in Omaha.

OPS wishes for saftey why not promote saftey with testing in school. Many students would take advantage of this is it was allowed.

This idea should have been thought up a long time ago.

Think about how crazy the rates will be 15 years from now if we don't change it now. There are plenty of organizations who give help those in need for free sich as Planned Parenthood or Charles Drew. But are they really effective and making a change?

A change is what we need. We need to make better decisions as young people to be protected while having sex and following up afterwards to make sure we are 100% safe.

And also, keep telling young people and providing classes about STD awarness. Knowledge is power.

If we aren't safe while we are young, it can effect us when we get older. STD's can make us unferile or even can cause death. And if you get pregnant with a STD, you can put your life and your childs life in danger as well.

So once again, we need immediatate testing in schools all over Omaha for students. It will make a change in rates we have going on here. When the Omaha World Hearld comes out with a issue saying how many youd people have STD's in Omaha, it looks bad.

We don't want people looking at us like we're gross, sex-crazed animals. So lets make a change.

Should safe sex options be provided to students?

Not much is done about the growing problems associated with unprotected teenage sex.

The problem is pushed aside, sometimes denied by students, and only recently have people been aware of the true risks of unprotected sex between teenagers.

Unprotected teenage sex causes unplanned pregnancies and devastating diseases.

These harmful things can ruin a person's family, education, and their years as an adolescent. Unprotected sex can ruin a person's life.

All of these problems can all be easily avoided with a simple solution—condom usage.

A potentially helpful solution would be to make condoms available to young people through well-regulated sex education programs.

Just like the argument of creation versus evolution, safe sex vs. abstinence is a topic constantly debated in school systems throughout the United States.

Proponents of safe sex education argue that an increased use of contraceptives such

as condoms or birth control pills would help to eliminate the growing problem of teenage childbirths and Sexually Transmitted diseases.

Many supporters of safe sex education feel that the solution to these problems goes beyond education. A suggestion is passing condoms out to teenagers in schools or other public places.

The solution has worked in countries with high rates of AIDS and other STD's.

The solution doesn't come up often in the United States. People would rather brush the problem aside, for religious or other reasons. Parents cringe at the thought of their children using condoms.

Many people are aware of Douglas County's extraordinarily high rate of sexually transmitted diseases. A recent Omaha World Herald brought attention to the statistics, stating that one-fourth of girls age 14 to 19 have one of the more common STD's.

Making condoms available to young people would help to lower teen pregnancy and STD's.

To be successful, the program would have to be well regulated. For instance, instead of just passing condoms out to teens, the free condom program could accompany a class on sex education or other another heath class.

At the conclusion of the course, when the students understand the risks of intercourse and proper usage, they could be given condoms.

The students would also be encouraged to use abstinence, for no safe sex practices are 100 percent effective, including condom usage.

The safe sex education and suggested condom usage would decrease diseases and childbirth more than current standards.

An availability of condoms in turn with an increased awareness of safe sex would contribute to a significant decline in STD's and teenage childbirth.

These practices could eliminate some widespread problems so no more lives would be ruined.



CARTOON BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

Emergency situation throws perception of safety off

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT
A column by Kevin Gibbs

It was an average Sunday. The family piled in the car before 5:30 to make it to church in time. We parked in the lot across the street and walked over to Saint Cecilia's Cathedral. Upon entering, the cavernous ceilings and works of art on the marble walls made you feel like you really had entered the house of God.

We took our seats, and it wasn't long into the service before I began to zone out.

I'm a catholic, and proud of it, and I've been known to pay attention through an entire mass, but I've also been on the verge of sleep too.

If you had asked me what father's sermon was over, you'd gain a blank stare, but I got the gist of it in between thoughts of video games and car chases. After a while, the mass was almost over. We were

all standing saying the "Our Father" before communion, one of the moments I'm sure to pay attention so that God doesn't smite me on the spot.

As it came to a close, I drifted back into a bit of dreamland. My eyes shifted arbitrarily to the pew a few ahead of me.

Suddenly my sight came back into focus as an elderly woman, who was still seated a couple rows ahead, made a small noise, straightened out both of her arms, and went completely limp, hitting her head on the back of the pew.

The parishoners next to her and I looked at each other and at her. Instinctively I grabbed my cellphone and held it up for a second. A woman near the now unconscious elderly woman nodded and mouthed, "911."

I flipped my phone open and realized I had shut it off before church. As I waited for it to finish powering up I watched as two women shifted her so that she was lying down in the pew. Finally the phone was operational and I dialed 911.

The phone beeped, alerting me in case I had dialed by accident I assume, and the phone rang.

"911, what is your emergency?" the woman on

the line asked.

"Um, there's an elderly woman who's passed out at Saint Cecilia's Cathedral. We need an ambulance."

"I'm sorry sir, I missed all of that."

I realized I had been whispering.

I know it's church, but this is as good an excuse as any to use a normal indoor voice.

I explained the situation again, and she told me to hold on. A new voice came over the phone.

"Omaha Fire and Rescue, what is your emergency?" she asked. I explained for a third time. The dispatcher asked where the church was, and I didn't know. I asked the people around me. My mom gave me a cross street.

"40th and Webster." I replied. Then the dispatcher asked if she had any medical issues, and what her condition was now.

"Uh, let me see, someone else might know better than I do."

"Okay," the dispatcher replied, and I handed it to one of the women caring for the unconscious octogenarian.

She grabbed the phone and began talking to

the woman on the line. The elderly woman's eyes fluttered open and she looked bewildered.

I watched as the women encouraged her to stay lying down. Even though she wanted to sit up, she complied.

Her caretakers passed my phone back and forth answering different questions, occasionally asking the elderly woman questions to relay to the dispatcher. Finally they hung up the phone and one of them hand it back to me with a thank you.

Eventually the woman sat up on her own and mass concluded.

On my way out one of the ushers told me that they had canceled the ambulance. Apparently she felt well enough. I watched from a distance as a small mob of people followed the woman out of the church to get her home safely.

It made me worry about getting old someday. Unfortunately it might be me who, without any warning, goes into a coma or becomes unconscious someday. It scares me sometimes.

However, as long as I'm with a group of people like the one that formed to aide the elderly woman, I know I'll be in good hands.

EDITORIALS

"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



CARTOON BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

Ballpark argument hits students

As the beautiful weather and warm temperatures begin to settle with the cool smell of spring making its return, baseball comes back into the mind of the general public, along with the long and drawn out argument that has captured Omaha.

The Great Ballpark Debate.

There are those who love the nostalgic feel of Rosenblatt Stadium, and the beloved history it holds within its multi-colored bleachers.

"There is so much tradition at Rosenblatt, and so many memories," sophomore Jake Fuhs explains. "It would be really sad to see Rosenblatt go."

There are those who believe that it is time for a new stadium, and that this will be the only way for the College World Series to stay in Omaha. They are tired of Rosenblatt Stadium, and are excited at the prospect of a brand new baseball stadium along with a rejuvenated north downtown area.

"I am definitely on the side of building a newer, more modern ball complex," says sophomore Daniel Grosbach. "Building a new stadium is the only way to save the College World Series."

Which side is right? With so much money, publicity, wrong interest at stake, Omaha cannot afford to make the wrong decision and lose the College World Series.

"It [Rosenblatt] has been around for 50 years, and I think building a new stadium will ruin the tradition and set a bad vibe for the College World Series," Fuhs says.

Back at the beginning of the debate, it was a much more wide open and up for discussion. Now, it seems like the committee and the general public are leaning toward a new downtown stadium, and it is right decision. According to the latest estimation, the new stadium would cost around \$140 million. It would include open concourses with field views, top-notch player amenities, new concessions, large skyboxes, and a fan festival site outside the stadium. To help lower the price, naming rights could be given to the highest bidder. Coupled with private donations, and it would lower the cost of the park by \$40 million.

Renovating Rosenblatt Stadium would cost a projected \$80 million and would not be a complete rebuilding of the historic landmark. It would include general repairs, new locker rooms, and more skyboxes.

However, fan concourses would be eliminated, and there would be expanded places where the sale of alcohol and other merchandise would be banned.

Then there is the prospect of the College World Series leaving Omaha if it doesn't get a new stadium. The current contract with the CWS runs until 2010, and Mayor Mike

Fahey is looking to get a new contract signed.

If a new stadium is built, it is projected that Omaha could lock up the series for the next 20 years. If not, it could get a much shorter contract.

Or no contract at all.

"I would rather see Rosenblatt torn down than to lose the CWS, and I believe that in this case, whatever tradition or mystique that surrounds Rosenblatt needs to be forgotten," says senior Connor Bailey.

"It would be depressing to see Rosenblatt go, but it would be terribly upsetting to lose the series to a city with finer facilities," Grosbach says.

Although deserting Rosenblatt is a depressing thought, it is completely necessary. Why would the greedy NCAA stay in Omaha, which would have an older stadium, when they could offer the series to the highest bidder and completely move it to another city.

The NCAA doesn't care about tradition. It's all about the money for them. A city with a newer stadium would attract more people and give the CWS a fresh new look, and would lead to, in their eyes, more money.

Whatever the committee decides in the near future, it will most likely make the decision that keeps the College World Series in Omaha. It is simply too important to the people of Omaha.

EDITORIAL The OPINION of the Register staff

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Creationism debate still alive, controversial

The controversy over whether religion should be allowed in schools, and the fact is that it's a war that been wagging on for years and will probably continue to wage on.

But recently there has been an argument on whether schools should teach creationism alongside evolution.

Evolution is the idea that humans evolved from apes millions of years ago. While creationism being the theory that life forms are too complicated to be explained through Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and must be the work of a hyper intelligent being.

The problem with this subject is that it has connections with religion so it goes in twenty different directions and it's not helped by the courts varying decisions when it comes to religion.

The argument keeps going back to the so-called separation of church and state. A law that pretty much says the U.S. has to remain neutral in matters that have to do with religion, not

going against religious freedom and not forcing it on people. Then whenever its Christian vs. religion, people get into the whole 'this is not what the founding fathers would have wanted' thing. But things were different then and things are different now. Its what we need to do not what some dead guys would have wanted.

Whenever someone tries to propose religion in school it said to be not a science and to be a dishonest argument.

Since the "crazy" Christians just trying to shove religion down our children's throats.

Yet no one seems to actually just look at the facts.

The dawn of man is just a theory and nothing more, you can't call one idea crazy because it's religious when the apparent scientific version has no proof and doesn't explain itself.

Since the theory of evolution is full of unexplainable holes and inconsistencies. The fact is the only true problem with creationism is that it means that science is pointing to a belief in God.

And for most people they need to be two separate things. If science adds up to the possibility of a God it must be wrong.

Most of taught science itself is usually just a mass of theories bases upon other theories based on tests that are usually at least modified within the year, and the majority of what in text books will be obsolete within the decade.

So should we not teach anything in science that can't be absolutely proven?

Or we could go with the idea that if it can't be seen it must be wrong and then get rid of over half of the information in text books.

At least then all science classes would be an easy A, one semester class.

EDITORIAL The OPINION of the Register staff



REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Do you think a school shooting is an open threat at Central and why or why not?



"Yes, because there's way too many students and not enough security."
Monika Heater (12)



"As long as there is animosity between students, there will always be a threat, but I still feel safe at Central."
Zachary Cutler (12)



"It's a threat everywhere, but I don't think it's as big of a threat here and I feel safe for the most part."
Ellen Danford (12)



"I think the school is very well protected."
Teresa Albrecht (11)

07-08 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 a 11-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.

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.

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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 ops.org.

Letters must include the author's full name and grade. The use of pen names is 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 as soon as possible.

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Arts	60	50
Sports	40	30
Opinion	100	90
Visuals	100	90
Staff	100	90
Other	100	90
Total	4270	4170

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
COLUMNS
REGISTER YOUR OPINION
POLITICAL CARTOONS

OPINION

Students need to take education more seriously. It's a privilege.
Crystal Huynhcao (10)

Keeping friends close and enemies closer



CHANGING THE FUTURE
A column by Angelica Genovesi

Ever since I can remember, my father has given me one piece of advice that directly describes relationships between the imaginations and realities of people we see everyday.

"Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer."

I've been turning it over in my head ever since the day he uttered those eight words to me and I have never since forgotten that quote.

It didn't belong to him; it belonged to the incredibly successful Hollywood actors who we all take for granted. In this movie, these characters, these actors, and this quote probably began to be spoken by someone who has made our history books.

But no matter where it originated, it is held near and dear to me for I couldn't even possibly begin to comprehend let alone explain.

However, I can tell you this; those simple words which so many of us look at as the true depth of, happen to be the best explanation of life and how the role of people's affiliations function.

Walking through the halls everyday where I see these words completely come to life.

The people, the personalities, and the friendships are familiar and it is because why we talk to people that we really dislike or that we don't get along with, and we all do it.

That is almost what makes this quote so hilariously. Our enemies are our friends; they were once people we confided in or at least held conversation with. Now, they are people we secretly talk about with our new friends, or those people who see in the hallway and try to avoid contact with, or maybe, they are just another acquaintance; someone who we don't mind talking to but who we would prefer to ignore completely.

The smarter of us would accept the person as their enemy but still be amicable and polite. Everyone owes it to everyone to be decent human beings and therefore no one should be treated with disrespect for the simple and obvious reason of hatred.

My father told me this quote when he never once did he intend the saying to be used as means of revenge toward someone who you consider your enemy.

His purpose in telling me this continuously was not only to quote one of the most notable movies ever created, but also to prove the point that no matter how the other person perceives you, as long as you are sincerely kind and benevolent, they will accept you as you are, whether they like or dislike you.

This method is not to be confused with being fake. Those people are simply entertained by the idea of attention, love and adoration by everyone.

They are not appreciated and are not the ones who are insecure.

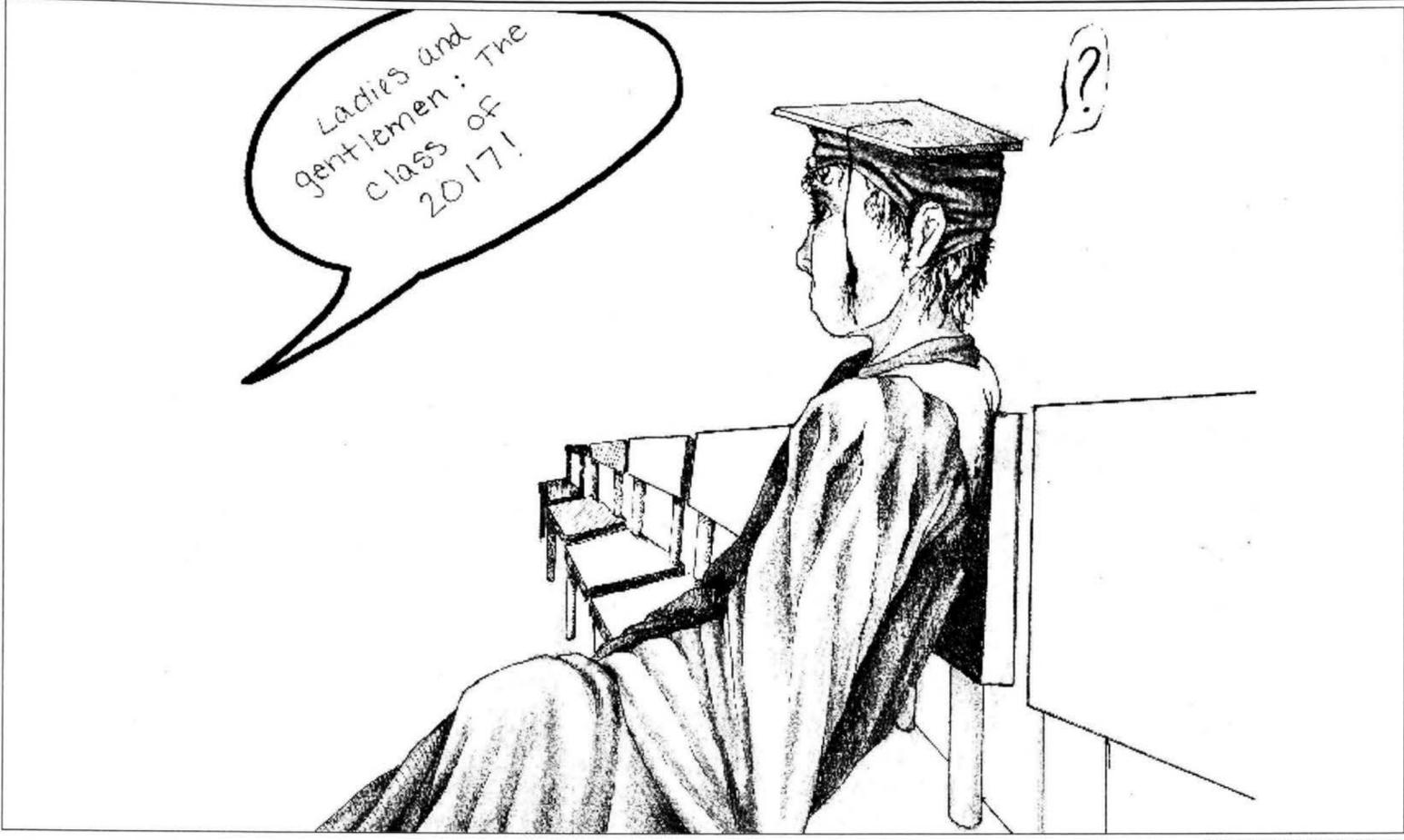
High school, in general, is the perfect place to apply this wonderful piece of advice I seem to have created my motto.

The interactions of people are simply addicting to watch and observe. It amazes me how much reality can be found in those words.

Maybe there other people who appreciate these words the way I do and use them to heart like I have. And maybe there are people who have heard this and think it defies all ethical reasoning. And maybe there are people who have an idea what I have been talking about and who don't even realize where the quote originated.

In that case, I advise who ever falls under that last category to go our and watch the Godfather Trilogy and spend probably ten hours on your couch with a bowl of popcorn, some M&M's and your attention to soak in some Sicilian heritage, confusing family relations, a whole lot of violence, and some incredibly important life lessons.

It's a day well spent, I promise.



CARTOON BY ANITA HODGE

Barely half of freshmen graduate on time

Sixty percent of students freshmen at Central will make it to their senior year here.

That is a terrible percentage.

So terrible in fact, that five OPS high schools, including Central, have been labeled "dropout factories", according to the *Sioux City Journal*.

An Associated Press research group did a national study finding one in ten schools coast to coast are at Central's level or worse.

In total, that's over 1,700 high schools or vocational schools.

However, according to the Associated Press, that is the same level as a decade ago, so education isn't necessarily declining.

It certainly isn't improving in terms of enrollment however.

70 percent of students in the nation graduate on time, with about half of minorities meeting that standard. The reasoning often is due to problems outside of the classroom that distract students.

What can be done to solve the problem? What

will keep teens at Central?

That's the question of the hour, and it should be asked to those who have made the choice to leave.

If the schools look at those who wish to leave, find out why, and fill in any gaps in their services that may cause it, Central might just drop out of the list of schools with such poor turnout.

Central's problem may be the environment of the school. Students are often in a violent fight-ridden situation when going to Central to gain an education. This may force some students to leave to escape the violence.

For some students it may be the administration, which often tries to crack down on policies which have long been forgotten or rejected by the student body, such ID tags which have received plenty of criticism.

This forceful nature is a huge change from more lax conditions at home and may result in students leaving the confines of the school system at the first availability.

Any way you look at it, it's not a great thing. School districts across America need to crack down and attempt to keep kids in school better than they do currently.

However, the school system cannot be solely blamed. The people dropping out ultimately create these numbers, and they alone are responsible for their actions.

Luckily the age at which one can drop out has risen. By the time most students are 18, the age you can legally drop out of school, they are already on the home stretch, and as a result the idea of dropping out loses its appeal somewhat.

Why leave school, when in only a few months, you can be granted a diploma worth your four years of hard work?

Hopefully this will decline the number of students missing out on their education.

One thing the percentage is a bit unclear on is that 60% of students graduate on time. The other 40% didn't necessarily drop out, but may have been held back.

While that isn't quite as horrendous as dropping

ping out, it's certainly nothing to be proud of, and is yet another issue to tackle before the percentage will drop.

Are harder classes to blame for the lack of good grades?

No, most likely it is again the issue of at home problems. Students distracted outside of school often bring the baggage with them, which weighs down their school work.

The only way to graduate is to leave the home drama where it came from and to buckle down and focus.

Easier said than done of course, but all the same, it is an important subject.

Central has a long history, with years of achievement, this mark on its record is not one we as students should leave it with, for the better of the school and for ourselves.

The problem won't go away with words or thoughts. It will take action from the administration, parents, and especially the students themselves to show that Central is anything but a "Dropout Factory"

Teens have lots of money, may lead to lots of trouble

Knowing you have a wallet full of the glorious green stuff is a good feeling.

Maybe you'll go and grab a bite to eat, then maybe catch a movie.

So far, that's about \$25 less that you now have in your wallet.

On Monday morning you forgot to eat breakfast so you make a trip to the vending machine before first hour and buy some chips and a cold, refreshing soda.

There are two more dollars gone.

The lunch menu calls for fish treasures and the sticky macaroni and cheese.

So you opt for a doughnut and juice instead. And another two dollars goes flying out of your wallet.

While at the mall with your friends, browsing through stores, you decide you need the belt hanging up on the wall, even though you already have five perfectly good ones at home.

You don't even realize the price until the cashier tells you the total is \$20.26.

You relent and hand over that hard earned cash. It's only Wednesday and you only have five dollars left in your wallet. You still have your phone bill to pay at the end of the month.

Your gas tank is plunging towards empty.

Next comes the monthly pattern of asking your parents for money. They then reject you, again. The same thing happened the month before, why did you do the same thing again?

In 2006 teens spent an average of \$150 billion. They buy clothes, cars, cell phones, games, food, just about anything. Teens make up about 15 percent of the United States population. Retailers and marketers are targeting towards teens more than ever because teens have the most disposable income.

Even if teens are paying for their own cell phone bill that is still more money that wireless phone companies are making. Teens are also more likely to add more features to their phone because they feel they need to stay in touch all the time. They also have the extra money to do that.

But do they really need all those extra things?

Of course not.

It's extra money they have that they feel like they should spend instead of save.

Most of the things that they do buy they don't need in the least bit. Many teens buy lots and lots of junk food. It doesn't do any good to their bodies or wallets. On food alone a teen spends about \$20-\$30 a week. On top of that they feel they need the newest CD and latest pair of Nikes.



CARTOON BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

'Rock the Nest' good promotion of school, students

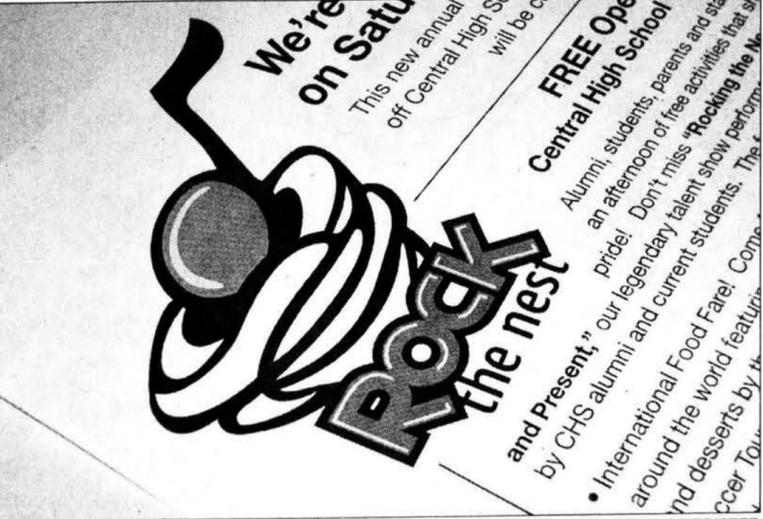


PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER

It seems like it's been a while since the school as a whole celebrated everything that makes it so great all together.

Road Show showcases the talent of the art students, teacher appreciation is strictly for instructors, and Sports Banquet focuses on athletics.

But nothing other than 'Rock the Nest' celebrates all of them as components of a great school and includes academics, diversity, and history; all of which are main components of the school as well.

The event is both a fundraiser and a kick-off celebration for the school's 150th birthday which it will have in 2009. That in it's self is cause for a blow out.

It is a new tradition, the flier reads, hosted by the Central High School foundation. It's goal is to create a fun environment for alumni and students, celebrate what makes Central one of the best high schools in the state, but also raise money to keep up academics and extra curricular activities.

Included in the celebration, which is held April 29th, is an international food fair, a soccer

tournament in the stadium, a child's craft show, magic shows, performances by the Jazz Band, CHS singers, String Quartet, Bagpipers, Mariachi Band, and District Music Contest winners.

There will also be building tours for alumni and parents, Chess demonstrations from the well reputed Chess Team, student art show and silent auction, poetry readings, and athletic activities.

And as if that is not enough, there will also be a casual evening party at Kaneko Studio afterwards.

Although it is nothing like State basketball where all students can be involved and excited, it is something that puts the school in a good light and makes money that will later benefit the students.

It's a good opportunity for alumni, parents and prospective students to check out the school and it's many fine attributes.

The event has been well advertised around the school not only because of the fliers, but also because so many students are involved in it, it has become something to talk about.

Either way, it is clear 'Rock the Nest' is bringing the school together.

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of the Register staff

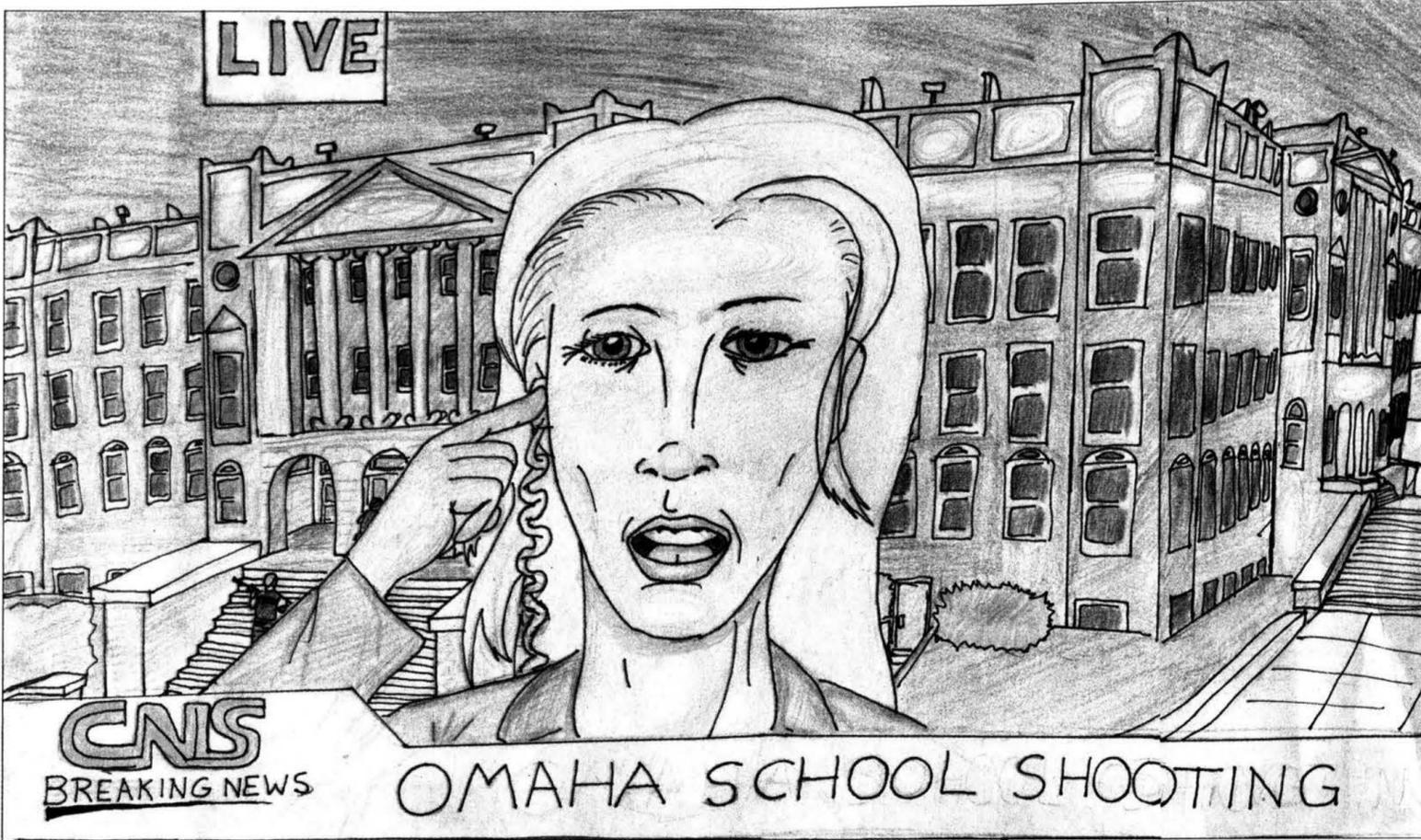
opinion

The Register | Thursday 3.27.2008 | central.journalism@ops.org

11 TIME NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

A HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER



CARTOON BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

Another shooting another worry



NOT A STEREOTYPE
A column by Kim Buckley

Another mass shooting. This time five people were dead, 17 were injured. Those words jumped out at me when I watched the news on Feb. 14. At first glance, while very tragic, was just another Virginia Tech or West Virginia shooting. I was only until I heard what the shooting took place that I began to worry.

Fear somehow wormed its way into my stomach making me feel as though my stomach had formed into knots and had a death-like grip, which it refused to relinquish.

I fought the urge to scream, and was only a miracle that no sound came out of my mouth and I didn't disturb others.

I am not a brave person. In fact, I would probably make Cowardly Lion in "The Wizard of Oz" look like the bravest person on earth.

Ever since I was eight years old, I have been afraid of hundreds of things. I remember asking my mother what would do if our house suddenly caught on fire. Whenever there is a home warning, I always gather up things I don't want to lose and hide in the basement, waiting for things to get so bad and hide in the bathroom.

It's paranoid for me to also assume the worst in those types of situations, but it seems every week in news there has been a fire or a burglary. Those news reports are the things that keep me nervous.

However, I have never been scared as I was on this year's Valentine's Day, a day we're used to celebrating.

My cousin is a student at Northern Illinois University, where Steve Kazmierczak committed suicide on a fateful day.

But not before taking the lives of five innocent people who didn't deserve to die.

When my mom heard the news she tried to reassure me that my cousin probably wasn't on campus when the shooting occurred because she is a student. She hadn't been on a bus traveling to another state as I had hoped.

She was on the campus when the shooting happened, and she was lucky to be alive.

If the shooting had happened earlier or a day later she could have been one of those 17 people who were injured. Or worse, she could have been one of the five dead.

My cousin has a class in the lecture hall at the same time the shooting was going on when the tragedy happened. The only difference was he had it on different days.

If the shooting had happened earlier or a day later, there would have been a good chance that she could have been seriously injured. It is only by a miracle that she wasn't in the classroom when the gunman opened fire and took the lives of five innocent people.

When my mom told me that she could only remain silent and thank God that one of my dear family members wasn't seriously injured or dead.

She is now back in that classroom going on with her life. For that reason alone, she is the bravest person I know. If that had happened at a school she was attending, I don't know if I would have the courage to continue going to that school.

My cousin is living her life as though a humongous tragedy occurred in her life and the lives of countless people who were at the university. She has tremendous courage and I hope someday I can be as brave as she is being right now. She was lucky to be one of those hundred of students and faculty who weren't injured or dead because of the shooting.

I only wish that those five people who died and those 17 who were wounded could have been as lucky as was that day.

How far is Central willing to go for safety?

San Ysidro, Columbine, Red Lake, Virginia Tech, and now Omaha.

The December 2007 Christmas season will live on in infamy over the day that Robert Hawkins staged a mass murder in the Von Maur department store at the Westroads mall. Hawkins left Omaha shattered during what was supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year.

Two weeks after this tragedy gripped Omaha, the Von Maur Department store re-opened. Tight security was everywhere, giving holiday shoppers a sense of security. People went back to shopping, comforted by the extra security.

This entire episode brings to mind the safety of our schools. It was only by mere luck that Hawkins decided to go to Von Maur instead of Papillion-La Vista High School, where he had recently dropped out.

Had he decided on PLVHS, there could

possibly have been even more mourning families across the metro area.

But what can we do?

Students do not want to have to go through security every day before being allowed to go into their school building.

No, individually searching students every day is out of the question.

When there was a bomb threat last year, almost 80 percent of the student body skipped, some because they felt searching their backpacks would be an invasion of their privacy.

Omaha Public Schools have considered investing in metal detectors, which are highly effective at revealing illegal weapons and other dangerous objects like knives.

But if OPS did use them, would students feel that their rights are being violated?

OPS could hire more security guards, which would provide on the spot security and would shorten a reaction time should a school shooting happen to occur at an OPS high school.

In the past, the administration has tried to implement certain safety features into daily life at Central.

Student I.D. tags were introduced two years ago, with the purpose of keeping unwanted visitors out of Central.

The student population did not take kindly to this new daily requirement.

Students would "forget them at home" or "lose them", feeling that their "rights" were being restricted.

After Columbine, strict new gun laws were introduced into state legislatures nationwide, but almost none were passed into law.

Why?

Overall, when tragedies like the Von Maur shootings happen, there is a general clamor for more safety in general.

However, when rules and regulations are put in place, students and citizens resist because they believe their "rights" are being violated.

So how far would we be willing to go?

When will putting safety first truly be a violation of student rights?

When the immediate shock of events such as the shootings at Von Maur wear off, will we still be willing to implement and cooperate with new rules and regulations for the benefit of our own safety?

History says no, but maybe Von Maur will change our minds.

After all, the next time there is a shooting in Omaha, it could be in one of our schools.

This would be a tragedy that could be very easily avoided by taking the right precautions.

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of
the Register staff

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Public school already feels too unsafe for many students

Besides education, one of the primary missions of a school is to ensure student's and faculty's safety.

With all of the recent college shootings that have been continuously circulating the United States, this has become one of the most important and most difficult tasks schools not only in Omaha, but all across the country have begun to take on.

Under no circumstance should any child ever feel that their physical safety and emotional well being is compromised at any time or under any circumstance.

With this high of standard resting on their backs, and with the recent increase in violent acts all over the world, the OPS School District has become challenged with the decision to place metal detectors at the entrances of the schools.

A metal detector is, simply, an electronic instrument used to locate specific types of metal. The metal detectors vary according to the specific needs of the consumer.

They are most commonly used for airport and building security and occasionally special events.

And now they might become common in school buildings.

In fact, the fact that students bring concealed weapons to school is the problem OPS are trying to cure by the placement of metal detectors. According to the National Education Association, at least 100,000 students bring guns to school and at least 160,000 students skip classes because they fear physical harm.

But the question of how effective a metal detector would be still remains.

They are most commonly installed in schools to check violence and are installed only in those schools that demonstrate a high crime rate.

They are placed at the entrances of schools and check every person who comes through that particular set of doors whether it be a student, teacher, security personnel or outsider.

A alarm signal is produced by the equipment if it recognizes a conductive metal or material. With metal detectors being a part of schools there is a

noticeable decrease in weaponry brought to school, and more importantly inside the school.

The only disadvantage of having this kind of technology in schools is that the machine can not distinguish the difference between a gun and a metal belt buckle therefore they can be considered faulty.

The entire school district as a whole may not experience violence at the same level. There may be areas that entertain higher levels of violence due to location or to what kind of students attend their school. Some schools may not experience violent acts at all.

But by having a violent act occur once or twice does not label the school or even bigger, the district, as "violent". Therefore, the question of metal detectors should be looked at as a whole and enacted accordingly.

Violence, however, isn't only shown through means of a weapon but also through verbal or physical abuse that takes place in the halls, the classroom, or even outside of school.

After all, a student at Westside was pressured

to leave the school because the bullying there was too much. The prejudice that student faced is not something that can be detected with a metal detector.

Metal detectors at Central would be a waste of both time and money.

These are other objectives, which promote the idea that students do not feel safe inside their school.

According to an article published in the Educational Leadership magazine, prosocial behavior, which is simply positive actions that benefit others, is one way to decrease the amount of violence that occurs in school environments.

Organizing peace in the school is a step that is vital for all successful schools whose goal is to teach and educate their students. By allowing students to discuss their feelings of rage or anger in a controlled environment with other peers who feel similar to them, creates a more relaxed and comfortable environment.

An environment where students feel safe and secure at all times.

Uniform testing for all Nebraska schools may prove to be useless

All of the tests in the state of Nebraska are not created equal.

A new legislative bill in the Unicameral is hoping to change that. The bill would require that all tests mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have the same standards all across the state.

Presently Nebraska is the only state that doesn't have a uniform standardized test for the state. Teachers are able to utilize the School-based Teacher-led Assessment Reporting System (STARS) method.

While the state sets the curriculum standards, teachers are able to instruct classes as they want to. School districts can make their own tests to see if the students are learning.

At first glance it seems that making the standards for all tests the same is the fair thing to do. After all, it is inevitable that often tests will be tougher to pass than another one covering the same material. There isn't anything that will change that if all tests are not uniform across the state.

However, test scores and results have shown that over four out of five elementary school students and secondary students met the national standards in

both reading and math.

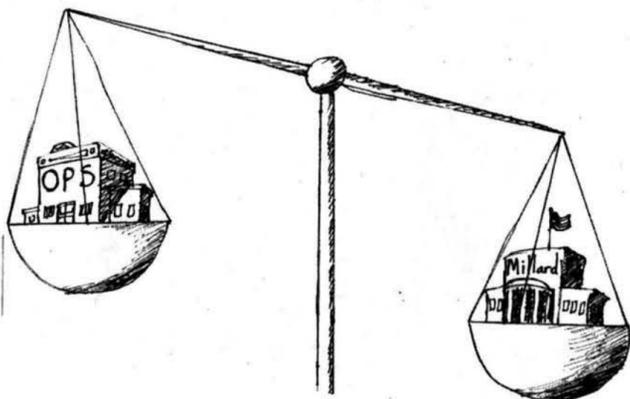
No one can deny that those are great statistics. By ensuring that each student will have to take a uniform test the state government takes the risk that those numbers will go down.

It is obvious to all students and teachers that NCLB needs to be reformed to truly be effective in its goal to raise education standards. Government officials would be wise to take note of what STARS has done for the Nebraska Public Schools system.

Because of STARS, teachers are able to add essays, which allows those students who are focused on writing and actually knowing the material in the curriculum. They don't have to just rely on multiple-choice questions, like the other forty-nine states.

Too often standardized tests do not accurately reflect the learning levels of all students. Incorporating the STARS method, give students an opportunity to be as successful as the next.

However, any chance of NCLB actually being reformed to benefit the school systems in the country could be gone if this bill passes.



CARTOON BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

Omaha Japanese Film Festival
FilmStreams steps out of the box once again by hosting the Omaha Japanese Film Festival.
See page15B

Artist gets Recognition
Freshman's artwork sold for over \$300 for benefitting neighborhoods.
See page13B



registration

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Special effects save action thriller

MICHAEL HAMM

There are going to be a lot of mixed feelings in the audience with "Jumper," the science-fiction novel to make its way to the silver big screen.

It was one of those movies that only time will tell how good it was.

Basically, the movie was about David, who discovered he had the special power to "jump," the ability to transport one's self to any location on the earth. He then found himself being hunted because of his powers.

Forget the special effects. The biggest thing that stood out were the special effects, which were amazing. The audience was able to see different places of the globe in only an instant and things like cars flying through the air, everyone oblivious to what's happening, were prevalent in the film. All looked incredible.

The movie did have the greatest science-fictioned moments of time that will have you talking about it days after the movie.

None of the were cheesy or obvious that computers were used to make the special effects.

"Jumper" had an Achilles heel.

The action scenes were so brilliant that was all the director spent time on. One looked at all the cool things characters teleported (jumped) and the MIB-like weapons the Palatine, a secret medieval society dedicated to eradicating all jumpers, used were awesome. At times, however, one was left to wonder why they didn't just shoot them to begin with.

It had a beautifully confusing plot, but it left the serious moviegoers with real questions, especially during the end,

which left the audience on a cliff-hanger.

Then there were the characters who had no interest.

David, played by Hayden Christiansen, backs, and "Millie," played by Rachel Bilson, felt like a paper ball in picture just didn't seem to connect. Chemistry between the two actors was not there.

The audience never seemed to be interested. David never really stepped into the boots of a hero, especially when he would save people selfishly.

He acted just like any normal guy in a movie. He spent time going to exotic locations, meeting various women, and robbing banks, but he never physically harm anybody.

Roland Cox, played by Michael Rosenbaum, was a son in a bad haircut, came across as a bad agent.

Truth be told, he had the power to do anything. He could terrorize, steal, and do anything. However, the movie didn't do much with his powers.

Most people will find themselves getting bored with a guy who stepped up to the plate to save the world.

The picture had more than enough action, especially in the acting.

Since the movie was a lot of nearly identical scenes, with the exception of Jackson and Bilson, their roles in a believable manner so they could do justice for their characters.

And they never really take time to explain the rules of jumping, which would have made the audience confused.

Despite some of the failings of the movie, this one will have science-fiction fans jumping for joy.



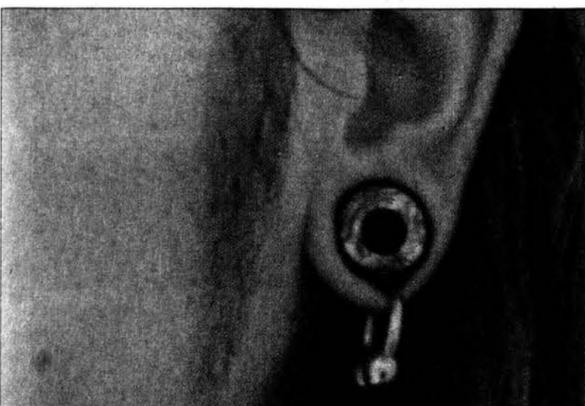
"Jumper" stars Hayden Christiansen.



COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY FOX

David, played by Hayden Christiansen, hides from agents of the Palentine in the hideout of one of the other jumpers in one of the movie's intense scenes. The special effects in the movie were some of the best ever seen on the big screen, but it didn't stop the audience from not caring about most of the characters. The movie was based on the novel written by Steven Gould, which several awards.

Making a fashion statement



Fashion has changed over the years from clothes to a form of self-expression. From changing hairstyles and clothing to getting tattoos and piercings, it shows our individuality.

Story by Alana Brunow,
Kim Buckley and
Angelica Genovesi
Photos by Alana Brunow

In the 60s it was rare to find a man who had even one of his ears pierced. Over 40 years later, it has become more common for a guy to get one or both of his ears pierced, and some of the guys walking around in the school hallways have both of them pierced.

Fashion has continually evolved with the changing times, and the height of fashion is being challenged by ordinary teens.

The appearance of a person is important and unfortunately stereotypes can be formed based on it.

What prompts teenagers to dress differently from other teens or to dye their hair multiple colors?

Fashion trends have come and gone with the seasons. What hasn't changed has been the fact that the clothes we wear, the way we style hair and what tattoos and piercings we get express who we are.

HAIR

Freshman Alexandria Manzer has blonde highlights in her hair. She wanted to get highlights because she thought they looked cute.

Caitlyn Conner has been dying her hair for two years. She said she decided to change the color of her hair because it was something different.

"I like the reactions I get," she said.

Conner said it's pretty fun to see how her family reacts and the fact that people stop and stare at it.

Right now Conner's hair is a dark red, which she decided to try because it's her favorite color and she has an Irish heritage. She also said she wears a lot of green clothes and that she thought the red hair would look good with it.

Because of her appearance, Conner feels people stereotype her.

"People think I'm a Satanist and I worship the devil and that's not true at all," she said.

Conner knows at least ten people that dye their hair and Manzer said many

Young leadership strengthens band

SAMANTHA LANG

Sophomore Rio Longoria drums to the beat of the music every day. Longoria, the first girl snare drummer on the marching band, took on the role of captain of Central's drumline this year. Band teacher Peter Wilger said that Longoria is mature and has demonstrated her skills as a musician. He said Longoria is a role model for the percussion section as well as the band as a whole.

When Longoria was age six, she received her first drum set and started taking lessons soon after.

"Drumming has always been something I could really get into," Longoria said. "My parents knew I liked it, and kept signing me up to see if I would stick to it."

She got the opportunity to step up on the drumline her freshmen year.

"Towards the end of freshmen year, Todd (Alba) came up to me one day, and told me to fill out an application for a section leader position. Only two other people turned in forms," Longoria said, "so they went ahead, and gave me the captain title."

For Longoria, the hardest part of being captain is keeping on top of everything and fitting the time into her schedule.

Longoria's responsibilities range from calling other members to remind them about the practices, to deciding if someone gets to keep their position on the line.

"Last week, myself, Mr. Cosby, and other section leaders had to issue a meeting to decide if we should pull someone out of drumline or not, and that was definitely the hardest decision I've been faced with so far," she said.

Although the job of captain can be difficult, there are many fun aspects to even out the hard decision making.

"My favorite part about being captain is being in control," she said. "I love being able to tell people when they finally get to go home."

This year, Longoria is in the marching, pep and concert band, takes part in jazz band and takes instrumental lessons. While in college she hopes to major in music.

"I would love to have a career in music, but I'm afraid that I won't be able to make a living on that alone and I really don't want to be a music teacher," she said.

For her remaining years at Central, Longoria would like to remain a captain of the drumline and further her knowledge in music.

"I would like to get some more experience," Longoria said, "but I would also like to spend more time on the drumline, so somewhere down the road, I could make a few changes for the better."

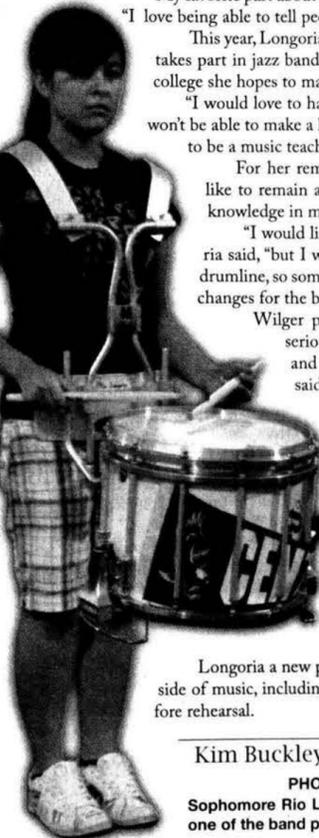
Wilger praised Longoria for her taking music seriously as well as the practices, performances and all aspects of her musical experience. He said she has an exemplary work ethic.

Band teacher Tom Cosby said Longoria demonstrates leadership through her playing.

"She always makes sure she has her part down," he said.

He also said Longoria puts in a lot of time setting up equipment and calling and reminding students about rehearsals. He also said her leadership is reflected in her attitude because she always tries, even if it is late at night.

Cosby said being a captain gives Longoria a new perspective and she is able to see the other side of music, including all of the organization and planning before rehearsal.



Kim Buckley contributed to this story
PHOTO BY SAMANTHA LANG/REGISTER
Sophomore Rio Longoria plays the snare drum during one of the band practices earlier in the year.

Continued to "Fashion" on Page 14B

Perfecting Pasta

From elbow macaroni that was used to make arts and crafts when you were younger to chicken fettuccine, pasta has been eaten for over 4,000 years. Here are some places in Omaha to enjoy pasta dishes influenced from Italian favorites without going broke.

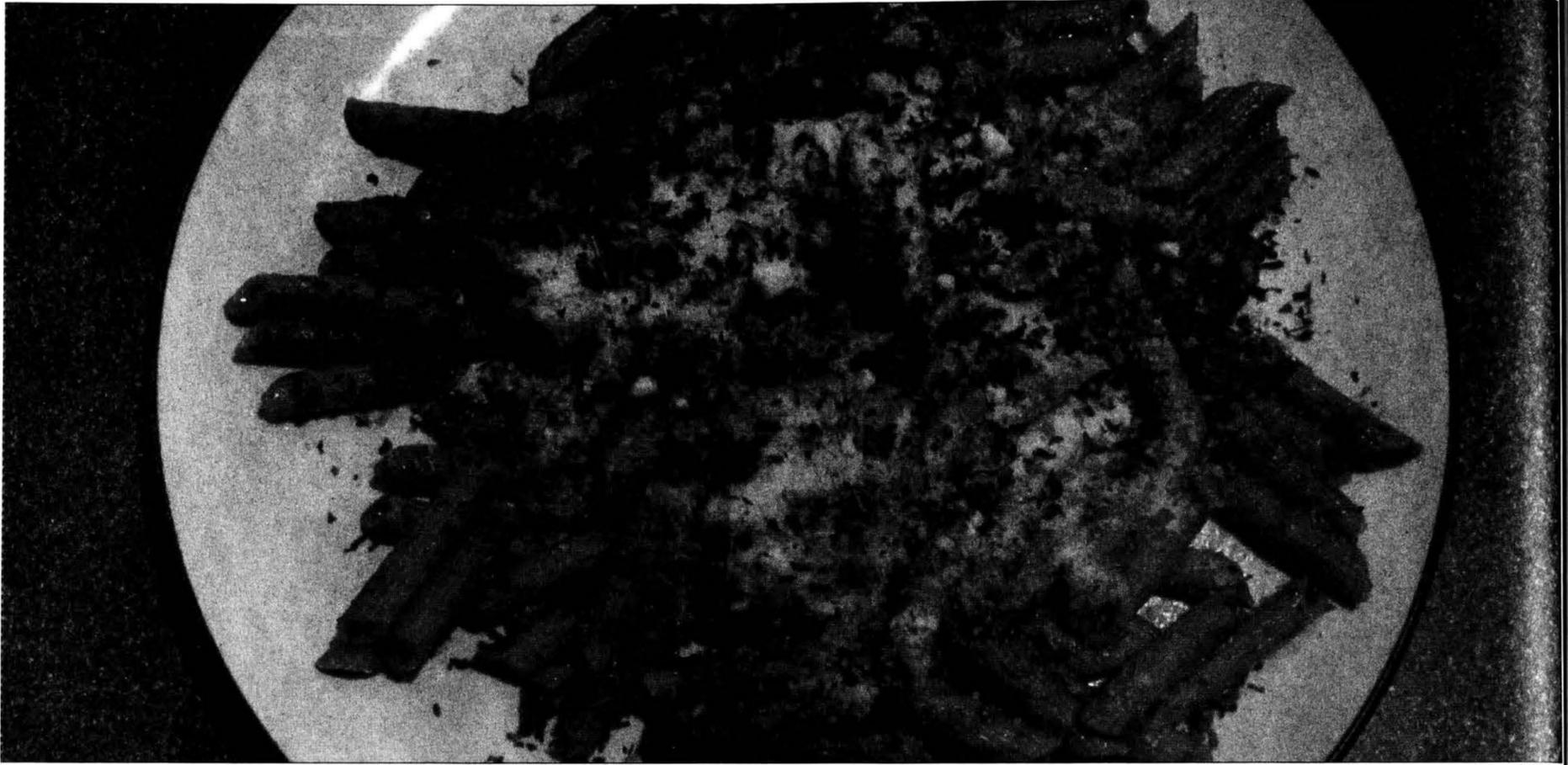


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KIM BUCKLEY/REGISTER

A bowl of penne pasta with a basic red marinara sauce is just one of the many variations one is sure to find in an Italian restaurant. Most pasta dishes come served with cheese on top and herbs such as basil and oregano are mixed in to add an Italian flavor to the pasta. Another sauce that is typically used on pasta is the alfredo sauce, which is made up of butter, cream and various white cheeses.



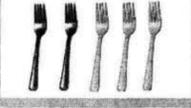
sandwiches prices were about the same as the noodle bowls.

The noodle bowls also managed to fill a person up. The meal was well worth the cheap price, if one ignored the greasy taste of the food.

The service there was pretty good and the workers were polite. They were able to serve their customers quickly and without any problems.

SPAGHETTI WORKS

Spaghetti Works
Address: 1105 Howard St.
Best Dish: Fettuccine Alfredo



BY PATRICK BREEN

Spaghetti Works is fantastic.

If one is looking for delicious food, sub-par service and waiters that would rather get back to their own drink than rather fill yours, "the Works" is great.

And the food is delicious. And the atmosphere is great. And if one is forgiving, they will not mention the obvious crumbs from the crumbs of the person before them.

Summed-up, Spaghetti Works is overpriced and over-hyped. Before one goes to "the Works," they might expect something like a speciality in Spaghetti. And at first it seems you would get that.

At the large wooden doors, one is greeted by the hostess with a wide-eyed smile.

Not too wide that you would think she were on something, but just wide enough to greet cordially with a, 'hey, nice to meet you.'

Then a prompt waiter comes up and whisks you away to the tall booths that are in the typical restaurant.

Except, he walks past them to the tables, not the coveted booths.

After re-directing him to where you would like to be seated, his smirk and scornful eyes detest you.

So far, the atmosphere is fantastic and the personnel is mediocre.

After sweeping the crumbs from the table, one orders from a menu a little bit too pricey for pasta.

The whole experience reminds oneself of having a tooth pulled at a family reunion.

The food is alright. It really isn't that spectacular, but come on. When a person goes to Spaghetti Works, they really aren't expecting the best food.

T h e

pasta offers many options, but remain far away from the cheese bread, which is more like buttered cardboard.

The bottom line is simple: If you want better food for a cheaper price follow these simple steps.

Step one, get in your car and ensure that there's enough gas in the tank.

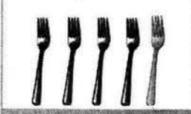
Step two, one should go to Grandma's house.

Step three, ask for some home-made pasta.

Step four, give her a hug and thank heavens that you didn't spend 20 dollars on some slop from rude people.



Vivace
Address: 1108 Howard St.
Best Dish: Carbonara



BY KIM BUCKLEY

The moment one walks into the building, the diner knows there is bound to be good food.

Vivace is one of the most elegant Italian restaurants in the Old Market, and perhaps in the whole downtown area. While the atmosphere was friendly, it was a place where one goes for a quiet meal, not a place where people are able to be loud.

The food at Vivace was some of the best in the Old Market.

There is no need to order appetizers since you are constantly given complementary bread.

The best pasta dish was the Carbonara. It was savory, especially with egg yolk that was cooked onto the noodles. While the pancetta was fairly salty, it balanced out the creamier flavors of the other ingredients.

The Carbonara had peas and red onions along with the pancetta on top of the dish. They were able to bring a little sweetness to the dish.

While having a meal that would fill a person up, the desserts looked so good a person had to sample one. The best one was the creme brulee.

The creme brulee was savory, but could have been more sweet. The dessert was creamy, and it left a good aftertaste in the mouth.

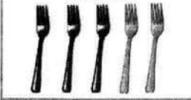
The customer service at the restaurant was good, with the waiters and waitresses being attentive to almost every single detail.

The prices at Vivace, like all of the upper-scale Italian restaurants, tended to be expensive. A pasta dish would cost anywhere around \$13 to \$17. However, the food was more than worth it.

Vivace is the perfect place to eat before Prom or Homecoming.



Macaroni Grill
Address: 701 N. 102nd St.
Best Dish: Chicken Fettuccine



BY ALI HODGE

If you are wanting to go someplace unique and handsome with good food, a nice atmosphere, and that's relatively cheap... then Macaroni Grill isn't the place for you.

Seafood seemed to be a favorite at the Macaroni Grill.

Pasta alfredo with shrimp, acallops and musles.

Spaghetti with crab.

Ravioli with clams and crab.

Practically any type of pasta is paired with any type of seafood there is.

This is all fine and dandy if you forget that we live in Omaha Nebraska which is five billion miles away from the nearest ocean.

Taking that into consideration, one can see why the sea food was not fresh.

The sauce is okay. There are better dishes that could be had, but it wasn't too much to complain about.

One aspect of the dining that truly is unique and perhaps not wise, but cool nevertheless is the honor system.

When a customer orders a glass of wine for instance - that was not me by the way - the waitress brings a glass as well as the whole bottle of wine. Every time the customer fills their glass, they tally the table, which is covered in one large piece of paper, with a crayon.

It's cool how how the company trusts their customers, but I could see where they could loose out on some money this way.

Therefore I wonder if it's wise.

Not all of the aspects of the restaurant is bad. For one, the service there is kind, entertaining, and quick.

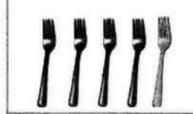
Also, cus-

tomers don't seem to have to wait very long before their food comes either, which is good.

But it would certainly be better if when it came, it was tasty.



Vincenzo's
Address: 1207 Harney St.
Best Dish: Penne Diavolo



BY KIM BUCKLEY

With one bite of the delicious food at Vinceozo's a person is suddenly transported to Italy, with the flavors of basil and oregano lingering in the mouth of the eater.

Vincenzo's Italian Ristorante is one of the newest Italian restaurants to come to the Old Market.

The restaurant offered many appealing appetizers that it became hard to choose. The best was the bruschetta, which was some sliced Italian bread that was brushed with olive oil and topped with slices of tomatoes and melted cheese. The slices of tomatoes lent a different texture from the typical bruschetta with diced tomatoes.

The best pasta dish on the menu was, without a doubt, the Penne Diavolo, which was one of the house favorites. It was the perfect blend of sweet and spicy.

The sauce, which was made from their marinara sauce and cream, was sweet, perfectly contrasted to the spicy Italian sausage that was one of the toppings. The Italian sausage added a lot of texture to the dish and some of the pieces were pretty big.

The red peppers were creamy and soft, which went along with the sauce perfectly.

This dish alone was enough to fill a person up.

If that wasn't enough all of the desserts sound good so one was always tempted to order one, even if one's stomach was strained from eating too much al-

ready.

The best dessert at Vincenzo's was the crème brulee. The luscious dessert was sweet and savory and practically melted like hot butter when it entered the mouth.

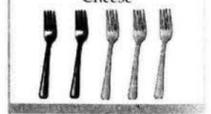
The prices tended to be on the expensive side, but if one didn't order an appetizer or a dessert than the entree weren't too bad of a price. The only thing that could have been better was the lighting, which was a little too dim.

The atmosphere was cozy, which made up for the lighting.

Vincenzo's is a restaurant that will keep you coming back.



Noodles and Com-
Address: 203 S. 72nd
Best Dish: Macaroni and Cheese



BY MICHELLE RIEGER

Combine a fast food joint with a dine in restaurant, take away the grease and screaming little kids in the play pen, add a bunch of fancy dishes such as Indonesian Peanut Saute or Pasta Fresca and out comes Noodles and Company.

The eater can sit him or herself down in a comfy, clean booth or table.

The eater then waits only a couple of minutes for a server to present the delicious smelling food to their table. Their most famous dish, Wisconsin Macaroni and Cheese, has their original cheeses and fresh cream on top of elbow macaroni, topped off with cheddar-jack cheese. Their potstickers bring the eater back to the Asian country that they originated. The spicy blend of seasonings, chicken and vegetables covered by a won ton wrap make the eater's mouth water. To add the to the flavor, it was served with a soy-ginger sauce with even more tang.

The atmosphere was lively and well coming. The eater would leave the restaurant wanting to try more.

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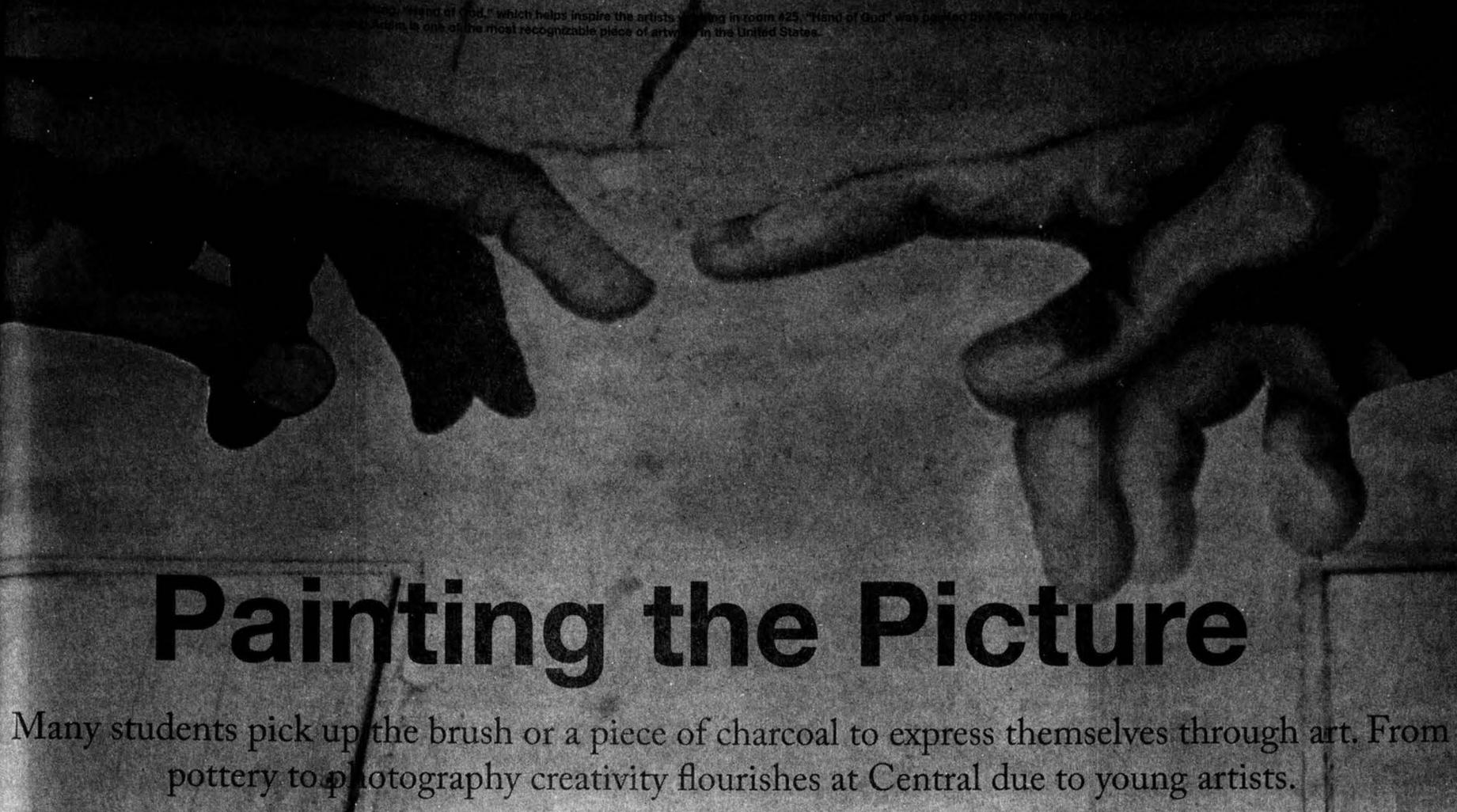
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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KIM BUCKLEY/REGISTER



Painting the Picture

Many students pick up the brush or a piece of charcoal to express themselves through art. From pottery to photography creativity flourishes at Central due to young artists.

Visual contest allows students to show talent

BY MARK VONDRASEK

When you think of Photoshop, you imagine celebrity magazines making up false stories and putting certain modified pictures on the cover of say Entertainment Weekly, or People Magazine.

But this time around, different students from around the state submitted their own photo-shopped photos to be judged and awarded in a state competition.

Entries for the Nebraska State Visual Arts Competition were accepted this past January throughout the state of Nebraska. An awards ceremony was held on Saturday February 23rd at 1:00pm for the winners.

Visual arts are pictures that someone creates using several other elements and bringing them all together into a picture that represents a certain message or idea that the artist wants to

convey to the viewer.

The Omaha Public High Schools that competed were Benson, Bryan, Burke, North, Northwest, South, and Central. Five Omaha Middle schools competed in the competition, including Buffet, Beveridge, Mays, Bryan Middle, and Norris. Five hundred and thirty six pieces of art were selected for the competition in the Omaha Public Schools District.

Several students participated in the Nebraska State Visual Arts Competition. One student, Gabby Gard, competed in the competition but did not receive any awards.

Gabby is a current member of Central High School's Art Club.

"Even though I didn't win anything, it was still a fun activity to be involved in" she explained.

Teachers from each school were allowed to choose twenty-five works maximum to submit into the competition. Students

were required to submit original photos that were used to create their works of art.

Students had to take their own photos and were not allowed to use published photos to create their art. There were also restrictions as to how large their works could be. For instance, an individual piece of art could not be more than forty-eight inches in any directions.

Several different categories divided the competition up for students and judges. Some of the categories were Animation, Photography, Ceramics and Glass, and Video and Film.

Animation is the art of creating a cartoon or movie. This would involve individually drawing out each slide and putting it together into a "slideshow" or "cartoon". Students were allowed to use computers to put together their work, and were required to submit all tools that were used in creating their work.

Photography was all about chemically processing film into

making pictures. Photos could be in color, black and white, or experimental. Students were also asked to give a small statement on all tools used and the process at which they made each picture.

Omaha Central High School took thirty-six awards, not including two Lauritzen Gardens Honorable Mentions. This is the best in the state for an individual school in the visual arts competition. The next highest number of awards for an individual school is North High School with thirty-one awards. Next after that is Benson High School with twenty-nine awards.

The Omaha World Herald sponsored the awards ceremony. The awards ceremony took place on February 23rd, at the TAC Building Auditorium.

The exhibit of over two thousand pieces of art will remain on display until March 12th, 2008.

Muralist takes time to speak to art club members

BY KIM BUCKLEY

One thing is evident: a talent for art and painting runs in the Harrison family.

Muralist Richard Harrison, the father of alumna Emily Harrison and Sophomore Rebecca Harrison, spoke to the members of Art Club during their meeting on March 11.

Harrison owns his own mural business called A Midsummer's Mural.

One of the first things Harrison did was show a short video, made by a friend who is a film buff, that showed the murals he has painted around the city.

After the film he shows some more photos of his murals from his web site and talked about the techniques he used to create them.

One of those techniques is to start covering the mural with a clear acrylic glaze before actually painting into it. Another one of his techniques is mixing the paint with another glaze to keep the paint wet.

Harrison studied art in high school and painted some murals during that time period.

He attended Ottawa University in Kansas. It was at that college that Harrison got in designing sets.

He told the Art Club members that the theater department had only one professor and he ended up painting eight sets for the drama productions, several of which won contests and one that went to a national competition.

Harrison went on to earn a degree in scene design. He then went on to work at a mural company in Chicago.

He then moved to Omaha and started his own company. Harrison has painted murals for restaurants, churches and nursing homes.

"I get to be a different artist every day," Harrison told the Art Club members.

He said he does a project every week and does around 30 or 40 murals a year.

The desire to be an artist grew early when he was a kid. Harrison said as early as the age of two, he drew compulsively.

Growing up, Harrison said, he had a neighbor who he would draw with. They would share stacks of blank paper and they would draw stories.

"I feel more confident as a drawer than a colorist," he said.

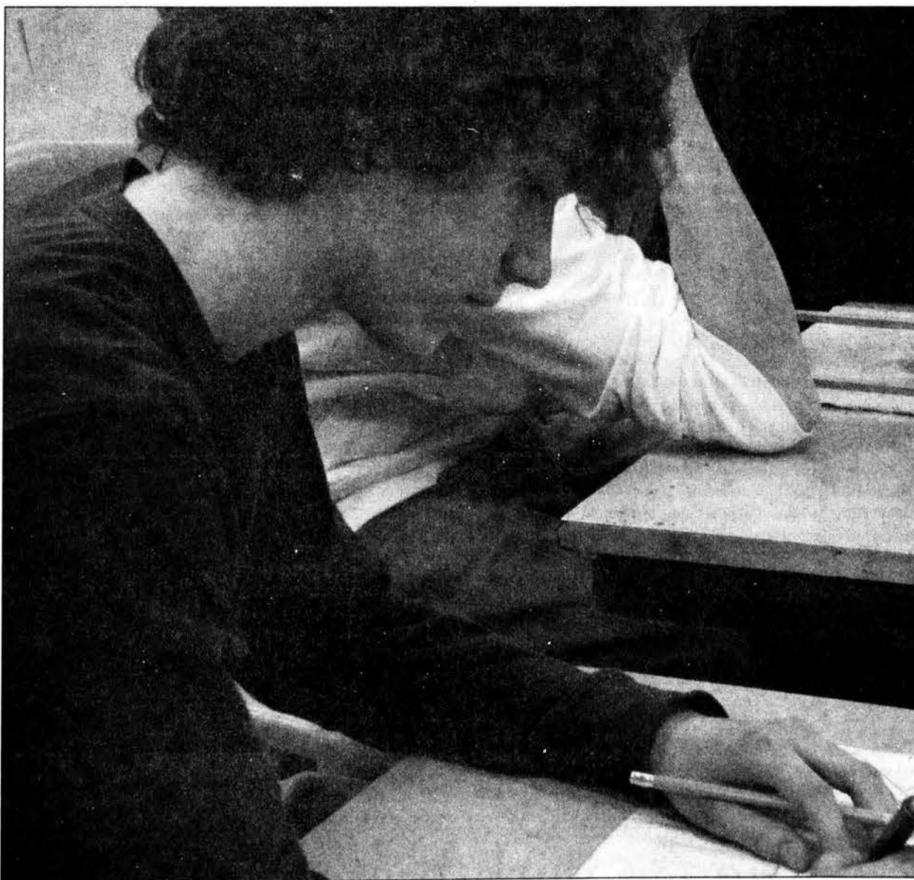
Harrison said he likes to design early in the morning with little sketches.

While he doesn't have a favorite mural he said he gets excited about the project of the week. He told the Art Club members that one of the most fun murals he painted was a twenty-foot fish.

Harrison said that while painting murals for kids is fun and playful, he likes painting the more serious ones better because he gets a feeling of real depth when he does those.

The muralist has painting murals for six churches, and Harrison said he really likes painting murals that have to do with Biblical history.

One of the things Harrison said he was grateful for was job security. He said he feels privilege to be paid a percentage of the money and have a contract before painting the mural because not many artists have that job security.



COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY FOX

Freshmen Aaron Perry sketches out an idea in his art class for one of the projects he will do. One of Perry's art projects sold for over \$300 dollars at an auction benefitting the Neighborhood Center for the Greater Omaha organization.

Drawing of Omaha landmark gets young artist recognition

BY ANGELICA GENOVESI

Aaron Perry, a freshman art student, received recognition for his ink drawing of an Omaha landmark in the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha Art Contest.

"It was the first contest I've ever entered and I was really surprised to get any recognition at all," said Perry.

He chose to do a drawing of a Dundee lamppost with a hanging flower arrangement, which stood in front of the historic view of the Omaha Bee, an old Omaha newspaper.

The subject Perry chose fit perfectly with the theme, which was to illustrate and reflect Omaha neighborhoods, identifiable landmarks and community leaders.

The contest was open to anyone ages eight to 18 in Douglas, Sarpay and Pottawattamie counties.

Perry's artwork specifically received an honorable mentioned but was included in the group of 33 pieces which were auctioned off. His piece earned \$325, which benefited the Neighborhood Center for the Greater Omaha organization.

"I was really astonished at how much my piece went for," said Perry.

The event had a goal to raise \$25,000, which includes the money earned from auctioning the artwork.

Perry is only in his first year of art and really excels and enjoys everything he attempts for the class.

Margaret Quinn, his current art teacher, is very impressed with the determination and creativity he displays while in class.

"He is always the first one to finish a project and is always eager to begin another," she said.

Novel shows unique view of factory life in modern China

BY ALI HODGE

This may be a cliché, but if you want a book that will make you think, but also make you wrinkle your eyebrows in wonder, than "In The Pond" is for you. If you also want a book that will shock you at the different ways people live across the world, this is certainly for you.

Ha Jin, an award winning author for his views and interpretations of modern life in China, has made a splash with this novel. He paints a very stern, stressful picture of China, with very little culture, but shows more than anything what workers in factories have to go through for survival. And above all, as sort of a side note, the importance of art.

The story follows a worker in a Chinese fertilizer plant, Shao Bin. He, his wife, and his daughter all live in a one room dirt floor dormitory in a large compound. For years Bin has been seeking to move his family to the factory housing. In his opinion he has been a good worker; he has been with the company for years, he has followed the one-child law, and he has never caused trouble. But the company keeps looking over him.

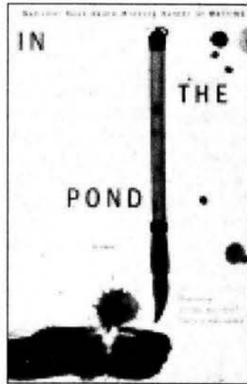
Bin finally becomes angry at such mistreatment and wages war against the presidents of the company by publishing cartoons and editorials about them in local newspapers. Bin is a self-taught artist and scholar and with such skill in calligraphy as well as his natural-born wit and courage, he gives them a run they will never forget.

There is certainly nothing happy about most of the book. In fact, it is much of the time angry, tense and sorrowful. That's not to say the ending is the same way.

Ha Jin has created a book that all nations can learn something from. Although it is set in China, it has a strong message that with enough determination and passion, one can achieve anything.

Jin's writing is interesting. It has a special ring to it that suggests that English is Jin's second language. If that's the case, he is very skilled at English. If that is not the case, he should really work on his writing before he goes to publish a book. However, in this instance, his slightly awkward syntax adds the oriental spirit of the novel.

Although "In The Pond" is a short read - only about 300 pages - it has a huge impact on readers. One thing is for certain, whether it is liked or not: anyone who reads this book will be able to see themselves in it and learn something from it.



COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

"In The Pond"

Author: Ha Jin





Band members medal at contest

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Spokane involved in the school band went for the gold in the 2008 Elkhorn Band Olympics.

Freshmen and sophomore band members were able to participate in the Elkhorn Band Olympics, which took place on Feb. 26 at Elkhorn High School.

Central has participated in the event consistently for around 17 years. While seniors and juniors were unable to participate, around thirty of the students in band competed against their peers from other schools in the state.

A dozen students medaled for their performances during the event. With 18 of the students earning Superior ratings and 13 of them earning Excellent ratings, Central also became the Class 3 Champions this year.

Sophomore Hannah Grossman was one of those students who competed and medaled. She received a fourth place medal for a tenth grade flute solo.

"I thought my teacher was joking," she said.

This was the biggest group of students from the school that participated in the Band Olympics. Band teacher Peter Wilger said that having such a big team spread the teachers out more than in previous years.

Getting such a big group of students to participate in the event was a combination of two things Wilger said. Those two things was the encouragement of the students and the

group of students who were enthusiastic and wanted to participate.

Grossman said she wanted to participate in the Band Olympics because it was fun and she enjoys competition when it came to playing the flute.

Wilger credited the juniors and seniors who left a legacy that let other students know it's important to improve for getting a big group of students that participated.

It's part of the progression of improving as a musician," Wilger said.

He said this year the students really took responsibility and worked hard. He said he always wants to see as many students participate who possibly could.

One of the things Wilger said the members who participated in the Band Olympics was prepare a lot as well as worked hard in individual lessons as well as on their own.

While students got some time to prepare for the Band Olympics during class time, Wilger said about 90% of the time students prepared for the event was outside of the classroom.

He said the Band Olympics gave students the opportunity to practice and become better individual musicians.

Central was only one of the many schools who participated.

Other schools that participated in the Band Olympics included Westside High School, South High School and Norris Middle School.

PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER

"Mamma Mia" proves humorously fun for entire family

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Who would have thought that a musical based on the songs by a singing group, Abba, that has all but fizzled out would be so entertaining?

"Mamma Mia" told the story about Sophie, who only wanted her father to walk her down the aisle.

That single wish couldn't have been simpler, right?

After all, it is every girl's dream to have her father give her away at her wedding.

The only catch?

She didn't know who her father even was.

The solution?

Invite three of her mother's former sweethearts to the wedding and find out which of those three is her father, all in one day.

As expected, things did not go as Sophie planned as all

kinds of chaos emerged on the little Greek island that was the setting of the story until the musical reached its picture perfect ending.

While it was a bit of a stretch to include all of the Abba songs, this was clearly a musical that was light hearted and not meant to be taken too seriously.

That was probably the reason why the musical was so good.

It offered laughs and entertainment while all the while the audience knew there was going to be a happy ending.

Cliche, yes, but dang it if it wasn't fun to see on stage.

While the story line was centered on Sophie and her quest to find her dad, it was Susie McMonagle, who played Sophie's mother Donna, who was the heart, soul and star of the musical.

McMonagle belted out all of her songs with ease, includ-

ing the title song "Mamma Mia." She showed she had vocal range as she handled the song "Winner Takes It All" with ease and more than a little sorrow.

She not only sang amazingly well, but she also handled the emotional scenes like a pro. Her performance as Donna alone was worth every dollar spent on the admission ticket.

Kittra Wynn Coomer and Michelle Elizabeth Dawson, who played Donna's friends Rosie and Tanya, were comedic gold. They had the audience cracking up almost every time they were on stage. Their acting was stupendous and they nailed their solo songs.

Credit must be given to Dawson, Coomer and McMonagle for bringing a lot of energy to the number "Dancing Queen," and actually having fun on stage, and not just pretending. That number had the audience applauding.

The lighting and staging of the musical was average. They really didn't make a difference to the musical, either positively or negatively.

The costumes included a beautiful white wedding dress that was absolutely stunning.

It was a pity that the dress was seen in only one or two of the scenes of the second Act.

The sets, while simple, still managed to seem like a part of the little Greek village. A lot of the sets could be moved with a lot of ease.

The songs in the production was catchy. While it was dated for most teenagers, they still managed to entertain the audience and tell Sophie and Donna's story.

The pit orchestra of the musical kept the music upland with an electric guitar playing in the beginning of both Acts.

At times, when it was only the pit orchestra playing, one wondered if the musical that was going to be on stage was really based on the songs of a disco group and not on some more recent band.

"Mamma Mia" is bound to keep audiences singing, like Donna in the title song, "My, my, how can I resist you?"



Teens choose identity through unusual piercings, hairstyles

Continued from "Fashion" on Page 11B

said she believes that dying their hair a different color is a trend among teenagers.

"If they (teenagers) like a certain color, they'll dye their hair," Manzer said.

While Conner has dyed her hair blue, green and black, Manzer has stuck with one color. Manzer said she isn't really concerned about the chemicals in the dye damaging her hair.

Conner said once when she bleached her hair twice in one day and went to a barber, who said if she kept bleaching it, her hair would fall out. Conner stopped bleaching her hair and said she just sticks to dying it. Giving your hair a chance to rest between bleaching is vital. Waiting at least six weeks between bleaching helps nourish the hair back to health.

BODY PIERCINGS

Piercings of all sorts have become a very fashionable and trendy part of today's society. Whether it's a hoop, a stud, inside the ear, outside the ear, nose, tongue, eyebrow, lip, belly-button or any other type of creative piercing that is being done today, people use it as a form of expression.

Piercings can reveal a form of rebellion or simply a form of interest, for some it is even part of their religion or culture.

Junior Sergio Montanez has had a pierced tongue for about the last three years. He got it because he thought it looked cool.

One of the coolest accessories right now are gauges. Gauges are put in the ear or another lose area of skin through a process called stretching.

"I began stretching because I was truly interested and fond of the concept and the way it was done. I also thought it was cool and trendy, but that wasn't the reason I began to stretch my ears. It was my individual decision," Junior Jenelle Smithberg said.

Smithberg has had stretched ears since the summer. While one inch is her goal, her ears have stopped stretching.

Junior Steve Pelish has had stretched ears for around four to five months. His ears have stretched to the size 0 and his goal for them to be stretched to size 00 (double zero).

"I did it because I could," he said.

Some people take piercing a step further.

Junior Dyllon Ishii takes piercings to a whole new level.

Giving himself a new piercing almost everyday, many people are often astonished when they see a few of his unique piercings.

"I've pierced my belly button, arm, ears, nipples, lip, eyebrow, and other various places including my achilles tendon," said Ishii.

His high tolerance for pain shows as he pierces himself somewhere new at least twice a month.

TATTOOS

For decades, tattooing has been a rebellious fad. Each individual that gets a tattoo has their own reason for getting

the work of art permanently tattooed on various places of their body.

Many people get tattoos for fun or just because they admire a certain image. Others get tattoos for personal reasons and the artwork becomes symbolic.

A touching example of this is when someone's friend or family dies and they get a cross or another image that reminds them of their lost love one on their skin. This leaves a permanent reminder of their loved one.

Other individuals get tattoos just to express themselves with a unique or common symbol or design.

Some examples of some more common symbols seen on mostly younger generations are nautical stars, band logos, flowers, and butterflies.

Senior Kurt West had his first tattoo done at Revolution Studios three months ago.

His goal was to get a quality piece of artwork that he would never regret. San Flares, one of his favorite artists has multiple books published with his artwork. Kurt took the image for his tattoo from one of these books to Revolutions.

"It hurt a lot because of the position I had to sit in," said Kurt. Overall, the pain that comes with getting a tattoo may vary because different people have different thresholds for pain and it depends what area you get the tattoo because some areas such as the neck may be more sensitive than others.

With only two visits, his tattoo was completed in three and a half hours.

His tattoo consists of an asian styled tiger that is wrapped around a woman. The tattoo is in full color and is spread across the right side of his torso.



PHOTO BY ALANA BRUNOW/REGISTER

While there are risks involved with body piercing, hair-dye and tattooing, here are the basic safety rules to follow.

HEALTH RISKS

TATTOOS:

Getting tattoos has been linked to getting infections and diseases such as Hepatitis B. Needles should be sterilized to ensure this doesn't happen, and the needle should be disposed of safely after use.

HAIR-DYE:

Permanent hair-dye has been linked to bladder cancer as well as the disease non-Hodkin's lymphoma. Coloring shouldn't be done every day to ensure the chemicals in the dye doesn't cause hair to fall off.

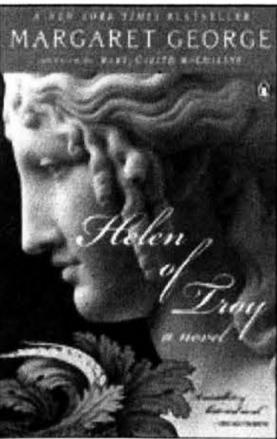
PIERCINGS:

Like tattoos, body piercing has been linked to diseases such as Hepatitis B, and it is possible for it to get infected. A clean needle should be used during the piercings and after use should be disposed of safely.

INFOGRAPHIC BY CHELSEA WILLIAMS

Author captivates audience with historical fiction of Helen's life

BY ALI HODGE



COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

Margaret George, not commonly read by teenagers, is a diamond in the rough and, if given the chance, could be one highly read by one in a younger generation.

In her latest New York Times Best seller, "Helen of Troy," she establishes her name and style at least to one young reader.

As an author that normally writes historical fiction such as the lives of Queen Victoria, Cleopatra and Mary Magdelene, she may be a turn off, but this latest novel is anything but boring.

The story of Helen is mystic and lost in the ancient tales of mythology. Margret George attempts to clear the blur by putting the fast paced, sad life of Helen into narrative form.

Within the three-hundred plus pages of her book, she brought to life a deep character ripped at the seams as she is a plaything, and a pawn of war, to the gods.

Cursed with beauty, George portrays her life as misunderstood, mistreated, and objectified all because she had 'the face that launched a thousand ships.'

The story starts in Sparta, Greece when Helen is less than ten years old; a normal child whose only desires in life are to leave the castle which has comfortably held her prisoner, and gaze into a mirror.

As she grows older, which happens rather quickly in this book despite being nearly seven hundred pages long, George shows her maturing as a person, but never as the daughter of Zeus.

As a teenager the book follows Helen interviewing suitor after suitor and trying her best to avoid her childhood prophesy that thou-

sands of Greeks will die because of her.

And, as the most beautiful woman in the world, and the daughter of Zeus, she had lots of suitors.

After, she has chosen a man she is not too much in love with to be her husband, Menalaus, the book follows her as she becomes a mother, meets the Goddess Aphrodite, falls in love with a Prince of Troy, escapes from Sparta, and ultimately angers all of Europe, launching the fatal war.

Much of the book is the details of the famous Trojan-Greek war. It goes into the oppression and the anger of the Trojan citizens after they had fallen out of the stages of happiness.

That's one thing that George does very well, going through the psychological stages of a war: happiness, pride, confidence, worry, panic, depression, oppression, ect. It is in particularly sad in the instance of this novel because George gets you attached not only to the characters whose lives are in serious danger, but also to the city of Troy.

But that's what a good author does, right?

George does a good job bringing to life the mysterious character of Helen.

She puts into her story small things that make the myth of Helen who she is like not being able to look in the mirror.

She also does a fantastic job of making her human even though she is commonly thought of as a goddess.

She incorporates into the book Helen's shallow love for her husband Menalaus, and her utter passion for her Trojan prince, Paris.

She is deeply heartbroken at having to leave her daughter, Hermione, and is devastated as she watched the citizens of her beloved city,

Troy, go off to fight in a war she knew she was the cause of.

There is emotions of complete happiness in the novel, but also some deep depression that pushes the characters to do life-altering things. There is an underlying theme of devotion and unconditional love mixed in with the heated tension of war.

She brings to life Troy in a time of power, and in a time of siege.

She incorporates the God's role in the lives of people at this time as one would regard the President in our time, and she not only brings alive a character as mysterious as Helen, giving her a personality every one can love, but also and entire continent during the time when history was written by Homer.

The addition of the Gods make it fun, and also intensify the feeling of horrible inevitability the novel carries through it. Aphrodite and Phersephone play large rolls in the book, as they are the goddesses in favor of Helen. Strangely enough, Zeus is nowhere to be found.

Apart from being loved, the Gods are depicted as evil as well.

The book took an interesting look at a life that is depicted as one of a villain. Her feelings didn't play a part in Homer's two famous epics, "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey."

George's writing can at times be disconnected and difficult to get into, but the story she took by the horns in enough entertainment in itself. Looking at it from a writer's point of view, George can be respected for her imagery and flowery writing, but not so much writing of war. It is clear that she's done her research as evidenced by the skill at which she writes history, but also by the index in the back.

She certainly is a unique writer, which has made her books nationally known and very well loved.

Land of the rising stars

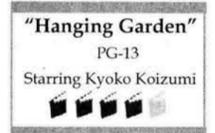
Movie audiences were able to get a glimpse of Japanese culture for a whole month when Filmstreams ran a Japanese film festival. While some of the audience needed subtitles to understand the language of the movies, the messages of the films were universal.



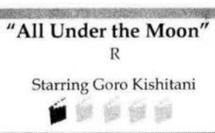
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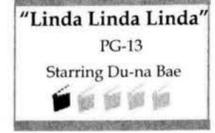
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MY VIEW OF THE STORY
A column by Michelle Rieger



BY ALI HODGE

One thing is for certain, eastern movies can certainly be far more entertaining than western ones even if they are in another language.

That was the case with "Waterboys," a 2001 Japanese film that played at FilmStreams Theater as part of Nebraska's Japanese Midwest Film Festival. They may not have known what to expect, but where in for a pleasant surprise when they found the theater full with a healthy cultural mix of both Asians and Americans.

Most of the audience were somehow in correlation with Creighton's Japanese and Asian studies department or the Omaha Japanese School and were excited to try out their language skills. There was also a good amount of people who were just curious and came to see the show.

The movie followed a high school student named Suzuki, played by Satoshi Tsumabuki, who wants to be a great swimmer one day, but is at a disadvantage being as he is the only one on his high school swim team. When a beautiful new coach takes the position at the school, suddenly almost all the male student population wants to be a part of whatever class she is teaching only to find out she teaches synchronized swimming instead of competitive swimming.

The boys get tricked into joining a synchronized competition, but is left without an instructor after she suddenly finds out she's eight and a half months

pregnant. The rest of the movie follows the boys' humorous journey over the summer as they try to create a rare boy's synchronized swimming team fit for competition, but also fit for their pride.

The movie, filmed in Tokyo, showed a good deal of the beautiful city, but mainly followed the life of high schoolers. Much of the scenes were at their school swimming pool, but it did venture out to show audiences a Japanese shopping arcade, aquarium, some streets of the city, housing, and a Pachinko arcade.

Although there was a language barrier, the fact that the movie was in Japanese didn't hinder the audience from completely enjoying it.

It was every bit as entertaining as an American teenager film and covered all of the universal aspects of pop generation such as the humors of homosexuality, love, acceptance, overcoming a large obstacle and the power of surprise.

The film featured some major Japanese stars most Americans may have not heard of such as Hiroshi Tamaki who has been featured in many movies, dramas and ads in Japan and has an undoubted talent for teenage films. For this reason and so much more, the films were a chance for some to step outside their bubble and get a glimpse of a culture and lifestyle unlike their own.

"Waterboys" was a good film to start off the Japanese Midwestern Film Festival with as it was truly entertaining, a good family film free of any nudity or vulgarity, and was a perfect picture of teenage life in a world three thousand miles away.

BY ALI HODGE

There would be no other way to describe "Hanging Garden" other than hauntingly dramatic, artistic and completely psychedelic. It gives a new face to what Japanese films are perceived to be. It's nowhere near anything martial arts, it's not "Juron" haunting, and it's shockingly modern; modern to the point of futuristic, which isn't that inconceivable since Japanese pop culture is crazy by epic proportions.

The film follows the life of a middle aged mother of two teenagers, Eriko, played by Kyoko Koizumi. She, being the Japanese version of Bree Van De Kamp of Wisteria Lane, lives with her family in what used to be a thriving metropolitan housing development, but has disintegrated into some sort of a slum. Her only rule in her family is that they shouldn't keep secrets; they should be an open family with one another being as they are all they have and are related on a deep core level. The movie drips with irony as it follows each family member's secret life. The oldest daughter skips school to spend her days in a love hotel, the very love hotel where she was conceived, the younger boy is having an illegal affair with his high school tutor, who is also having an affair with his father. Little does any of them know that she's only one of two.

The seams start to rip apart as each family members' secret comes out in the open. And in the center of the chaos, wearing a small pink coat and sporting a sweet, distressed smile, stands Eriko. She, who wants her family to be perfect so terribly is the one harboring the largest grudge and keeping quiet

the biggest secret of them all. And yes, it can be worse than illegal, immoral and underage sex. On the brink of falling apart over the very thing they fought so hard to avoid, the family has to choose whether their distance from one another and their lies will break them up, or pull them even closer together.

The film, directed by Toshiaki Toyoda was completely unique in every aspect of its being. The writing, when translated was artistic and bold. The filming was very well done and was fairly appropriate considering many of the shots were R-rated. Some of the sexual conversations seemed unnecessary, but certainly added to the intensity of the film. Much of the introductory filming was done in a swinging motion like the flower pots that swing in Eriko's garden. The story line was simple, yet the filming made it horribly complicated. Audience members must wonder whether or not it was that way because of poor interpretation or for artistic reasons. The short replays of memory or violent scenes which the audience figures out is going on within the mind of Eriko add much more to the film than any complexity of plot would.

The setting was modern and beautiful, which is easy to understand as it is Japan. Much of the filming took place in one room of a love hotel, which was elaborately decorated in orange and red 70's wallpaper with a huge, gaudy rotating bed. Just something as simple as one room added more to the film than the special graphics. As it was, it was also the only elaborate setting in the movie. All other places visited were colorless and bare in comparison. Therefore, the use of setting to bring emphasis to the story line was brilliant even for an untrained eye like myself.

BY ALI HODGE

"All Under the Moon" was perhaps the worst film to come of the Japanese Film Festival this year.

Classified as a humorous drama, it disappointed audiences by being boring, hard to understand, cryptic, weird, and softly pornographic.

The story was of a taxi driver in Tokyo, Tadao played by Goro Kishitani, who had Korean ethnicity. He and his Philippine bar tender girlfriend, Connie played by Ruby Moreno, work hard through out the movie to make a living in Japan and fight off the hardships and evils that come at them due to discrimination.

The moral of the movie was excellent and presented a good learning opportunity for the audience. The message was that discrimination exists in Japan and is a huge problem. It's not a discrimination problem between skin color as we see here in America, but between races. This movie made clear the reality of the deep rooted hate some Japanese have towards Koreans, Chinese, and other South Asian races. Also the hate they receive back.

"You're Korean?" asked one of the characters to Tadao, his face fallen. "I usually hate Koreans, but I like you I think."

The line was a key moment in the movie, showing the audience that hate and discrimination is made up of only false perceptions and that it is entirely possible to like a person despite their race based on who they are on the inside.

BY KEVIN GIBBS

Say you happen to see a movie poster outside of Filmstreams, or find it on the internet, or travel out of town to find the Japanese film, Linda, Linda, Linda.

Turn around and run screaming, preferably hitting people with an umbrella as you run to spare them the much worse pain of having to sit through two hours of this excuse for entertainment.

Otherwise, be ready to sit through an hour of the main characters staring blankly in a particular direction, this being the only relative entertainment in the film.

The movie follows a high school band as they struggle to prepare for a talent show and pull a Korean exchange student along for the ride. It offers some laughs, mainly at the expense of the language barrier between Korean and Japanese speech, but for the most part, the film is painfully boring and unimaginative.

At one point the exchange student is forced into a storage room with a boy who likes her. In awkward Korean translation, the boy tells her he sees her often, and that he loves her. She awkwardly replies, "Can I go now?" It was funny, I'll admit, but this one hit, beyond a strange dream sequence near the end, provides the only real laughs in the film, as well as the only memorable part about it.

As good as the morals of the story were, the movie it's self was enough to make audiences cringe, crinkle their eyebrows in wonder, even shout out in frustration, which is what one young woman did after one particularly pointless scene.

The writing of the script was good, and brought the movie to full circle, but it was vulgar, sexual, and in some scenes just plain weird. It may have been because the audience was American and therefore couldn't understand some of the cultural references, but much of the script asked of it's audience too much.

It seemed like they were just supposed to know things that were important to the story.

It's easy to see where Filmstreams would put on such a movie as it explores a problem in Japan that is very rarely ever discussed, but the audience undoubtedly left that night disappointed. The filming was average, the music was pretty much nonexistent, and the characters, apart from seeing a four-story version of them butt naked in the throws of passionate love, were somewhat forgettable.

The acting was only okay, but it was Moreno, who played her character very well, who upstaged all other characters.

However, the film won many awards and was a box office hit in Japan. Therefore, perhaps I'm the only one who nearly fell asleep.

However, just because it was a box office hit in Japan doesn't mean it translates into a box office hit in America.

During the majority of the movie, the characters just talked, never showing any depth, never doing anything interesting. At one point while practicing, the band members fall asleep and are woken up by the next band which wants to practice with the equipment.

Wow!
Heaven forbid I miss that!
If I hadn't seen it I might not understand the underlying meaning... that they're a bunch of lazy schoolgirls.

The characters never really develop. They each stay entirely as they did at the beginning of the movie, with the exception of the exchange student, who learns to sing a bit better, and the lazy "gothish" girl who learns how to fall asleep on several different floor types.

The vast majority of the two hours this film occupies are spent with distracting irrelevant sub-plots and incredibly boring filler material.

The entire message could have been summed up well in an hour. Unfortunately the determination of the filmmaker to waste my time was all too obvious.

I wouldn't recommend this film to anyone with anything else they need to do. Getting your teeth cleaned is more fun than this, especially if you get chatty with the dentist, but I digress.

Overall this movie didn't have a point, likeable characters, or my attention, and I wouldn't advise you give it the light of day either.

Family, friends show value of retaining cultural identity

My mom was never really that skilled at speaking English.

She was born in Japan. She grew up there. Then she moved here, to America. She got married and had me.

But there was never a language barrier between us.

That's because she taught me Japanese. She taught me to speak it, write it, and read it.

I went to Omaha Japanese School from the age of two years to 12.

Every single Saturday morning my mom and I would head off to the building where I would learn so much about my heritage's culture and language.

My mom was the one who taught me the most. She would help me with my Japanese homework and help me study.

I remember every time she reminded me to do my homework I walked upstairs to my room to try to avoid dig it.

Eventually, I got bored and walked back downstairs. She told me again to do my homework.

This time she forced me to get all of my materials and sit down at the table.

At first, it was fine. All I had to do was copy down the Japanese characters in my notebook.

Then, it got frustrating.

I don't remember exactly why, but I just got really frustrated and didn't want to do my work anymore. I threw my pencil on the floor and started crying.

This was all for no good reason at all.

I was just stubborn. I would rather have been playing outside with my friends or watching TV. She yelled at me and told me to stop it. After, about ten minutes of pouting I resumed my homework.

I quit Japanese School when I was 12 years old. It seemed like too much work and effort. I didn't really care about my language.

I didn't think I would need it. I lived in America after all. We

speak English here.

My mom later got a job as a Japanese teacher at Elkhorn High School. She loved it. She loved her students. When they and Japanese food nights I came with her. I thought I was really cool because I got to talk to high school students.

One of them, Morgan, was really passionate about Japanese culture. She told me that I should keep learning Japanese because not many other people get an opportunity like this. She said it's a hard language to learn, and since I already knew the basics I should keep filling my mind with more of it.

I thought everything she said was complete malarkey.

It was nonsense.

"I don't need any of that stuff. Why would I need that?"

Now as a junior in high school I know exactly why I would need that.

First of all, it's part of me, part of who I am. It's my background, my history.

It could also be my future.

I could get a decent scholarship just for being able to speak Japanese fluently. Or even just carrying Japanese blood in my body. Maybe I'll even end up spending the rest of my

life in Japan.

Now, well now I just feel like I'm losing everything that my mom ever taught me. There actually is a language barrier between us now. I quit attending Japanese School and I quit speaking to my mom in Japanese. I'm starting to feel the effects of it now because I stumble over my words when I'm trying to communicate with my mom. Let me tell you, it's a sinking feeling, knowing that at age 17, I'm already losing my background. I'm starting to lose what has been part of my all of my life.

In elementary school, I remember that my classmates asked me to say something in Japanese for them. They didn't even care what I said. They were just so fascinated to hear it in a different language. I thought it was pretty cool too, but not anything out of the ordinary. Now when classmates ask me to that I tell them that I forgot. I didn't think I would ever forget my own language.

I guess Morgan was right. My mom was right.

Make really sure that if you have a gift, whatever it is, even if you think it's 'stupid' or has no worth to you, that you hold it in high esteem.

Three in a Row



With a third straight title, the Eagles solidify their place in history. They are the first Central basketball team to win three state basketball championships since Lincoln North-east did it from 95-'98 games throughout the entire year. The reason for their success was obvious. Hard work. Determination. "Throughout the season there were a lot of ups and downs," head coach Eric Behrens said.

Eagles slow Crayton, win nail-biter for Title

BY PATRICK BREEN

"You just have to be one point better," head coach Eric Behrens said. With seven seconds left on the clock, up 59-56 in the State Championship, the Eagles gave-up an easy, uncontested bucket to Jarrell Crayton.

But it was exactly what they planned for. "We just told them to guard the perimeter," Behrens said, "They were out of time outs. If they passed it to Crayton, (we) told them to back off."

And that's what the Eagles did. With the inbound to the post with Crayton, senior Josh Jones stepped back.

Something new for Crayton who had been double-teamed the whole game. "He looked around for the defense and then just laid it in," junior Paul Simms said.

The Chieftains with no time out couldn't stop the clock and the Eagles in bounded the ball and senior guard Chris Griffin put the ball deep down the court to senior Ronnell Grixby to secure the win.

"We told them not to inbound the ball (since the clock would run)," Behrens said, "but Chris made a smart play in getting it down court."

The play of the seniors helped keep hold of the lead and secure the third consecutive basketball title.

Although Crayton scored 26 points, the rest of the team could not. Seniors Griffin, Jones and Wilson were the high scorers in the game.

"I kept thinking, three-peat," Simms said. The win came after the Eagles knocked off the Bellevue West Thunderbirds for the third year in a row.

Although the Chieftains came into the game with nine losses, while the Eagles only had a third of that total, the Chieftains came ready to play. The Chieftains offense consisted of one main objective.

"They played to get the ball to him (Crayton)," Behrens said. Good guard play by 5'8" senior James Futch made the Eagles defense work twice as hard to keep Crayton from having a breakout game.

Throughout the season, 6'6" center Crayton dominated the league averaging 18 points and 10 rebounds per game.

The reason. Not only his size and quickness, but his desire. "He (Crayton) played great," Behrens said, "but our guys stuck with him and caused him problems."

The team placed senior Lorenzo Wilson on Crayton early in the game and saw good success.

Although Crayton would score, racking up 12 points in the first half, Wilson

also took home the bulk of his points and played toe-to-toe with him the entire game.

And big play was also seen out of guard Chris Griffin. Griffin, used to big games after leading his Eagle Football team to the State Championship with Grixby, gave the Eagles their first five points and ended with 12.

But as the second half began, the Eagles started taking over. The lead would lengthen to nine before Futch and senior Chieftain guard John Bryan would lead the team back with fast breaks and good inside posts, fouling out Wilson.

Fighting against Crayton would now be up to senior Donald Jones and his cousin Josh Jones. Off the bench help would come from step-up forward Paul Simms, who was used to big game situations, coming into the title game the year before with minutes left on the clock.

"(Not having) Lorenzo on the court was a big loss," he said. "But we just kept doubling him (Crayton)."

The final minutes led to a tense Eagles crowd. The Eagles were up 55-51 before the Chieftains clawed their way back. But the Eagles faithful believed in their team down the stretch, watching the senior leadership take charge and lead to some big clutch plays.

The lay-up was the only easy thing Crayton got all night. And the inbound pass led to the beginning of the celebration.

Assistant coach makes impact on champs through schemes

Continued from 'Welling' on Page 20

hand man, and I met anybody who's anybody in basketball because of him," Welling mentions.

Garfinkel is the author of several best-selling books on basketball, and runs several high end Five Star Basketball Camps. Michael Jordan came through one of Garfinkel's camp, where Welling was introduced to him.

As for other Nebraska basketball teams, Welling has a given a clinic to Wakefield High School, and they have begun to use the Dribble Drive Motion. But so far, interest from area teams has been limited.

"I've received a few calls, and I've done a clinic, but I think it's just teams looking into new offenses," Welling says.

Along with giving clinics and helping spread the DDM, Welling created a video featuring the offense and the various nuances included with it.

Seven months in, it is the number one selling video on Sysko's a basketball catalogue that is sent to millions of readers a year.

Herb Welling, a security guard, is out selling videos from people like Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan, UCLA legend John Wooden, and Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski, whose instructional videos rank behind Welling's.

Welling produced two videos, one that included the actual offense, and one that detailed all the drills necessary to run the offense to perfection.

"It's just all the rage right now, and people are really interested in it," Welling says, down playing his success.

There has been some controversy over if Welling should give Walberg some credit for the videos, since Walberg did come up with offense. Since the Sports

Illustrated article, some people have complained that Welling should at least share some of the profit with the junior college coach, who is currently not coaching basketball.

However, Walberg has not filed a lawsuit of any kind and is "happy" for the coaches who have prospered from his original idea. There is no real pressure for Welling to pay him, and for now, both parties are satisfied.

But Welling isn't distracted by it. He was completely focused during the Eagles run through the state championship.

So the next time you spot Herb Welling on the bench at a Central basketball game, you'll know he is extremely important and a main component behind the three-time defending State Champions.

Without Herb, the Eagles might not be three-time state champions and one of the greatest dynasties in Nebraska high school history.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Head coach Eric Behrens addresses his team during a time-out of the State championship game. Behrens, the Nebraska 2007 High School Basketball Coach of the Year, took timely time outs down the stretch of games to reorganize his team and get them ready for the new challenges.

The boys basketball team completes one of the most elusive feats in sports: A THREE-PEAT.



PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

The Eagles also enjoyed one of their most successful seasons, only losing three. "But we overcame them and that made us better."

GAME ONE COVERAGE: ROAD TO THE TITLE

Eagles beat Bears with speed, defense

BY PATRICK BREEN

The Eagles seemed poised to be upset. The no. 1, Ralston Rams and the no. 4 Creighton Prep, were knocked off in the first round of the State Tournament. And all indications said that this year's journey would be the year of the underdog. And at first it looked possible. The 18-6 Kearney Bears took a lead just a minute into the game and held it good into the middle second quarter. But then the Eagles kicked into gear, with strong defense and good rebounding, beating Kearney 56-43. The game was a tough one for the Eagles, who saw Kearney's determination and hope for revenge throughout the game. The reason for revenge? Well, just four months earlier, the Kearney Bears took on the Eagles at home in the State Football Tournament, beating the undefeated team ending their hopes for another title. "A lot of the same players on their football team played on their basketball team," Eagles head coach Eric Behrens said. "They are a very athletic team." But the lust for revenge wouldn't lead to any game changing performances. The Eagles would take a lead early in the second, and the Bears wouldn't come close to it again. They were close throughout the game, sometimes clawing their way back to a six-point deficit, like in the third quarter, but senior guard Ronnell Grixby helped stomp out the flame with a long distance three-point

basket. The guard play from the seniors Ronnell Grixby and Chris Griffin lead to the Eagles success. Although Creighton recruit Josh Jones didn't shoot lights-out from the floor. The player, who was used to averaging 20 points per game, came through with some good passes. "They played really well down the stretch," Behrens said. Key plays also came from off the bench. Sophomore Deverell Biggs came onto the court with his hair braided and his eyes gleaming. Some good playing time for a sophomore and the future of next year's team. With a good steal coming early in the third, he silenced the Bear's with a slam. As the third quarter came to an end with the Eagles up, the crowd became more and more anxious. The first State game of '08' and hopefully not the last. And then another player came off the bench to make an impact. Junior Paul Simms, a member of the championship team last year, and a vital player after the fouling out of Jones in the title game, scored some key rebounds and even a reverse tip in. With the ball just above the rim, Simms fought his way up and was turned around in mid-air, but had the mind to keep his hands up. And they just tapped it in. It seemed to be the way the whole game went. It wasn't easy, but the plays were made when they needed them, and the players walked away with two games separating them from their third straight Championship.

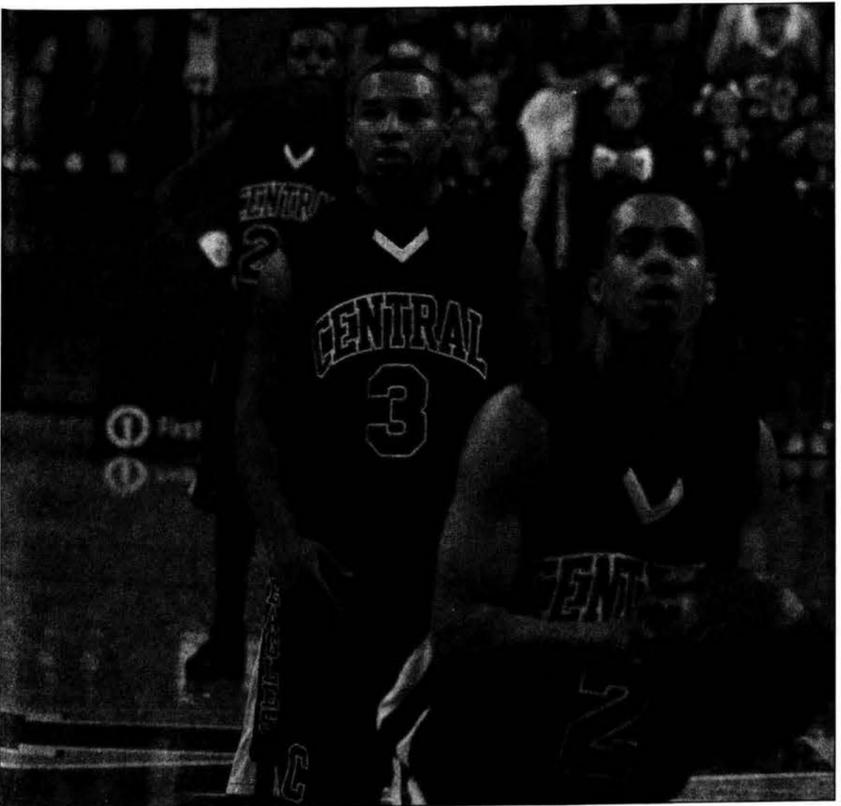


PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

(From back) Seniors Josh Jones, Ronnell Grixby and Chris Griffin played extensively as guards, and helped lead the team throughout the season and the State Playoffs.

2008 Omaha Central Eagles

Name	Position	Points per game	Rebounds per game	Grade
Ronnell Grixby	G	11.2	2.1	12
Chris Griffin	G	6.0	1.5	12
Josh Jones	G	19.8	3.5	12
Donald Jones	F	8.8	7.0	12
Lorenzo Wilson	F	14.0	8.0	12

Head coach: Eric Behrens

Assistant Coaches: Chad Burns, Herb Welling, Charles Williams, Jay Landstrom, Matt Hamill

Offense Average: 75.7
Defense Average: 58.6

Final Record: 25-3

INFO-GRAPHIC BY PATRICK BREEN AND PETER BOCK/REGISTER

Next season preview: Young, but talented

BY PETER BOCK

After the initial celebration dies down, and Central basketball fans come down from cloud nine and back to reality, it's time to take a look at next year's basketball team. The Eagles will lose all five of their starters that lead them to a state title. Ronnell Grixby, Chris Griffin, Josh Jones, Lorenzo Wilson, and Donald Jones all are seniors, and four of them have been on varsity since their sophomore year. Despite losing the leadership and talent that has won Central three state championships, head coach Eric Behrens is still confident in next year's crop. "We have a lot of young talented players. We will be good next season. We're losing a lot of good guys (seniors), and most of them have played all four years for me (on varsity)," the coach mentions. Central will look very different next year without the core nucleus of Jones, Grixby, Griffin, and Wilson. They will have a completely different look, and the new starters will lack experience, as the starting five took up 95% of the playing time. "We've got some talent, but we have to step up every aspect of our game," says junior Paul Simms, who played a small role but important role on the team this year. Simms and sophomore Deverell Biggs, the sixth and seventh man, will be the leaders of the team, being the key reserves and having played the most out of the bench players.

“We have a lot of young talented players. We will be good next season.”
- Head Coach Eric Behrens

Both will have big shoes to fill, which could be a difficult transition after being role players for much of the last two years. However, both have excellent potential and should have no problem stepping up and being the star. Teddy Lampkin, a freshman who got a playing time on the varsity this past season, is projected as the starting point guard. He has benefited from playing with the varsity this year, but it might take him a while to get a feel for the offense. The rest of the lineup is harder to project. Juniors Daryle Hawkins sat the bench for varsity and Josh Hackett suited up for two games at the regular season and played a big role on the junior varsity, along with sophomores Jake Fuhs and Jack Kmiecik. Junior Denzell Cook, another varsity player, will also compete. None of the players saw much clock, so who plays over who will most likely be decided come tryouts and practice. As for the rest of team, juniors Rashad Middleton and Doug Knickrehm (whose ankle injury sidelined him for the year) all have a legitimate chance at starting, but might get chosen over by more experienced players earlier in the year. Of course, nothing is set in stone, and the most deserving players come next December will start. Next season will bring forth a lot of change, and Central fans might have to be patient with the new starters as they learn to gel and embrace their new roles. A fourth straight state title will still be in the picture, but the Eagles might suffer a few more bumps in the road then in the past.

GAME TWO COVERAGE: ROAD TO THE TITLE

No overtime needed for T-birds this year

BY PATRICK BREEN

This would not be the State Championship game like it had been the two-years past. Eagles vs. Thunderbirds. The game brought its own hype. Its own fan and media frenzy. The Bob Devaney Center would be packed, over 10,000 in attendance to witness what would be the third-part of the long rivalry of a trilogy. The first two times, the Eagles used all of regular time and a little bit of the extra to knock off the once unbeatable T-birds. This year would be different though. In the Holiday Tournament, preseason favorites and defending champs Omaha Central would be knocked-off by the Antoine Young led Bellevue West. But revenge is sweet in the State Playoffs. The winner of this game would go on to face Bellevue East in the finals. The game began with a tip won by Central's forward Lorenzo Wilson and he would have to play great to shut down the T-birds' forward Shomari Wellington. The Eagles jumped out in front at first leading, by a four point margin, before loosing grip and yielding the lead and momentum to the Eagles. It looked like the other State games. It looked like one to be decided in the overtime. The Eagles would score, Jones making numerous jumpers, and then the T-birds would do just the same on the other end. "It was a back and forth game," head coach Eric Behrens said. At half the Eagles would be just up by a few, and Antoine Young would head to the locker room with a new found drive that led him to his 24 points in the game. They were quiet ones though, being silenced by the Eagles return to offense, where the fluid passes left open threes for the Eagle guards' Chris Griffin, Ronnell Grixby and Jones.

But some of the biggest play came not from the points on the perimeter, but from the post. Senior forward Donald Jones took home rebound after rebound, providing a solid inside presence for the Eagles. He would end up with a game high 20. The Eagles began to mount their lead in the early parts of the second half, leading by 12 with 4:42 to play. Central would extend that lead to 19 before watching it slip slowly away. As Young and others hit shots, the Eagles did not. And the Bellevue West press caused them some difficulties. During an especially hard stretch of the fourth quarter, the Eagles called three time-outs in less than a full minute. "We didn't look ready for the press," Behrens said. But the Eagles would regain their composure from the timely time-outs called by veteran and 2007 Nebraska Basketball Coach of the Year. Josh Jones would make some free-throws down the stretch, and the missed three-point buckets with less than four minutes remaining would lead to the lead stretching itself back to 10 and then 14. With 19.4 seconds left on the clock, the Eagles would set down their tired starters and send in the young and future of the team. The 80-66 win would be the largest the Eagles have had over the T-birds in two years. The young players stepped onto the court, and Creighton recruit Young stepped off for his final time in high school. Central fans celebrated the win with chants of "We want East," and that's just who the Eagles would get a shot at. Next up for the Eagles would be the State Championship game, where they would face the mountain of a man, 6'6" Jarrell Crayton and the resilient Bellevue East Chieftains. They wouldn't have the time to game plan like they did against Kearney, nor the returning rivalry, but the Eagles would play them as tough as any team this season.

SPORTS CALENDAR

April

5 Benson Track Invite
The Eagles look to have a good season on the varsity level after winning the state championship a year ago.

14 Reserve Baseball
The boys play Millard South down at Boyd Field at 4:30.

15 Boys Soccer vs. Millard North
The varsity boys take on last year's defending champions, who won state last year with an undefeated season.

24-26 Central Invite
The varsity girls soccer team hosts a tournament here at Seaman Stadium. Come out and support your Lady Eagles.

24 Soccer Districts
Come support your Central soccer team at districts which will be held at Central at 7 p.m.

May

3-6 Baseball Districts
The Eagles shoot for a return to state, where they made their first appearance since 1984 last year.

7 Track and Field Districts
The defending champs try and reclaim supremacy at Burke High School. Support the members of track and field by attending districts.

7-8 Girls Tennis Metro Tournament
Going to state is the goal as the Lady Eagles shoot for a strong showing in the Metro Tournament.

8 Boys Golf at Elmwood
The team faces off against Omaha Benson in a showdown between two Omaha down town area schools.

S Born to SKATE

BY WILL LANGAN

For some, skateboarding is an overlooked sport and a nuisance. For others, skating is a way of life.

For Central student Jeff Fowler, the activity is a way of life. The freshman has been skateboarding seriously for several years.

"I skate almost everyday," said Fowler. He loves the feeling he gets when skateboarding, whether riding in the street or at a local skatepark.

Fowler stressed that skateboarding is not a sport. Fowler looks at skateboarding as a fun hobby. For Fowler, skateboarding also isn't just something to do. It is a way of living and a skill to be improving every day.

Fowler spends hours skating and working to improve his skills just as a basketball player would practice his three-pointer.

For Fowler and other skateboarders, it isn't always easy to work on the activity. Many people, not just adults, have a lack of respect for skateboarding and people who skate. It's almost frustrating for Fowler and other skateboarders that people don't really "understand" skateboarding. Skateboarders are often looked down upon, and judged by others.

Skateboarders are often accused of vandalism, and the activity often times can harm the appearance of public places, especially by improvising with public spaces or setting up places called "gaps" to perform tricks. Cities and other public landowners use a variety of means such as iron "skate-stops" to prevent skateboarders from harming the appearance of ledges in public areas.

Fowler also knows that the activity is dangerous, but added that danger is present in other sports. Every major sport has some risk involved.

"It's just a risk you have to take" said Fowler.

Using safe practices such as wearing a helmet or refraining from performing dangerous tricks greatly increases the safety of the sport. Fowler believes that the benefits of skateboarding far outweigh the dangers. The danger adds to the fun of skateboarding, for the same reasons why people risk their lives for fun by doing other activities.

Fowler believes that the danger is better than the alternatives to the hobby. Many skateboarders choose to do what they do as opposed to using drugs or drinking. There is the same sense of risk in both activities.

An active hobby like skateboarding is a much better alternative to drug use. Fowler agreed. "It's a better use of time," said the freshman.

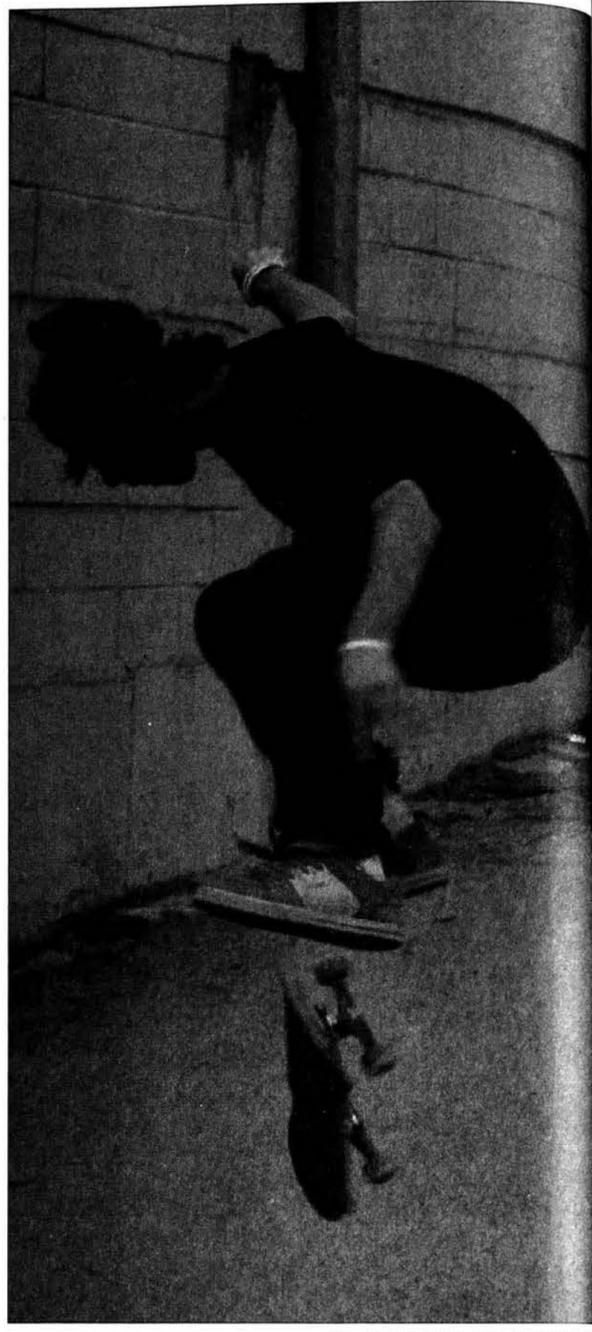


PHOTO BY WILL LANGAN/ REGISTER

Freshman Jeff Fowler pulls a move outside of Central High School on his skateboard. Fowler has a deep passion for skateboarding, and does it even with the accusations brought against the sport.

Teachers not just content to sit on sidelines, taking the ice instead



PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Brent Larson and Matthew Aguilar are two Central teachers that have decided that it's better to be on the field of the play rather than off. Larson is second on his team, Kong's Krew. Aguilar plays defense for the R.O.U.S..

BY PATRICK BREEN

Looking back, he reminisces about his own childhood.

"When I was a kid," math teacher Brent Larson said, "they used to use bulldozers to plow the dirt and then use hoses to add the water."

The building of the local ice rink in North Dakota is a fond memory that Larson holds.

He remembers skating there.

But he also remembers not being allowed to play hockey.

"Growing up I always wanted to play," he said, "but my mom wouldn't let me. Hockey was too expensive."

Now though, Larson plays in the OMCHL (Omaha Metro Classic Hockey League). And it has become a fun pastime for him.

Science teacher Matthew Aguilar also never played hockey when he was a kid.

But as an adult he got involved in hockey through friends.

"We played roller-hockey," Aguilar said, "but then my friend got injured and we took him to the E.R."

Once there, the doctor suggested something different for the young adults.

"He told us to try ice hockey instead," Aguilar said.

"(The best part is) Just playing hockey," Larson said. "Having that outlet for competition."

But Larson isn't the only teacher at Central

who has the hockey gene egging for him to get out on the ice. Aguilar also plays the sport.

Although not on the same team, Larson joins, Once every week, Larson joins his team to try and beat one of the eight other teams in his league.

The league plays host to three different skill sets. There is novice.

"It's a beginning level, but they don't call it beginner because it's just the first place everyone goes (before heading up)," Larson said.

Then there is the intermediate level. This is the skill set where Larson is playing at.

"It's a little bit faster," he said, "and there is more contact."

And the top level is for the fastest and most skilled players. It offers opportunities for those who want to move up.

"It's generally for players who have played in college," Larson said.

Hockey is a game built on physicality and finesse, but Larson said that it usually gets a perception that doesn't fit it.

"Everyone thinks of the fighting," Larson said. "(In professional) There is some, but the game is more than that."

Larson also said he enjoys watching the game.

"I try to attend as many UNO games as possible," Larson said, "but its kind-of hard with a family, and the kids bed-time."

Whether they are on the ice, or on in the stands, these teachers show their love for the sport and the way they play.

2008 Spring Sports Key Players

Baseball: Derek Noel, Drew Dickey, Josh Samuelson

Boys Soccer: Nate Whittle, Mark David, Kurt West

Girls Soccer: Anna French, Adrian Monge, Molly Anderson

Boys Golf: Cole Peterson, Ben Thomas, Tony Distefano

Girls Tennis: Alex Tran, Erika Koenig, Abby Sjogren

Track and Field: Stephon Washington, Caleigh Conn, Kadeem Nehlsen

Soccer season kicks off with blustery weather

BY ANDREA MAUSETH

Last season was not as successful as the girls soccer team would have liked, but this year, they are shooting to go all the way to state.

With over half the varsity team returning this year things are looking good for their season this year. Coach Pleiss is excited to see what every player has to offer.

"I think this season is going to be a big success," Pleiss said.

"Our team has the personality and strength for a winning season, have success in districts and make it to state," Pleiss.

As a coach she is motivated by the players willingness to work hard and the love of the game. In return, she motivates her players by getting them excited and giving them quotes before every game. The quotes inspire the players to play their best.

On the boys side, the soccer team is returning without some graduated players, but also shoots for a high season.

Head coach Tim Herbert said that the team is preparing for a good season earlier than in the past.

The harder they work, the better the season.

The temperature reaches to a high of 27 degrees.

But that doesn't stop either team from practicing. Every day and every minute matter in preparing for the soccer season.

Both the boys and the girls squads hope to improve on their seasons from last year, which were slightly better than average.

The varsity girls team is off to a solid start, including a blowout win over Omaha Benson.

The varsity boys are 2-2, with wins over Gross Catholic and Lincoln Pius X.

But no matter the teams' records at the end of the season, they will always be hungry and coming back for more next year.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/ REGISTER

Coach Tim Herbert, in his winter apparel, looks on as his varsity soccer squad practices.

Signing Day

State Champion seniors sign to different schools

BY MARK VONDRASEK

Six members of Central High School's State Championship Football team sat down at a table in the courtyard on the 15th of February, or Signing Day, to sign themselves over to different college teams across the country.

Ronnell Grixby, Louis House, Shane and Shaun Prater, Chris Griffin, and Terrell Mayhue were all signing their way over to college teams, and all were supported by their head football coach, Jay Ball.

In the courtyard that morning were Mr. Emmel, Mr. Williams, Coach Ball, and other teachers, some counselors, and administrators. Several other Central High Football players were also at the meeting in the courtyard.

Coach Ball seemed very excited about giving away his football players, and told reporters that he was "very proud" of the championship football team this year.

Coach Jay Ball stood up in front of the cameras and introduced the six high school seniors, from right to left, introducing Grixby last.

"And if the parents could come up and get these letters signed, these boys need to go to class," Coach said.

The six high school seniors signed their individual papers, taking pictures with parents all the while.

The seniors then split up and went to take individual interviews with separate television news stations, and newspapers, including the Omaha World-Herald.

When asked why he thought that this group of boys made a good team, Coach Jay Ball said, "They work so well together because they have all known each other for a very long time". Ronnell Grixby will be attending college at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

Louis House will be attending Dana College in Blair, Nebraska. Shane and Shaun Prater will both be starting football this fall at Iowa State University in Iowa. Terrell Mayhue will be attending college at Iowa Central in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

And Chris Griffin will be attending college at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

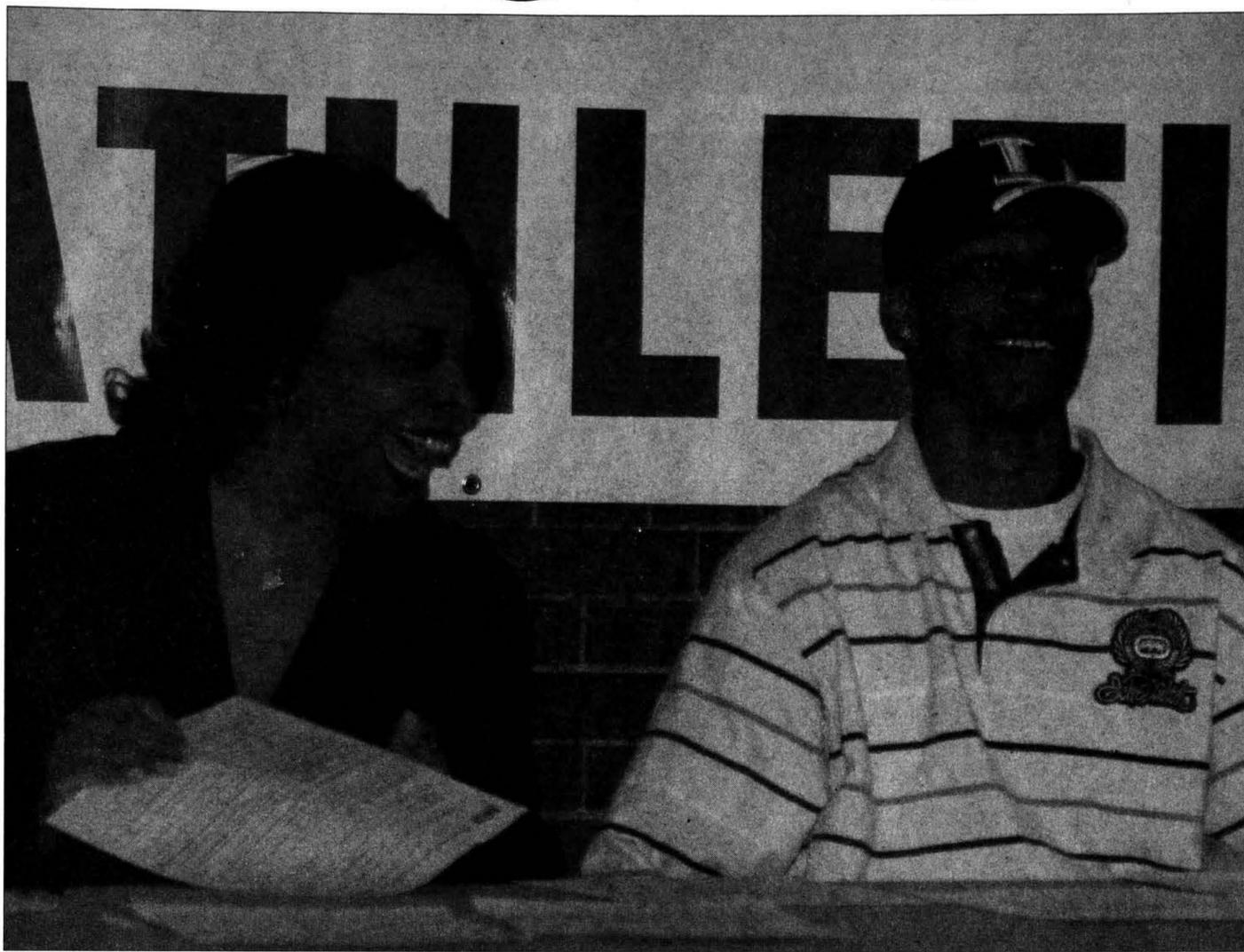


PHOTO BY ARYANNAH CONRAD/ O-BOOK

The Prater brothers are two of Central's star-studded State Championship team. The Eagles sent away six players on 'Signing Day,' but two top notables in Shane and Shaun. The two will play with the Hawkeyes hoping to make an early impact on the team.

Twins to play college ball at Iowa

BY PATRICK BREEN

On Feb. 6, one of the most publicized days of a high-schoolers career, the twin brothers that secured their State Championship, took home something different.

New hats.

But these hats symbolized something more.

With a crowd of family members, teachers and friends, seniors Shane and Shaun Prater signed the all-important letter of intent.

'Signing Day' is the day when colleges proclaim their marks on the high school players they have recruited.

And with a few quick swooshes of the pen, the Praters marked down their commitment to Iowa University.

Four months earlier, the brothers were playing in the biggest game of their career, the State Championship. Each played well, and garnered interest from some elite colleges.

Now, the Eagles will be becoming Hawkeyes.

The saying plays well here. "Birds of a feather, fly together."

Shaun decided quite early on Iowa, was his brother, Shane, still kept many of his options open. After both had verbally committed to the school, the players saw some late interest from in state.

After the University of Nebraska (UNL) fired head coach Bill Callahan, the Huskers brought in former Defensive Coordinator Bo Pelini.

Pelini and former Husker coach and current Athletic Director Tom Osborne visited Central to present the option of coming to the Huskers. Although they visited, they missed out on the Central players.

In the end the players decided it better to remain with their original option.

Very similar to a year before where UNL offered late to tackle Harland Gunn, in which he stayed with his original decision of University of Miami.

Receiving scholarships for football isn't new to their family. Just four years back, Nate Prater signed his letter to Kansas State University (KSU) and their father played at Iowa himself. Quite a talented family.

"It (football talent) runs in the family," Shaun said.

The twins remember playing football in their backyard with the whole family.

The brothers are going to Iowa in hopes of different pursuits. Shane, the faster of the two is built more towards offense.

His hope is to make an impact at the wide-receiver position.

But matching up across the line might be his counter-part Shaun. Shaun, the more physical of the two, could be playing defensive back.



PHOTO BY ARYANNAH CONRAD/ O-BOOK

Shaun Prater signs the letter of intent to play for the University of Iowa.

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THREE-PEAT

PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

Sophomore Deverell Biggs and senior Josh Jones laugh after a third-consecutive State Championship. The Eagles knocked off the 6'6" Jarrell Crayton and the Bellevue East Cheiftans 59-58, despite a late 8-4 Cheiftan run at the end of the game.

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team took home its third consecutive State Basketball Trophy.

The last time a team put together such a successful season was by Lincoln Northeast in their run from 95-'98 and four State Titles.

But don't count the run over. Although the Eagles are losing all five of their starting seniors, the talent pool at Central is deep.

Great play from off the bench came from Sophomore Deverell Biggs and Simms. Biggs is an explosive scorer with range and a quick step. Simms bring to the team tenacity and heart.

For a 6'2" forward, he boxes out well and comes down with big rebounds.

"We're all going to have to step up," Simms said.

The hour ride to Lincoln was expected, but this year, for each of the rounds the tourney was moved back.

The first round game for Central began at 8:45 p.m. But it wouldn't phase the 22-3 Eagles.

The run began against the Kearney Bearcats in the first round. Although Kearney held an early lead in the first quarter, the Eagles came back and posted a 56-43 win.

The following day (or one would say 'night') was the next game. With the no. 1 Ralston Rams and the no. 4 Creighton Prep losing in the first round, the Eagles were up to face no. 2 Bellevue West, a team they usually met in the Championship.

Basketball is a game of mathematics. The players are the variables, the coaches are the identities and their are proofs to every equation.

The last two championship games, the Eagles faced the T-birds and won. But they did it by a close margin, both times needing overtime to topple their foes. Not this year though,

as the Eagles followed in the same tradition of winning, but by doing it with a considerable margin, 80-66.

"Everything went as planned," Behrens said.

Leaving the proof of the equation being, that the Eagles own the T-birds in the tournament. With the no. 2 seed out of the way, the Eagles went up against Bellevue East and the 6'6" Jarrell Crayton.

A tough battle for the Eagles, as their beast of a forward Crayton averages 18 points and 10 rebounds a game.

Just one point. But a good point, that's for sure."

- Junior Forward Paul Simms

"We doubled down on him the whole game," Simms said. "When Lorenz fouled out it was a huge loss. He is one of our most physical players."

Throughout the playoffs, the Eagles had faced good big men both in Kearney and Bellevue West.

But Crayton, who put up 26 points in the State Championship was a tough battle.

With Wilson fouled out, Simms came from off the bench to help play the post.

The whole season boiled down to just a few minutes with a slim lead.

Just a few seconds would separate the Eagles from their goal.

Those seven seconds left in the game, had the Cheiftans down 56-53. Coach Behrens called a timeout.

"He told us not to give up a three," Simms said. "And then he told us not to foul. We kind of knew they were going to him (Crayton). He got it and looked around and put it up (scoring)."

The inbound pass went to Griffin, who threw it up court.

The rest is history. The Central Eagles.

Three-straight Class A State Titles.

Security guard coaches basketball team unique offense

BY PETER BOCK

When at a Central basketball game, you may wonder what Herb Welling, the jolly security guard, is doing as an assistant coach of the three-time defending state champions.

Well, there's a lot more to Herb than meets the eye.

Three weeks ago, Welling was featured in *Sports Illustrated's* story on a basketball offense that is sweeping the nation.

The Dribble Drive Motion Offense (DDM), which Central has used for the past few years, is capturing the interest of coaches and fans across the country. One of the top teams in college basketball, the Memphis Tigers, use the offense as well as the Denver Nuggets and the Boston Celtics of the National Basketball Association.

"Well, we come down the court and dribble penetrate, then kick it out, get back in the lane, attack again, and try to get the ball back to the middle of the floor. There's lots of driving and passing," Welling says.

The offense may sound complicated, but it's actually fairly simple. There is a reduced amount of ball screens and very little set plays. The main point is to have a point guard dribble into the lane, draw defenders, and pass it out to the open player.

It was created by Vance Walberg, a former coach at Pepperdine University who came up with an offense at Clovis West High School in Clovis, California, to take advantage of the skill set of his star point guard, Chris Hernandez.

He met one night with Memphis coach John Calipari, and gave him a walkthrough of the offense. Calipari thought it was pure genius, and began to implement it with his team.

It began for Welling in 2004, when his son was attending a Pete Newell Big Man Camp in Las Vegas. He got wind of a new offense that he thought would be ideal for Central, and decided to investigate further.

He contacted a friend of his who was an assistant with the Denver Nuggets, and another friend, a high school coach named John Jordan who lived in Sacramento, California, he said.

"I got on the phone and they told me all about it, and that's really where I got my

interest," Welling explains.

Jordan had known of the DDM for years, and sent a 100-page documentation to Welling after Welling had shown interest.

From then on Welling has adapted the DDM to fit Omaha Central's needs, and so far has been an obvious success.

"We've been to the state tournament in the past, but it definitely enhanced [the basketball program] with the style of player we have. We've never had overwhelming size by any means, and the offense has helped us."

With Welling as the secret mastermind behind Central's basketball team, it has been able to win back-to-back state championships.

Other teams across the country, at all three levels, have also enjoyed success with DDM.

The Boston Celtics are currently the NBA's best team with a 44-12 record, and run a variation of the offense that can be successful at the highest level of basketball.

The Memphis Tigers are 27-1 and are currently ranked number two in the Associated Press Poll. They have performed the DDM to perfection, and won their first 25 games.

St. Anthony High School, in Jersey City, New Jersey, is number two in ESPN High Elite 25 Basketball Rankings and have beaten some of the best high school teams in the country.

Welling is good friends with the St. Anthony's coach Bob Hurley, and was the one who turned him on to the offense.

Before Central used the DDM, they were still good, Welling said, but the offense made the team better as a whole.

Welling is also one of the most connected men U.S. basketball. He mentions acquaintances of North Carolina coach Roy Williams, former Memphis Grizzlies coach Mike Fratello, Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski, and NBA legend Hubie Brown.

"I was the right-hand man for a guy named Howard Garfinkel, and discovered about a million other people in basketball through him. At all his basketball camps I was his right

Juiced-up players set a negative example for teens



POLITICALLY INCORRECT

A column by Peter Bock

As the Washington Field Office of the FBI prepares an in-depth investigation that may take months, there is a man on trial for lying under oath and committing perjury.

The case has received non-stop media coverage, and has been closely followed by people all over the country for months. It has been the main topic of discussion on television and radio.

The man on trial is not on trial for lying about terrorism. He's not on trial for lying about a murder. And he's not on trial for lying about a hate crime.

The man is Roger Clemens, and he's on trial for lying about using performance-enhancing drugs.

Clemens is one of the many athletes under fire recently for using a certain type of supplement that improves athletic performance.

Along with Clemens, track stars such as Marion Jones and Justin Gatlin, football player Shawn Merriman of the San Diego Chargers, and other baseball players such as Miguel Tejada and Barry Bonds have all been questioned for the use of steroids. And so the question must be asked:

Are today's athletes setting good examples for the youth of America?

As a little kid, I loved sports more than anything else, and the best players were my idols. Eric Crouch, Alex Rodriguez, Kurt Warner... They all were superhuman to me, and would stop at nothing to be just like them.

Today, I still have a passionate love for sports, but I realize my abilities are limited and I'll never be able to play professional sport. But do I still have my favorite players?

Right now I do, but I feel like I can't trust them completely. Why should I believe Alex Gordon, the third baseman for the Kansas City Royals, my favorite baseball player, that he is completely clean of any steroids?

With Barry Bonds, the all-time leader in home runs, one of the greatest baseball players ever scarred with the mark of shame (the steroid user label), it's hard to believe anything when they say they don't use steroids.

And these athletes set the standard for what kids think is acceptable.

When there are reports that hundreds of players have supposedly used steroids in baseball, and hundreds more are under suspicion, it leads young athletes to think it is acceptable for them to use steroids.

In the competitive world of sports, people will do anything to get an edge. This includes high school sports.

If kids think they can get away with using performance enhancers, they will definitely try to.

If they can get some kind of advantage over the rest of the field, they'll take it. And today's professional athletes encourage it through their actions.

But don't get me wrong; most don't take steroids. But when ESPN is covering the Roger Clemens case non-stop, and the Mitchell Report (a document revealing suspected steroid users in baseball) is all everyone is talking about, it makes it seem like there isn't anyone in sports who isn't cheating.

So when a kid gets cut from his football team, and he learns of his hero taking steroids, what would stop him from taking performance enhancers to get bigger and stronger? Could he make the team next year?

According to the Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy, 6 to 11 percent of high school students have used steroids, and the rate has climbed in recent years.

If a teenager takes a steroid, growth can be stunted, he can get severe acne, lose hair, and damage internal organs. Not to mention the shrinkage of the testicles.

So in my opinion, athletes in general need to step it up. If kids see all this happening, they will experiment with the drugs.

There is no excuse for professionals to take steroids and cheat.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER
Herb Welling embraces Deverell Biggs (Right) after the Eagles clinched the state title.

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