

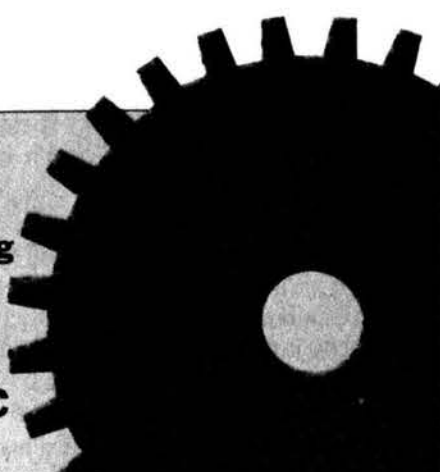


PERCEPTIONS
Magazine tackles prejudices, visual perceptions and other sources for opinions in people's minds.
THE EDGE

SWIMMING
Freshman swimmer Brittany McClure follows in sister's footsteps, by qualifying for state competition.
PAGE 14C



COG FACTORY
Local all-ages venue closes due to mounting financial problems. A tribute to the memory and the music.
PAGE 24C



001 Back-to-Back NSPA Best in Show

Oldest High School Newspaper West of the Mississippi

National Pacemaker Award Winner

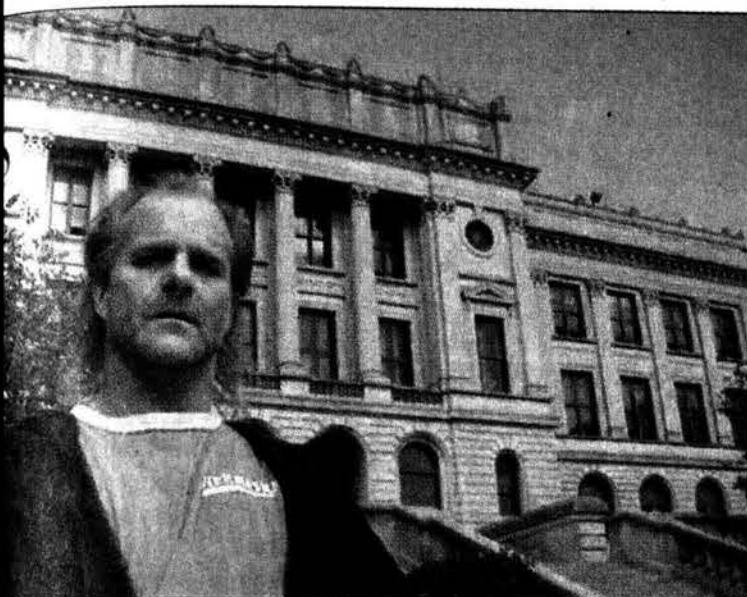


Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

ger Roll, the parent of a Central freshman, recently dropped his lawsuit claiming that collection of student fees violates the state constitution.

LAWSUIT

Fee issue moves to Unicameral

By Joe Meyer

The question of whether school districts can legally collect student fees will most likely be answered in Lincoln instead of a district courtroom.

Earlier this month, Roger Roll, father of a Central freshman, temporarily dropped his lawsuit claiming that student fees violate the state constitution.

Meanwhile, the Unicameral is on the verge of debating the issue. State senators have introduced seven bills for this legislative session addressing the issue.

Also, the Nebraska Board of Education formed a 22-member task force to examine the issue, the commissioner of education Doug Christensen said.

Roll said he dropped his lawsuit because the state seems to be solving the problem. He filed the suit without prejudice,

which means the matter will not go to court now, but he can refile at any time.

He said he has made his point. His lawsuit made people realize that the district was charging students for things like locker rentals and gym suits.

He said he never intended the lawsuit to cost the district thousands of dollars.

"It appears as though they (the state) are headed in the right direction," he said. "I'm satisfied for now."

Omaha Public Schools is continuing to postpone collecting all student fees throughout the district until the state establishes official fee guidelines.

"Nothing has changed (since Roll dropped his suit)," executive director of general administration Janelle Mullen said. "We're just all on hold waiting to see what happens (at the state level)."

See LAWSUIT, page 6

Bexten selected to be CHS' next principal

By Joe Meyer

When freshman Katy Baker was in middle school at Lewis and Clark and she disagreed with one of her principal's decisions, she didn't mess around. She debated him.

Lewis and Clark principal Gary Bexten invited her to debate him about a decision he made that limited student dress in front of her English class.

And now that the district has announced that Bexten will be Central's next principal, Baker still remembers that day in English class and she has one suggestion for her former principal.

principal.

"It's just really different here at Central," she said. "He needs to be more open minded."

Sophomore Sarah Cavanagh said Bexten's history of becoming involved with students, like in Baker's case, will help him when he takes over control at Central.

Cavanagh especially
See BEXTEN, page 6



Bexten

Facing up to RACE

Students, community leaders and teachers comment on the growing and changing face of Central High

By Matt Wynn

When senior Karletta White went to the student council convention in Plattsmouth this year, she wasn't prepared for the kind of people she would have to deal with.

While she was sitting at a table with some of her friends, she was approached by a girl from a Millard school.

"She started saying things like, 'We just don't have a lot of your kind of people, you guys don't really live out there. We have this one black guy who plays football, but that's about it,'" White said.

"She didn't even realize what she was saying."

Things like that didn't happen very often at Central, she said.

The school is more diverse now than ever before.

More than 45 percent of the school's population is minority.

The ESL program teaches students from Brazil, Mexico, Spain, Sudan, China and others, representing over 30 countries in all. Central is changing. That much is evident.

But what is the school doing to accommodate the differences? How are teachers handling the extra responsibilities? And most importantly, what do students think?

"Make diversity as natural as breathing"

As a city, Omaha has spent a lot of time and money to learn about the role of race in education.

Two years ago, it started the Omaha Commission on Community and Race Relations, which was formed to examine race in public schools and make recommendations based on its findings.

Betty Jo Hawkins, a counselor at UNO and a specialist in education, was one member of that commission.

What has been done with the results of the research her group published two years ago has been less than revolutionary change, she said.

"It is my understanding nothing has been done with the information in that report," she said.

Hawkins said her commission identified problems in the areas of inservice teacher training, special programs held by schools, curriculum, teacher placement, community concerns and student leadership development.

See RACE, page 4

OPS makes 'Pledge' mandatory

By Doug Meigs

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America..." recited the ROTC cadet across the intercom during homeroom on Jan. 22.

It was the first day the mandated pledge of allegiance was spoken throughout Omaha's public and private schools since the State Board of Education had voted 8-0 to enact Nebraska's Americanism law.

The pledge is just one part of Nebraska's Americanism laws that aims to produce a "loyal just, and patriotic citizenry," according to the law. The Americanism law is part of a prior Americanism Act, OPS school board member, Nancy Kratky said.

The newer law aims to redirect what Kratky had said appeared to be a disregard for basic American principles.

ROTC teacher, Col. Mike Melvin said he is glad to see the rest of the school beginning to say the pledge. The pledge of allegiance has been a routine part of ROTC.

Just like the pledge in homeroom, it is completely optional for cadets to stand up and speak. However, Melvin said that not all do. Furthermore, the cadets who recite the pledge over the intercom are volunteers.

"Anything that promotes good citizenship or patriotism, I think, is a good thing. For OPS to step forward and require students to give the 'Pledge of Allegiance' can do nothing but to increase citizenship and patriotism," Melvin said.

He acknowledges there are some legitimate religious concerns for many students, while there may be some who may refuse to give the pledge just to be different.

The purpose of the law is to develop a reverence of American political institution, documents (such as "the Constitution") and history.

The bill lays specific emphasis on educating students concerning American heroes, the benefits of democracy over Nazism and communism, as well as respect of the flag.

"Since youth is the time most susceptible to the acceptance of principles and doctrines that will influence men and women throughout their lives, it is one of the first duties of our educational system to conduct its activities, choose its textbooks, and arrange its curriculum in such a way that love of liberty, justice, democracy, and America will be instilled in the hearts and minds of the youths."

See PLEDGE, page 8

INSIDE

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Central High Register
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pages



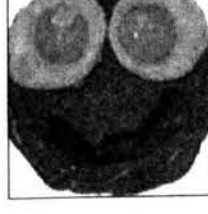
Technology

Wireless and optical mice, while convenient, are not an option for Central computer classes. yet.
NEWS, 7A



NU Bound

Central football's top recruit, David Horne, verbally commits to Nebraska, ending a long recruiting battle.
SPORTS, 13C



Breakfast

The eggs, bacon and other breakfast goodies of three of the area's top breakfast nooks are put to the ultimate taste test.
ENTERTAINMENT, 19C

Briefs.....	2A	Swimming.....	14C
College Corner.....	3A	Class A.....	15C
Race.....	4-5A	Schulte at Large.....	16C
Renovations.....	7A	Devlon Webb.....	18C
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Opinion.....	9B	Reviews.....	18C
Editorials.....	10B	Local Music.....	20-21C
Letters.....	11B	Calendar.....	23C
Juvenile Crime.....	12B	Cog Factory.....	24C
Sports.....	13C		

Tae-Kwan-Do kicks off year

The new Tae-Kwan-Do club had its first meeting Jan. 23 to see how many students would be interested in such a unique club, sponsor Sharon Cooper said.

The Tae-Kwan-Do club will meet every Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for a light workout and practice. A local instructor, Michael Storm, teaches the club. He has many years of experience.

Storm is one of the metro area's top black belts in the marital art. He also teaches Tae-Kwan-Do to the public.

Cooper said she was an avid participant in Tae-Kwan-Do about four years ago. After her short break, she said she is excited to sponsor such a unique club.

Cooper is currently a yellow belt in the sport, but hopes to continue and gain more experience and earn a higher belt.

Cooper said Tae-Kwan-Do is a martial art that requires as much mental preparation as physical. To perform well, athletes must learn to fight with their mind and attack physically only when their opponent shows a weakness.

This type of fighting promotes greater control of the body, she said.

The club was started when a Central student asked Patti Gatzke, who is the director of after school activities at Central, about starting such a club after learning about the activity from Cooper.

Gatzke saw a way to offer a unique experience to Central's students and proceeded with the idea, Cooper said.

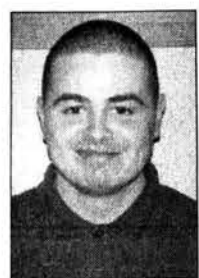
The class can currently support about ten students. If the interest is higher, other arrangements will be made to accommodate the students.

Decathlon team to compete at state

Academic Decathlon will attend the state competition after a strong showing at regionals.

The team placed fourth in regionals out of all the large schools in the state. Only the top six teams made the cut for state.

The three teams that beat Central were: Elkhorn, Creighton Prep and Burke.



Melton

Academic Decathlon member Ryan Melton, a senior, said the team expects to do well this year based on its success at regionals.

"I think we have a good chance to go to Nationals this year," he said.

The competition consists of many smaller tests that are added together for a final score. The

smaller competition has individual tests, an essay, interview, speech and the Superquiz.

The individual tests are over six subject areas including math, science, economics, art, music and language and literature. Three members of the team take each test, with the top two tests in each category counting to the team score.

Each team member then writes an essay, participates in an interview and then gives a short speech. The last competition of the day is a Superquiz, which is taken on the Internet. The scores are then taken from each area to find a final team score.

The top team at the state competition will attend nationals in Phoenix, Ariz. later in the year.

Individual awards are also offered to the top team members.

Classes help students deal with stress, anger

Stress and anger management classes offered through the counseling office helps students deal with problems, counselor Ron Moore said.

The purpose of the stress and anger management classes is to help the student see all the sides of a conflict. This allows the students to further understand and control their emotions, Moore said.

During the hour-long sessions, Moore tries to show the group how to further evaluate their problems.

Most problems can be resolved better if the student can see all the sides of an issue, Moore said.

Any student who has a problem can join the voluntary group, he said. The group meets on a weekly basis for about six weeks. The average group size is four to six students.

Most students enrolled in the class have come when they realized that they needed to get help controlling their stress or anger that is a regular part of teenage life.

The ultimate outcome of the six weeks is a better prepared youth that can deal with issues when they arise in positive way, Moore said.

This is Moore's first year as the leader of the group.

He said he hopes that the group will continue to be an important forum for student issues. The results are well-rounded students who can do better in real-world environments.

The stress and anger management class meets at different times throughout the year. The counseling office also offers groups that deal specifically with other problems besides anger and stress.

News Calendar

Compiled by Aaron Maurice

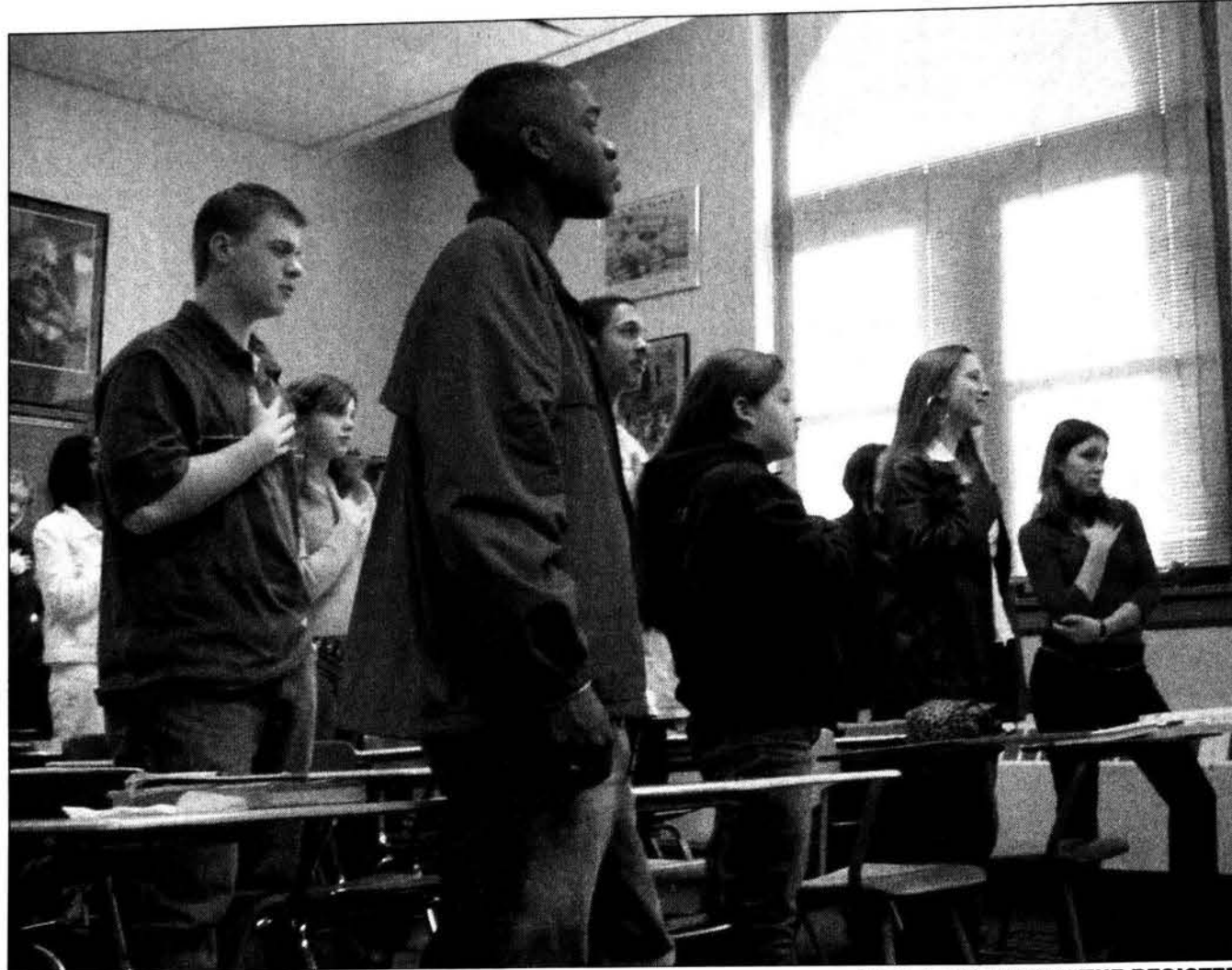


Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

Students say the "Pledge of Allegiance" during homeroom. The pledge is now required of all students due to a new district guideline instituted to promote patriotism. The controversial decision has come under fire recently by students as a form of "forced patriotism."

February

01 Central Speech and Debate Tournament

The tournament will be hosted at Central and will feature students from all over the state. The two day event is one of the last contests of the year before state and nationals.

03 Super Bowl

The two best teams from the NFL will meet and battle it out to see who is the champion. The game was moved back a week due to the canceled week after the September attacks.

06 Road Show Matinee

The 88th annual Road Show will be presented to the students on two days, starting the 6th. The show features many exciting acts of student talent and skill.

07 Wesleyan Honor Choir and Band

Members of the Central band and choir will be performing during the three-day event.

08 Road Show Night Performance

The Road Show will be presented to the general public two nights starting the 8th. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

09 ACT Exam

The ACT test will be administered on the 9th. Registration is required before taking the four-hour-long exam.

11 Progress Report Week

The third quarter progress reports will be made this week. The grades will be given to parents at Parent-Teacher conferences later in the month.

11 PEP Meeting

Central's parent-supported group will be having a meeting on the 11th. The group is a major supporter of ensuring a quality education at Central.

14 State Wrestling Tournament

The wrestling season concludes with the state wrestling meet to determine the best wrestlers in Nebraska. The competition will last three days.

18 President's Day

School is not in session this day to celebrate our nation's presidents, past and present. Parades and celebrations will be on television for the occasion.

21 State Swimming and Diving

The swimming and diving team will end its season at the state meet. The competition will last for three days.

25 Spring Sports Begins

Spring practice begins for the last sports season of the school year. Spring sports include boys and girls soccer, track, baseball and womens tennis.

28 Half Day of School

Students will attend only classes in the morning of the 28th due to parent-teacher conferences later in the day. The day will last from 7:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

28 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents will have a chance to meet with their student's teachers to review grades and student achievement. They last from 12:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the afternoon.

28 Girls State Basketball Tournament

Competition will be fierce in the girls basketball tournament in Lincoln. Since school is dismissed early, students may be able to cheer on their favorite teams. The competition will last throughout the weekend.

After-school study session helps students

The after-school tutoring program in the library helps students achieve better grades, inform manager Kristel Mayberry said.

Mayberry works in the library where the tutoring program is. The AIM Institute funds the program through the Community Learning Center Project grant.

This money pays the teachers who provide the assistance to the students. The goal of the program is to provide extra assistance to the students so they do not get behind in their classes.

The tutoring lasts from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

This is the program's second year. Each night about thirty students are present to use the computer, check out books and get assistance from the teachers.

The program is designed to help students in social studies, mathematics and English classes. Each teacher from each of these departments is present to help students.

The library is also open during the hour-long program for students to check out books. Many students check out books to read while they wait for their ride home.

Students are encouraged to stay in the library if they have to wait for a ride home.

During this time, they can do their homework or use the Internet.

One of the most popular subjects that students seek assistance in is physics, although other students seek a variety of other subjects as well, Mayberry said.

Mayberry said that the program should be continued after the current funding runs out because of the benefit to many students.

Any student with a question is strongly encouraged to attend.

Big Brother, Big Sister benefit many students

Volunteering at Big Brothers and Sisters of the Midlands is a way youth to be reached at many levels, Big Brother's high school representative Kelly Nary said.

Big Brother is an organization that helps children by giving them a mentor, she said. The organization uses high school and college volunteers to mentor children from elementary schools.

The new volunteers are interviewed and screened to see if they can be good role models for young kids.

The high school or college student is then paired with a child from a local elementary school.

The two then would spend a day after school for an hour doing homework, activities, or just having fun.

Central junior Erica Yates joined the organization recently because she enjoyed the personal level the opportunity gave.

Yates worked at Camp Monticello a camp for handicapped kids during the summer. She said she enjoyed the personal level she reached with the kids. They gained each others trust throughout the summer.

Yates decided to volunteer at Big Brother because she wanted to continue to work one on one with people.

Most of the kids involved in the program come from households where two parents work or from households where a single parent works two jobs and has little time to spend with their child. The children are in the program to have a mentor.

The program has numerous benefits for both the mentor and the child, Nary said. The elementary student has the advantage of an older student to ask questions, while receiving help on homework and issues regarding his or her life. The child also has an additional friend to talk to.

The mentor learns to care for a smaller child and help them when they are in need.

The mentor also has the opportunity to learn about that person's way of life and culture.

Millard North adopts IB program

By Paula Salhany

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a much bigger endeavor than first meets the eye. It requires rigorous teacher training, some curriculum changes and applications for acceptance.

But now Millard North can be one of 1,182 schools in 101 countries with the IB program.

The school became interested in the program four years ago when they applied for a \$30,000 government-issued grant for secondary schools to investigate the program, Nancy Buda, IB coordinator at Millard North, said.

This grant allowed teachers and administrators to attend workshops across the United States and in Canada to determine whether or not the IB program would be good for Millard North, said.

These workshops helped teachers learn about the opportunities the program provides along with some training. The grant was extended for

two years and Millard North decided to try and become an IB school.

Now, some of the school's sophomores and freshman are taking classes to prepare to be IB students their junior and senior years, Buda said.

This is because the IB diploma program is only for juniors and seniors.

There are other programs that help younger students, like Middle Years Program and the Primary Years Program.

"So far everything is going very smoothly," Buda said. "We haven't had any glitches yet, and I don't see any coming up in the future."

At one time, OPS considered the IB program.

Central was one of the schools in the district that really wanted the program, counselor Lynda Molyneaux said. They thought Central had the kind of students, teachers and academic potential the program required.

But because the program is

very expensive, the idea of a school in OPS having it was unreasonable.

Junior Danielle Rood said she would probably be interested in the IB program if it were available.

One of the reasons is because she already takes honors and AP classes and she is already on a very rigorous academic path.

She said that if the opportunity arose, she would enjoy going abroad for college, which is one of the benefits of the IB diploma.

"When students graduate from the IB program, they get two diplomas, one from the school and one from the IB program," Buda said. "The IB diploma is accepted colleges all over the world."

In order to graduate from the IB program, students have to take tests much like the AP test.

This is where the costs for the student come in. Over the years, students pay around \$700 in three installments. Students must pay \$77 to take an AP test.

Millard North has about 40 tenth graders and 55 ninth grad-

ers preparing for the IB program, Buda said.

The school expects to have as many as 100 students graduate with IB diplomas in the years to come.

"The program is getting a great response and we hope in future years we can have 100 students graduate from Millard North with IB diplomas," Buda said.

IB at a glance

1,182 School in 101 countries

Asia/Pacific: 18 Countries
North America: 4 Countries
Latin America: 17 Countries

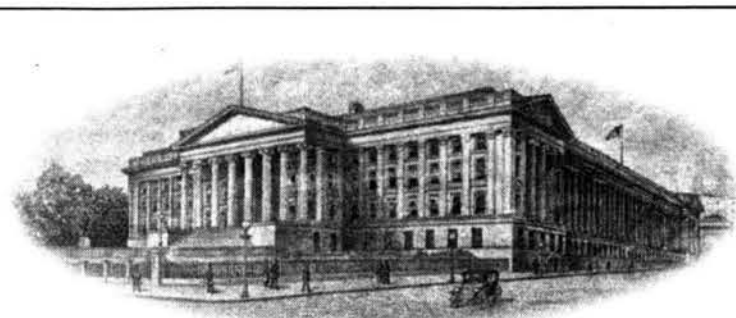
3 Different Programs:

Primary Years

Middle Years

Diploma Program

75 percent of all IB schools are Diploma Program Schools



College Corner

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Location: Kearney, Nebraska

Admission: 93 percent of applicants admitted

Type: Four-year public university, coed

Undergraduate enrollment: 5,502

Additional facts: On-campus housing available to all students, campus-wide network, most popular majors are teacher education and business marketing

Freshman admissions: 19-25 on ACT, recommended courses are 4 years of English, 3 of Math, and 3 of Social Studies

Washington State University

Location: Pullman, Washington

Admission: 84 percent of applicants admitted

Type: Four-year public university, coed

Undergraduate enrollment: 16,366

Additional facts: 97 percent of freshmen students live in on-campus housing, division one athletics, most popular majors are business marketing and social sciences

Freshman admissions: 940-1180 on SAT, recommended courses are 4 years of English, 3 of Math, and 2 of Social Studies

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Location: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Admission: 16 percent of applicants admitted

Type: Four-year private university, coed

Undergraduate enrollment: 4,258

Additional facts: division three athletics, students from over 120 different countries, most popular majors are engineering and computer science

Freshman admissions: 1410-1560 on SAT, recommended courses are 4 years of English, 4 of Math, and 4 of Science

California universities propose to eliminate SAT testing

By Paula Salhany

If you want to go to any college in the University of California (UC) system, there is a good chance you won't have to take the SAT.

At least not in the traditional sense.

The UC system is trying to continue the use of the SAT I, but, according to a study released through UC, it does not accurately predict how a student will do in college, Hanan Eisenman, the UC admissions coordinator, said.

Currently, the proposal is under review by an academic senate made up of professors from the various colleges in the system. When they come to a vote, it will be up to the board of regents, where the final decision will be made.

"The senate does not have a scheduled deadline, so it could be a while before anything comes of this," Eisenman said. "But we wouldn't have proposed it if we didn't think it has the potential to become something."

Currently, UC requires students to take both the SAT I and the SAT II.

Senior Chase Billotte, who plans on going to a UC school, said he would rather take the SAT I than SAT II.

For him, when it came to the SAT II, it was hard to focus all his thoughts onto one subject, especially when he had not completed that particular course in high school.

Overall, he didn't mind taking either of them, and if SAT I weren't required he still would

have chosen to apply there.

Eisenman said UC wants to make the playing field fair for everyone.

They said they believe using only the SAT II would do just that.

Counselor Richard Servis said he doesn't think it would be a good idea to stop using standardized testing.

"In the long run it would hurt a lot more students than it would help," he said. "Especially the underachievers who would have the potential to score high on a standardized test, but just don't do their homework."

UC has no intention of abolishing the use of all standardized testing. In fact they want encourage the makers of SAT to come up with a new test that would reflect on what students have learned in

their high school classes.

"We ultimately want to have some kind of test that measures the aptitude of students," Eisenman said. "We don't want it to be so similar to an IQ test, which is essentially what the SAT I is right now."

Billotte said it would have been more convenient if he didn't have to take the SAT I. He wouldn't have had to study from strategy books or hire a tutor to learn about the test.

No one can really tell if the proposal will pass or if it will stop at the academic senate.

But for the University of California system, the hope is that standardized testing for college entrance will become more of a reflection on how much students learned in their high school years.

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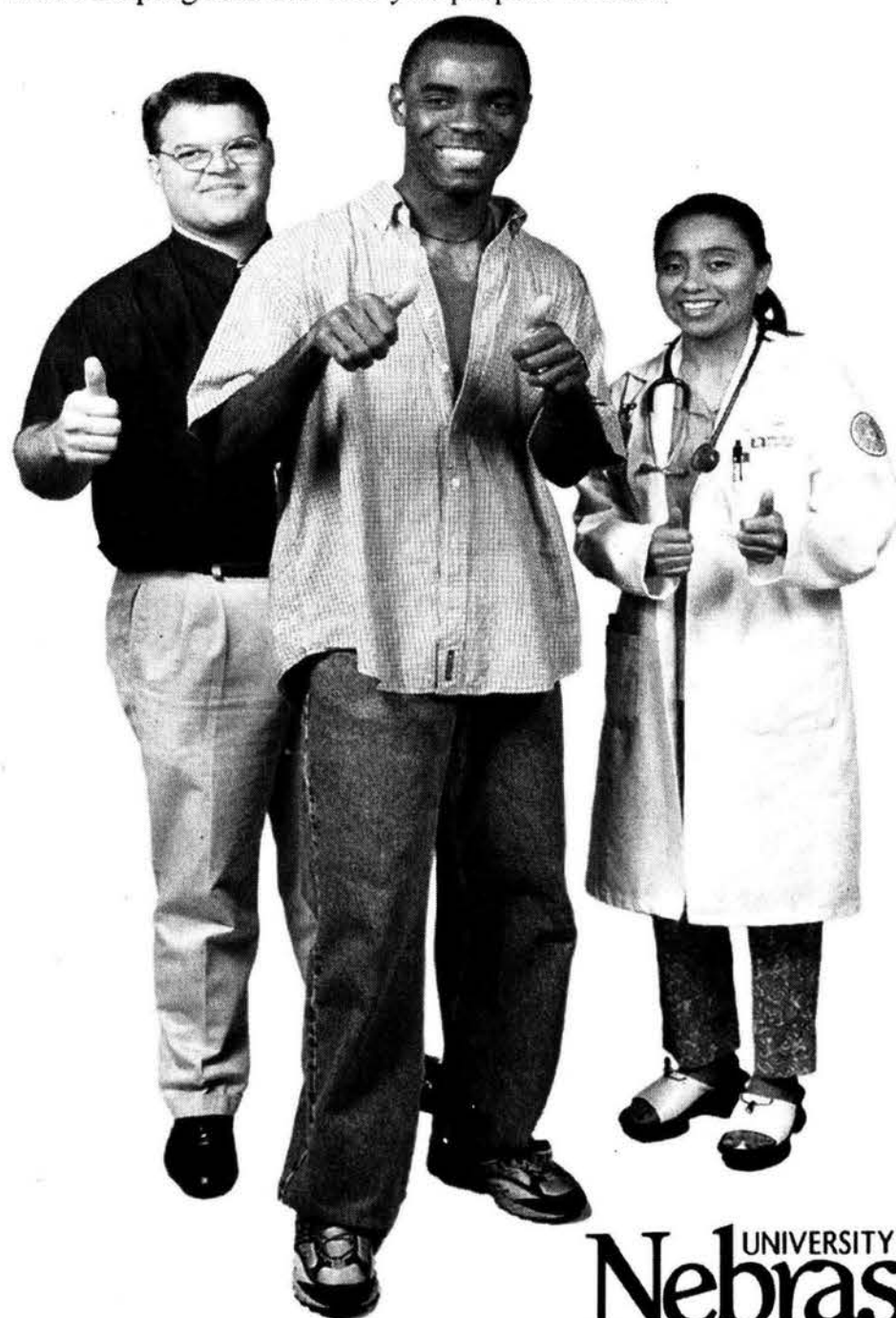
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More kids coming in, fewer leaving

The changing

Race is only one part of a rapidly-changing Central High. Principal Gary Thompson said he attributes this mostly to changes in Omaha as a whole. But even as Omaha gets more and more spread out, Central's population manages to keep growing. Ten years ago, there were only 1,800 students enrolled at Central. That number has soared to today's 2,494. No other school in the district has more than 2,000 students. Central's student body is now larger and more diverse. Students come from all over the city to take part in the Central tradition. According to numbers from this year, 408 students come to Central from outside attendance areas. The changes are a good thing, but do not really change the aura of the school, Thompson said.

"It's different. But it's not. The numbers may change, the percentages may go up and down, but it's still the same Central," he said.

Changes in student body alter programs, teacher recruitment

From RACE, page 1
ment.

But Hawkins is quick to note that while the rest of the OPS high schools may be having troubles in these areas, Central is not.

"It's one of the few schools that is actually doing a pretty good job, and they've been doing that forever," she said.

For some reason, Central tends to draw students of all ethnic groups and blend them in such a way that tension rarely exists, she said. Since the school is in an urban neighborhood, but has a college preparatory curriculum, it draws people of all different races and economic classes.

"Parents still want their children to be exposed or go to Central, rather than be sequestered off to Westside or some Millard school," Hawkins said.

City Councilman Dr. Franklin Thompson said he thinks every school can do something more about race. Thompson, who also teaches Race and Human Relations courses at UNO, said he has been studying school issues in Omaha for almost two decades.

He, too, said he is impressed with OPS' commitment to diversity.

The councilman said he does not like that diversity appears to be forced.

"They (the schools) need to make diversity intrinsic," Thompson said. "They need to make diversity as natural as breathing air or drinking water."

Thompson said most problems with racial issues in education are often blamed on teachers and administrators, instead of where it belongs, on the shoulders of parents and culture.

"The culture of poverty," as Thompson called it, exacerbates problems minority children face. He gave an example of common street perception people have for students who earn all As or Bs.

"There is a common perception that getting good grades is for nerds and that the only way you're going to make it out of the ghetto is through fast money, even if that means illegal acts," he said.

One example of how this could be accomplished would be to implement a program like Creighton Prep's "Brothers for Others."

The program involves a number of students in a variety of activities meant to make a lot of people feel welcome, Thompson said. The purpose of the group is to make diversity a natural part of being a teenager.

In all the time he has spent dealing with racial studies, Thompson said he has never felt as positive about the future as he does now.

"You guys, young people about 26 and under... they just seem to be different. There's something different about them. You guys seem like you've shaken the stupid stuff."

"There's not a school in this state as diverse as Central"

To be able to reach out to all of the different students at Central, teachers and administrators have implemented new programs and started teaching in new ways.

Most notably, Central added Minority Scholars, a program specifically offered to minority students with GPAs of at least 3.2, to the class roster.

Terrie Saunders, English department chairperson who is one of three Minority Scholars sponsors, said the purpose of the group is to give outstanding minority students a chance to surround themselves with students like themselves.

"So they don't feel like they're alone," she said.

In the class, students are told about con-

tests and opportunities being offered to minorities. Juniors and seniors also learn to be good role models for underclassmen.

Back when she came up with the idea to start the program, Saunders said she hoped it would grow and that students would come to Central and want to be part of the program.

That is exactly what has happened.

"Originally, we had to actually go out there and recruit students. Now, more seem to be taking honors classes and saying, 'Hey, this isn't so bad. I can do this,'" Saunders said.

Before Minority Scholars, she remembers teaching four sophomore Honors English classes of about 30 students apiece. Out of those 120 students, she said there were only five minority students.

"It was terrible," she said.

Now, six years later, she teaches only two Honors English classes. But the number of minority students in her classes has more than tripled.

Despite the program's success, it is still one of the only like it in the country.

But other steps are being taken throughout the building to reach out to minorities.

The school recently arranged for a representative from the Chicano Awareness Center to have a permanent office in the building.

The school has also hired a cultural liaison to work in the school. Translators fluent in languages like Spanish, German and Nuer, the language of Sudanese, are available at all times as well.

Every OPS document is printed in English and Spanish and is available in any language by request. Dr. Minnie Dacus, who works in OPS' Student Community Relations office, said other steps are also being taken.

Before they are recertified, teachers have to take a one credit or three hour college course about diversity.

The district has also developed a partnership with UNO to try and recruit more minority teachers.

"The face of America is changing, we're trying to reflect that," Dacus said. "When kids go into a classroom, we want them to be able to see someone who looks like them."

Principal Gary Thompson said he attributes the growing diversity of Central to nothing more than a growing population. But he admits that when people think of Central, they can't help but think of diversity.

"Out of the four things people always tell me they respect about Central, academics and diversity always are at the top of the list," he said. "I would argue that there's not a school in the state as diverse as Central."

The differences between students have never really caused any major problems, Thompson said, and he said he thinks that the diversity has been almost made into a non-issue in that not too many students are preoccupied with it.

Indeed, it seems as if Franklin Thompson's idea that diversity should be as "natural as breathing air or drinking water" may have been realized at Central.

Principal Thompson said he had one experience this year that drove home just how lucky Central is to be diverse.

When the Academic Decathlon class took a trip to Chicago, Thompson went along. He supervised a group of students as they traveled around the city.

When his group got on the subway, Thompson said students were confronted by people of every imaginable race, ethnicity and social class.

"All of the kids I went with were very comfortable with that," he said.

As a kid growing up in western

Nebraska, Thompson never even thought it was possible for so many different people to live together.

When he moved to Omaha, he said it was a culture shock. Suddenly he was surrounded by people from all kinds of ethnic groups and financial backgrounds.

"It has all been a learning experience for me," he said. "I really feel bad for kids that grow up and never get to experience diversity."

"I'd rather be in a school like Central"

Though district administrators and Central teachers are spending a lot of time and energy to make the school as accepting as possible, some students think more should be done.

Karletta White, the senior who was confronted in Plattsmouth, said Central is on the right track.

She said being involved in all the programs she is gives her a big boost.

"All the programs that are here are really good," White said. "They helped me to get where I want to go even more. But I'm the type of person who is going to get what I want on my own no matter what."

She said she is involved in these programs because she always pushes herself to succeed. In her eyes, a program similar to Minority Scholars should be implemented for students who don't have high GPAs.

Sophomore Eric Wilson, another member of Minority Scholars, said he thinks the school is doing a good job of promoting diversity and helping minority students get extra support.

But he agrees that minority students who don't have high GPAs should have the same opportunities.

"All the stuff that we get to hear about, I guess it's available in the counselor's office. But nobody really knows about it," he said.

He said if the counselors spent more time trying to publicize what information they have, then perhaps more minorities would try to take part in the programs.

But Minority Scholars is a big step in the right direction, Wilson said. And it has really helped him make some good decisions while he's been at Central.

"Something about being with a big group of smart kids makes you want to do just that much better," he said.

The school's diversity has even affected some students who aren't minorities.

Senior Wade Shelton said that he came to Central because of academics, but he has learned to appreciate the diversity of the school, as well.

"It's not something I pay attention to," he said. "But I'd rather be in a school like Central than a place where there's a whole bunch of white kids," he said.

Some students think that no other classes should be started specifically to help minority students, but they support the idea of starting a class that similar to Minority Scholars.

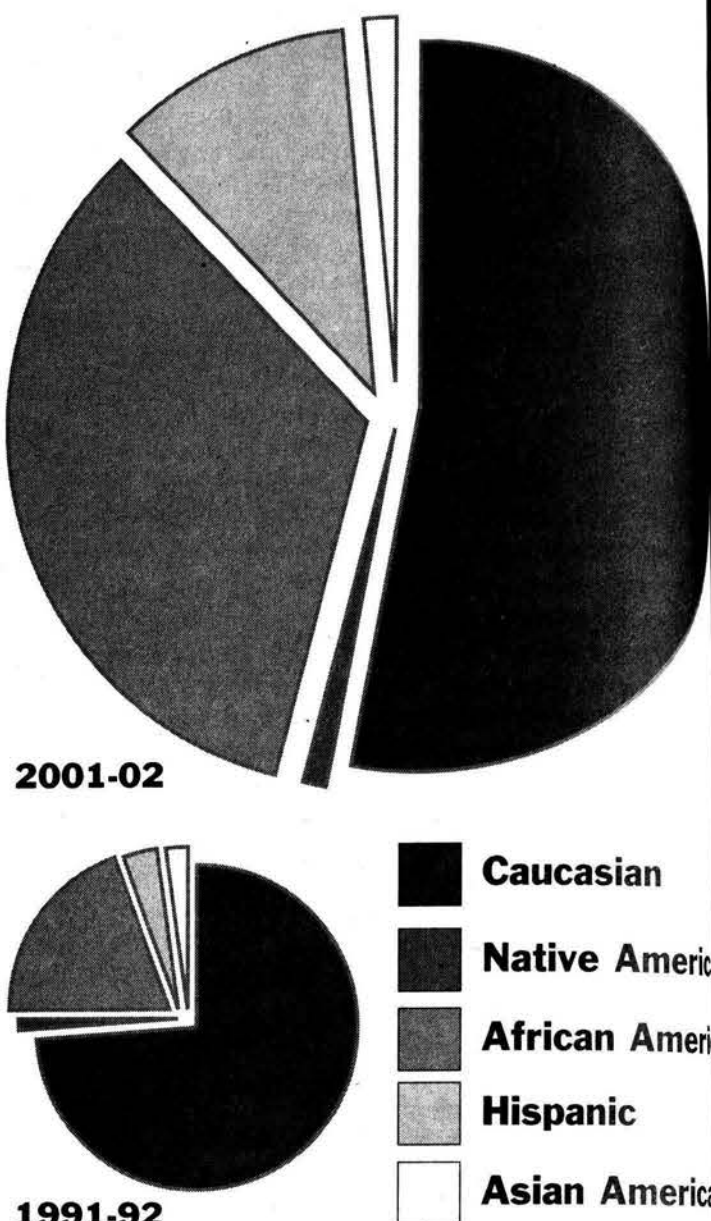
That way, all kinds of students could be privy to information about available opportunities.

"If they're going to do anything to help people learn that, they need to do it for everyone. Otherwise it's going to be racist," senior Fred Combs said.

Senior Andrew Maxey echoed his sentiments.

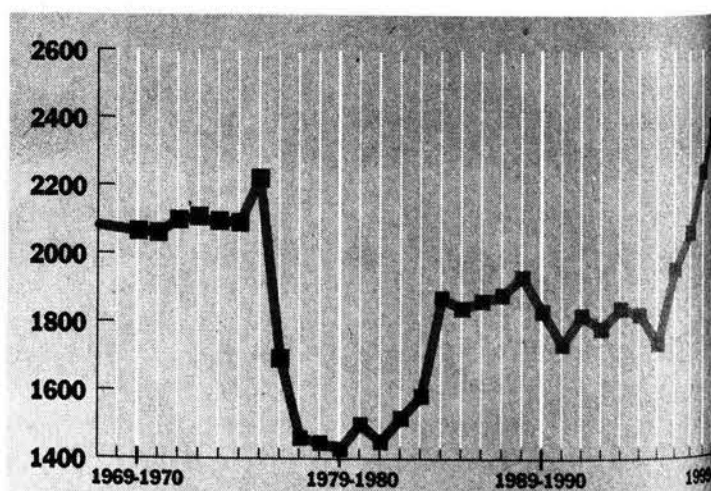
"Give them as much as you can within reason, there should be a class that solely prepares students for tests, and that should be open to everyone."

Ten years of racial change



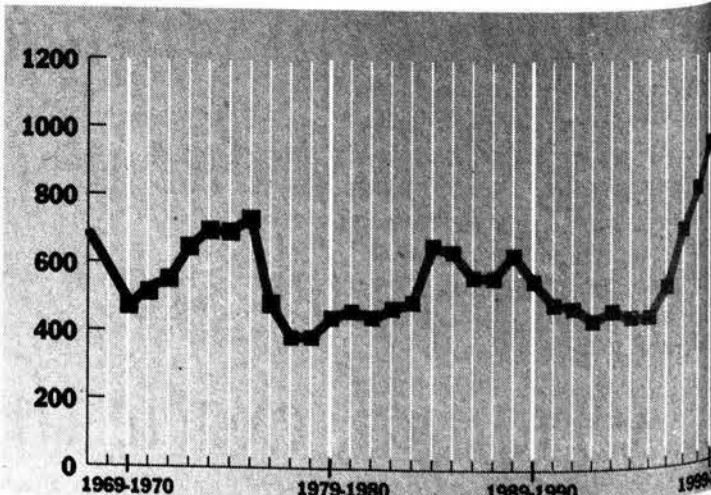
Ten years ago, 74 percent of Central students were Caucasian. African Americans made up 22 percent of the school, and Native Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans together didn't even make up five percent of the school's population. Today, those numbers have changed drastically. While the majority of Central students are Caucasian, the percentage of minority students has increased. African Americans account for 35 percent of the entire student body, and Hispanics now make up more than 10 percent. All of this change has had quite an impact on the way the school teaches, and has altered the way it hires teachers. New positions have been created, too.

The growth of Central



The population of Central has grown considerably over the past 30 years. In the late 1970s, the population of the school dropped dramatically because ninth graders were sent to be taught in middle schools. The population grew again after that plan was changed. The population grew again when the district stopped forced busing in the 1990s, allowing students to attend any high school in the district no matter where they lived.

Minority growth at Central

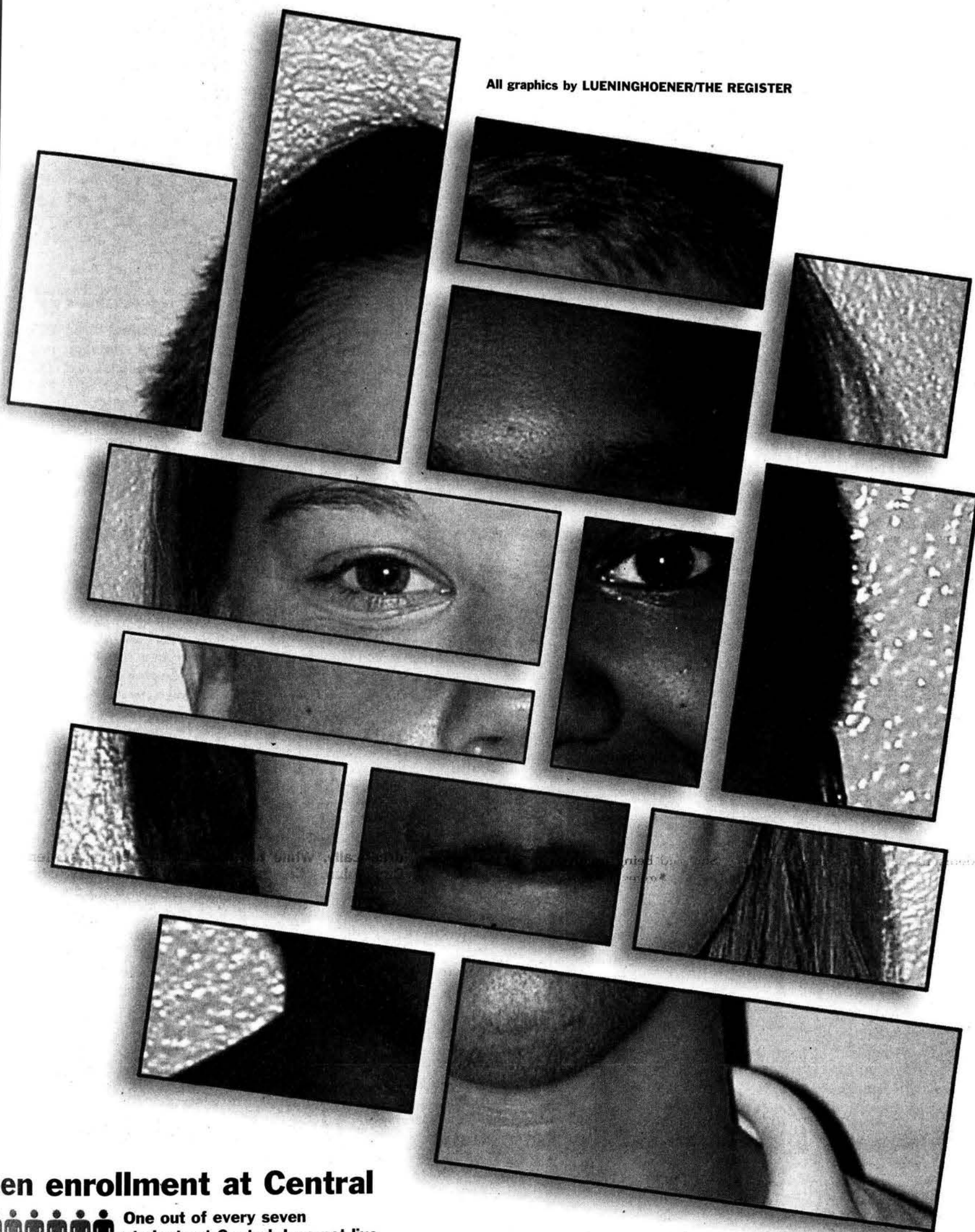


The number of minority students at Central has remained fairly consistent with the overall school population over the past 30 years. Generally, as the total population of Central students rises, the number of minority students rises. But while the numbers of minorities coming into the school continue to rise, the number of non-minorities has been decreasing, resulting in a balance between races that is uncommon at almost any other school in the district.

and more and more diversity every year

face of Central

All graphics by LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER



Diversity nothing new at Central, alumni say

Former students recall varied student body being present when they attended school

By Matt Wynn

1970 graduate Gary Willis remembers being a student at Central during the racially tumultuous 1960s.

He remembers having to identify himself as a "Negro" on enrollment cards and standardized tests.

And he remembers attending the state boys basketball tournament at the Civic Center in 1967, the one that ended up in a race riot.

The overtly racist Alabama Gov. George Wallace was coming through Omaha during his presidential campaign.

He managed to stop by just in time for the basketball game, Willis said.

When he got into the arena, Willis said tension was already running high. After all, it was the 60s, and with Wallace in town, things certainly weren't going to end up pretty.

Willis said he doesn't remember the events of the evening as well as he'd like to. But he remembers the gist of it.

"It was just an uproar. There was a little fight that turned into a huge brawl. Ever since then they've held state in Lincoln," Willis said.

Though Willis said he remembers very few negative things about his time at the school, he does say that championship sticks out in his mind. For the most part, though, he attributes most of his social growth to the mix of students at Central.

"Central is really a melting pot," he said. "The mix and blend of people I met back then prepared me for anyone I could encounter in my adult life."

Central alumni seemed to think the school's diversity had helped them grow into responsible, well-rounded adults. Their experiences make it evident that Central has always been one of the most diverse and accepting schools in the state.

JoAnn Kratky, a 1960 graduate, said she remembers diversity meaning much more than race. It was also a religious issue, she said.

"I was a freshman in fifty-six, I think the Jewish community probably came to Central in that time," she said.

She said even back then, Central teachers made a big attempt to not offend anyone, while at the same time reaching out to everyone.

She remembers specifically a time when a very well-liked music teacher would teach Christmas carols.

"They always made it very evident that when we were singing Christmas carols, it wasn't because of religious reasons. We were singing them because they were beautiful," Kratky said.

She said there wasn't too much tension between the races or religions. Instead, it was very similar to the divisions in the school today.

"We had the same people you have," she said. "People who like school, people that hate it. Your artists, athletes, the smart kids, your thespians... it was really split like that."

Even back then, she said, Central commanded a lot of respect in the community.

She said she doesn't remember very many kids opting out of a chance to attend the school.

"It was a college-prep school, but it was more than that. The person who was Christian learned from the Jewish friend. The African American learned from the Caucasian and vice-versa. The diversity was the education," Kratky said.

Roger Sayers, another 1960 graduate, said he recalls a similar feeling in the school. Back then, some schools were still segregated.

Sayers said if a person chose to come to a school like Central, which had never had segregation, he was already ahead of the game.

"Everybody had a kind of camaraderie and companionship," Sayers said. "I know discrimination probably happened, it was the 1950s, but I don't ever recall it happening to myself."

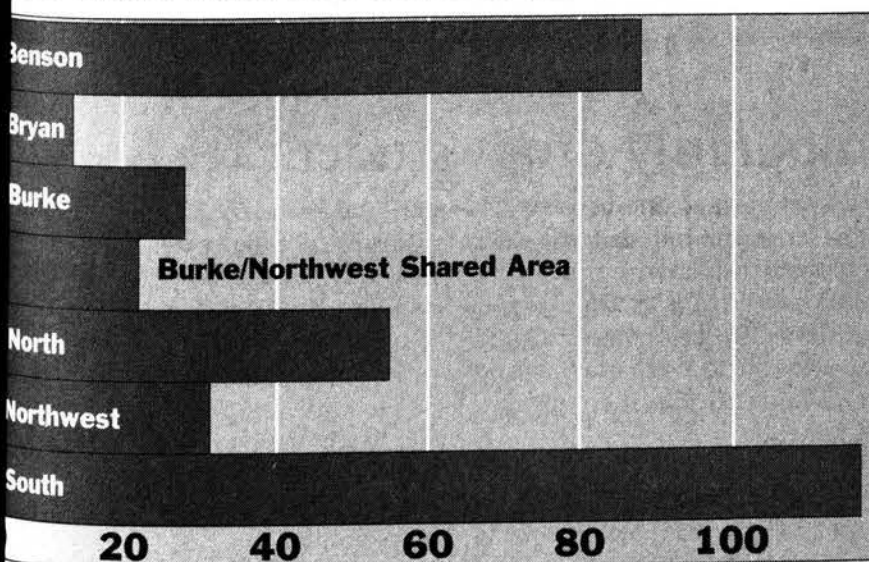
The school always seemed to be ahead of the rest of the country in terms of diversity, he said. As the vice-president of the senior class, he said the officers probably best showed the racial nonchalance of most people at the school.

"At a time when the whole US was trying to come to grips with Jim Crow, we (Central students) had a black vice-president and female officers," he said. "Central kids always seemed to have it all figured out."

Open enrollment at Central

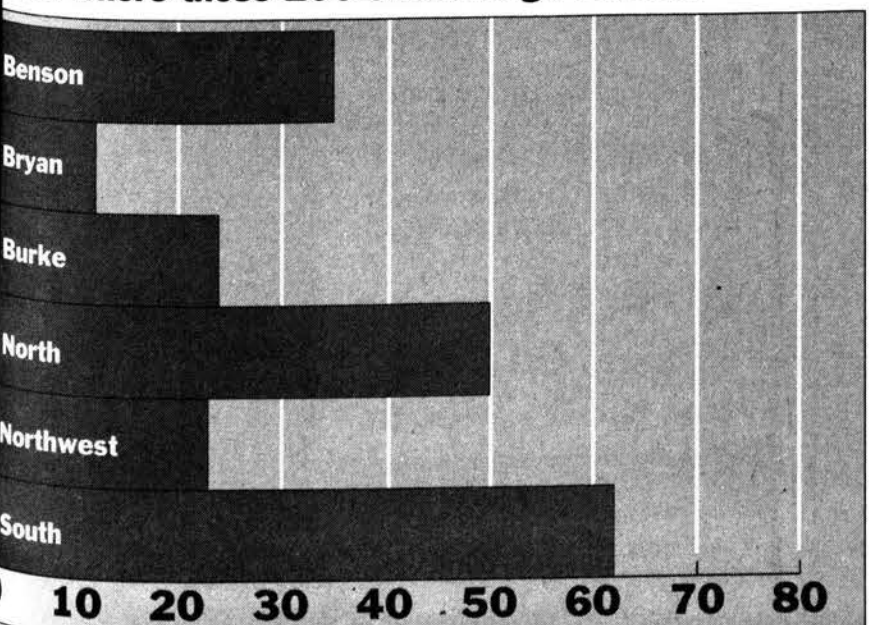
One out of every seven students at Central does not live in Central's attendance area

Here's where those 356 students come from:

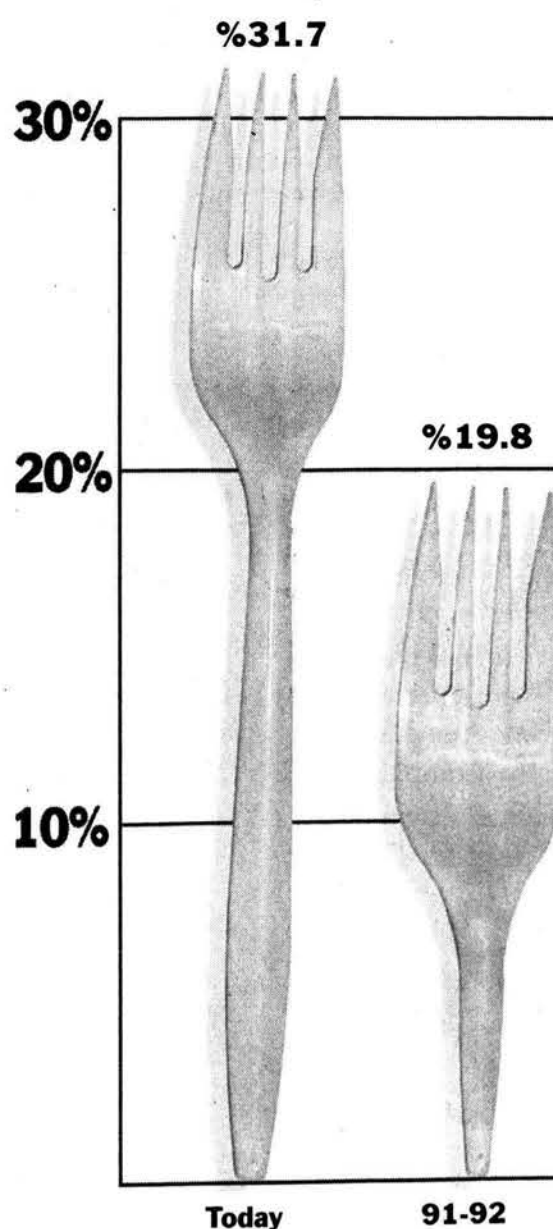


One out of every 12 students who can attend Central chooses not to

Here's where those 206 students go instead:



Free and reduced lunch



The free and reduced lunch program, which is present at every school in OPS, is helping more students now than ever before. In 1991, only 356 students qualified for and received the service. Today, that number has soared to over 750. While numbers are high, they are not as high as they are in some other OPS high schools. For instance, South High has almost 55 percent of its students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Free and reduced lunch is probably the most accurate way to measure the socio-economic status of students. Again, Central's students body is diverse.

Westside holds school on Dr. King's birthday

By Joe Meyer

Freshman Lamar Davis slept a little longer on Martin Luther King Day. Freshman RoseAnn Incontro watched a television program that focused on diversity.

And students at Westside High School went to school.

As the school has done for years, students attended school on the national holiday dedicated to remember the civil rights leader.

Westside assistant principal Pat Hutchings said the school held a special 45-minute assembly honoring King.

At the event, a speaker told students about the importance of diversity in education and what King's message means in today's world.

Hutchings said Westside has always held school on the national holiday for the 16 years she has been working there. Sometimes the school invites a speaker or plans other activities. For example, in years past, the school has distributed buttons that say "Live the Dream" and signed pledges to encourage equality.

A good majority of the students enjoyed this year's activities, the assistant principal said.

"You could hear a pin drop," she said. "We were talking about that later. It was great."

Jon Priester, a social studies teacher at Westside who sponsors the student forum group who chose the speaker, said the assembly helped all students learn about King's message on the name that is named after him.

"We think that it's better to honor him by coming to school and giving the students something to take back with them," Priester said.

Attending school on the holiday also allows students to honor King by carrying out his reflecting on his educational message and learning a little about him.

Luann Nelson, director of public relations for OPS, disagrees. She said the best way to honor the civil rights activist is to dismiss students for the day, especially because it is a national holiday.

Nelson said dismissing students for the day emphasizes the importance of the man's life, especially for elementary students.

"It's a way we can emphasize his contributions," she said. "They are very aware of why they have the day off."

Another reason why the district does not hold classes on the holiday is because a lot of its students celebrate it in different ways. Some students choose to attend church services in the morning and others celebrate at night.

If the district decided to have a regular day of teaching, these students would be absent from class.

But the main reason why school is dismissed on Martin Luther King Day is because it is a national holiday, Nelson said. Just like banks and post offices, the district's schools close for the day.

The district's schools also participate in activities throughout the entire month of January to remember King, especially in elementary school, Nelson said.

Freshman Candis Sorensen agrees with Nelson. She said OPS is right by dismissing students for the holiday. That way, students have the opportunity to attend church services.

Incontro said that there is no reason for the school to have students sit through an assembly. Instead, she said, the school should dismiss students for the day, which would allow them to celebrate the holiday on their own if they want to.

BEXTEN

New principal not intimidated by move to larger school, he says

From BEXTEN, page 1

remembers when Bexten agreed to hit a golf ball for every book that the students read.

He was outside for hours.

She said he may experience some growing pains when he assumes the position, but he will be a good leader for the school.

"I think it will take him a while to get used to it (being Central's principal) because he's used to a middle school," Cavanagh said. "Whatever he does, it's going to be what's good for the school at the time."

Bexten said the transition from a junior high to a high school is not a big concern for him because he has followed in current principal Gary Thompson's footsteps before.

In fact, the district moved Bexten to Lewis and Clark after Thompson left for Central seven years ago.

When that happened, it was easy for him to assume the position because of Thompson's organization and great work ethic.

Bexten said he expects the same this time around, too.

Freshman Max Lesley said Bexten was very tough with discipline while he was at Lewis and Clark. During the three times that Lesley met with him, Bexten never let him off easy.

"He wouldn't let anything go," he said. "He'd never let you get away with anything."

Being a high school principal will be

a lot different for Bexten, Lesley said.

More students break the rules, but he doubts Bexten would change his attitude.

Sophomore Sam Stanfield said he looks forward to the new principal's arrival.

The school needs a leader who will crack down on bad behavior, he said.

Bexten said he does have some concerns about changing positions. At the top of the list is the amount of activities that a principal has to be in charge of and attend at Central.

Also, he will have to meet teachers and students when he moves into the school sometime in August, along with learning to navigate the building.

"To tell you the truth, if I came into Central right now, I would probably get lost," he said.

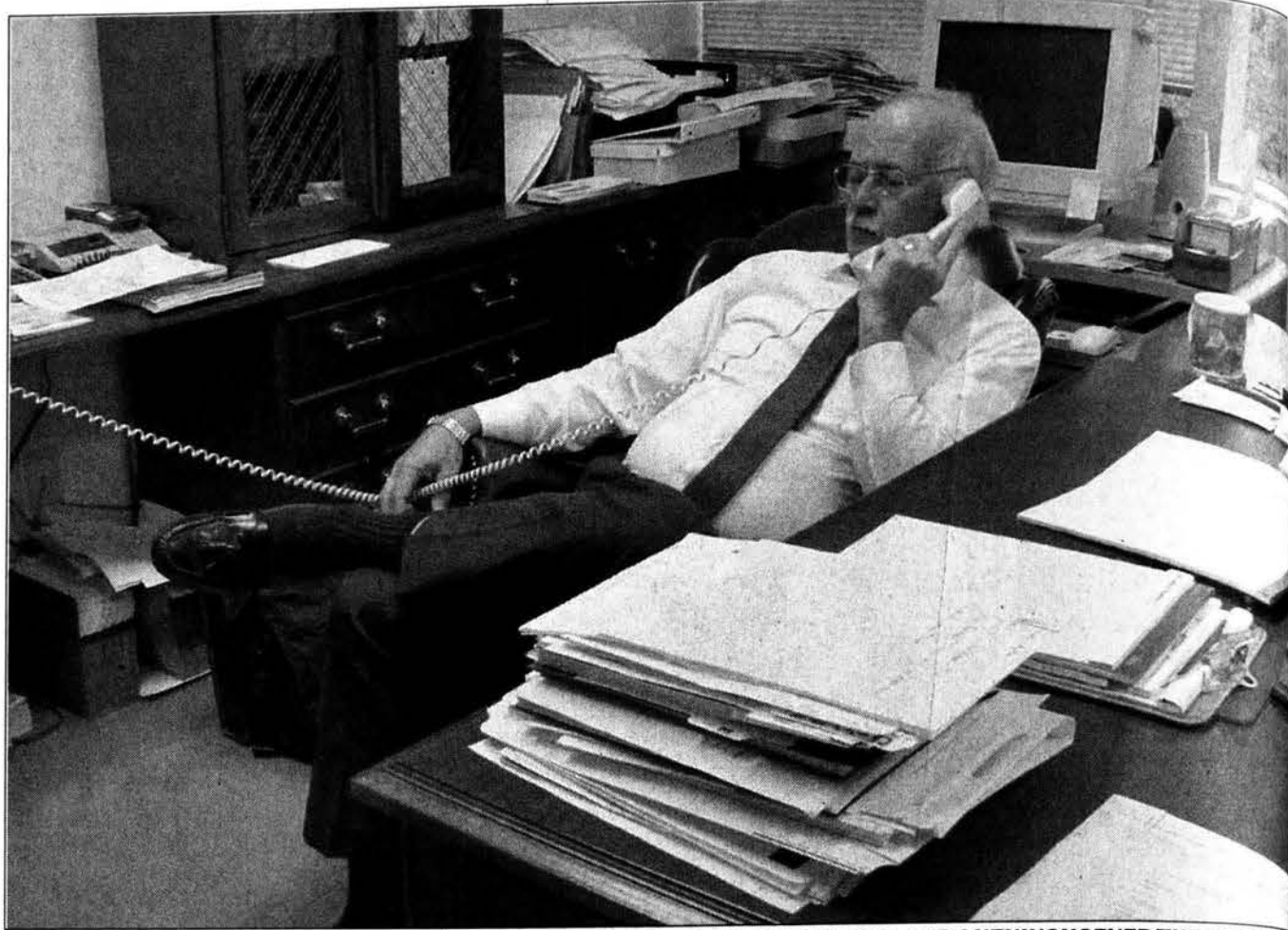
Since the district's announcement, Bexten said he has attended a meeting about the progress of the renovation project with Thompson and Jacobs Facilities to learn about the phasing plan.

He said he expects to be kept up to speed on the project, but he does not expect to make the decisions himself. That's just not his job yet.

"Dr. Thompson's still the principal, so he's going to make all the decisions," he said.

Bexten said he is excited to move into the school, meet the teachers and become part of the school.

"Central High has such a great tradition and I just want to be a part of it," he said.



Photos by ANNIE WALDEN AND LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER

ABOVE: Jim Gleason talks to one of his clients on the phone at his law office. The school hired Gleason to teach one Latin class first hour because of an increase in student interest and a shortage of foreign language teachers. **BELOW:** Gleason balances working at a law firm with teaching his class. Currently he is teaching the only third year Latin class.

Filling the void

Lawyer Jim Gleason returns to teaching Latin because of a teacher shortage

By Paula Salhany

There has only been one Latin teacher at Central for many years.

But this year, because of the amount of students who want to take the class, a new teacher was brought in.

Jim Gleason, who runs his own law firm, was asked to teach only one period of Latin a day.

"I heard that there was a need for someone to teach only one period, and Dr. Thompson approached me about the job," he said.

After teaching first period Latin, Gleason returns to his law office and continues his practice for the rest of the day.

Gleason's teaching experience comes from teaching Latin at Benson. He said because the certifications needed were the same, he came to Central.

"I don't know if I will be here next year," he said. "If they need me, I'll come back."

Gleason said knowing Latin has been very helpful in his job, mainly because much of Latin is incorporated in the English language.

The primary reason why Gleason is at Central is because of a statewide teacher shortage.

"Especially in the area of foreign language, there is definitely a shortage," Becky Schnobel at UNO said.

She said over the last year there have been more teachers retiring and less new teachers coming in.

This means quite a few positions are left open. The shortage of new teachers could be occurring for any number of reasons.

One major reason could be because of the poor pay, Schnobel said. There was a resurgence of teachers five years ago, but since then the numbers have dropped significantly.

"The shortage problem tends to ebb and flow over the years," she said. "But it has never been this bad."

But in the case of the Latin classes at Central, there are too many students that want to take Latin and Rita Ryan can't teach them all.

In fact, Ryan is only allowed to teach six classes. Without Gleason, the school would have had to cut one class.

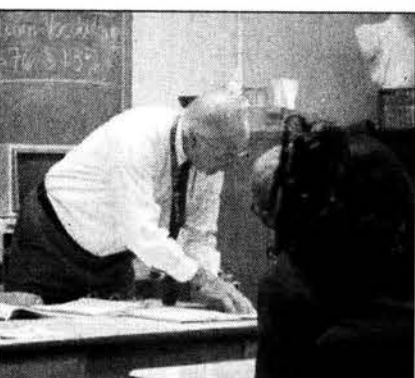
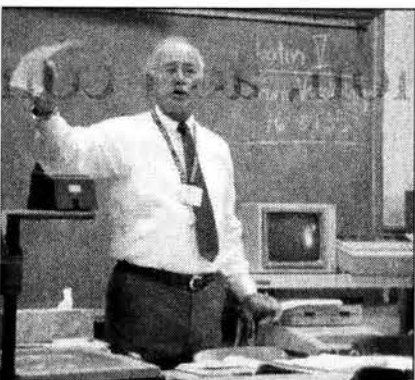
"For Latin, the teacher shortage is not only a problem in Nebraska," she said. "It is a regional problem."

Over the last eight or nine years, country wide, and even internationally, more and more students have been taking Latin, Ryan said. There are even new textbooks coming out of Scotland and England.

She said if the school hadn't found Gleason, it would have been very hard for her.

"In the beginning of the year my classes had 37 and 38 people," she said.

It is not known if Gleason will stay next year, or if the school will find a permanent teacher. But there will still be the demand for the Latin class.



LAWSUIT

State acts after parent temporarily drops student fee lawsuit

the state level.)

Christensen said if anything is passed in the Unicameral this session, it will most likely act as a framework for future action.

Most likely, the responsibility of deciding what schools can and cannot charge for will be left up to the Board of Education, he said.

State Sen. Deborah Suttle of Omaha, who is also a member of the state's

taskforce, said the issue needs to be discussed this session to enact guidelines for the school districts to follow.

"Legislation is to put down guidelines," Suttle said. "It is up to the Board of Education to put together the rules and regulations for what the school districts can and can't do."

"If we start talking on the floor of the legislature about whether we should charge for football cleats, we'd be there

until the end of time."

Roll said that no matter what happens, he and his lawyer will follow the issue closely. If the school district starts to collect fees that he considers unconstitutional again, he said he will not hesitate to refile.

"They have to do the right thing else we will be back to court," he said. "It's not a free education, it's not going to be forgotten."

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Air conditioning put off until 2003

District vetoes portable plan

By Matt Wynn

After the plan to have portables on the field was vetoed by the school board, the work in the school was moved back until the next school year.

But even though the phasing has been altered, there is still no guarantee the portables will be available when they are needed.

"They've got so many projects, they couldn't free up the 30 (portables) we were counting on," principal Gary Thompson said.

Right now, there are a few options available as to how to house students if the portables are not available, Mark Warneke, director of the project and head of Jacobs Facilities said.

There is a chance of moving the administrative or storage space to other buildings downtown, thus opening some areas of school up for classroom space. If a business could be found that would be willing to rent out space, then that plan would work well.

The downside to that plan is the amount of things in storage in the school would no longer be readily available. Teachers would have to go through a lot of trouble to get things that once



Students leave a portable classroom after school is dismissed at Lewis and Clark Middle School. The district decided in December that it would not be able to move any of the portables to Central for next school year, but project officials hope portables will be available by the time they start construction.

Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

were easily accessible.

Another plan hinges on the completion of either the gym or cafeteria addition.

This April, construction of the additions is scheduled to begin, Warneke said.

If all goes according to plan, at least one of the spaces will be available for holding classes in by the time the 2003-2004 school year rolls around.

The plan to install portables on the football field has not been

completely ruled out, Warneke said, and not all options have been completely thought through.

Students had mixed views on the proposed plans.

"Putting portables on the football field wouldn't really work because then band wouldn't be able to practice," freshman Mike Driggs said.

He said the band could probably still practice in the Joslyn parking lot, but then the group would not have the yard mark-

ings to show where to stand. Especially for an award-winning band, he said, that would never do.

Freshman Jordan Gunn said he wasn't too impressed with any of the plans, but he thought the idea to have portables on the football field might work nicely, especially in conjunction with another space, like the gym addition.

"If they give you a little more time for passing periods, then the portables would be fine," he said.

Final completion date remains unaltered

By Joe Meyer

Construction on the new gym and cafeteria wings are scheduled to start in late March or early April, but installing air conditioning in the school has been moved back a year, principal Gary Thompson said.

Because the school could not arrange to receive portables for next school year, the district decided not to delay the air conditioning process. Instead, work inside the school will start in June 2003.

Thompson said construction crews would be inside the building for most of the 2003-04 school year. Work outside the building will be conducted throughout next year, he said.

This change in phasing will not affect the overall completion date for the project, Thompson said. The entire second phase of the renovation, which will cost about \$12.5 million, will be finished in August 2004.

Thompson said the district's decision to reschedule the project was a wise decision due to the recent circumstances.

"If they could not do it right away," he said, "They can wait and do it the right way."

This decision will also help the new principal, Jerry Bexten, when he moves into the school next year. This way, he will have a year to plan how to deal with the renovation project before it displaces students.

Even though the project has

been rescheduled, there is no plan for how to move students during the 2003-04 school year. That decision will be made next year.

Jacobs Facilities construction manager Terry Page said the school board recently approved the phasing plan and designs. Now, his company will focus on finding a contractor to coordinate the entire project.

But if all the bids are higher than the projects budget, Page said the school board will have to approve a less expensive version of the plans.

Page said the second phase of the project will be a lot more extensive than the first one.

Along with the second phase being more expensive than the first, the organization of the construction crews will be different, too.

Instead of contracting subcontractors to complete the work, like the district did for the first phase, the district will only hire one general contractor for the job. Then, the general contractor will coordinate the work from there. In the end, there will be as many as 15 subcontractors working at the school, Page said.

"We could coordinate the job (last year) just as well as he could," Page said. "But you need someone to coordinate the work when you get 10 or 15 guys out there."

Thompson said the district will announce the general contractor sometime in February.



Optical mice optimize precision, add convenience, accuracy, teacher says

By Paula Salhany

Optical and cordless optical mice are the newest in mouse technology.

Not only are they the newest, they

are also useful for graphics and CAD students here at Central.

There's only one problem: no Central computer classes have this latest technology.

Peggy Wheeler, a technology teacher at Central, said using optical mice would help students be more precise in their work, especially for more advanced students.

The mice would help students use computer programs such as Adobe Photoshop and CAD.

She said they are a bit harder to control, but once a student gets used to it, the mice are much more accurate than the more conventional ones.

As far as the cordless mice go, they would be a good tool for teaching, but they would be less practical for students.

The key to the optical mouse is a small laser that acts like a sensor, reading the movements of the mouse, Eric Urbanec, product specialist

at Nebraska Furniture Mart said.

The difference between these mice and the old ones is significant.

The old mice used a ball that stimulated sensors inside the mouse, he said.

This caused problems when the mouse would get dirty and could no longer activate the sensors.

Because Central still uses the older mice, it is still a problem for the school's classes, Wheeler said.

The reason Central doesn't have these mice is because the cost.

The school would need far too many mice to accommodate all the students who use computers at school on a daily basis.

An optical for a personal computer typically costs somewhere around \$25, whereas one for a Macintosh costs about \$70.

This is just for the optical mice, the cordless run about \$65-\$75.

Junior Nick Zielinski said he enjoys using the optical mouse because of its precision.

He received his mouse from his brother and said if it was to break, he would most likely get the cordless mouse.

"I would get the cordless mouse because of convenience," Zielinski said.

The advantage to the cordless mouse is simply the convenience of being cordless.

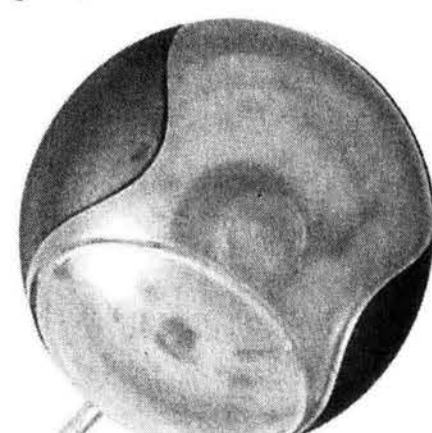
They eliminate the possibility of accidentally ripping the mouse out of the computer and the ever-annoying cord tangle, Zielinski said.

Urbanec said the precision is much better in the new mice and they don't die as quickly.

The cordless optical mice, however, have the use up batteries quickly, he said. This would also add to the cost of having this technology.

The mouse runs on a simple concept.

A receiver is attached to the computer and the mouse transmits movements it detects to the computer using radio waves. Most cordless mice have the ability to be six feet away from the computer, Urbanec said.



Optical mice use laser technology to transfer information from the mouse to the computer. Typically these mice cost anywhere from \$25 to \$75.

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Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

Joerz straps on his glove while he prepares to run with the Olympic torch Jan. 10. He was selected by the Olympic committee to run for five blocks.

Running strong

Graduate Nick Joerz runs with Olympic torch due to his inspiring story

By Joe Meyer

Three years ago, Nick Joerz ran away. He ran away from school, his classes and graduation. He ran to drugs, alcohol and depression. But he came back. He returned to Central and graduated last May. Now, he is a student at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and has a steady job. On Jan. 10, Joerz ran again. The 19-year-old participated in the Olympic torch relay when the torch traveled through Omaha on its way to the winter games in Salt Lake City. Joerz described his five-block run as a "flash of light" that left him wondering what happened. Friends and family were "hounding" him days before he ran, but Joerz said he was not nervous. He trained for the run by riding stationary bikes, jogging and lifting weights. Guidance department chairwoman Lynda Molyneaux nominated Joerz to run with the torch, but she didn't tell Joerz until he had already been selected. Molyneaux called him at work to tell him the news. "I had no idea my name was submitted," he said. "I was totally shell shocked." Molyneaux said she nominated Joerz because of the inspirational story about his turnaround. She said he "pulled himself up by his bootstraps" to accomplish what he really wanted. During Joerz's first two years at Central, he didn't care about his education. He didn't care about school. He didn't care about graduating and he certainly never would have imagined that he would run with the Olympic torch. While he was a sophomore, he was suspended from school a lot and seriously considered dropping out. At a certain point during his sophomore year, he stopped coming to school. Molyneaux described his attendance as "horrible." Then in 1997, Joerz ended up in jail. He spent three months incarcerated at the Douglas County youth center with gang members, drug addicts and thieves. He was scared senseless. But that didn't turn him around. He continued to waste his education by making poor decisions.



Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

Central graduate Nick Joerz runs the Olympic torch down Dodge St. during his run on Jan 10.

Eventually, though, something happened. He decided to return to school and rededicate himself to earning a diploma. His family's "nagging" had finally gotten to him. Molyneaux still remembers the day Joerz came back to reregister for classes. When she sat down to plan out what he needed to do to graduate, he did not lose any ambition. Even when she explained that he would have to enroll in 10 classes the first semester he came back, he was still dedicated to graduating.

"You set your mind on something and it's not that tough," Joerz said. Because of his dedication and persistence, Joerz was able to graduate in five years. He even gave one of the commencement speeches at his graduation ceremony. Joerz may not know exactly why he chose the paths he did or how he ended up carrying the Olympic torch through his hometown, but he does admit that it has been a wild ride. "I could be (the basis for) a TV movie," he said.

Student opinions on 'Pledge of Allegiance' before school differ

From PLEDGE, page 1

of the state," stated the law. Despite what the document states concerning impressionable youths, many Central students don't agree with the pledge being spoken in a school environment, prompting some students to not participate. There has been some student resentment directed toward the pledge, but from what teacher Brent Larson has

seen from his homeroom, it is minimal. The first day of the pledge, Larson said that three or four of his students did not stand with the rest of the class. However, after most of the class started reciting the pledge, Larson said the students who were sitting seemed to become self-conscious. Due to this apparent awkwardness, Larson said he believes most students who don't want to stand for the pledge

will end up doing so just because of peer pressure. For some students like junior Joey Klaczynsky, saying the "Pledge of Allegiance" is part of being American. "I think its every student's right. They owe the country for a free education, particularly in this time," he said. Klaczynsky said he has no problem with the "Pledge of Allegiance" and also doesn't have any problem with students

not standing. Sophomore Erika Schweikert is one student who disagrees with the pledge. She said she feels that religion shouldn't play any role whatsoever in a public school, and disagrees with the reference in to "one nation under God." Schweikert said she is patriotic and loves her American freedom; that is exactly why she doesn't want the government to tell her to be allegiant.

Junior saved friend from drowning

By Paula Salhany

By anyone's standards, junior Brown is a hero.

But he admits that he and his friend shouldn't have been on the frozen lake.

They didn't think twice about the thickness of the ice or about the temperature of the water. They saw people on the ice earlier that day, so they figured it must be okay.

Brown's friend, Chris Younker, was the first. He didn't even hear the ice crack.

Brown, who was only 20, didn't hear the ice either. All Brown heard was his friend's scream who he had known since sixth grade. He screamed for help.

Playing around on the ice, Brown and Younker turned into a struggle for their lives. Brown ran back to his friend.

"I wasn't thinking about whether I would fall in or not I would fall in," Brown said. But the ice broke under Brown and he fell in.

Larry Foster, acting director of the Parks and Recreation for Omaha, said the city does not hold any responsibility for Candlewood Lake, where Brown and Younker were.

With lakes like Candlewood, the thickness of the ice can vary a great deal depending on where the person is on the lake, he said.

Now both of them were in the water, wondering whether they would be alive to see the new year.

"It was a complete panic," Younker said. "I was yelling at the top of my lungs for help even though I knew there was no one around to hear me."

He was clawing at the ice, trying to get a grip. A few times he did, but he got his leg up only to have the ice break again. They were too far out to reach the bottom and too far out to see under the ice to get to shore.

Brown was in the water for about 15 minutes before he got out, but it wasn't enough for his body to feel the effects of hypothermia. He couldn't feel his fingers or toes, but he still had his friend out.

Younker said his head kept coming under periodically, and when he got out and turned around, he was beginning to sink.

"I threw him my coat and made him to pull him out," he said. "He just lay on the ice unable to move."

Younker said he was so cold he couldn't get his body to move enough to get off the ice. So he lay on the ice wondering whether or not he was going to die, while Brown was as fast as his cold body would let him to his car.

Dr. Robert Gillespie, medical director of the Burn Unit at Central Hospital, said hypothermia can set in within five to thirty minutes when a person's body is in that type of environment.

When the body loses heat, it becomes harder for the heart to pump regularly, he said.

Both boys said they know they had been in the water a long time, they wouldn't have survived.

It just so happened that a car was by when Brown was getting ready to call 911. They stopped and helped the boys stay relatively warm until paramedics came.

"We were by each other in the ambulance, and I remember Chris saying we were going to be okay," Brown said.

Brown was released from the hospital the same night, but Younker stayed overnight because of an irregular heartbeat.

Brown said while the events were very scary, he remained happy throughout the whole incident. He said that he would get a grip on the situation and hope that Younker would still be alive when he got him out of the water. He said that everything would be okay. He said he would have felt bad for his friend and family if he had died.

Most of all, Brown said he would have felt guilty if Younker had died. He would have felt stupid if his friend died under a lake, when they should have been there in the first place.

"It was just a big relief that we were out," he said. "It was the biggest relief ever."



BAH HUMBUG
Johannns and company
cut funding for OPS
once again.

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OPINION & EDITORIALS

INSIGHT

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Page 9
The Central High Register
January 31, 2002

Principal duties



READ BETWEEN THE
LINES

Matt Wynn

Misinformed
critics try to
tarnish paper

On the first day of my freshman year, I walked into my English class and sat down. A few minutes after the bell rang, a kid I had never seen before walked in the door.

He had slicked back hair, a bottle of cologne poured on his back and a look of utter contempt on his face. I decided that I hated him.

I didn't know the guy, but based on the impressions I got from other people, I decided I would never get along with him.

I was being an idiot. If I were thinking, I would have talked to him and could form my own opinion. But I didn't.

And now the *Register* seems to be on the flip side of a similar situation.

Recently there has been a huge amount of debate about the purpose of a high school newspaper. Because of this, some people have made ill-informed decisions about the paper based on hearsay, politicking and limited information.

Just like me on my first day at Central, people started using the information available to them, however skewed it may have been, to form an opinion about the *Register*.

For instance, you might have heard of the *Register*. It (according to a few critics) is the paper that uses whatever means possible to make Central and its students look as criminal and negative as possible. It's the paper that never does any stories about things that actually affect Central students, opting instead to give pieces that, while sensationalistic, don't offer anyone anything useful or even slightly interesting.

And you may have heard of us, the staff that puts the paper out. We're the no-good, low-down, dirty, lying scoundrels that all stay at school until an ungodly hour to put out a paper that will have no bearing on your college careers, at the cost of your GPAs which are the difference between a life of poverty and owning a successful technology business.

Don't believe any of it. The *Register* is unlike other high school newspapers in that it actually does journalism. We do not do fluff stories some people think we are obligated to simply because some people think we have to.

We conduct fair interviews and try to represent all sides of every story we report. If our readers are displeased with our actions, they are encouraged to write a letter to the editor, many of which are published.

People say that the staff only writes stories for the sake of winning awards.

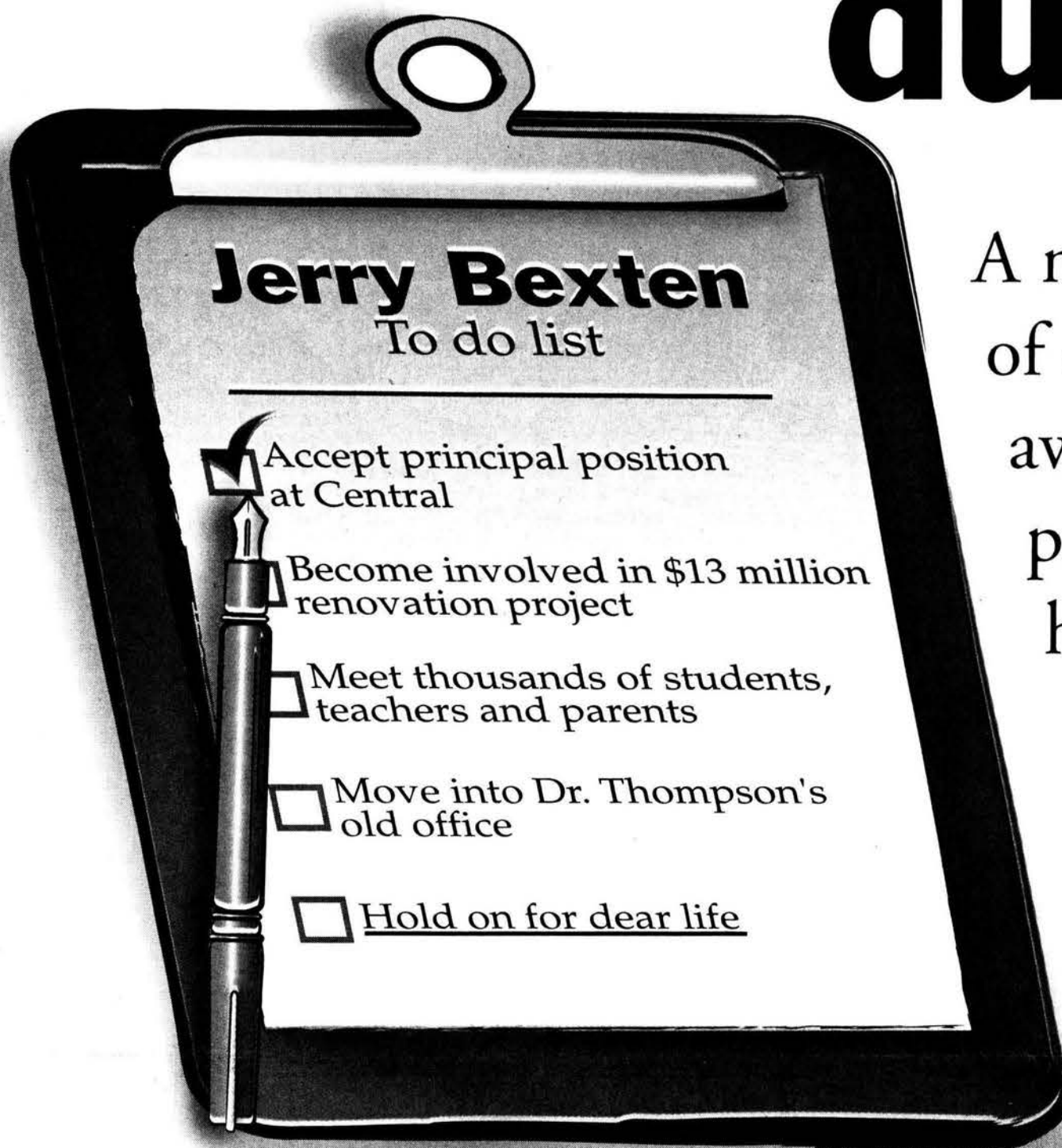
I choose to take that as a compliment. If someone honestly believes that every story we write is worthy of an award, then we must be doing a pretty good job.

The truth is that, yeah, we will probably win a lot of awards. But not because we purposefully sensationalize stories or searched for only the most controversial topics.

It's because, as reporters, we do a pretty good job. We look for good stories that affect Central students and we find them. We talk to the key players, find others with some insight on the issue and get down to writing.

Perceptions shape most of our lives. I know this now much like I knew it when I first came to Central.

Perceptions are such a big deal, in fact, that we decided to do an entire issue on the subject. Perhaps if we all made a little bit more of an attempt to actually know something, be it a person or a newspaper, before we hate it, we'd all be a little better off.



Jerry Bexten To do list

- ☒ Accept principal position at Central
- ☒ Become involved in \$13 million renovation project
- ☐ Meet thousands of students, teachers and parents
- ☐ Move into Dr. Thompson's old office
- ☐ Hold on for dear life

A number
of challenges
await the new
principal when
he takes control
of the biggest
high school in
Nebraska next
school year

Graphic by LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER

Congratulations Jerry Bexten. The district just named you as the next principal at Central High School.

Now, here comes the tough part.

Here comes a student population that never seems to stop growing. Here comes a massive renovation project that will displace the growing student body from normal classroom space. Here comes the possibility of having to cap the school's enrollment.

And you have to deal with it.

But you're the best man for the job. Out of four very qualified finalists and many others who applied, the district picked you.

You're Central's next principal.

It's a prestigious position, being principal of the largest high school in the state. You're following in the footsteps of some great men: J. Arthur Nelson, Doc Moller and Dr. Thompson.

And just like Thompson, you will come from a junior high school with only 800 students.

Central High School is a little different. It's called I-Back High, the Pearl of OPS and everything in between. Oh yeah, did we say the incoming freshmen class is almost always bigger than

700?

But the job is doable. Look at Dr. Thompson. Only seven years ago, he was in the same position and he has done a fine job.

The fact that the district has announced that you will be the next principal this early is great.

Hopefully you will start to be introduced to the workings of Central before the end of the year.

Hopefully Dr. Thompson will give you some advice. He can tell you what it's like to run this school.

Hopefully you will be able to pick his brain for a while before you have to take on the responsibility yourself.

We're sure you have questions. Everyone else does. Please ask them now. Hopefully you will be able to meet with teachers and students. Maybe even parents. Hopefully you will discuss what you want Central to be while you are in charge. Hopefully they will tell you what they want Central to be while you are in charge.

Hopefully you will be brought in to discuss the renovation process next year. Hopefully you will be able to make some decisions about what you want to happen during your first year when the school will be torn to shreds and put back

together.

Maybe you might even have an answer for where to put those students who will be forced out of their classrooms by construction crews.

Thompson will always be remembered as the principal who made sure Central received air conditioning, but people will judge you based on the success of the renovation project when it is completed.

Doc Moller, who was inducted into the Central Hall of Fame this year, said that being a principal at Central while it is under construction is challenging.

But unlike Moller, you will be put in a tough spot early in your tenure. But you have what it takes. Maybe you will be inducted into the Central Hall of Fame someday, too. But the only thing that matters now is what is going to happen next year.

You will have a great set of assistants working to help you get through it. You will also have great teachers and students who will support you along the way.

So Mr. Bexten, polish your shoes and make sure your best suit is nicely pressed. You've got some work to do.

Good luck.

EDITORIAL

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The opinion of
the *Register* staff

Arbitrary credit requirements ignore student ambitions

I was not making the most out of my high school experience.

I was not taking it as seriously as I needed to.

Worst of all, I was misrepresenting Central.

My offense: I was only carrying four credits last semester.

I had committed a cardinal sin.

Once I was caught, I was called down to the counselors' office immediately. There, I was told Central is not a part-time school. I needed more classes.

So they added one to my schedule. That was enough, they said. Enough to make me a full-time student again.

Officials are playing a numbers game. They don't care what classes students take, as long as they take five. Even if you don't need the credits to graduate, it doesn't matter.

It's all about the numbers.



WELCOME TO THE
BAHAMAS

Joe Meyer

I understand what the school is trying to do. This policy tries to ensure that every student sits through enough classes every day.

But it doesn't make any sense in my case. I have enough credits to graduate already. The only credits I need are my English and History ones for this year.

I'm not being hypocritical or elitist, but the school should not require that I take another class during my last semester of high school.

It's all just a silly game that neglects the biggest part of education, the students.

Students are individuals and this game doesn't acknowledge that.

In my case, it was absolutely absurd to change my schedule. Trust me, when

I looked at the classes I wanted to take this year, I looked at everything. But when my only choices were classes like drama, art, enrichment math and some social studies classes, I didn't want to bother.

My plans after high school do not include art, drama or upper-level mathematics.

I have nothing against the classes I just mentioned. I'm sure they are very good and everything, but they just don't interest me.

Besides, I don't need another elective credit and I don't want to waste my time. I would rather focus on something else, like my future.

If the school is so concerned about my academic achievement, why am I being forced to attend another class when my other classes demand a lot of time now?

It just doesn't make sense. Public education is supposed to be

about the students.

But these days, it's just a numbers game. Each senior needs to be enrolled in at least five classes, no questions asked. I am on track to graduate with honors, but I still have to waste my time.

I thought freshmen and sophomores had to deal with this. If I only wanted to take four challenging classes, why should the school oppose?

These days, public education is a breeding ground for politicians who are ready to establish rules and regulations "for the better good of all students."

These days, I am forced to sit through classes I don't like because these politicians want to make sure I stay in class long enough each day.

These days, it's all about the numbers. Nothing else matters. If every student is in enough classes everyday, everything's just dandy.

These days, individual students don't matter. I should have known.

EDITORIALS

“Congress shall make no laws 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 people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

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



Dr. Gary Thompson
Principal
Matt Deabler
Adviser
Matt Wynn
Editor in chief
Joe Meyer
Insight editor

BAH HUMBUG

For years, the Unicameral has limited funding to OPS. Emergency financial aid is desperately needed to keep the district competitive.

For years, state politicians have passed law after law hindering the potency of education in urban school districts. For years, these measures have come back to hurt Omaha's public schools.

In Nebraska, that's no big deal to most people. There are only two major urban areas in the state—Lincoln and Omaha. And while the amount of money granted to the urban school districts goes down, other smaller towns gain money from the state.

Most Nebraskans are okay with that, but it doesn't make any sense at all.

How is it that the school districts that are responsible for teaching the most students are always left out in the cold when the state changes funding to public schools?

And even worse, when a bill comes up that would further limit funding for urban school districts, only a small group of senators from Omaha and Lincoln argue for the two largest school districts in the state. The others tend to be more than willing to vote in favor of further reducing funding to urban districts.

If you put all these factors together, it is easy to see that the odds are certainly not stacked in OPS' favor.

Bills like LB 1059, which limited the amount of financial growth a school district can have in a year, and LB 1114, which took 10 cents out of every dollar collected from property taxes away from school districts, greatly limited the amount of good a district can do.

Yet the Unicameral debated them, decided they were good moves to make and voted them into the books.

This has been taking place for years. Money is taken from OPS and allocated to funds that are deemed to be more deserving. But somewhere along the line, legislators forgot that OPS deserves an adequate amount of money, too.

But somehow, OPS still manages to survive.

Superintendent John MacKiel and the rest of the OPS

administrators have managed to get the job done with inadequate resources. And they've done a fine job of it, winning several accolades for efficiency along the way.

But a district running on a shoestring budget doesn't really have a choice. It either has to be efficient—very efficient—or fail. And at a certain point, failure is inevitable.

According to an OPS report, the district has lost at least \$24 million worth of state funding in only seven years. The average student, taxpayer or teacher would not notice it right away because of the districts' efficient qualities help it survive, even thrive, under the conditions the state has placed upon it.

This efficiency means that new textbooks cannot be purchased when teachers really need them. This efficiency means that teachers have to limit the amount of photocopies they make because of a lack of paper throughout the district.

And now, with the collection of student fees being postponed, the district is losing even more money.

The district employs a host of talented budgeters and other monetarily-inclined personnel. These people have done an incredible job. But at the rate things are going, the entire house of cards is about to come toppling down.

OPS is in a financial code red.

During the Unicameral's short session this year, it is imperative that the state takes steps to pull OPS out of this tight spot that previous legislation has forced it into.

This is not a time for promises and altercations to the way the state calculates how much aid a district should receive. Action needs to be taken and they need to be taken now.

Hopefully the Unicameral will realize the severity of the situation in Omaha, and take steps to right its previous wrongs.

If they don't, beware.

Despite the district's best intentions, the provisions placed by a very short-sighted Unicameral may have already done damage that can't be reversed.

EDITORIAL
.....
The opinion of
the Register

Cog introduced many to new forms of music

Obituaries were never meant for buildings. They were meant for living things, like people. Some extend them to dogs and cats, but never buildings.

But if something is loved, people want to write about it, and that's what obituaries are for.

If all it takes to get an obituary is a heart, then the Cog Factory deserves one, too. So, here it goes.

There was always something special about the Cog.

Maybe it was special because it was the only all-ages venue in Omaha. Maybe it was special because it was the third-oldest punk club in the country. Maybe it was special because it just was what it was—no pretty paint job, no stadium seating and no special effects.

Ten years ago, no one could have suspected the empty building at 22nd and Leavenworth would ever become a successful music venue.

But then slowly, things started to happen.

Someone found the back entrance through the alley and the Cog Factory was born.

Eventually things got better for the club. Rob Rathe

bought the building, started taking steps to legalize the shows he was holding.

Of course there were speed bumps along the way. Irrate neighbors called the police and jealous owners of other clubs tried to use political muscle to take it down. The Cog certainly went through its share of growing pains.

But once it got started, it couldn't be stopped.

Dozens of homegrown bands started out at the Cog Factory. The "tractor" punk genre was kicked off by the Tractor Trust on the club's stage. Other influential bands like Mousetrap, Fischer, Titano White and Plosion started the Cog Factory, too.

Turmoil, AFL, NOFX, Melvins, Man or Astroman, Witchery all played nearby shows there, too.

But now it's gone.

People can always try to build. Maybe they can start a new club that will be a new generation of Omaha punk rockers.

But the Cog Factory is dead. And it will always be remembered.

EDITORIAL
.....
The opinion of
the Register

A twist in renovation plans foreshadows huge problem

Bundle up and get ready for the wicked road ahead.

It seems just like yesterday when the renovation dilemma was solved. The school decided that portables would be the answer for next year's troubles.

But now, that has all changed. For some reason, the school doesn't know whether it will be able to use portables next year. In fact, the phasing plan for the project is still up in the air, too.

The school may have to resort back to what it did the last time the building was renovated.

Sections of classrooms may be emptied and classes might be held in odd parts of the building.

The courtyard, the gym, empty hallways, the auditorium. You name it and it might have to be used as a temporary classes during the project.

That's the worst case scenario, though. There is another plan the school may be able to

work out.

In a few months, construction will begin for the new gym and cafeteria additions. The work will not have an adverse effect on classroom activities.

Once the work is complete, the school may be able to move disrupted classrooms into the gym while working inside the building.

But nothing is decided at this point. And that's worrisome.

It looks like disaster waiting to happen. Hopefully school officials will step up to the challenge and come up with a practical solution.

Hopefully someone will have the answer that everyone is looking for.

Meanwhile, hold on to your seats and don't be afraid to get a little wet along the way. Just keep your eye on the final product which will look

EDITORIAL
.....
The opinion of
the Register

RENOVATION
2002



HEROES & ZEROS

- Gov. Mike Johanns

After some questions arose about the treatment at the Kearney juvenile detention center, the governor acted quickly and sternly. For years, juveniles at the center were allowed to conduct "slammings," or restrain other peers when they were out of control, but Johanns recently declared that the practice will be stopped. Allowing juveniles with criminal problems, some even with violent history, to legally restrain their peers increases the chance that the system will be abused. Although the center only reported a few injuries from these acts, threatening violence on troubled teenagers is asking for trouble. Good job Mike.

- Millard school district

After teachers complained about the policy, the Millard school district revoked its "family night" policy which prohibited teachers from testing students on Thursday to allow Wednesday night as a time for families to interact with one another. Don't let the name trick you. The policy was designed to allow students the opportunity to attend religious teachings and church groups on Wednesday. Also, because some of the Millard high schools have block scheduling, avoiding tests and Thursday was a lot tougher than it should have been. For example, if a class was only held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, then the teacher would not be able to test on Thursday, so the test would need to be postponed until the next week. Bravo to the administrators who decided to revoke the policy. Besides clearing up possible religious favoritism, the school district will no longer handcuff teachers concerning when they can test their students.

- The Nebraska Unicameral

In a recent turnaround, Roger Roll dropped his lawsuit against the school district. He said he has already made his point, to make people aware of school fees in public education. And now, some state senators are on the verge of introducing legislation that would clarify the issue. This legislation, which will probably outlaw required expenses like locker fees and lab fees, is a good sign that the problem is still being fixed while Roll dropped his lawsuit. Hopefully with this kind of leadership, the issue will be solved for good.

- Work keys testing

The Register has always opposed arbitrary testing of Central students. They waste valuable time and yield little, if any, results about student abilities. And the Work Keys tests that were administered to seniors this month are the same as the rest. As a follow up test to ones given during freshmen year, they were praised by teachers and administrators. But what were they really following up with? The answer: a further waste of time and a false standard officials will use to judge students.

- Sportsmanship at Central basketball games

In a pleasant surprise this season, both varsity basketball teams have shown great success on the court. The boys have been on a tear under new head coach Eric Behrens and both teams should be considered contenders for the state titles. But the same cannot be said about the fans, though. During the Westside victory, Central students and other supporters teased a male member of the opposing school's dance team. The taunting continued once Central increased its lead and victory was certain. This poor sportsmanship reflects badly on the school and does not complement the hard work and dedication exhibited by the athletes. Especially in high school athletics, this activity cannot be tolerated. Hopefully after Dr. Thompson's announcement condemning the activities, Central students will realize the impact poor sportsmanship has on the school's image. Otherwise, the entire student body and the entire school will suffer.

- Central's school schedule

Thanks to an OPS regulation that governs how schools can schedule the end of the semester, Central students experienced a dead week after winter break. Although the school administered finals before the break, the semester did not officially end until a week after it. The school should urge the district to reconsider the schedule to make sure the semester ends when students are finished taking finals.

Labeling cliques distracts from individuals

Are you in or are you out? Pretty loaded question, huh? I was driving the other day after school with a friend. My friend had been explaining her theory to me about how high school students were under the misguided that everyone around her was in sort of group. She also thought all these social groups were neatly aged and labeled. To her, there was no escaping the that cliques are everywhere. She thought that most everyone is a member of one of these groups. I have a somewhat more idealistic on life. I argued that it didn’t have that way. Predefined cliques are of bad movies with Freddie Jr. I argued that everyone

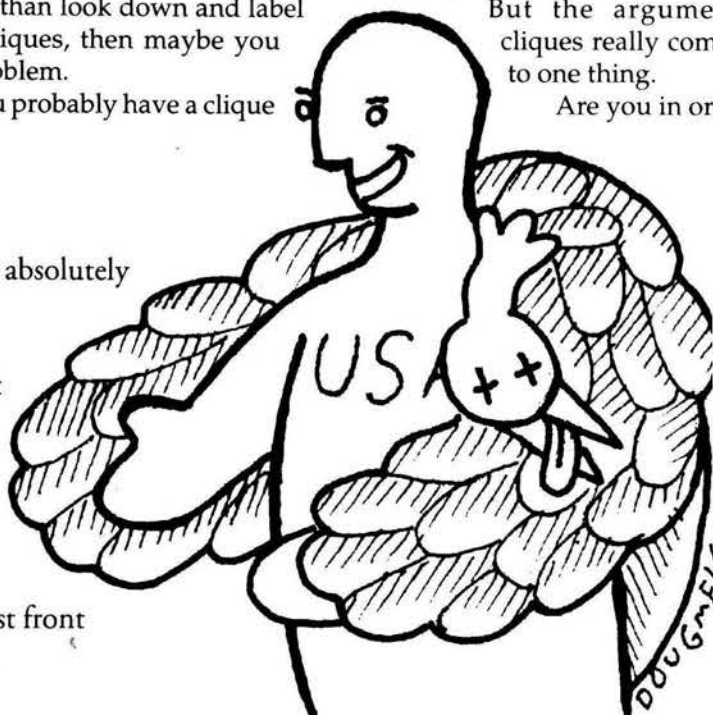


LONG STORY SHORT
Kaitlin Butz

should just come together, give peace a chance and all that nice, fuzzy stuff. What a load. I admit, there are a lot of cliques and social groups in high school. But I really wanted to win this argument nonetheless. My friend continued explaining her argument, saying that not only were there predestined groups, but they all have a specific label. There’s the cool group, the athletic group, the cool group that doesn’t want to admit its coolness group and so on and so forth. That was just the beginning, though. This stupid classification could go on forever, if you really feel the need to do so. Giving each group a label is taking it a bit too far for me, though. Section off groups if you will, but very few people deserve to be dumbled down to a single word or phrase. Most humans are too complex for

that. Someone may be a member of whatever group you want to say they are in, but is that person exactly like everyone else that they hang out with? Who cares if the people who hang out together have a similar style? Where do you get your style? Very few people can say they do not dress even a little bit like someone else they know. Oh, that girl and her friend have the exact same shirt. Is it really that big of a deal? Call them lemmings if you want, feel a little better about yourself and get over it. How much impact does it really have on your life? If you are going to go strictly by labels, an athlete is simply an athlete. Even if this athlete is in debate, A Cappella and a billion other extracurricular activities, he’s just an athlete; his friends are athletes. Case closed. If you have nothing better to do than look down and label people in cliques, then maybe you have the problem. And you probably have a clique

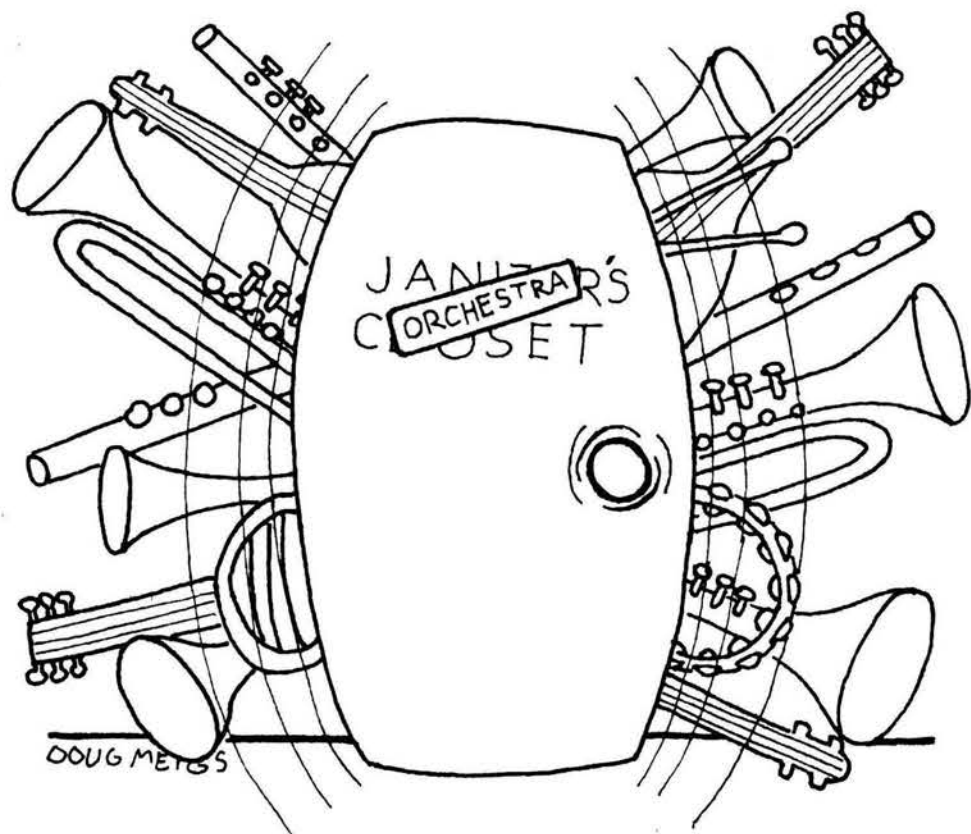
yourself, if you would just take a look around and realize it. I’m not trying to say that cliques are a magic cure-all. I think that a lot of people use them as crutches for their own lack of personality and backbone. But considering yourself better than someone because they have a specific group of friends is asinine. What my well-meaning yet cynical friend needs to realize is that in the grand scheme of things, none of this adds up to anything. Why bother to waste time analyzing any of this? I’m sort of mad at myself for wasting my time and energy thinking about this stupid topic. I could have done my homework, read a book or played a leisurely game of Ping-Pong. If you want to spend your time pondering it, go right ahead. But the argument over cliques really comes down to one thing. Are you in or out?



Top ten worst cliques to be involved in

1. The Babysitters Club. It’s a popular club among fifth grade girls.
2. Pokemon Look Alikes. Even if you like the cards and video games, there is absolutely no reason to dress like them.
3. **American Eagle Wearers(right). Not the brand, but the animal.**
4. Young Republicans Boxing Group. Are you angry that the government didn’t pass a big enough tax cut? Settle it in the ring.
5. Pog Preservation People.
6. The Burger Kings.
7. Future Enron Executives of America.
8. Engelbert Humperdink Groupies.
9. Mole People. Now you can be a member of the group that destroys the most front yards and golf greens in the world.
10. ‘N Sync Fan Fiction Extravaganza.

LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES AND CARTOONS



By Doug Meigs

the REGISTER

The Omaha Central High School Register seeks to inform readers accurately and fairly as to items of interest and importance. 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). Recently, the Register won a National Pacemaker from NSPA and a Cornhusker Award from NHSPA. This year, the Register has won two consecutive Best-of-Show competitions at JEA/NSPA’s national journalism conventions. Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Register staff and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the students of Central High School or its faculty. Signed editorials are the opinion of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Central High School or the Register staff. Readers are encouraged to send letters to the editor to room 315. Letters must include the author’s full name and grade. The use of pen names is not permitted. Unsigned letters are not printed. Letters may be edited for length, clarity, accuracy and taste. Letters containing substantial misrepresentation of fact are not considered. The Register (USPS 097-520) is published monthly during the school year by Central High School, 124 N. 20 St., Omaha, NE, 68102. Periodicals postage paid at Omaha, NE. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Register, 124 N. 20 St., Omaha, NE, 68102.

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mouse just runs under your leg or something. Do you get scared, frightened, or surprised? All three, if you really think about it. Ashley Pinkerton, 10

Paper tells real story of Central

I thought the newspaper pertaining to meth and the football player was one of the best papers ever. It showed the inside, real deal without the sugar coating. There was a lot of controversy over that issue, but what was the real reason? Do they want all the negative aspects of our society hidden or do they just feel that it’s not appropriate for school? Whatever the case may be, there is still freedom of speech. Of course there has to be a line drawn somewhere, but who judges where that is? I just think that if all the newspaper writes about is good things, than it’s basically just trying to appeal to the critics that want to stop what is really going on out there from being known. Auriel Blake, 10

the REGISTER Letters wanted

Letters to the editor can be dropped off in room 315 or the mailbox in the courtyard. All letters must be signed and include the author’s grade. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

What happened to being polite and courteous? I’m tired of hearing people shouting expletives rather than saying “Excuse me.” Rachel Lassek, 12

Rodents roam halls, restrooms

Some of my fellow students think that Central has a pest problem, including rats, mice and roaches. You can be in the middle of the courtyard and all of the sudden a big two-centimeter-long roach just pops out of no where. You could be in either the boys’ or girls’ restrooms and a

✓ REGISTER YOUR OPINION

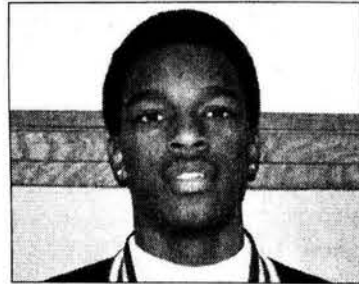
What should Jerry Bexten do now to prepare for when he moves in and becomes Central’s principal next year? Also, should he change anything when he actually assumes control?



“Do not change the rules around here much because everything goes all right.” Nikia Broadway, 10



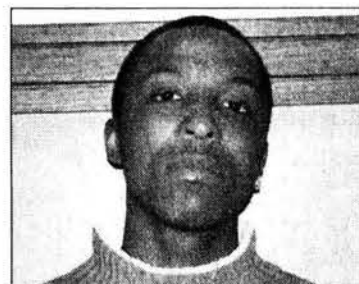
“Because he was a middle school principal, he needs to adjust to the high school. He needs to respect our independence and not treat us like middle school kids.” Kimberly Ghunn, 9



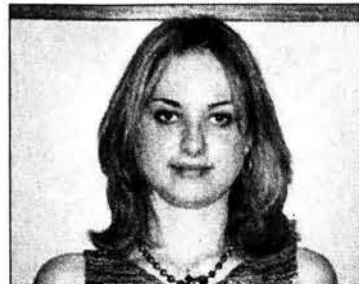
“It’s going to be kind of tough for him to fill Dr. Thompson’s shoes.” Drew Ford, 12



“He’ll face a wider variety of students than (he did) in middle school.” Kenneth Newman, 12



“I think he is going to face a lot of problems he didn’t face at his old school. He should change the dress code.” Randy Cobb, 11



“He was my junior high principal. Central will be too big for him.” Danielle Knutson, 9



“The drama department needs better funding.” Lacy Bledsoe, 12



“If he comes here and changes things, that’s going to create more ruckus. Just take it day by day.” Kendell Dorsey, 10

awn & artered

the district not approve central’s request portables, the pool will have hold classes where and ywhere that ailable while renovation ect is being mpleted next bol year.

est issue disappoints reader received the newest edition of the ol paper, the Register, and was disinted that there was only 12 pages pared to the usual 40 pages. think the regular 40-page Register a lot more informative and interg. The new 12-page Register is a lot nformative and interesting. believe that the old Register was ride of the school. It was the only winning awards for the school es women’s basketball and volley-

m truly saddened and disap- ed by the new 12-page paper. Amanda Lonergan, 10

deness hurts diverse school

Central is a very diverse school and glad for that. There are all kinds people from all different places that one could get to know. The word ould.” Many of the students are so rude nobody would stop and take the to get to know someone new. Kids ou in the hall and down the s. They only care about themselves.



DIMESTORE HOOD
Chris Aponick

Unicameral steals from education

In a state filled with miserly farmers and wrinkly-old-elderly women, K-12 education always has to dig between couch cushions for spare change.

In years past, public education has been saddled with budget shortages and has always had trouble trying to pass bonds to help build new schools or buy updated materials.

This year, the Unicameral and Gov. Mike Johanns have threatened public education with cuts several times because of a budget deficit.

The reason for the deficit can be traced back to a fiscally conservative governor who refuses to raise any taxes. Public education has to take the brunt of a financial crisis because it has the least ability to defend itself.

The first round of cut proposals focused on the University of Nebraska system, which was good because elementary and secondary education systems in this state are still dealing with teacher shortages and numerous other inadequacies.

But now, the dimestore hayseeds in the Legislature's Appropriations Committee just released a new proposal that would funnel \$27 million from state education grants into the state's projected shortfalls during the next two fiscal years.

These grants were developed in 1993 when voters established the state lottery. The general concept was to exploit the stupidity of gambling and fund certain cash-strapped programs while developing new ones. If someone throws away their life savings playing scratch games, then at least they can help buy school lunches.

One of the worst cuts is planned to strip away \$3.3 million in funding for special education. The next step is for the state to just cancel special education programs and institute a program where handicapped babies are thrown into an incinerator.

Still, the state says it could have done worse to special education, but they took \$4 million from the state's teacher loan-forgiveness program to cover some of the potential gap. So even if the state gives special education the money for adequate supplies, there won't be any teachers for the classes because teachers will leave to make a livable wage in careers like meat-packing or cab driving.

The state explains away its proposed cuts in special education by crossing its fingers and hoping the federal government will pick up the tab.

Other programs targeted for cuts include school lunches and incentives for school consolidation.

It is okay to cut school lunches because it isn't necessary for a kid to eat at least once a day.

In other words, the older, conservative element in Nebraska would burn down their million-dollar town homes before they would help a child eat a decent meal.

So while old widows receive bloated state-aid checks, they should feel glad that they are living comfortably in their old age.

They should know that their comfort is at the expense of the future, which has been carelessly tucked away underneath couch cushions.

JUSTICE IS BLIND ...unless you're underage

He asked for it.
On June 1, a 16-year-old allegedly drank alcohol in Omaha. He then got into his car and attempted to drive home.
Along the way, he allegedly hit Daniel Callahan and his two-year-old daughter.

Callahan died almost instantly. His daughter survived with only minor cuts and bruises.

By drinking alcohol, the 16-year-old gave up his rights as a juvenile on the day he allegedly killed Daniel Callahan. And he should be punished like it.

However, the boy's lawyers are trying to convince the court that he is a child and get his case heard in juvenile court.

By drinking, he asked to be tried as an adult.
To move an act that may have caused a man's death down to juvenile court is an insult to the victim's family and an insult to the courts.

Drinking alcohol is a right reserved for people 21 years old and over. By drinking alcohol, this minor implicitly agreed to take on responsibilities reserved for adults.

He gave up his rights as a juvenile. He gave up his right to be tried in a separate court reserved for those under 18—those not legally allowed to drink alcohol.

By his own choice, this minor became an honorary adult. He thought he was knowledgeable in the ways of adult life, adult responsibilities and adult consequences.

The courts would be guilty of a serious oversight if it allowed this minor's case to be tried in juvenile court.

The criminal is rapidly approaching his seventeenth birthday. If he is convicted as a juvenile, then he will only be able to be held accountable for a little over a year.

Causing a man's death should require more than one year of punishment.

Moving the case to juvenile court would also set a dangerous precedent. If a teenager can get away with juvenile punishments for knowledgeably drinking, driving and killing a man once, what will that mean to future drunk drivers?

Teens should be held responsible for their actions in all cases. Many people believe that.

And if the past year has been any indication, so does the state of Nebraska.

A few years ago the Unicameral made a landmark decision to broaden the definition of probable cause for officers investigating Minor In Possession offenses.

This legislation made it possible for officers to administer blood-alcohol tests to anyone who is even in a building with alcohol in it.

This bill, and several others like it, makes it pointedly obvious that the state of Nebraska is interested in holding minors accountable for their actions.

The court should uphold what the citizens and the state believe to be justice.

If the minor currently on trial is allowed to use the pathetic excuse of his age to get away with what is essentially manslaughter, that will set the state's definition of "responsibility" back decades. It will also send the message that no matter what legislation is passed in Lincoln, Omaha will still tolerate the abuse of alcohol.

The Douglas County Courts face a unanimous decision.

If they allow this young man to move his case down to juvenile court, then they will have helped one young man stay out of prison. Some would probably even argue that the trial would be enough to scare him away from drinking and driving ever again.

That decision would be a cop-out.

A man is dead because a minor allegedly felt

the need to break the law. That man will never be okay. He is dead as a result of a minor's actions.

If the case is moved down to juvenile court, the justice system will have caused even more pain to a family that has already endured enough. Callahan's family, his wife and now 3-year-old daughter, deserve some sort of closure for his death.

If the young man is found guilty and given the slap-on-the-wrist justice typical of the juvenile system, the court will have helped one young man get away with murder.

The law is an unsympathetic set of documents; it is not concerned with the emotional aspects of justice. It is hoped the judges will stay true to the law

and not let their opinions be colored by sympathy for the defendant when they make their final decision.

The minor in question is convicted of a crime that can only be committed by an adult: drinking and driving. And he should be punished like it.

EDITORIAL
.....
The opinion of
the Register staff



Graphic by LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER

Biracial children experience the best of both worlds, race

I am a biracial young woman.

No, I am a very proud biracial young woman.

I am mentioning this because I recently got into an argument with a young black man about the way I identify myself as a biracial young woman.

He was convinced that I was wrong for identifying myself this way.

The sad thing is that he is not the first person who I have confronted with this narrow viewpoint. Either at school or outside of it, I always encounter people who disagree with how I identify myself.

Everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, but I think it's wrong to form an opinion about something you know



THROUGH MY EYES
Dominique Brown

him and start laughing hysterically.

Is there really a problem? My mother is white and my father is black. I call myself biracial because I am just that.

I am not black. I am not white. I am both.

I am not ashamed of this. I am ashamed of ignorant people who feel it is their duty to tell me I am wrong.

Growing up, I had a hard time trying to fit in.

In elementary school, I was two dif-

ferent people. I tried to be one person

when I was with the white kids and I tried to be another with the black kids. I continued to do that until I came to Central.

Now, black people tell me that I am ashamed of being black? A white person has never had a problem with this. Why should anyone have a problem with it?

It's my life and my identity. Biracial children are everywhere and are being born everyday.

We have our own race. We should not be made to choose. I won't.

Some people think everyone is biracial because we are all a mix of descendants. That is true, but most people don't have two parents with different races.

That's what is different about me and other children who are born into interracial families.

We are supposed to choose between being one race or the other. Some people go so far as to tell me which one I am. They tear you in two.

Whenever I fill out a form that has boxes for race, I have always marked the white and black. I've done that for years. I refuse to check "other" because I am not an alien from Jupiter.

I deserve to be able to have myself recognized just like everybody else.

I am not ashamed to say I am white and I am not ashamed to say I am black.

It would be wrong for me to identify myself only one or the other because I am both of them.

I am very proud of what I am. I am a biracial young woman. No one is going to tell me I am wrong or what I should choose. It's my life.



SCHULTE AT LARGE
Staff writer enters the
ring, becomes a cham-
pion for a day (or not).
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SPORTS

ATHLETICS & PROFILES



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The Central High Register
January 31, 2002

Horne's Husker

By Chris Aponick

Senior David Horne will play college football less than 60 days from Central.

During a press conference on Jan. 23, Horne officially announced his decision to attend the University of Nebraska next fall.

He had to make a decision between Nebraska, Michigan, and Colorado.

"It was a tough decision," he said. "I'm glad it's over with."

Horne's mother, Pam, shares relief.

The amount of phone calls and attention Horne received overwhelmed her, she said.

"Our phones were blowing," she said. "But we adjusted."

Horne announced his decision after calling Michigan coaches to let them know his choice.

However, Nebraska had to wait for his official announcement to find out if he was going to become a Husker.

Horne said he paced out his decision and tried to take it day-by-day.

Michigan and Nebraska were the final two choices. He made his choice after visiting both of the schools.

His mother said she wanted him to go to Nebraska because it would be right down the road from the family. Still, she left the decision up to him.

While at a high school All-Star game over winter break, Horne started to lean more towards Nebraska.

After talking to teammates, he found out that many were staying close to home.

He also considered how much playing time he would have at the school.

The opportunity to play was the greatest at Nebraska. Central coach Joe McMenamin said Nebraska told Horne he was its top recruit this year.

Once they get Horne to commit, they said they're done," he said.

The coaches told him he could earn playing time at running back as early as 2003.

It's wide open after this next year," he said.

Pam said Nebraska head coach Frank Solich impressed her with his honesty.

"He didn't promise us any big teams," she said.

While visiting with Nebraska coaches, Horne said they really pushed him to come there.

The way they treated him played his choice.

Many of the current Huskers talked to him, including several Central graduates like Lornell McPherson and DeAntae Grixby.

However, Michigan has its own Central connection.

Brandon Williams, who graduated in 1999, starts in the Wolverines' secondary.

Horne said he had to also look at the atmosphere of where he could play. Ann Arbor is bigger than Lincoln and Michigan Stadium is bigger than Memorial Stadium. He also had to decide if he wanted to play in the Big Ten or the Big Twelve.

McMenamin said Horne is a great player and has used the rewards he's won to help improve his game.

He is a two-time All-State running back and was selected as a second team All-American by USA Today.

Omaha's newest game

A school-based local hockey league is bringing more attention to the growing sport



Illustration by LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER

By Chris Aponick

Junior Neal Bierman is part of a hockey team consisting of players from Central and North.

He is part of a new high school hockey league in Omaha.

This year the Omaha Metropolitan Amateur Hockey Association (OMAHA) decided to offer a high school league, league president Pat Meschede said.

Bierman was contacted by a coach and decided to play for to start playing again.

In past years the league had a 15-19 year-old league. But they decided to change it. Instead of dividing into teams after skills testing, the league's teams are being decided by where the players go to school, Meschede said.

Bierman said he likes the idea of being able to play with players from his school.

He said playing for his own school

is a big part of what house hockey is all about.

"House league is about having fun and this has added to it," Bierman said.

He is on a combined team with North players to form the City team.

The OMAHA house league has City, Suburban, Creighton Prep, West Omaha, Millard and Westside teams.

Meschede said he hopes the current set-up will stick around for good.

In the late 1970s, Omaha had high school affiliated teams.

However, the league eventually dissolved. Many people in the organization suggested going back to this format, he said.

One parent came forward and said he wanted to have the teams connected to the schools again.

He contacted players and coaches to have the league and volunteered to be the head of the league.

"It was nowhere near as big as it is

now," he said.

John Thomas agreed to coach for the City team because his son goes to North.

He has coached for 12 years. He said the league has helped develop competition and allegiance to the team.

"It has attracted better skaters and stronger teams," Thomas said. "The competition and coaches are better in the house league this year."

Bierman said the games have been attracting more fans now than in years past.

Meschede said that attendance has increased since the league was formed. The top two teams, City and Prep, attract the largest crowds when they play.

He said the fans are more likely to come to games with the new set up. The players have stepped up their play in response to the fans.

"It has given the kids something to

play for," he said. "The emphasis had always been on the select travel program, but this has given the house league a boost."

The league has also attracted players back into the game, he said. They want to play for their school.

"They used to get no recognition within their schools," Meschede said.

It has kept kids playing longer. In high school, they have a lot of other options and they stop playing hockey.

OMAHA had approximately 30 players who had quit playing that the new house league brought back.

Thomas said he is confident that the league will continue to expand.

The level of quality is better than it has ever been in the new high school house league, he said. The games are played every Wednesday and Thursday night at 8:30 at the Moylan-Tranquility Iceplex. City plays on Feb. 6, 13, 14, 20, 21 to finish the season.

Kimmons wins back starting spot with solid bench play

By Troy Schulte

One of the most prolific scorers on one of the state's most prolific scoring teams, ironically enough, couldn't be found in the starting lineup until the team's eighth game of the season.

Senior forward Javelle Kimmons had never started a game for the boys basketball team until this season. But when opposing players and coaches scout the Eagles, they focus on him.

Kimmons started the opening game of the season, but then was benched for the size of freshman Nate Prater by head coach Eric Behrens.

"We needed some bigger guys," Behrens said. "We just put Prater in there so we could have a bigger body in there."

During those seven games Kimmons, the senior who has played four seasons on the varsity level, but had never started a game, didn't get discouraged.

He just became the leading scorer coming off the bench.

Through those seven wins, he led the team in 3-point shooting (.546). Three of these seven wins came in the Metro Holiday tournament, in which the Eagles captured the tournament championship for the second time in school history.

Kimmons was named to the All-Tournament team and was one of the key components in the championship game against Creighton Prep on New Year's Eve.

But at the opening tip-off Kimmons found himself on the bench for the seventh straight game. About halfway through the first quarter, Kimmons entered the game and only missed two shots the entire game.

Kimmons only took seven shots from the field, but made five of them, all of which came from behind the 3-point line. He finished with 15 points, which was coincidentally the final spread in the Eagles' 71-56 win over the Bluejays.

"It was huge," Behrens said about Kimmons' performance in that game. "To have one guy hit five threes in one game is very rare."

At the time the Eagles had won seven consecutive games and were one of the hottest teams in the state. But

despite that, Behrens decided to once again shuffle the lineup and Kimmons was in the starting lineup for their rematch against Prep on Jan. 4.

"He had been working hard in practice and shooting the ball well so we put him back in," he said.

Kimmons' success this season from beyond the 3-point line is little surprising to him. He said it's not something he ever spent a lot of time on. But Behrens said his shooting was one of the key components to the Eagle's nine game winning streak.

"We have guys like Cortney (Grixby) and Kris Kuhn and Mark (LeFlore) who like to drive the ball," Behrens said. "And to have a guy who can shoot from the outside, the defense has to adjust and spread out, which also opens up the inside game."

All the success Kimmons has enjoyed this season is just what he needed after seeing limited playing time in his first three seasons.

At the beginning of his sophomore season in 1999, Kimmons' playing time began to gradually increase. And he just assumed the trend would continue heading into his junior year.

But prior to the season's opening game Kimmons was suspended for the first four games of the season, a decision which virtually wasted his entire junior season.

"That (suspension) really put him in a whole," Behrens said. "It basically wiped out his whole junior year."

Kimmons was devastated by the suspension, but he wasn't going to give up. He continued to go to practice and did whatever the coaching staff asked him to do.

"He (Rick Behrens) told me to just come to practice, work hard and be ready to play again once my suspension was over," he said.

Once he was reinstated to the team, Kimmons vowed to never again make that mistake and concentrate solely on basketball. Starting in preseason practice this season, Kimmons started working on his 3-point shooting.

When Kimmons first started his career at Central, he figured by the time his senior year was over, some college basketball teams would show interest. He has received some consideration from junior colleges, but no

big-name schools yet.

So prior to his senior season Kimmons decided to focus on wins rather than impressing college scouts. All Kimmons concentrates on now is helping the Eagles win their first state championship in two and a half decades.

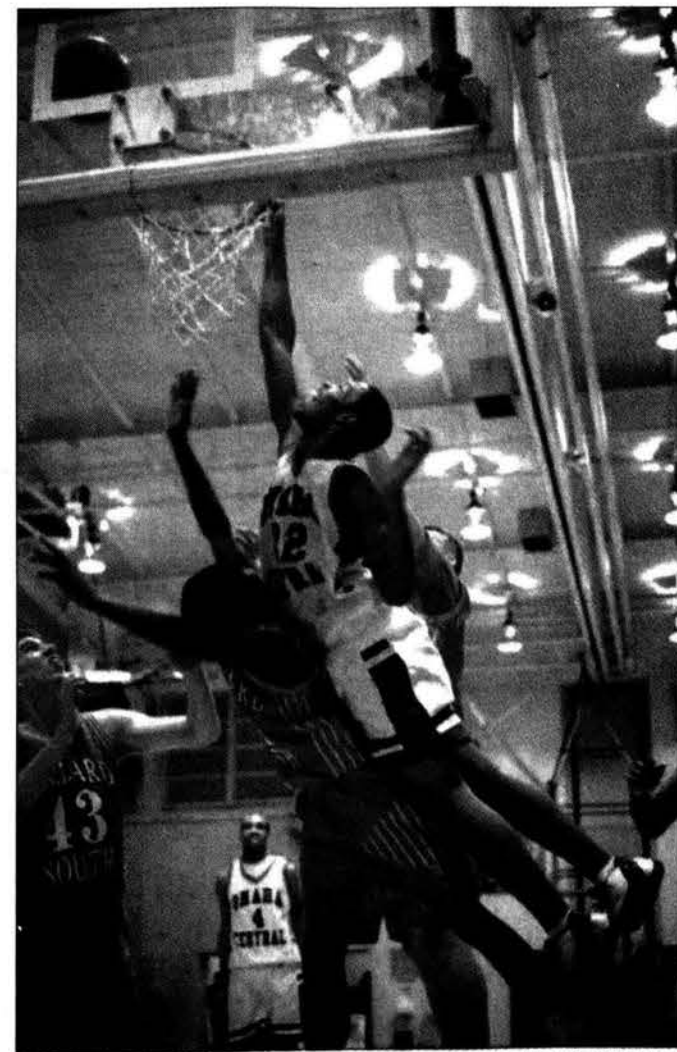


Photo by MEREDITH GRUNKE/THE REGISTER

Senior forward Javelle Kimmons puts up a shot during the Millard South game Jan. 18. The Eagles won the game 78-42.

EAGLE REWIND

A look back at the past month in Central sports

The past month has been very successful for Eagle sports.

Several teams have found themselves in the throes of being major contenders for state titles, most notably the boys and girls basketball teams.

Big scorers like senior Kris Kuhn and sophomore Crystal Howard have added a whole new depth to their teams, racking up points that have led to wins.

The varsity wrestling team competed in the Metro Tournament, where sophomore Devlon Webb captured the conference championship in the 112-pound weight division.

Several swimmers have qualified for state, including freshman Brittany McClure and senior Luke Kielion.

Both individually and as teams, Central athletes have a great chance at being dominant forces in state tournaments this year.

All scores as of January 25

Boys Basketball			
12/27 Reserve	WIN	Ralston	55-47
12/27 Freshman B	WIN	Burke	52-37
12/28 Varsity	WIN	Millard South	48-47
12/28 Junior Varsity	WIN	Westside	59-55
12/28 Reserve	WIN	Bell, West	53-47
12/28 Freshman A	WIN	Bryan	55-51
12/28 Freshman B	WIN	Bryan	47-13
12/29 Varsity	WIN	Burke	60-40
12/29 Junior Varsity	LOSS	North	50-58
12/29 Reserve	WIN	Bryan	48-46
12/29 Freshman A	WIN	Benson	49-38
12/29 Freshman B	WIN	Benson	65-51
12/31 Varsity	WIN	Prep	71-56
12/31 Freshman A	LOSS	Northwest	49-62
1/04 Varsity	WIN	Prep	65-60
1/04 Junior Varsity	LOSS	Prep	63-67
1/07 Freshman A	WIN	Millard West	65-55
1/07 Freshman B	LOSS	Millard West	40-60
1/08 Junior Varsity	LOSS	Westside	56-63
1/08 Reserve	WIN	Westside	49-47
1/10 Varsity	WIN	Westside	70-61
1/11 Varsity	LOSS	Papillion	60-62
1/11 Freshman A	LOSS	North	50-64
1/11 Freshman B	WIN	North	54-44
1/12 Junior Varsity	WIN	Papillion	71-52
1/12 Reserve	WIN	Papillion	53-51
1/14 Reserve	WIN	Millard South	48-46
1/17 Junior Varsity	WIN	Millard South	68-43
1/18 Varsity	WIN	Millard South	78-42
1/22 Freshman B	LOSS	Gross	37-51
1/24 Freshman	WIN	Bryan	33-21
Girls Basketball			
12/18 Varsity	LOSS	Bell, East	30-51
12/20 Reserve	LOSS	Bell, East	25-35
12/21 Reserve	WIN	South	48-43
12/27 Junior Varsity	WIN	Benson	43-37
12/28 Varsity	WIN	Marian	62-49
12/28 Junior Varsity	WIN	North	55-28
12/29 Varsity	LOSS	Bell, East	40-41
12/29 Freshman A	WIN	North	36-12
12/29 Freshman B	LOSS	Burke	18-22
12/29 Freshman A	WIN	South	37-17
12/29 Freshman B	WIN	Marian	30-22
12/31 Freshman A	LOSS	Burke	19-38
12/31 Freshman B	WIN	North	24-21
1/05 Varsity	LOSS	Marian	73-76
1/05 Junior Varsity	LOSS	Marian	47-50
1/05 Reserve	LOSS	Papillion	25-27
1/07 Freshman A	LOSS	Millard West	25-45
1/07 Freshman B	WIN	Millard West	32-16
1/09 Junior Varsity	WIN	Westside	54-35
1/09 Reserve	WIN	Duchesne	48-31
1/10 Varsity	LOSS	Westside	54-63
1/11 Varsity	WIN	Papillion	58-52
1/11 Freshman A	WIN	North	52-26
1/12 Junior Varsity	WIN	Papillion	43-26
1/12 Reserve	LOSS	Marian	40-36
1/17 Junior Varsity	WIN	Millard South	42-25
1/18 Varsity	WIN	Millard South	51-31
1/18 Freshman A	WIN	Millard North	38-26
1/18 Freshman B	WIN	Millard North	28-10
1/23 Junior Varsity	WIN	Northwest	64-19
Wrestling			
Junior Varsity 12/20			
103- Cavin Cooper	FIRST		
103- Rico Devers	SECOND		
112- Blake Marcum	THIRD		
119- Blake Gayer	SECOND		
130- Aristotile Shropshire	FIRST		
135- Lorenzo Bush	SECOND		
215- Marchelo Moderow	FIRST		
275- Matt Storm	THIRD		
Swimming			
1/15 Boys	WIN	Bryan	119-43
1/15 Girls	WIN	Bryan	104-11



Photo by EMILY NEUMANN/THE REGISTER

Freshman Brittany McClure practices her breathing at Norris Middle School. McClure, who specializes in the 100-meter breaststroke, learned much of what she knows about the sport from her sister, Marisa, who graduated last year.

A champion in the making

By Chris Aponick

Freshman Brittany McClure had been used to competitive swimming by watching her sister, Marisa.

Now, she's in high school and she is the one in the pool. She's the one the family is coming to see.

"It's weird," she said. "I used to be watching her, but now I'm doing it."

She is already making an impact on the team despite her inexperience in the pool. Her main event is the 100-meter breaststroke, which is the same event her sister excelled in. And like her sister, she has qualified for state. Her best time of 1:14.52 has automatically put her into the field for the tournament.

She earned one of the final berths for the breaststroke.

Though she has had good times as of late, McClure said she was not getting the times she wanted at the beginning of the season.

"At the first meets she was nervous," Braddock said. "At Millard North, she swam a 1:16 though, which was her best time (until the midpoint of the season)."

McClure said her recent improvement was the reason she qualified for the state tournament and will help her in her quest for a state medal.

"Eventually, it will all come together," she said. "I just have to work on my strokes."

Braddock said she is improving and stands a good chance of placing at state during the next four years.

"I hope she will eventually place in the top six like her sister," she said.

Her success started simply when Marisa began preparing to swim in high school. She first learned the sport by tagging along when her sister would swim over the summer.

"My mom told me to go with her

during the day," McClure said.

She has gone to watch her sister at several meets, including the state tournament during the last two years. Watching her sister and many other state champion swimmers has let her see how to develop a winning form.

However, in just a half a year of swimming at the high school level, her coaches are already helping her to change how she swims. They have advised her on how to improve her stroke.

"My stroke is changing," she said. "I'm going forward more."

McClure changed her stroke over the summer. Braddock has worked with McClure's personal coach to help develop it. She does a lot of drills to work on the stroke during practices, Braddock said.

Since qualifying for state, McClure said she has been able to change her focus and try to get in shape for the state

meet. She is still swimming just as hard at practice, but she will relax after the Metros.






McClure said she has tried to make the most of her season, especially since she thought she might not even make the team. Because the team did not have an assistant coach at the beginning of the season, McClure thought Braddock would not be able to have her competition this year.

"I was a little nervous," she said. "But I never really thought that an assistant wouldn't be found."

Once an assistant was found, McClure was able to swim and has made the most of her opportunity.

McClure said she does not think she is doing anything different than her sister and Braddock said she does not compare the McClures.

"They swim the same (event), but their strokes are different," she said.

SCORECARD	REGISTER PICKS	The sports staff calls 'em like they see 'em	Super Bowl Champions	Super Bowl MVP	Girls Basketball Record	Boys Basketball Record
		Chris Aponick Sports Editor	New England Patriots	Tom Brady, Patriots	 13-8	 19-3
		Troy Schulte Assistant Sports Editor	St. Louis Rams	Kurt Warner, Rams	15-6	18-4
		Jon Lathan Assistant Sports Editor	St. Louis Rams	Marshall Faulk, Rams	14-7	17-5

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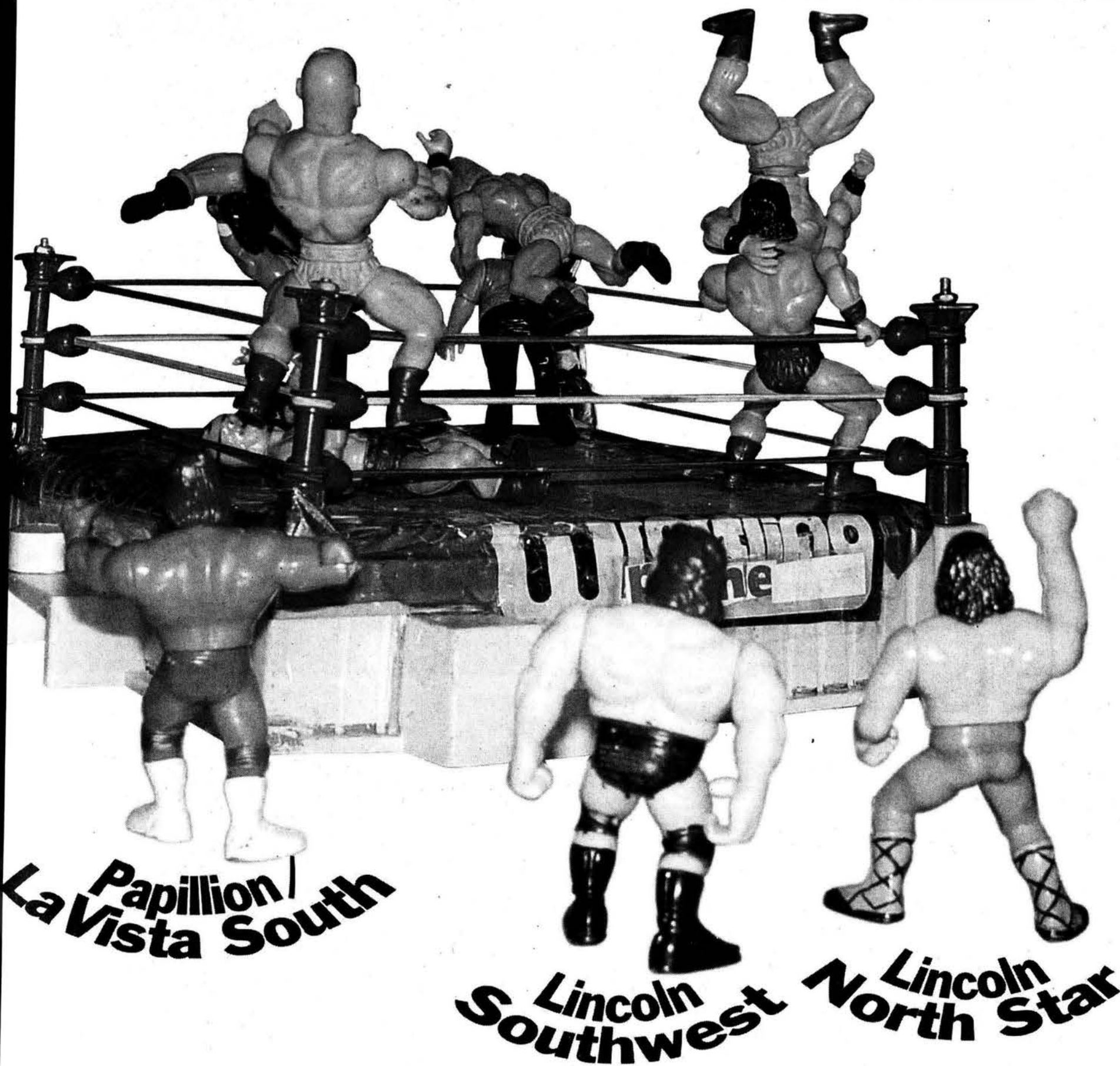


Illustration by PAULA SALHANY/THE REGISTER

Entering the Battle

Over the next two years, Lincoln and Papillion/LaVista will add three new schools to play Class A sports. These additions could have adverse effects on competition.

By Chris Aponick

By 2003, Central will have to compete against three new Class A rivals.

The addition of Lincoln Southwest next year and Lincoln North Star and Papillion/La Vista South in the fall of 2003 will create over 50 new varsity sports teams.

Central's athletic director Paul Pennington said these additional schools will have an adverse effect on its neighboring schools.

He said schools like Lincoln Southwest could lose several players to the new schools. However whether a school's team would experience a drop off in success is unpredictable.

"You never know what kids will go," he said.

Several Central athletes are looking forward to the opening of the new schools. Sophomore John Friend said the new schools will help make competition

better. Having the powerful schools lose some of their talent will help improve the opportunities for some OPS schools like Central, North and South. This new formation of talent will help them keep up with other schools.

In volleyball, Papillion's split could help out several other teams, sophomore Holly Lehmer said. Since they are always competitive in volleyball and have recently been ranked nationally, it will improve Central's chances to win a state title of its own.

"It will be good because all their good players will not be at one school anymore," she said.

Assistant NSAA director Jim Angele said the success of the old schools depends on whether players want to stay with the established programs.

The schools with strong athletic traditions probably will not see as many students leaving for the new teams, Angele

said.

"The overall assumption is that there will be a drop-off," he said. "It is more than likely that it will spread out talent."

The last new school to join Class A was Millard West. It drew students from both Millard North and Millard South, but only Millard South saw a noticeable drop off. West started off its first football season 0-9, but won the state title last season. The school is also very competitive in wrestling and other sports.

"It's interesting to see how long it takes for a new high school to become competitive," Angele said. "You can't look into a crystal ball; it's anybody's guess."

While several teams may lose some players to new schools, Lincoln Public Schools' athletic director Karen Hand said the expansion is going to be very positive for the students.

It gives additional kids the opportunity

to be on varsity teams, she said.

The increased opportunity to play a sport is also a good learning experience, Angele said.

Hand said the addition of Lincoln North Star and Lincoln Southwest will help correct an imbalance the district had and give every student a fair chance to participate.

The two new Lincoln schools will also lower enrollments across the district.

Instead of having around 2000 students per school, Southwest is only projected to have 900 in its freshman through sophomore classes while North Star will only have around 850.

Lincoln's goal is to have no more than 1500 students at every high school.

"Two thousand students is too much," Hand said. "You lose a lot of kids through the cracks."

Five Eagles plan to sign national letters of intent

By Troy Schulte

Each year, the first Wednesday in February is the day high school football players from across the country decide where they are going to play college football.

This year, seniors can officially sign national letters of intent starting Feb. 6. Signing a letter of intent officially makes them a part of that team for the 2002 season.

As many as five Central football players are expected to sign national letters of intent to various schools around the country this year.

The two most notable of the group are both two time All-State selections, running back David Horne and wide receiver Mark LeFlores.

Both players have received much attention from some of the most renowned college football programs in the country and they have both verbally committed to sign with Nebraska.

Teammates Keenan Ford, Calvin Sherrod and Jamar Dorsey, who was also a first team All-State selection in 2001, won't join them in the Division I-A ranks, but are expected to sign with schools in lower divisions.

Both Sherrod and Dorsey visited the campus of Division I-AA Grambling Jan. 11-13 and were both very impressed with what they saw.

In fact, Dorsey was so impressed that he called head coach Doug Williams the day after he arrived home to give the Tigers his verbal commitment.

Prior to his visit Dorsey had narrowed his choices down to four schools: Grambling, South Dakota, UNO and UNK.

He said his trip to the campus was one of the biggest factors in making his decision.

"I have been impressed with them the whole time," he said. "They offered me a full ride, you have the tradition, you just can't beat that."

Although Dorsey played offense and defense for most of his career at Central, that will change at Grambling. He said his days of playing ironman football are over and he'll be strictly play offense at Grambling.

"He (Williams) thought I would be a better fit on offense. And I do too, I'm an offensive man," he said.

Though Dorsey has already made his final decision on where he will play football, Sherrod said he still has some thinking to do.

He was impressed by the coaches and the facilities, but still had to look at other schools and talk to other coaches.

Sherrod said, as of right now, Grambling would have to be his top choice, but wants to wait and see how the other programs compare to the Tigers.

"UNO would be nice because it's close to home, but they are a D-II school, so they will offer me as much as they can. And Northern Iowa offered me a full ride, but I might just cancel the trip there. I'm not too interested in them," he said.

One of the biggest reasons Sherrod is leaning towards Grambling is Dorsey's commitment.

It would be a lot easier to adjust to college football if he was there with someone he has known since freshman year of high school.

"I played with him for three years so that would definitely be a plus," he said.

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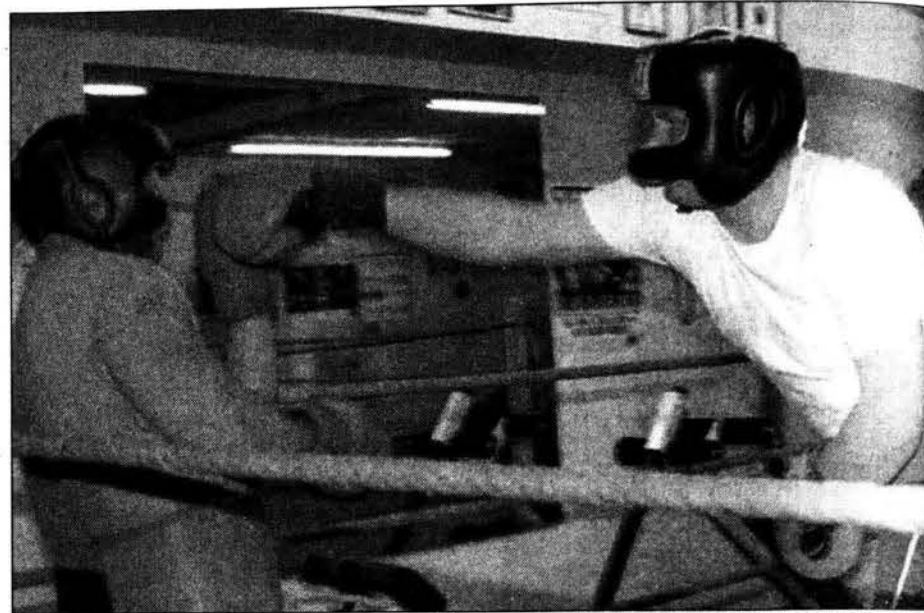
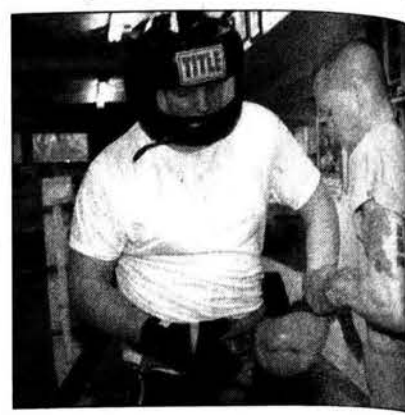
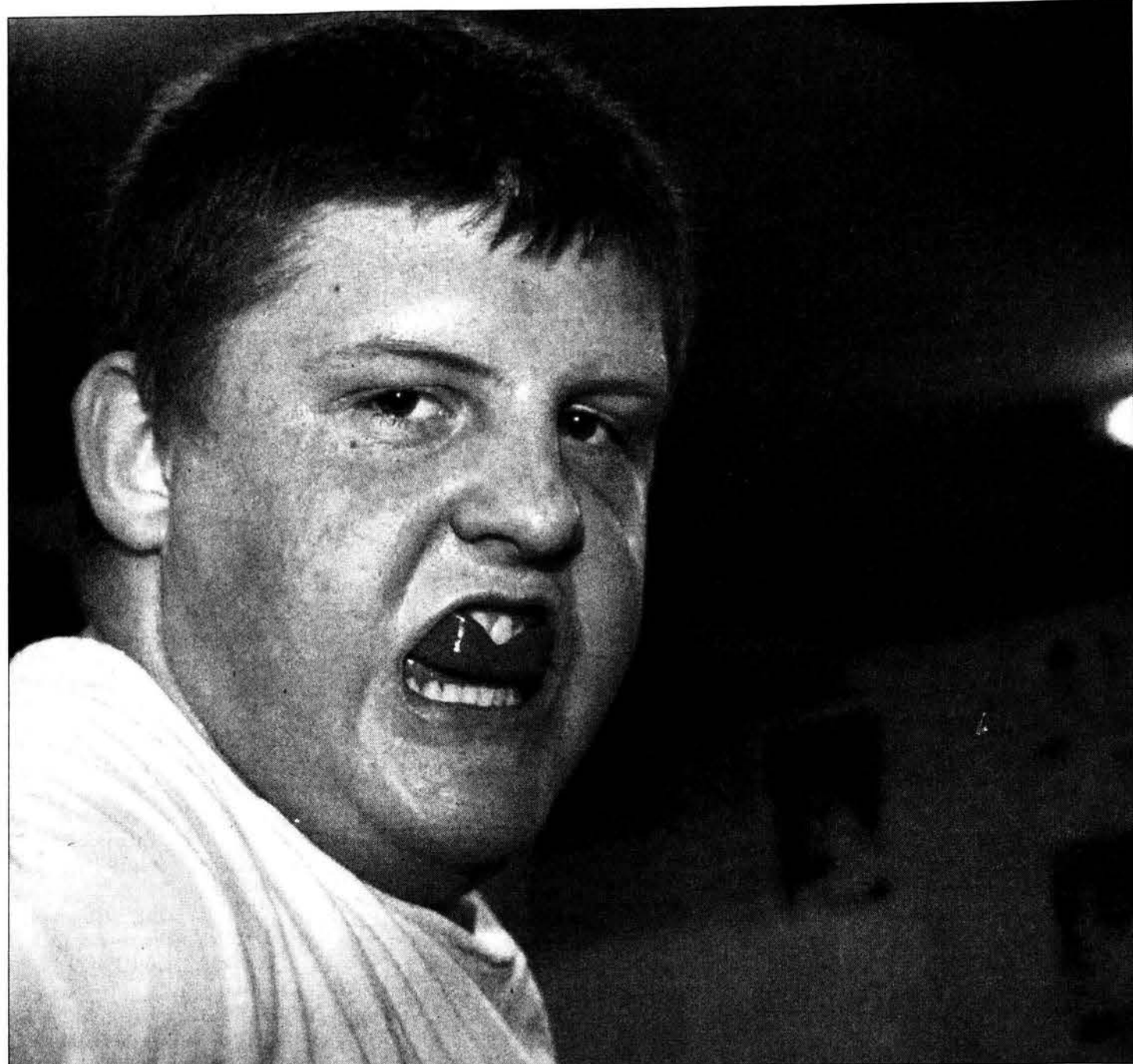
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In the *Register's* newest feature, assistant sports editor Troy Schulte participates in a different sporting event each issue to see if he has what it takes to be a world-class athlete. This issue, Schulte visits The Pit Boxing Club where he jumps into the ring for two rounds with a veteran boxer.



Photos by EMILY NEUMANN/THE REGISTER

ABOVE: Schulte shows his frustration and fatigue after sparring two rounds with Anderson. **UPPER MIDDLE:** Schulte prepares for his fight by throwing a few punches at a punching bag. **UPPER RIGHT:** Schulte practices punching a smaller target. **MIDDLE RIGHT:** Anderson prepares Schulte's gear before the two jump into the ring. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Anderson blocks Schulte's right crosses.



An hour in 'The Pit'



Most boxing careers span a couple of decades, the good ones anyway.

Muhammad Ali fought for over 20 years, Joe Frazier almost 20 years, Sugar Ray Leonard about 17 years, Joe Louis 13 years. Mine only lasted roughly an hour.

I've never really been a big boxing fan. Whenever a championship fight rolls around, I'll at least tune into Sportscenter to find out who won, but I would never would call myself a fan. I have always been fascinated by the sport and have always wondered if I have what it takes to be a championship fighter.

So I gave Paul Anderson, a 16-year veteran of the sport, a call at The Pit Boxing Club to see if I could jump in the ring for a few rounds. He had no problems with it. And so my boxing career began.

"The Pit" is the quintessential boxing gym, right down to the old posters on the wall promoting championship fights and the odor of old leather and sweat. Anderson looks like he spends most of his time in his gym. And why not, it has everything a boxer would want. A regulation ring, some speed bags, some heavy bags and a radio. What else would you need?

I don't think Anderson thought I could hack it as a boxer. He asked me if I was sure that I wanted to do this more

than once.

He started off with the basics. He taught me how to wrap my wrists and the primary boxing stance. How to throw a left jab, a right cross, a left jab combined with a right cross, a double left jab combined with a right cross, a jab with a step, a jab with a step combined with a right cross, a double jab with a step. He taught me all the essential combinations.

Then I was ready to start boxing. I strapped on some gloves and stepped up to the speed bag. It wasn't really a speed bag, but that's what he called it. It was a small punching bag about the size of a softball connected to the ceiling and the floor by two bungee cords. So when I punched it, the bag gets to spinning so fast you can barely see it.

It's supposed to help your hand-eye coordination. Apparently, mine stinks. I started off doing pretty well, but once it came in contact with my ferocious left jab and it started moving all over the place, I'd swing again and miss...swing again, miss...swing again miss. I got tired of looking like a fool and grabbed the cord to stop it and start over. But he caught me.

"No, you can't do that, you're cheating now," he yelled from across the gym. After a few rounds on the speed bag,

Anderson said it was time to move to the heavy bag.

It was time to work on the power. I was glad to hear that. Since I'm about 6 foot 3, and 250 pounds, I always figured power was my schtick. I worked on my combinations on the heavy bag for a few rounds and felt I was starting to get pretty good at it.

While I was working out, a woman came in to speak with Anderson about having her son join the club. He was telling her what the boxers work on and said that many of his customers don't take up boxing for competition, but just to get in shape.

That gave me an idea. I'm sort of a big guy who could stand to lose some weight, I'll just join "The Pit" to shed some pounds.

After a few rounds on the heavy bag, it was time to spar.

"Are you sure you want to get in the ring for a little bit?" Anderson asked again.

We weren't going to fight a regulation match, just two four-minute rounds with a 45-second break in between. I figured I could put together some of the combinations he taught me and give it my all for two rounds. It's just eight minutes, not even a half of an episode of "The

Simpsons."

I had my headgear on, my mouthpiece in, my jock strap on the outside of my shorts (which looked like a diaper), and my sparring gloves on tight. I was ready. Then, the bell rang. The fight began.

It's not like I never tried to hit him. I threw punches, he just moved. Before I would throw a punch I would think about what I would want to do. Left jab and then a right cross, I would think. Then I threw the punch, closed my eyes and prayed to the heavens that I hit something. I never did.

About a minute into the fight, he hit me right in the nose with a right cross and I went down with my mouthpiece flying. I looked like Mike Tyson when he was knocked out by Buster Douglas in Tokyo in 1989, laid out flat on the canvas with my mouthpiece on the other side of the ring.

During the course of the fight, I think I landed about four punches. He knocked me down three times.

The second knock down was later in the first round when he hit me right in the sternum, I fell to the canvas, had trouble breathing for about 20-seconds and a sore sternum for the next three days. Once again, I got the impression

Anderson didn't want me anywhere near a boxing ring. Every time he knocked me down, I would look up at him from a comfortable position on the canvas. He had a look on his face as if to say, "you kidding me, this kid is actually trying to box."

I thought I would be able to last a few rounds, but halfway into the second round I just started to fake it, waiting for the end of the fight.

At the end of the fight I had received four punches landed, zero knockouts. I was knocked down three times and about to keel over and die. We touched gloves as if to say, "good night" when we both knew it was anything but.

Then I took off my gloves, my headgear and stepped out of the ring—for good. Halfway through my workout I started thinking boxing would be a way for a slightly overweight teenager to get into shape. But that was when I was fighting the heavy bag that didn't move. When I stepped out of the ring, I asked Anderson, "So, was I as bad as most of your first-time fighters?"

"About in the middle," he said. "Definitely not the best, but not the worst either."

That's fine by me, I was never going to be a championship fighter anyway.

Sophomore captures 112-pound Metro conference championship

By Troy Schulte

One Central wrestler captured the Metro conference tournament championship in his respective weight class, but no other wrestlers advanced to the final round in the Eagles 11th place finish on Jan. 11-12.

Sophomore Devlon Webb breezed through the initial rounds of the tournament with a pin the first round and a decision in the second to force a final round match between him and North wrestler Corey Ashburn, who transferred from Central this year.

Last season the two were freshman wrestling in the same weight class at Central. Everyday Webb and Ashburn would wrestle each other in practice and everyday Ashburn would beat him. And because of that, Webb found himself look-

ing forward to the championship match, hoping he would get a shot at the wrestler who, a year ago, was supposedly better than he was.

Head coach Jimmy Foster didn't think Webb wrestling his former teammate added any extra incentive to the match. He wanted him to treat it like any other match.

"Wrestling is wrestling," Foster said. "It doesn't matter who is across the mat from you, you just have to get after it."

That's what Webb tried to do. He tried to focus on each individual match, but he couldn't help looking forward to a possible match with Ashburn.

"I tried to take it one match at a time," Webb said. "But it (a possible match with Ashburn) was always in the back of my head."

The two wrestlers were the top two seeds in the 112-pound division and they both earned first round byes.

Two easy wins in the quarterfinals and in the semifinals set up the final between the former teammates. Webb said he wanted to start the match off aggressively and he jumped out to a quick 5-1 lead and then took it easy the remainder of the match.

He eventually outlasted Ashburn to get the 6-5 decision.

"I got him on his back and got a lead, 5-1. Then I just laid back, I didn't know how close it was until it was almost over," he said.

Though Webb won an individual championship, he was disappointed the team didn't finish any higher than 11th and no other wrestlers advanced to a final

round.

"Some of the guys had a few hard matches early, but considering that, I think we did all right," he said.

Freshman Cavin Cooper advanced to the semifinal round of the 103-pound division, but was pinned by eventual champion Tony Valdez of South.

Though he's only a freshman, Foster said Cooper has potential, but he has to gain a few pounds.

"He's a tough kid," Foster said. "He's only 99 pounds. If he was 105, 106 pounds he would be pretty good."

Another wrestler who reached the semifinals was senior Lonnie Long in the 189-pound division. Long was in pretty good shape after two quick, first round pins, which put him in the semifinal. But, like Cooper, Long was pinned by Ian

Thatcher of Westside.

Though he didn't reach the semifinals or finals, Foster said senior Bischoff wrestled well in the 275-pound heavyweight division. But he lost the consolation final and finished in 13th place.

Foster said Long and Bischoff stepped it up at the tournament. "The Eagles want to compete with some of the state's best teams, more team members will have to contribute."

"We got about four guys who were our team," he said. "We need more to start stepping up. You can't have some guys stepping up every time."

For a special feature on Central's best wrestler, Devlon Webb, see page 18.

Eagles recover from Papillion upset



Photo by MEREDITH GRUNKE/THE REGISTER
Senior Schuyler Thomas goes up for a rebound during the Millard South game.

By Troy Schulte

Eagles 78
Patriots 42

Despite a first quarter where the Central boys basketball team scored just nine points and its leading scorer was held out of the starting lineup, the Eagles bounced back from a loss to Papillion/La Vista and beat Millard South in blowout fashion on Jan. 18, 78-42.

The win improved the team's record to 10-2.

Senior Kris Kuhn, the team's leading scorer who averages 12.8 points per game, was not on the court for the opening tip-off, but came off the bench to score 16 points in the victory.

Kuhn said the team saw the game against the Patriots as a must win after the 62-60 loss to the Monarchs that ended the Eagles' nine game winning streak.

"We really wanted to win that one," Kuhn said. "We didn't want to have that bad taste in our mouths like we did after the Papio game."

Kuhn's absence from the starting lineup allowed many other players to gain experience.

Sophomore Rico Washington received the first start of his career and sophomore Karl White played more minutes than he has all season.

Head coach Eric Behrens shuffled his lineup and started Washington in Kuhn's place along with sophomore Cortney Grixby and seniors Schyler Thomas, Javell Kimmons and Andrew Ford.

But halfway through the first quarter, the Eagles had yet to make a shot, but they only found themselves down 4-0 because of the Patriot's poor shooting.

But with 4:09 remaining in the quarter, Central got a boost. Division I-A prospect Kuhn and fellow senior Mark LeFlore from the bench. Kuhn immediately rebounded a missed 3-point attempt by Grixby, layed it in and was fouled.

After he made the free throw, he brought the Eagles within one.

So far this season, Central's trademark has been a fast-paced tempo. But in the first half, the Patriots contained the Eagles. Every time the team attempted to run the ball off the opening pass, they would throw the ball away or

Millard South would force a turnover.

During the second quarter, Washington intercepted a Patriot pass, passed it ahead to Kimmons who scored the breakaway lay-up.

The next possession, Thomas made the Eagles first 3-pointer of the game, which gave them their first lead of the game at 14-12.

But, once again, the Patriots killed Central's run. The Patriots scored seven straight points to take a five point lead midway through the second quarter.

After the Millard South run, Kuhn returned and led the team just like he did when the Eagles were trailing in the first quarter.

Kuhn once again went on a run all by himself. He scored four quick points and gave Central the lead once again at 20-19. And the Eagles kept the lead for good.

Kuhn's return sparked another scoring run by the Eagle's to end the half. He scored six points in the 13-3 run and the Eagles took a 29-22 lead into the locker room at halftime.

The Eagles' hot shooting continued after the intermission.

To go along with the run to

end the first half, they busted out of the gates with a 11-2 run and extended their lead to 16.

With the score 40-24, it looked as if it was getting out of reach.

By the time the third quarter ended the Eagles had a huge lead of 51-32.

Senior guard Schyler Thomas took over in the fourth quarter and scored 10 of his game-high 18 points in the final period.

With just under three minutes to play, a 28 point lead and the game all but over, Behrens pulled all five starters and left the rest of the game up to the reserves.

Every player on the team received playing time and all but one scored a point.

One thing the blowout win did, Kuhn said, was allow some of the reserves who play hard in practice everyday but never see action come game time, some playing time.

"We love it," Kuhn said of getting a big enough lead so the reserves can see some action, "Our second- and third- string guys could start for any other team in the Metro. So it's good when they get playing time."

Behren's first team similar to last set of Eagles to win Holiday Tournament

The boys basketball team is possibly the best this school has seen in quite some time.

Though he has been at the helm for barely half a season, first

head coach Eric Behrens has his team on a roll. After an opening night loss to No. 1 Burke, the Eagles won their next three games, most notably a 71-56 win over Eighton Prep to capture the Metro Holiday Tournament championship.

Behrens' first team is strikingly similar to the last set of Eagles to win a Holiday Tournament in the 1996-97 season. Like dad's '97 team, Eric's 2002

team has the same formula to make a run at a state championship. Both teams have the same types of players to make them the best in the Metro conference.

-The division I prospect.

In '96, it was Galen Morrison who led the team in scoring and would later go on to play college basketball at Kansas State.

This season's version of Morrison is senior Kris Kuhn. Like Morrison, Kuhn leads the team in scoring and will play division I basketball at Robert Morris.

-The veteran team leader.



CHARGIN' THE MOUND

Troy Schulte

This player doesn't necessarily have to be a top college prospect, but playing multiple years at the position on the varsity level and knowing how to rally his team is a must. Five years ago that player was the son of then head coach Rick and the younger brother of current head coach Eric, Ryan Behrens. He never played collegiate basketball, but he did what every good point guard supposed to do. He found a way to get the job done.

Schyler Thomas is filling that role now. Thomas, like Behrens, will never lead the conference in scoring, or get a full-ride to a big name school, but he gets the job done.

-The freshman big man.

At the beginning of the '97

season, Rick started a young freshman center named Ben Jacobson. Jacobson went on to be named to the All-State team twice and is currently playing for Lamar University.

This season 6-foot-4-inch Nate Prater has filled that role. Prater has started on both the football and basketball team's as a freshman. Only time will tell if Prater will have the same kind of career as Jacobson, but for now he's playing like him.

-A stacked bench.

Center Robert Jefferson and guard Ralph Blank came off the bench in '97 and helped the Eagles to a No. 1 ranking in the state. These player's careers never extended beyond Central, but they were intricate parts of the team's

success.

This year sophomores Ricco Washington and Karl White joins seniors Mark LeFlore and Andrew Ford and provided a spark for Central in its Holiday Tournament championship game win against Creighton Prep.

Two teams, two different coaches, five years apart- yet strikingly similar.

The school's first Holiday Tournament win kicked off Rick's most successful season as a head coach.

They were the top rated team in Class A for much of the season and were the No. 1 seed in the state tournament. But they lost in the first round to Lincoln High, ending a potentially great season.

But this 2002 season has

something the '97 one didn't, a lack of competition. I'm not discrediting Central's wins so far this season, but the '97 team fell smack dab in the middle of Lincoln Northeast's run of four straight state championships.

But there's no Lincoln Northeast this season.

But if similarities between head coaches surnames, various player's roles and early season success matter, then these Eagles look to be in trouble come playoff time.

But if Kuhn, Thomas and Behrens can prevent history from repeating itself, then it doesn't look like anything can stop the Eagles from winning the school's first state basketball championship in 25 years.

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US supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter
Quoted in the New York Times, 11/28/54

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ACLU Nebraska congratulates the Central High Journalism Program for its dedication to a free press and its excellent showing at the Journalism Education Association/National Student Press Association meeting in Boston, November 2001.

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Sophomore eyes state championship

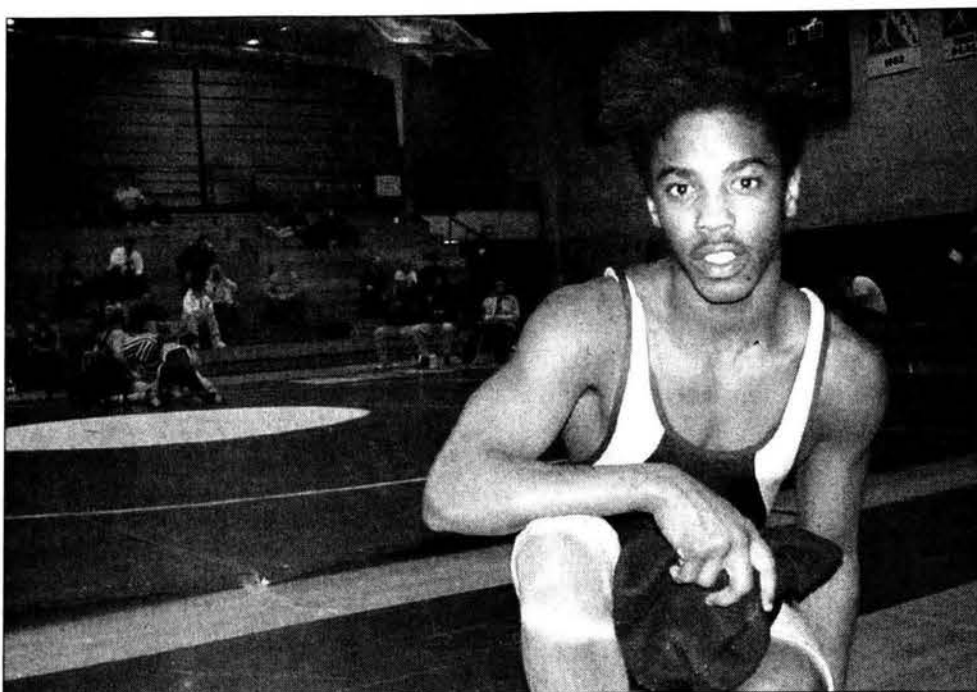


Photo by JOE MEYER/THE REGISTER

Sophomore Devlon Webb has continued to improve this year. He is the current Metro conference champion and looks toward winning a state title.

By Jon Lathan

Sophomore Devlon Webb had to sit and watch as Corey Ashburn competed in the 103-pound weight class last year.

Ashburn's presence as one of the best wrestlers in the state forced Webb to wrestle in a heavier weight class. Meanwhile, Ashburn advanced to the state semifinals as a freshman.

Head coach Jimmie Foster said that Webb was good last year, but every day in practice he couldn't seem to beat Ashburn.

However, over the summer Central lost Ashburn, its best wrestler from the previous season, when he transferred to North. But Ashburn's transfer benefited Webb, propelling him into Ashburn's spot.

Webb said he was shocked when he first heard Ashburn was at North. However, he settled into the main spot over the fall. He said he has learned a lot in the last two years and he is ready to continue improving.

"Last year I was a little smaller, plus I was an incoming freshman," Webb said. "High school wrestling is a lot different than junior high. In junior high, you are only one and two years apart, now you're three and four."

Webb has immediately stepped up and found success in the 112-pound weight-class this year. At the Metro Conference wrestling meet, the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth-ranked wrestlers in Webb's weight class all fell, but Webb went through the tourney unbeaten to win the 112-pound title.

In order to win, Webb wrestled and beat Ashburn for the second time ever. He said his first victory over Ashburn has helped him throughout the season.

"After my first win against Corey I thought I could beat anybody," he said.

He said that there is definitely a rivalry between him and Ashburn, but he still gets excited every time he goes out and he tries to do his best against whom ever he wrestles.

His confidence has grown this season, Foster said.

But after Webb's first and only win of the season, he said he lost some confidence and doubted himself.

However, he has turned it into motivation, and says that he still has two years, and quickly regained his confidence. At the end of Metro he was the champion.

Webb said that he thinks he has a good chance at winning state in his weight class, as does Foster. Right now Webb's record is 20-1.

"He's our first wrestler to win in his class since Ray Kizzee, who won on to win state," Foster said.

There is a big difference in Webb's style since last year. Webb has grown his hair and developed a noticeable presence on the mat.

Foster said it gives him attitude on an edge. It is a big part of Webb's success.

"As long as he has confidence, he'll be tough to beat," Foster said.

New head coach brings energetic attitude to boys basketball team

By Chris Aponick

In the final minute of the Metro Holiday Tournament championship game, Central head coach Eric Behrens had the difficult task of restraining his players from rushing the court before the game was over.

As the players became more anxious for the final buzzer, Behrens kept on repeating one phrase.

"Do it with class," he said.

With the victory, Central not only gained confidence in itself, but the rest of the state took notice, too.

To Behrens, the team's success has been all about intensity. On and off the court, he has built a new way of thinking and acting for the team.

A smothering defensive press and a fast-paced offense are examples of how the team's passion has changed in a few short months. It has been the key that boosted Central to a 9-2 start and helped the team win the Metro Conference Holiday Tournament, he said.

The defensive strategy has sparked the entire team, sophomore forward Rico Washington said. The team always tries

to keep two players on defense. These players try to chase the ball into the corners and trap it. Then they kick it back to the offense.

"We protect what we call 'the House' which is in the paint (in the key)," he said.

Behrens has emphasized the defense from the beginning of the year, senior forward Andrew Ford said. He started the first day of practice with a defensive drill. Every practice has started the same way.

The team tries to tire out other teams so they cannot compete in the fourth quarter, he said.

"If we hold teams to under 50 points, we will win," he said.

With a solid defense in place, the team is ready to continue its success in districts.

"Our goal is to win state," Behrens said. "Winning the Holiday tournament was great, but it was just a step along the way."

The wins have helped the team build confidence and that confidence has helped Behrens settle in as coach.

"When the team is winning, it's easier for the players to buy into a coach's sys-

tem," he said.

The team's skill level was already there, Behrens said. That made it possible for the team to focus on attitude and not just the game. Because the defense is very good at attacking, forcing turnovers and getting rebounds it has set the tone for many games.

"On defense, we go after teams," he said. "Forcing turnovers creates offense."

The team has developed into a high scoring offense. The players try to keep a fast pace, but at the start of the season they were giving up too many turnovers.

Now, the team is taking care of the ball better and has cut the amount of turnovers in half. They have also been able to play a fast pace knowing the bench is very deep and many players can step up and play when another player gets tired.

Washington and another sophomore guard Karl White have provided an energy boost off the bench, he said. Senior forward Javelle Kimmons and Ford have stepped up into starting positions, too.

The bench has helped keep up the team's intensity.

With the nine-man rotation that the

team uses, one player can play hard for three minutes and then sit down, Ford said.

Game days are noticeably different as well. Instead of wearing their uniforms to school, the players wear dress shirts and ties. Many college and professional teams arrive at games dressed up and now, so does Central.

Behrens said he wants the players to represent the school well and having them show up well-dressed to a game sends a positive message about the team.

"It sends the message that we're there for business, not a pick-up game," he said.

The ties are all part of the team's new attitude, he said.

Ford said Behrens is starting a good tradition with the ties. He's started a program with a good future. The image of the team has been focused on looking and playing the best they can.

"We are there (at a basketball game) for a reason and that is to win," he said. "The shirts and ties go along with that attitude."

Despite the victories and the respect

that other teams are giving Central, Behrens said he is keeping his team focused on each game and what they need to do to win the state tournament.

"We keep it in perspective," he said. "We haven't met all of our goals yet."

The team is starting to focus on districts. Holiday tournament runner-up Creighton Prep, as well as Bryan Millard West are in Central's district. However, Behrens said he is confident that the team can beat any team in state.

"We don't say that we have to win on all cylinders to beat any team," he said.

The team's three losses have come to Burke, Papillion/Lavista and Lincoln High. Ford said he and his teammates view these games as wake-up calls.

"We were starting to feel invincible, like we have an on and off switch, we turn on to win games," he said.

Ford said he does not want these performances to affect the rest of the season.

"Our hope is to end the season with two losses, go to state and make some noise," he said.

This Nebraska student wants to make a difference.

Angela Clements is a senior political science and history major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She's also one of only 80 students nationwide to be awarded a Truman

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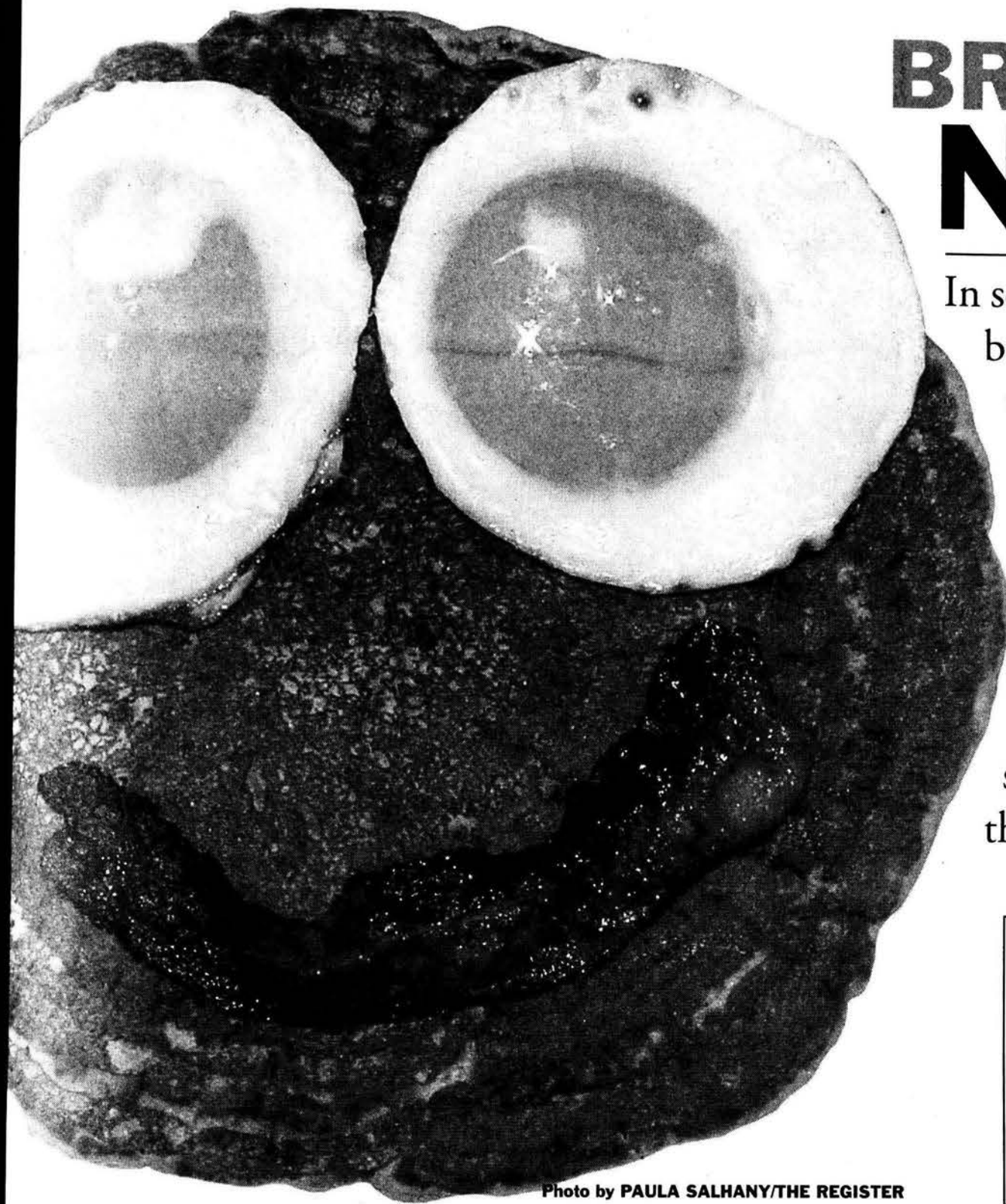


Photo by PAULA SALHANY/THE REGISTER

BREAKFAST NOOKS

In search of the best place to eat breakfast, the *Register* scoured the town. Big chain restaurants were not rated because everyone knows what they offer. Lesser-known places that not only have great food, but are pleasant places to eat were rated instead. Here are the results of the long and exhaustive test:

The Radial Café

Perfect place for a quiet breakfast
Great menu for lunch, too

Cecil's

Family owned and friendly service
Very small

The Leavenworth Café

Complete with video games and pool table
Big enough to handle large groups

By Kaitlin Butz

It's not very hard to find the best place to eat breakfast if you are willing to take a second look. Many of the best breakfast joints are hidden around town.

Radial Café, 817 N. 40th St.

The Radial Café is a great little place. From its simple but delicious menu to its retro, family-owned café look, it feels like something straight out of an old black and white movie.

Radial has a fairly wide variety of breakfast foods offering most of the basics. Eggs, sausage, bacon, hash browns, toast and pancakes are all offered in various combinations and combos.

The service is good, and the wait staff is friendly. They make sure no one's coffee cup is ever empty and everyone is enjoying their meal. Though the food isn't exactly fast, it's not a horribly long wait and it is served fresh and hot.

The food itself is good, but nothing totally new or extravagant. The sausage and hash browns are both made fresh, instead of prepackaged and preprocessed, which makes it taste a lot better.

Though the Radial Café is the perfect place for a breakfast, it also offers a lunch menu with a variety of both hot and cold sandwiches.

Cecil's, 50th and Dodge

Cecil's was a surprising find. This tiny little breakfast joint is located directly across from the Dundee Theater on 50th and Dodge, but is easily missed.

I heard about this place from others and decided to check it out.

The inside of the place is extraordinarily small, dominated by a counter and a few tables scattered throughout. Cecil's is definitely not the right place to go out for breakfast with a large group of people.

The food is fairly good, but nothing fancy. Every typical breakfast option is offered, and it's all prepared fresh when ordered. The meals are good sized, especially for the relatively low prices.

Cecil's is one of the few places around where you can still get a decent breakfast for five bucks and some change.

The nook is family owned and the staff is really friendly. The woman working behind the counter was very nice and made small talk with me while I was waiting for my meal.

Cecil's is another place that deals strictly with breakfast and lunch, but if you are out early it's a great place to stop.

Leavenworth Café, 24th and Leavenworth

Leavenworth Café is an old favorite in Omaha. Well known for its mix of traditional breakfasts and specialty meals, the café is sure to be busy at any time.

The place is huge on the inside so even if there is a crowd, the wait should not be very long. If you find yourself waiting, the front of the restaurant has video games and a pool table to keep patrons occupied.

Once seated, customers face the task of sifting through Leavenworth's lengthy menu. There are many simple combo deals that can be found at any breakfast place, as well as unique meals like the Robert E. Lee, a sausage biscuit and gravy combo.

The prices are slightly higher than Cecil's or the Radial, but are still low when compared to most other restaurants. The meals are pretty big, which helps make up for the price difference.

The food is decent and the wait is not horribly long. The servers are great about not keeping people waiting, whether it be taking an order, serving the food or leaving the check.

The Leavenworth is the best mix of a small-time diner and a large restaurant. It combines the large space of a place like Village Inn with the family style feel of a smaller place.

Radio station changes name, causes confusion

By Bryan Swotek

Omaha's 93.3 K-Rock changed its name to The Dam on New Year's Eve to avoid potential legal problems.

The problems arose over copyright issues. Apparently there is more than one station named K-Rock.

"The name K-Rock is owned by a national company, who would have made us change the name anyway," production director Tim Sheridan said.

Sheridan said he and three other staff members were sitting around trying to come up with a word that sounded cool and could work well as a radio station name when they came up with the new call letters.

The quest to find a new name was anything but easy, Sheridan said. They wanted to find something that had never been used before, one that was unique.

Despite popular belief, Sheridan said that the new name was not in any way supposed to be a slam on another popular station, The River.

Sheridan and his colleagues were bombarded with the overused line: "The Dam will close The River."

When they chose the name it was simply because people could have a lot of fun with the name.

Recent advertisements have promoted The Dam as being the same "Dam" station with the same "Dam" music.

Once Sheridan actually looked back at the name, he said that he didn't even realize that the River and Dam were related.

One question which leaves a lot of listeners puzzled, will they still play the same music? When Sheridan was asked this question, he said, "Does it sound the same to you?"

Some avid listeners are disappointed with the name change.

The name change was announced at about five p.m. on New Year's Eve. Many listeners who were not tuned in for the announcement were left wondering what happened.

Freshman Sarah Stowell didn't know what to think when she first heard the new name.

"I was very confused because I wasn't there when they unveiled the name for the first time," she said. "I like the name K-Rock because the name The Dam just sounds stupid."

One thing that confused Stowell was the fact that there were so many K-Rocks. Stowell was one of the many listeners who were misled by the new name.

"If there are a whole bunch of K-Rocks already, why couldn't ours stay the same?"

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Music in the big

From local music venues to radio stations, every aspect of Omaha music seems to be changing. Local bands, station producers and students voice their opinions about the future of music in Omaha.

Lincoln producers help local bands record music

By Kaitlin Butz

It all started with a tape recorder and a cheap Radio Shack mixer.

That is all Mike and AJ Mogis had as kids when they began recording their own music.

The two brothers now own and are the main producers at the Presto Recording Studio in Lincoln. The studio has proven to be a viable career for Mike and AJ, even though it had humble beginnings in the basement of their home.

As technology improved, the variety of what the brothers recorded grew. They went from recording themselves and their friends. Then, they moved on to produce local groups and others from around the world.

Mike and AJ have played in several bands together over the years, like Lullaby for the Working Class. No matter who they played with, they have always recorded their own music. When Mike helped start Saddle Creek Records as part of a business class project, he said it made him want to start a business of his own.

Six years ago, Mike and AJ started to produce music professionally. Mike said their first client was former Lincoln band Pullcat.

Local bands began coming to Mike and AJ to produce their own music. Mike said his and AJ's producing skills improved as they worked with these bands. Mike said the two have produced all the bands on Saddle Creek Records, like Bright Eyes and the Faint.

Mike has also played instruments on Bright Eyes' albums in the past.

One year ago, Mike and AJ moved the studio out of their basement and into a new building. Now, Mike said the studio is flourishing.

He and AJ have plans to open up a second studio sometime next year, after AJ graduates from college. AJ said he has been on a hiatus from producing while finishing his bachelor degree.

Throughout their producing

careers, the Mogis brothers have been increasingly successful. Besides bands on local labels, Mike said they have produced bands from countries like Belgium and Japan.

Mike said the purpose of opening the second studio would be to keep attracting national and international acts while still having facilities available for the local bands that have been with the studio for so long.

They have also employed a third producer, Jason Evans, and Mike said they would consider training more producers when the second studio opens.

Both brothers said they love producing and plan to continue with it.

Mike said he enjoys how musicians trust them with their work and leave it to him and AJ to interpret and improve upon it.

AJ said there were many factors that made producing appealing to him.

"I enjoy the process, I enjoy crafting things together, I enjoy music and this [producing] lets me do all those things," he said.

Mike and AJ said they agree that they work together well and have a good relationship as producers. Mike said that after being in a band together, it only seemed natural that the two would start to produce music together, too.

"I really have a good handle on what he's thinking. I guess that makes it a little easier to communicate," AJ said.

AJ said the time he and Mike have spent working together has gone smoothly and there have been no struggles for power between the two. They complement each other nicely because AJ specializes in the technical side, while Mike is more experienced with the business aspects of running a production company.

Though their profession may not be very common, Mike and AJ both said it is a perfect match for them.

"It's not a normal job," Mike said. "That's what I like about it."



Photo Courtesy of THE FAIN

The Faint, a former Cog Factory feature, continues to play shows in the Omaha area at the Sokol. The band can pull huge crowds at national concerts and has been getting attention from the national media.

The Faint remains true to Omaha

By Kaitlin Butz

The Faint can draw in huge crowds all across the country, yet this local band still calls Omaha its home and still enjoys playing in the city.

The five-piece group is composed of brothers Todd Baechle, vocals and synthesizers; Clark Baechle, drums; Joel Petersen, bass; Jacob Thiele, synthesizers and a guitarist who only goes by Dapose.

The Faint has three full-length releases under its belt. Dapose said there was an unintentional progression in the band that makes each album have a different sound.

The band's first album "Media" was the most guitar-oriented of all three and the second record "Blank Wave Arcade" had heavy use of synthesizers, Dapose said.

For their most recent release "Danse Macabre," Dapose said the band had a new goal.

"It was produced in a way that we were trying to make it sound like more of a dance record, with real rich sounds," he said.

Though "Danse Macabre" may have been a dance album, Dapose said many of the songs had a dark feel to them, which is not typical of most "happy" dance music.

While it has enjoyed a blitz of success in the wake of the release of "Danse Macabre," the Faint is taking a short break from recording and touring.

It plans to pick things up again in the spring with a one-month European tour in February. It hopes to release "Danse Macabre" there at that time.

When the members return from Europe, they hope to begin writing music together again.

The group has always written their songs together and Dapose said this was important to them.

"One person might be physically doing it, but we're all contributing mentally," he said.

While they are on this break, the members are all working on

individual pieces. Dapose said they hope to sit down together after they tour and combine the best of the new material.

Fans should not worry about losing the Faint to a bigger city. The band has no plans to relocate, even though it is becoming better known.

Dapose said all the members grew up here and have no desire to change. They all see Omaha as a city with lots of potential for musicians.

Still, Dapose said, he hopes the band can help overcome some of the limitations it runs into on the Omaha music scene. He said he wants to help out artists who are just starting out achieve musical success.

Dapose admits that fame has its benefits for the band. While it may have caused changes, the majority of them have been positive.

"In reality, it's [fame] changed the group because we all have the ability to not have jobs," he said.

This newfound national fame is a new experience for the band, but they are all taking it in stride. All of the members care about their fans, no matter who they are, Dapose said.

"Anyone who is a fan of ours is much appreciated, a kid in a local city or a record executive," he said.

The band members were shocked when they went on a national tour over the summer and audience members in cities around the country were singing along with their songs, Dapose said. He said this was one of the band's first realizations of success.

Dapose said they band has no definite idea what the next album will sound like.

The band draws influences from all aspects of culture not just music.

The members' personal taste in music ranges from artists like the electronic group Basement Jaxx to gothic band Cradle of Filth.

Closing of landmark venue kills teen hangout, local music community

Gather up your coats and put away your guitars.

The Omaha local music scene is dying a miserable, suffocating death.

With the loss of the popular venue, the Cog Factory, local bands without demo tapes don't really have anywhere else to go.

It's time to go home and plop yourself in front of the television. Friday night concerts that are open to every age group will soon be gone, at least most of them.

Granted, I haven't had some of the most spectacular Cog Factory experiences, but it has always been there for me whenever I got bored or if my favorite band from Lincoln finally rolled into town.

I think I've actually seen only two shows at the Cog: the Vampire Sorority Babes and the JV Allstars, but I know how much it meant to everyone.

The Cog was kind of the quintessential venue.

It gave every local band a place to play. It was close to a convenience store and there were cheap shows going on every weekend, every day.

That's not to say the Cog was a perfect environment. It was constantly changing owners and the bathrooms were...intimidating.

But there were a few times where I called the crappy legless couch in the back "home" for a few hours and I'm going to miss it just like everyone else who ever entered the all-age venue.

There are few things better than being squished on that couch next to two smokers and a dude that spent all night being stinky and sweaty.

Honestly.

And you know what?

The dirty bathrooms covered with bumper stickers and not having doors half the time really didn't scare me. If you gotta go, you gotta go. Deal with it.

So the ceiling leaked. So the owners might have been a little irresponsible when it came to paying the IRS.

Fact is, a groundbreaking underage venue that meant a lot to many teenagers in the Omaha area is closed.

It is gone.

The Cog was kind of like one of those 50s smoky jazz clubs you hear about all the time.

Of course, it was the smoky club with the funky paintings on the walls and a sound system that left a lot to be desired.

The place was all dark and smoky, kind of musty and covered with posters and stickers of all the bands that had once played there.

Some of the names that littered the walls and roll through Cog folklore were familiar: Rancid, Q and not U, Against All Authority and The Donnas.

And a lot of the other names became a heck of a lot more popular after shows at the Cog, such as the Faint and the Fonzarellies, which now play more often at the Sokol or the Ranch Bowl.

All in all, the Cog was spectacular. I think every town needs a place that was started by the kids for the kids.

It was almost like "Cheers," where everyone knows your name. The kids that hung out at the Cog were a close-knit circle.

There were a few people that floated in and out of the venue, but most of the kids at least had seen each other somewhere before.

It was always nice to drive down Leavenworth and look out my window to see some kids waiting for a show.

One of the greatest things about the Cog is that so many bands that were rejected by other venues had the chance to play there.

A lot of former Central bands, such as Plosion and Art's Got a

Gun got a majority of their exposure from playing shows at the Cog.

Bands like Art's Got a Gun would probably not have been able to get such attention anywhere else.

"That's fine, no problem, we'll find somewhere else to play," all the local bands think to themselves.

Sadly enough, this could be more challenging than you may think.

We have a few scattered venues around the area: the Ranch Bowl, Sokol, 18th Amendment and the Music Box come to mind, but they are so restrictive that booking shows won't be as easy as it used to, especially when you want to get the youth involved.

The Cog was the only venue that was always an all-ages venue.

It's upsetting when a great band comes around, but oh no! The shows are 18 and over.

That never happened at the Cog.

No matter how old you are,

as long as you have about

bucks, it's all good.

I would like to see the

pick up the duties of a local

and give the kids somewhere

play and a safe place to

shows, but I don't really

how feasible that is.

I'd love to see a new

opened, without fire safety

lems and rabid tax collectors

I urge any angry kids to

a place and start another

revolution in Omaha.

Give bands a new place

play, but make sure you

taxes.

Learn from your prede

sors. Money has to be

fore it is made.

I guess until then, you

find me at the Joyo in

Although I'd really like

Omaha's bands gracing

stages in full force as

possibly can.

Grab your guitars, wa

your vocalists because

to see what's next. I

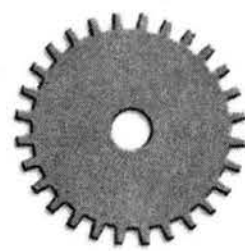
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THE ONLY TIME

Layne Gabriel

Six years at the Cog



On Jan. 11, the Cog Factory closed its doors after six years. During the time it was open, the Cog was known for its diverse shows and low cover charges. Also, it was the only all-age venue in town and there was always a show every Friday and Saturday night. To honor the Cog, the Register has compiled photographs of the Cog.



Photos courtesy of KEVIN JONES

Bands are (from top going clockwise): Deseparacidos in 2001, Baron Ghede in 2000, Fischer in 1995 and Opium Taylor in 1996.

■ Cog Students miss all-ages venue

From COG, page 24

charges at the door, he said.

Kevin Jones, drummer for local band the Bombardment Society, has been involved with the Cog Factory from the beginning. He said the management did not believe sales tax had to be paid because the Cog Factory was a non-profit organization. The staff of the Cog Factory declined to comment.

There is a common misconception that non-profit organizations are exempt from paying sales taxes. In reality, Norris said, there are hardly ever waivers on sales tax because it is a tax on the person making the purchase, not the organization.

If a business does not pay sales tax and is caught, Norris said, the business is charged for the back taxes plus nine percent interest and penalties.

Failure to pay sales taxes can result in the filing of criminal charges, but Norris said this rarely happens, especially when the business did not pay because of a misunderstanding.

Jones said one reason for the sudden closing on Jan. 11 was because of fears that state officials would come in and seize all the equipment.

Norris said there are certain cases where property can be confiscated, but this is usually reserved for instances where a business cannot pay. Even when a business closes, the state can still pursue any money it is owed. Norris said the state would not pursue in some cases where it is apparent that money will only be lost.

"A tax liability does not go away when the entity goes away," he said.

The end of the Cog Factory has affected many students at Central, from the students whose bands played there to those who attended the shows.

Senior Will Allard was a member of the band Art's Got a Gun (AGAG), which played at the Cog over 10 times.

Allard had been going to the Cog Factory since February of 1997, when he was 14 years old. He said one of the best things about the Cog Factory was that most bands could book a show there, whereas the Ranch Bowl was often more selective in scheduling their shows.

Allard credits the Cog Factory for introducing him to the straight-edge lifestyle, which involves abstaining from drugs and alcohol, through straight-edge bands and musicians he met there.

Junior Grant Garrean was also a member of AGAG who said he started going to the Cog Factory about a year and a half ago and went there as often as once a week at one time.

Garrean admitted the Cog had problems such as the leaky roof and the falling-apart bathrooms, but said the Cog Factory would do things for bands that other venues would not, like book shows for unknown bands. The Cog Factory was also a good size for AGAG shows, he said, which usually drew about 30 people.

"It was underground, not very many people go there," he said.

Jones has been a spectator, a volunteer and a performer during the years he has been going to the Cog Factory. He has been going there since age 16 when he went to see Rancid and Frontier Trust.

Jones said he would help with minor repairs for the club when needed. During the winter, he said he would go in and help fix the plumbing. Jones knew the Cog would have to come to an end eventually and said he found out about the actual closing about a week before the public announcement.

"We knew it couldn't last forever," he said.

He said problems had been mounting for a long time, like the deteriorating roof and the rent going up \$100, but when the controversy over sales tax began, the end was near.

"This [the tax issue] was kind of the straw that broke the camel's back," he said.

The Bombardment Society played shows at the Cog regularly at one time, Jones said. The management always treated the band well, he said, and he had lots of good times at Cog shows.

"We had something special there that a lot of places don't get to have," he said.

Garrean said he thinks lots of bands will start playing basement shows.

Jones said the loss of the Cog Factory will be damaging to the local music scene, but he said he believes people might take steps to rebuild it.

"It's going to hurt at first, but it's (the local scene) going to be strong eventually," he said.

Race for Titles sells drummer, moves towards recording album

By Kaitlin Butz

Some bands might rethink their set lists after a bad show. But local band Race for Titles sold their drummer.

After a disastrous show at Lincoln's Antelope Park last summer, the band members decided to sell the drum machine they had been using on an auction.

The drum machine, "Ernie," went for \$50 and the band realized it needed a real drummer.

After a short search, Race for Titles found its new drummer, who was an old friend of the members.

When drummer Matt Bowen joined Race for Titles, vocalist and guitarist James Massey and bassist Ryan McLoughlin, the lineup of the band was finally complete.

Though these four members have only been together since the summer, the band itself has been around for a year. Massey and Lorenzen started the band as a duo, with McLoughlin and Bowen joining later.

Lorenzen said the band's name came about one night when he and Massey were out driving around and pulled up beside an elderly woman.

He joked that they and the woman would "race for titles," which is fifties hot rod slang for racing for ownership of a car. Both of them thought it would be a great band name and it stuck.

In its short time together the band has played shows all around Lincoln, Omaha and Sioux City.

Lorenzen said they have played at venues including the Cog Factory, the Music Box, the Sokol Underground, the

49er and Knickerbockers.

However the band is not planning on doing any out of area touring until they record an album.

"It's tough to go out and play other places when you don't have any material to sell," McLoughlin said.

The group plans on recording its full-length debut album in March. The group's members all have different hopes for the release.

As long as he is happy with the record's sound, Massey said he would be satisfied.

Lorenzen said he would like to find a way to get national distribution for the album, though Bowen said the band would not want to sign to a major label.

"You get one record (with major labels) and if it doesn't sell a lot of copies, you're canned," he said.

The band has several of its songs posted on its website, so fans have something to listen to until an album is released.

The band members all said they have had a lot of good times in the band, but each member has a different recollection of what the best one was.

Massey said in his mind it was a recent show at the Music Box, which also featured the Good Life and the Movies. Lorenzen said this show was the largest one the band ever played.

A show at the Junction on Sept. 14 with Neva Dinova was one of the band's most memorable times, McLoughlin said.

All of the proceeds from the show were donated to Sept. 11 charities. Bowen's employers donated as well, matching the totals from the door.



Photo by PAULA SALHANY/THE REGISTER

Members of Race for Titles are (from left): Zac Lorenzen, Ryan McLoughlin, James Massey and Matt Bowen. They are posing for a picture after they played during the last show at the Cog Factory.

Lorenzen said his favorite times in the band are when the members make up or work on new songs.

Massey and Lorenzen are usually the ones who bring ideas or parts for songs, but the members said everyone works on them together.

The band is reluctant to label itself as one style.

Bowen said he did not like doing this because when band members describe their musical sound, it is never anything like what it actually sounds like.

McLoughlin did not want to label the

band either. However, he said the band's music would probably best described as melodic rock with a wide range of influences.

He said all of the band members draw influences from indie and punk music of the late 80s and early 90s, as well as 80s metal.

This mix of influences is proving to be a winning formula for Race for Titles, the members said.

In only six months, the group has gone from selling a drummer on the Internet to packing venues around town.



Photo Courtesy of WARNER BROTHERS

Jamie (Mandy Moore) says her final farewells to Landon (Shane West) in front of her angry preacher father in the boring film "A Walk to Remember."

Teen film leaves a lot to be desired

By Kaitlin Butz

The only good thing about "A Walk to Remember" is that it is easily forgotten.

This new-star vehicle for teen pop singer Mandy Moore is one of the most cliché-ridden, sugary-sweet, predictable movies to come out in a long time.

The movie, based on a young adult novel of the same name, starts with typical bad boy Landon Carter (Shane West) getting busted after pulling a prank.

His totally unrealistic punishment is tutoring disadvantaged kids, doing janitorial work after school and starring in the spring musical.

These various wholesome activities bring Landon closer to Jamie Sullivan (Mandy Moore).

Jamie is another typical character, the sweet and giving daughter of the local preacher.

At first these two are like oil and water, but they eventually get together, much to the chagrin of pretty much everyone they know.

After a short, but sweet romance, an unexpected twist is thrown into the movie.

Instead of making the movie more original,

it actually makes it worse.

From this point on, the movie is pure saccharine, going down a spiral that ends in one of the cheesiest endings ever.

The leads actors do their best, but neither one can pull off the roles they have been handed.

Moore does her best, but accomplishes little besides looking wide-eyed and innocent.

An extended scene where Moore is singing is completely laughable.

The lip-synching is blatantly obvious and the instruments that are played are heard, yet not seen.

West stomps around and looks troubled, but his only

strength is looking like a pin-up from a teen magazine.

The Christian overtones in the movie can be grating, especially for viewers who are not Christians.

All of the corny metaphors insult the intelligence of everybody above the age of 12.

Anyone with a hint of taste, maturity, intelligence or culture should avoid this movie like the plague.

MOVIE REVIEW

"A Walk to Remember" - Rated PG

2 of 5

Starring: Mandy Moore, Shane West

'Beautiful Mind' tempts viewer

By Faith Lynn

Insanity and genius sometimes go hand in hand. In "A Beautiful Mind" they work together marvelously.

Russell Crowe plays mathematician John Nash, who won the Nobel Prize for economics in 1964. He could solve impossible calculus problems at a glance.

He develops schizophrenia along with his genius. He began to have major hallucinations that would haunt him throughout his life, beginning in graduate school.

Crowe is excellent in playing his role as Nash. He is convincingly nerdy with great mannerisms and a masterful stutter.

He is backed by a powerful cast including Jennifer Connelly, his suffering wife, and Ed Harris, his domineering boss.

Also notable is Adam Goldberg as a sympathetic friend and partner, Sol. Paul Bettany shines as Nash's funny and liberating roommate.

Every aspect of the movie is great. The acting is very well done. The script manages to be both comedic and heavily down-to-earth as well.

Director Ron Howard has a great command of the essence of the film.

From one of the first shots of the main character to the last word uttered on screen, everything has been brought together into a coherent whole.

In the film, Nash finds a job with the government, doing secret codebreaking work.

Using his natural codebreaking skills, he intercepts messages sent by Russia to its sleeper cells in America and tells the U.S. government of the movement of an atomic bomb.

He is brilliant at this. Lines of code jump out at him from the

papers and magazines effor

Due to the high pressure secrecy of his job, Nash becomes paranoid and his wife eventually has him admitted to a psychiatric hospital. His doctors discover that he has been having hallucinations.

MOVIE REVIEW

"A Beautiful Mind" - Rated PG-13

22222 of 5

Directed by: Ron Howard
Starring: Russell Crowe, Jennifer Connelly

Band 'roars' in with new release

By Matt Wynn

"It's Hard To Find A Friend," Pedro The Lion's first full-length album re-released on Jade Tree records, is sealed with a heavy haze of melancholy, fear and soul-searching.

Unlike countless bands that sing of the same, leader David Bazan sounds sincere by channeling his manic depressive behavior through the lyrics and music.

Following the "less is more" philosophy, the five-piece Pedro manages to hold back twice as many notes as it plays, creating memorable tunes along the way.

"Bad Diary Days," the fifth track on the album, is the crown

jewel of Bazan's work to date. His lilting, unsure alto voice adds a dose of complexity to the stark beauty of the simple chord progressions and arpeggios. It all weaves together charmingly on this track that just begs to be played over and over again.

Bazan's lyrics walk the line between obtuse and blatantly

cheesy. His shy and seemingly desperate voice saves him from sounding like an anguished, love-scorned 14-year-old. Although it seems like this is what Bazan strives for. He uses words that high schoolers and 30-something

divorcees can find comfort

Leaving behind the almost-cidal vibe of Pedro's debut "Whole," which dealt with addiction and death, "It's Hard To Find A Friend" could be the band's coming-of-age album.

Many of the songs center on Bazan's relationship with his father and God, or lack thereof.

"Big Trucks" is a father-son's conversation about riding rude drivers, while "The Secret Of The Easy Yoke" is a

apology for breaking a promise his father.

No matter how hopeless Bazan becomes, the band's arrangements give the listener a glimmer of sunshine because the notes chosen. Jade Records did its good deed for the year by re-releasing this sure to be instant classic.

ALBUM REVIEW

Pedro the Lion
"It's Hard To Find A Friend" of 5

The Strokes' debut release 'Is This It' lives up to immense hype

By Doug Meigs

The pretty, prep-school youths who are The Strokes have released what may be the only good recording to hit mainstream in over a decade,

injecting a refreshing burst of nervous, retro-sque energy into an otherwise dead and decaying mainstream rock scene with its first full-length, "Is This It".

Straight from the group's pleasant, cocaine-addled minds, "Is This It" seems to contain blended influences eerily reminiscent of any alternative or under-

ground rock prior to Dec. 8, 1980.

With a sound so nostalgically 'indie', The Strokes have attracted vast amounts of hype as well as criticism continuing from long before the release of its debut album was delayed.

Because of the Sept. 11 terrorist acts, a track criticizing New York City cops was replaced with a less controversial song.

Whether considering The Strokes a band of musicians or a financial tool, "Is This It" has turned out to be a skillfully produced album, solid in each of its

tracks.

It makes for a smooth, enjoyable listening experience.

Singer Julian Casablancas' restrained, scratching melodies intertwine into traditional, electronic guitar riffs played off the group's driving bass line, altogether producing a loose yet very well-refined studio recording.

The album begins with Casablancas' venting his sexual aggression and knack for social intercourse over a questioned relationship. Sexual references to girl chasing and getting into their apartments fill most of "Is This It's" tracks.

This creates an almost constant reference to some sexual encounter or exploit overlaid by the

album's pervading anxious uncertainty of past and future.

The album's lyrics convey a sort of arrogant confusion in the description of youthful escapades, good times and lounging about.

The doubt is appropriately captured by the track "Hard To Explain," where Casablancas laments over his conflicting interests.

The band seems to have already mastered the decadent rock-star lifestyle with its first album released on RCA.

It already has a fan club because Casablancas is also the son of renowned international modeling agent John Casablancas, of Studio 54 fame.

Go check it out.



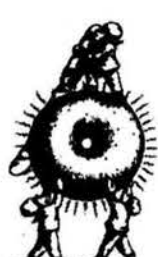
Photo courtesy of

The Strokes recent release "Is This It" was met with a lot of heavy praise and outspoken criticism.

ALBUM REVIEW

The Strokes
"Is This It" of 5

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One Inch Nails debuts aggressive live album

By Layne Gabriel

One Inch Nails' new live album perfectly captures the concert experience without the mosh pits and beer.

With aggressive, raw vocals and the audience shouting out the lyrics in perfect time with Trent Reznor's "And All That Could Have Been," known as "AATCHB," is absolutely captivating. This is the way Nine Inch Nails was meant to be heard.

The live CD begins with "Terrible Lie," one of the standard starter songs for Nails shows.

The album goes through the basic setlist, from "Closer" to the ever-popular and somewhat depressing intimate version of "Hurt" from the album, "The Downward Spiral."

Under songs such as "Head Like A Hole" get from the whiny synthesizer days of 1989 come alive to the audience stronger than ever. It's almost a greatest hits album for Nine Inch Nails, but the mesmerizing lyrics and music of the band become so much more alive when placed in front of an audience.

"AATCHB" can also be purchased as a double CD with a second disc titled "Still."

As excellent as the live album is, "Still" all but overshadows it with broken-down, intense and simple instrumentals.

"Still" also contains one new vocal track "And All That Could Have Been," and four new instrumentals, including the beautifully stellar "Leaving Hope," which deviates from the more assertive Nine Inch Nails sound with soft chords and heavenly tones.

"Still" is a very relaxing, pulsating side to the band, but it has that nice Reznor touch.

The two CD set is possibly one of the best that has come out of Nine Inch Nails. It's so easy to fall in love with the band again at first with "And All That Could Have Been."



Courtesy of ISLAND RECORDS

Ku Lappalainen, Doug Robb, Dan Estrin, and Chris Hesse form the mediocre pop band Hoobastank.

Hoobastank seriously disappoints with album

By Layne Gabriel

Perhaps Hoobastank is not the best name for a band, but at least they got the "stank" part right. Sadly, Hoobastank's obnoxious self-titled album is absolutely miserable. There is little to recommend that stands out on the album.

Everything has a very bland sound to it and it doesn't get the listener from really getting into the music.

The first track, the single "Crawling in the Dark," is so overplayed that it is easy to just want to turn the album off right away.

The only redeeming qualities for the album are some decent background music and some thought-provoking lyrics.

Guitarist Dan Estrin is talented, but he seems hindered by the simplicity of the music.

The album has some decent beats and melodies, but it is disappointing in general.

Vocalist Doug Robb's voice is annoying and all belief and it sounds like the band is trying to be like other popular bands, such as Limp Bizkit.

The genre of the band is even difficult to define. It wavers between Nu Metal like Staind and more hardcore sounds like Alien Ant Farm.

Most bands can have rhyming lyrics without it being painfully obvious, but these guys don't seem to have that skill down. The lyrics sound like a bunch of angry teenagers griping to their parents.

Doug Robb whines like an unpopular teenage girl, wanting to be just like you, so perfect, so touchable.

All of the tracks on the album seem to blend together somewhat, as there is little differentiation between songs. There is the occasional slow song, but much of the album is just like "Crawling in the Dark." The entire album just reeks of mediocrity. The songs are sappy and cliché and the vocals just become painful to listen to after a while.

Although the self-titled album is the band's worst, it is still relatively inexcusable how awful the album is. Hopefully further releases will be a lot more promising.

Calendar

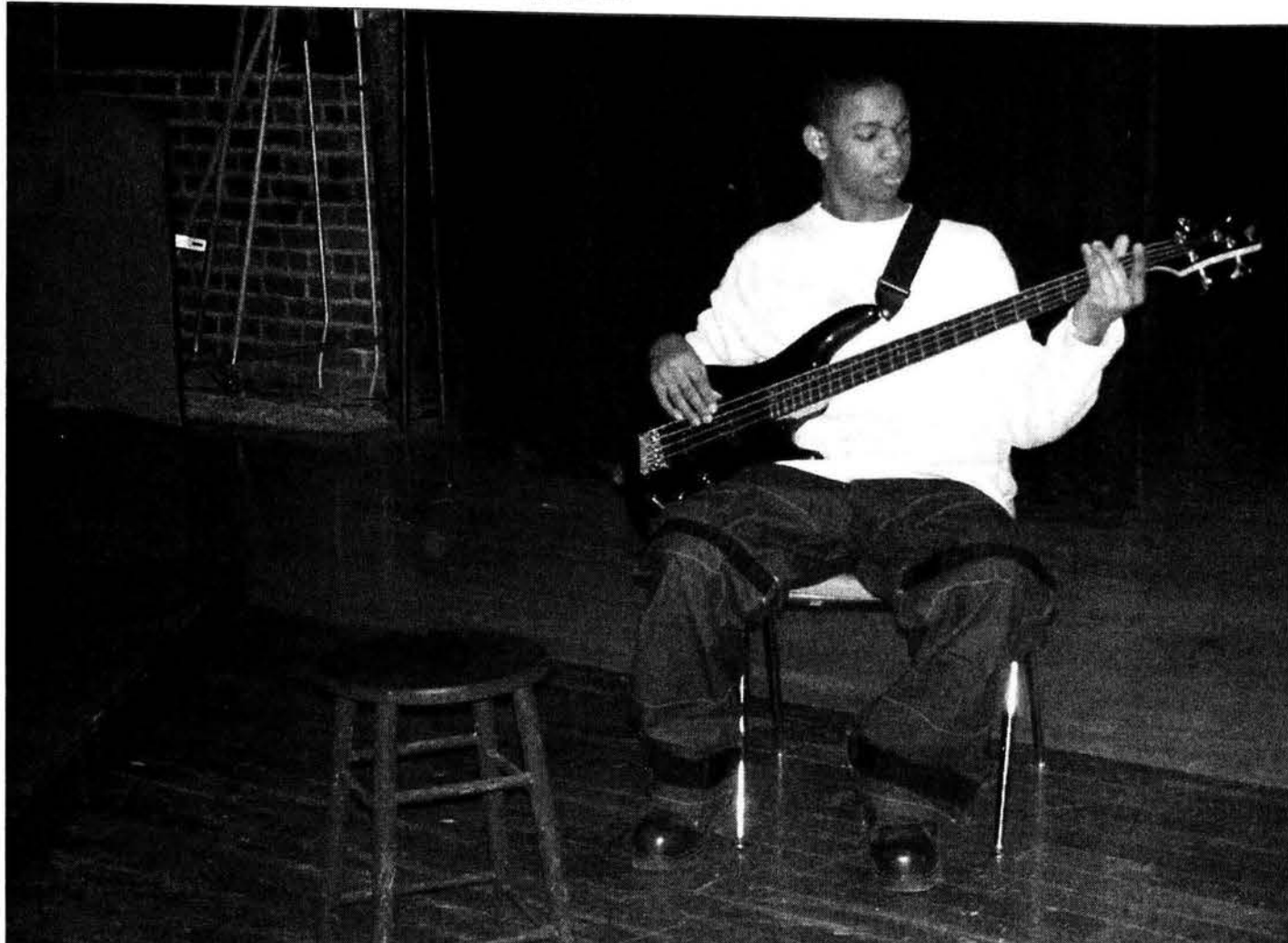


Photo By PAULA SALHANY/THE REGISTER

Senior Jonathan Johnson practices with his band for roadshow. His band, one of the 29 acts that will perform in the show, will be playing a mixture of hip-hop and jazz music.

Roadshow continues tradition

By Kaitlin Butz

All around Central, students are busy practicing and polishing their acts for the 88th annual Roadshow. This variety show attracts an eclectic mix of acts from students of all grades. Many students said Roadshow has become one of Central's best traditions.

Junior Norma Reynolds will be in Roadshow for the third year in a row. Reynolds prepared several musical numbers for tryouts and made it into the show performing the song "You Must Love Me," from the musical "Evita."

Reynolds said she enjoys Roadshow because of the sense of pride and the surge of energy she feels when performing on stage. She also said Roadshow was a good opportunity for students to do something they created themselves.

"It's not so often that you get to see what kids can do on their own," she said.

Senior Rose Payne is another returning performer in Roadshow. Payne was part of a dance act last year and will be one of the three masters of ceremonies added to the show this year.

Payne said she really enjoyed participating last year. She said performing was a thrill for her and she felt appreciated by those involved.

Seniors Ben Huston, Dac Vu, Rafiq Kamal and Erik Rudd will be performing

ing a breakdancing number. Huston, Kamal and Rudd had all been in Roadshow at least once before.

Though Vu, Huston and Rudd all confessed to being nervous before the audition and Kamal could not be there because of wrestling practice, the act was accepted into the show.

For acts to get into the show, they had to be approved by a panel of about 32 judges, drama teacher John Gibson said. This panel was made of alumni, teachers, students and other school staff members.

Gibson said staff judges included English teachers Marcie Mahoney, Cristina Flaherty-Colling, and Dolores D'Agosto, counselor Richard Servis and bilingual liaison Celane Smith.

All of the student judges were seniors. To be selected as a judge, Theresa Fuchs said she went to Gibson and expressed her interest in becoming one. Gibson said fewer seniors expressed interest this year than what he was told was normal for previous years.

Acts were judged on a number of different factors, said judge Andrew Maxey. He said he considered quali-

ties like uniqueness, originality, consistency and showmanship.

There were some changes made in this year's show. However, Gibson said this is not uncommon.

"I think by the nature of the show, it changes every year," he said.

One of these differences from last year's show was the opportunity for students to audition for master of ceremonies (MC). Besides Payne, seniors Jon Kodera and Khay Patterson were selected. He said he thought adding an MC would add a lot to the show.

"It'll be easier to help the audience follow the program," he said.

Gibson said he used a notebook full of instructions, left by former drama teacher Pegi Georgeson, to help him run his first Roadshow. He also received help from vocal music teachers Lyn and Steve Bouma, drama teacher Kris Jonyka and the stage crew.

Many students said that over the years Roadshow has become one of the most important traditions at Central.

"Big word right there, tradition," Maxey said.

88th ROADSHOW

First Roadshow directed by John Gibson

85 acts auditioned only 29 accepted

Matinees are periods 1-4 Feb. 6 and 7, shows are Feb. 8 and 9 at 7 p.m.

Album Releases

February

5 - Norman Cook "All Star Breakbeats"

Norman Cook, better known as Fatboy Slim, releases his newest album under his lesser-known name. Cook gained notoriety with albums such as "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" and "Halfway Between the Gutter and the Stars."

12 - Chris Isaak "Always Got Tonight"

The musician behind "Wicked Games," deemed the hottest video on MTV and "Baby Did a Bad, Bad Thing," from the soundtrack to "Eyes Wide Shut," releases his new album. He is also the host of his own cable show.

12 - Funkmaster Flex "60 Minutes of Funk, Vol. V"

A funk master, Flex releases another volume from his "60 Minutes of Funk" collection. Rest assured that if you buy one, they won't send you new albums to audition every month.

19 - Elvis Costello "This Year's Model"

Elvis Costello releases his first new album in quite some time, "This Year's Model." Costello's vocal stylings can be caught with Burt Bacharach in "Austin Powers II, The Spy Who Shagged Me."

26 - Alanis Morissette "Under Rug Swept"

Singer Alanis Morissette returns for her first studio album in several years. After the mega success of her debut "Jagged Little Pill" and the failure of its follow up, Morissette is surely hoping for a hit.

26 - Gorillaz "G Sides"

Cartoon band Gorillaz, brain child of Dan the Automator and Blur's Damon Albarn, continues its mix of hip-hop, techno and alternative with its new release "G Sides." This genre-hopping group has been winning over listeners since the release of their single "Clint Eastwood" last year.

26 - Joey Ramone "Don't Worry About Me"

Joey Ramone's album will be released. Joey was one of the most beloved Ramones, the band that laid cornerstones in the punk movement of the 1970s.

Movie Releases

February

1 "Slackers"

8 "Below"

"Big Fat Liar"
"Collateral Damage"
"Rollerball"

15 "Crossroads"

"Hart's War"
"John Q"
"Return to Neverland"
"Supertroopers"
"Waking up in Reno"

22 "Dragonfly"

"The New Guy"
"Queen of the Damned"

Drama

February

3 "How the Other Half Loves" at Bellevue Little Theater
"Confetti" at the Rose
"Othello" at Orpheum

12 "Cinderella" at Orpheum

14 "Alice Deep in Wonderland" at Millennium
"Godspell the Musical" at Millennium

15 "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" at Playhouse

16 "The Foreigner" at Dundee Dinner Theatre

17 "Over the River and Through the Woods" at Playhouse

22 "Cabaret Weekend" at Dundee Dinner Theatre

24 "The Ice Fishing Play" at the Blue Barn Theatre

24 "The Mouse and the Motorcycle" at the Rose

1-24 "The Shaughraun" at the Saint Brigit Theatre

Concerts

February

1 First Friday Jam at Joslyn

3 Trick Pony at Royal Grove, Lincoln

5 Wesley Willis at Sokol

6 Unity Fest: Agnostic Front, T.S.O.L., The Casualties and Rise Against at Ranch Bowl

15 Lennon, Speakeasy at Ranch Bowl

20 Punks vs. Psychos (Featuring Lars Frederikson and the Bastards, Nekromantix and Tiger Army) at Ranch Bowl

Leaving Town

February

5 Nelly Furtado at Fillmore Auditorium, Denver

6 Static X and Soulfly at Fillmore Auditorium, Denver



Photo courtesy of Wind-up Records

15 Creed (above) at Kemper Arena, Kansas City

25 Ani DiFranco at Liberty Hall, Manhattan, Kansas



THE FAINT
National act stays true
to the city where it
first got started.
PAGE 20

Cog Factory 1995-2002



This photo illustration displays two local bands who played the Cog Factory since its inception. Conor Oberst, the lead singer of Bright Eyes and a member of Deeparacidos, is in the red cog. Mousetrap, who played the Cog Factory while it was just getting off of the ground, is displayed in the blue cog.

Oberst courtesy of SADDLE CREEK RECORDS
Other photo courtesy of KEVIN JONES

Photo illustration by LUENINGHOENER/THE REGISTER

Club closed due to back taxes

By Kaitlin Butz

The Cog Factory was hidden away on a stretch of Leavenworth Street that is mostly populated with dilapidated storefronts and gas stations.

It was Omaha's answer to CBGBs in New York, a little club for any pick-up punk or hardcore band to put on a show.

The club had its share of problems. The roof leaked, the bathrooms were in horrible shape and the rent had just been raised. However, it was one of the few all-ages, all-the-time venues to be found in Omaha.

When it was discovered that the Cog Factory had not been collecting sales tax on the money taken at the door, it became clear that the club would have to shut down.

The Cog Factory was scheduled to close with a pair of benefit shows on Jan. 25 and 26, but the last show ended up being played on Jan. 11.

The performers at the last show included the Musico and the Carsingents.

Tom Norris, director of Legislative Policy for the State Revenue Department, said all admissions to concert venues are subject to sales tax.

This applies to both pre-sold tickets and cover

See COG, page 21

'Black Hawk Down' exhibits actor's talents, strong script



Courtesy of COLUMBIA PICTURES

Staff sergeant Ed Yurek dodges fire from a Somali militia in the hit film "Black Hawk Down." Yurek is played by Thomas Guiry in this film about a 1993 secret operation to break up civil war in Somalia. The movie exhibits strong cinematography, a talented cast of actors and a strong script.

By Layne Gabriel

The city in "Black Hawk Down" looks like footage of Berlin after World War II: decrepit, littered with bodies and riddled with bullet holes.

A helicopter lies mangled in the streets while troops dodge shots from a militia.

But it's not the 1940s. It's 1993.

"Black Hawk Down," is based on a true story of a group of soldiers trying to break up a civil war, is spectacular, but very violent.

The film was captivating. It draws the viewer into the scenes and comes to life beautifully, which makes the already-intriguing film all the more enticing.

In the film, U.S. troops have been deployed to Somalia to put an end to a civil war.

They were sent to capture two top lieutenants of warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid, who has turned the country into a disaster.

The film opens with a short

explanation of the status of Somalia.

Armed service men are training at the Mogadishu airport, which has become their base, preparing to take out the Somali government.

On Oct. 3, the force is deployed in a mission that is supposed to take only an hour to complete. Instead, the mission took over 15 hours.

The story was turned into a little over two hours of violence and war, and the perils of the destruction that come with it.

The forces are greeted with gunfire from the rebel militia, who also happen to take out two Black Hawk helicopters in the process.

Following the seizure of many Somali leaders, the most important part of the mission is to get the wounded and dead out of danger.

The battle ensues in a highly-populated shopping district in Mogadishu.

After the first few minutes of battle scenes, viewers become

desensitized to the bodies thrown

and falling after a gunshot wound.

But there are scenes that go back to remind people how war truly is.

Josh Hartnett plays Staff

Matt Everson, a young man who put in charge of some forces performs wonderfully.

Ewan McGregor and Sizemore also make appearances. Company Clerk John Grimes, Lt. Col. Danny McKnight, respectively.

The violence that is the theme of the film allows for character development, but viewer still feels compassion.

Although the film is violent, truthfully recreates American war. Scenes of small groups of soldiers running and the crunching of their feet through the rubble make it easy to identify with the film.

Most of the scenes seen are grainy and old, and the camera angles really helped set the tone of this excellent film.

MOVIE REVIEW

"Black Hawk Down"
Rated R

2 2 2 2 of 5

Directed by: Ridley Scott
Starring: Josh Hartnett,
Ewan McGregor

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THE EDGE

The

January 31, 2002
Volume 1, Issue 3



Knocking the
doors to the
stereotypes,
impressions and
opinions in your mind

Perceptions

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Perceptions shape our identity. They are the literal and abstract ways we interact with society, culture and the people we deal with every day.

They have become ingrained in every aspect of life. This issue, the EDGE takes an in-depth look at the motivations behind social perceptions.

Walking down Central's halls, we use perceptions to see obstacles in our path. Many take for granted this use of sight.

Groups of students who appear to fit some prescribed image actually don't. They are individuals, not some stereotype.

The girl who once thought she did not have the "ideal" look realizes her true beauty, acknowledging that appearance is relative.

Teachers who seem to be working against you may really just be trying to help.

Online conversations that seem harmless can become dangerous because visual perceptions cannot be used.

Countries that appear bizarre may just be hard to understand. A Central student talks of her experiences living in a foreign country.

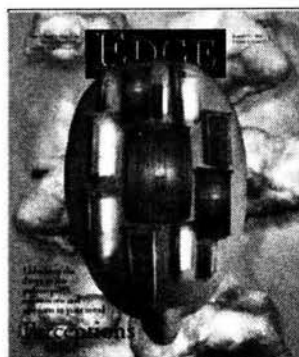
From the way we observe our surroundings to our impressions of society, perceptions determine how and what we see.

SPECIALTY ISSUE



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ILLUSTRATION BY LUENINGHOENER



COVER ILLUSTRATION BY LUENINGHOENER

Cover

Perceptions are a common part of society. In this specialty issue, the **EDGE** attempts to explain how some people stave off perceptions, keeping an open mind, while others simply don't. Even to make simple choices, people allow stereotypes and first impressions to govern their thoughts.

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Several students and teachers were asked to write about some common perceptions in a high school. Questions were asked concerning stereotypes of teachers and students and how perceptions are sometimes ill-conceived. The following two letters are a couple of examples of those responses.

A teacher's view on students

Many people at Central High School, and in the world at large, think of me as a nice person. Because I am not delusional, I know there are people who would choose every different adjective for me.

For the most part, people see me as helpful and desiring to be a good influence. It might shock people to hear that, if there is such thing as a judgmental disorder, I have it. I have a constant refrain of evil comments in my head. Sometimes my mouth lets them out. Because I am a grown-up, however, I separate my inherent evil from my professional behavior.

I often hear that people in the community see my students as lazy, uneducated, violent and unable to learn. People who believe this are using it as an excuse not to take on the difficult task of helping young people become good grown-ups.

My general opinion of my students, whether they are freshmen or seniors, is that they are basically good people who are not necessarily academically oriented.

Approximately 50 percent of my students this year are serious students who actively enjoy learning. Others need a little more coaxing.

Due to the variety of Central's population, I find it impossible to categorize students as a unit. I no longer try. As cliché as it might sound, I recognize all of my students are unique and require different levels of kindness, interest and butt-kicking to live up to their potential.

As a teacher, I face the problem of overcoming first impressions constantly. At the start of the school year, I use them to help me learn names.

In my head I think of students by the type of hair (pointy!), type of behavior (spastic!), or by any other characteristic that will help me remember names quickly. I am infinitely more comfortable with people when I can name them.

It throws me off if a student with normally spiky hair lays off the gel for a day. Knowing about my students gives me a slight edge, which I need if I am to be the authority in the classroom.

Sometimes my initial opinions are based upon previous interactions with the students or with their siblings. Sometimes I ask other English teachers about my class lists before the school year starts.

I want to know what I am up



**Jennifer Stastny
English Teacher**

against and how to arrange my seating chart.

This is not always an attempt to separate the "bad" students. Sometimes I learn who needs to sit in front to see better, who needs one-on-one attention and who will never ask for help but always needs it. Often I learn about past transgression of evil nature. Some of those cause me a little anxiety.

Why am I not mortified by my attempts to classify students before I meet them? Well maybe it's a giant cop-out, but I refer myself back to educational psychology and Jean Piaget.

He stated that people are born with an innate mental organization, in which the component parts are called schemes in infancy and structures as the person grows older and has more complex experiences.

I also do not feel bad about judging others because I exercise my higher level of human

intellectual function. Even though my first impression of a person might be less than stellar, I am also willing to get to know him/her. Sometimes this backfires and a student hurls epithets at me as he/she is escorted out.

Most of the time, though, my world is enriched by the people I know. I have a perfect example from this school year. I will call the student in question Bob, because I call everyone Bob.

Many people told me that I would have trouble with Bob and that he did not want to learn. Bob only marginally lived up to his reputation. I had the distinct impression that he did not want to learn, but that he was not a problem.

I grew concerned about his lack of success. Then, an extremely wise woman, Karen Cirulis of guidance, came to discuss Bob with me. After the conversation, I felt sad that I had not reached out to him more.

I had let my biases get in the way. From that day on I tried to work with him more closely.

Let me tell you, it was often a struggle. Eventually he came around and passed my class first semester. What have I gained from working with him? I have learned a lot about grief and its effects on apathy. I have learned how deviling low self-esteem can be relative to education.

I have learned patience. I hope he's learned that he can do it if he wants to and that I am not as much of a nerd as he used to think I was.

Inherent in my philosophy of life is sadness for people who get to the end of life and find that they have never emerged from their shell of people who are just like them.

There is joy in becoming a more tolerant and stronger individual just by being open to others. People who lament the lack of free education in the world should pay attention to the educational opportunity that surrounds them. ■

THE EDGE

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A student's view on teachers

Since I chose to attend Central (and many of my middle school friends also enrolled here) I had already begun to look rather positively at the school and its teachers.

I am sure this, in some way, colored my perceptions of teachers. During my experiences, Central teachers have been encouraging and promoted my intellectual development.

A common perception that I would want from any teacher (and that I have found almost always at Central) is the teachers desire to promote learning for each of their students.

Their encouragement and devotion to the students they teach sometimes goes beyond the classroom. That, to me, shows their true dedication.

They have shown up at extracurricular activities and sporting events. Some of them have created events outside the classroom to further enhance our interests and education.

Here, specifically, I am thinking of a Chicago trip that Mrs. Deniston-Reed organized before school began this year for our Academic Decathlon class.

Although I think I am usually able to size-up how a class will turn out just from being in the class a few

days, I can remember one experience when my perception turned out to be incorrect.

In this particular class, I was displeased to find that the first few days seemed quite simple because the teacher went over the rules and expectations of doing work and studying for tests and then spent the entire first week explaining the class syllabus.

Frankly, this was boring. My perception of the teacher who seemed to be spending too much on the unimportant and basics, instead turned out to be one of my favorite classes.

While I try not to let my first impression of teachers affect the way that I perceive them, the first impression of a person inevitably stays in my mind until that person proves otherwise.

For example, in a foreign language class, some may perceive their teacher's ability based on his or her accent or nationality.

Last year, my first impression of the teacher from Spain was, "Oh no, I wonder if I am going to learn

anything this year?"

As it turned out my experience was quite contrary to my first impression.

So I try to remain open-minded and not let a first impression affect the way I perceive a teacher.

I let this first impression of my Spanish teacher stay with me for the first couple weeks and as a result

of it I was definitely less attentive in class.

Because I didn't listen in class during the first couple weeks, it seemed that he thought I was not a very focused student. He was surprised when I did well on his first test.

I may have held on to this first impression longer than this and had not been as open to this teacher who had such a different background from me.

First impressions may not always be a good thing.

For example, I know that some teachers on the first day will always tend to favor the students who are "normally" dressed rather than those who choose to be very

different.

The students, who may have a very different hairstyle or more exotic general appearance are often looked down upon until they can prove their intelligence to the teachers.

It is interesting because sometimes the perception that a teacher has about the student may become harmful to the teacher. I have noticed that often times the students happen to be the most intelligent or more insightful students in the class.

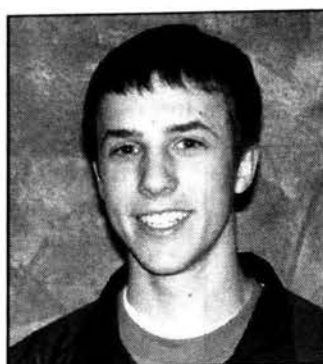
Because of a teacher's immediate misconception of a student, it may take a lot longer for the teacher to understand a student's fullest potential.

I know that in this world, especially in a diverse school like Central, many people try not to discriminate or stereotype each other on the basis of what they appear to be.

There are, however, inevitable judgments and impressions that turn out to be misconceptions.

The challenge for teachers and students is: can we let go of these misconceptions?

Can we set aside the first impression and allow the person to be him or herself, and, for that matter, to change?

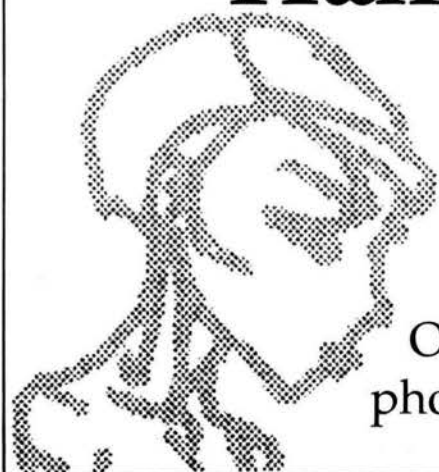


Philip Witchger
Sophomore

Hair by Jane

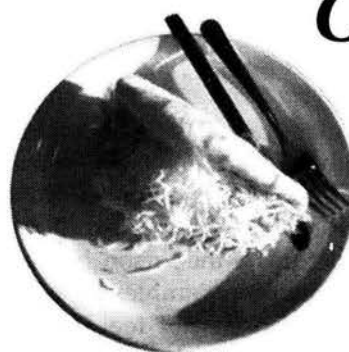
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Cassy Brouse

STORY BY DANIELLE ROLLINS

PHOTO BY EMILY NEUMANN

Teenager says being a plus-sized model causes many people to have negative perceptions about her



Nineteen-year-old Cassy Brouse has blonde hair, blue eyes and flawless skin. She is tall, pretty and photogenic.

Although Brouse is strikingly beautiful, most people stare in amazement when she tells them she is a model.

Unlike society's normal perception of a teen model, Brouse has yet to drop below size twelve.

"A lot of people are confused," she said, "they ask, real curiously, 'Well what do you model?' They are always really confused."

For three months, Brouse has been a plus-sized model for the Nancy Bounds studio.

She said although modeling has been like a dream of hers for some time, she never thought she had what it takes to make it professionally.

Because of her weight, she didn't think she had a chance. She said some people do not understand that there are plus-size models. They ask her if she is a hand model or if she models "normal" clothes.

"Being plus-sized hasn't been seen as beautiful for so long," Brouse said.

When she was about fifteen, Brouse would see in family photograph samples for her family's studio. It was then that she decided that was what she wanted to do.

At first she was too afraid to think about becoming a model.

She said she thought that people would

laugh at her or make fun of her because of her weight. Although her mother encouraged her to pursue a modeling career, Brouse still had doubts.

"It was my mom, of course she's going to think I'm beautiful, she has to," she said.

When more plus-sized models began appearing on television and in magazines, Brouse finally went to the Nancy Bounds studios to see what professional photographers and agents thought of her look.

She was amazed to find that they too thought she could have a future in modeling.

She said it was then that she decided to really go for it.

"If the professional eyes see me, then maybe someone else will, too," Brouse said.

Brouse attended self-development classes at the Nancy Bounds studio.

She said that the classes helped to build up her confidence and make her comfortable in front of the camera.

The classes also taught skin and hair care and had the models practice on the runway for their graduation.

Brouse said that at graduation, agents would come from across the country to see the new models.

"You don't always take classes," Brouse said, "But it's just a good idea to be polished."

Brouse said plus models have not only had to deal with the misguided perceptions about their weight, but hear many of the common stereotypes for models in general as well. She said that because she is blonde, she is commonly stereotyped.

"Being a model and being blonde—instant airhead," she said.

She said she is encouraged to combat these stereotypes by keeping up on current events and by presenting herself in a professional manner.

She said some people just assume that she is only a model because she is not smart enough or talented enough to do anything else.

"If you are pretty and you smile, well then that's why you are a model because you can't do anything else," she said.

Brouse is also a D.J. for Sweet 98 and a college student.

She is staying with modeling until she graduates from the self-development class and, if another agent doesn't pick her up, she said she would consider staying in school as a full-time student.

Brouse said her experiences with modeling and the classes put on by her studio, have helped her to accept her body and herself.

"You can accept things and not be pleased with them," Brouse said, "but I've learned to accept myself and be happy with who I am." ■

Art discovered in unexpected places

Smoky rooms, loud and angry people, sweat, a bit of blood, flailing body parts, nose rings, tongue rings, lip rings, earrings, cigarette burns, tattoos, spiked hair, colored hair, confusion, screaming and, of course, a mosh pit.

Welcome to the punk show. You are thinking—that is definitely not art. If anything it sounds like a bad dream or a riot of angry teenagers, they're prone to things like that anyway.

You are sitting in your conventional boxes looking at a picture of total chaos.

At least Cassat and her blurry lines and Dali and his melting clocks aren't giving you a black eye. You may consider yourself pretty open-minded, you sit on top of the box, but you draw the line at a mosh pit.

I agree. The mosh pit isn't any sort of art form, but the show you mosh at is.

It isn't about the bands themselves, or even music. It is about the feeling you get when you put the two together and add chaos.

A punk show used to stand for political frustration being channeled through the tobacco-stained, safety-pinned mouths of freaks who set themselves apart, above the rest of the world.

Now, punk music is as corporate as the pop rock bands it originally rebelled against. But the original integrity remains.

Art moves you. It inspires you. It stays with you through your whole life, altering your perception of life.

Art is your escape, and the punk show is mine.

Consider it interactive art.

How awesome would it be if you were able to pick the mind of Monet and ask what inspired him and what his beliefs were?

The punk artist is always will-

ing to share. Most of the time without even being asked. Each song is a statement, each album is a new perception and each show is a spiritual experience.

The band I saw were an established, poppy, punk band that had been around since the early nineties, maybe earlier.

The lead singer was very social, both on and off the stage.

He told the crowd that last Halloween was his daughter's first trick-or-treat experience and he was going to miss it because he was on tour because we kept buying his music.

That changed the way I thought of him.

When I first met him I did not picture him as much of a family man, but the way he talked to us humanized him in my mind.

I realized that he has a life outside his music, as do many other people who constantly perform.

I definitely bonded with other people while there. I basically surrendered my personal bubble all night.

At one point during the show, I was sandwiched between two people.

The guy behind me, in typical punk fashion, donned a spiky, studded bracelet, which he practically embedded in my back.

You may ask what is so spiritual about that.

The music took me out of myself.

I was able to interact with many people I normally would not have. It reminded me that people are just people and all that cheesy crap about the inside being what counts really is true.

The fact that you are dripping with sweat, (most of which is not your own) covered head to toe in bruises and scrapes, and slightly deaf the next day is a

good sign.

It means the bands have done their jobs. I was, and they did.

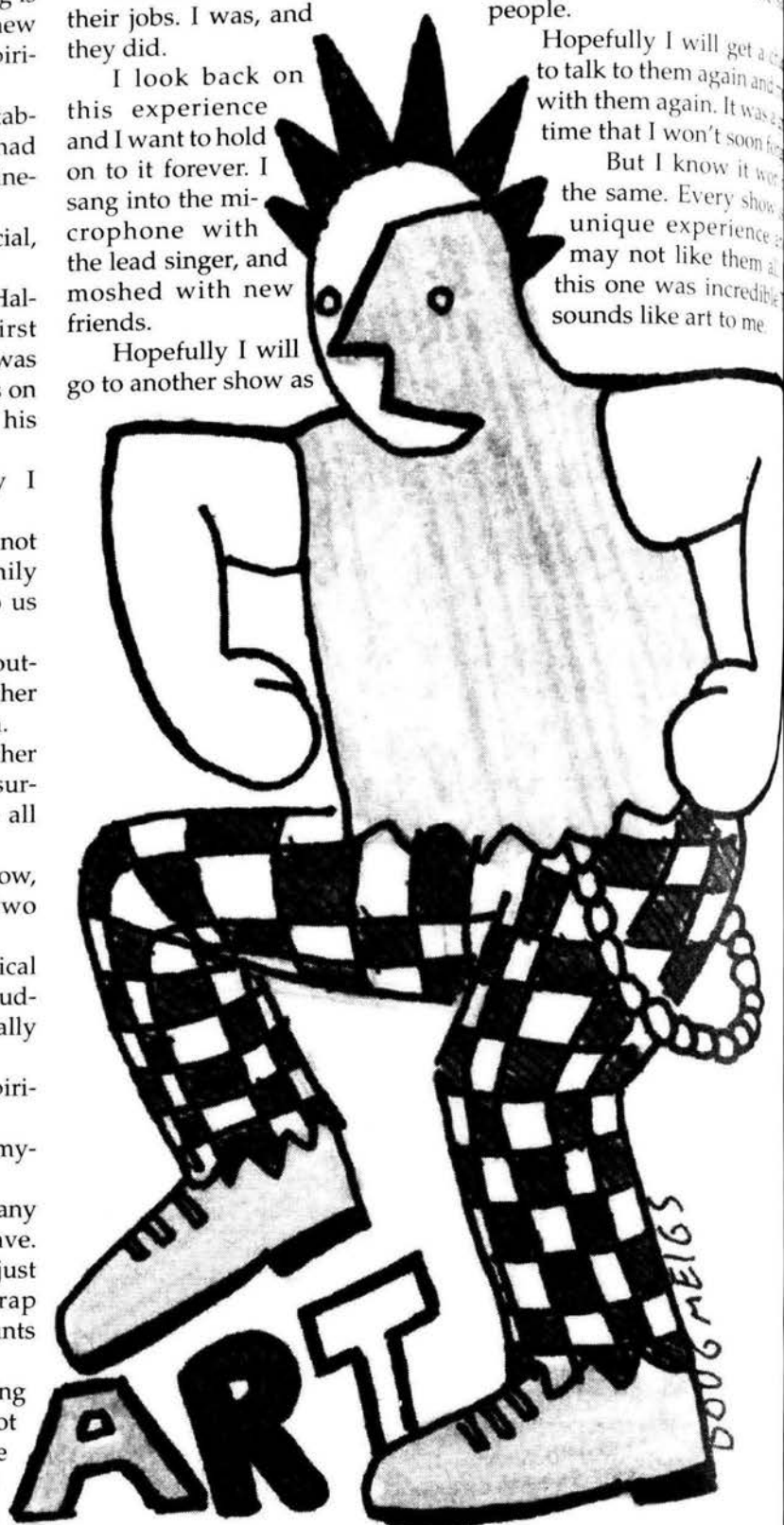
I look back on this experience and I want to hold on to it forever. I sang into the microphone with the lead singer, and moshed with new friends.

Hopefully I will go to another show as

tangible and infectious as this. Maybe I'll see some of the people.

Hopefully I will get a chance to talk to them again and see them with them again. It was a time that I won't soon forget.

But I know it won't be the same. Every show is a unique experience and I may not like them all, but this one was incredible. It sounds like art to me.



Logging ON

STORY BY DANIELLE ROLLINS

**Internet chat rooms
make accurate
judgment impossible,
causing unknown,
dangerous situations**

If you wanted to change what people think of you, what would you do? Would you change the way you dress, comb your hair a different way or just hop online?

Online, there are no names, no gender and no age. You control it all.

While chatting online, all the judgments, biases, stereotypes and misguided perceptions from everyday life disappear.

There is no way to make assumptions based on first impressions and no way to be racist, sexist or age biased. There's no real way to know the race, sex or age of the person you're "speaking" to and vice versa.

Internet chatrooms serve as an excellent way to meet new people, keep in touch with old friends and make new ones in a cheap and efficient way. But chatrooms are also making it impossible for people to use their best defense mechanism—the ability to judge people based on the facts.

Eleanor Hoeger, a sophomore, said she feels the anonymity of chatrooms is part of the reason they are so appealing. By going into a room where no one can judge her appearance, Hoeger said it is easier to meet new people.

"When you are in a chat room, it's easy to become who you really want to be," Hoeger said, "If no one likes it, you can scratch that person and come up

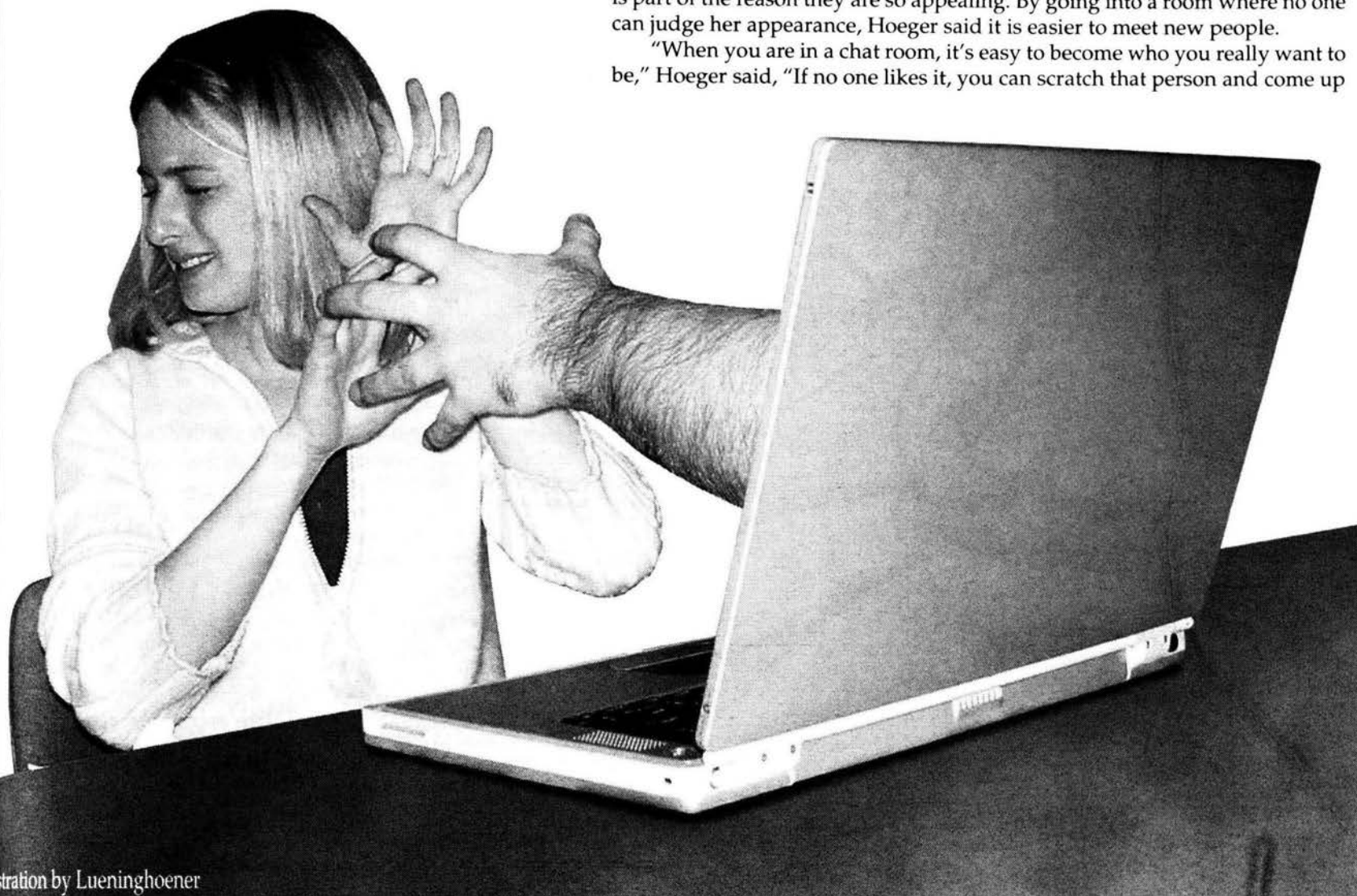


Illustration by Lueninghoener

with someone new."

Hoeger said she rarely trusts anything others tell her when she is online. She said that, unless she knows the user personally, she would simply assume that everything he says is a lie.

Yahoo spokesperson, Mary Osako, said Yahoo Chat does not set specific regulations for their chatrooms. There are, however, recommendations for proper conduct and appropriate conversation set in the company's terms of service.

"Chat, by nature, is open forum," Osako said.

Recently an EDGE reporter entered several chat rooms set up by different servers.

After about a five-minute conversation in which the other user would ask questions such as, "How are you, Where are you from and what are you doing?" In many instances, the conversation would become sexual.

One user asked the reporter her age, but only after making attempts to talk about sex.

Sgt. Scott Christensen, supervisor of a unit in charge of Internet crimes, said the distribution of child pornography is becoming a major issue on the Internet. He said that, often times, undercover police officers go online to catch these crimi-

nals in the act.

"We could be anybody we want to be, just like anybody else," Christensen said, "We're kind of everywhere on the Internet."

He said they enter the chat rooms, waiting for people to approach them about child pornography. A similar crime is enticement of a minor, which is when the user will attempt to talk to a minor about sex.

If caught in either of these acts, Christensen said they could be charged with distribution of child pornography or online enticement.

These investigations are intended to make the Internet safe for open-forum chats, Christensen said. Some online servers have security precautions. America Online and MSN both have chat rooms that are monitored for language and content.

Osako said chat rooms are intended to be a place where people are able to communicate freely about hobbies and topics that interest them. If members have problems with the service, they are encouraged to report the problems to Yahoo.

"Yahoo is deeply committed," Osako said, "We have a strong track record in terms of service."

Hoeger said she has had some

trouble with harassment in chat rooms, but nothing that she could not handle on her own.

She said she always found a way to either block a user's name or cause them to stop contacting her by other means.

Osako said members are encouraged to use the "Yahoo Family Section" and "Yahooligans." These two sites are parentally controlled and stress the importance of safe Internet use.

"It is extremely important for parents to supervise children and make sure they're not giving out personal information," she said.

In some chatrooms, voice chats are used and special cameras send pictures over the net. These inventions help users to make their own judgments concerning age, sex and race while still keeping the much wanted anonymity.

Despite the apparent dangers of chatting, Hoeger said she chats online about twice a week.

She said she knows how to protect herself. She doesn't give out any personal information to people she doesn't know and she won't chat with someone if they seem trustworthy.

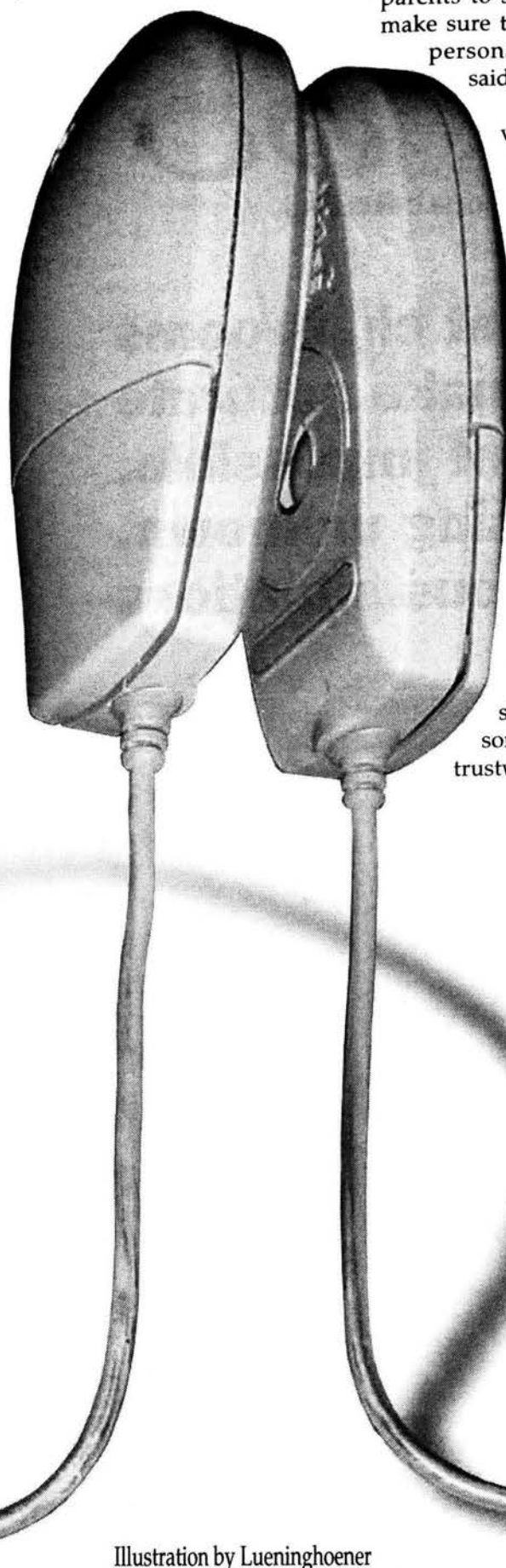


Illustration by Lueninghoener

Career decision harder than expected

Sitting in the dentist's office, an old man probes about my teeth commenting that I need floss more. At that moment I promise to myself "I will never become a dentist."

Although I had never even considered dentistry as a career, at the time I was too busy being irritated, yet interested, in the strange slurpy raw suctioning in saliva and remnants of bubble-gummy fluoride and the metal knife-like tools scraping and digging into my gums.

Everyone has different interests and motivations. It just so happens that my dentist's motivation in life is to boost the dental hygiene of America.

Or maybe he just really hates bad breath. Whatever his reasons, be them for humanity or self-interest, he is a dentist today because of his independent motivation... something which I have been lacking as of late.

We all perceive the world differently. I may never want to scrape plaque off some shmuck's teeth to earn a dollar, but then again I don't want to go around looking like a shmuck with plaque-covered bicuspid. It is all dependent on the individual.

Some may say they would never want to become a garbage collector. Some would argue they would hate to be confined to a cubicle.

In a similar line of thought, I can list any number of things I would hate to become, yet not one I can honestly say I would love to be (in response to the above preference, I would much rather be garbage collector than caged via three-sided drywall enclosure. Although in my mind, both careers are 'trashy').

Reclining in the dentist's chair I feel as if I am being interrogated. The light hanging above stares down at my face asking, "If you don't want to be a dentist then what do you want to be?"

Images of astronauts, firemen and doctors flash through my mind.

I want to have a fun job. And it should be very important. And I need to make a lot of money. And it needs to be exciting. And, just to be clear, it must have a good salary.

Hmm...maybe a lawyer would do. But then I have to go to college. College means work. Work does not equal fun. It even costs money to put it out of the question.

I look at the dental assistants as they clumsily fiddle about in patients' mouths and shudder.

I realize I should be thinking much more seriously

about a future career, lest I end up questioning patients as to whether they would prefer minterrific or bananalicious-flavored dental floss.

I know. I want to be a dinosaur. They are big and cool and can smash stuff.

Yet, again I reconsider.

If only dinosaurs could make money then I would be set. I guess that wouldn't work because there's that whole billion years of extinction "thing" and people are not able to become animals.

Maybe I could be Jennifer Aniston. She is pretty and makes lots of money, both of which I like. But then again sex changes aren't very appealing, and surgery does cost a lot of money. I just don't know if I could get the return.

There are too many options. I feel like I just walked into an ice-cream parlor and actually had some money to spend.

Maybe I should just crawl into a hole. No. I don't want to do that because then I don't get the money.

Then again I'm not coming up with any stellar career prospects,

so for now I think it will do.

The dentist says he's done trying to make my teeth shiny and turns off the light. I am finally able to leave.

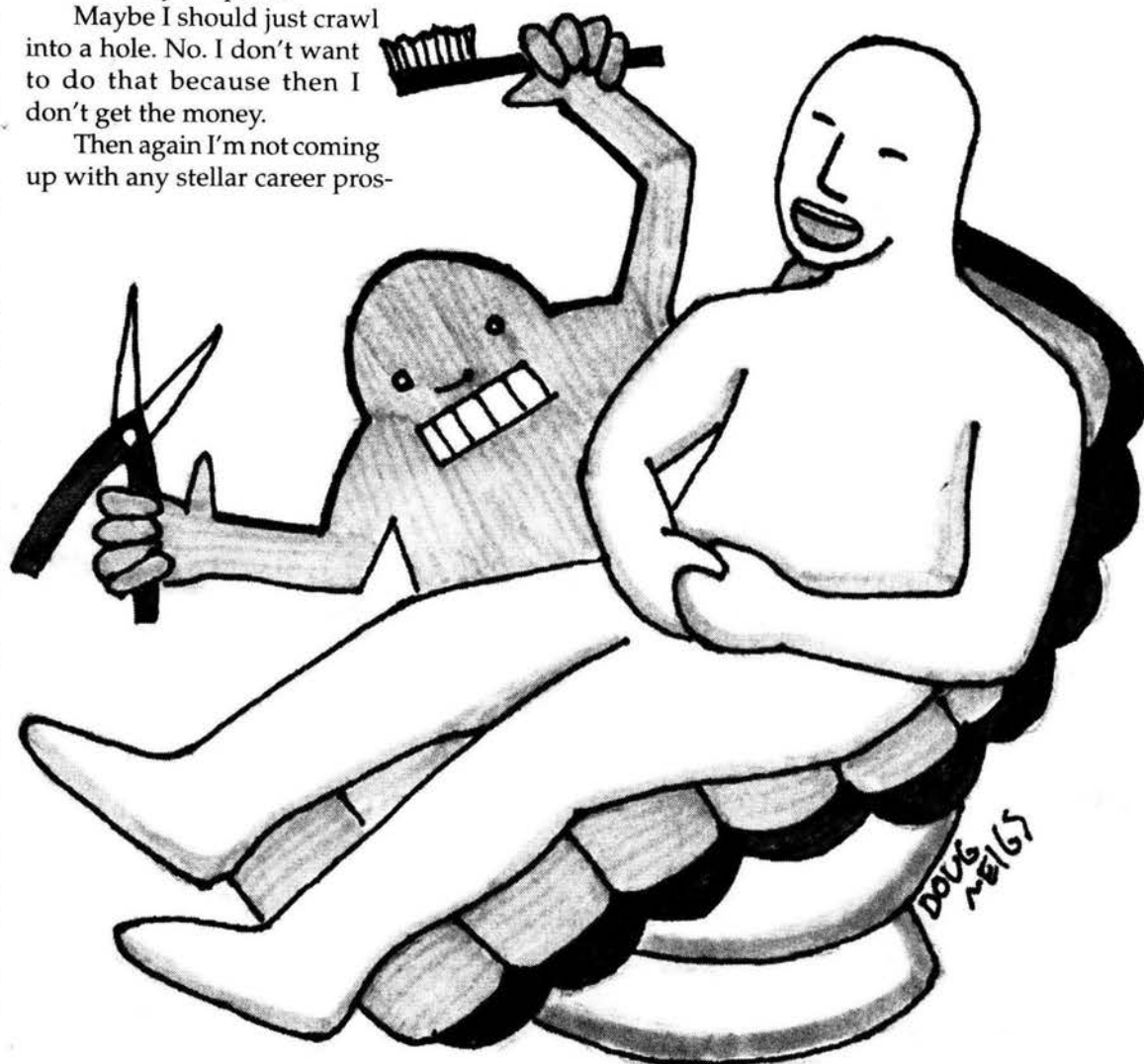
He hands me a new toothbrush, dental floss and pack of gum.


I feel stupid because I remember dental appointments long gone where I received similar prizes after sifting through some drawer of crappy bendy toys and pretty colored balls.

I used to love going to the dentist and feel even more stupid because I still enjoy receiving childish rewards for my "accomplishments."

I toss the dental floss and shove some gum in my mouth and decide that I like going there.

One of the dentist's assistants makes the customary "Farewell, have a nice day," comment. I'd bet she is planning on becoming a dentist.





A day without Light

STORY BY DOUG MEIGS

Most perceptions are developed through visual observation. Literally, they are what we see. We use vision to interact with our surroundings.

But, what if we were left without sight?

To answer this question an EDGE reporter spent a 24 hour period blindfolded. Led by a number of student guides, he underwent a very typical school day

BLIND

It is a normal day.

Students converse as they stream into Central. A few brush against me as they head toward their first hour classes. The temperature is mild. The sky is a nondescript blue. At least I am told so.

I can't actually see.

I close my eyes and open them to darkness. It is five minutes before first hour and I am blind. A student helps me to my first class. 24 hours of darkness begins.

Alone I become disoriented. I creep along, carefully placing each foot in front of the other. The simple task of walking in a straight line is bewildering.

My body is off balance. Each step I expect a collision not only with the walls, but also with the invisible bodies flowing past. I have become dependant on the goodwill of my guide and the students who step out of my mean-

dering path.

My perceptions are distorted. After 16 years of vision, I will spend a day blind. It is only a period of 24 hours, yet is still a looming idea.

Air rushes across my face. Bodies swarm past. Feet shuffle, as they pitter-patter, squeak and thud across the wood halls.

A barrage of voices yell and converse on every side. I don't walk down the halls. I follow and stumble.

It's the passing period. Students who are rushing to class and congregating in groups miraculously move out of my stumbling path with little contact. I feel like I'm walking down the median of a highway.

Someone jokingly pushes me down a hall. I have no idea who they are. Classmates stop to ask me something. I talk to them. The voices sound familiar, but I have difficulty associating face with the words.

I find myself constantly stopping in the middle of the hall as if some unknown object were about to slam into my face. Students halt to let me by.

I bump into a few of them. The already slow pace of my legs awkwardly trudging through Central's blackened hallways stops. I have to stop and ask "Where am I?" and "Can I just be pointed in the right direction?"

If I drag my hand across the wall I'm fine. Holding onto the physical world I become a sort of island. The connection breaks. Standing in the middle of the hall, I drown in darkness.

I flinch and instinctively grope about in front of myself trying to brace the impact of one of Central's countless doors. This time I find a door. Other times I stand in the middle of the hall reaching about until instructed that the door is 20 feet straight ahead. If not, I unknowingly walk headfirst into the obstacle.

After a continual collision course through Central's halls, I'd thought I developed a heightened awareness for the obstructions. However, I only became more paranoid. The incidents of impact never seemed to decrease.

My guide makes me aware of another door. After considerable groping I find it and proceed to ram headlong into it and then trip over the doorstep.

So many times I think I am walking through empty space and suddenly a hand abruptly reaches out to stop my body. Surprised, I would begin to reach in front of myself to see what I had avoided. Less than an inch away there would be a pole, or wall, or door.

Imagine being a freshman again, tripping over doorstops, not knowing where to go. Imagine being back to such a time and try to envision it with a bag over your head.

I reach class. The students are silent. The teacher stops talking. I'm tardy. As I am directed to a seat, a girl giggles. I can't see her, but it's obvious she's laughing at me.

Students in the class ask why I am blindfolded. I answer. Class resumes.

The class is physics, the teacher lectures on some topic.

I can't concentrate. He discusses some relationship between gravity and arcs of motion. My mind drifts.

The overhead illustrates the subject, or at least that's my guess. I am lost. In an attempt to take notes, I scribble some physics down on a piece of paper.

Even though I can't see what is being written, I look down at the paper. The process is futile. I space off.

While staring blankly forward I attempt to concentrate, but I find I have nothing to focus on. I remain in a similar state for the rest of the day.

A few periods pass. The class is taking a test. I'm not. I look around as if to scan the room, I see nothing.

I turn to my left to face Central's east lawn. Traffic passes the school on 20th street.

Typical sounds of downtown reach the classroom through the open window, as does the scent.

Omahans go about typical routines in a downtown that sprawls east to the Missouri river.

I can't see the scene, but I assume such is the case after countless other days of staring out the window. Omaha's skyline rises to meet the hills in the distance.

Maybe if I asked someone what was going on outside, they would give a description, but even then I can't see. I must assume.

It's almost lunchtime. The aroma of cafeteria food reaches the classroom.

It smells like meat and class is almost over. The teacher lets a student finished with the test escort me to lunch early.

Noise explodes. We reach the courtyard just as the bell rings. Chairs simultaneously clank about. I stand in the doorway awkwardly working to-

wards the lunch line. The courtyard seems cavernous.

After going through the line I sit down to eat. The guide helped obtain my meal, and then hurried off to class. I am being a nuisance.

The food feels like a sandwich. My hand instinctively raises it to my mouth. I bite. It is a hoagie.

I am surprised as my teeth sink through the layers of bread, meat and cheese. The ham has a strange greasy texture and the bread is somewhat crusty.

I eat because I don't have much choice otherwise, unless I plan on not eating today.

Class periods pass. School is dismissed. Time to go home. Someone has to give me a ride because I am incapable of driving my car.

I am directed outside. Going down the halls and stairs to leave Central I become more disoriented than I have yet been in the day. So far, I have always walked along familiar halls.

I've meandered down routes that are familiar to me. When I entered class, my desk was



ILLUSTRATIONS BY LUENINGHOENER

A photo illustration of what someone might see if they were able to look through a page in a book written in braille. Braille is a form of writing written with patterns of raised bumps that can be read by touch.

easily found because I had walked to it everyday for a semester.

The current path is a bit more frightening. I awkwardly exit the building somewhere on the west side and am directed across the sidewalk around the football field. I am told to walk straight. I try, but find myself veering off toward the street, barely dodging the poles in my path.

We arrive at a strange car. I have bit of trouble navigating around the open door, but eventually find my seat.

I am reminded of being driven back from my grandparents house late at night when I was very young. Sprawled out on the car seats, I couldn't see anything. I wouldn't have known if there was an accident until it was over and didn't care because I had faith in my parent's driving.

I now put such faith in the individual about to drive me home in my current situation.

I have been forced to acknowledge the help of others, while being babied about school by guides. Today has been a lesson on dependence.

I am led through Baker's. I remember the location, it's close to my house and I've been there countless times. Despite my supposed familiarity, I am still lost.

Customers pass by and ask, "What's your problem?" I respond as pleasantly as I can, but I can't read what their faces are saying. We leave and head for the Kentucky Fried Chicken.

I hand the cashier a wad of money and ask what I can order. I'm almost positive it is \$21, I think. She is silent.

I have a feeling she's staring at me. It is impossible to tell what her response is. I can't identify any of the physical signals we all use to

express ourselves. I exit with a bit of harassment and a large amount of confusion.

Eventually I am home. I find the way towards my bedroom. It's still early, but I can't go anywhere or do anything, not even homework.

There are still almost 8 hours left of simulated blindness. I am bored and decide I hate the darkness. I am thankful that I can always take the blindfold off if I choose to do so.

To pass the time I decide to go to sleep.

I wake to darkness. I am late.

I jump out of bed, or at least make the attempt. I throw on some clothes I find laying around. Fumbling about my room, bumping into walls, I hurriedly fall about as if getting ready to rush off and drive to school.

I stop, noticing there is something wrong with this situation.

I am still blindfolded, making driving to school impossible.

My car is still at Central.

Twenty-four hours have passed. I take off the blindfold. For the first time in 24 hours, I can see. The world reopens.

My eyes burn. They cannot focus. My body clenches my eyelids shut. I am constantly blinking in an attempt to stop my eyes watering. They are dry. I'm trying to stop them from watering.

After 24 hours of darkness I can finally see. I don't have to be led. I can walk around just as I did before. Looking about the room, the scene appears ultra-real.

Colors flash. My eyes are stunned as they recall images I had seen 24 hours before. The objects I had recently fallen over now radiate a vivid sense of reality.

The harsh light is brilliant. It is a reassurance of a new day. **E**

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Student overcomes disability

STORY BY DOUG MEIGS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY LUENINGHOENER

Doctors informed an 8-year-old Mac Brush that he would be blind by the next year. That was eight years ago.

Brush, now a junior, was told he would not be able to live unassisted by age 40 and his sight would become exponentially worse every year. But all of that is conjecture.

Brush lives with impaired vision, but nothing close to the impairment doctors had believed.

Brush is legally blind.

He suffers from a relatively unknown disease known as Retinitis Pigmentosa, RP for short.

The disease affects at least 100,000 people in the United States., according to Vision Web, an eye re-

search organization.

Retinitis Pigmentosa is the degeneration of the retina's layer of pigmentation. Due to RP, sufferers lose peripheral vision and blindness in dark or dimly lit areas.

Because of RP Brush has trouble reading. In fact it is nearly impossible without the aid of a magnification device called an SCTV.

Despite the difficulty of reading, Mac said it is one of his favorite hobbies.

He has an SCTV in his room, and frequently borrows books from the library. It just goes to show that Brush refuses to let RP dictate his actions.

However, when he was younger, Brush said it took a long while to learn to read. Because he couldn't read in the third grade, he said everyone thought it was some sort of learning disability.

This was proven wrong when Brush received an enlarger and consequently learned to read within the year.

"I became frustrated. It was not always a reading problem. I couldn't see the book," he said about his emotions at the time.

Kids at his elementary school sometimes made fun of him and called him stupid, but Brush said he would only ignore them.

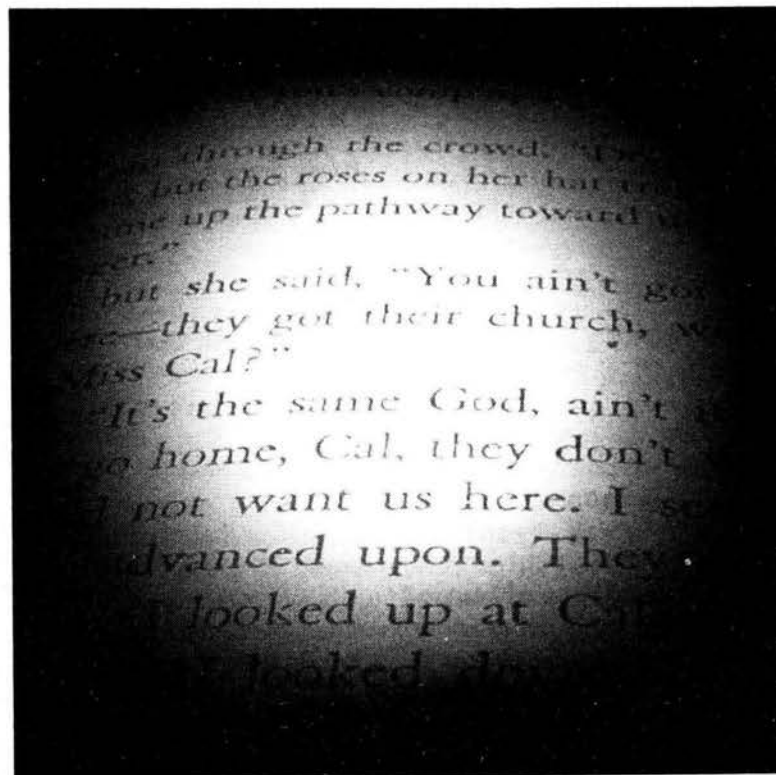
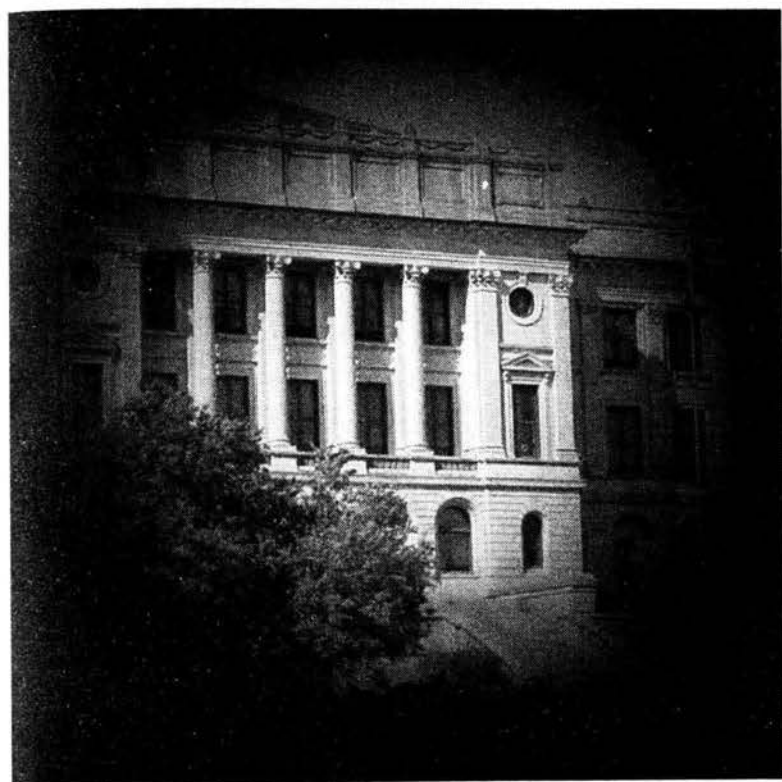
Brush has overcome his vision

impairments with what can only be a love for learning, observed teacher Cindy Newburg. It is a commitment that can be seen through his involvement in advanced classes at school.

"He works really hard to get good grades," she said. "Any time a person is confronted with a challenge, it's pretty easy to give up, but not Mac."

He admits he may not be as fast as other students in class, but he said he works as hard as he can at reaching his full potential.

"I take it as another challenge. It's not that big of a deal to me," he said. "It's just another thing I have to deal with."



Retinitis Pigmentosa is the slow degeneration of the rods in the retina that eventually changes the way light is interpreted and seen. A common side effect of the disease is a severe loss of peripheral vision, commonly referred to as "tunnel vision." Above is an artist's depiction of what a person with Retinitis Pigmentosa might see when looking at Central or reading a book. Although the exact cause of the disease is unknown, many believe it to be caused by mutations in at least ten different genes. Because it is believed to be genetic, it cannot be prevented. Instead, people who have the disease must rely on technology to cope with the visual disability.

style | cheerleader snob punk cute nerd geek jock immature violent mean thug **Stereotypes.**

INTRO BY DOUG MEIGS • PHOTOS BY EMILY NEUMANN

The band nerds, thugs, over-achievers and skateboarders ...we all know who they are.

They walk through the halls in every high school across the nation. Central is no exception. Their appearances are instantly recognizable. Their identities are obvious, or at least perceived to be.

They fit the mold. Each has a prescribed lifestyle. As strangers, we even use their names to describe certain people in conversation.

They are stereotypes.

They are the social divisions of the student body of every high school from coast to coast.

Divided by appearance, the stereotypical figures of America have found a niche in high school existence.

But for many it is a distinction that has eroded into something more like a crater, dividing their identity from reality.

The most notable stereotypical images have formed over the past decades. They have been passed on in the form of nostalgic generalizations, television show characters, media in general and easy-way-out turns of phrase.

Stereotypes have always existed. However, over time they have fallen into special notoriety at the high school level.

The following style section explores the preconceived "reality" of some Central students' appearances.

The students include a few of Central's most stereotyped teens.

They are almost always taken at face value.

You may have seen them. You may have judged them. A quick glance at any of the students, and one might assume any number of things. But, after listening to each student, one learns how assumptions can, and often times are, wrong.

The following students fall under the shadow of some stereotype or generalization.

Some may fit the description because they have decided it is who they want to be. For others, it is because their appearance is who they are.

This short list doesn't even begin to describe the multi-

tude of stereotypes today's high school students "fit" into. This section is simply meant to show a few of the more common ones.

Their appearance may be typical, but their identity is not.

QA

Nick Waszak "the nerd"

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

I think people who don't know me see me as smart or a nerd.

How does it make you feel to be associated with that stereotype?

Even though I may be smart (or so people tell me), I don't do just school work and I'm not a nerd.

Are there any instances in your mind where it was evident that a person was stereotyping you?

Yes, when a person walks by and says "Hey, look at that nerd! He's so stupid!" (Ironic, huh?)

What is the importance of image?

When kids don't want to get to know someone, they base their idea on that image. In other words, semi-important.

Why do you have the image that you do?

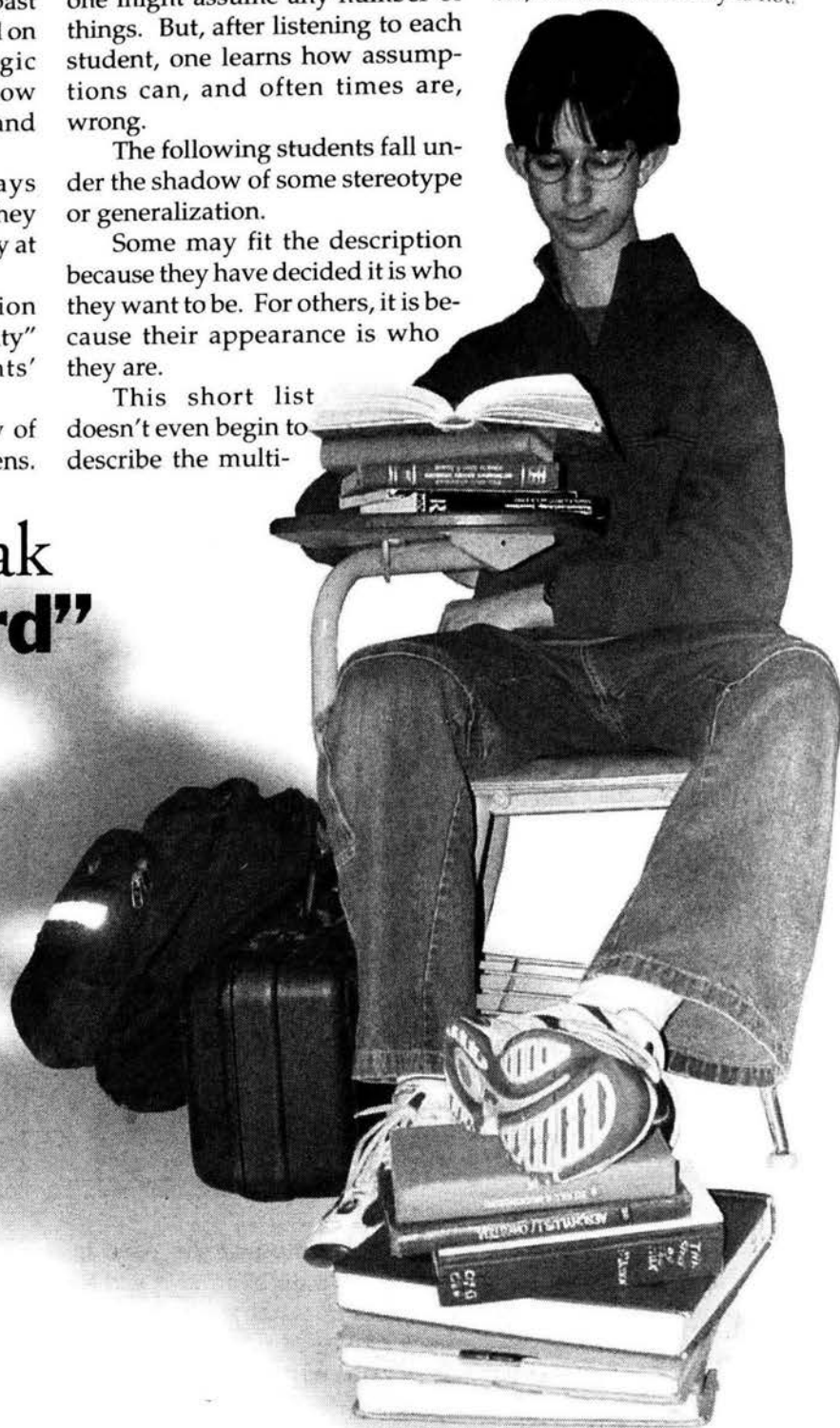
I have glasses because I have to, I wear the clothes I do because they fit, are comfortable and don't look like rags. Other than that, I don't know.

What do you think people think when they see you?

"Look, he's smart and gets perfect grades and just studies all the time."

How are they right or wrong?

I don't get perfect grades and try not to overload my mind with too much studying.



Q&A Kerribeth Bahr the "pickle"

How does it make you feel to be associated with that stereotype?

I think it's funny that people have such a skewed view of me. I laugh when my friends try to impersonate me.

Are there any instances in your mind where it was evident that a person was stereotyping you?

One time at the movies, someone saw the back of my letter jacket and started making loud, ignorant comments.

Why do you think you are a stereotype?

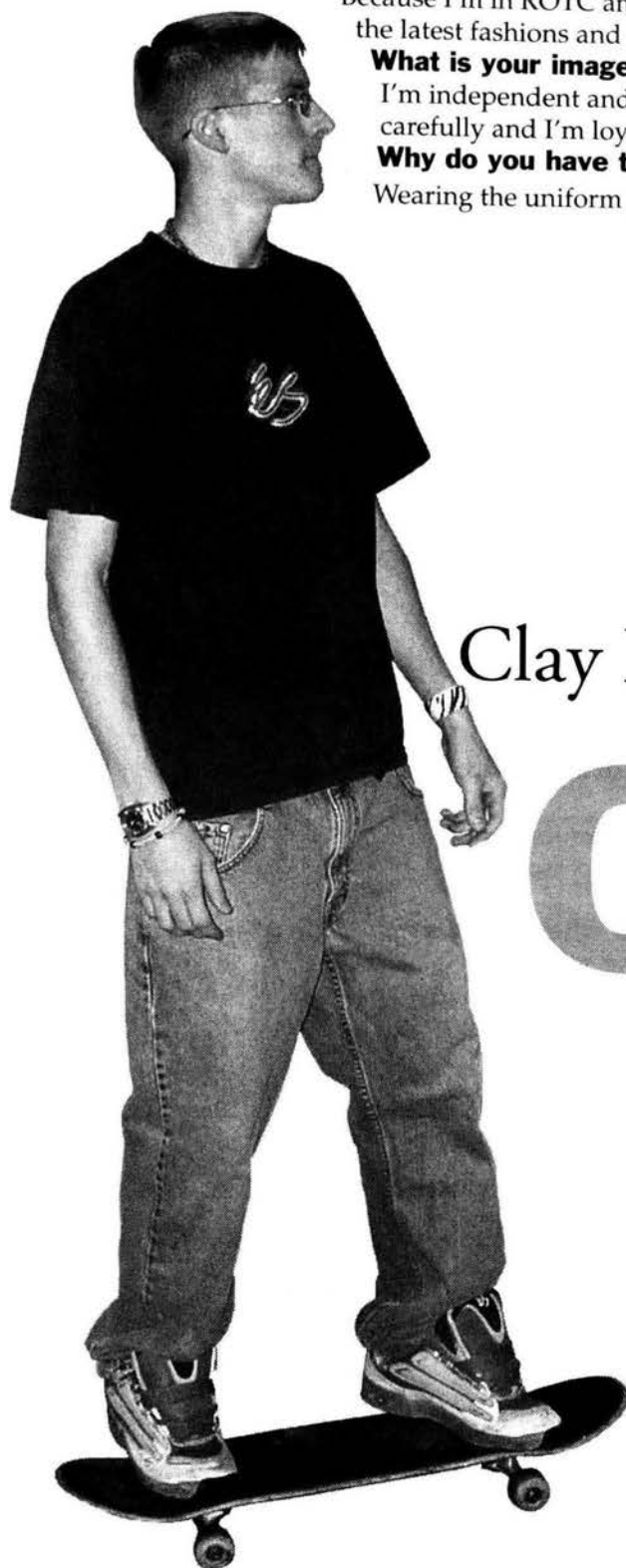
Because I'm in ROTC and on the rifle team and I'm not consumed by the latest fashions and make-up.

What is your image?

I'm independent and focused on my goals, I choose my friends carefully and I'm loyal to them.

Why do you have the image that you do?

Wearing the uniform gives me a sense of authority and importance.



Clay Lidgett the "skater"

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

My image classifies me as a skateboarder.

How do you feel stereotypes are dangerous?

Many take them too seriously.

Do you think there is any truth to stereotypes?

Yes, but only a minute amount of them are out there on which to base all opinions.

Why do you think you are stereotyped?

Because I am one of everybody else in the world, it can't be prevented.

What is the importance of image?

First impressions of somebody are based mainly on one's image.

What good thing has come about for you because of this image?

I have made many great friends on different social levels and it has let me succeed outside of school as well.

What are some perceptions of you that are not true?

Some may take me as a less-than-serious student, but in truth, I am serious.

What do you think people think when they see you?

Probably a clean-cut skater that has morals and goals to keep me from losing in life.

Q & A Raphael Adams the "thug"

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

Sometimes I'm at 32nd and California and I've got all my stuff on and walking down the street, waiting for my ride. Some people might drive by and think I'm a thug just because it's a bad neighborhood.

How does it make you feel to be associated with that stereotype?

I accept it and move on. I'm entitled to my own opinion and so are they, but it's still not right.

How do you feel stereotypes are dangerous?

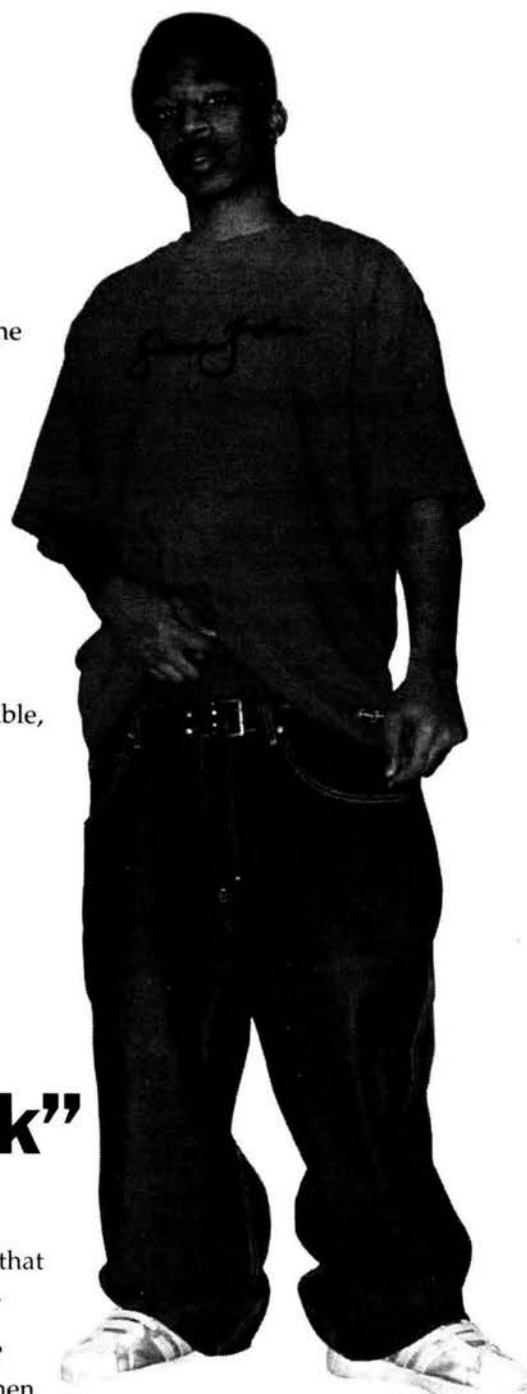
It's like somebody will make a comment, then that person will stereotype them back. Two wrongs don't make a right.

What is your image?

It's just what I'm like. I can't change the way I think.

What do you think people think when they see you?

I feel like it all depends, but (they think) I'm like a normal teenager who gets into trouble, thuggish.



Elizabeth Q & A Atwater the "freak"

How does it feel to be stereotyped?

I don't really care about my association with that stereotype, though technically I'm not gothic.

Are there any instances when it was evident a person was stereotyping you?

One instance when I was stereotyped was when I was followed around in a "respectable" store.

How are stereotypes dangerous?

Stereotypes are dangerous. Not just because of the psychological effect, but because the person you might be labeling could verbally or physically attack you if it is taken as an insult.

Do you think there is truth to stereotypes?

No, I don't believe there is truth to any stereotype. You can be anything, it doesn't matter what people think.

What good thing has come because of your image?

My image tends to keep people I don't particularly like away from me. And I meet more people like me by being identified by my clothes.

What bad thing has come because of your image?

Unfortunately sometimes I get followed around in some stores, get called petty names, and other annoying things.

What do people think when they see you?

I think most people can't relate so they think degrading things like druggie, slut, drop-out or just think I'm crazy.





Q & A

Stephanie Carlson the "band nerd"

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

I think I might fit the stereotype of the typical band nerd.

Why do you think you are stereotyped?

Music is a big part of my life, and that aspect of me is kind of hard to ignore, I guess. Some people stereotype me as being part of the "band clique" at Central. I have a lot of band friends, but they are not the only friends I have.

What is your image?

I don't really know how to answer that. I guess others who don't know me personally, but know I'm a musician might think I only have musician friends, or am only willing to have musician friends.

What good thing has come to you because of your image?

When people identify me as a "musician," they have identified a very large part of who I am, and they understand some of my personality just from knowing that one thing about me.

Andrew Maxey the "singer"

Q & A

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

A person would normally stereotype me as a choir and drama nerd.

How does it make you feel to be associated with that stereotype?

It does not bother me because stereotypes are for people who are too ignorant to really get to know a person before they judge them.

Are there any instances in your mind where it was evident that a person was stereotyping you?

I get this stereotype everyday at school, by my brother and at work.

How do you feel stereotypes are dangerous?

Stereotypes weaken a person's ability to see other people for who they truly are.

Do you think there is any truth to stereotypes?

Of course, however I have always said "No matter how much you get to know someone, there will always be something you don't know."

What is the importance of image?

Image is important because it defines who you are.



Q&A Braden Nelson the "drama kid"

How do you feel you fit a stereotype?

I think that people stereotype me as a "drama freak." I do not think that it is accurate. I think I am more of a t-shirt and jeans guy. There are a lot of those and I think I am mostly that.

How does it make you feel to be associated with that stereotype?

I don't think it's accurate. People have seen me on the stage a few times, but drama isn't that high on my list. I've done shows at Central just because I know some great people who have been in them.

Do you think there is any truth to stereotypes?

Yes, in many cases you'll find people who fit a stereotype just like you expect them to.

What is the importance of image?

Honestly? Nothing. But there is not one person in this high school who does not care about how they are perceived. Image is important to me because I want people to think highly of me.

What is your image?

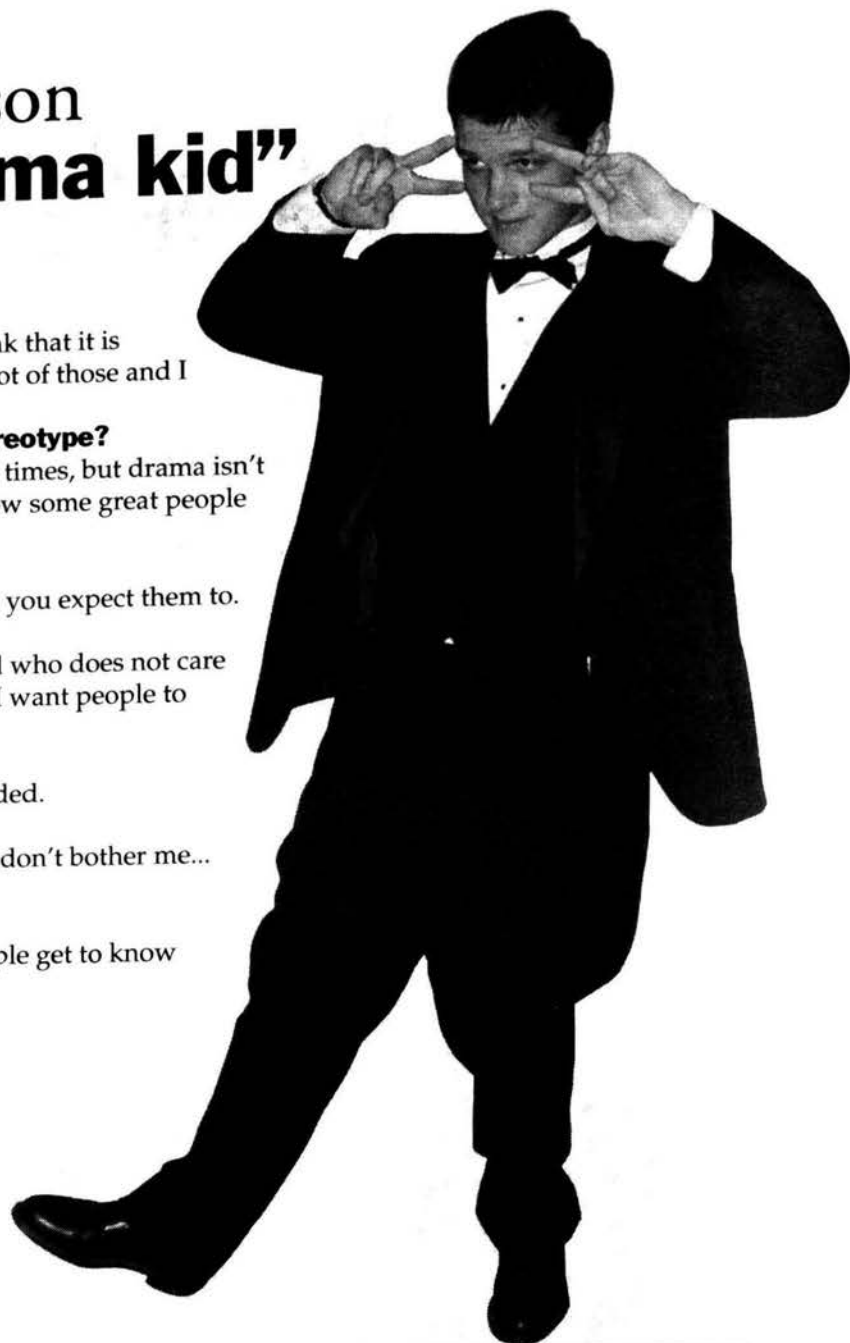
I try to be laid back, hard working...maybe even a little open-minded.

What bad thing has come because of your image?

People say what they want to me because they think some things don't bother me... but sometimes they really get annoying.

How are they right or wrong?

I am a nice guy. Sometimes I'm probably a jerk though. Once people get to know me and understand me they usually get to like me...usually.

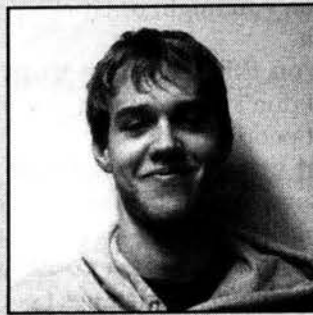


What is your Opinion? describe beauty...



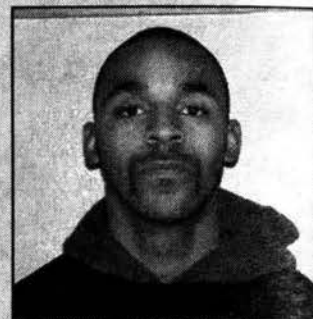
"First thing that comes to mind, obviously, is looks, personality and intelligence, and that's just about girls. I mean, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It can be anything a person believes to be beautiful."

-Dennis Yin, 11



"Art expresses the way people feel about themselves and the way other people perceive them. That's true beauty."

-Josh Olbertz, 10



"Personality. It's personality. Thickness beauty, too. Beauty is nature, music...it's all beauty. Music is the main thing. It's about rap."

-Nicki Paul, 11

Overseas trip transforms student's views

STORY AND PHOTO BY DOUG MEIGS

Foreign culture can be very strange; especially being a 15-year-old American living in a country that at first glance, "doesn't like America."

The summer before her junior year, senior Rachael Hart spent a summer in Germany in a student exchange program. It was an experience that changed her perceptions of culture and herself.

The event was a foreign exchange program run from the German American Society in Omaha. Fifteen students from the area went including Hart, her sister and three Central graduates.

She said it was a great learning experience. Not only did the summer abroad make her fluent in German, but it also made her reconsider her perceptions.

"I always thought they were a bunch of 80s punk rock kids who ate a lot of meat," Hart said of her expectations of German youths. "I totally had the stereotype of a person walking through the Alps eating chocolate and drinking beer."

She said she realized this perception was false as soon as she arrived in Braunschweig, a city outside Berlin that became her home for the next few months. She decided to go because of a fascination with German culture and the encouragement of a grandparent.

It was a trip Hart wanted to make, but at times, she said the experience was frightening.

The German students thought she and the other American exchange students were stupid and would mock the Americans because they were less fluent in German than the German students were in

English.

The German work ethic that Hart said she witnessed is something that she said has led to some Germans having distaste for Americans. It is a mentality that she said she definitely respects, and believes is one of the reasons many Germans believe Americans are lazy.

She said most of the Germans she met were initially very negative towards Americans, but just as Hart had preconceptions of Germany, she believed the Germans were no different.

While in Germany, Hart felt she changed how a number of people perceived Americans, including her host family.

She said their idea of America was based on the previous exchange students that came to Germany just to get drunk.

Hart, who said she has never had alcohol, said her host father constantly offered her beer, and was surprised when she declined.

Just as she shaped the opinions of individuals in Germany, Germany had a distinct impression on her own perceptions.

"Cocky," "egotistical" and "wasteful," is the way Hart described America after her trip to the country.

She said the foreign exchange program made her realize that the rest of the world is very different than America.

Germans in particular, she said, are much more respectful, hardworking and frugal.

Hart said she tried to learn language, culture and history. In the process she developed a love and

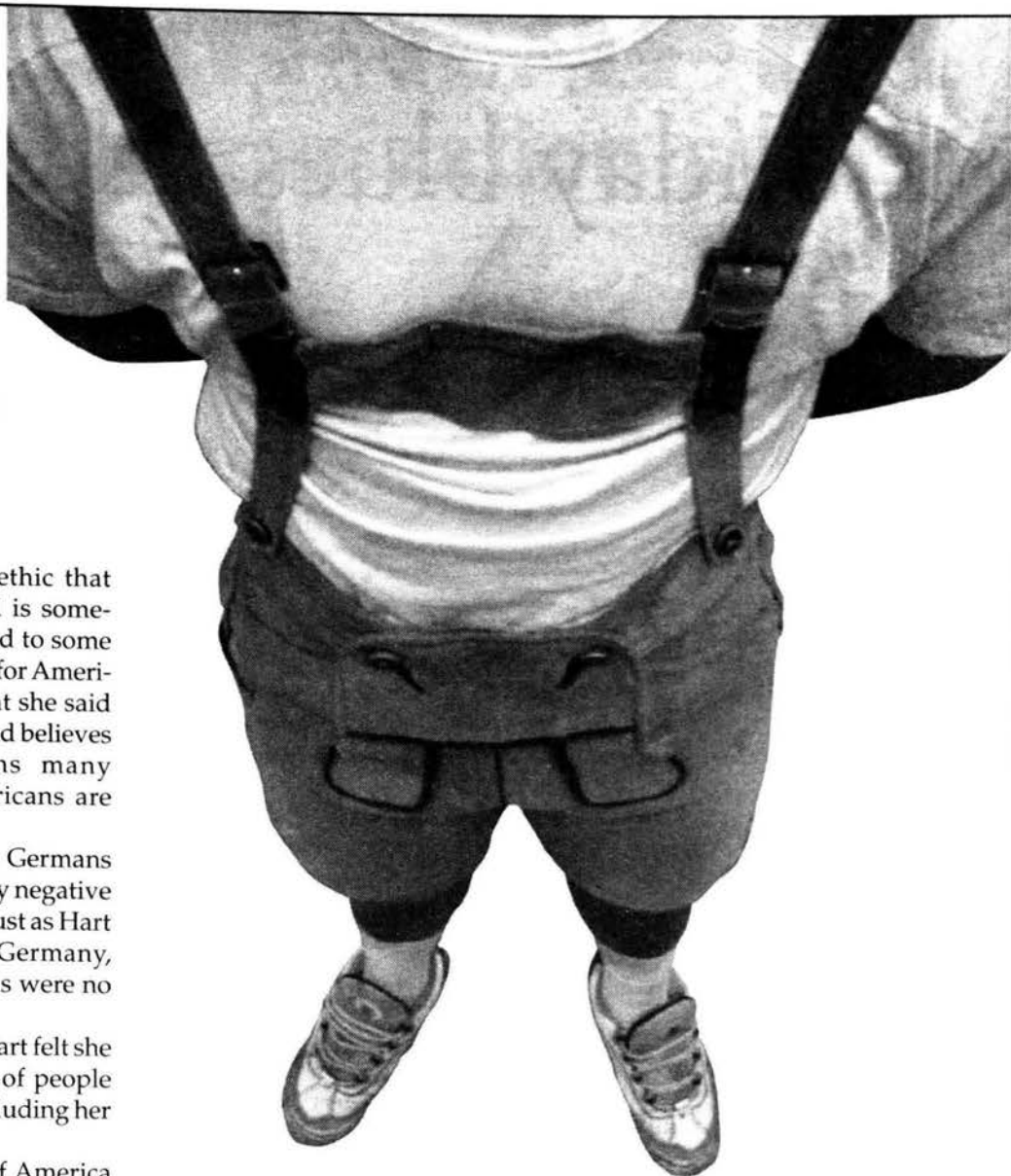


PHOTO BY DOUG MEIGS

Perceptions about other countries are something most people deal with. Lederhosen, pictured above are one example of such a prejudice. Many Americans believe Germans walk around in the traditional dress, but Rachael Hart, a senior who travelled to the country, said that is definitely not the case.

appreciation for German life.

The trip even incited a fascination for German medieval architecture. She said she thinks architecture is something America is missing from its history and culture.

Hart said, looking back on her trip to Germany, it was a very positive experience. She even plans on revisiting Germany in the near future, and maybe even living there.

Before going she said she was extremely patriotic.

Now, she said she believes there is a bit of truth to the world's perception of America as a corrupt nation. Her view of America has

been made more mature and realistic.

"It was interesting to see their side of the story. Not all Germans are Nazis like some Americans think," Hart said.

And, as she proved to her host family, not all Americans are self-centered and unappreciative.

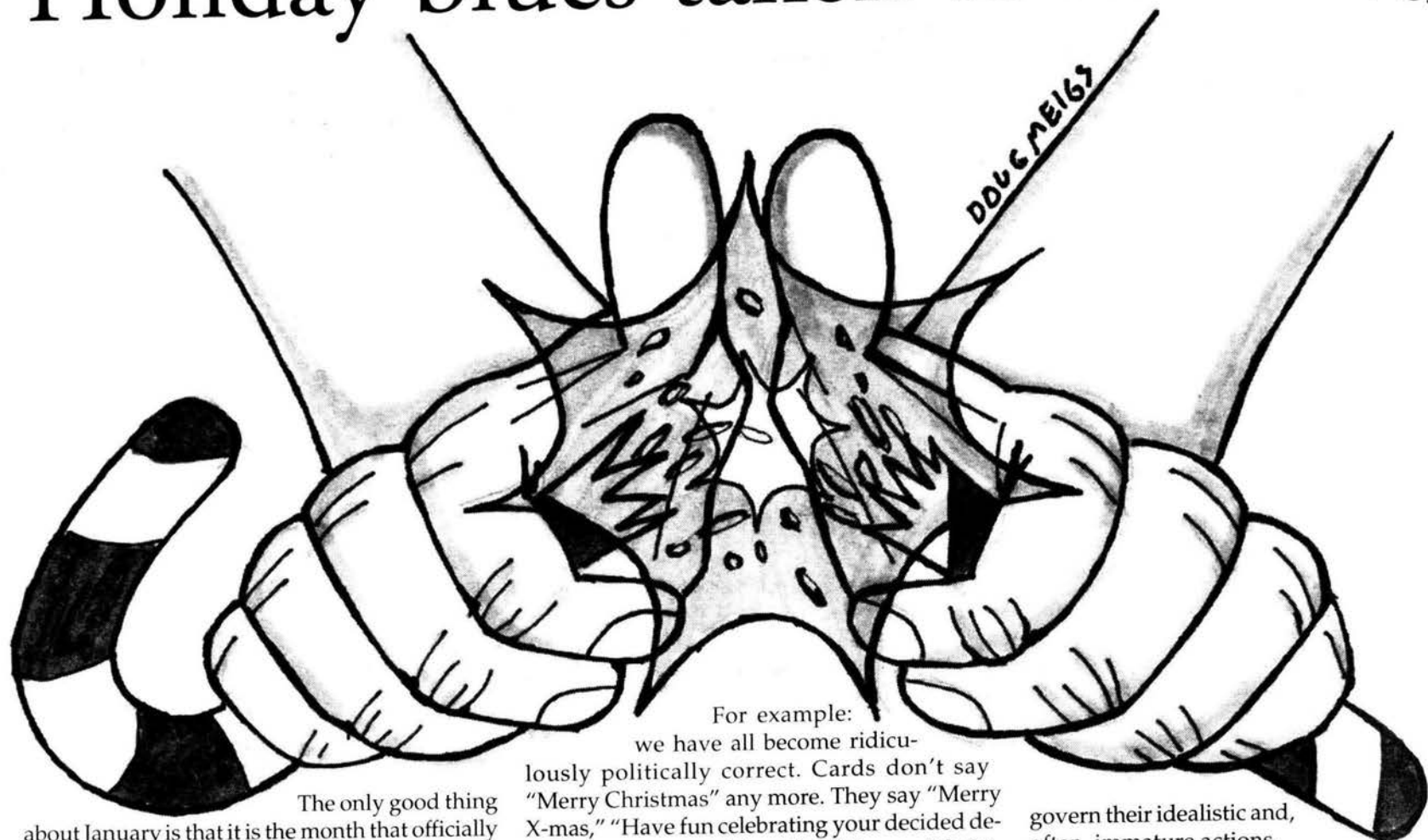
The foreign exchange experience enlightened the perceptions of both Hart and those who she came in contact with.

At one time Hart said she was reluctant to go to Germany. By the end of her trip, she didn't want to go home.

they'll all laugh at you

COLUMN BY DANIELLE ROLLINS

Holiday blues taken to new levels



The only good thing about January is that it is the month that officially ends the holiday season.

For the most part, I like the holidays. First you eat a lot of food, then you get a lot of stuff, then you see a bunch of relatives who can't stop talking about how old you're getting and asking you questions about what you feel is the meaning of life. What a total blast.

My major problem with this whole season-of-joy thing isn't with the actual holidays. I'm not bitter about my life and I don't hate God. I'm more annoyed with the people who celebrate these joyous occasions.

The common perception of the holiday season is presents, food and family. (If confused see above description) Now I am not going to go off on some "Hallmark card", "true meaning of Christmas", "where's the peace", rant, but do we really have to all celebrate the joy and wonder of God's creation on the same day? I am getting really sick of celebrating the holidays according to society's "norms." All this red and green, Rudolph the red-nosed nonsense has gotten a little out of hand.

No one is even trying to be creative any more, we are all just blindly following society's rules, not even thinking that maybe this isn't the way it should be.

For example:

we have all become ridiculously politically correct. Cards don't say "Merry Christmas" any more. They say "Merry X-mas," "Have fun celebrating your decided deity" or, my personal favorite, "Happy-Atheist-children-of-the-world-get-new-stuff day!"

I think that we should decide on a word or phrase to represent all possible celebrations that occur around the Christmas season. How about "Winter day," or "Holiday in December," or "Really-just-a-reason-to-get-a-week-off-of-school-and-sell-a-lot-of-cheesy-cards day."

And it isn't just the name. The whole atmosphere makes people all crazy-like. People all over the country buy a ridiculous amount of incredibly expensive gifts for others who don't really want them.

Suburban families across the Midwest put up those awful, gaudy, red and green lights, making their somewhat respectable homes resemble houses from cartoon shows. It is my firm belief that a few weeks ago my neighborhood could have easily been seen from space.

And then there are the songs. The horrible songs! There really are just five Christmas songs in all only everyone has made some sort of cover. In the end, you just keep listening to "Frosty the Snowman" over and over again.

Unfortunately, the holiday season isn't the only time that society allows ridiculous perceptions based on ill-conceived first impressions to

govern their idealistic and, often, immature actions.

In fact, the entire high school institution is a prime example of this very notion at work. We are all of us, walking around like mindless drones, feeding into all of the thoughts and ideas that our televisions, Internet and teen magazines tell us are true.

From what I've heard, it doesn't get much better in college and, once you become a fully fledged adult, your narrow-mindedness actually increases.

The unfortunate truth is that we cannot escape the biased perceptions presented to us by an all too accepting society. Most of us don't waste our precious brain cells thinking for ourselves anymore.

Just turn on the television and allow yourself to be hypnotized by all those pretty flashing lights to make all of our decisions for us. Because we all know that television show producers are such a deep, intellectual bunch of people.

And if we are not compromising ourselves to fit into a narrow perception of what society should be, then we are changing our basic concepts of moral integrity in order to earn a quick buck. Anything to raise that money to buy overpriced Christmas toys for the kiddies!

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