

Our boys State basketball titles in over 100 years. Here's a look at life at CHS then, now and the future.

Section E, pgs 41-52, for State basketball.



52 Pages

THURSDAY
April 13, 2006

the Central High School REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER
PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL
JOURNALISM

THE NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

FIVE TIME NHSPA CLASS A1 SWEEPSTAKES CHAMPION

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

Student arrested for tags

Police crack down on graffiti artists vandalizing city

Names changed to protect identity

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

When he saw the blue and red paint splashing, he dropped all 14 cans of paint from his hands.

"I looked at two of my crew members and they were still working on pieces," he said. "We walked on to the other side of the wall and that's when they searched us."

Senior John Doe* appeared in court about two months after he was arrested by police.

He was charged with appearance of graffiti, destruction of property and trespassing. He was then sentenced to probation, counseling, 20 hours of community service and urine analysis.

COMPETITION

Until that night with the police, I had spent an entire year dedicated to graffiti.

I loved both the legal and illegal aspects of this controversial art and had a hard time dealing with the fact that he was caught.

"It hurts," he said, shortly after his arrest. "It's like loving someone and then seeing them break up with you. It's like being trapped. I'm like a little baby. I can't do anything."

Doe said the main reason he loved graffiti was the illegal aspect of it so much was the rush that went along with it.

The thought of getting caught, the adrenaline speed and the appearance of the job made him feel involved in something extraordinary.

"You might be able to tag something on a wall, but when you get it on a wall and it rains, it looks better," he said. "And when I do, it feels like a part of my life."

He and his crew even had a ritual for tagging cleanly and conspicuously.

"The first day we scope it out," he said. "Most of the time if we hit a wall, then we scope the entire thing from top to bottom. We come back the next day at about midnight and that's when we hit it. We usually take our own books with us. We always know where we gonna do when we get there."

Despite his careful planning, Doe was unable to stay out of trouble.

He and his friends were questioned by the police.

Their belongings were taken.

Any evidence, including their black markers (the drawing pads they use to mark and plan their tags), was confiscated.

Since that time Doe has continued to tag both on and off school grounds, making him a repeat offender in the eyes

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WE WIN!

After 31 years, the Eagles are finally crowned the king of boys basketball in Class A. The largest high school in the state ended its long dry spell by defeating two-time champion Bellevue West.

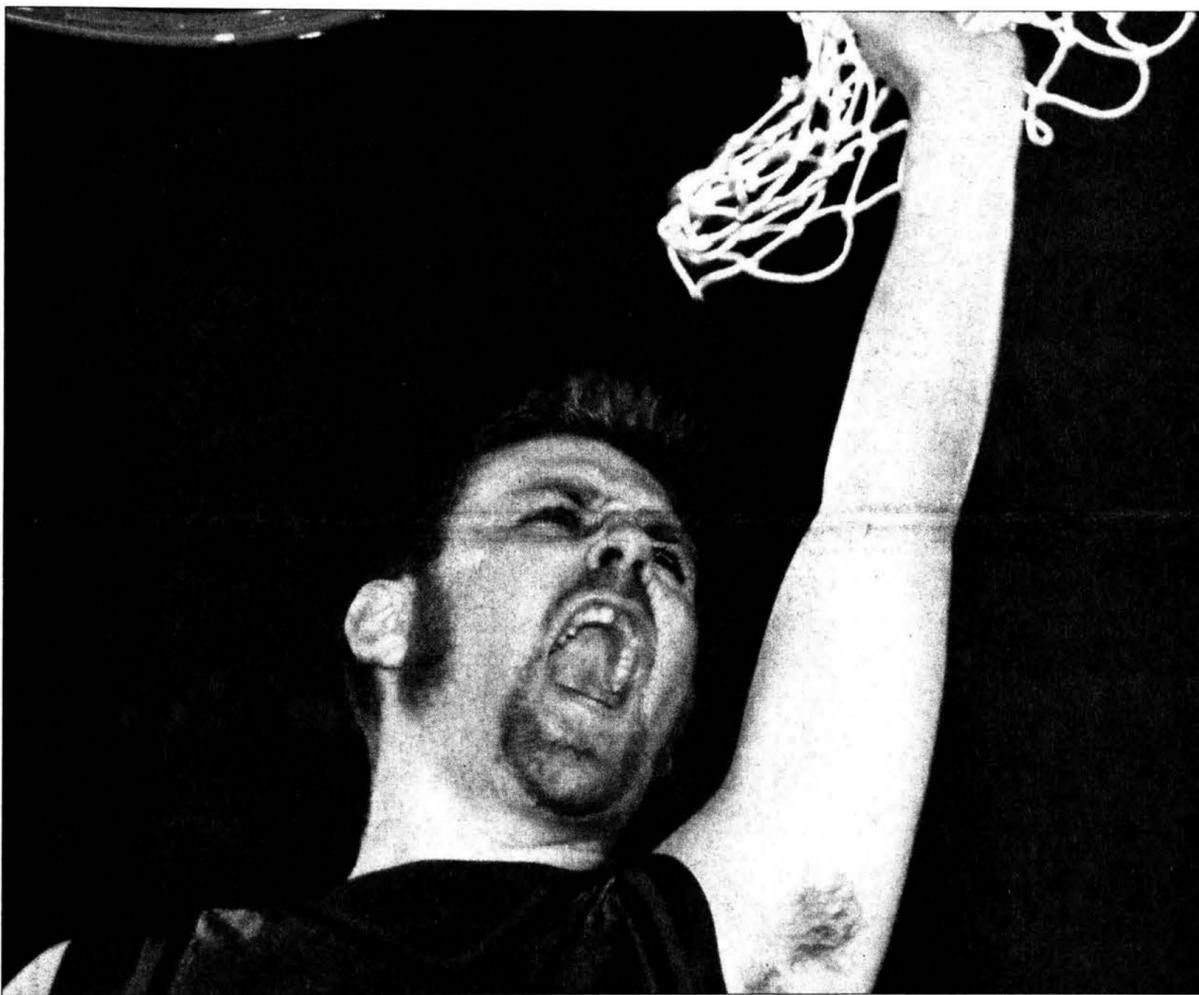


PHOTO BY PATRICK O'MALLEY/REGISTER

Senior and captain Tim Kanger holds up the net after the Eagles won. Kanger's mouth was bleeding after his teammates jumped on him after the final buzzer sounded. This was the first time in over three decades the Eagle boys were able to bring home the crown in this sport.

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Thirty-one long years, and there was talk it would be at least another year before Central would take State.

"We weren't favored to win," coach Eric Behrens said. "That's OK. A lot of people doubted us. We proved them wrong."

But, at the March 11 game against Bellevue West, the two-time defending champions, the Eagles defied everyone's expectations and took the trophy home in a nail-biting overtime game that ended 84-79.

Senior Rodney Grace was the first to score in the period, which was no surprise.

At times it seemed for a guaranteed easy 2 points all he had to do was touch the ball. But the Thunderbirds were smart, they wouldn't let him get open often.

Coming into the game, Grace said he saw some of the Bellevue West players, and they acted like the game would be no big deal to them.

"They thought it was going to be easy," he said.

The first period of the game looked similar to the Eagle's previous tournament game the day before against Kearney. They gained a quick lead and the other team

grabbed it back. Just three minutes into that game, Central stood high at 7-0, but by the 3:53 mark, Kearney had gained 8.

In the championship game, the teams traded points for the rest of the period, including shots from sophomore Josh Jones and junior Ben Kline.

"We knew everyone was against us, but we wanted to come out and prove a point," Kline said.

Still, the Thunderbirds were up 2 by the end of the period, 13-11.

The second period was the Eagles' time to take the lead. After two in a row by the Thunderbirds' senior Jack Meyer, Central's own Josh Jones put up a 3-pointer and the Eagles were off on a roll.

Grace, though a dominant force on the paint, also began to rack up the fouls. One foul in particular set the Eagle fans off into an indignant fury, yelling "Both ways" at the referees.

Central managed to pull off a 29-26 lead going into the second half.

It was enough for the players to go to the locker rooms with a little weight off their shoulders, but not



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior Bryant Cotton holds up the State trophy. He, like many of his teammates, cried after the victory.

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● A look back at the past champs of 1912, 1974, 1975

● What does the future hold for Eagle basketball?

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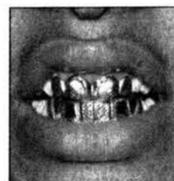
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Students fail to notice rights
Teens use the First Amendment on a daily basis, but never see why it is important.
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Grills become new trend
After the song "Grilz" was popularized by Nelly, more students are buying them.
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Chess Club makes move for Nationals

BY JOE DELICH

Senior William Chaney is a chess team veteran. He said the team has been doing well again this year.

"The team won five of the six matches in league play," Chaney said.

He said he was only able to attend two of the matches, but he won both games he played.

He said the team recently beat Creighton Prep to win its division at Metros.

He said the chess team won all five games in the match. The team beat Westside for the Metro title.

"You play within your division, and then play the other division winner," Chaney said.

He said he was always optimistic about the State competition.

The team took the State title for its fourth year in a row, with several members of last year's team coming back for another win.

Chaney said the State chess meet is different from most State competitions because there are actually two separate State meets.

He said there was an official competition in Columbus, but most teams don't attend it.

He said an unofficial State meet was held at Bellevue East, and most of the teams were there.

He said the chess team was going to nationals this year, even if they hadn't won State.

"The National competition is an independent tournament sponsored by the United Chess Federation," Chaney said.

He said the team finished 26th last year out of 50 teams.

Chaney said last year he won half of his games at nationals.

He said he thought it was a respectable finish, and hopes to do better this year.

Latin classes take national language test

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

Latin students are expected to continue a tradition of good test scores on this year's National Latin Examination, Latin teacher Rita Ryan said.

Ryan said roughly 70 students participated in the voluntary exam this year, more than any in the other international language departments at Central.

"Which is a huge number who actually take it," Ryan said.

In the past Central's Latin department has scored very well, last year 18 students scored first, second and third places.

Ryan said she expected and hoped to double that number this year.

"I would hope that at least 50 percent would get first or second places," she said.

Ryan said she prepared her students, but said she had confidence that the students already knew the material very well.

"We did go over some of the old tests," she said.

Throughout the year Ryan said she tried to keep a general focus on the curriculum covered in the National exam, which wasn't a problem.

"The Central syllabus pretty much matches the National Exam syllabus, so we just worked on what we had already been learning," she said.

Ryan said she expected exceptional scores out of her fourth-year students because the material covered in the exam was a personal favorite of the Latin teacher.

"There is predominately over the Aeniad which is my favorite piece," Ryan said.

CALENDAR

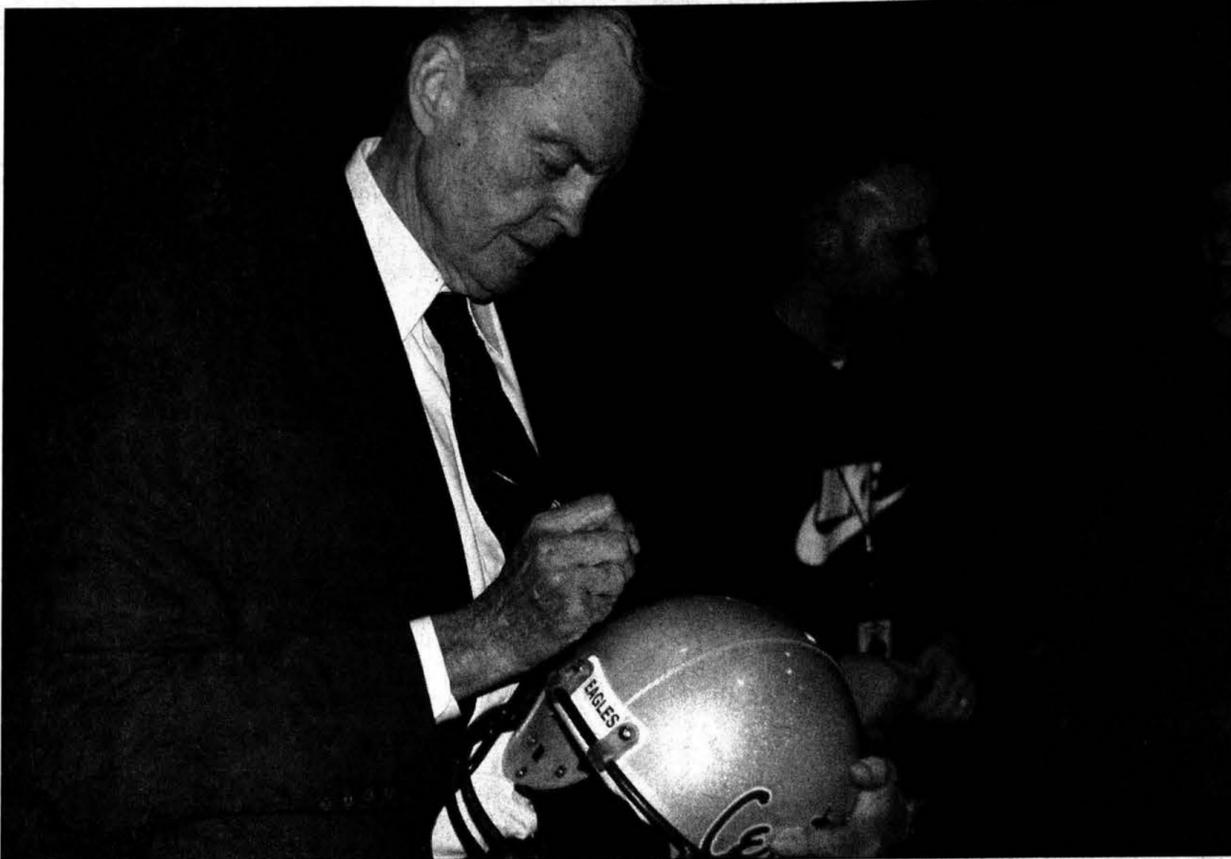


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Congressman and gubernatorial hopeful Tom Osborne signs a football helmet for the Central scholarship auction. He came to Central a few weeks before his debate between the other Republican candidates. He spoke briefly about One City, One School District, but gave no official position. "I would hope they can settle it themselves," Osborne said.

Osborne pushes importance of education

BY TANIKA COOPER

It seemed like the only thing these three men had in common was they all wanted the same job.

The Education Committee of the Omaha Press Club prepared the questions for the debate among Gov. Dave Heineman, Rep. Tom Osborne and businessman Dave Nabity at the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Strauss Performing Arts Center Recital Hall.

They are all candidates for governor and were each asked 10 questions concerning topics ranging from tax cuts to improving public education.

One big issue at the debate was One City, One School District. They were asked what they thought of it and what solutions did they have for the issue.

Days prior to the debate, Osborne spoke briefly about the annexation plan at an assembly at Central.

"My position is I have to understand it," he said at the assembly.

He said he hoped all the parties involved could resolve it themselves, but if elected governor he said he would add his assistance. He said he would sit both parties down and not let them leave until they both got everything out.

"Maybe they'll solve it in the Legislature," he said.

At the debate, Osborne took a softer approach to One City, One School than his opponents. He said the first thing to solving a problem is to first understand the issues. He's convinced the school districts should go to court and let it decide, but he did say if he had a chance to bring people together, he'd rather do that.

Nabity said he had a strategic plan about the district issue, and it was the opposite of what Omaha Public Schools (OPS) wanted to do. He said the eight surrounding schools should come in and reconstruct the district. One of his points was to balance the high achievers with low achievers.

By correcting the school districts' problems he said would also result in property tax reliefs.

Social studies teacher Rod Mullen said the problem with counting on private sectors is they don't have anything at stake, especially when it comes to redesigning the way public education is run.

He didn't say he had a problem with private sectors, but he didn't think they were the solution to all the problems.

Mullen said the real problem with public education was the lack of resources.

Heineman said he was opposed to OPS taking over other school district and said OPS should focus on real issue: teachers and students.

"Bigger is not better," he said.

He said pulling in better teachers and fixing the students' behavioral problems would be a much bigger issue.

He said cutting taxes was one of the biggest concerns with the people in the state, and many wanted to know how this would be done.

Nabity said the solution would be to modernize and streamline the government and simplify the tax code and this could eliminate many taxes such as the death tax and vehicle taxes.

"We need to look at redesigning how to deliver public education to bring needed property tax relief," he said.

He said property taxes were the highest taxes that needed to be brought down. The other two candidates also touched on cutting property taxes.

"The number one issue is to cut spending," Osborne said.

His solution to bringing property taxes down was to bring in the private sectors and let them redesign and reduce the redundancy of the tax code to create savings.

Molly Mullen contributed to this story

Upcoming Events

April

20-22 District Music

The music department participates in District Music in Fremont. The orchestra performs on the 20th, The choirs and bands perform on the 21st and the solos and the small ensembles take place on the 22nd. The department competes with other Metro Area Schools for ratings. Schools from Bellevue, Millard, Papillion, Ralston, Fremont, Westside, Elkhorn and Omaha Public Schools participate.

21 UNO Math Competition

In celebration of Math Awareness Month, the University of Nebraska at Omaha is hosting a mathematics competition for local area high school students. Prizes are awarded to high scorers. It takes place from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Durham Science Center. Students who are interested in competing should talk to math teacher Greg Sand in room 440.

29 Junior and Senior Prom

Prom will be held in the courtyard from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tickets for this formal dance will go on sale a week before the event. The cost is \$12 per person. Student council is in charge the activity.

May

6 SAT

Students have one more chance to take the SAT this year. Students taking the SAT will need to bring materials such as pencils and calculators with them to the test. Colleges and universities use the SAT scores along with a list of activities to decide acceptance. Students should eat a good breakfast and get a good night's sleep before the test.

7 Senior Recognition

The Senior Recognition Ceremony takes place in the auditorium at 2 p.m. The ceremony announces the teacher and senior of the year. The scholarships students earn will also be announced.

15 Tri-M Ice-Cream Social

Tri M hosts an ice-cream social for a final event for Tri M. At the social, new officers are announced and certificates are given to graduating seniors as a final farewell. The social takes place in the cafeteria after school from around 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Record score not enough for Aca-Deca

BY PATRICK BREEN

The sweat dripped from the brow of junior Tyler Magnusson as he prepared to answer one of the questions about the Renaissance Decathlon.

This year the Central Aca-Deca team prepared hard to win State and go to Nationals, but came up short. The Aca-Deca team was edged out in State competitions by Creighton Prep, Omaha and Omaha North at Central University. Aca-Deca coach Deniston-Reed said.

The team did a very good job, she said.

The Aca-Deca team was an underdog to Creighton Prep, but could not overcome the margin. Maslo practice the Prep team has done. The team posted scores in that put them behind Creighton Prep, Burke and just behind by 75 points.

Creighton Prep took home scores and finished first over the state. Central battled with scores led by seniors Alison and Joe Delich.

The team looked optimistic after the party held after school. The first competitions and members seemed especially on the first phase of the competition. The team had a potluck to bring morale and bring support to the team. The first day consisted of categories like memorized, impromptu, and interviews.

The second day consisted of a broad range of subjects over a super quiz. The tests challenge students intellect over areas they have studied the past months.

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German Club and Latin squared off in a game of laser March 29.

"It was my first hour that said let's challenge Latin German teacher Erica Meyer said.

For weeks before competition, students from language clubs had been discussing the competition.

"We are competing to prove that Latin Club isn't the best club around," Meyer said.

Some German Club members had to secretly take laser pointers to the competition in order to gain an advantage over Latin Club.

A few students from German Club had even suggested that members wear black.

This laser tag competition created an atmosphere of rivalry between the languages.

Most participating students this was a chance to have fun. It was also serious because nobody wanted to be humiliated and lose.

This planned competition was initiated with a letter from students to German students. It was responded to shortly after the same school day.

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DENISTON-REED



MEYER

ROAMING THE HALLS

Nowhere is safe. Nowadays the largest school in the state is seeing more and more criminal activity. From stealing technology from classrooms to ripping off lockers, everything is at risk.

Despite precautions, locker rooms make easy targets

BY JOE DELICH

The locker rooms are full of sweaty gym socks, dirty shorts and apparently thieves.

Junior Kelsie Maslo said she had \$85 stolen from her locker. She said her locker partner set the purse down and left it unattended for about a minute.

"In that small amount of time the money was gone," she said.

Maslo said she's also had \$10 stolen out of her gym locker, but she doesn't know how the thieves managed to break into it. She said the thieves were probably not people sneaking into the locker room, they were probably a few of her classmates.

"I think it's people in the class, but there are so many people in the class it's hard to tell who it is," Maslo said. She said stealing was definitely a problem, but she didn't think there's an easy solution.

"There's not really anything they (the gym teachers) can do," Maslo said. "It's a matter of people not keeping their hands off other people's stuff."

Junior Abby Fleek is Maslo's locker partner.

She said someone stole \$5 out of her locker. "I don't know how they got into the locker," Fleek said. "We haven't told anyone the combination to our lock."

Fleek said backpacks don't fit into the lockers, and there's no place to lock them up so they all just sit out.

"We're supposed to take all our valuables out of our backpacks and either keep them with us or give them to the teacher," Fleek said.

She said the locker room is supposed to be locked, but that it's probably not very effective in keeping people out.

"They say the locker room is locked, but even if it is they'll let you in and don't watch you to make sure you don't go through people's stuff," she said.

However, Fleek agreed it's probably people in the class who were stealing things.

She said she thought there were a few things the school could work on to prevent thefts.

"There should be adequate locker room for all of your stuff," Fleek said. "And they should at least give you a new locker if someone manages to break into yours."

Physical education teacher Joe McMenamain said he didn't

think thefts were an especially large problem this year.

"It happens of course, but stealing hasn't really been a problem," McMenamain said.

He said some of the things have been stolen because students left their things outside their lockers. The backpacks do not fit in the lockers, but in the boys locker room a safe place is provided for them.

"We lock up the backpacks in a room and stuff is safe there," he said.

He said sometimes things are taken from the lockers.

"Occasionally stuff is taken out of the lockers but I don't know how," he said. "It's possible they didn't lock it correctly or that a student found a way to break into them."

He said the locker room doors are locked every period to prevent students from entering the locker room while class is taking place.

"We don't let anyone in the locker room after the tardy bell, even if they have a pass," he said. "For security purposes they just have to go to class in their street clothes."

He said stolen items include things like cell phones, iPods, CD players and cash.

He said the thieves are also usually in the same gym class as the victims. Omaha police officer Larry Cahill said thefts are a fairly common occurrence in high schools.

"We constantly see thefts in the school system," Cahill said. "Do they get caught? Absolutely."

He said the consequences within the school system include a five day suspension and restitution.

He said the school will also notify law enforcement.

"In the legal system thefts are usually a misdemeanor crime which carry up to six months in jail, and or a \$10,000 fine," he said.

He said the least someone convicted of stealing could hope for was probation and restitution. He also said anyone over 16 could expect to be tried as an adult, although they could request a transfer to juvenile court if they are under 18. Cahill said if a student steals a large enough amount of money, they could be charged with a felony.

He said a felony theft is usually a class four, which carries penalties of up to a year in prison and a \$5,000 fine. Cahill said any student caught stealing should expect to be arrested and prosecuted.

Technology continues to disappear after school

BY CLAY LOMNETH

During the early morning on March 9, room 1115 was broken into. Principal Jerry Bexten said it appeared a rock or piece of concrete was thrown through a back window and an LCD projector was stolen.

"As soon as I came in the building, someone called me about it," he said.

Nothing else appeared to be missing, Bexten said, but thieves going after the projectors was a new thing.

"We've had several taken over the course of the last two years," he said.

Bexten said he thought this was because there was a market for them to be used for home entertainment systems among other things.

Student Resource Officer Matthew Kelly said he found out by school security that a room had been broken into. The first thing he did was look for evidence. Then, he found out what was missing, and found out who was the first and last people into the room and lastly, he called the crime lab.

"We handled it just like any standard burglary," Kelly said.

As for after school security, Bexten said there are alarm systems all over the school, but a lot of what happens to keep the school secure after hours must remain private.

"If you break into the school after hours, they're probably going to pick you up," he said.

Bexten said there were times when teachers accidentally set off alarms and the police were at the school within five minutes.

When an alarm goes off, the alarm company immediately notified. No matter what the case, the alarm company calls the police who respond by going to the school.

Kelly said the burglary was just like in any neighborhood. Things like that happen every day, he said.

"Think of this (Central) as a small town," he said.

He said most burglars, when confronted in the school would rather run instead of fight.

"It doesn't really put anyone's safety at jeopardy," he said.

Bexten said the fact only a few people knew the codes to turn on and off the alarms helped reduce who has access. The people who turn on and off the alarms have their own personal codes to do so.

"They (the alarm company) know who's been in and out of the building based on that," Bexten said.

One issue surrounding building security is the cameras.

Nine small frames flashed on the screen as security head Mike McWhorter moved the mouse across the images and explained how the many security cameras scattered throughout the building aided the security team.

"It's a great set of eyes," he said.

Dean of students Dave Anderson said there are 15 cameras used for security purposes, seven inside the building and two outside. He said the school has had the cameras for about three years and there was no reason beyond wanting to improve security that more cameras were purchased.

Anderson said the indoor cameras were put in places that would make monitoring the building easier and more efficient.

"We basically have been installing cameras

where there is high student traffic in and out of the building," he said.

There are computers connected to the camera network in both the security office and Anderson's office. These computers display what each camera sees, and the view is updated every few seconds. McWhorter said usually there is someone in the security office monitoring the cameras every class period.

He said the cameras were extremely useful because if a security guard saw someone doing something inappropriate on the camera, he could contact another security guard by walkie-talkie and communicate where the disturbance was so it could be taken care of.

He also said the outdoor cameras were used not only to keep track of who was coming in and out of the building, but also to monitor parking lots so the school could be alerted if there was an attempted break-in.

McWhorter said the cameras also helped to monitor the building by letting the security guards see many areas of the school at one time.

"You can see different areas without having to go there," he said.

Anderson said the school was planning to add two more cameras, one in the new gym lobby and one at a stadium entrance.

"We are going to have some additional cameras installed in the lobby addition," he said.

He said in the event of a fight, or other illegal activity occurring within the range of the cameras, the school was capable of turning the images over to the police so the offenders could be prosecuted.

"We would be able to record anybody who was involved in any altercation," Anderson said.

Sophomore Rachel Woolard said she thought the addition of cameras was a good choice by the administration.

"I think it'll help security in our school," she said.

Woolard said a camera in the stadium was a good addition because it could help to catch people who might trespass after hours.

Woolard also said she thought the expense of the cameras was justified by the level of safety they provided. She also said she thought the cameras' ability to help identify students involved in fights was a good thing.

"If they can figure out who was involved and get the right person instead of accusing the wrong person then it's good," she said.

McWhorter said the cameras were very useful in regards to punishing students involved in fights. He said the program the cameras ran on allowed the operator to look at what had happened in specific areas by typing in what time and day the operator wished to view. This helped the administrator to see how the fight began and who initiated it.

McWhorter said although the cameras were very helpful for him and his team, it could only go so far.

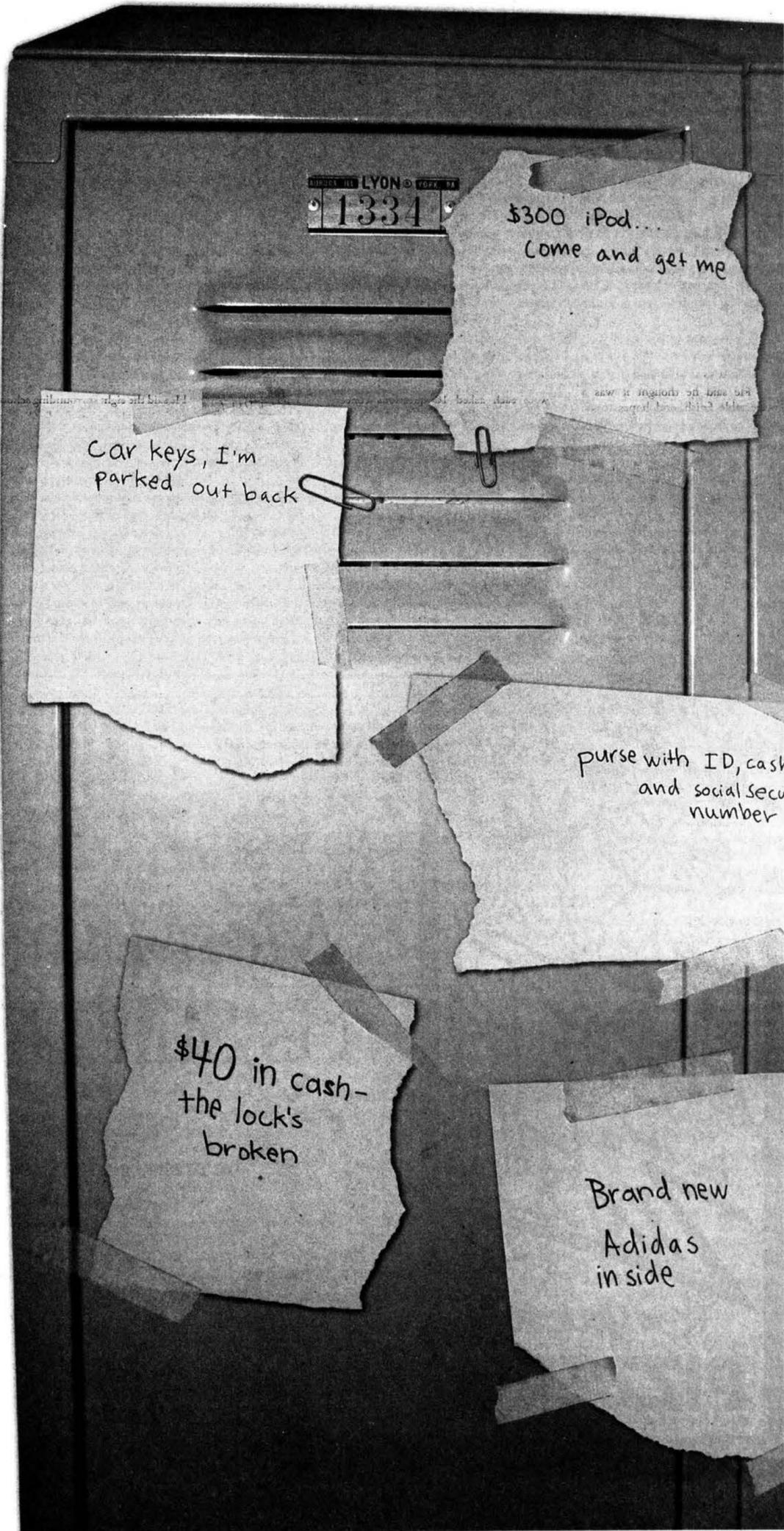
"Cameras can't replace security," he said.

He said without actual people watching, the cameras they were useless.

"Without someone to watch and react they're just cameras," McWhorter said.

Anderson said he was confident the addition of security cameras was a good thing for the school.

Emma Phillips contributed to this story



This graphic illustrates all the valuable items people keep in their lockers that are easily stolen every day. People walk around the halls displaying these things, which is just like wearing a sign saying "I own this, steal it!"

INFOGRAPHIC BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

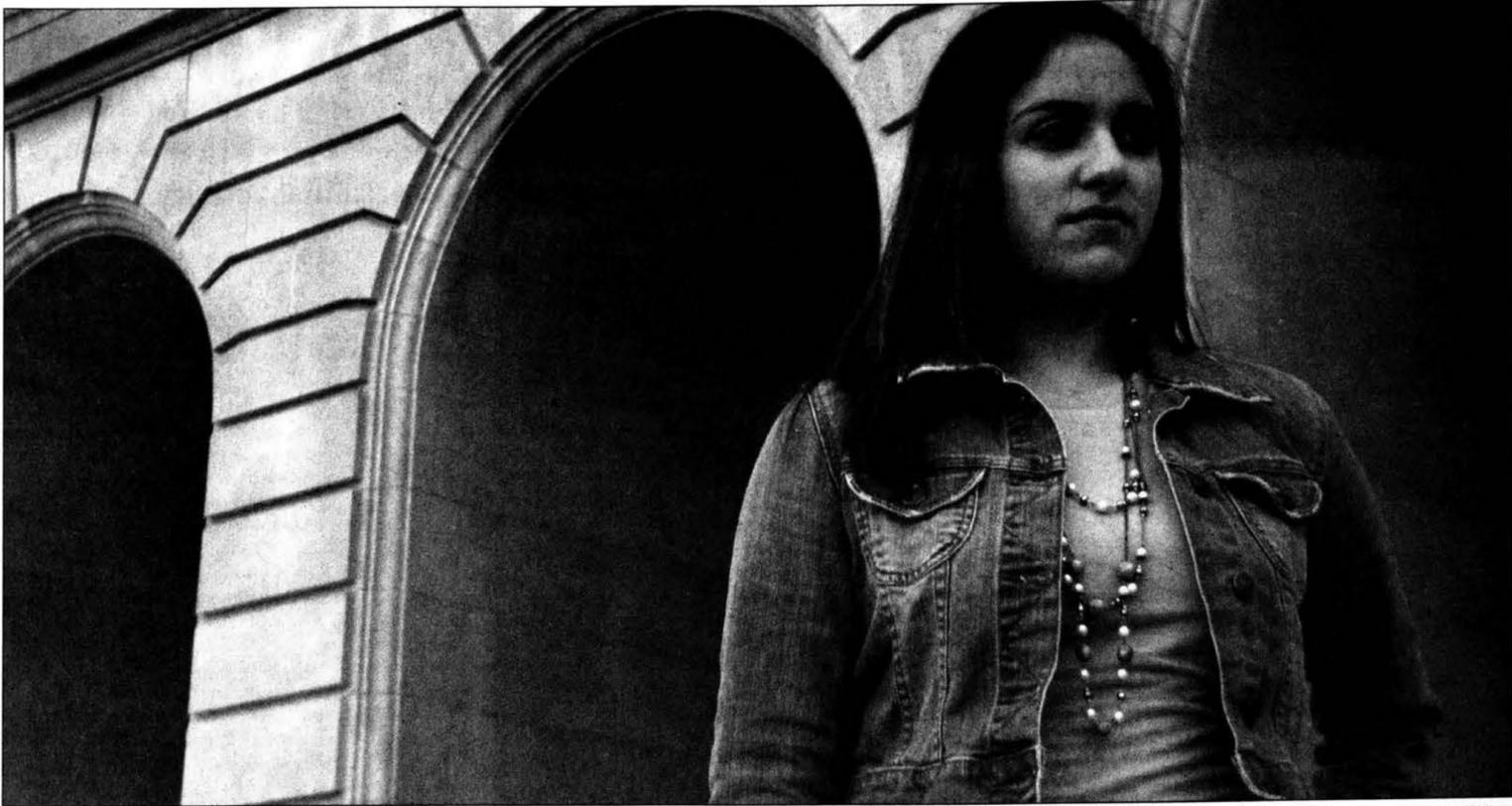


PHOTO BY TANIKA COOPER/REGISTER

Sophomore Maya Doghman volunteers for a program called Project Extra Mile. She said the program specifically targets teens to help them stay away from harmful substances, especially alcohol. One of her assignments was to help police officers catch cashiers selling alcohol to minors.

Teen goes 'undercover' to keep alcohol off streets

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

When sophomore Maya Doghman put the six-pack of beer on the counter and handed the cashier her ID, she was nervous. When he handed her back her ID with her purchase, she said she was just shocked.

"It was actually really funny because the guy checked my ID three times, and as he was ringing me up he said, 'I hope I don't get in trouble for this,'" Doghman said.

She walked back to the car and told the two men in the front seats she had gotten away with it.

"I was waiting for him to say, 'I'm sorry, I can't sell it to you' because I'm a really bad liar," Doghman said.

The two men in the car were Omaha Douglas County police officers who had hired Doghman as a Cooperating Individual (CI) in a compliance check.

Compliance checks are an activity in which minors go undercover with police officers to attempt to buy alcohol from businesses that sell liquor.

Doghman is part of Project Extra Mile Youth Group, a teen-based program in Nebraska working to prevent underage drinking in the community.

"I felt guilty but at the same time, he wasn't doing his job and him getting caught is one step closer to our goal," Doghman said.

Youth Coordinator of Project Extra Mile Julie Swartz led a meeting describing the goal of the group.

She said the goal of Project Extra Mile is evident in their mission statement, to create a

community consensus that clearly states that underage alcohol use is illegal, unhealthy and unacceptable.

She said the group wants to have a more environmental effect rather than just on a person-to-person basis.

"We try to do things that change policies," Swartz said.

Compliance checks are one of the activities that the youth group takes part in 3-4 times a year through Nebraska police, sheriff and patrol departments. One to three teens go with undercover police officers to grocery stores, convenience marts, restaurants and bars and purchase alcohol and at the end of the night are paid \$50.

The teen buying or CI must use her real ID and present it if asked, which is why Doghman said she was so surprised she pulled off the purchase. Since the group started doing compliance checks in February of 1997, the percentage of businesses selling alcohol to minors in Douglas and Sarpy county has dropped from 41 percent to about 10 percent in the last couple years, Swartz said.

"That has to speak for some improvement," she said.

If the business does sell to the CIs, the police issue a ticket.

Swartz said there have been rare cases in which business owners have become upset with the kids, but police officers are always there to move in on the situation.

Swartz said the compliance checks appeal to most teens. Doghman said she liked doing the compliance checks because she knew she was

making a difference by getting businesses selling to minors ticketed. She said she also liked the thrill.

"It was like a rush of energy that just goes through you," Doghman said.

Executive Director of Project Extra Mile Diane Riibe said the youth group teaches teens leadership and advocacy.

"All of us are in a moment in life where we have to stand up for someone who's voice is too small," Riibe said.

The Douglas County Project Extra Mile youth group's project for the year is getting stronger penalties for adults accused of providing alcohol to minors and Minor In Possession (MIP) charges, a project which Riibe said she is very impressed with.

"It's huge. However, just because it's large doesn't mean you shouldn't tackle it," Riibe said.

The group recently wrote a letter to the Douglas County Presiding Court Judge asking to meet with him to discuss the penalties of adults providing alcohol to minors.

"If we hear back from him, we want to go down there and meet with him," Swartz said.

They have not received a reply yet, and are now in the process of writing a second letter with what Swartz describes as a more firm voice.

Riibe said tackling such a big issue at a young age gives them an advantage and impresses judges.

"There's a desire to engage the judiciary system, it just doesn't happen easily," she said.

Doghman and freshman John Lloyd said because the program was youth only, the court and judges listened to their opinion with more

seriousness and were less likely to brush them off as another typical underage alcohol prevention group.

"They're more willing to do something about it hearing it from a 16-year-old mouth rather than stuffy parents," Doghman said.

Lloyd said he thinks the work with the court regarding MIPs and providing alcohol to minors would really make a difference.

"If we're persistent I think it will work," Lloyd said.

Lloyd and Doghman both said they wanted to be part of Project Extra Mile to make a difference.

"We're trying to get laws passed to make parents more accountable for drunk kids leaving their house," Doghman said.

Swartz said the group was very student-run. The students decided what issue they wanted to focus on, what action they wanted to take how they wanted to express their position.

"I really try to make this their thing, my position is to guide and facilitate," Swartz said.

Riibe said she thinks Project Extra Mile youth group gives teens essential leadership skills that can be used not only now but in adult life as well.

Doghman said she'd like to see more students from Omaha Public Schools involved in Project Extra Mile. She said the group was mostly composed of Millard and Westside students.

Riibe said to get more students involved the best method has been word of mouth, and that anyone is invited to come to the youth group meetings despite any alcohol related past.

"Anybody can decide that today is the day that life's different," she said.

Neb. Supreme Court justice talks to teens

BY JARED SPENCE

Central alumnus Kenneth Stephan, a Nebraska Supreme Court Justice, is now passing on what he learned to students.

Stephan graduated in 1964, but returns every semester to speak to law and justice classes about the system. He said there weren't any classes when he attended Central, but history, English and civics classes as a student has had a bearing on his career.

"The English department prepared me heavily," Stephan said.

Stephan credited John Keenan, an English Composition teacher, as deceased, for influencing him.

"He was an excellent composition teacher," he said. "Much of what he taught me, I use every day."

Stephan said many things have changed since his years at the school, including air conditioning, technology and separate staircases for boys and girls. He said the use of technology is something they couldn't even imagine in 1964.

Stephan said the most impressive aspects of Central have remained the years. The strict enforcement of rules and high expectations of the students among these vital traits.

Stephan was inducted into the Central Hall of Fame in 2004.

Kay Corell, of the CHS Foundation, said he was chosen to be inducted on his achievements and position on Nebraska Supreme Court, as well as the fact that he keeps in contact with Central and regularly comes back.

"I enjoy the questions from students and being around them," Stephan said.

Law and Justice teacher Donahoe said she wanted her students to learn about the court system in general but especially how the appeals process worked.

"I think it is an honor to have you in class," Donahoe said. "He speaks with the students. He has a lot of knowledge about the court system."

Junior Alicia Bender said she found Stephan's visit very interesting.

"He answered a lot of questions I had," Bender said. "I was surprised that you'd have to know the law like back of your hand... You also have to be willing to accept loss."

Stephan said he believed all aspects of law are important for students to know about.

"Law affects all citizens in some way," he said.

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Family still hopes to find missing child

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

"You really can't say what you feel," she said. "Don't give up. She's still out there."

Jalesa Harris, sister of Amber, attended the event. Along with Marissa Mitchell, her friend from King Elementary, checked off people as they came in.

Central hosted a fund-raiser for the missing girl, Amber Harris. Renae Mitchell was in charge of the event.

The money raised went to the reward fund in order to capture the person who kidnapped Amber or anyone who knows information.

"No expectations on amount...unlimited," Mitchell said.

She said the charge for the event was \$5 for those 12 years old and up and \$2.50 for those younger.

She said she knows the Harris' because she takes care of their students at school.

"Amber was the average, normal kid," Mitchell said. "She was one of my favorites at the daycare; if she did something wrong, the other teachers would send her to me."

She said the event didn't go as she expected.

"There was an unexpected funeral and people were searching," Mitchell said. "That's were a lot of the people were."

There was a delay of about 20 minutes. However, the audience members said they didn't mind too much.

Jalesa said she thought the event could have been better.

"Better acting...more people should've shown up," Jalesa said.

She asked the Paradise Baptist Church Drill Team to perform for entertainment.

Mitchell said she knows many of the students on it because they go to the same church.

Marcus Horton was in charge of the drill team. He said his role was to give back to the community that helped find the missing girl.

"We performed to help benefit Amber," Horton said. "We wanted to help support the community and let everyone can relate to the loss of a child, not being able to contact them."

He said he wanted to do anything to help. He said he made the dance special for the event and practiced for close to three months. He said he thought everything went smoothly.

"I told them to go out and have some fun," Horton said. "We held a prayer service before the event to pray for Amber and her family."

Horton said the team usually performs in parades and they also compete.

The dancers, ranging in ages from 8-24, either perform at Paradise Baptist Church or were in some other church loosely affiliated with it.

Redeathur Davis said he went to the performance to help support the family and to watch his daughter Dominique Davis perform.

Central alumni Dominique and Torrence Rowel performed with the team. Sophomore Curtis Jackson also attends Bryan High School said he came because his uncle was performing.

He said Amber's disappearance hit pretty close to home for his acquaintances.

"I hope they find the girl," Jackson said. "I know a lot of people who knew her...It's unfortunate it happened to her. She's a cool girl."

Freshman Shyrl Snoddy from Burke High School said she heard about the event on the television and wanted to benefit Amber.

"I feel that if she's still alive, she needs to be helped," Snoddy said. "I want to do all I can help."

Junior Sonya Rhine helped out with stage crew. She said it was a good idea to raise money, but it could have been more organized. She said she along with the other four stage crew members were volunteered by her John Gibson to help do miscellaneous things around the stage.

"I was there because I didn't have anything better to do," Rhine said. "I like working here though, it's fun."

PRIVACY PLEASE!

A sophomore is piercing students in the bathrooms at school. Although it may be against the rules and unsanitary, her customers say she's the best.

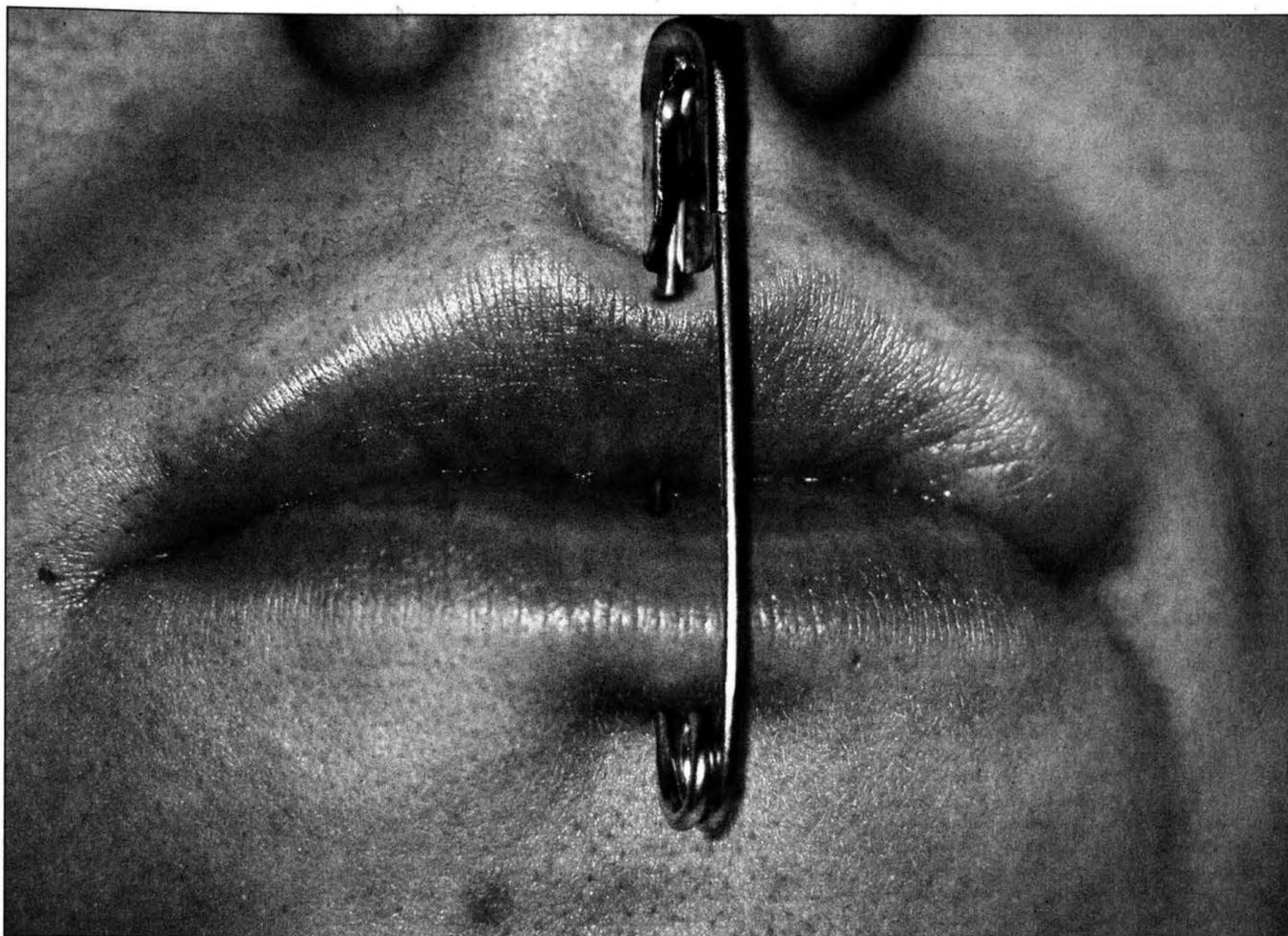


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

This illustration exaggerates how far some students will go to express their individuality. They are willing to risk infection and punishment by school officials by getting pierced by sophomore Jane Doe. Doe said she once almost got caught when a teacher walked into the bathroom when she was in the same stall as her friend. "I'm trying not to do it in school because people I don't even know come up to me (to get pierced)," Doe said.

*Name changed to protect identity

BY TANIKA COOPER

She said she's lost count of how many students she has pierced in the bathroom. Demand is high.

Sophomore Jane Doe said she knows she's pierced well over 20 students.

"It's (piercing in the bathroom) gotten to be boring," Doe said.

Usually teens just want their tongues and belly buttons pierced and those are among the easiest to do, she said.

In order to avoid getting in trouble she said she tried to make sure she only pierced people she knew. The first person she pierced in the bathroom was a friend.

"I didn't want to do (pierce) people I didn't know," she said. "That's how you get caught."

She also said she made sure the student wanted the piercing. Doe said she never had a complaint and the common question asked was if it's going to hurt.

"They're too excited to worry about anything else," she said.

Although they're excited, she said many get a little nervous when they see the clamps, which are used to hold the area for the ring.

Doe held her piercing sessions during the passing periods. She said she and the student who had to pay \$20 for the piercing would make prior arrangements before it took place.

University of Nebraska Medical Center's Dr. Kristie Hayes said there are many dangers involved with body piercing. She said even if the instruments used are cleaned properly.

"Any opening in the skin allows bacteria to get in (the body)," she said.

The most common complication with piercing is keloids. They are caused by an excessive buildup of scar tissue and can appear after any piercing of the skin. Dr. Hayes said keloids are very difficult to treat. Treating a keloid can involve surgery

and/or injections of steroids or interferon.

Tongue piercing has become very popular with teenage boys and girls. She said piercing of the tongue could cause a blood stream infection.

"It (tongue piercing) allows connections with deeper tissues through the blood stream," she said.

Although many piercing shops require permission if under the age of 18, the risks are still the same. Dr. Hayes said there are always risks for infections involving the skin and even the liver.

Doe said once an incident occurred where she said she had just finished piercing a student and a teacher walked in and saw them in the stall together.

She said the teacher asked them what they were doing and she just walked away.

There are other reasons why she is trying to stop piercing others besides the fact that she can get caught.

"I'm trying not to do it in school because people I don't even know come up to me (to get pierced)," Doe said.

She said the main reason she only did people she knew was to eliminate the possibility of others telling the authorities.

"We've been friends since last year," said a student who asked Doe to pierce his tongue and navel.

He said the navel piercing hurt worse than the tongue, but it only hurt for a few seconds. He said after she pierced him, she gave him a packet that explained how to clean the piercing.

"She even told me what items to use, like Listerine for my tongue," he said.

He said he had gotten both piercings in January and neither one has gotten infected or caused him any problems.

"I actually trusted her because she's a really good friend," he said.

Her passion for piercing turned into something she'd like to do as a profession. She said she got an apprenticeship at a piercing shop in Tekamah, Neb.

"I started working there a month before school started,"

she said.

She said the only requirement was to take a college course in Anatomy.

The class was pretty helpful when it came to teaching about the places where you shouldn't pierce (main arteries, veins etc.) she said, but overall the class was pretty boring.

Through the Anatomy class, Doe said she had to take a first aid unit and she had to learn CPR. Even though it was a college course she said the class was very simple.

She said she enjoys her job and if she continues to keep piercing in school, she'll have to constantly wonder if she's going to get caught.

Besides she has pierced so many students in the bathroom, she said she no longer gets a rush.

Piercing had and will always fascinate her. Every since she was younger she'd been involved with piercing.

"I got my tongue pierced when I was 13 years old," Doe said. "And I pierced my nose myself (with a safety pin)."

One of the down sides about her piercing is when she walks around with her friends she said she gets mean looks and the people just assume she's going to do something wrong.

"Just by looking at me people actually think I'm a bad person by the way I look," Doe said.

In all reality Doe said she's a good student.

She first started getting pierced because she thought it looked really interesting. She had an older brother who was into it and she thought maybe he helped influence her.

In middle school things were different. She said she had her tongue, nose and lip pierced. None of the children her age had those types of piercing.

"All the kids thought that it was pretty insane," Doe said.

When she got to high school things changed. She said everybody seemed to have some odd piercing and it was hard to stand out from the rest.

Compared to adults she said the teens dealt with it much better. Teens her age felt more comfortable asking about the rings while adults just stared and judged her.

Official wants rally to make Latino students appreciate their history



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE WILHELM/REGISTER

Sophomore Yuriana Jacobo holds up a sign to protest new legislation that would make it a felony to live in the United States illegally or assist someone who came here illegally. She said she was at the rally to support immigrants. "We are united. We are not criminals," she said.

CONTINUED FROM 'WALK' ON PAGE 1A

expecting the community to come out and show support.

"The bill (H.R. 4437) would mean every illegal is a criminal and everyone who helps them," Castro-Gomez said. "Does that mean school teachers, lawyers, priests? We need to take action as soon as possible."

Castro-Gomez said students were encouraged not to come to school, but if they did come to walk out.

Freshman Emilce Ramirez said her sister's husband is in the United States illegally right now. She's representing her family at the rally.

The legislation wouldn't just affect Mexicans, Ramirez said.

She said she wore the Mexican flag during school to promote awareness of the issue.

Students from the University of Nebraska-Omaha told the crowd they were the future and they needed to fight for their rights.

They said the next two weeks were very important and to call senators Chuck Hagel and Ben Nelson.

A common message was not to allow amendments to the bill because it would dilute the effects.

Sophomore Adam Hankins spoke at the rally. He said the Bible says to go where you are needed.

"These people in the courthouse are all Christians. God is good," he said. "God wouldn't do this."

Maria Teresa Gaston from Creighton University's Center for Service and Justice said Giovanna Zermeno from Central's Chicano Awareness called her. She asked Gaston to speak at the rally about the legislation.

"The reasons are complex for why this legislation was written. Our laws are outdated," Gaston said. "If the laws had been updated, this would not have happened."

Gaston passed around a petition to send to senators. She also asked for people to step up and volunteer if the legislation passed. People will need help applying for legalization and getting through the paperwork, Gaston said.

Rodriguez said the president of Mercado Corporation Tom Rehys called him Wednesday morning and asked him to go the rally.

"I have a sign. The kids go crazy over it," Rodriguez said.

He said he hopes the young people will come to appreciate their history better and realize why the revolutions in Mexico happened.

"The rally's for justice. The illegals need the same opportunities," Rodriguez said. "They have good grades, go to the universities, have jobs and I help them."

He said the people opposing the legalization of illegals need to open up their eyes and ears and be human.

"The immigrants before us came the same way," Rodriguez said. "American corporations went to Latin American and replaced human workers with machines so the workers came here (the United States)."

Last night, Rodriguez said more people got into America.

"I would like to see everyone come legally," Rodriguez said. "But, that's not reality. The fact of the matter is they're here and they're doing better than before."

He said the people who work need a voice. Many people who are in this country illegally don't have a union to protect them.

"There was a guy whose foot was hurt on the job. It had to be amputated," Rodriguez said. "He didn't know about worker compensation. He went back to Mexico when he could've gotten x amounts of dollars for losing his foot."

CAUGHT IN

Although many teens see tagging as a creative release, it is still considered destructive and involved with trying to stop teens before they join a tagging crew.

Graffiti obsession lands senior in court

CONTINUED FROM 'TAG' ON PAGE 1A

of the law. In school, the penalty for willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, which includes graffiti, is suspension and restitution.

The student is required to pay for the damages by a specified time.

If the student fails to meet this deadline, he or she can be expelled or reassigned.

Either way, law enforcement is contacted.

Administrator Dave Anderson said students who participate in gang graffiti could face harsher punishments such as mandatory counseling, although he couldn't recollect ever assigning anything but a vandalism charge.

Doe's "crew" is similar to a gang in that they use a common style and moniker in their graffiti.

His group is not involved in any other illegal activities such as drug trafficking and physical violence, although they do show some similarities to gangs in the way they are organized.

Several months after Doe was caught by police, gang tags appeared all over the school.

Administrators said the work was done by a former student who slipped in to the building undetected.

Studying the tags later that day, Doe could tell right away they were either done by a gang member or someone impersonating a gang member.

He also began to notice some pieces of his own history scattered throughout the halls.

Reaching underneath the two-side staircase, he tapped a spot where the off-white paint had been peeled away with adhesive from a sticker.

That, he said, was from years ago, done by one of his mentors.

Unlike the gang tag, Doe admired the square blemish as though it were hanging in a museum.

He started getting angry when his attention reverted back to the scribbled gang graffiti. He had already decided to compete with the person who tagged it because, to him, gang graffiti was not art—it was vandalism.

"It's like basic morals," he said. "You never hit a church... (or other) stuff you know you shouldn't do. If you're gonna do it, do it in your hoods."

He came to school the next morning armed with stickers, the name of his crew drawn on each one, and a can of spray paint.

Central was his territory, no one else's, and he wanted to make that clear to any intruders.

"When you see somebody tagging where you come every day, it's sorta like they're challenging you... that would be like somebody coming up and tagging your house," he said. "If I was to mark him out, then we would be beefin'."

THE CRIMINAL MIND

The stickers, Doe's first major act of vandalism since his arrest, led him to continue what he started just a year before.

Doe got caught up in the rush, and kept tagging.

On March 10, around seven months after he was caught, Doe climbed the railway bridge above 7th St., a spot he said he'd "never get caught."

It was hard to distinguish him in the dark, his all-black clothing blending with everything but his face, his paint roller and the white letters of a tag that suddenly appeared on the wall below

him. He also used spray paint to hit a few spots on a nearby retaining wall.

Alone and rushed for time, Doe wasn't happy with his most recent work. He had to abbreviate the crew's name because he couldn't reach far enough to write all five letters.

If his crew didn't like it, he would have to explain to the 40-some members what had happened.

University of Nebraska at Omaha psychology professor Carey Ryan said teenagers spend more time with peers than their parents, so their minds can be easily swayed.

"We are inherently social beings anyway," Ryan said.

She said the need to fit it starts as early as preschool.

"We are very influence by the people around us," Ryan said. "And children and adolescents are even more easily swayed by peers."

She said teens focus more on the positives in trying risky behavior when with their friends.

"They don't think about getting caught enough," she said. "It's difficult to think of long-term effects after short-term costs."

As people enter the middle school period of their lives, they spend time with younger people and less time with their parents, even though they are not self-reliant yet.

"They have much less impulse control," she said.

Clinical social worker Gay McTate said a large factor in situations like tagging crews is peer pressure, which can come in two forms.

The first is giving the individual benefits if he goes along with the group.

"It's the old 'Oh, come on, everybody's doing it' line," McTate said.

The second would be the withholding of benefits for the individual.

This, she said, is more common in relationships, when a boyfriend tells his girlfriend being with him will make her look good.

"If you're not with us, you're against us," she said.

This is where the person would be pushed to actually commit a crime, when someone would be holding the spray paint can or joint, or whatever it would be.

That individual would have to make a split-second decision on whether or not to take it.

Having a criminal mentality is not something someone is born with, she said, although individuals can exhibit traits later in life that promote dangerous behavior.

"Some of us are more apt to be skating on the edge as it is," she said. "Some of us like risks."

She said some people are just lucky to find a legal way to do something that gives an adrenaline rush, like learning to fly airplanes or playing sports.

Another big factor when students get involved in tagging crews would be a mob mentality.

They might feel the need to be protected in a way parents or adults could not provide for them.

"We seek approval from those around us," she said.

If a teen is trying to be like their perfect next-door neighbor, they might never achieve what they want. Instead, they might choose to rebel against the situation entirely.

"We might chose to reject those values," she said.

The criminal mind is commonly

developed during middle school, she said. It has to do with physical maturation, like puberty.

"Many junior high students have more physical and cognitive ability than their judgement can handle," she said.

McTate said the first step for students to avoid or recover from risky behavior would be to find an adult they could trust, whether it be a teacher, parent or a coach, and tell them the problem.

The next step would be for that teen to gain a sense of empowerment in a way that is not destructive to himself or the community.

A NEW MOVEMENT

Art department head Larry Andrews teaches Doe's Art 3-4 class.

He has seen his student's designs for assigned school projects and said they closely resemble the hard-edge painting in graffiti.

Andrews was worried the art's controversial form might be something students abuse, causing the negative reactions seen in society.

He said there was a fine line between art and vandalism to some people, and young people could not always tell the difference.

"It's a contemporary art form, but I want him (Doe) to understand what it really is and the point of it," Andrews said. "I also think it can be derogatorily used and can be put in places it's not supposed to be."

For students to use graffiti appropriately, he said, they must understand its message and have a positive intent.

This includes avoiding vandalism and gang graffiti.

"It's been used more for those reasons than it has as an art form," he said. "The future, just like any art, is determined by how artists use it."

Because of the similarities between legal hard-edge painting and graffiti, administrators often compare such works done in art classes with vandalism in the halls.

This allows them to find suspects by comparing their styles.

Anderson said several students have been suspended for graffiti vandalism this year alone.

Assistant Principal Dionne Kirksey has investigated at least five students for graffiti in the past six years.

She was disappointed at the destruction of property involved in graffiti, but said it could be very artistic as well.

"It's just one of those thin lines I guess," she said. "They don't do any type of fighting, that's just how they show their creativity."

That was exactly how it started out for Doe.

When he was only 9 years old, his cousin from Los Angeles, Calif. showed him sketches of graffiti and the different styles he had seen and experimented with.

Doe was swept away. To this day, he said, he has not seen tags that good

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

This graphic illustrates the consequence of getting caught. Most teens don't look for trouble, but often times outside pressures and personal desires get them caught and punished. Senior John Doe said he loved the thrill of tagging with the threat of getting caught hovering over his head.



coming out of Omaha.

It took years, as well as the influence of some area taggers, for this interest to become a full-blown fascination in what he considered to be an art form.

Others might consider some of what he does to be vandalism, and he should find a legal way of expressing himself.

His junior year in high school, Doe and one of his classmates began selling graffiti-style sketches for lunch money. In just a few months, he said, the two of them made around \$200.

He wanted to take his work farther: get recognized, start a crew, and tag some things that stuck out more than just pieces of paper.

He began working with other teens who experimented with graffiti, eventually starting his own crew, dedicated to vandalism.

"We do trains," Doe said. "That's like when artists use canvases. Without a train, you can't get your name out there."

He also tags for political reasons.

"Basically you're saying you're not run by the government," he said.

Molly Mullen contributed to this story



REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Do you consider tagging an art form?



"I suppose so. Yeah, definitely, as long as it's not gang-related."
Adrienne Anderson (10)



"No, tagging is bad for school. You shouldn't do it."
Darin Sherrod (9)



"No. I think it's vandalism."
Jonathan Butler (10)



"Yes, if they do it right. Anything can be art."
Mellaa Jones (12)



"Yeah I do. It shows expression."
Mike Overgaard (9)



"It depends on who does it and what's the meaning."
Corey Himes (9)

A history of Graffiti

Whether you consider it street art or destruction of property, it has become a very popular problem



Pre-1960s
Graffiti is used to promote politics by different activists or to mark gang territory. This is still the case today. One of the most famous cases of early graffiti is "Kilroy was here," a slogan and a face painted on ruined buildings by American soldiers during WWII.

1966-1971
Graffiti is said to have started in Philadelphia, Pen. by taggers known as Cornbread and Cool Earl.

1971-1974
Julio204 and Taki183 were forming the New York tagging scene. Competition started to form as more people began interested. Styles that have become common such as Broadway style were created by Topcat126.

THE ACT

property by the law. Here is a look into the mind of a graffiti artist and those making sure they are rehabilitated to never do it again.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

DeBauche sprays Taginator on a brick wall, which is a harder surface to clean than painted surfaces, which can just be painted over. DeBauche said Taginator is a chemical so powerful, he once looked down at his hand and saw it had eaten through his glove.

Technician makes living off cleaning up after taggers

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Every single day of the year, there are 10 to 25 different houses, streets or garages to paint. Those public and private structures have been vandalized by graffiti.

Graffiti van technician Jeff Nicola is the one man who must clean everything.

Each incident of vandalism is reported to the mayor's office, then reported to street maintenance. Nicola receives these reports and gets to work.

The graffiti van has been in operation for nine years, bought with donations by Coca-Cola and Channel 3 News. Nicola has been working for eight of those years.

"I take care of the whole city of Omaha by myself," Nicola said.

During a typical day, Nicola said he usually finds himself between 24th and Leavenworth and 24th and Chandler.

"Ninety percent of the time I'm in south Omaha," he said.

North Omaha, he said, only has problems in some spots, but south Omaha is worse than north. Downtown Omaha has not been as bad in recent years as it used to be, he said.

Nicola said with the technology in the graffiti van, he could clean literally any color of any building in the city of Omaha. The first thing he does when he gets to a work site is use the spectrometer, which detects what color is on the building. This information is sent to a computer in the graffiti van, which comes up with

a formula for the paint in amount of drips of each color.

Another device creates that color, and Nicola gets to work painting the structure with a hose.

Sometimes, Nicola needs help. Bill DeBauche, his sometimes partner, helps Nicola with the harder to clean vandalism. Brick walls are one of those difficult surfaces to clean.

DeBauche uses Taginator, a form of cleaning solution, to take it off brick. He sprays the wall and lets it set before rinsing it with water. DeBauche said the Taginator is extremely powerful. If one surface keeps getting spray painted, the Taginator can start to eat away at the brick.

Street signs are a different story. Nicola said sometimes he can get away with scrubbing down the sign, but sometimes that ends up wearing down the sign. It is easier, he said, to just call the traffic department and have them replace it. When he first started driving the graffiti van, Nicola said some of the stuff he cleaned up was actually fairly artistic. He said he remembered one piece that was a giant eyeball.

"I didn't want to cover it up," he said.

These days, however, most of the graffiti he sees are gang-related. The more artistic taggers, he said, quit long ago for fear of getting caught. He said he thought over 95 percent of the tags he cleans up are associated with Omaha gangs.

"The other 5 percent is just wannabees," Nicola said. "You can usually just kinda tell."

In a city with a graffiti problem going unnoticed, Nicola said

there is a risk of the problem getting as bad as Los Angeles or New York.

Within the first two years of the existence of the graffiti van, Nicola said they had about 5,000 jobs total.

"It would be ugly," Nicola said.

Nicola said cleaning up the graffiti gave him some degree of personal satisfaction. When he's done painting a job, sometimes he looks back at it and feels good about what he's just done.

"If I can catch it right, by the time they (taggers) drive by it (the tag) again, it's gone," he said. "That's probably when they don't feel so good."

Nicola said he heads out to clean up graffiti any day the weather permits. Over the winter, the Street Maintenance gets backlogged a few hundred work orders, so for a while in the spring and summer, Nicola is scrambling all over Omaha. Nicola said he noticed a difference in the number of reports from when school is in session and when it is out for the summer. He said he thought the increase in vandalism was because at school, different gangs are seeing each other and oftentimes fighting.

"From the day school starts to the day school ends, I'm busy," he said.

Driving south on 24th street, Nicola points out every other building, remembering times when it was covered in black spray paint.

"Every one of these buildings at some time I've painted," he said.

Alumnus returns to protect and serve students, building

BY KIM BUCKLEY

An alumnus is back at his old high school as the new resource officer.

Officer Matthew Kelly took over for Officer Stokes as the school's resource officer.

Kelly graduated from Central in the year 1985.

He said he has been a police officer for 15 years, 11 in Omaha. He also said all of his previous experiences were on the street.

Kelly said he has a secondary interest in education. He said the job would provide a change of pace and would fit in with his family schedule. He said whenever there is an opening in any department, officers need to submit a specialty application.

He said he was not only interviewed by the police department, but also with someone from Omaha Public Schools (OPS).

Principal Jerry Bexten said he and another person from OPS talked with Kelly and his sergeant, but he said that was more to get acquainted.

"I felt very positive about the interview," Bexten said.

He said he primarily liked officer Kelly's temperament, and said he thought that was important because a school resource officer works to develop positive relationships with young people and the police department.

"He's spending more time interacting with students than dealing with crimes," Bexten said.

He said having Kelly in the school helps deter people outside the school from causing problems and Kelly would already be at the school if a situation occurred where a police officer was needed.

He said he talked with Kelly frequently, though it depended on the circumstances.

"There are some situations that we work very closely together on," Bexten said.

Kelly said he wanted to let students know police officers have personalities and are human beings.

He said he wanted to get rid of some of the stereotypes students have of police officers and show students that police

officers are like other people.

Kelly said there were two main differences between working at schools as a resource officer and on the street.

He said this job would have him working and dealing with teens exclusively, instead of people of all ages. He said there was a difference between the school rules and the law, and how they interact with each other.

"I think working with kids will be good," Kelly said.

Social Studies teacher Lisa Donahoe said Kelly was a great speaker. She said she usually has the school resource officer come to the law and justice class to talk with the students.

She said the students really enjoyed hearing Kelly talk about his job and crime.

"He was willing to answer any questions the students had," Donahoe said.

She said it was interesting to hear about the experiences Kelly has had as a police officer and in the national guard.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Student Resource Officer Matthew Kelly, class of '85, speaks with security staff member Herb Welling (not pictured) after a fight broke out after a pep rally.

ERADICATION OF A PROBLEM

Out on the streets, graffiti infests everything from homes to street signs. Graffiti van driver Jeff Nicola deals with this every day.



The spectrometer, when placed against the original color of a surface, sends to the computer the mixture of paint it will take to match it exactly.



The paint is then mixed, putting in certain number of drops for each color, depending on what the spectrometer reads. Nicola said he could match any color of paint in the city of Omaha. If a store sold it, he said, he could make it.



After the paint is prepared, Nicola pours it on one side of the pressurized hose. He prepares the hose by cleaning it out, then gets to work painting.



Nicola said usually the job of painting over the graffiti took him just a few strokes of the hand. Electrical boxes, he said, were especially easy because the paint took less preparation because of how common that color was.

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

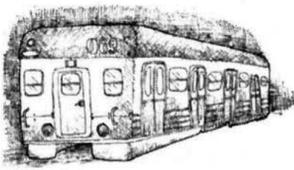


1978-1981

Tagging becomes popular across the country and "style wars" officially begin between crews.

1980

Artists' tags begin to fade as stricter graffiti laws are enforced. Tagging spreads to Europe.



May 12, 1989

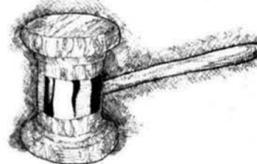
Subway graffiti is officially dead because from then on, subway cars are taken off and buffed if they contain graffiti.

1989- Present

Tagging enters pop culture (clothing lines and ads) for companies such as South Pole and Sprite. After writing explodes in Europe, bonds form between American writers as they begin to work together. Magazines, video and the Internet expand the horizons for graffiti worldwide. Rather than subways, people paint on highway sound barriers and roof tops.

2005

Omaha City Council votes to make an ordinance banning all minors from buying spray paint.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER
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Teen gathers assembly to fight destructive decisions

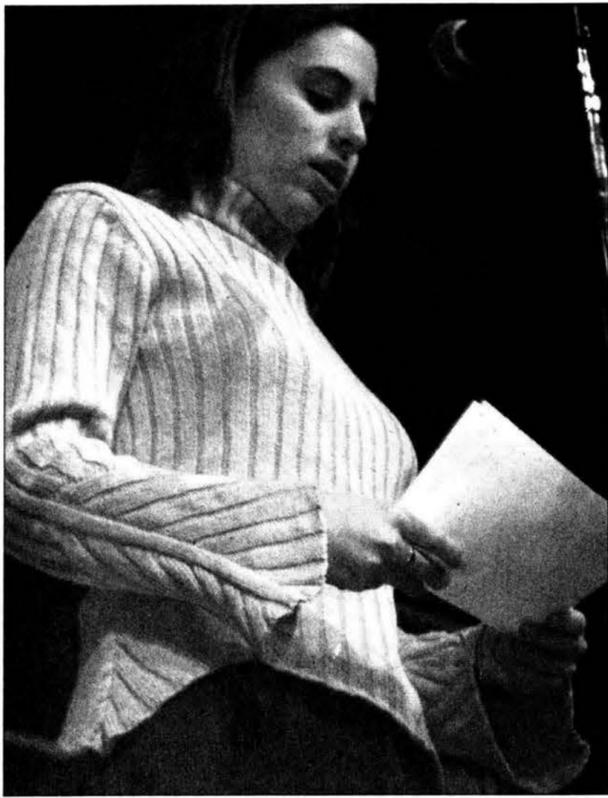


PHOTO BY TANIKA COOPER/REGISTER

Senior Dena Rennard makes a speech for her Gold Award Project for Girl Scouts. She hung up posters that discouraged destructive decisions by young adults.

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Senior Dena Rennard organized a week-long campaign to increase student awareness of the destructive decisions that happen every day.

She said her campaign was her Gold Award project, which she did through the Girl Scouts. The Gold Award is the equivalent to the Eagle Award in the Boy Scouts.

She said her project was anything that would benefit the community.

To receive the award Rennard had to do 45 hours of prerequisite work and a project that took a minimum of 50 hours.

Rennard said her project took over 100 hours to complete. The decisions Rennard focused on were alcohol and drug abuse, reckless driving, unhealthy eating disorders, premarital sex and suicide.

Rennard said Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), some National Honor Society members and some individuals had helped her to make the posters for the project.

"The posters are just to get people to think about the statistics of the destructive decisions," Rennard said.

She said the project was to increase awareness about the effects of destructive decisions. Rennard said the posters were a way to help get the ideas going for her main project.

She said it was a big problem and teens should be more aware of the long-term effects of destructive decisions.

"Even if you get yourself off of them (drugs), the addiction never goes away," Rennard said.

She said the destructive decisions could lead to diseases and possibly death. Rennard said the campaign also included announcements on the intercom talking about the statistics of the decisions.

She said she asked people to wear ribbons and attempt a vow of silence during each day of her project to represent the number of people who were making the destructive decision.

Rennard said each day of the week focused on a different destructive decision and said the vow of silence was to show the severity of the decision, and she used different colored ribbons to distinguish between the decisions.

"What I'm hoping to get out of it was people seeing how many people were wearing ribbons and taking a vow of silence and how many were making destructive decisions," Rennard said.

She said the end of the project was an assembly for seniors. In order to have the assembly, Rennard said she had to talk to Principal Jerry Bexten so he could OK it. She then said she had to figure out what she wanted to do at the assembly and talked about it with her mentor. She made an outline of what she wanted to do and gave it to Bexten, who approved it.

Rennard also had to talk to John Gibson to approve the date so she could use the auditorium, and Kelly Means so she could use the projector.

She said a video shown at the assembly was a self-made film by her and one of her friends. In the video there were anonymous student stories about destructive decisions and included statistical facts, images and music.

"There were a few students who were an embarrassment to Central, but for the most part I think students were really receptive to what was going on," Rennard said.

She said students asked the speaker great questions and responded well to the entire program. After the assembly, Rennard said she wrote notes thanking people who helped out, edited the video of the assembly and talked to her mentor about the impact of her project. She said she also had to do final paperwork and a final

interview before she could earn her Gold Award.

Rennard also spoke in the assembly. She said the hardest part of the project was getting up in front of the senior class and doing the assembly.

"I was terrified out of my mind," Rennard said. She said she was afraid she might get mocked for what she was doing.

She said she gained confidence when she introduced her and she was applauded.

The speaker, Rick Keller, spoke in the assembly about his feelings early on as a child and how he got into trouble with the law.

He said he felt like he was alone and he needed anybody. Keller started out with a story about Christmas when he was 7 and how he wasn't happy when everybody else was. He said he felt as if the people he was with weren't as smart as he was.

"I felt everyone was easily entertained," Keller said.

This was Keller's first time speaking. The project took to get Keller to speak took some time.

He said Rennard called the Catholic Center at Omaha Campus for Hope and her message was to help him.

"I thought he did a marvelous job. I couldn't be a better speaker."

He was completely honest and drew in the audience and really painted the picture on his lowest low. He pulled himself up from that point," Rennard said.

Keller said he hoped him talking to students would help at least one person listening to him.

He said he was trying to help the community as well as students.

Senior John Taylor said it was good to be an example of someone who first made the wrong decision and then the right one that turned his life around.

"I think it's important for students to know the difference between wrong decisions and right decisions," Taylor said.

New T-shirts show another side of school-district conflict

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

The controversial "I (heart) OPS" shirts now have some competition from a T-shirt designed by a Central student.

Junior Everett Kladstrup has been selling T-shirts reading "I don't give a (picture of rat and a donkey) about OPS" across the front, implying a very different message than the blunt "I (heart) OPS" shirts.

Kladstrup said he didn't make the shirts because he was against the "I (heart) OPS" shirts or the One City, One School District proposal, he just wanted to make money.

"I don't agree with any United States public school systems, but that doesn't have anything to do with these shirts," he said.

Kladstrup said he wasn't trying to make a statement by making or selling the shirts, although he said maybe some of his customers would be by wearing them.

"It's not an anti-OPS T-shirt," Kladstrup said.

So far, no administrators or teachers have asked Kladstrup about the shirts or put any regulations on the shirts.

He said if he was asked to stop producing them he wouldn't because he feels there is nothing on the shirts that would be considered against school rules.

"There's no foul language, there's nothing derogatory," Kladstrup said.

Administrator Dionne Kirksey said if the administrators see any students wearing the shirts they will be asked to turn them inside out.

"It's inappropriate," Kirksey said.

The content of the shirts is the problem, Kirksey said. She also said the message could be distracting in classrooms.

"What's happening is, for what he stands for, people are going to get upset," she said.

Because of the distraction the shirts may pose, Kirksey said if students continue to wear the shirts they may be suspended for insubordination.

"Most likely that will be disruptive," Kirksey said.

Kladstrup said he was just the provider, and it's up to the students to voice their opinions.

Sophomore Zach Pope bought one of the shirts from Kladstrup because he wanted to show his anti-One City, One School opinion.

"I'm just trying to provide a different view," Pope said.

Pope said he thinks not enough students at Central get to voice the opposing side of the citywide district proposal and the shirts could gain some student involvement.

"People started going for it," he said. "I think kids should be active in both sides."

Pope said the message of "not caring" that the T-shirts portray is his opinion that the provisions under One City, One School are too

controlling and that each district should have its own identity, not that he doesn't care about his district.

"We don't care about OPS

to the point of ruining other districts," he said.

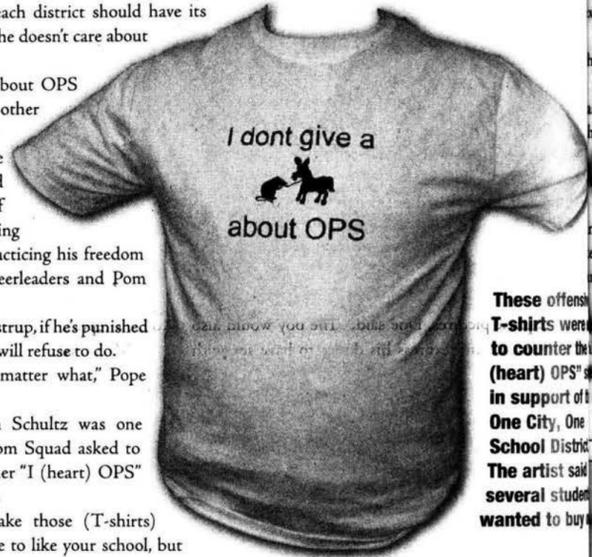
Pope said he doesn't want to offend any students or staff members by wearing the shirts, he's just practicing his freedom of speech like the cheerleaders and Pom Squad tried to do.

He said like Kladstrup, if he's punished or asked to change he will refuse to do.

"I'll wear it no matter what," Pope said.

Sophomore Erin Schultz was one of the members of Pom Squad asked to discontinue wearing her "I (heart) OPS" shirt while in uniform.

"It's rude to make those (T-shirts) because you don't have to like your school, but you don't have to tell people you hate it," Schultz said.



These offensive T-shirts were made to counter the (heart) OPS shirts in support of One City, One School District. The artist said several students wanted to buy them.

PHOTO BY CLAY LOMMETH/REGISTER

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- August 14-16
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Buffett knows virtues of OPS

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Whatever happened, her children would not go to a private school.

Alumna Susie Buffett, class of 1971, said when she graduated the Millard district was nothing like the size it is now. Most people did not go out that far anyway, she said.

"It was like driving to Lincoln, going to Millard," Buffett said.

She went to Central in the middle of a lot of race riots. She said a lot of students got involved in issues and most of the older teachers were frightened.

After graduation, Buffett moved to California to go to college. After she graduated from the University of California at Irvine, she headed to Washington, D.C. to work at the corporate office of Century 21. She came back to Omaha 17 years later and decided her children would attend schools in the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) district.

"Why on earth would I not put them in a public school?" she said.

Buffett moved nearby to Dundee Elementary and sent her children there. For high

school, they went to Central. Senior Michael Greenburg currently attends.

"I would not have done that if I did not think it wasn't a great school district," Buffett said.

At meetings with corporate leaders outside of Omaha, Buffett said there are sometimes discussions about where children and grandchildren go. Buffett said she found out the majority of their children went to private schools, while most of the corporate leaders themselves went to public schools.

Principal Jerry Bexten said he thought Buffett sending her children to Central was a huge compliment. He said she speaks publicly and very positively about Central and OPS, but actually having her children go there really showed her support.

"Obviously they could go to school where they want to," Bexten said.

Showing OPS support at a Central and Millard South basketball game attracted some controversy earlier in the year. Buffett said she did not know why her pro-OPS comments

caused such a stir. She said what she said then was not about Millard, and she would have said what she did even if Central had been playing North, as originally planned.

Buffett's mother was the one to first donate money to the building of the stadium. The \$5 million was the thing that really encouraged other donors to step forward, Bexten said. Susie Buffett herself didn't fund the stadium building, but Bexten said she played a big role in raising funds.

Bexten said Buffett has helped pay for many things in the school including a lot of the gym lobby, the portable bleachers, renovations for the science labs and various technology for other ones. The auditorium curtain was replaced and the light and sound systems were updated.

"And that's just in that last two years," Bexten said.

Over the last two years, Bexten said Susie Buffett has donated anywhere from \$2.5 to \$3 million to the school. Buffett said she was inspired to donate money to Central after the bond issue was proposed. She said she thought it would be a good idea to see what Central needed and to help pay for it.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Buffett, class of 1971, has donated money to Central to help buy new equipment, along with many other things, for classrooms. She said she sent her children to Central because she wanted them to go to an Omaha Public School.

Recurring sexual harassment problem difficult to avoid in hallways

changed to protect identity

BY JOE DELICH

"Random guys will feel up on us in the hall and then they'll walk off," she said.

Sophomore Jane Doe* said she and her friends often experience sexual harassment in the halls of Central.

Sexual harassment is defined by the student handbook as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, pervasive and objectively offensive to undermine and detract from the student's educational experience.

She said she is usually unable to identify them because they run off into the crowd.

There was however, one boy who consistently harassed her, she said. Doe said it occurred in her math class, where she and the boy both sat near the back of the classroom.

Doe said the harassment could occur once or twice a week, or twice in a week.

"He sat behind me so he'd put his arms around my waist the whole time he'd pretend to be kidding," she said, "He'd pinch up and I'd tell him to stop and he'd keep doing it until I had to slap his arm."

In addition to touching her, the boy would draw obscene sexually explicit pictures, Doe said. The boy would also talk to her about sex and express his desire to have sex with her.

She said she initially refrained from informing anyone

because her class was in the portables and she was afraid of being caught alone by the boy. Eventually, however, one of her friends told her parents, who in turn informed the counselor.

She said as soon as her teacher learned of the problem, her seat was changed to distance her from the boy.

This fixed the majority of the problem, though harassment from the boy still continued a little bit in the hall, Doe said. This year she does not have a class with the boy and does not have to deal with his harassment.

"I haven't seen him since," she said.

She said she thinks sexual harassment is a problem at Central, but a difficult one to remedy.

"You don't know the hell I go through with so many ridiculous boys," she said.

She said perhaps if there were more awareness amongst boys of the damage sexual harassment causes it wouldn't be as much of an issue. She said having security guards patrol the hallways during passing periods could also help curb harassment.

Sexual harassment is often first reported to a guidance counselor. Counselor Ron Moore often deals with harassment cases before they are passed on to administrators.

"In any type of harassment or bullying situation I make sure the person feels validated, is as comfortable as possible and open to conversation," he said. "Then we go to the administration to file a report."

Moore said his concern is with the victim, rather than the harasser or the punishment.

"When they come here (a counselor's office), the important

thing is to make sure the person is taken care of emotionally," he said.

He said the victims themselves often do not report the harassment. He said teachers, other students and parents sometimes report it. Regardless of who reports it, he said he goes to the victim and confirms it with them first. After the harassment is confirmed he said he informs administrators so they can pursue disciplinary action.

Administrator Dave Anderson said after he receives a report of harassment from a counselor he conducts his own investigation. He said he immediately gives the victim an incident report to fill out.

The incident report is where the victim can write down the details of the harassment, as well as the date and time it occurred. He said based on the incident report and a conversation with the student who reported the harassment, he determines what has gone on in the situation.

The punishments for sexual harassment can vary. According to the student code of conduct, a first offense of unwelcome touching of a student's intimate parts will result in a short-term suspension. A second offense will result in a long-term suspension and a third offense is punishable by expulsion. The same punishments hold true for verbal harassment.

Anderson said when compared to other offenses, sexual harassment is something he does not handle very often.

"In the overall amount of cases, I don't really deal with a large number of sexual harassment cases," he said.

He said even though he does not see a large number of sexual harassment complaints, it may only mean some of them

are not being reported. He said if a student is being harassed, she should report it so the problem can be fixed.

"We encourage students that if they have been victimized or harassed to speak with an administrator, counselor, or nurse so they can take appropriate action," he said.

Mary Larsen is the director of the Women Against Violence program at the YWCA. Larsen said sexual harassment is a problem that needs to be addressed.

"It's an important issue because it makes a person feel vulnerable, they feel like they're walking on eggshells and it can impair their ability to concentrate and get good grades," she said. "It can lead to people feeling so vulnerable they will drop out of school or quit their jobs."

She said the other danger inherently present in sexual harassment is its potential to escalate to sexual assault. Larsen said there are two types of sexual harassment, atmospheric harassment and more personal one-on-one harassment.

"One type [atmospheric] is where you have things like sexually explicit calendars, flyers, or sexual jokes and comments are made," Larsen said.

She said a good example would be a student with sexually explicit photos or pictures in their locker displayed not so much for their own benefit, but so the people around them are subjected to it. She said it could also include a group of students making sexual comments as another student walked down the hall.

She said the other type of sexual harassment is more one-on-one. She said its usually much more private and one person is clearly expecting something from the other sexually.

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CALLING IN THE TROOPS

From competitions to having a member be named battalion commander for a second year in a row, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) had a lot to celebrate this year

Spring formal features saber team, jazz band in opening ceremony



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Junior Brenton Donaldson dances JROTC Spring Formal. The formal featured the saber team and awards given out to senior Sornil Bhattarai.

BY EMMA PHILLIPS

The Spring Formal, put on by JROTC, looked like a dance from a more classic era. The majority of the boys wore their uniforms and the girls who were not in uniform wore evening gowns. Along with smooth music provided by the Jazz Band, the event accomplished its goal of feeling and looking formal.

Their respective JROTC members represented all of the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) high schools. It was sophomore Crystal Huynhcao's first year attending the dance. She said she was expecting to have fun at the event.

"I expect a night of relaxing time to spend with friends," she said.

Along with simple entertainment and time to spend with friends, the dance also involved official ceremonies. Freshmen Carmen Ruiz said she was looking forward to one of the more official aspects of the dance.

"I want to do saber team," she said.

The saber team was featured toward the end of the official ceremony. Freshmen Dave Schneider was also a member of the saber team and was equally enthused about participating in the ceremony.

"I'm looking forward to saber team and dancing," he said.

Freshmen Michael Vian was also on the saber team, but said he was particularly looking forward to intermixing with other JROTC

students from across the district.

"You get more culture," he said.

Ruiz said one of the best parts of about the dance was there was not any competition between the schools. She said it was a great stress-free way to see other students and learn if things were done differently at different schools. She said the only other times that JROTC students from across the district get to mix is at competitions and there isn't much opportunity to talk due to stress and the set up of the competition.

"You get to know how other battalions run," she said.

Ruiz said she was interested to see members of JROTC from South because they presented the most competition to Central at JROTC competitions.

All of the members of the saber team said they were planning on participating in JROTC all four years of their high schools careers, and also were anticipating careers in the military. Schneider said he thought being active in JROTC in high school would help make the transition into the armed forces easier.

"It teaches us discipline and how to respect other people," he said.

Students were involved in all areas of the dance, from those involved in the actual ceremony, students who were playing as part of the Jazz Band and the ushers who showed important guests to their seats.

The event was held at the University of

Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Milo Bail Student Center.

JROTC instructor Lieutenant Corporal Mike Melvin said the event has been held at UNO for the last five years. He said not having the dance occur at any specific school encourages the feeling of equality among all the schools and gives no school feeling of having a home-field advantage.

Melvin said the planning for the dance begins well in advance and is thought out thoroughly.

"We've been planning for about two months," he said.

Melvin said he wasn't sure what the cost was for the dance, but the decorations alone cost \$300. The theme of the event was "United We Stand," the decorations consisted of red, white and blue balloons at each table along with plastic army soldiers.

He said he thought it was great that students from across the district were given the opportunity to meet and spend time with each other in a stress-free environment.

"It's a good time to get an exchange of ideas," he said.

Melvin also said he thought the involvement of the Jazz Band was good, because it added to the experience of the formal program.

Sophomore Kevin Gibbs said he thought the addition of the Jazz Band was beneficial to the formality of the dance and was much better

for the formal program as opposed to a jockey (DJ).

"This is a step up from that (DJ), it's a bit classier," he said.

Gibbs said he had been looking forward to the dance for a long time. Melvin said it was not an uncommon feeling among students involved in JROTC.

"They start talking about this in the fall," he said.

Melvin said he thought it would be great if there were more events for JROTC students to intermix in a casual environment. The dance was scheduled to last until 11:30 p.m.

"It's a great time for kids to learn to be responsible in a social situation," he said.

Gibbs said it was easy to meet new people due to the casual atmosphere of the dance.

"I've already met a couple kids from other schools," he said.

Gibbs also said he enjoyed getting to meet seniors honored as new brigade commander, which was the main focus of the formal program. Gibbs also said he thought the work students and staff put into setting up the dance was impressive.

The official portion of the dance began when Dean of students Dave Anderson read at the podium and introduced students from all the schools who each carried their respective schools' flag and Anderson read a brief history of the schools' JROTC program.

Senior awarded highest JROTC honor, expects to continue training through college

BY EMMA PHILLIPS

Sgt. Maj. Dwaine Sutter was at a loss for words when asked how to best describe new Brigade Commander senior Sornil Bhattarai.

"Choose your adjective," he said, "superb, outstanding..." Bhattarai was awarded the title of brigade commander in a ceremony at the University of Nebraska's (UNO) Milo Bail student center. This title means that Bhattarai now holds the highest rank in the district provided by the Junior Officer Reserve Training Core (JROTC).

Upon being given his new title, Bhattarai was also presented with a full-size saber by Principal Jerry Bexten. Other cadets were presented with miniature sabers, but due to his accomplishment Bhattarai was given an authentic one, which also had his name engraved on the blade.

Bhattarai said receiving the award was very important to him because of the work he put into it and also the fact that he was the only student in the district to receive it.

"It means a lot, it's the highest rank you can get in OPS," he said.

Sutter said he had Bhattarai as a student and has known him for three years. He said he knew that Bhattarai was destined for a high-ranking position in JROTC since the day he met him.

In order for Bhattarai to be given this title, he along with several other students from other schools across the district were judged on how they presented themselves, how well they spoke and also things they had accomplished within the JROTC programs at their schools. Bhattarai said the spoken part of the judging was more than just a quick sit down.

"We had an interviewing process," he said.

Bhattarai also said officers from the National Guard were involved in the process that led to him being given his new title. Bhattarai said he thought the influence of Central's JROTC was a factor in his success in program.

"Central has a very good JROTC program," he said.

Bhattarai said he thought one of the reasons Central's JROTC program has been successful is because it is the oldest in the district and therefore has a great sense of traditions instilled in it.

Sutter said he thought one of the reasons that Bhattarai was chosen was because of his exceptional leadership skills.

"Neil follows three words: lead by example," he said.

Bhattarai said he thought the reason he excelled in leadership positions was because of the way he interacted with people.

"I'm good with people," he said.

Sutter said he thought one of the reasons other students were so willing to cooperate and listen to Bhattarai was his friendly demeanor and open attitude. He also said the students felt that Bhattarai did not take advantage of his position of power.

"He wouldn't ask anyone to do anything he wouldn't do himself," Sutter said.

Bhattarai said one of the added responsibilities that came with being brigade commander was overseeing one of the formal JROTC ceremonies.

"I'll just oversee the brigade review," he said.

Sutter said the brigade review was when the students involved in JROTC marched in formation. He said Bhattarai would not be directly instructing those students who were marching, instead he would be delegating orders to students who then would tell the marchers.

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PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE

High school teacher Cristina Hiddleston practices resuscitative rescue breathing on an "Annie." Family and Consumer Science teacher Jeanee Weiss said 30 teachers attended a CPR training and certification seminar in March in the cafeteria.

Teachers get CPR certified

BY BOB AL-GREENE

They hope it will never have to be used, but it is good to be prepared.

Staff members met in the cafeteria in March to become certified in the use of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and other emergency first aid techniques. They took most of their teacher work day to do so.

"This was a little more important than a regular lesson at school because this lesson could be a matter of life or death. Family and Consumer Science teacher Jeanee Weiss, who led the seminar, said most of the staff members present were there to become recertified.

"There are 30 teachers we're renewing," Weiss said.

She said that Central teachers have been coming to the CPR seminar for seven years, usually on the Friday after Spring conferences, and that feedback has been very positive.

She said the faculty and staff recognized its

importance.

"It's free for the staff," Weiss said. "They love it. It's offered as an in-service. The course is \$45 otherwise."

She said it was the school nurse Jennifer Conahan's responsibility to get the course going in the first place, and there had to be a minimum of 18 teachers involved. Conahan said the staff had wanted to be involved in the program anyway, and when the district began offering it, staff members at Central jumped at the opportunity. She said it has been successful every time since, and new teachers attend every lesson.

"Absolutely great feedback. People ask all year when it'll happen again," she said. "It's perfect to have a day when teachers can come in without missing school."

To pass the course, staff members had to watch an informative video, review procedure, take a written exam, and then a skills test with artificial torsos dubbed Annies. Teachers practiced rescue breathing, opening airways and chest compression on the Annies, as well as working with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

The roughly hour-long video set up scenarios with

narration showing the steps to help with each problem.

The video stressed Early Recognition, Early CPR administration, Early Defibrillation, and Early Life Support in cases where victims were both conscious and unconscious.

"When you're having a heart attack," Weiss said, "Your ventricles spasm. A defibrillator shocks the heart into stopping."

She said that hopefully, the heart would then re-start and get back into a rhythm. The AED attached wires to a heart attack victim's torso and delivers an electrical shock while issuing voice commands to the user.

Teachers had to stand clear of it when using the device. Conahan said that as of yet, there is only one AED in the school building, and it is located in the gymnasium.

"Coaches need to know it," she said. "People in the P.E. department, definitely."

She said since heart problems were most likely to occur during a sports event, the gym was the best place to keep the AED, but the school definitely needed more.

No lead contamination in rifle range, official says

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

Lead contamination concerns on the JROTC rifle ranges at Central should be eliminated, Lt. Col. Michael Melvin said.

After concerns expressed by a mother of a North High School JROTC member, the Health Department has been addressing the concern.

"It's a complaint on a non-existent problem," Melvin said. He said lead only existed in rifle rounds or bullets. After switching from .22 rifles to air rifles, each round contained only a small amount of lead. Melvin said the new air rifles are shot at such a speed that the lead dust, which would normally be created with .22 rifles, isn't there with the air rifles.

"The velocity is too slow for there to be any dust," Melvin said. He said the size of the rounds was too small to cause any harm to students by simply handling them.

"It's not like picking up a block of lead or sleeping with lead, the exposure is very low," Melvin said.

Walter Kazor, supervisor of the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Military Science Department said the Environmental office at District Maintenance had a testing agency do testing on the North High rifle range and cafeteria and found no results high enough to register any lead contamination in the area.

"The maintenance is in charge of insuring the safety in those ranges," Kazor said.

He said the ranges were found to have no lead dust created and were completely safe.

"There shouldn't be a concern as far as I know," he said.

Reid Steinkraus, supervisor of the Health Department's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, said since the complaint he has asked OPS to provide records on any lead testing or general information concerning the lead content in the bullets from past years.

"We haven't received any testing from any of the schools," Steinkraus said.

Melvin said he hasn't received any information or requests from the Health Dept. but if he did, he'd have no problem complying.

Steinkraus said the Health Dept. wants to make sure indoor shooting ranges have proper ventilation and the rifles receive adequate cleaning.

Kazor said the complaint was just a concern from a parent, which was completely understandable. He said the student of the mother wasn't enrolled in the JROTC program, but had been exposed to lead contamination as a child and walked by the cafeteria and rifle range daily. If exposed to lead contamination, teens could suffer from hypertension and possibly kidney damage, but there are no deadly effects, Steinkraus said.

"I think it would be wise to have base-wise numbers on each kid for their own sake and for the JROTC program's," Steinkraus said.

Melvin said Central's biggest concern was always safety.

"I can't speak for other schools, but I can for this one, our safety is impeccable," Melvin said.

Melvin said the rifles are cleaned depending on how much they are used. If JROTC uses the rifles daily for a week, the guns will be cleaned at the end of the week.

If months pass by without use, then they will clean the rifles less often. Sgt. Maj. Dwaine Sutter and Melvin clean the weapons.

Math instructor get pie in face to show support for club's fund-raiser

BY MATT WILEY

The Pi Day fund-raiser ended at 3:14 in the courtyard, with a whip cream pie smeared in each math teacher's face.

Pi Day is the recognition of the number 3.14. It is a nationwide celebration and is celebrated on this date because the numbers 3.14. Greg Sand organized this year's fund-raiser at Central, along with Math Club president, Tess Mandell.

"Pi Day is a chance for the math kids to be creative and do something unique," Sand said.

Math Club along with Enrichment Math started to think up ideas in January.

"We wanted to spice things up, and that's what the rest of the kids started to build off the idea," Mandell said.

* Proceeds were given to the Leukemia, Lymphoma Society, which math teacher Brent Larson is associated with.

Larson said he does not have a personal connection with the disease, but his wife's uncle had Leukemia.

"I just wanted to be a part of the team, a part of the cause," he said. "I have the ability to do

something for others."

Larson is also a part of Team in Training, where endurance athletes participate in marathons, cyclist events and triathlons to raise money for kids.

Each group in Team of Training has an honored patient it participates for. Larson's team rides for Rachael and Charlie.

They also ride for money to help fund a doctor's research for cures for these diseases.

Larson said he has been associated Team in Training for four years, and will be riding in his sixth event in June.

Larson said he and his wife have raised close to \$15,000, and that he has gone 8000 miles on his bike.

As far as the Pi Day competition, Susan Drumm, a seven-year math teacher at Central, won the competition, collecting the most money out of all the math teachers.

"It's not everyday that you go home smelling like sour milk," Drumm said.

She said the process was good, but in the courtyard, there seemed to be a small hint of hostility.

Even though Drumm won, all the math

teachers were pied, some of them unexpectedly.

"High school is all about memories," said math teacher Elizabeth Wessling, who was one of the teachers who was unexpectedly pied.

She said that it was for a good cause so it did not make her angry.

"I saw kids dig deep into their pockets, and that was wonderful, but I also challenged kids, saying that they couldn't hit me anyway," Drumm said.

Overall, Pi Day brought together the Math Club, math teachers and many students for a day of fun.

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LEAVING THE NEST

After four years, Principal Jerry Bexten is retiring to spend more time with his family. He has continued the tradition of excellence at Nebraska's largest high school.

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Principal Jerry Bexten's retirement came as a surprise to most.

Why would a principal want to retire this year of all years, only four years after he started here? This year a brand new, multi-million dollar stadium was completed, a gym lobby was built, the Eagles won State basketball in boys Class A for the first time in a long time and the quality of academics at this school is seen by many as second to none.

"Why not go out on top?" he said.

It took him a long time to decide whether or not to retire and he made his final decision just days before the deadline.

"I want to spend more time with my family," he said. "My daughters are 7 and 9 years old."

With such a good school year happening he said at first he didn't quite know what to do about retirement.

"It took a lot of soul searching, a lot of reflection," he said.

He said, obviously, his job took a lot of energy and time away from his family, and after 33 years in education, he was ready to retire. As for next year he hasn't ruled anything out. All he knows, he said, is he wants to do something.

"I would go crazy," he said.

He taught for 12 years prior to becoming an administrator and principal, and said he enjoyed it very much. Although he has yet to have any offers, he said anything was a possibility.

After teaching for between 8-10 years he said he started to feel restless, and wanted to do something different.

"I knew I wanted to stay in education," he said.

He said his options were either guidance or administration, and he didn't feel like he was the right fit for guidance, so he became an assistant principal at Lewis and Clark Middle School.

To become the principal he said he had to get an endorsement on his teaching certificate that said he could, not that anyone could disagree he was qualified.

Bexten received one of two master's degrees in educational administration in 1985 after receiving one in history four years prior. He graduated from Creighton University with a bachelor's degree in history and minor in secondary education.

He said as far as the difference between being

the principal of a middle school versus a high school, only a few things remained constant.

"It's a huge difference," he said. "The job is just so much bigger."

Between the staff and students, he said Central is three times the size of Lewis and Clark.

"High schools are just really busy places," he said. "I knew it would be a bigger job. I'm still getting used to it."

He said the good thing about working at the largest school in the state is there are so many people helping him do his job.

"It's not like you're doing it all yourself," he said. "I've been really fortunate in my career, I've always found myself working with some really great people."

He said he has worked with people who are doing their job for the right reasons.

He said being the 16th principal at Central is an honor.

"Central High School is truly the flagship school for the district," he said. "You'll look at some of those people on the list and I don't hold a candle."

Principals like Dr. G.E. Moller and J. Arthur Nelson were legends at Central.

"(As principal) you leave a huge, lasting impression on the institution," Bexten said.

He said as far as him being a legend, or leaving his mark on the school, that would be for others to decide.

Of everything it takes to make this school run, Bexten said he would miss the people the most.

"People ask me what the best part of my job is and I say 'The people I work with,'" he said. "People ask me what the worst part of my job is and I say 'The people I work with.'"

He said one of his favorite things to do was meet with the reunion groups and hear about their experiences at Central.

He said it's weird to think someone else will be sitting in his desk come next fall, but he's sure Supt. Dr. John Mackiel and other district administrators will find someone very qualified to do the job.

"I know he (Mackiel) understands how big this job is," he said.

Although he is retiring for his family, Lauren and Claire his daughters, and Karen his wife, he said neither of his daughters were happy to

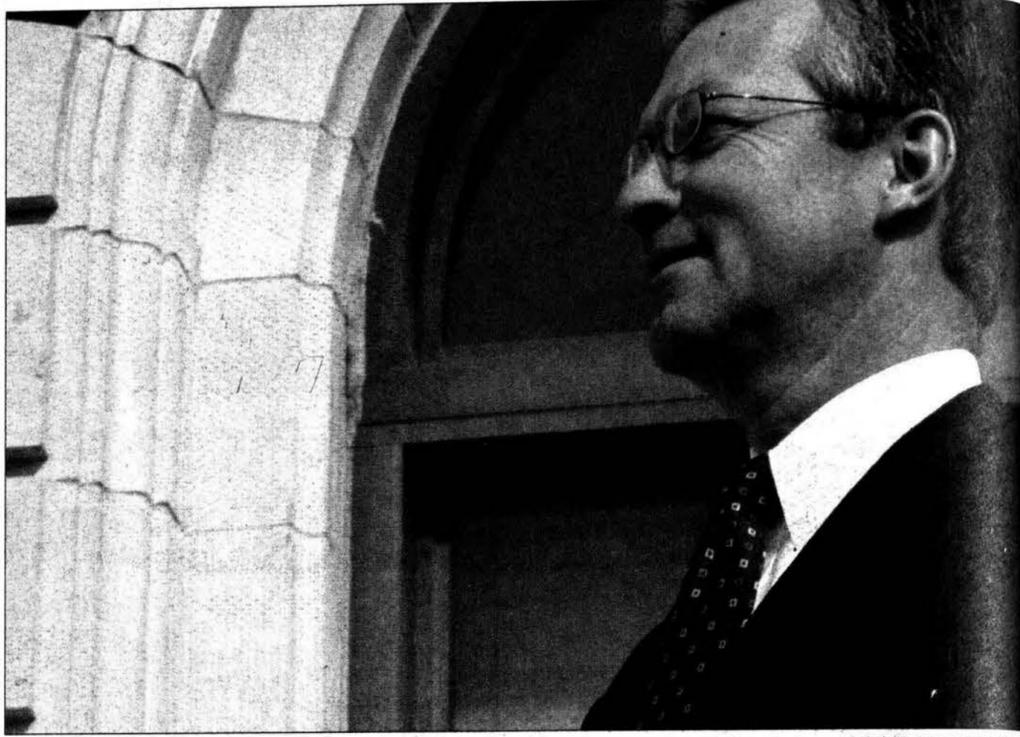


PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REG

Principal Jerry Bexten said after four years of being the leader of the largest school in the state, he is retiring to spend more with his family. He said this would not be the end to his working career, however. He said he would be looking for options because he liked to stay busy.

hear about it. Both his daughters were in the fall musical "The Music Man."

"They just loved coming down here and working with the students," he said.

Claire, his youngest daughter, was concerned that if he wasn't the principal anymore she couldn't be in the play. He said Lauren, his oldest, liked being able to tell her friends her dad was the principal at Central.

Every principal has a goal or vision for the institution. For Bexten, that was making sure Central still had the best academics.

"This is a great college prep school," he said. "People walk away satisfied knowing they got what they could get."

Latin teacher Rita Ryan has taught here for

35 years, under three different principals, and was upset to hear about Bexten's retirement.

"It's so sad," she said. "He's done such a great job."

She said he has improved the morale of the teachers since he's been here, and been continuously supportive.

"He'll help us with anything we need for the students," she said.

Bexten's vision of having a top-notch academic atmosphere was something to be envied by other schools, she said.

Senior Class President Alvin Samuels followed Bexten from Lewis and Clark.

"I felt I had a bond with him," he said.

Ever since junior high he said he felt like

he could trust him. He said Bexten was the person to give Samuels a speaking engagement and he's been doing it ever since.

This summer, when everyone was at the dedication ceremony for the stadium, Samuels sat in on some meetings because he was a person who accepted the stadium on behalf of the student body.

"He always treated me like an adult," he said. "I would ask questions or follow up with him and he would explain things to me."

When he first heard about Bexten's retirement, he said he went straight to Bexten and asked him why. He said although he understood his reasons, he can't imagine being principal at Central.



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OPINION

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

N 20TH STREET OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102

ID tag policy all washed up. PAGE 19B

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER



ITCH 'TIL IT BLEEDS

A Column by Tanika Cooper

Senior has never been daddy's girl'

If my dad died tomorrow, I know I wouldn't cry.

Yeah, for some that's hard to say, if you had only seen five years worth of your father, you'd understand.

No, my dad didn't live miles away. It wasn't the result of a one-night stand with my mom.

He didn't have a job that took all his time away from us so he could support our family.

He was and still is a drug dealer.

We moved to Omaha when I was 3 years old and we (my mom, dad, brother and I) soon ended up in the projects.

My mom started work at 7 in the morning and my dad stayed in bed until noon. My mom couldn't take us to school because she was working so hard. On top of that, my dad was too lazy to take us, and my brother and I had to walk to school in a rough neighborhood.

Even though the neighborhood wasn't all that good, my brother and I got used to seeing someone running out of a gas station with a paper bag and a gun in his hand.

I can remember my dad hugging me twice in my life, maybe three times. Once on Christmas when I was 5 and once when my mom got shot.

He was taken to jail when I was 12. It was because of drugs and he was sentenced to seven years, but he served only two years probation.

Like most who end up in jail, he begged us. He said how sorry he was and that he would never do anything to hurt us, but not enough he did again.

After he got out, he left us. He said he would go to Arkansas to take care of his mother, but I later learned it was for something else.

My dad had a 16-year-old daughter in Arkansas.

It turned out he could have been the father to about 15 children. Three of them, not including my brother and I, he knew were his for sure.

So my dad gave us that lame excuse and stayed away.

My brother began to mess up in school. My mom cried every night because she was afraid she couldn't raise him on her own.

She was afraid she couldn't teach my brother how to be a man and because he didn't have a father, he'd turn to gangs and crime.

What about me? What did she think about me?

I don't know.

She kept me by her all the time. She scolded me for a long time. I'd cry for no reason and she'd just let me. Even though she couldn't tell her why I was crying, I knew she knew it was because my dad wasn't there.

Growing up, I felt there was something missing, even after my mom died through a bullet to the chest and a good man came into all our lives.

At school I would crawl underneath my desk and cry, and I wouldn't let anyone help me.

My teachers all thought it was because of what had happened to my mom, but it wasn't. I just was angry because the other girls had their dads and I didn't.

I couldn't share any good experiences about me and my dad.

Soon enough I realized this happens to many people.

Many fathers know they can just bail out and that's just what many of them do. They leave their children alone in a world where anything can happen to them.

I haven't cried about not having a father in a long time. Like I said, if he died tomorrow, I still wouldn't cry.



This graphic exaggerates the different stupid and illegal things students have admitted to doing in the bathrooms at school. Teens have found ways to cram nearly every illegal activity they participate in outside school into tiny bathroom stalls.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

WHAT REALLY HAPPENS

From drinking, to drugs, to sex, to gambling, to piercing, to fighting, high school bathrooms are being used for more than what they were designed for

How pathetic does a person have to be to have sex in a high school bathroom?

How bad is the self-esteem of these people?

Two questions immediately come to mind: one, is it really impossible for them to wait until they are not in school? And two, why do they need to do these things so badly in the first place?

regardless of whether or not they get caught.

Not only does it show a general disregard for the rules in the school, as well as for the building itself, it also takes a serious lack of character.

Any student, no matter how desperate for a quick dose of nicotine, could find a less disgusting, obvious place to light up.

work hard every day to transform students from children to adults, and they are let down in a big way whenever some immature student takes advantage of some free time.

The most discouraging thing isn't the way staff members feel, but the way students portray themselves. Most of the people in this school feel free to brag about the dominance of Central High and the respect and tradition that go with that dominance, which they most certainly fail to back up by snorting lines off a toilet seat.

With claims ranging from smoking cigarettes to actually performing oral sex in the stalls, it forces some stretch of the imagination for most students to even dream of sinking so low.

But recently, teachers and administrators have been having an especially hard time controlling things like fighting, drug abuse and sexual activity in the bathrooms.

The situation is so bad that hall monitors have been specifically asked to keep an eye on the restrooms to watch for these and other pathetic behaviors.

Those students who think hiding in a stall is a safe way to avoid getting written-up are in for a rude awakening. The sad thing is most students don't have the self-respect or the decency to realize how ridiculous doing drugs or having sex in the bathroom truly is,

There are even popular songs that mention teens smoking in the bathroom. Who cares?

Teens expect a great deal of freedom in the building, as well as the trust to make decisions for themselves. Then they do everything from smoking to gambling to "going body." This is the activity where teens beat each other up. The only rule to this intellectually-stimulating activity is not to hit each other in the head.

Again, how pathetic.

There are also teens who are allegedly getting pierced in the bathrooms of this school.

What's next?

Individuals who should be maturing to adult status are letting down the ones who most want them to see this transition.

The teachers and staff members in this building

Students can do all the good things and activities they want, but it's the negative things that stand out to others.

No matter how hidden drug addicts and gamblers think they may be in the bathrooms, their activity will always reflect poorly on themselves and their peers.

Honoring tradition and excellence means showing respect at all times, not just when others are watching. It also means showing respect for all parts of the building, not just the "sacred C" and the courtyard.



OUT OF MY WAY

A Column by Matt Wiley

Teen's life surrounded by tragedy

Two bullets skinned my hand and hit my stomach. All I remember is the words, "You hit the kid," and then the sound of screeching tires. I was found about 10 minutes later, and was rushed to the hospital where I died for 23 seconds. That was my first run-in with death.

It's not natural for a 16-year-old kid to experience death as much as I have, but it has made me who I am.

Another example was when I was 6. Around my project facility, there was a drive-by and I walked onto the scene, not knowing what the noise was.

Yet another incident happened when I was walking my cousin to school and little to my knowledge a rapist was following us. Eric told me he would walk the rest of the way by himself, but I still should have been there to watch him.

I left him to walk a block by himself and 45 minutes later I heard his mother's scream. She found him on her doorstep when she went out to get the mail. He had been raped and murdered. This left me scared because I always felt if I'd walked him to school, that tragedy could have been avoided.

Again, when I was 12, I was walking down a street on the West side of Chicago. I heard a pop, and I never ducked or cared. I went home and realized that I had been shot between the shoulder and neck area. I blacked out and woke up a week later in a white bed. I had flat lined for about 27 seconds that time.

The next loss I would take was my mother's death. It was the biggest thing to affect me my entire life. I was my mother's child, always connected and attached to her. But on Sept. 15, 2003, I lost that bond forever.

I was in first hour in Mrs. Hiddleston's Honors English class, when I received a call. I went spiraling into a world of hate, regret and flat-out anger for anyone and anything.

I will never forget the impact she had on me, shaping me into the guy I am today.

She died in a car accident, killed by a drunk and high teenager.

She flipped over an interstate guardrail and died instantly. My life went black then. I didn't care about what I did or who I hurt, just as long as someone hurt just as much as I did.

Her twin sister came down from Chicago to comfort me, but only two years later she was taken from me, too. She died of multiple sclerosis.

People say most tears at a funeral are because of things unsaid, feelings not shared and things left undone.

My tears were because I was left on this Earth without the guidance I needed.

I use to feel death seemed to shadow me. I blamed everything I could for my losses, but I really felt like I had no one to blame or go to.

But through their deaths, I found a purpose in life, to impact anyone's life in a positive way and make people smile because for so long I couldn't.

So this punk kid from the South side of Chicago has a new mission in life.

I will not become a stereotype. I will not become the one holding the gun or drunk driving.

Something bigger is in my future. Hopefully, I can make sure that my family, friends and relatives never have to attend another funeral of a lost daughter or son.

I'd like to think I will have something to do with saving a generation from seeing what I have seen.

THAT DROWNING FEELING

POINT/COUNTERPOINT ON STRESS

PRO

Stress builds work ethic in teenagers

Listening in when students talk about their weekends proves they are not ready for life outside of high school. "I slept all day" is usually the subject.

Do something with your life. Do something worthwhile and meaningful. Sleeping all day is reserved for retirement. Fifteen-year-old students should not be complaining about how burnt out they are. They haven't even had any taste of life outside school. If they get worn out by writing a term paper, try making a career work. With e-mail, text messaging and instant messaging, the most common ways to communicate, students are actually getting lazier. They are so unprepared for the life ahead of them. They can't text message during a job interview, they actually have to speak with people face-to-face.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

The work ethic of 99 percent of students is appalling. Faced with the smallest amount of writing in class, they complain until they get their way. Anything that makes their work is wrong, and they will

fight to the end. But when something comes up that matters but takes a work ethic, they are pathetically apathetic.

The worst thing about all of this is not the students don't care, but that they are actually proud of it. They will actually admit they are lazy and make a fool of themselves in front of everybody. Sadly, nobody even sees this. Some of the most respected students are also the biggest sloths in the school.

Students are only stressed because they are spoiled from the start. Parents teach them their way is the right way when they should have been taught respect and how to have a work ethic. If students feel as if they are drowning in schoolwork and responsibilities now, just wait until after high school. Look around, if they think they are working hard, nothing can prepare them for the future. This isn't middle school anymore. Shirking responsibility by claiming one is too young just won't cut it anymore. This is the real world right now, and if students can't handle it in high school, there is no hope for them.

Holding an actual career will be useless for some students. Looking at a classroom, one can tell which ones will be future leaders and bosses of the others.

They are the ones to ask intelligent questions and stay awake while the teacher is talking. Their future employees are the ones giggling and looking behind them to copy some answers. But it's not copying them, it's sharing, and it's not done to get a good grade. It's done to get it done and forget about the work. Students are doing less than the minimum. They make their neighbor in class think for them.

Students can handle the work they are given. They will still whine and may not do it, but they can handle it.

Anyone who says otherwise is a lethargic liar. Long before today's high school students were born, there was a time when teens worked so much they didn't even have time for school. Sunup to sundown, it was hard labor. Quit complaining and finish some work for once.

CON

Teachers overload seniors with work

Wake up, school, work until 11 p.m., homework, repeat. It gets really old.

In an age where teens are almost expected to hold jobs and participate in all Advanced Placement classes, there seems to be too much stress.

How does this leave them time for anything else? Mindless hours of students go through the motions and don't really put any effort into anything.

They have been burnt out since middle school. It is simply shameful.

Nowadays, there are just too many distractions for one person. Check e-mail, go to work, eight-page paper and it all needs to be done the next day.

Students are drowning in responsibility and stress.

They need something to lighten their load so they can take a break for a while. Otherwise, it will break them.

Parents, if it is possible, should take some responsibility. Don't expect so much from their kids. One person cannot take on all Advanced Placement classes without feeling a little burdened.

School isn't the same as it was when students' parents were going to school. Much is expected of them. New education laws make the standards tests pile up like never before. More pressure than ever is put on students to not fail. The ACT and SAT are now expected to be taken multiple times by every student. It seems as though everyone had their eyes on students, and if they make a wrong move, the "successful-life gods" are ready to punish them down.

The colleges, high schools, parents, relatives and friends are all focused on the student. One mistake and everyone sees it. Students are expected to juggle all of this and not make little mistakes. The biggest error factor is huge, especially when operating on little sleep and carrying the weight of their futures on their shoulders.

Students need a little help. The responsibility will only increase for each generation. Think of what can be worse than part-time work during the school year, working 5 p.m. to close. Just imagine what responsibilities can be added. Years ago, students had to work instead of going to school. This was almost better. No additional school pressures were put on the students.

Before, it was work all day. Now it's school half of the day, work the other half and then homework before sleep. This is why whenever a student comes from school, all students talk about is sleep. All they plan to do is go to bed, wake up only to eat and then sleep some more. This should be a sign of how worn out students are if all they can think about is resting.

Two days seems too little for a weekend. Students can't recuperate just two nights. There should be no sympathy for students who don't have the weekend to rest up. They can't complain if they stay up all night long because they are too worn out to work on schoolwork.

Someone throw these kids a lifesaving device. They are drowning in their own life's responsibilities and nobody is there to help them.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

Antidepressant medication carries too much risk when prescribing to teenagers

Why are doctors and psychiatrists across the country still prescribing antidepressants to children and teens when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) never approved the use of these drugs for minors?

Whether or not the drugs increase suicidality (suicidal thoughts and behaviors) in children almost seems irrelevant to the fact that these drugs are being prescribed by the millions every year without the approval of the FDA.

Lieff, Cabraser, Heimann and Bernstein, a law firm that deals specifically with parents suing pharmaceutical companies after their children commit suicide, came up with some interesting research.

Eight percent of prescribed antidepressants in the United States go to young people, which averages out to be over 10 million prescriptions a year.

According to the firm, some parents of children prescribed antidepressants who commit suicide have filed wrongful death lawsuits with the pharmaceutical companies.

They said the companies failed to describe the link between the medication and suicidal thoughts in minors.

The contradictory debate on whether antidepressants cause suicides in young people still wages on.

The FDA recently announced it had been looking into the issue, and since then many medical journals have suggested that drugs such as Paxil and Prozac do increase suicidality in young people.

The FDA said it had not looked into the issue of adolescent depression, but did look at adult depression using the same drugs oftentimes prescribed to people under the age of 18.

Taking antidepressants may increase suicidal thoughts and actions in about 1 out of 50 people, 18 years or younger.

Although paroxetine is prescribed for children, the FDA has not approved it for use in children.

Why should this continue? Why does the

FDA not consider other options to help the youth depression problem?

All that seems to be out there is either risk suicide and take the drugs or choose not to treat the problem.

The pharmaceutical companies nearly run the country.

They are a multi-billion dollar industry.

If those companies went

under, so would this nation.

How could an industry with this much power not find another solution?

How can it only find drugs that increase suicidal thoughts and behavior?

Even though a recent study said suicide risks do not increase with the use of antidepressant medication, the risks are still there and too high.

The study of more than 65,000 people, young and adult, started in 1992 and lasted for 10 years. The study found that suicide risk declined within

the first month of use.

This study was conducted by the Group Health Cooperative.

This group said the risk for suicide was obviously highest the month before useage of the medication.

After the first month, the risk of suicide declined more every month of use. Obviously, this is what the drugs were supposed to do.

The American Psychiatric Association published the study.

Even with one study saying these drugs can help young people, there is no way it is worth the sudden effects or risk of death.

In the end, the British were right when they regulated the sales of these medication to people under the age of 18.

The possibility of recovery or suppression of depression is absolutely not worth the risk of increased suicidal thoughts or attempts. Life is too important.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

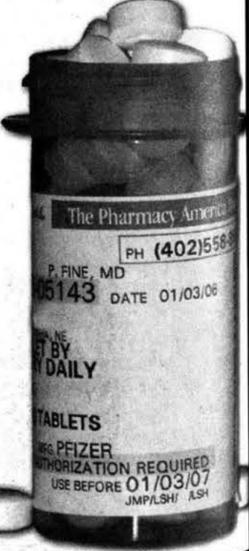


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

05-06 REGISTER

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

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

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

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

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

The Register has won multiple NSPA Pacemakers.

The Pacemaker is considered the Pulitzer Prize of high school

journalism. It has also won many Cornhusker awards from NHSPA.

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

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

Letters to the editor are encouraged.

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

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

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PERCEPTIONS

Midwesterners more than just farmers



Yee-Ha.

That's the most common phrase linked to Nebraskans. Most people outside the state think of Nebraskans as being either cowboys or farmers. To them this state is filled with rowdy gun-slinging cowboys and yahoo farmers with extreme accents. To those metropolitan states, Nebraska is a giant plain that stretches miles of wheat and Republican policy across the land. Do you get up every morning and milk cows or feed the chickens?

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

Most people in Nebraska don't. If one looks on the calendar for Nebraska, he will not find a barn dance. Nebraska, in the past, may have been primarily a beef state, but nowadays industries and companies command most of the time and money. Nebraska has a job growth of 12.8 percent, which puts us in the top half of the United States in job growth. Most of the jobs come from companies and small businesses, not farming and agriculture.

Nebraska does have a large section of its land devoted to farming and agriculture, but that doesn't mean all 1,711,263 live on an acreage of land. Will that stop the jokes? Comedians use Nebraska as a common joke, and when mentioning hillbillies or hicks, Nebraska is where they came from. No matter what statistics are out there, people will still view this state as the capital of blue jean overalls. Nebraska isn't the "Great American Desert," like it first was called. This state has many things that would remind one of a major state. A growing economic system, large sporting events and concerts are just among a few things Nebraska has to offer. Omaha built the Quest Center that cost over \$100 million.

They didn't pull that from the corn and wheat-farming budget. Is that fact enough to make someone say, "Hey, maybe they're not all a bunch of hillbillies, are they?" Maybe more information would be helpful. Nebraska is ranked number 13 on the list for the smartest states, and it was ranked in the top 10 for money in public education.

That means that even though Nebraska has most of its children in public schools, the students still succeed. In fact, its public schools are good. Those students with some amazing test scores are definitely not the stereotypes of tomorrow. Nebraska even brings in new venues because of many newly-developed arenas and centers like the Quest Center.

Recently concerts ranging from "Cold Play" to "The Rolling Stones" have sold out. Those bands don't create country music. And they sure don't sing about their gardens and milking a cow. Omaha specifically shells out independent bands like "Bright Eyes" every year. Still convinced Nebraska is a hick state? Let's continue. Omaha alone holds over 300,000 people and about only less than 1 percent farm. Yes, as one goes out west he will find more farms, but that is true for any heartland state.

Nebraska offers major colleges like University of Neb. at Lincoln and Creighton University, which bring in students from outside states every year. Nebraska is a powerhouse in education. In no way is Nebraska a giant plain where farmers collaborate to bring the herd of cattle across the border. In fact, Nebraska is one of the more industrialized states of the Mid-west. Every year Nebraska climbs higher in the rankings of developing states.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

View of Olympic games changes during skating

The Olympics are like a black hole. When the Olympics are on, there is a gravitational pull that sucks your eyes to the television screen.

No matter if people are eating, cleaning, or working, it doesn't matter because when the Olympics are on, they'll stop everything and watch.

Maybe it's actually the government's secret effort to create nationalism or to inspire obesity prevention, but either way everyone in the world is buying it.

Personally, I've never been a huge sports fan, especially a winter sports fan, which can be credited in part to the fact that every time I go to an ice skating rink, I spend 75 percent of my time with a lot more than my skates on the ice.

Granted, Olympians are trained professionally, which I never was. My parents thought falling was cute, so I guess in that way I've stayed cute.

My lack of skill in athletics has been the reason for my anti-Olympics attitude in the past.

That attitude changed during the figure skating short program.

It was around 9 p.m. and I was poking at my backpack trying to decide if homework was a good idea when I heard my mom scurrying around the kitchen in one of those moods she gets in when the zoo passes come in the mail.

Then I heard her chirping throughout the first floor, "Sasha Cohen is on next!"

From what I had gathered from my mother over the past week, Sasha Cohen is a member of the USA skating team who was expected to make some big comeback after falling in 2002.

Apparently I was the only human being in America who didn't know the entire biography of Sasha Cohen. Actually, I was probably the only person living in the universe who didn't know who she was.

Figure skating has always had the reputation of being "the thing" to watch during the winter Olympics, which is why when it's on television, the broadcasting company interrupts it halfway for things people care less about like speed skating or cross country skiing.

Why ABC insisted on keeping its viewers up all night just to watch people flit around in too small costumes and cry when they lost was beyond me. Ice skaters always cry.

I knew I was never going to be one of those people who stay up all night and get sucked into this ice skating obsession fad. I've always thought if dance isn't a sport, then why is ice skating?

I rolled my eyes and imitated my mother's excitement mockingly, but she just brushed me off and ran upstairs.

Then it happened, I looked up from my seat at the couch at just the right time to see it.

The music started and I heard my mom squeal from upstairs.

A tiny blue streak zipped across the ice and flipped up in the air awing the commentators. I could already tell this was going to be a distraction.

I muted the television and looked down at the homework in my lap. I could still see the strick-thin girl jumping and gliding in and out of the corner of my eye.

I told myself I still refused to conform to an Olympic yuppie, and turned off the television.

The room went silent and dim. There, finally. Now I could work.

"Woo!" I heard my mom yelling



TALKING FOR MYSELF

A Column by Claire Anderson

and clapping.

"This is ridiculous," I said.

She turned up the volume.

That's it; I turned back on the television. If everyone thought the Olympics were so great, I'd give it a chance and then make fun of them all later when I know for a fact it's lame. That wasn't quite what happened.

Within five minutes I found myself in a trance as I watched the girl fly through her routine.

I was holding onto every jump, lift and turn along with the rest of America. I was waiting for her to fall, but hoping she wouldn't.

I felt a certain sympathy and connection for Cohen, maybe because she's the underdog, and maybe just simply because she's on team USA, I still don't know how sports events pull people together like that.

There's something cheesy and unifying about figure skating because even though I was watching a different television in a different room, on a different floor of my house, my parents were thinking the same things I was. So was the rest of the world.

As the music swelled and finally came to a closing note, the entire ice arena gave what seemed like a huge sigh, and applause rose.

Cohen sat down and waited with her coach for her score. Her face was confident, but completely defined by anticipation and admittedly mine was too.

We waited for the scores together. I yelled, "Come on! Show the scores already!" and in those words I knew I had completely dishonored my anti-Olympics oath.

Mass transportation more vital to city than streetcars

With the problems in mass transportation in downtown Omaha, streetcars aren't the answer.

There has been talk about using streetcars in Omaha, but there are no plans or design, yet. A budget hasn't even been planned yet that includes money going for streetcars. That is a good thing because Omaha should concentrate on mass public transportation before attempting a big project like this.

Central is downtown. The students who go to the state's largest high school need better mass transportation, not trendy streetcars.

Instead of streetcars, there should be talk of money that could be used to improve the public transportation that is already in place. Hardly anyone uses the public transportation as it is because it is so unreliable. The buses are never on time.

There should be meetings on how to improve public mass transportation, and budgets should be planned that allow the city to buy new buses. New buses, not these revamped 1960s vintage buses.

If someone missed their 3:15 bus outside school it seems like over an hour before they have an opportunity to ride another one. So students are sitting on Dodge street, after all the security guards have left, in the heart of downtown, waiting to pay \$1.50 for a bus that was late.

Streetcars in Omaha would cost millions of dollars for a transportation system that would only run through Creighton, the Quest Center and the Old Market. This is too much money for something that will affect only a few people and will not help students get to school and back home.

Mayor Mike Fahey had in mind a design like the light rail system used in Portland, OR.

Unlike the system in Oregon that has busing, the light rail and streetcars, the system for Omaha has only streetcars, and no other forms of public transportation, except for a few buses that are barely beneficial to the public as it is.

The Metro Area Transit (MAT) official web site reported that only 3 percent of the riders use the Portland streetcars compared to the 25 percent that ride on the light rail and the

19 percent who only use buses.

People prefer to use buses or light rails rather than streetcars, and building a system that only a few people would use seems pointless.

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

There have been complaints that the city buses are slow and they cost too much.

The millions of dollars that could be used for streetcars would be better used for buying more buses and making transportation faster or less expensive.

People have to get up earlier than they should just to catch a bus, and with more buses, there would be more stops. Time would be used efficiently without all of the people waking up early to catch a bus.

Students at Central have no need for streetcars when they get to school by bus or car. At the end of the day, students line up in front of city buses.

According to the United States Transportation Dept., there are 24 million students who ride buses on a daily basis.

It's not just the city buses that are a problem for students. Students who ride the school bus do not have shelter when it gets cold in the winter and when it rains. Money could be used to build some form of shelter for the students who need it.

The money that could be used for streetcars should go for busing and transportation for students. Omaha has a major mass transportation problem because there is a lack of public transportation.

The lack of buses and shelters are making it hard for students to go to school and adults to go to work. Omaha Eppley Airport does not even have its own bus system.

What a way for travelers to be welcomed in Omaha.

When our airport doesn't have a bus system, or doesn't connect with city buses, it becomes a serious problem for Omaha.

Tourists would rather pay a bus fare, then pay for a taxi ride because it's cheaper. Tourists who pay too much money for a taxi ride would not be very impressed with Omaha.

Something needs to be done.

Omaha drops on list of nation's healthiest cities

It seems as if it is always on the news, in the newspaper and on anyone's mind.

Well, the city of Omaha has become a little side-tracked, to put it mildly.

Last year Omaha was ranked number 16 on the list for the top 25 healthiest cities. This year, Omaha's place has drastically dropped to dead last place. Omaha is not on a list of unhealthy cities, but let's face it, the United States in general is not a hot spot of health to the world.

Why is it that Omaha has become less healthy than it was last year? It doesn't seem possible that everyone decided to stop exercising and started eating only junk food.

A number of factors have led to the downfall of Omaha's health.

The obvious factors are of course the kinds of food people eat, how much they exercise and their stress level. There is no use looking at the

past at what the city of Omaha did wrong. The people of Omaha should look forward to what can be done to increase the health of this city.

This includes teenagers.

Does Omaha really want to become Houston, or Dallas, two of the most obese cities in the country, according to the Food and Drug Administration?

For the major problem of food, many things can be done. It's not that difficult to find out how to stay healthy. The phrase "exercise and eat right" has been ingrained into the minds of every student for years.

It does not mean go to the gym every single day and run 10 miles. But, people can always exercise without even realizing it. They can take the stairs instead of the elevator or the escalator. They can just do things that might take a little longer. This way it won't seem as if they are exercising. God knows Central's stairs are the best places to find exercise. Going from the band room to the art room in five minutes

is a heart-pumping task.

Many people may say there is no cure for stress, and it always exists. They are right, but there are ways to limit the amount of stress an individual has. People should relax every so often.

For example, if a student has hours of homework, and they have been working for only an hour or so, then they should take a 15-minute break or so to relieve their mind of stress. There is no excuse why Omaha is getting more and more unhealthy. People need to start caring about their health. Shows like "The Biggest Loser" promote healthy living, but over half of the commercials show pills and diets that can damage the body.

Stop buying into the fads and concentrate on what works. Metabolism pills and ab crunchers don't make a person healthy. One plus one is two. Diet and exercise are the only ways to solve Omaha's health problem.



EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

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

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

EDITORIALS

BATTLE OF THE BOUNDARIES

From segregation to class sizes, the war over school districts continues to widen the gap between the East and West

The segregation in Omaha's schools was apparent even to students sitting in the stands during this year's basketball games against Millard South.

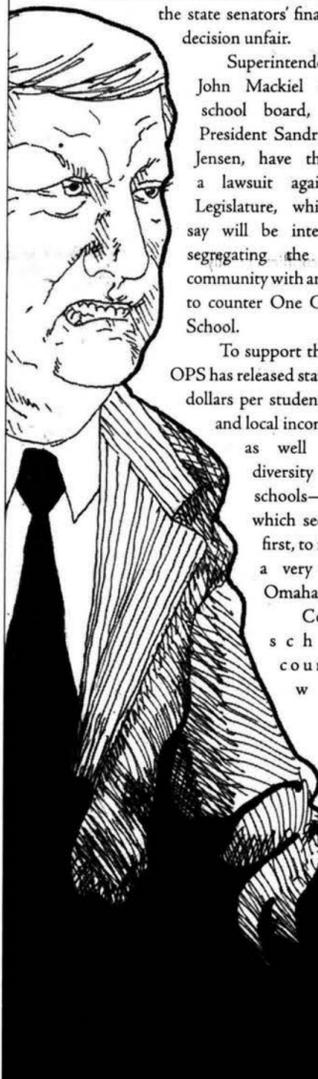
Amongst the crowds of "I (heart) OPS" T-shirts and purple and red school-spirit gear, the two schools peered across the gym at one another with no unity whatsoever. It was just another reason for conflict.

Millard's predominately-white crowd represented another team, another school, another district and, perhaps more importantly, a completely different way of life.

These students, unlike those from any other Omaha Public School (OPS), weren't just rivals—they were enemies, and the city's largest district was trying to stop that.

Instead of working for unity, however, the One City, One School District effort had already escalated into an all-out war between the shielded suburban areas and the starving inner-city community.

The boundary battle, hitting the eye of the storm in the Nebraska Legislature, is ready to explode once more should OPS officials deem the state senators' final decision unfair.



information showing the same thing except, in their information, the suburban districts were the ones not getting their fair share.

One could argue over the discrepancies in this data for years, with or without success. But in the end, it all comes down to the obvious.

The students and teachers who have seen both school systems first hand and experienced the differences between them are the ones with the purest view of the city.

The 17 and 18-year-old students who still have to ride the bus to school every morning know they're missing out on something, just like the students in Westside who have personal laptops know they have advantages.

Students who attend old schools without built-in resources and new, impressive construction are already suffering in the eyes of parents and people who wish to send their children to the most impressive academic academies.

Funding ratios and tax dollars just don't tell the whole story. Instead of firing meaningless numbers back and forth like cannonballs, district officials should just spend some time listening to the people at the center of the conflict. Instead of isolating students, the school board should encourage them to speak out.

Only that can show the real meaning of One City, One School District. Only by working together and truly understanding both situations can the OPS and Coalition schools come to an agreement.

The district should not expect most students to completely understand the funding situation at hand but, instead of dismissing it as a "complex issue," officials should be trying to explain it.

Giving students blanket answers results in them forming misconceptions.

In a recent *Register* poll of 189 randomly-selected students, nearly every survey showed students do not totally understand all of the facts relating to One City, One School.

And, only 15 of these students reported ever having attended a rally, meeting or discussion on the topic.

It is clear that even if information is being made accessible to teens, they are not gaining from it because they do not understand the ramifications this political battle could have on their younger classmates and potentially their future children.

There is no way the decisions being made right now in the Legislature and in the school board meeting rooms across the city will not influence future generations. That can be said without bias.

So it shouldn't scare OPS officials for teachers to bring up the boundary struggle in their classes. If students do care about it, they should be able to talk about it.

It is in all the districts' best interests to educate and involve young people in this massive political debate because it can be used as a method for students to study in all classes.

Right here, in Omaha, is a reflection of history and of American politics in general. English classes should be writing opinion essays and sending letters to senators.

Government classes should be studying the school board's and the Legislature's processes in dealing with it.

U.S. History classes should be looking at related incidences in the city's past.

Even statistics classes should be running over and over the data compiled by both sides and weighing them against state reports and first-hand information. Economics classes could use the new data to come up with some funding solutions of their own.

This is as much an opportunity for change as it is for education. Officials keep saying the effects of One City, One School will not be felt until years, even decades, from now.

This is flat-out wrong. Students could just as easily be feeling them now.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff



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Advertising good for OPS campaign

Omaha Public Schools (OPS) has been trying to gain support in its One City, One School District proposal through advertisements since September.

However, most Nebraskans are still uninformed or inactive in the city-wide school district push. Hopefully that will soon change because now the best way for people to become involved in One City, One School is to do what they've been doing, which is sitting in front of the television.

Alliance for Omaha's Future (AOF), the pro-One, City, One School District organization is now airing commercials on television and radio programs, and it's about time.

In a society where more and more people spend their time glued to the television screen and less time picking up the paper, even their own child's school newsletter, broadcasting is growing to be the best method of publicity.

The alliance should have been airing commercials long ago.

In general, the advertisements OPS has been producing has not been drawing in the support it wants.

Commercials reach more people and because the commercials air during prime time, are reaching people at a convenient time.

According to a study done by the A.C. Nielson Co., the average American watches more than four hours of television a day.

In four hours both students and parents are bound to come across the commercials numerous times.

There's a reason that when asked, most Central students weren't familiar with the provisions under One City, One School District. It's because they weren't properly informed.

Most students don't wake up and grab a paper for the bus ride to school or visit the AOF web site when they get home.

Rather, they go home grab a snack and turn on the television. Children, which is anyone under the age of 16, see an average of a staggering 20,000 30-second commercials every year.

Some people might blame the lack of student involvement on apathy.

Apathy does play some part in the lack of involvement regarding the One City, One School District, but the officials pushing for statewide districts haven't done enough to include students in the first place.

Although One City, One School is entirely about the students,

they are the ones in the dark.

At school it is taught there are three types of learning: auditory, visual and kinesthetic. Those styles refer to what individual's brain responds to.

OPS and the alliance can't

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff

speaking directly to Nebraska about the advantages of a city school district is a more progressive approach and allows more people to relate.

The directness of the powerful and is what we're going to need to gain a strong support system.

In the commercial world, the speaker must be direct, clear, and to the point. Words like "racism" and "opportunity" are hard to ignore. It's a good thing that the alliance isn't afraid to use words to get their message across even at the chance of stepping on some toes in the process.

It can be assumed that schools aren't going to like being accused of being racist or anti-semitic, but the reality of this situation is that now, it is in their best interest to be worried about it.

Both advertisements mention the AOF web site which contains facts, statistics and general pro-One City, One School information.

The site itself is more interesting than the commercials can be, and is a good resource for interested viewers.

Even though OPS is becoming stronger by using different media and may be gaining more support, Millard is still more than one step ahead of OPS.

Millard and other coalition schools have been and are continuing to produce more advertisements including yard signs and literature, the key part of the campaign.

Millard is ahead of OPS because it has a consistency in campaigning.

People see things like yard signs and commercials every day and get used to them.

That repetition is what gets people to an idea or product.

The alliance needs to be harder. It knows it's on the track.

The alliance should just keep on doing what it's doing, but at a faster pace and with more force.

Clinton's scandal may be too biased to be included in high school textbooks

"I did not have sexual relations with that woman." Former president Bill Clinton defended himself with that statement against allegations of sleeping with White House intern Monica Lewinski.

Too bad it was a lie. The rest was history, published in the hard copies of United States history textbooks where young readers learn of their nation.

Students have every right to know at least some of the details about this important part of this nation's recent history. He lied under oath about having sexual relations with the White House intern.

Details of the raunchy affair should not be kept a secret. Rather the details should be included. It is part of history.

Students should be learning about the mistakes political figures have made in the past and the consequences that follow. Events that shape the nation's history are mandatory for today's generation to learn of and learn from.

Textbooks should include details of the allegations Lewinski made against Clinton, why she made them and how the whole ordeal was handled.

However, some people feel students do not need to know of the sickening sexual acts of this now infamous duo. All of the hot and sweaty groping can stay confidential between Lewinski and Clinton.

They feel sex is all over the media, on the minds of many and is easily excused. It would not be hard for one to overlook grotesque details of Clinton's sex life, quietly tucked away in the corner of a history textbook. Young minds are already corrupted by current television programs. They don't need any more corruption.

Yet, Clinton's scandal is forever a part of U.S. history, and should not be overlooked either. If only textbook editors could find a happy medium in the amount of details presented.

"Holt's World History," briefly refers to this part in history.

In the same history book, there was a full page of Nixon's impeachment and resignation as well as events that led up to it.

The textbook went into great detail of why Nixon resigned. Why should it be any different for Clinton's impeachment?

It shouldn't. Text covering the events surrounding Clinton's impeachment should be covered just the same as Nixon's impeachment was covered in "Holt's World History."

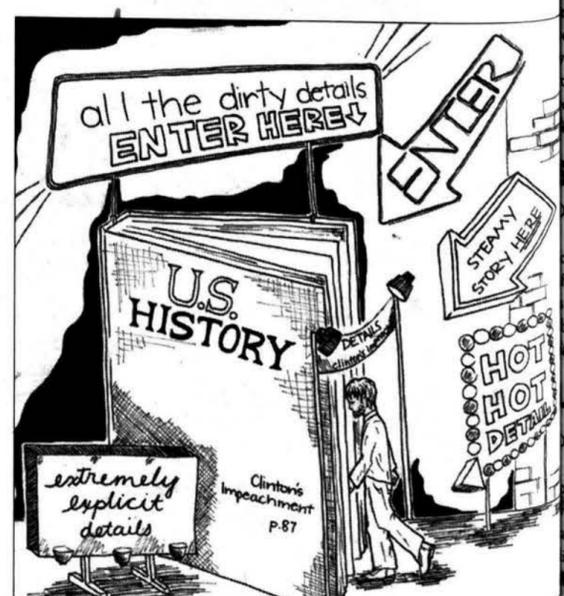
In view of the nature of the accusations that preceded Clinton's impeachment, one could argue that any detail would be considered too vulgar. People could disagree saying that any detail expanding beyond "sexual misconduct" is too profane for any reader's eyes, even if they're reading of their nation's history. That is their opinion.

Textbook editors should spare no expense when presenting students with details of Clinton's wrongdoings that changed history, yet also drawing the line where the important information ends and the bawdy facts begin.

They should be descriptive, but at the same time, keep an eye out for those details that are a bit too descriptive.

EDITORIAL

The OPINION of the Register staff



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
COLUMNS
REGISTER YOUR OPINION
POLITICAL CARTOONS

OPINION

"I am writing about the One City, One School conflict. I really don't see what would be wrong if the schools came together to form one complete district."
Jamesa Stewart (11)

BIG ISSUE: THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

Annexation will bring equality

Dear Editor,
I think the One City, One School District is a great idea. All of the schools will be equal. I think this is how it should have been from the beginning. Then, that way, the other schools wouldn't be able to brag about being better than us.
Maia Clark (10)

Annexation should blow over

Dear Editor,
I wonder when all of this annexation business is going to end. Although the controversy of skirmishes at basketball games is entertaining, and the drama of a war between the districts is fun for us, I can't wait until everybody stops making a big deal about the takeover of Millard. I also eagerly await Omaha Public Schools' next big campaign... "One City, One Bathroom."
Erickson (10)

Annexation will cause trouble

Dear Editor,
The schools should not be all brought together as one district. I think it gives schools and other districts more opportunities to express their opinions and their uniqueness. If there were one school district, there would be more arguing over the best. There would be more fights. I think it should just stay the way it is.
Merine Schuster (11)

Takeover will drag down schools

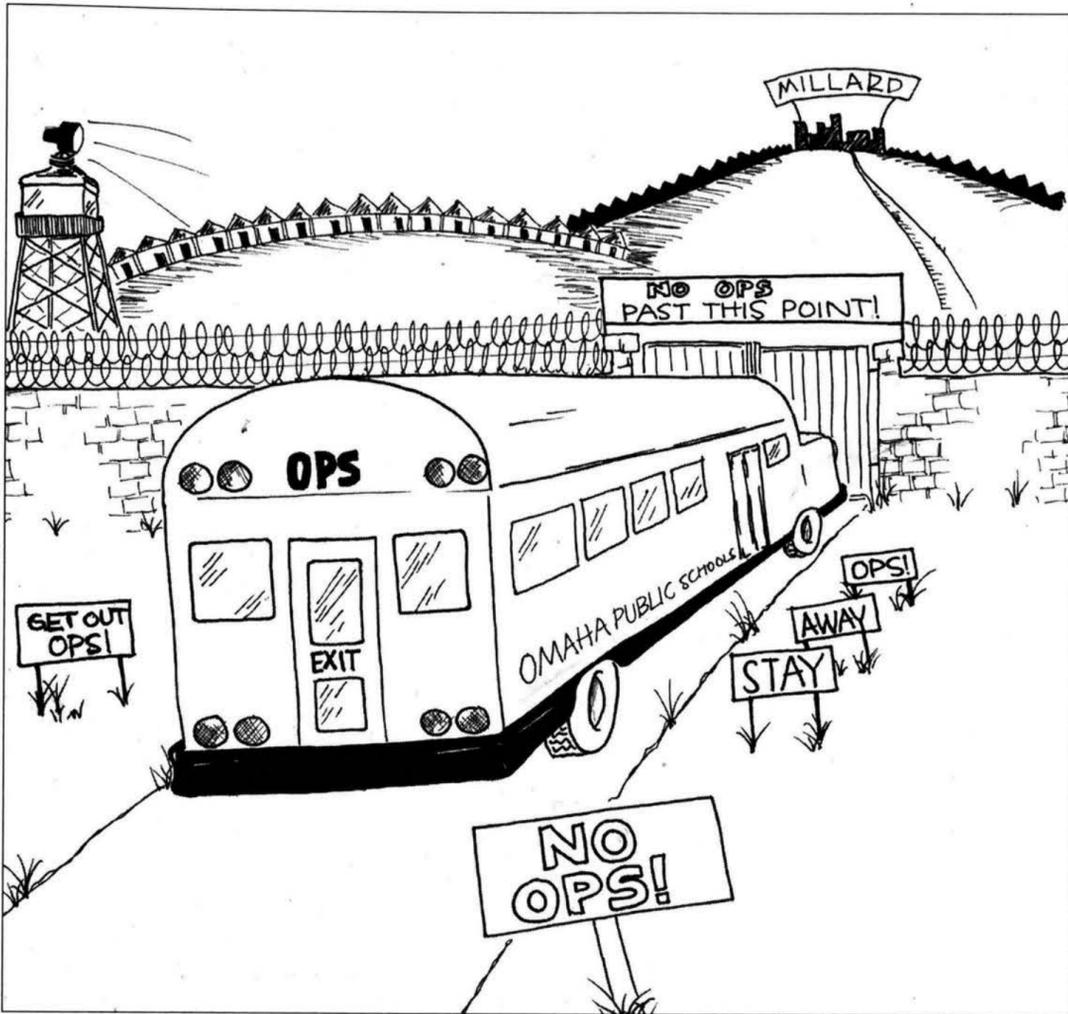
Dear Editor,
I am writing to give my opinion about the Omaha Public Schools' annexation. Even though I am a student in Omaha Public Schools, I believe we should leave Millard Schools alone. I say this because Millard Schools are doing better than us academically. This means that if they join us, we are probably going to drag them down, which is wrong. Now, if we were doing better than them it would probably be in their best interest to join us. The only thing OPS should be worried about is bringing us back to the top and once we are there then we can begin to tell the lesser to join us.
Edward Pierce (9)

OPS shirts appropriate at games

Dear Editor,
I recently read Clay Lomneth's column on the students wearing their OPS T-shirts at a basketball game and how they were forced to turn them inside out.
This, I think, is stupid. The shirts were school appropriate and the students were the ones handing money over the counter. It not only discourages the expression of opinions, but also is a bad example for the teenagers.
What kind of city are they trying to run?
Rockwell (10)

Takeover has many advantages

Dear Editor,
I think One City, One School is a great idea. It only makes sense. Millard kids can stay in the same school, and they



shouldn't have to worry about busing. Also, with Westside, the technology would be a definite plus. All in all, One City, One School District is a great idea for not only the OPS students, but everyone in this city.
Vicky Czerwinski (9)

Split budget makes no sense

Dear Editor,
I think that it is stupid we split the budget with other schools. Omaha Public Schools has the most schools and better rules, therefore, Omaha Public Schools should get the most money.
Jose Cardenas (9)

Change is not always good

Dear Editor,
What's the deal with the annexation? I think this whole annexation thing is wrong. We should just leave things as they are. Some say change is good. In this case, they're wrong. If it works for everyone, leave it be because nobody cares about our opinion.
Jon Roberson (10)

Millard overreacting to OPS plan

Dear Editor,
I am writing about the One City, One School conflict. I really don't see what would be wrong if the schools came together to form one complete district. Millard is really blowing the subject out of proportion. It wouldn't hurt them to come together with our school. I just don't understand.
Janesa Stewart (11)

One City meetings need attention

Dear Editor,
While I feel it is extremely important to be a part of the One City, One School issue and I want to attend meetings, but I find myself ignorant as to when they are held. It is so important for students to be involved in the future of our school district, and if the Register printed known meetings, maybe more students would attend. For myself, I know if I came across such a list I would take note and plan to attend.
Megan Kreigler (10)



REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Do students appreciate the First Amendment?



"Yes, they appreciate it, but they don't acknowledge it. Without it, you can't express yourself."



"I would say most of them do."
Josh Griffin (10)



"I think they do, but they take it for granted."
Sara Rahaman (11)



"No, because we really don't get our First Amendment right at school."
Ashley Hawthorne (11)



"I think they do, but I think they don't know it. If it was gone they'd appreciate it. I think they take it for granted."
Max Larson (10)

LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES, POLLS, CARTOONS

Priority on technology needed

Dear Editor,
I think Central High School should have better technology. We should have laptops for instance. In California, students have laptops and get to take them home. If we do not have money, then we should have sales or drives (penny). We could have a bake sale in the spring or we could make our own speciality cookies. We could sell them around Omaha. Hopefully, someday soon we will have laptops.
Tany Rountree (9)

Central's cliques aren't diverse

Dear Editor,
Central has always prided itself on diversity. Yeah, we may be diverse, but we are not united. Everyday lunch, in class, in the hallways if you just take a good look and you will see. There's hundreds of different kinds of cliques, but we all stay in our comfort zone. We do not dare step up to someone we do not know and strike up a simple conversation. Central may be diverse, but there is still work to be done in uniting us all.
Anne Negus (9)

School should prevent drug use

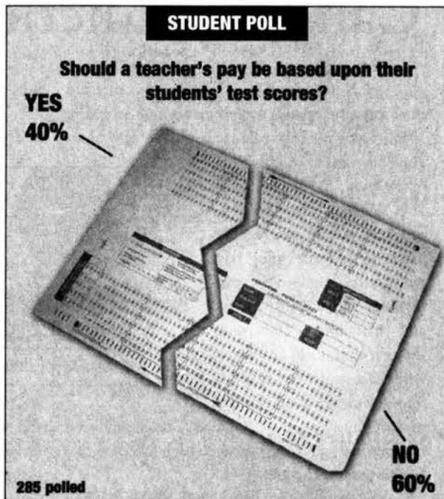
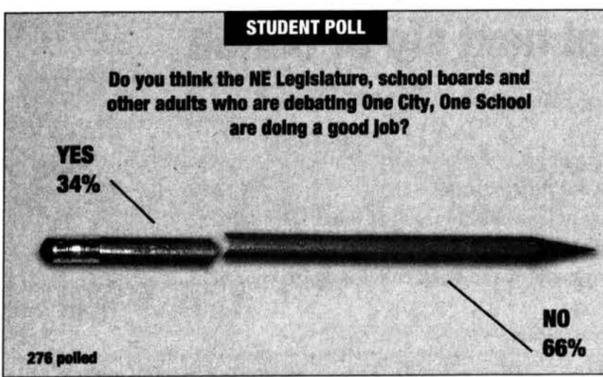
Dear Editor,
I am strongly opinionated about kids doing drugs in school. Almost everyday I see kids on drugs. It does not really bother me, but what exactly is the school doing to prevent this. It is something I was wondering about, and I have strong feelings about it.
Maiah Velez (10)

Lunch menu needs to change

Dear Editor,
I have an opinion on lunch. The food sucks horribly. The fries are cold and taste like they are not cooked all the way, same with the main course. I would get a salad, but the dressings are bad also. And, I am pretty sure that I am not the only one displeased with the school lunches.
Michael Laizure (9)

Homophobic remarks offend many students

Dear Editor,
Recently a story was published in the Register regarding offensive language, emphasizing racial and religious slurs. I thought the article itself was very good, but I noticed one huge issue missing: homophobic remarks. The fact of the matter is, I rarely hear someone make an offensive religious remark, and the only racial slurs I hear come from the race to which they are considered offensive. I always hear the phrase "that's gay" or "don't be a fag" coming from all kinds of people, regardless of race, religion or gender. And the sad part is, rarely does a teacher make any attempt to stop it. Not only is it offensive, but it's downright ignorant. The word gay by definition means cheerful or having a sexual attraction to people of the same sex. Imagine if instead of using the word gay in the phrase "that's so gay," people started saying "that's so Asian" or "that's so American Indian." Doesn't make a whole lot of sense does it? There is no reason to use the word gay synonymously with stupid or lame. Imagine how much smarter people would seem if they instead said "that's so preposterous." I'm not saying that people need to suddenly start using intelligent words (gasp!), but at least use a word that shares a definition with the context in which it's being used. The chances of the ridiculous use of the word gay ending are slim, but that's not to say efforts can't be made. It would be incredible to see a teacher for once reprimand a student for using the word gay in a derogatory way.



It may not offend the teacher or the students in the class, but it does offend a lot of other people. Central is known for being a very good academic school, a school in which students are safe, and a school in which students (and teachers) are respected. I think it's time that the students who have been disrespected for something that is such a huge part of who they are, are finally given the respect they deserve.
Michael Greenberg (12)

Latin, German 'war' is overdue

Dear Editor,
The Junior Classical League (Latin Club) is a lot of fun. We have been talking about an intramural competition against another language club for a long time. It is about time for someone to do something about it. Thank God for lazer tag.
Frankie Hannah (11)

New eating disorder involves exercising

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

A recent poll of American women found among those who responded only 2 percent thought of themselves as beautiful.

Although this figure is shocking, it is not surprising.

With the constant images of perfection flashed across television screens and splashed across magazine pages, it would be hard for even the most secure person to make it through the day without feeling a hint of self-doubt.

There are two well-known disorders that develop out of a need to feel and be thin, they are anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.

Although the goal of both of these sicknesses is the same way that the sufferers make sure they don't gain weight is different. With anorexia the person simply doesn't eat, this way not absorbing any fat and forcing their body to use the fat previously stored and eventually muscle tissue.

Bulimia is a more gruesome way to control one's weight. With this disease the sufferers will allow themselves to eat, but then immediately induce vomiting to purge their bodies of the food. The side effects of this are just as bad as anorexia, the constant exposure to stomach acid cause the teeth to rot and cause extensive damage to the throat.

Many people who suffer from this disease will binge and purge in response to stress. When binging the person will usually eat more than normal portions, this is not only to get an over blown sense of satisfaction from eating, but also to make it easier when they make themselves throw up.

Unfortunately a new, and more easily disguised eating disorder has emerged. With this as of yet unnamed disease, people will eat in very minimal amounts and then immediately begin to exercise in order to rid the body of the new calories.

On the surface this may seem safe, even healthy, but in reality this has the potential to be just as damaging as the more traditional eating disorders. The reduced intake of calories is unhealthy because it is not allowing the body to absorb the proper nourishment.

Forcing a body to exercise that is not properly nourished can cause fainting and muscle cramps.

By working the calories off that they ate, they are starving themselves.

Eventually the practice of this disorder can lead to the same long-term effects as anorexia.

Once all the body fat has been exercised or starved off, the body begins to attack its own muscle tissue, causing weakening in the extremities.

After the non-essential muscle has been ravaged, internal organs, most notably the heart, will also begin to suffer.

Once the body has begun to literally eat itself, there is little to be done if the condition is in the later stages.

Once the muscles of the heart have been attacked they do not recover as quickly or efficiently as the muscles of the limbs do.

Without being able to work to its full capacity, the heart is put under a great deal of strain and continual exercising will only add to the stress put on the organ. After continued abuse, the heart will eventually fail and the person will die.

There are rehabilitation facilities for people suffering from eating disorder. For a rare few, going to rehab is enough to learn how to live without relying on their disorder, but for most it is a temporary fix.

The battle to keep from relapsing into their previous disorder is an urge most people, who suffer from this disorder, must fight for the rest of their lives. Sadly for some people, falling into the disorder is what will kill them.

Any kind of eating disorder, bulimia, anorexia or a new one are terrible for those afflicted by it.

There is little to be done about the triggers of such disorders, as the media does play a major role, but much of the want to feel thin comes from inside a person's mind.

BODY MODIFICATION

What are the popular graduation presents this year? A new car, a summer vacation to Europe or a brand new \$4,000 set of breasts?

The latter seems increasingly popular for young people, and with shows like "Nip/Tuck" and "Extreme Makeover," it may seem like the fashion of this season. It's true, when have big cup sizes not been in fashion?

Piercings and branding are just as dangerous.

The only thing different now is people aren't hiding their cosmetic surgery, they aren't ashamed of saying "these aren't natural." If women want to change and enhance what they've already have, more power to them. The only question is how young is too young?

The number of women under the age of 18 who had elective surgery last year was 220,000, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Out of these, nearly 4,000 were breast augmentations. That is 24 percent just in one year.

Although the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not suggest young people get this all-the-rage surgery, most cosmetic surgeons will do it, with fast recovery and cheap prices.

This means junior Jane Doe can step up on the surgeon's table after her math test on Friday and walk back into class a few days later with a new (and some could say improved) body. She's got a bigger cup size, more self confidence and the birthday gift she's wanted since she realized she wasn't what she saw in the fashion magazines.

Sounds great! The only problem with this is, Doe might wake up a few days later and not be able to go to her math class. She might wake up in excruciating pain, not only in her new breasts, but in every

joint and muscle in her body.

According the FDA, even girls who are over 18 should wait a few years to get this body modification. So anyone hoping to walk onto that college campus in the fall with a new body is kidding themselves.

According to the FDA, pain can be so bad young women have to go to the hospital and have the implants removed.

This is because their breasts weren't finished developing yet, so their real breasts were growing and clashing with the silicone implants. Even if a girl has been a B cup since puberty, there is good chance they'll get bigger later.

After the implants were removed, the breasts could pucker and ripple and not look as natural as before the surgery.

So, forget cosmetic surgery and sitting in the doctor's office for hours to get a new, hip look. The other trends happen in the tattoo parlor, or in some cases the

girls bathroom during passing period.

Although implants are dangerous and expensive, these new trends are nearly just as permanent with obvious risks involved.

Teens are piercing, scarring and tattooing themselves and friends with little more than a ball point pen and sewing needle. Needless to say this is dangerous, popular and nothing new.

Techniques called branding are also becoming a trend again with people burning shapes and designs into themselves. These are scars created by cutting a design into the skin and then tearing out the middle.

Is this what it takes to be unique today? Is this how people keep up with the trends, by tearing random designs into the skin that are permanent?

People can't get a professional tattoo, so they just go to a friends basement and get something make-shift and dangerous.

This is why adults think teens are stupid. This is how minors get bad names. Immature people like this who think they are so deep they know what they want.

Be it larger breasts or huge scars, body modification is an idea that is best left out of the high school scene, although it never will be.

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

New television shows lead to the new trend of bigger breasts in younger girls. Although it may help with self image, it is one of the most dangerous mistakes.

Caffeine addiction proves coffee to be teen's drug of choice

Jack Kerouac and Paul Erdos both completed their most memorable achievements high on speed. While I may not ingest Benzadrine on a daily basis, I must confess to an addiction of my own.



BOMBS AWAY

A Column by Joe Delich

Without my favorite drug, I would be literally incapable of functioning. My withdrawal symptoms can include headaches, fatigue and irritability. The mere thought of starting a morning without it causes me to break into a cold sweat. Caffeine is my love, my life and my livelihood. Caffeine-induced frenzies have pulled me through high school with a fair amount of success.

You really know you have a problem when you order a drink at a coffee shop and the cashier stares at you like you're insane. For example, it's already 9:30 p.m. and you ask for a cup of coffee with two shots of espresso and all the cashier can

say is "why?"

At my worst I was consuming up to a pot of coffee every day, in addition to the numerous pops and my after-school cup of coffee.

In the beginning it helped me stay awake, stay focused and stay motivated to complete my schoolwork as well as pursue numerous hobbies on the side.

Of course, the massive amounts of caffeine I was pouring down my throat eventually began to take its toll. My body simply began to degenerate from lack of sleep. My nerves were frayed and my sanity was quickly disappearing. I would drag myself into English class shaking uncontrollably, with my mind and papers scattered.

I finally recognized my problem when college essays rolled around and I had a prompt asking what I did after school and before sleep. This was

my moment of clarity. I realized I had nothing to write down except an apologetic explanation of why I spend all my spare time cloistered in a coffee shop.

It was after this event I decided to make an attempt at rehabilitating myself. I immediately cut back on my caffeine intake by restricting myself to a sole cup of coffee per day. In addition to limiting my caffeine consumption, I even began forcing myself to be in bed by 10 every night rather than the usual wee hours of the morning.

Everything went well for a week or two, but eventually I found myself in a situation where I was confronted with the same old temptation once again.

It was a dreary Tuesday morning and I was running slightly late for school. I had stayed up until 2:30 and as a result had already stopped for coffee on my way to school.

I walked into math class, still exhausted despite the cup of coffee I had already drained on my drive to school. The whole class I could

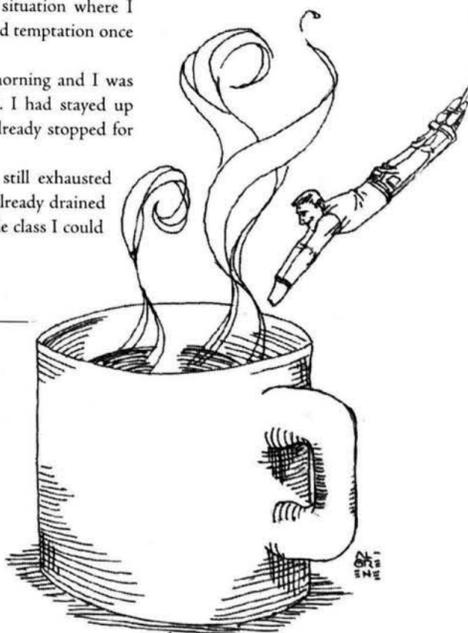
do nothing but stare at the devilish instrument of destruction known as a coffeemaker that sat on a counter a mere three feet away.

At first I tried to focus on the lecture, but to pour all my nervous energy into taking notes it was no use. My legs succumbed to the floor shaking and I broke into a cold sweat.

At last I could take it no longer, and I ran for the coffee maker in the middle of class.

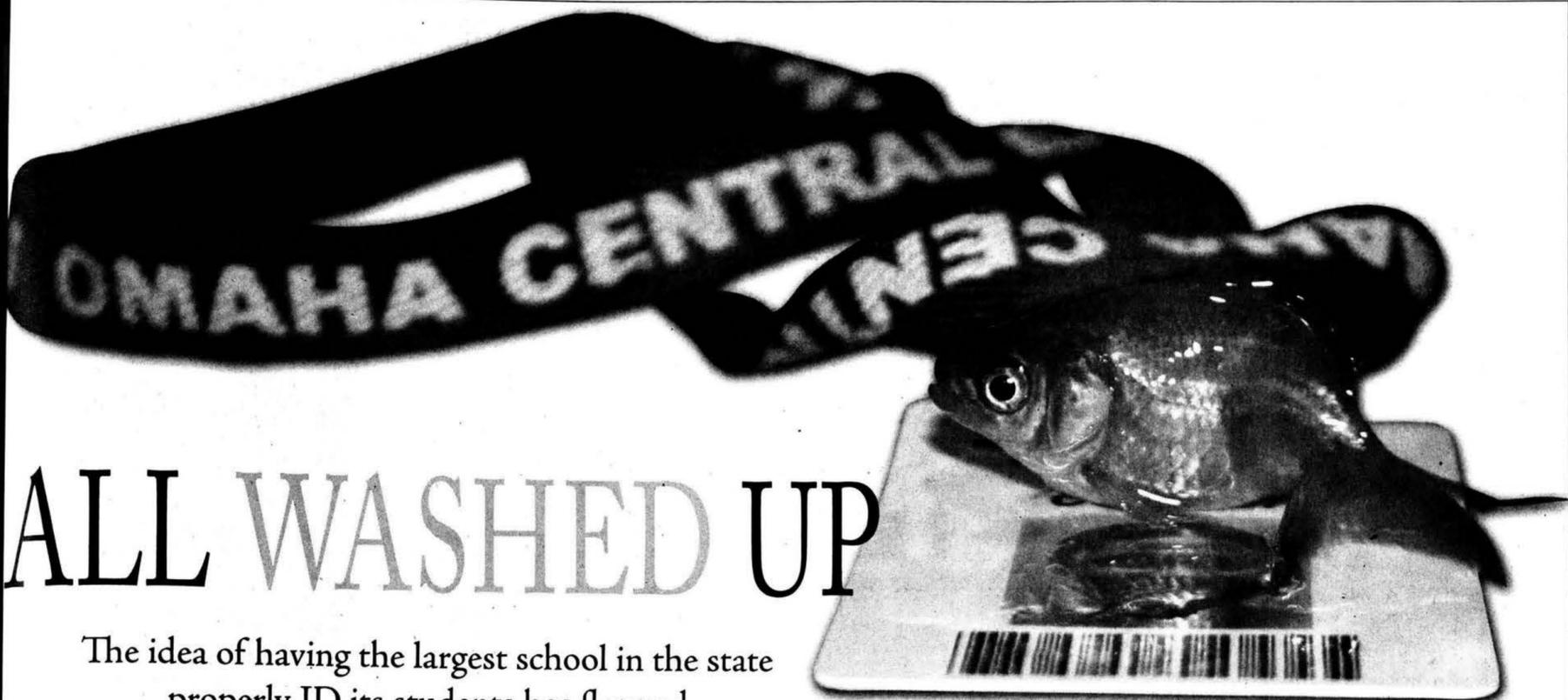
My instructor must have seen the desperation in my eyes because he said nothing, but let me do what I had to do. It was so good.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CLAY LOMNETH/REX USA
How young is too young? Some teenage girls get implants when they are just starting school. Whether they feel they are not beautiful enough or want to portray themselves as sexual objects, there is a serious problem.



Top ten ways to get that next sip of coffee

1. Stick it to the man by growing your own coffee bean plants.
2. Get a huge mug and dive in (Right).
3. Have a contest to see who can brew the blackest cup of joe.
4. Spike it with Mountain Dew to get even more of your caffeine kick.
5. Make sure to buy a car based on the amount of cup holders within reach of the driver's seat.
6. Take a sip from your first hour teacher's cup when she's not looking.
7. Keep a Mr. Coffee in your backpack, lug around a generator and hook coffee mugs to your belt.
8. Replace all salt on foods with coffee grounds.
9. In the morning, forget milk on your cereal. No decaf, please.
10. Spend your summers in Columbia "volunteering."



ALL WASHED UP

The idea of having the largest school in the state properly ID its students has flopped

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

They were meant to be an added measure of safety and security. Instead, they're used as a straight edge in math class and something to help students flip food at each other during lunch.

Providing over 2,000 students with identification was a very ambitious undertaking by the administration, one that required class time, money and one that ultimately proved to be in vain.

Hardly, if ever, are the rules regarding the ID badges enforced. Students still leave class with passes, even if they do not have their badges. When students can be bothered to actually wear their badges, they are more often attached in non-regulation places. Instead of wearing lanyards, displaying their badges on their chests, students attach the IDs to their belt loops, backpacks or purses.

Initially the administration said the IDs would be checked whenever a student entered the building, or bought lunch. Even the idea of checking the IDs of thousands of

students, many of whom arrive at school only minutes before the first hour bell rings, is absurd. The time it would take the security staff to OK each student could very possibly make students phenomenally late to class and cause huge snarls in foot traffic.

Using the badges to help the lunch lines move smoother and more efficiently is a more reasonable idea as opposed to checking badges as students enter the building, but it has also not been put into place. The idea behind using the cards to buy lunch is a good one, but it would not make a noticeable difference from the current system. There would still be problems when students didn't have money or forgot their cards at home. Students could still use their friend's accounts to pay for lunch.

As stagnant as the ID card system has become in this its

first year, things could become more outdated and easier to avoid if the program is continued. Once a student is issued an ID, he can enter the building, even if he is currently suspended or no longer in attendance.

One of examples of this occurred this year when a student who had dropped out entered the building and was not

questioned by security because he had a current ID badge. He then proceeded to do graffiti on several surfaces in the school. With the current system there was no way this incident could have been avoided. The security guard did what he was supposed to. There was just no way to know the student was no longer

enrolled at Central. This is probably the most glaring example of the ideology of the ID tags falling apart. Every procedure was followed and yet an intruder was still allowed to enter the building and put students and staff at risk.

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

Liberalism has limit in eyes of cartoonist

was surprised at first at how angry I was at the rioters in Arab countries and cities from Baghdad to Bangkok over the appearance of the "Muhammad" cartoons in a Danish paper. I was enraged at the prospect of innocent people, dying in the region over a cartoon. A cartoon!

What surprised me about myself was just angry I was, and how simplistically and creatively I viewed the increased violence in the Middle-East. In the past, I've been of the mind that acceptance and understanding can help calm a situation. Don't be so quick to judge; don't be so quick to condemn the opponent, or you'll never get things out.

But I believe that line of understanding has crossed, and surpassing my initial surprise at anger is my surprise at my own tenacity and willingness to part from my opinion. I can't break from the mentality that the rioters are simply wrong.

Not wrong in terms of anger. Not wrong in terms of indignity. But wrong in terms of peace.

The morning after my initial outrage faded, I became involved in a spur-of-the-moment debate with a friend. The friend, as far as I know, is a devout Christian, and has been on the conservative side of many an issue I've talked him about.

His stance on the cartoon riots, however, was more liberal in this case. Repeatedly, he told me simply was failing to view the issue from a firm standpoint.

The appearance of Muhammad alone, much with a bomb-shaped turban, is the most basic offense of the Islamic faith. He struggled to find a parallel in the Christian faith, and told me that lesser religious involvement excluded me from

understanding what it feels like to have something you believe in marred, insulted and corrupted. It would be like having Jesus on the cross, spewing blood violently, with "All Jews Die" written on the cross, he said. Or something like that.

This left me feeling unsure. I'm usually willing to consider my views and possibly change them, but something still just didn't ring true in his argument. So I got a second opinion.

This time I went as directly to the source as I could, and consulted a friend who is a Muslim by choice, a friend whose perspective I'd been eager to hear anyway.

He came up with a sacrilegious Jesus analogy as well, albeit one much more creative, biting and insulting to not only Christians, but also American ideals.

If something as horrible as his imagined cartoon appeared in an Arabic paper, he claimed, "we would go over there." To fight in a war. To kill.

Religious matters are tricky. Religion can be the most important thing to any one person who takes their faith seriously, and if history has shown anything, it's that religious disagreements can be the nastiest.

But my argument, I've realized, should go past that. Past religion, no matter what. I find myself believing today that peace is an international and multi-faith language. Heck, it's an omni-faith language.

Something I brought up in my argument with the Christian, and something that I should have brought up with the Muslim, is that nonviolence is, as history has also shown, so much

more powerful than violence in the end. If an outside observer can watch your movement and see that your cause is dignified, true and dedicated to a better tomorrow for everyone, won't they be more sympathetic? Don't nonviolent movements automatically put you on the side of good?



INITIATE PLAN 9

A Column by Bob Al-Greene

My Christian friend argued against that, using the claim that all Muslims are committed to a jihad that they must fight against us.

Well, I think that's pretty obviously ridiculous. Time and time again we've been told by the majority of the Muslim community that al-Qaeda and its ilk are a simple few extremist hacks.

And as for my Muslim friend's argument, I still have to disagree that a cartoon insulting Christians values would lead to a war, at least led by Americans. Because America believes in freedom of the press, an essential part of the Constitution, and also in the separation of church matters and state affairs. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." It's that simple, eloquent and sensible.

Ironically, an Iranian newspaper is of course sponsoring a cartoon contest based on who can poke fun at the Holocaust in the best way.

Oh, yeah, that's hilarious. Zing! Actually, it's very telling that the Iranians' best defense against a perceived insult from a mainly Christian nation is to poke fun at the Jews.

That's apparently where they're most comfortable; the leader of Iran, by the way, has repeatedly voiced his hopes that Israel, along with a nation of innocent people whose only crime

is their religion, should be pushed into the sea. What?

No. I refuse to believe that anyone can be justified in killing innocent civilians.

This is the 21st century, for God's sake. No one should be dying over religious persecution or disagreement anymore.

But so many people on all sides seem to think that simple religion gives any average person the excuse to wage unending war on an invisible, unattainable enemy. That's wrong.

"Hell is not a place you go if you're not a Christian/It's the failure of your life's greatest ambition/It's a bad decision to blindly follow any religion."

Those are the words of a revolutionary underground rapper, words that have new meaning to me now.

Because everyone's greatest ambition should be peace. I especially had hoped to hear that from my Muslim friend, a knowledgeable person with much intellect and interest in this country's own Civil Right's movement, a perfect example of the impact of nonviolence.

So soon after the death of Coretta Scott King, we must not forget her lessons, or the lessons of her husband and his inspiration before him. These were true heroes who did not bow to the frailty and failings of the human heart, who learned to look past race. Past creed. Past sex. Past the importance of their own lives. Past everything, just to strive for understanding in the world.

The one, best word I could fathom to explain my feelings over the cartoon riots to my Muslim friend was "disheartened."

Now, thinking of the sacrifices true righteous heroes can make, I know that truly is the word for what I feel.

EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

New language offers broader future to teens

Next year, students will be able to take Chinese for the first time. This is a good thing.

Teens these days have no idea how easy they have things at school.

One thing they have easy is they only have to take one international language, and that's not until junior high.

French teacher and International Language dept. head Bev Fellman said a person's native language is stored in a certain area of the brain.

She said if this person learns a foreign language before he hits puberty, it is stored in the same section as is his native language.

However, if this person learns a different language after puberty, it goes to an entirely new section.

Fellman said when a person learns languages during his younger years, he spends most of his time on conversation. As he gets older, he has to focus more on reading and writing.

So, why not start American children speaking different languages earlier in life?

Then by the time they get to high school, they can take more than one language and be fluent in them.

She thinks if children learn more languages, this country would be much better off. In many areas, America is the leading country of the world. The children who live here are the future of America.

So, if they learn different languages, especially the languages of the second and third leading countries of the world, it will be much better off.

There is one system of teaching a foreign language called the "immersion approach."

Children's minds are so ready to learn and absorb so much more easily than adults. Adults' minds are already jammed with so much that it's harder for them to learn. Therefore, if we start teaching the children languages earlier in life, it will work more efficiently. We need to immerse them into learning of new languages.

It's about time Chinese is offered to the biggest high school in the state. Everything at this school is Eurocentric, even though every part of the world is represented here.

Chinese and other international languages need to be pushed, so students can be more well-rounded leaving high school.

Following rules seems to be tough concept

The courtyard had one small yet supposedly significant change to it at the beginning of the school year. On the walls were signs posting "Eight chairs to a table." Now that the year is coming to an end, one might think the "controversy" would have died down.

Absolutely not. Students are still fighting to get all 25 friends somehow seated around one small table for 42 minutes every

Why? What is the big problem? Eight chairs per table are not worth fighting over. It seems like the battle students are deciding to pick and choose are the big ones. Whether it be ID tags, passing periods, food or chairs, these fights are worthless.

It is simple. More than eight chairs is a fire hazard, period. There is no reason not to comply with fire codes. Even if it wasn't a fire code, there is no reason to have 15 chairs gathered around a small table. It makes the chaos of lunch periods a little easier for teachers to handle.

Does the school really need to be fined because people have to eat with the same group every lunch period? Is a comfort zone that necessary? It is to think that this is true.

Why not eat with other people sometimes? This school is 2,500 students strong, but no one seems to venture out into the unknown. Are students really afraid of change?

This goes back to the "Mix it Up Day" a few months ago. Hardly anyone participated. The goal was, for one day, to have everyone sit at a new table with people they didn't know, who didn't necessarily look like them or talk like them. It seems like people fear their classmates.

They would rather spend their four years with the same group, a group they have most likely known since middle school.

Now, students feel like they have to battle the teachers every day to get a few extra chairs to circle the lunch table.

They argue like the teachers made up the rules in the first place.

The rule is logical. No one needs that many people at one table. There are no rules about getting up and walking to another table to converse with other friends. Are students just that lazy? They will even pile onto one chair so they can all fit rather than get up and mingle around the courtyard?

That is pathetic. Get over it. There are fire safety rules that need to be followed. This rule is one of them.

Find something actually worth fighting for to voice your opinion about, not lunch food and chairs. There is a reason officials and adults don't take high school students seriously, and this is one of those reasons.



EDITORIAL

The **OPINION** of the Register staff

OPINION

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD

124 N 20TH STREET OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102



TAKING IT FOR GRANTED

Freedoms are meaningless to this generation, as is the flag that represents them

Students come to school every day wearing T-shirts that express their thoughts and opinions, from One City, One School to the president.

They speak out in class and some even organize events.

They complain about little things as insignificant as wearing an ID tag to school, but never think about what life would be like without the ability and freedom to do these things.

Students exercise the First Amendment every day, but don't appreciate it. In fact, more young people than ever before can't even see the significance of it. It is terrifying to think this generation has become apathetic.

These freedoms most likely won't be here forever, especially with young people not appreciating or fighting for them.

There is a reason why this amendment was the first one added to the Constitution.

Freedom of speech, religion, and the rest are all freedoms that have never really been threatened

since current high school students have been alive.

A study at the University of Connecticut found only 83 percent of young people think they should be allowed to express unpopular ideas.

Nearly 97 percent of teachers and 99 percent of administrators thought this was a basic right of the people.

It's not the administration, it's not "the man" keeping everyone down as students want to believe. It is the people letting the bosses and officials do whatever they want.

People allow their rights to be taken away, be it

through the Patriot Act, or by not speaking out in the classrooms.

Teens are using, abusing and ultimately abandoning these freedoms with no thought of the repercussions.

They simply do not care.

Of course people should be able to voice ideas.

Students all have opinions on the ID tags, and they certainly have opinions on the One City, One School District conflict. So why do people assume their voice should be overlooked?

Speak up and speak out because this luxury might not be around much longer.

With the apathy facing Americans in the last few decades, it is amazing this country still has the freedoms it does.

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of the Register staff

Burning the flag shows great disrespect for this country and what it stands for. Taking its freedoms for granted is also disrespectful. The First Amendment is very important and students are simply brushing it aside.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER



TOO OLD FOR YOU

A Column by Justin Valentine

Tough times show meaning of friendship

There's nothing worse feeling useless when a close friend needs your help, especially when you are the only person she can rely on.

You try to come up with sympathy and then some words of wisdom to get this person out of this situation, but as you collect your thoughts, you draw a blank.

You're shocked at what you just tell her over and over again, you are sorry and that this is what has happened to them.

Many people face this situation and have to keep secrets and be there and be supporting. One of my closest friends is in this situation. One of my closest friends I hold dear to my heart she was pregnant.

I was stunned because she was the least likely person I would think would get pregnant. She called me 10 minutes after she found out her pregnancy test. At first, I thought something was wrong.

I had to beg her to tell me what was bothering her because she wouldn't open up to me. She told me it was woman problems. I wouldn't be interested, but she said it was a cover-up. I asked her she was on her period and she said, "I wish then I would worry about this."

Then she told me what happened and how lost she was. She didn't have anyone to turn to, she was repeating "it was only one time" how "one time" can change your entire life.

I talked to her every day, she found out and we talked about what she should do.

She wasn't going to tell her parents. She wasn't going to tell anyone at her school for the teacher would somehow find out. Her parents are threatening to tell her out. Yet, they want her to have a baby.

Abortion. That has been the main topic of discussion between other than who and who else. Her parents don't want her to have one.

I really am not the best to give advice on this topic because as new to me as it is to her, I'm trying the best I can.

She went to court to get an abortion without her parents knowing. Yet, she doesn't have the \$450 to pay for it. I offered money, but she wouldn't take it.

I do not know what the scenario is. So like her, I wait to see what will happen next.

Shorter school weeks offer less vacation time than imagined

School districts in seven states considered implementing a four-day school week policy for the 2005-06 school year, including districts in Nebraska and western Iowa. The proposal would be a poor decision for Omaha Public Schools (OPS).

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of the Register staff

The most rural districts from states such as Louisiana and South Dakota who have adopted the program have claimed that it is mainly an economic matter. By reducing the number of days in a week, usually by subtracting Monday or Friday, they said there would be less of a need for substitute teachers. As the school year went on, however, they found it improved student morale.

There is a downside to the four-day school week program, however. Fewer school days necessitate longer school days. Typically 1 hour and

15 minutes were added to the day, and never less than 1 hour. That one downside, as far as OPS students should be concerned, makes the issue moot. Longer days need to be avoided sharply, especially for high schools. The addition of more hours to a school day at an OPS high school could go either of two ways.

The first option for school officials would be to add time to the beginning of the day. This would be a ridiculous move, and would hurt students greatly. Starting school at 7:45 a.m., or even 7 a.m. for students with Zero Hour classes, is already pushing it. The idea of starting a school day at 6:30 in the morning is frightening.

Officials would likely recognize this and avoid adding time to the beginning of the day. In the second option there is as much trouble to be foreseen. If instead hours were added to the end of the school day,

there would be detrimental effects as well, similar in nature to an early-starting day.

If, for example, a day lasted from 7:45 a.m. until 4:05 in the afternoon, no doubt many students would take the opportunity to fit more honors classes in their day. This would not only immediately raise the amount of homework students received daily, but also take away precious hours at home to do that work. Many students are already stressed to finish all of their honors homework before bedtime. Taking an hour away in the afternoon for school would very likely add 1 hour in the evening for work. And the whole problem would circulate back to student sleep deprivation.

A four-day school week, while "cutting edge," as one school official described it, would not be the type of change OPS needs right now. A three-day weekend might sound appealing at face value, but in truth the negatives greatly outweigh the positives.

Crime rate fails to prove violent video games to be one of many causes of delinquency

After a long, strenuous night of gaming on his PS2, senior John Doe headed downtown with his paint can in hand, and practiced his graffiti on the First National Bank tower. Within minutes, a police officer approached him and cuffed him for vandalism. When questioned about his motives, Doe said he got the idea from a newly released video game "Marc Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure."

Here it is again, the "Grand Theft Auto" syndrome. Adolescents play the video games and then mimic the actions guiltlessly played on their gaming system.

After "Grand Theft Auto" came out, a short

period later, a teen was charged for grand theft auto.

Now, "Contents Under Pressure" comes out. What are the chances a teen will get the idea that he needs to earn respect by "tagging" a van eight times without getting caught.

One of the results of this is a crime rate going up.

But when John Doe told the police that a video game was the reason and the motivation behind his illegal acts, was that seriously a viable excuse?

It's ridiculous. He blamed a video game, an inanimate object. That has the same magnitude of a kindergartner blaming the broken vase on his teddy bear.

EDITORIAL
The OPINION of the Register staff

It has been all over the media recently. Headlines read, "Violent and morally corrupt video games affiliated with destructive decisions among adolescents."

That's bogus. Parents usually teach their youngsters the difference between right and wrong at the tender

age of 7, give or take a few years. As teens, there is no excuse for not knowing the difference between right and wrong. Attributing absent-minded actions to the advanced features of violent video games is low and should be completely unacceptable.

Unfortunately that's what society is like today. With that in mind, people still accept those excuses as being legitimate.

Some would say these games are interactive enough and realistic enough to psychologically corrupt the minds of today's youth. They should not be falling for that garbage. If today's teens can't comprehend the line drawn between reality and

fantasy, it is safe to say there might be another problem...or a big one.

Well, the simple solution would be to eliminate any and all morally-corrupt video games on the planet.

Fat chance. That is not the answer. Those who commit a wrong should be responsible for their actions. It is not the game's fault that Doe decided to do graffiti on the First National Bank tower. He made the choice himself. Nobody told him what to do.

Video games such as "Marc Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure" offer no logical excuse for bad behavior in teens.

ARTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

Kung fu, PAGES 26-27

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

20TH STREET OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102

New fad brings bling, tooth decay

Names changed to protect identities

BY PATRICK BREEN

When senior Ken Gregory smiles, he feels as if he is getting a lot of stares. Gregory is one of many students who are getting involved with a pricey new fad.

"My grill draws a lot of attention," Gregory said. The grills are gold, silver or diamond-encrusted covers that go over teeth. Grills are popular for the teeth, and often cost students hundreds of dollars for a set. Yet, it isn't the price that is worrying some people, it is the health risks and the backlash for installing this dental fashion statement.

A local dentist said any unlicensed dentistry can be hazardous to one's oral health.

"There are many dangers to having someone not a professional put things on your teeth," Dr. Gregory said. Oliver said without proper care, plaque can grow under the metal.

"The teeth, without brushing, can grow bacteria, and speed up decay," he said. Former Central student and grills seller John Doe said he sold anywhere from 15 to 27 grills a month and there is no danger in wearing one.

"There is as much danger wearing a gold necklace as wearing gold teeth," Doe said. Doe said he believed the reason for the backlash is not because of safety, but that selling grills is a new way with more money flowing into it than dentistry.

"There is no real danger," Doe said, "they're (grills) meant to be worn all the time." Doe said if one wears the grill properly and takes it off when sleeping and eating, he will avoid any risks.

If one doesn't, Doe said, the metal will start to shape the teeth, although he has never heard of it happening. Students have three choices in getting grills put on their teeth.

They can get them done by a dentist, setting them up online or by individual sales people. Getting a dentist is not a popular choice because the cost at a dentist's office visit is almost three times more than getting it done at the mall or by him. Online prices vary by web site.

The prices range from \$180 to over \$3,000, depending on how many teeth and what metal and diamonds.

To put the grills on, one must also buy a starter kit at the price of \$15 before ordering grills. After the

Continued to Grills on Page 24C



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER
Grills are becoming popular by the hit song "Grillz," and students are buying these accessories as fast as possible. However, some people are getting into trouble for installing them.

Art dept. head plans for fully-loaded semester before retiring this spring

BY BOB AL-GREENE

At the end of this year, Larry Andrews, 54, the Art Department's head, will retire.

He said even though his retirement will be because of the Early Leave Incentive Program, he is definitely not the kind of person who can't wait to get out of teaching.

"I'm not slowing down," Andrews said. "There's still Fine Arts Week, the Eagle Does and the Faculty Arts Show I still want to do."

He also said he is helping Principal Jerry Bexten with the Hall of Fame wall and outdoor lighting to show off Central's exterior.

"My wife says I'm busier now than I've been in my 25 years," he said.

Andrews has been working in the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) for 33 years, and for the last 23 years at Central.

He said he started his career inside OPS at Hor-Mann, which is now King Science Center, where he worked for five years.

"The reason I left was I married the music teacher," he said.

He said the administration had a policy then about married couples working in the same building, so Andrews moved to work at what was then King Prime, where there were a mix of students from the neighborhood and from Bryan.

Once he got his master's degree, however, he said he really wanted to teach high school.

He said he was ready for older students and for more of an academic challenge.

He said there were two possible schools that he could go to, and even though the other was close to his home, Andrews came to Central.

In 1983, when Andrews joined the Central staff, Margaret Quinn and Larry Houseman were the only art teachers.

Houseman was the department head at that time, and taught pottery and stagecraft.

When Houseman left, Andrews took over his classes and as department head, and has since taught Art 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 and Studio.

He said in time enrollment in art classes started to go up, and the most teachers the Art Department

has ever employed was 4 1/2.

"Central's changed," he said. "I've been here while things changed."

Andrews said he was proud of Central's tradition of excellence and achievement, in and after students have left school, and each teacher has a part in that tradition.

"I've had the fortune of teaching with some strong teachers. There are a lot of dedicated people in this building."

Andrews was vague as to when he took over for Houseman.

"It's been quite a while," he said.

He said many people have asked him how long he's been doing things, but he doesn't really keep track of things like that.

He said that he's been coaching girls tennis for 15 to 18 years, but that it doesn't really matter to him how long he's been working, just the fact that he still can.

"People tell me congratulations," he said. "And it feels a little weird. I don't feel old enough for one

Continued to Art on Page 24C



It's the genre that has the driving beats and the sometimes controversial lyrics. Its rich history is filled with imagery and pain. The new wave of young rappers is coming straight out of Omaha.



RHINO RECORDS

GRANDMASTER FLASH
1980



ARISTA RECORDS

RUN-DMC
1984



PRIORITY RECORDS

N.W.A
1988

Turn to pages 28-30 to see a rap history timeline, reviews and stories on how the local scene is exploding with its own unique sound and energy.

Tupac Shakur has been the face of rap music for more than a decade. While his music lives on, newer artists take up where he left off. Rap has been around for awhile and its popularity is stronger than ever.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Art department head Larry Andrews organizes the eagle sculptures in a display case before they were auctioned off for the CHS Foundation.

Movie Releases

April

- 7 "Benchwarmers"
- "On a Clear Day"
- "Phat Girls"
- 14 "Scary Movie 4"
- "The Wild"
- "Somersault"
- "The Notorious Betty Page"
- "Kinky Boots"
- 21 "Silent Hill"
- "Poseidon"
- "Haven"
- "Sentinel"

Concerts/Events

April

- 13 Sokol
- Underground
- John Vanderslice
- 17 Sokol
- Underground
- Saves The Day
- 18 Sokol
- Auditorium
- Murs

- 28 Sokol
- Auditorium
- Alkaline Trio

May

- 2 Sokol
- Underground
- Pretty Girls Make Graves
- 10 Sokol
- Underground
- Atmosphere,
- Brother Ali, Los
- Nativos
- 22 Sokol
- Auditorium
- Underoath

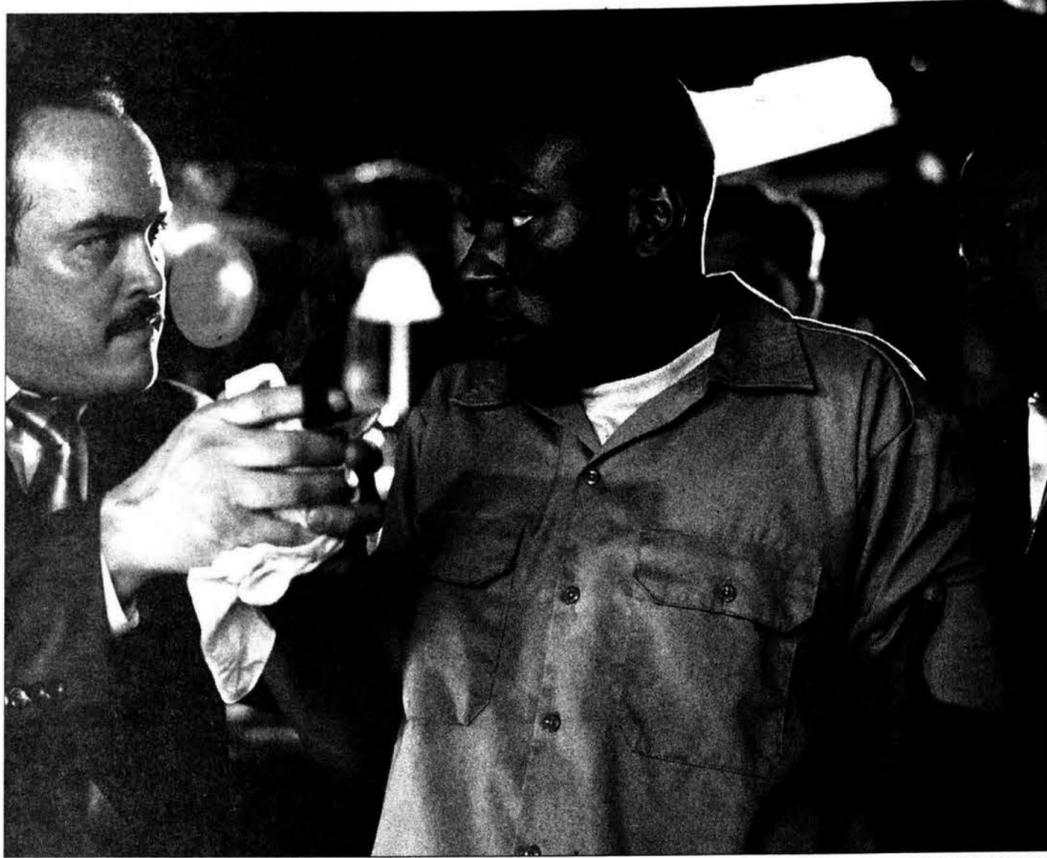


PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROTHERS
 Eddie Bunker, played by Mos Def, is being framed by the New York Police Dept. He was supposed to testify against the police in court that morning, but the police officers did whatever they could to delay him. Mos Def stole the show from cinema veteran Bruce Willis because of his kind heart and genuine acting ability.

Mos Def conquers film world

BY KIM BUCKLEY

16 Blocks was not a typical action movie. The movie started off with NYPD officer Jack Mosley (Bruce Willis) getting an assignment. He was tired both physically and mentally, turning to alcohol to get him through a boring night of watching a crime scene. His job was to get an important witness, Eddie Bunker (Mos Def), to the courthouse 16 blocks away so he could testify in front of the jury. It was supposed to be an easy job.

Of course it took a lot longer than it should to finally make it to the courthouse, and of course the people who Bunker was going to testify against tried to get both Mosley and Bunker killed.

And yes, there was a time limit. Mosley needed to get Bunker to the courthouse by 10 a.m. before the jury began deliberations, the making of a typical action movie.

Don't be fooled. Somehow between all of the gunshots and chase scenes, the movie took time to make the audience care about the characters, something rare in an action movie.

Willis was still at the top of his game in this movie. When Willis decided to testify in place of Def, and almost got shot, the emotion on his face said it all. He managed to turn a character who was an alcoholic, to a character who was a real hero in a convincing way.

However, the real star of the movie was Mos Def. He was impressive in this role and provided well-needed humor. The audience all burst out laughing when Willis pulled over to a liquor store and Def called after him, "It's not Miller time!"

Def didn't just make the audience laugh. In a scene on a bus, Bunker befriended a little girl, and showed a softer side of his character. One could tell he wanted to make the little girl feel better.

When Def talked about not knowing his real birthday and how he wanted to see a sister he never knew about, his words touched the audience.

David Morse played the bad guy, Frank Nugent. He perfectly played the manipulative cop who only cared about what he wanted.

MOVIE REVIEW

'16 BLOCKS'
 Starring: Mos Def

When he yelled at Mosley that he didn't care about the truth, the expression on his face showed how far he was gone. The audience could see how much he thought he had the right to tamper with witnesses to get the bad guys in jail, even if it meant murder.

The movie moved slowly, even in the midst of all of the chase scenes and the gunshots. One felt the entire thing could have been avoided in the first place if Mosley hadn't stopped by the liquor store that morning. Of course, then the movie would have been a lot shorter than it was.

There were no loud explosions, though there were plenty of loud gunshots and chases. Mosley and Bunker even had to hide out in an apartment of an old Asian man to escape the police.

This is all rescued by the acting. Willis and Def turned characters that might have annoyed people into characters you sympathize with. Willis and Def's strong acting was the highlight of the film, and had the audience rooting for Bunker and Mosley, even when it was obvious that they were going to succeed anyway.

In the end the audience was glad Mosley stopped at the liquor store because they got to see two characters they care about evolve.

Upcoming Albums

April

25 The Coup, "Pick A Bigger Weapon"
 The Marxist hip-hop group based out of Oakland has suffered intense criticism since its last release, "Party Music," which featured a photograph of the World Trade Center attacks jokingly on the cover. Their controversial lyrics have made The Coup targets of organizations such as FOX News, but it will no doubt continue its own brand of political activism, even after the loss of its "hype man," Tarus Jackson, in November of last year.

25 The Goo Goo Dolls, "Let Love In"
 The highly anticipated next album from the 18-week #1 Billboard champions and Grammy-nominated Goo Goo Dolls will feature its single "Better Days," which was released late last year, along with "Give A Little Bit." The next single off of "Let Love In" will be "Stay With You."

25 Taking Back Sunday, "Louder Now"
 Taking Back Sunday's quick rise to stardom dating back to its self-titled EP in 2001 has seen the group vaulted into the public eye and success. The Amityville, Long Island group popularly opened for Blink-182 and headlined the Vans Warped Tour before releasing its second album, "Where You Want to Be," in Summer 2004. Its new album, "Louder Now," will be released by Warner Bros. Records.

May

2 Pearl Jam, "Pearl Jam"
 One of the most popular and influential rock bands of the '90s, Seattle-based Pearl Jam, who can be named in the same sentence as both Neil Young and The Ramones, and along with Nirvana helped start the grunge movement. Songs from its eighth studio album, "Pearl Jam," were released in March and October of last year. "World Wide Suicide" is the first single from the new album, which lead vocalist and guitarist Eddie Vedder has repeatedly stated is Pearl Jam's best work to date.

2 Thursday, "A City By The Light Divided"
 The post-hardcore band from New Brunswick, N.J. released its first full-length album, "Waiting," in 1999 and has since gained much national attention, with plenty of radio airtime and label bids. Thursday has reportedly contacted bands Cursive, Converge, The Blood Brothers and more to collaborate on the title track of its new album.

6 Ludacris, "Release Therapy"
 In a recent issue of the hip-hop magazine XXL, "Release Therapy" was listed as the ninth most-awaited album of the year. He can certainly look forward to a smash hit follow-up to his fifth studio album, 2004's, "The Red Light District," especially with the added popularity he gained from his acting career in the movies "Hustle & Flow" and "Crash."



PHOTO COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES
 Sara Jessica Parker plays the cute and quirky girl who everyone wants. No surprise because that's who she was in "Sex in the City" as Samantha Jones.

Parker fails to spark old story

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Boy and girl meet, boy and girl fall in love, boy and girl break up and boy and girl finally get back together. "Failure to Launch" followed the typical romantic comedy format.

Matthew McConaughey played a 35-year-old bachelor named Tripp, who still lived in his parents' home.

His parents, played by Kathy Bates and former Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw, were fed up with him living in their home and hire Paula, a personal trainer, supposed to get Tripp to fall in love with her so he can leave his parents' home.

Already you could predict how the movie was to turn out.

Sarah Jessica Parker played Paula, and was decent, even though she did nothing to make the movie laugh.

Both characters were annoying enough, but the actors did nothing to make us want to care about them. The main leads had no chemistry together and they were forced together.

It never seemed like they truly loved each other. Besides Bradshaw and Kie, the audience could care less for the characters and maybe for the entire movie.

"Failure to Launch" wasn't a failure, but it was no success either. It's a decent movie if it isn't taken too seriously.

However, people should rent another movie if they want laughs because this movie offered few.

MOVIE REVIEW

'FAILURE TO LAUNCH'
 Starring: Sara Jessica Parker



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROGUE PICTURES
 Dave Chappelle plays the drums during a rehearsal for a block party he was holding in Brooklyn.

'Block Party' shows new side of comedian

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Dave Chappelle threw the greatest block party in history and it wasn't even his block. BedStuy, Brooklyn was the site of one of the greatest free concerts Woodstock. It featured Mos Def, the Roots, Eric Burdon and ended with a performance by Lauren Hill and Fugis.

MOVIE REVIEW

'DAVE CHAPPELLE'S BLOCK PARTY'
 Starring: Dave Chappelle

The greatest part wasn't that it was a decent documentary, or the fact that Lauren Hill played "Killing Me Softly." The best part was that Dave Chappelle was doing something outside of himself. He was giving back to a community that deserved it.

He gave out free tickets and bus rides to the party to random people throughout the city. He even gave two buses to drive a marching band from Ohio to Wyclef Jean sang "If I Were President" for the band.

Chappelle did a great job with this low-budget movie. It did everything it was supposed to do. It flowed from beginning to end, showing how each act came as a part of the block party. Chappelle also chose to edit pieces of the concert between interviews.

It was great to see the normal side of people who have been idolized for nearly a decade. Hill spoke for the first time ever meeting Wyclef Jean, who he met into a studio wearing combat boots and a crown. He was even famous.

That's not to say the movie didn't have its moments. Chappelle could never be a master of ceremony, but getting the audience to laugh. This was one of the best musical documentaries of all time.

STRAIGHT EDGE STATE OF MIND

Sex, drugs and rock and roll is the most common phrase associated with music. Now take out the sex and drugs and you have a genre becoming popular with teens.

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

He walks in the building every day knowing he's not only representing himself, but everyone who shares his beliefs. Senior Chris Snider wears a denim jacket with the words, "XXX" printed on the back.

He became straight edge over two years ago after referring to Central and said he's been happy ever since. Snider said he sees the straight-edge community as a safe space. He admits to seeing more edge breakers, but tries to encourage people to become part of the culture through subtle messages, such as his clothes.

"I don't shove it down their throat," Snider said. Straight edge, Snider said, started as and continues to be about the music.

A musician active in the straight-edge scene, alumnus Josh Koterba, has a small black "X" tattooed on his wrist.

Koterba, who is the singer/guitarist for Rochester, said "X" represents his vow to live a life abstained from alcohol, recreational drug use and promiscuous sexual activity, the style and music trend known as straight edge.

He said although Rochester's lyrics don't necessarily represent straight edge, the band still considers itself an edge band because all the members have vowed to live a substance-free life, which Koterba said he never plans on breaking.

Today, most music professionals will say since the '80s the time of Minor Threat (bottom page left), straight edge has branched off into even deeper subcultures, changing the musical genre, interpretation, intensity and militancy which over the years has created a stereotype that the straight-edge community is fighting a constant battle against.

Koterba said he fights the stereotype of straight edge as a negative concept every day, but he treats it as a positive part of his life.

"It's not even about straight edge, it's about good decisions," Koterba said.

Koterba said the intensity that a person chooses to take to straight edge is his choice.

"It's not a religion but it kind of is, like within Christianity and other religions are different beliefs, but they are all still Christian," Koterba said.

BEGINNING OF A CULTURE

Mike Arnold, an employee at the Old Market record store called Plastic, said straight edge started in the late '70s to early '80s at music concerts.

As minor audience members entered a venue, they were greeted with an "X" to show they were under age. These music aficionados became proud of their identity and adopted the "X" as the symbol of their choice not to drink, smoke or do drugs.

Arnold said the term straight edge was coined by Ian MacKaye and the movement began arguably after "Straight Edge" was released off Minor Threat's first EP "Minor Threat." Koterba said for many teens today MacKaye was the pioneer of a subculture that would change their lives forever.

"It's part of youth culture," Arnold said, "but I think it sort of goes back to that Minor Threat ideology."

Arnold said he thinks straight-edge values have stayed the same, but the music has changed.

"I don't think people are really latching onto the bands," Arnold said.

He said he thinks the reason teens got so into Minor Threat during the 80s was because they liked the values that Minor Threat had and wanted to adopt them, or possibly just because they liked the band, which Arnold said was especially true for a 16-year-old.

Arnold said he thinks after members of Minor Threat grew up and started making their own bands, straight edge and straight-edge music decreased in listeners and bands as well.

"I think people kind of got tired of being good," Arnold said.

STRAIGHT FROM THE LYRICS

Koterba said he considers Rochester to be a straight-edge band because all the members are straight edge, even though its lyrics don't focus on a straight-edge message.

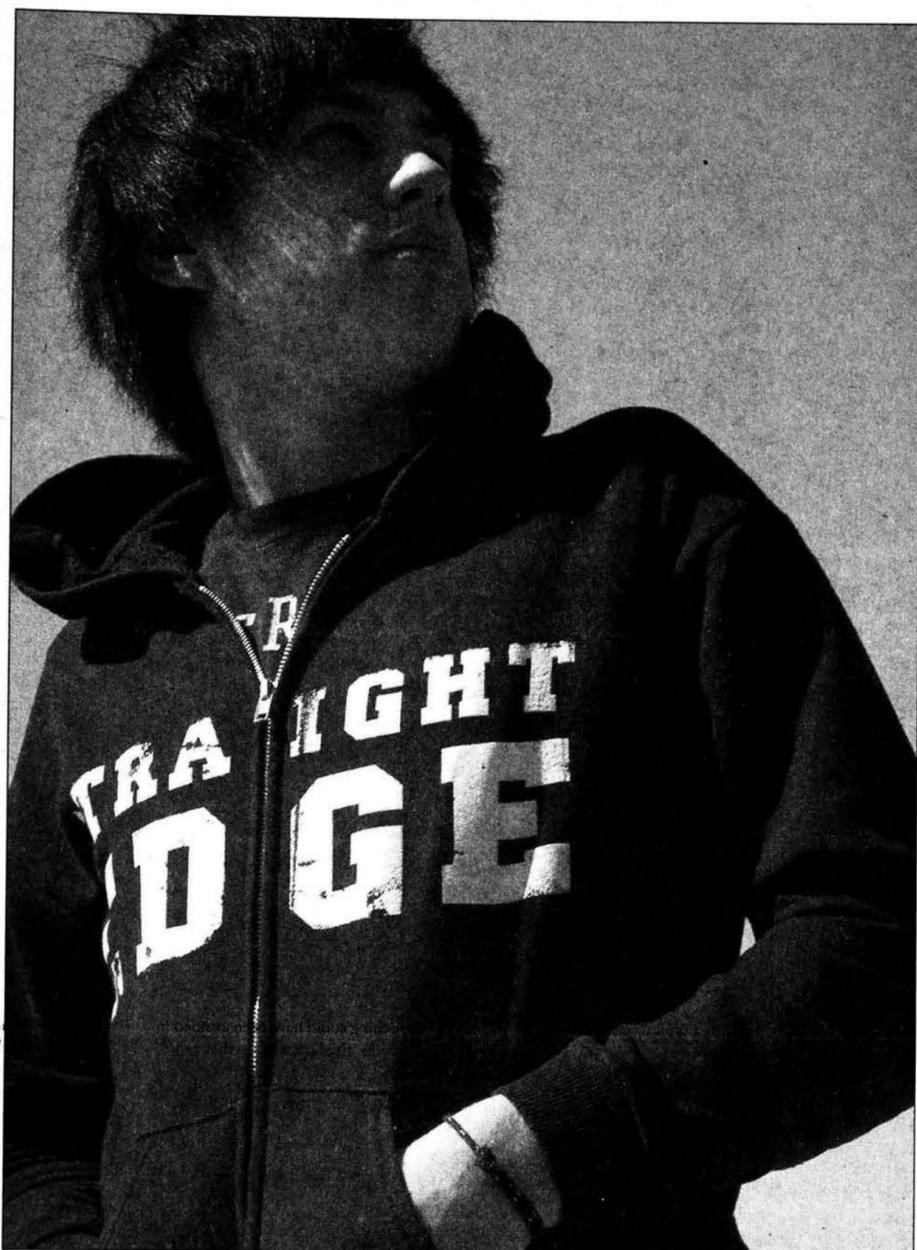
"We don't write about being straight edge, yet," he said.

Koterba said the lyrics written by himself and vocalist/bassist Alex Woodard reflect what's happening in their lives, because straight edge is a big part of it, the band's upcoming EPs may have more straight-edge messages.

Currently, the band just recorded its first EP in Eudora, Kansas. Koterba said he thinks the recording will create an even stronger fan base and hopes to send the demo to record labels.

He said his music has a very positive message, whether or not it is defined by straight-edge values.

Katie Norsworthy of Facedown Records in Sun City, Kansas, home to two straight-edge bands XDEATHSTARX and xLooking Forwardx, said like Rochester, there are a lot of



Junior Mark McClellan wears his usual straight-edge jacket. He said he had been living the straight-edge lifestyle for the past year until he broke edge nearly a month ago.

PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

other bands on the label composed strongly of straight-edge members, however they do not identify as a straight-edge band as a whole.

"They definitely want to promote a positive lifestyle," Norsworthy said.

She said since the Minor Threat era the straight-edge genre has become more hardcore.

"Back in the Minor Threat era, it was more of a revolutionary thing," she said.

She said she sees more of a general conviction in straight-edge bands because they lead by example. Norsworthy said straight-edge music is most popular with younger audiences, teens and high school students.

She said in general the music has a very strong message in the lyrics which appeals to teens and has a big influence on them.

"When you hear lyrics, that will be the thing that connects in your mind," Norsworthy said.

Josh Chaillou of xLooking Forwardx agrees that straight-edge music as a whole is aiming to convey views through music.

"Straight-edge bands tend to focus on a message more than music," he said.

Chaillou said straight-edge music has definitely changed in genre since the '80s.

"It's changed dramatically," he said. "People have had time to marinate on some other influences like metal and even some rock."

Chaillou said xLooking Forwardx isn't trying to change the views of its listeners. Members of the band simply want to make music about their lives and choices.

"Creating a convert of straight edge isn't exactly our

priority," he said.

Drummer for Rochester junior Trevor Moore said straight-edge concerts are a prime place to get teens interested, and where he first got into the edge scene.

"I first heard about it freshmen year and was like 'whatever,' then sophomore year I was really into it," Moore said.

Alumnus Joseph Tingley, an employee at the Antiquarium, said as far as genres go, there was still straight-edge hardcore music, but now it's more "jock oriented."

"Indie Rock smothered it," Tingley said. "I mean you used to see kids in 'X band name X' hoodies and now you just see kids in Faint T-shirts," he said.

Tingley said most militant straight-edge bands never got really popular, but members of one Boston band, Judge, were known for swinging their guitars at fans.

"If someone was singing along to the straight-edge lyrics, but weren't straight edge, they'd hit them in the face with the guitar," Tingley said.

He said Boston was the hotspot for militant bands. FSU (Friends Standing United) was an extremist straight-edge group in Boston.

The FSU was extremely vegan, had many right-wing views, hated homosexuality and was known for starting fights. Tingley said Omaha always had a tame straight-edge scene, but Koterba can recall meeting some people who were very intense.

"Lots of kids will beat people up because they're smoking a cigarette, which is ridiculous," Koterba said.

Along with a violent stereotype, Tingley said people may be deterred from straight edge because it's commonly thought of as a trend.

Senior Kaitlin Waterman said she chooses not to identify as straight edge though she shares and respects the same

choices that are straight edge because she believes the "popular" students, mainly freshmen and sophomores, picked up straight edge and made it into a fad rather than a lifestyle. However, Waterman said even what the trendsetters are doing is a start because they may become faithful straight edge.

"I think it's good considering half of our student body does meth and marijuana even during school," Waterman said.

KEEPING THE FAITH

Erich Gregson, lead singer of XDEATHSTARX, a band that not only speaks for the straight-edge culture in its lyrics, but the Christian one as well.

"I stand for keeping kids out of jail and from dying, but to a large extent, I believe the only way out is a relationship with God," Gregson said.

He said he wants to help teens through his music more than anything in his life. He knows first hand what it's like to be part of the drug world.

Now 26, Gregson's history with drugs and alcohol dated back to the age of 12. Through his teens his infatuation with substances grew and he was doing speed before he had even graduated.

"I know from personal experience what it's done to my life," he said.

Which is why he is where he is now. Gregson said although straight edge gave him something to turn to as a youth, he can only truly credit his success to God.

Gregson said drugs were merely filling a void in his life, a space which he believes everyone has and can be best, or perhaps only, filled with a belief in God.

"I think a lot of people look to straight edge as a culture to completely get them," Gregson said.

Gregson said he considers himself a voice for people who are too afraid or can't speak up for themselves.

"Especially with a band, you have a pulpit," he said.

However, standing up for Christianity and straight edge isn't always easy. Gregson said there are people who are very condemning to people who are a straight edge as well as Christian band.

"The fact is, people hate God and people hate Jesus and we're going to stand for God and Jesus," he said. "I don't think another label would support us like Facedown."

He said people will always look up to people as well as envy others, but XDEATHSTARX is just standing up for what it believes in.

He said bands like his, mainly hardcore and metal, are the most popular genre of straight-edge music. He said he also personally knows of three or four straight edge hip-hop groups.

"Everyone, whether they'll say it or not, is defined by music," Gregson said.

Norsworthy said straight edge and Christian bands are uncommon in California but Koterba thinks most bands in the Midwest share that.

"Bands more often than not are straight edge, but also Christian," he said, "their songs aren't always edge or Christian but are positive."

BREAKING EDGE

Junior Mark McClellan had been living a straight-edge lifestyle for the past year until he broke edge a month ago.

"I wasn't having any fun, I just felt like I was being too serious," he said.

McClellan said he broke edge because he missed the memories he had before becoming straight edge and thought it was too much of a commitment.

"I'm happier now, but people think I sold out," McClellan said.

He said he admits he wasn't as devoted as he hoped, and wished he hadn't bragged about being straight edge so much.

"I still say I used to be, but technically, I wasn't," he said.

McClellan said even after becoming an edge breaker, he's continued to live a healthier life than before and hasn't gone back to his past.

He said he listened to straight-edge music for the message it carried in lyrics. McClellan said he thinks he was just one of many in the vanishing straight-edge society, especially in high school students.

"Every once and a while you need to go crazy," he said.

THE COMEBACK

Koterba and Chaillou both said straight edge may be fluctuating in popularity, but he thinks right now the scene is strong.

"I see it more popular with teens more now than five or even 10 years ago," Koterba said.

Koterba said he knows there's always going to be people going against the straight edge way of life, but knows there are a lot of people choosing to make the life-long commitment to be straight edge and he hopes to see more people living that life in the future.

SNIPPETS FROM A CULTURE

A look at lyrics of straight-edge bands, old and new



MINOR THREAT
1981
DISCHORD RECORDS

"I'm a person, just like you, but I've got better things to do than sit around and smoke dope 'cause I know that I can cope."



CHAMPION
2005
BRIDGE NINE RECORDS

"Four years of my life that I'm ever going to get back and it hurts to realize. The days, the years I can't live again. Painstaking, heartbroken and filled with regret."



BURY YOUR DEAD
2002
VICTORY RECORDS

"Just because you turned your back, just because you turned away, it doesn't make you any better, it doesn't make you any less, you think you're better."

Rappers make fad popular

■ 'GRILLS' FROM PAGE 21C

grill is made, the person places it in his mouth and waits for it to harden.

"Most people don't go online, because you can get them here from the mall or other people," Gregory said.

Gregory had his done by Doe and said he hasn't experienced any problems. The prices range from \$160 to \$260, depending on the number of teeth one wants done and what materials he uses. Most often, Doe said, people come to him because his prices are cheap and the grills are easy to put in.

"The fad became real popular when rappers in the south started wearing them," he said.

Rappers from Nelly to Mike Jones are often seen in their music videos wearing the trend. Nelly recently produced a song that is all about grills.

The growing popularity has increased customers, but has increased pressure, too. Doe said police will confiscate the grills if it finds him selling them.

Despite the pressure, Doe said he will continue to sell these pieces of jewelry.

Students like senior Brandon Anderson said that he wasn't worried about his safety.

"It's about the look, not the feel," Anderson said.

Retirement won't slow art teacher

■ 'ART' FROM PAGE 21C

thing."

He said he 'feels lucky' just to have really good, academic students. He said he's been privileged to see students come up through the grades, mature and become talented, and he said he'll miss that the most.

"I get to know them so well," he said. "And I'll miss those relationships. Teachers and students both, but predominantly the students."

One of those students, junior Lindsay Schulz, has known Andrews since her freshman year and is in his Studio 1-2 class. Schulz said she knew as soon as she found out that the art department was going to have to figure out new ways to fill in his classes.

"I knew the other teachers would have to step in," she said.

She said she thought Andrews' constructive criticism made him a good teacher.

Though he said he is not overly eager to get out of school, Andrews said he definitely has goals. He said he really wanted to use his studio, just to relax and paint. He said he put a studio in his house several years ago for that reason. Within two years, he hopes to have a show of only his art in a gallery.

Andrews also said substitute teaching was a possibility, but he was kind of uncertain on that. He said if other possibilities come up, he'll think about them when they come. He said he wants to have more time with family members like his parents, and find a balance between work and family, while keeping tuned in on what Central is doing.

"I'm sure there are some teachers interested in Central," he said. "I got a call from a teacher from out-of-state who wants to come in." He said he wasn't sure who was going to teach what classes, and that it's up to him and Mr. Bexten to decide in the end, but he knows enrollment is going to stay good or continue to go up.

"As far as Studio and 7-8 go, I'm assuming Mrs. Quinn is the most logical choice. She has the most experience," he said.

Quinn, who has been with the district for 30 years and worked with Andrews for 20, said she wasn't surprised to hear about his upcoming retirement.

"He's been talking about it for a few years," she said. "He was excited about it and I was happy for him. It's a good thing to do at a certain time."



Counseling department secretary Melissa Henderson performs at an annual Aquarian Fest. She not only performed songs from the '60s, but also sang songs in Portuguese and lyrics had written herself. The band was started by a Central alumnus who plays guitar for Soul Plexus.

Writing lyrics becomes creative night job

BY KIM BUCKLEY

A staff member is proving that being in a band isn't just for students.

Counseling department secretary Melissa Henderson is the vocalist for the band "Soul Plexus," which formed in the summer of 2005.

Henderson said one of her friends was also a friend of the guitarist and vocalist John Green. Green is an alumnus of the class of 1986. She said her friend gave Green her phone number and she auditioned for the band.

Green said Henderson was the first person to audition for the band when the first singer left. He said when she auditioned she sounded great and she got along with the band well, which he said helped.

"We became friends almost right off the bat," Green said.

He said she brought a fantastic voice, a great personality and a soulful, earthy sound in her voice to the band.

She said she's been singing her whole life, but this was the first time she has been in a band. She said she had sung karaoke, and for wedding and

funerals which helped her prepare for being in a band.

"I've always dreamed of singing in a band, and it fell into place at the perfect time of my life," Henderson said.

She said it was a great outlet for her because it has helped her balance her body, mind and spirit.

"Singing is something I love to do and is a passion of mind," Henderson said.

She said performing to live music with six great musicians was awesome.

She said she doesn't know how to describe the feeling she gets when she performs on stage.

"It's such a rush," she said. "It's the most amazing feeling being able to share your passion with other people."

She said members of the band all worked well together and they have become great friends as well.

Henderson said she meditates before every show and takes deep breaths so she doesn't get nervous. She said it's more of an excited feeling.

She said the band did jazzy, down-tempo grooves with a little blues songs. She said the band

has some jazz and blue standards, some reggae, some worldly, edgy beats and some original songs the band has written.

She said she had written her first song with the keyboarder, Scott Norman, called "Fly Away."

"It's just amazing to see the song come together and the lyrics come alive to the music," Henderson said.

She also said she was singing in a different language for the first time. Henderson said she has sung a Portuguese song called "Aganju."

Henderson said one of the most interesting things about the band was seeing a different side of the band besides just performing. She said she has taken a part of the management side of the band.

Henderson said she is in charge of contacting the establishment and talking to the owners about booking a show.

She is also in charge of the financial side of the band.

She said she has put aside some of her hobbies in place of the band, and named scrap booking as an example.

"It's trading one thing I love for another thing I

love," Henderson said.

French teacher Kristin Lawton said she has seen Soul Plexus perform three times. She said the band was great.

"They're all very talented musicians," Lawton said.

She said Henderson's voice was absolutely gorgeous. She said her favorite song was "Summertime."

"It gives me shivers," Lawton said.

Henderson said the band had a professional sound man come in to record a live demo CD at "Reading Grounds" on Feb. 25.

She said the show went well and there were almost 100 people in attendance showing support.

"The energy in the room was amazing," Henderson said.

She said she's giving 100 percent to the band and practicing a lot. She said the band practices every Wednesday night, and if there is a show on the weekend, twice a week.

"It's a dream come true for me. It's something I've always wanted to do," Henderson said.

Nigerian makes sure lessons of her culture are shared with students

BY KIM BUCKLEY

The buba is tie-dyed with a rich purple and is beautifully embroidered. It's not something found in stores like The Gap or Old Navy.

Living in America, the artwork and crafts of Nigeria is a way to connect math teacher Ebi Ekpere and her family to her Nigerian culture and heritage.

"I am from Nigeria and as a Nigerian, I am interested in the art, crafts and cultures of the people," Ekpere said.

She said that Nigeria has over 264 tribes and cultures. She said she was driven by curiosity to learn more about the cultures.

"I'm interested in knowing about the different cultures," Ekpere said.

She said in the process of learning about different cultures, she collected different items from different areas.

She said over the years she has given a lot as gifts for people she knew were interested and amazed by the culture.

Ekpere said it was really important for her that her children know about their culture. She said she didn't want her children to forget where they come from and what their culture is.

"It's a way to teach them about the traditions and culture of the people," she said. "It's very important."

She said she doesn't really see herself as a collector though because it's a part of her culture.

"It's who I am, so I have it," Ekpere said.

She said that English was the main language in her country because there were so many cultures and traditions.

"In Nigeria because the culture is so different, you may not know the language of

another tribe," Ekpere said.

She said the people in Nigeria wore different clothes, and there was not just one style.

She said the fabrics and materials were different as well.

She said if she wore a traditional dress of the Delta area, someone up North would not dress the same.

"Their traditional dress would be different," Ekpere said.

She said people learning about other cultures was very good because it built relationships and lets people have a knowledge about the other person's culture.

She said if a person met someone from Nigeria, he could have a conversation about Nigerian culture.

"I believe it breaks down barriers and gives room for conversations as well," Ekpere said.

She said before the display was up, she talked to Media specialist Sue Devlin if there was anything she could do for Black History Month.

Devlin said every month is usually designated for a particular group or curriculum. She said the displays in and outside the library are ways to support the designation for the month.

She said she had initially set up around 20 books of the most recent material in the library, until Ekpere volunteered some of her artwork.

"I was talking to Ms. Ekpere about the display and she mentioned she had artwork and artifacts from Nigeria," Devlin said.

She said Ekpere offered to bring them for use in the display in the hall and the circulation desk.

She said it didn't take very long to set up

the display. It took about one period.

Devlin said the displays create an educational environment and stimulate thinking about different cultures and cultural contributions.

She said students can appreciate the artwork and can ask questions about it.

Devlin said she talked to a student who is interested in fashion design, and she let the student look at the material and fabrics of the Nigerian clothes. She said they then started to talk about how good ideas for designing can come from different places.

"It's a cultural connection for students and staff," Devlin said.

Freshman Jamelia Ray said she thought the display was very interesting.

She said she thought it was nice and she liked it.

"I've never seen anything like this; it's different," Ray said.

She said she thought the artwork was beautiful.

"It's original and comforting. It's something I can use," said Ray.

Ekpere said that most of the artwork has a meaning, or tells a story or an event that happened.

She said in one of the displays there was a figure of a woman with a baby on her back. Ekpere said the figure shows how passionate women feel about children and that helped a mother be intimate with her child.

She said she held her own children on her back when they were younger, and that they were so comfortable on her back that they would stop crying.

"The arts and the crafts speaks a lot about a person's culture and tradition," Ekpere said.



Math teacher Ebi Ekpere helps tie the headdress freshman Borana Gjoka. Ekpere let several students try on traditional Nigerian clothes. These clothes and other artworks were on display in and outside the library to help celebrate Black History month.

The bloodier the better

Some think rare is the best way to prepare meat. Others want it burnt to a crisp. Either way, make no mistake, in Nebraska, beef is more than what's for dinner, it's what's for prom.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Location: 7450 Dodge St.
Best dish: Shrimp Parmesan
Rating: 

BY ANGELLA MERTZ

The first thing noticed upon pulling into the parking lot is the familiar green sign on the front of the building. The second thing that catches the eye is the satisfied looks on the customers'

Walking into Applebee's is similar to walking into a Toys 'R Us store. Pictures of Marilyn Monroe and various celebrities plaster the walls from ceiling to floor. It is difficult for a first-time visitor to take in everything at once.

A great thing about Applebee's is the short wait time. A wait time over 10 minutes is unusual.

After being seated, the menus and drinks are brought. The selection on the menu is large. It is almost difficult to choose between the many entrees offered.

A safe bet for most, with an exception for vegetarians, is the Shrimp Parmesan and Steak. The meal is brought on a steaming, aromatic plate in a fairly short amount of time.

The steak is a little on the tough side but that is easily forgotten when you get into the shrimp.

The shrimp is the highlight of the meal. It is well-cooked and has a nice taste.

Those a little hesitant about the combination of flavors, the different textures mix well.

If the meat doesn't fill the eater, no worries. The main dish is also served with carrots and broccoli, mashed potatoes, and garlic toast.

The toast complements the flavors of the main dish well, as do the carrots and broccoli. They are all well-seasoned and bursting with flavor. The potatoes are a great texture, the "skin-in" type, and one can tell that they aren't made from a box of potato flakes. The taste, however, is bland.

The best part of the meal, though, comes after the food - the check. The price for the entire meal was less than

Of course, the price would change if the eater wanted to finish off with a dessert, but the meal is adequate to fill the biggest eater's stomach.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMMETH/REGISTER

The traditional gyro is made of lamb not beef, but at long as it's meat, who'll complain. However, eating a sloppy gyro might not be everyone's idea of a traditional prom night dinner. King Kong gyros are perfect for anyone looking for big, cheap and fast.

From a kid's size hot dog wrapped in pita bread for \$3 to a \$10 hamburger, this restaurant has the beast meat in town.

What's better than \$1 buying over 2 lbs. of meat.

Now add on an enormous bun, some lettuce, onion and tomato and no one can leave with an empty plate.

Getting the customers full is the goal of all the cooks at this place, and they sure meet the expectation.

Tired of going to a big, cold, expensive steak joint where the waiters wear tuxedos and judge all the teenage customers? Then go to King Kong, a small restaurant where a giant stuffed gorilla costume greets all incoming customers.

It's loud, greasy and serves up more meat than any expensive joint in the area.

From phillies to gyros, no one even knows what animal they just ate when walking out the door.

And on the way out, pick up a King Kong T-shirt for the dance.

This is the perfect place to eat breakfast or lunch. What's better, they serve the best french fries in town, and they serve them by the ton.

Any order comes with this delicacy. Hot french fries made of real potatoes, fried in grease and topped with seasoning that no other burger joint or 5-star restaurant can serve.

This place is simply the best. And if anyone blew their money on tickets and outfits, King Kong has it covered. Just order a kid's gyro for less than \$4 and fill up on the free refills of Coke.

Once that first bite of the gyro settles in one's stomach, the customer needs more. King Kong has the best, it has the most and none of it is pricey.



RESTAURANT REVIEW

Location: 4917 Center St.
Best dish: Minestrone Soup
Rating: 

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

The stereotype of an Italian-run family restaurant may bring illustrations into your mind of a family atmosphere where everyone is welcomed and with delicious aromas that make your mouth water like a raging river.

Gorats portrayed this illustration perfectly, except for the quality of one dish of food.

When you first walk in, mirrors surround you.

They are everywhere! The mirrors, with their expensive golden frames gave the illusion that the restaurant was enormous, but, simultaneously, the restaurant seemed cozy and comfortable.

It has multiple rooms, one of which had a bar that seemed to extend to the whole length of the room. The food's quality, quite like the décor of the restaurant, is, to put it plainly, absolutely wonderful.

To start with, the soup was

delicious. The minestrone soup was absolutely perfect; although there were some ingredients I had never heard of. But, it definitely deserves two thumbs up, three if humans had that many thumbs. The potatoes they served were even better than the soup if that is even possible.

The gravy, not for anyone on a diet, poured over the potatoes made the potatoes so fantastic that you could imagine tasting the potatoes and gravy with your nose.

Finally, the steak, the main entrée, although cheaper than many other restaurants, did not have the quality that was expected. When you first stick your fork into the steak and then cut a piece off with your knife, guess what will happen?

The scent of the steak drifts to your nose, and juices drip from the steak so that your mouth is hanging wide open, waiting for its reward of scrumptious steak fit for a queen.

Well, if you want this, don't go to Gorats.

When you slice into the meat, it's like trying to cut a rock in half with a rubber spoon. Yes! It's impossible. The chef overcooks his steak apparently. Also, the steak tasted normal, in a bad way. There were no spices to make the steak taste better.

So, when you go to Gorats, you can get everything for a low price, just don't get the steak.

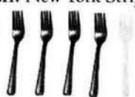
This restaurant was apparently Ronald Reagan's favorite restaurant, and he had great taste for food it seems.

Ignore all other restaurants and head over to Gorats. You should run probably since the restaurant is so popular.

Can you say, "Mmmmmmm! Something smells good!"?



RESTAURANT REVIEW

Location: 140 Regency Pkwy
Best dish: New York Strip
Rating: 

BY BOBAL-GREENE

Most steak houses fall into one of two categories. There is first the down-home smokehouse, the tavern, the Texas Roadhouse-style atmosphere where everyone should talk with a little twang.

And then there is the Fleming's category, which Texas Roadhouse could not be further from. Some might call it upscale. Some might just say expensive. Either way, Fleming's is not by any means a place to just drop in and grab some meat. With a two-person bill of nearly \$120, it's more of a place to celebrate with a prime steak.

The mood inside Fleming's is at the same time reserved and relaxed. It is dark, dark enough that one must almost strain his eyes to read the menu. Candles offer minor illumination, creating a haze of yellow-orange that envelops the diners in a quiet but careful, permeating mood. One gets the idea not to talk too loud.

The far wall from the entrance is the open kitchen, stainless steel complimenting the rich browns of the tables, chairs and booths that fill the rest of the large room. The occasional searing

flame jumps into the air, adding to the warm atmosphere like a fireplace in a warm cabin.

Fleming's is a small chain of steak houses that stretches nationwide. The Omaha restaurant opened at Regency in November. The steak house's claim to fame is its cooking method; each piece of meat is subjected to ovens at 1600 degrees Fahrenheit, charring the outside and locking the juices inside it. The results are well worth the price. The New York strip is massive, mouth watering, explosively tasty and tender. There is, however, a shortcoming for any teenager in a dining establishment such as Fleming's. Allow a personal anecdote.

While waiting for the host to verify my reservations, I wandered a few feet away, towards the restrooms, to look at one of the many fine paintings on the walls of wine bottles and such. When I turned away from the painting, I was confronted by one of the octogenarians that opens the front doors.

"Excuse me," he said accusingly, as if I had been licking the painting or something. "Can I help you?"

What?

The point of fine dining, the purpose of the servers, is to make the diners feel welcome and special. Not to make them feel more like rubes. In truth I should have walked out right then. If I had more pride maybe I would have. Instead, I stuck around and reviewed Fleming's. If I had only been reviewing the food, it would have been great, but I wasn't. I was reviewing the restaurant as a whole. For that one man's rudeness to his guest, Fleming's suffered.



RESTAURANT REVIEW

Location: 520 N 155th Plz
Best dish: 8oz. Steak Meal
Rating: 

BY PATRICK BREEN

Atmosphere can make or break a meal easily.

Even sub-par food can seem fantastic and flavorful if the mood in the restaurant is right.

Texas Roadhouse used this fact to its advantage, making a typical steak seem fantastic.

Even during rush hour on a bright day, it seems like a relaxed late evening inside Texas Roadhouse. The lights are low, blinds drawn. Glowing red and blue neon signs seem to be the only artificial light source and fishing and hunting photos adorn the walls.

The air is thick with smoky flavor, flavor that permeates the rich wooden paneling to be seen in every direction. There's a fat barrel of peanuts by the kitchen to hand out to hungry customers before meals. The floor is littered with cracked shells.

It's a real down-home atmosphere. This couldn't possibly be 155th Street in Omaha, Neb. No, it has to be a friendly tavern somewhere on the back roads of rural Texas, run by some guy named Jed who used to be a trucker.

Well, actually it's a chain, and the rural atmosphere is, in a word, manufactured. But that doesn't mean it's any less enjoyable, really. It's an experience, that's all, and that so much work would be put into making the restaurant seem friendly can be appreciated.

It certainly doesn't make the food taste bad. The 8 oz. steak dinner comes with two vegetable sides and four bread rolls with apple butter. The steak is by no means poor, but there is the sense, much as there is with the atmosphere, perhaps all the various spices that can be tasted are a little more artificial than the restaurateur would like us to believe.

Cynical? Yes, but not distrustful. The steak is flavorful regardless, just as much as the potatoes, the soupy green beans, and the apple butter.

Whether or not Texas Roadhouse is artificial or manufactured, it is enjoyable.



RESTAURANT REVIEW

Location: 4909 Dodge St.
Best dish: Gyro
Rating: 

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Sitting down at King Kong and getting a huge bite of lamb meat might be one's idea of prom.

Well think again. This restaurant has everything any size date, and it's on the way to school, for anyone traveling to the dance in West O.

THE ART OF MARTIAL ARTS

Whether inspired by Bruce Lee or one's own safety, more people are putting down the DVD remote and picking up the belt.



PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REG

Sophomore Jomarcell Nguyen said through his love of kung fu films, he decided to learn Tae Kwan Do. In the four years he has been taking lessons, Nguyen has earned an orange belt, which is the third belt level, before his ultimate goal, a black belt.

Life of kung fu movies leads student to strive for black belt

BY BOB AL-GREENE

He said it was about learning defense not offense.

It's all about attitude and discipline, but it's not found in most martial arts movies. Sophomore Jomarcell Nguyen has been taking Tae Kwan Do classes since before his freshman year.

He said he'd wanted to take a martial arts class for a long time, but his father didn't allow him to until they decided Nguyen would come to Central for high school.

He said his father thought Central was a rough and that he would need to be able to defend himself.

Only then did his father give his

permission to take the classes.

Tae Kwan Do is a form of martial arts based on karate that focuses mostly on kicking techniques.

As in all martial arts, there are a number of belts used as a ranking system. They are white, yellow, orange, green, blue, purple and finally black. Nguyen said he was currently an orange belt, and was not overeager to advance.

"I'm in it for the long run," he said. "To learn and get everything down straight."

He said he takes a one-hour class one day a week where he and fellow students work on technique.

He said they warm up for 15 to 30 minutes before sparring.

"Sparring is zero contact or very light," he said. "Only every once in a while do we go full-on."

Nguyen said he feels more confident since he started taking the classes, and that he has a lot more patience and balance.

As for defending himself at school, he said he has never had to use his martial arts talents or gotten in a fight.

"There's that pressure where people get in your face, but you learn to control it," he said. "You have to."

Sukki Shin, founder and instructor at Shin's Judo & Karate Academy, where Nguyen takes Tae Kwan Do, definitely agreed.

Shin, an 8th degree black belt Don

in both Judo and Hapkido, founded the academy in 1968.

"It was to show others the benefits and the mental health that come with the martial arts," he said.

He said it was about keeping in shape and helping others.

Shin has spent 52 years of his life involved in the martial arts.

He said he initially learned in order to become able to protect himself.

"You have to be in very good shape," he said.

Shin said it is necessary to have control, judgment, confidence and a good attitude.

"Attitude is most important," he said. "Yes, the students learn kicking and

punching, but it is attitude and discipline that makes them good."

He said of his most talented students and the ones in which he sees the most improvement, it is mostly a matter of attitude.

Though the sizes of his classes fluctuate, he usually has around 100 students, who may be anywhere from 5 to 14 or 15 years old.

"We also have adult classes," he said. "Students might be 17 to 18, and we have a few that are older, maybe 68 or 78."

Nguyen said taking classes at Shin's Academy hasn't really changed his perception of martial arts in the media. He said he still really enjoys martial arts movies.

"Kung fu movies are all I see sometimes," he said. "But some of them are just stupid and crazy."

He used the film "Romeo Must Die" as an example, citing a scene in which Li runs along a wall.

"There's no walking on walls," he said.

Shin, on the other hand, said that some martial arts in movies are unrealistic. "That's why I like the realistic ones," he said.

"Martial arts training is not just for trouble," he said. "Learning is always to improve behavior."

As for realism, Shin said he would laugh that when he sees a movie, he really tell anything about technique.

Self defense important in a school setting, regardless of situation, teacher says

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Science teacher Meghan Meshbesh has taken karate for eight years and plans on continuing until she gets her black belt.

"I just fell in love with it," she said.

She started taking self-defense classes when she was 18 because she moved from a small town in Wisconsin, to Minneapolis, Minn. for college.

Her father said if she planned on living in a big city and going to a big university, then she would have to know how to defend herself.

She only practiced karate for two months before going to college, but after she got to Minneapolis, she said she didn't want to stop.

"It has taught me a lot," she said.

She is a red belt, but she said by the end of

summer she hopes to have her black belt. She said taking karate lessons was nothing like the movies, however.

"The only person who I have seen do the true martial arts was Chuck Norris," she said.

People like Jet Li, she said, were all about show, and not about the art.

As far as cool tricks go, she said she knew a few. In the first week of class she broke a board in front of her students in a demonstration.

While getting her red belt, she said she started learning Aikido. This, she said, was all about focusing energy.

Meshbesh said she never use to believe in things like energy. She said it wasn't until she started learning Aikido did she believe in it.

"I'm a small person, about 100 pounds," she

said. "When I focused my energy, no one could lift me."

She said if someone looked at her they would not think she was into karate. That could be helpful if someone came at her, she said.

She has never had to use any combat tactics in real life, but karate has helped her in some situations.

She said if she was in a bad part of town than she knew how to carry herself where no one would try and attack her.

This has really made her more aware of her surroundings.

Being born in a small town and starting to work in the largest school in the state, knowing self defense made her feel more comfortable.

"I would recommend self defense to anyone,

not just Central teachers," she said. "It helps balance, awareness, everything."

Security guard Frank Zavorka said every year the security staff goes through training on how to deal with violent situations.

He said in his eight years here he has never had anyone try and attack him.

Even if someone were to attack him, he said he would not think the attacker would be a student. It would probably be an intruder or an adult.

He said in training they learned pressure points or different ways to disarm an attacker.

He said he usually doesn't worry about self defense.

"If I have to take a student down I might get kicked or hit," he said, "but I am protecting that

student."

He said his job is to protect all students if the student is trying to hurt him.

He tries to protect the students from someone they may be fighting or make sure they don't hurt anyone else.

One technique he used was verbal judo. In training he learned how to talk a student down or out of a destructive situation.

He said in many situations his main concern would be getting a student out of a room or situation.

If a student is in a classroom and he will be in trouble when he leaves, it would be Zavorka's job to get him to leave anyway.

"At that point I will say anything it takes to get the student out of that room," he said.

CHAN V. LEE methods of the masters

Jackie Chan

Birth place: Hong Kong
Birth name: Kong-Sang Chan
Birth date: April 7, 1954
Style of Acting: Comedic and aimed to entertain audiences.
Zodiac sign: Aries
Education: Chan was educated at the Peking Opera School.
Music Career: Chan has recorded and released 28 opera albums, most of which are recorded in Mandarin.
Insurance: Due to the amount of stunt accidents, Chan has been involved in and the number of times he has been hurt, no life insurance company will cover him.

Bruce Lee

Birth place: San Francisco, California
Birth name: Lee Jun Fan
Birth date: November 27, 1940
Style of Acting: Used film roles as a way to demonstrate his fighting theories.
Zodiac sign: Sagittarius
Education: Studied at martial arts schools Wing Chun and Jeet Kune Do.
Death: Official records state Lee died of a cerebral edema, but the exact circumstances are still unclear and many believe foul play was involved.
Curse: Many believe the Lee family is cursed due to the mysterious way Bruce died, and also the freak accident that killed his son Brandon during a movie shoot.



DIMENSION FILMS



WARNER BROS.

At a glance: some of the greats, new and old

From Akira Kurasawa to Chuck Norris, everyone has their own style of the martial arts. Here are a few of the best and the worst.

What follows is a plot so full of ambushes, assassination attempts and outright war, the viewer cannot help but be riveted to his seat.

A few qualities detract from the film as a whole, though they by no means ruin it.

The special effects are far from impressive, and at times they are so unrealistic it can make very serious scenes seem unbelievable or even comedic.

In addition to this a few scenes where the camera angles make it unclear what has actually occurred.

For instance, there is a confrontation between two of the characters and it begins with them staring each other down.

Then all of sudden one of them is dead, and his adversary is at least 20 feet away.

Scenes like these can be confusing, but they are few and far between.

These defects however, are more then accounted for by the talent of the actors in the film.

Viewers who are not fluent in Japanese should also be warned they will need to use subtitles in order to understand the movie.

So if anyone really hates reading, it's probably advisable to skip over this film at the movie store.

Sonny Chiba gave an impressive performance as Jubei Yagyu, a figure from Japanese history who has gained quasi-legendary status over the years.

He was believable, and his swordsmanship was quite impressive. Audiences may also remember Chiba from the more recent films, "Steelfighter" and "Kill Bill, Volume One," where he played the master sword maker Hattori Hanzo.

Kinnosuke Yorozyua played the role of Tajima Yagyu, the mastermind of the plot against the shogun.

His performance as the cold, calculating swordsman was frighteningly believable.

It's easy to see why this film is a classic of Japanese cinema.

It even contains the famous line, "It's a dream! It must be a dream!"

Words cannot even begin to describe the power and emotion present in this final scene, but anyone who sees it will immediately know why it catapulted this film into its rightful place in film history.

Let's just say it's nearly impossible to purge the image of a man with a severed hand clutching a severed head like a newborn baby from your memory.

The special features on the DVD do leave a lot to be desired, offering only the original Japanese trailers and teasers and the liner notes of some author who wrote a book about Japanese cult films.

Taken as a whole however, Shogun's Samurai manages to provide a solid two hours of entertainment full of deceit, intrigue and samurai.

More details about Fei Hong's life, such as his kung fu rival-turned-teacher in the market place and his mahjong-obsessed stepmother, allowed for more depth in the form of series of sketches and slapstick comedy, another hallmark of Three Stooges material.

The film was dubbed into English, with Chan doing his own voice, and of course, all of his own stunts.

That included the painful scene in which Fei Hong was pushed onto a pile of burning coals and had to scurry towards on all fours to get to safety.

Chan also did a very good impression of being drunk, and made good use of his skills at martial arts to poke fun at them, giving ridiculous names to random poses while fighting, such as "Drunk Playing the Flute." Seeing the physical humor in kung fu action was as entertaining as the Stoooges seeing the hilarity of Fei Hong dancing around the ring.

Just like Stoooges material, "The Legend of Drunken Master" was an entertaining classic.

The setting of the movie was a place where it always seems to be night and there is a problem with overpopulation of half-dead zombies.

Pak (Gordon Liu) seemed to be in charge of bringing some zombies back to a burial.

This aspect did work either.

The audience never found out why he was the one in charge of the dead, or why they were attacking the living or even who any of the main character actually were.

Everybody just refers to each other as "brother," "uncle" or "master."

Pak used really bad magic throughout the movie to help him solve the problem of the undead.

There is no explanation of how he learned this magic or what it has to do with kung fu.

There were more questions in this movie than there were dead bodies. The audience assumed everything that happened.

Why can the dead bodies kung-fu fight? Why are they attacking in the first place?

Why is Liu's character in charge of burying dead bodies, and who are his two companions?

People watching this movie might begin to assume they were left out of a sequel of a movie, or a really bad joke they didn't want to join.

Speaking of jokes, the humor in this movie was incredibly childish.

Again, this part didn't work either. Bathroom humor dominated much of the beginning and then popped up again in the middle and end.

The ending was the absolute worst. It was as if the movie had reached its budget.

It ended right in the middle of an important battle scene and continued in a small screen right next to the credits. In this screen, there were random clips showed of new places and new characters with no sound.

All of it was just a flash of colors and then the credits ended.

The director either aimed this movie at 4 year olds or was 4 himself.

Either way, it didn't work.

out of a paper bag, much less a kun fu fighting ring. Jean-Claude Van Damme's acting throughout the movie steals the audience's attention. Van Damme's stone face look stays the same throughout the entire movie.

The viewer focuses on the terrible acting instead of the terrible plot.

The movie explained how Lux ran from the army to join in the Kumite, a titanic tournament for fighting, to honor his trainer.

The fighting isn't great, but it suffices one's hunger for action.

The government chased after him to bring him back, repeating several times that he is important to the army.

The movie never explains why. This is one of the many holes in the plot.

While competing he meets fellow American Ray Jackson.

The plot follows the basic diagram of traditional movies, and the audience can easily tell where the plot is going.

Jackson after being injured, motivates Lux to beat the former champion, Chong Li.

Don't mess with Van Damme. In the final fight seen the competitor cheats by blinding him with powder.

In his blurry vision the jaded Van Damme fought off Chong Li and uses his senses to beat down the cheater.

A bead of sweat drips from his brow, and that's when the viewer knows it is over. Frank Lux is the champion.

Jackson is the one solid actor in this movie, and is the only bright spot in the black hole.

The movie's best points are seeing blood and violence, with a few comedic moments provided by Ray Jackson.

The blood splatters everywhere and in gruesome fashion some bones are broken. The special effects are limited and by today's standard, non-existent.

Van Damme produced another movie that doesn't capture any emotions and wastes the time and money of the audience.

chose to fight.

The somewhat stereotypical villain did not want to take over the world in this movie.

The plot does not expand enough to exactly explain what he is doing.

There were, of course, henchmen and sub-henchmen, each one was a cinder block of a man that knew kung fu.

Nobody has been a bigger symbol of martial arts in movies than Bruce Lee and he deserves it.

Nothing can beat the battles where the enemy, hopelessly outnumbered, surrounds him and suddenly people begin to drop.

A minute later the sea of white robes would be gone and Lee would be standing among piles of bodies.

He has a skill that makes even those who are not kung fu fans watch him in awe and flinch when he is hit back.

The same kind of fan of a James Bond movie would enjoy "Enter the Dragon." It's obvious Lee will be victorious in the end.

It's obvious the villain will die.

But the key and appeal to the movie is how all that will happen.



MOVIE REVIEW

'DRUNKEN MASTER'
Starring: Jackie Chan

BOB AL-GREENE

There's an old Three Stooges short every time Curly hears a certain word ("Round and 'round the mulberry tree"), he gets into a fit of rage that leads him to become a fantastic boxer. The premise in Chinese, with Jackie Chan instead of Curly and liquor instead of music, and that's "The Legend of Drunken Master."

It's a funny premise, that's a given. The Three Stooges were masters of comedy. But even the best gimmick loses its edge after an hour and a half, and why most of their movies flopped.

That's why "The Legend of Drunken Master" wasn't as good as it could have been.

Jackie Chan played Fei Hong, the son of a Hunan physician, and secretly a master of his own fighting style, Drunken Boxing.

Through his numerous street fights and getting him into trouble, when greedy-grubbing industrialists came to town and started to shut down the steel mill, Fei Hong found himself on the side of good, finally given a purpose to do as much wine as possible and beat them up.

More details about Fei Hong's life, such as his kung fu rival-turned-teacher in the market place and his mahjong-obsessed stepmother, allowed for more depth in the form of series of sketches and slapstick comedy, another hallmark of Three Stooges material.

The film was dubbed into English, with Chan doing his own voice, and of course, all of his own stunts.

That included the painful scene in which Fei Hong was pushed onto a pile of burning coals and had to scurry towards on all fours to get to safety.

Chan also did a very good impression of being drunk, and made good use of his skills at martial arts to poke fun at them, giving ridiculous names to random poses while fighting, such as "Drunk Playing the Flute." Seeing the physical humor in kung fu action was as entertaining as the Stoooges seeing the hilarity of Fei Hong dancing around the ring.

Just like Stoooges material, "The Legend of Drunken Master" was an entertaining classic.

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MOVIE REVIEW

'SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD'
Starring: Gordon Lui

CLAY LOMNETH

The back of the DVD box compares "Shaolin vs. Evil Dead" to "Kill Bill."

That has to be very embarrassing for Quentin Tarantino.

Everything about "Shaolin" failed. The only possible win in the whole movie could be the overall weirdness of it all. Most of the movie was shot in a weird light while the dead hopped around with paper on their head.

Needless to say it didn't work.

The plot was sliced into four or five different subplots all happening at what seems to be a completely random order.



MOVIE REVIEW

'BLOODSPORT'
Starring: Jean-Claude Van Damme

BY PATRICK BREEN

"Bloodsport" is an action-packed adventure with no plot, and little acting. The story is about Frank Lux, the first American to win in the illegal Chinese fighting ring.

Lux is portrayed by character actor Jean-Claude Van Damme, whose other movies are just as cheesy and as bad as this one.

In this corner, standing six feet tall, Jean-Claude Van Damme, and in the other corner, standing four feet something, a small Japanese man with large pectoral muscles.

Both men are without a shirt, sweating already. It seems like a commercial for Old Spice deodorant.

Then in the next five minutes, BAM! The small Chinese guy is laying flat on his back, down and out. The large chested Van Damme wins, again.

Lux goes through tough physical and mental tests.

Some of the best scenes are seeing him get the stuffing beaten out of him by his trainer. Van Damme is also seen doing amazing stunts like suspending himself by two chairs while doing the splits.

The movie is a sorry excuse for acting and cinematography.

Van Damme couldn't act his way



MOVIE REVIEW

'ENTER THE DRAGON'
Starring: Bruce Lee

BY CLAY LOMNETH

With punches that sound like whip cracks and slow-motion fights way before "The Matrix," "Enter the Dragon" was Bruce Lee at his best.

The martial arts icon never actually got to see his masterpiece released. He would have been proud to see it on the big screen.

The special edition DVD adds three minutes to the movie. This may not seem like a lot, but it was part of the philosophical part of the movie that was added.

Though it was meant to beef up the plot, the movie was still filled with fighting scenes that didn't take a lot of attention to watch.

The only time the movie did slow down to take time for the plot was just a build up for another massive kung fu fight.

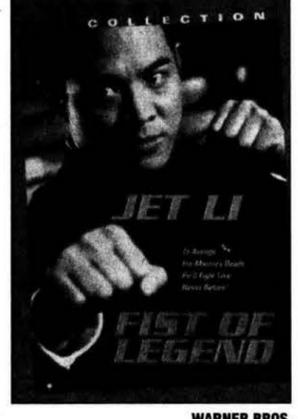
But those fights were impressive. It's a fun movie to break out the junk food to sit down and watch. For any kung fu movie night with friends, this movie is a must.

In "Dragon," Lee was sent to a martial arts tournament set up by an archenemy of his master.

He would be an undercover agent and try to stop the villain and his vaguely explained drug empire.

Because the headquarters were on a private island, Lee had two choices, fight or don't show.

Fortunately for the viewers, he



MOVIE REVIEW

'FIST OF LEGEND'
Starring: Jet Li

BY BOB AL-GREENE

Most new kung fu movies have to add a gimmick to make the plot seem original. "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" added beautiful wirework and artistic scenes, and it won Academy Awards.

"Kung Fu Hustle" added comedy and ridiculous special effects.

Who knew adding a serious theme like racism could make a film that much better?

"Fist of Legend" pulled it off.

A remake of the Bruce Lee classic, it focused on Chen Zhen, a Chinese martial artist studying in Japan who had to return to his homeland to avenge his master's death.

Set against the backdrop of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai in 1937 and the tension between the two nations that would lead to World War II, the racism seen during the course of the film went both ways.

Initially, it was the oppression of the Chinese by the Japanese occupation, and how it affected the running of the kung fu school where Chen wished to become a master.

Soon, however, it was inversely seen by the school's refusal to admit Chen as a master due to his love affair with a Japanese student.

Though the racism was well-used and the film contained just the right ratio of emotion to action, "Fist of Legend" had a weakness in that it had no real discernible beginning, middle or end, and it also seemed to drag on a little too long.

The action started with almost no exposition, and then the viewer was plunged into a series of fights, each more meaningless than the last.

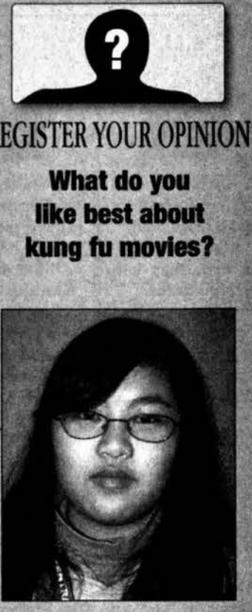
Then, the final fight between Chen and the head bad guy inevitably arrived, with expectable results.

There was, however, an unusual and surprising let-down ending, which mirrored reality.

One could not truly have expected a completely happy ending knowing the history of the region, but it was still a shock.

The cinematography was appropriate to the movie. The development of the shot sequences could have been better. Different camera locations might have helped.

"Fist of Legend" was more than a simple kung fu flick; it also sent a message of persistence, respect and tolerance.



REGISTER YOUR OPINION

What do you like best about kung fu movies?

"Nothing, because I don't like them. I think they're kind of lame. They're always using fake stuff to make it look better than it is."
Jessica Huynh (9)



"I like that they get to kick people, and it doesn't matter where they kick them. Sometimes I imitate them. I'm just a big fan."
Donte Smith (9)



"Pretty much the fighting, just the cool moves."
Darryl Johnson (9)



"I've never seen any. It's never sparked my interest. I like scary movies and romantic comedies. I don't like action movies or anything like that."
Maya Doghman (10)



"They're funny when they're doing all the moves."
Elvis Servellon (10)

Roots of Rap

A timeline since the beginning

| '73 | '78 | '81 | '84 | '85 | '86 | '87 | '88 | '89 | '90 |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hip hop "Grandfather" Afrika Bambaataa starts to DJ. Kool Herc played the break or get down sections—the part where the break beat or percussion part of the song was played in its rawest form. But because the breaks of the songs weren't very long, he expanded them by using two turntables with double copies of the record. | Bambaataa and Grandmaster Caz battle at the Police Athletic League. Music industry coined rap music. In 1978, Kurtis Blow needed a DJ. Russell Simmons was Kurtis' manager at the time and his brother Joseph (aka as Run of Run DMC) (right) got the job. He got his name "Run" because he could cut between two turntables so quickly. | Dynamic Rockers and Rock Steady Crew battle at the Lincoln Center. Grandmaster Flash's "Adventures on the Wheels of Steel" is the first rap record to bring the real sounds of live DJ scratching. ABC's 20/20 shows the first national television coverage of the "Rap Phenomenon." The Beastie Boys are formed. | Rick Rubin and Russell Simmons form Def Jam records. Doug E. Fresh, releases "The Original Human Beatbox" Breakdancing goes global via Lionel Richie's performance at the Closing Ceremony of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. The Fresh Fest concert tour, featuring Run-D.M.C., Kurtis Blow, Whodini, Fat Boys, and Newcleus, is hip hop's first big money making tour (\$3.5 million for 27 dates). | Salt 'n' Pepa makes its first appearance on wax on Super Nature's "The Show Stopper." "The Show" by Doug E. Fresh and the Get Fresh Crew changes the sound of hip hop. Ricky D's laidback style was unheard of at that point. Sugar Hill Records is forced into bankruptcy and ceases to be active in the record industry. | Run-D.M.C. releases a hip-hop version of Aerosmith's "Walk This Way," and hip hop breaks into the pop charts, MTV and mass media all at once. This was credited with reviving Aerosmith's career as well. | Public Enemy releases its debut album "Yo! Bum Rush The Show." The group Public Enemy included Chuck D (born Carlton Ridenhour on Aug. 1, 1960 in NYC), Flavor Flav (born William Drayton on March 16, 1959 in NYC), the "Minister of Information" Professor Griff (born Richard Griffin) and DJ Terminator X (born Norman Rogers). | N.W.A.'s "Straight Outta Compton" goes Gold, popularizing the gangsta school of rap. Brooklyn Born Big Daddy Kane (aka Antonio Hardy) releases "Ain't No Half Steppin'" from his album "Long Live The Kane." Def Jam founders Russell Simmons and Rick Rubin split up. Simmons opts for distribution through CBS/Columbia Records, while Rubin goes on to start Def American. | Cowboy of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five died after spending nearly two years hooked on crack. He was 28 years old. ATCQ formed at school in Manhattan, NYC, where it started out as part of the Native Tongues Posse, with Queen Latifah and the Jungle Brothers, and were given the name by Afrika Baby Bambaataa of the Jungle Brothers. | Controversy over Live Crew's "As Nasty as They Wanna Be" as they Wanna Be as a Florida record store owner and Luther Campbell arrested (both trials eventually end with acquittal). Tupac joins Dope Underground as a roadie and dancer. Schoolly D appears on the Phil Donahue Show to talk about money and rap music. |

Information courtesy of "The Hip Hop Years: A History of Rap" and "The History of Rap Music"

REVEREND RUN



Omaha's rap scene gets national attention

Whether it be starting record labels or freestyling at lunch, rap is bigger in the Midwest than ever. These rappers are taking the opportunity to prove to the rest of the world they are better than the rest.

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Rap is the biggest thing of this generation. No longer is it the East Coast, West Coast or the Dirty South. This new wave is coming straight through Omaha.

Marquise Walker from AKAP (As Krunk as Possible) Souljas said the sound coming out of the Midwest was different than anything ever heard before.

"Basically we took what came out of there and acted as the melting pot," Walker said. "We put us on it, we put Omaha's stamp on it."

He said the group's rap was breaking the stereotypes of the Midwest. He said people think Omaha is just farmland and cows, but there are the same struggles going on in Omaha as in the rest of the country. He said after AKAP Souljas becomes nationally recognized, people will be surprised that rap like that will be coming out of the Big O.

Kevin Jenkins, CEO of AKAP Records said this group wanted to be the first big group out of Omaha. He said rappers outside the Midwest were actually surprised there was rap in Omaha. He said they were surprised there were even black people in the city.

"It's not the same as what they are used to," he said.

He said black Omaha and North Omaha have had a long history since the city existed, but people are now explaining it how others want to hear it.

"We make it (music) for the people," he said.

Jenkins said the group's music was very versatile, and it worked hard to make albums that could compete in the big time.

"There were a couple of weeks when we were in the studio from 8:30 (a.m.) to 10:30 (p.m.)," he said. "We just called each other and got to work."

Walker said there was a stereotype of rappers as being violent or thuggish. He said, more generally, this was also the stereotype of black people. He said even if they rap about violent things they've seen, they are still giving back to the community.

AKAP Souljas have performed at benefits for Katrina victims, as well as Amber Harris. He said there were two important things to know when breaking into the rap industry.

First, he said, was to build connections. He knew getting as many people as possible to hear the music was a goal.

Second, he said, was to stay positive. People will try and steal the glory away, but if you know your stuff is good, go for it.

Senior Jamelle Ray has not only released a rap album with a group, he also freestyles and battles students for fun. His group, and album of the same name, Young



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

(FROM LEFT) Marquise Walker and Kevin Jenkins dance and rap to one of their favorite songs they wrote, "Omaha, Nebraska." They are three members of the rap group AKAP Souljas, which stands for As Krunk as Possible. They would later open their notebooks and start freestyling, getting ideas for the next album they wanted to write. Walker said Omaha was becoming a melting pot for the rap industry in the United States. He said they hear what came out of the East Coast, West Coast and Dirty South and wanted to put Omaha's stamp on their style of rap.

Legends, features all high school students. He said he heard about JKC Records from a friend, and went to their studio. He said he performed some freestyles for them and they wanted him to record with him.

"I know how hard it is to get your name out there," Ray said.

He said prior to JKC Records he had recorded with other labels, but his part was either cut out of the track or they had someone else using his lyrics.

Although he loves performing, he said right now he has to focus on marketing

himself and his CD.

"I love rapping," he said. "Right now it's about getting in the studio and dropping more CDs."

He said to market himself in the school setting, he performed before class one day.

He brought a stereo to school and called people over to hear his rap.

"I called all the people I knew had big mouths," he said.

That day alone he said he sold 45 copies around school. He said there was no other choice for him but to rap.

"I love music, and I want to be a part of it," he said, "but I can't sing."

Since people started hearing about Ray, students have come up to him and asked him to battle.

"I can get nervous," he said. "There is a lot of untapped talent out there that I don't know about."

He said

he has to have specific strategies in each battle so he can be sure to win. Whether it is making fun of their clothes or their style of rap, he'll find something to attack his opponent on. Ray has been rapping since the 7th grade. He said he started just by telling "your momma jokes" and then someone put those to a beat.

He said he raps about what he knows.

"Everyone's trying to be ganista," he said. "I can't talk about guns because I never shot nobody, and I can't talk about stealing because I never robbed nobody."

He said this attitude

nowadays is a huge reason why people are negatively stereotyped. He said his style of rap is more positive raps about how this music is making money, or a girlfriend or his family.

More than old rappers' inspiration, Ray said he looked further back. He said he grew up listening to James Brown and Motown records. He gets some inspiration from there.

Local hip-hop promoter Davenport said the Omaha scene just started to break through.

"I've been a promoter for 15 years," he said, "and rap is not new to Omaha."

He said there was a lot of talent for years but people are finally taking notice. He said up until recently wasn't considered mainstream. Now everywhere, and artists are on television shows, commercials, in magazines. Everyone wants a piece of it.

"It's definitely getting a lot of radio play now," he said.

"And then, of course, there are still like MTV BET."

THE ART OF SCRATCHING

Beginning

Baby scratch:

Place any number of fingers on the record to have control. Move the record back and forth to any rhythm.

Scribbles:

Place fingers on the record to maintain control and start vibrating as quickly as possible.

Tips:

Are basically just baby scratches except shorter and faster. They are typically played at the beginning of a sample.

This is not the way a typical scratched record should look. Many people just starting out turn new records into old cracked pieces of plastic just because they didn't follow the basic rule of scratching.

Advanced

Forward cutting:

Place any number of fingers on the record to have control. Move the record back and forth to any rhythm. Place on hand on the cross fader. When moving the record forward keep the cross fader open, and when moving the record back keep it closed. This is to prevent the back scrape noise.

Drags:

This is basically scratching the record back and forth slowly to make a dragging sound.

Other advanced moves include tears and chirping.

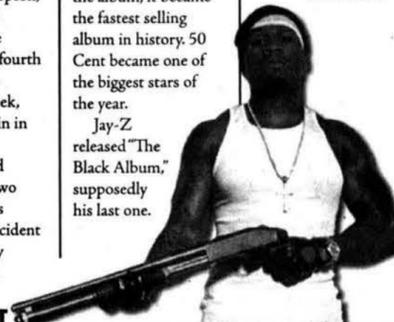
INFOGRAPHIC BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

INFORMATION COURTESY OF "TURNABLE TECHNIQUE: THE ART OF A DJ"

Roots of Rap

A timeline since the beginning

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>'91</p> <p>David (Germany) the DMC World Championship two in a row. N.W.A.'s follow-up record, 1991's "Straight Outta Compton," sold 100,000 copies in its first week of release and became the first rap album to go No. 1 on the charts. Vanilla Ice's "To the Extreme" comes out with Ice Baby."</p> | <p>'92</p> <p>The Disposable Heroes of Hip-Hop's record "Language of Violence," the first anti-gay-bashing rap. Rock Steady DJs (DJ Qbert, DJ Apollo and Mix Master Mike (USA) take DMC World.</p> | <p>'93</p> <p>Dr. Dre's "The Chronic" goes multi-platinum and starts a gangsta bandwagon. Wu-Tang Clan drops the platinum debut album "Enter the Wu-Tang" (36 Chambers). Staten Island's Wu-warriors: Prince (The RZA) Rakeem, Raekwon, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Method Man, Ghost Face Killah, Genius (GZA), U-God, Master Killa and Inspectah Deck. Cypress Hill released its second album, "Black Sunday."</p> | <p>'94</p> <p>November: Tupac shot in a New York recording studio five times and robbed of \$40,000 worth of jewelry. He was also sentenced to prison where he served eight months in New York Rikers Island. NAS aka Nassir Jones went Gold with his first album "Illmatic," but it was "If I Ruled the World" with vocals by Lauryn Hill that pushed him into the hip-hop mainstream spotlight.</p> | <p>'95</p> <p>Queen Latifah won a Grammy Award in the category of best rap solo performance for her hit "UNITY." Eazy-E of N.W.A. passed away of AIDS on Mar. 20, at age 31. He was the first rapper ever to admit having full-blown AIDS. Notorious B.I.G. is featured in the Unsigned Hype column of <i>The Source</i> magazine. Former <i>Source</i> editor, Matty C, played Biggie's tape for Puffy and the rest is history.</p> | <p>'97</p> <p>Scribble Jam becomes a successful underground event displaying stars such as Slug, Dose One, Eminem, Sage Francis and others. On Mar. 9, Notorious B.I.G. was gunned down while he was leaving a star-studded <i>Vibe</i> magazine party after the Soul Train Music Awards. "Misdemeanor" Elliott won two Billboard Video Music Awards for Best Rap Clip and Best New Rap Artist Clip ("The Rain").</p> | <p>'99</p> <p>Anticon releases "Music for the Advancement of Hip-Hop." Hip-hop music evolves into a new form. Lauryn Hill was the first woman to be nominated for 10 awards in Grammy history. She won five. Performance ("Doo Wop"), Best New Artist, Best R&B Album and Best R&B Song (songwriter). P. Diddy goes to court.</p> | <p>'01</p> <p>Hip-Hop legends KRS-One, Grand Master Flash and Afrika Bambaata, along with the Reverend Al Sharpton, recently gathered to announce the beginning of the fourth annual Hip-Hop Appreciation Week, scheduled to begin in May. Eminem plead guilty to one of two felony charges his facing from an incident when he allegedly pistol-whipped a man.</p> | <p>'03</p> <p>One of rap's newest stars 50 Cent (below) released his "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" album. After critics doubted the album, it became the fastest selling album in history. 50 Cent became one of the biggest stars of the year. Jay-Z released "The Black Album," supposedly his last one.</p> | <p>'06</p> <p>Lil' Kim also known as the Queen Bee launches a television show on BET, "Countdown to Lockdown."</p> |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|



50 CENT

RETROSPECTIVE: A look back at a few of the ground-breaking albums

Out of the hundreds of rap albums that paved the way, here are a few of the most famous selections. Along with those there are a few new albums that were influenced by the old-school sound.

REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Does rap promote violence and drug usage?



If you listen to the kids in the hallways that will answer your question."

Adam Hankins (9)



Not rap specifically, but different artists do."

Daniel Holst (10)



"No, parents who don't take care of their children promote violence and drug use."

Jose Cardenas (9)



"If you don't have something that is influencing or programming things into their minds, then it won't be in their minds."

Nadia Al-Absy (9)



LIL' JOE RECORDS, 1999

MUSIC REVIEW



'GREATEST HITS'

Key track: "Banned in the USA"

BY MOLLY MULLEN

The infamous 2 Live Crew was a First Amendment lover's best friend and worst enemy.

Any woman's rights activist would be horrified at the song titles alone, not to mention the rest of the lyrics. Fortunately, most people can look past the derogatory remarks made every two seconds and see it for what it really was. The band was created simply for shock value and pushing the envelope, and boy did it. Anyone looking for vulgarity to the beats of classic samples have found a home with 2 Live Crew. It was catchy, there were no two ways around it. It had shocking lyrics that everyone felt like singing along with to get that rush.

Some say the group was funny. People who couldn't see what 2 Live Crew was doing shouldn't be listening to rap music in the first place.

In the era of Tupac and Snoop Dog, there was another route to go for hard-core rap, and that was 2 Live Crew. Just remember, the parental advisory on the front was not suppose to be taken lightly.

in. The track has the distinct sound of guitar leads, but the group formed it as its own and made this new form of music bloom.

This track differs from any other one on the album in many ways. The rest of the album gives that most distinct electronic sound, whereas "Rock Box" sounds as though a live band would perform behind the master of ceremony at a concert.

The rest of the album shaped a slightly different sound, yet still this mix of electronic percussions, and rough vocals gives a listener that slight "head-rocking motion." A listener could sit down and listen to this album's entirety just bobbing their head and before they know it it's over. Unlike many following artists, Run-DMC didn't use curse words, but more inspirational words telling teens to improve their lives and tried to put out a positive sound.



CAPITOL RECORDS, 1990

MUSIC REVIEW



'PLEASE HAMMER DON'T HURT 'EM'

Key track: "Help the Children"

BY PATRICK BREEN

It is time to look past the gold parachute pants and dance moves. It's Hammer time. In, "Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em," MC Hammer brings back some original rap and beats, not seen in his later albums.

MC Hammer hammers "Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em" with good beats and original rap. Produced by the rapper, Hammer stuffed the CD with his original work and some great featured artists like Prince and Marvin Gaye.

No laffy taffy here. The cover of the track is old-school style with MC Hammer in a classic suit, sporting some bling and big glasses. If one looks past the silly cover, they will find a solid album.

The title of the album, "Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em," is really ironic because Hammer's tracks in this CD are a lot less violent than in his later, more gangsta years.

Hammer will never be known as a gangsta rapper, and that makes these tracks his memorable ones.

The album starts with the track with "Here Comes the Hammer," but by track five, "Help the Children," Hammer softens up. This is one of the best tracks on the disc. It features Marvin Gaye singing soulfully while Hammer raps about saving the children. This song has a slow beat, but rounds the CD out well. It hits Hammer's softer side, which was missing in his later hits and years.

He isn't all soulful and peaceful though. At the end of the album, his last four tracks are more like those of today. Tracks like "She's Soft and Wet" and "Black is Black" bring in Hammers harder side.

Those who are looking for the Hammer, as he later came to be known, will be disappointed. The music is relatively slow and Hammer raps with crystal clear words.



DEF JAM RECORDINGS, 1989

MUSIC REVIEW



'FEAR OF A BLACK PLANET'

Key track: "Fight the Power"

BY MOLLY MULLEN

No one can deny the power of Public Enemy, and the members would never let you. "Fear of a Black Planet" was the all-famous East Coast explosion of gangsta rap in the early '90s.

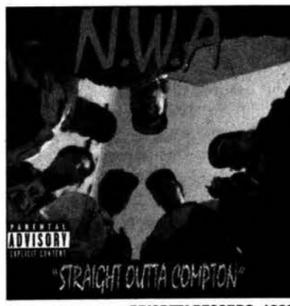
From Spike Lee's decision to play "Fight the Power" on a loop in his famous film "Do the Right Thing" to its famous East Coast flare and political tones, Public Enemy was a true innovator of rap.

Everyone credits Tupac or Run D.M.C., but Public Enemy allowed people to listen, get angry and get active.

They brought the black struggle to the front door step of every American, black or white.

"Fear of a Black Planet" used new beats and sounds with catchy lyrics. "Power to the people/ get on in, get into it, get involved," were the lyrics from "Power to the People."

Unlike the rappers of today, each and every track had something of value, along with very different beats. It is not a new, 10-track hip-hop album where every song sounds similar. This is truly what rap is supposed to be, and hopefully the new stars can take a note from one of the greats.



PRIORITY RECORDS, 1988

MUSIC REVIEW



'STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON'

Key track: "Express Yourself"

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Eighteen years ago, playing this in a car would have turned heads. Now, "Straight Outta Compton" by the rap group N.W.A. most likely wouldn't even cause a pedestrian to blink.

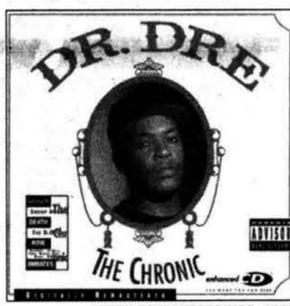
Regardless, N.W.A. was big for a reason. Any successful and smart rap artist today is influenced by these West Coast gods. Unfortunately, somewhere along the line, these more mainstream rappers have turned their backs on what N.W.A. specialized in, racist cops and calling attention to how black people are treated every day.

The band's hometown of Compton did later become important with the recent appearance of the Game, a successful new rapper from the same hometown. What Public Enemy was to the East

Coast, N.W.A. was successful because it spoke to its audience. It rapped about the frustrations of being pulled over by the police every day.

If the listener is offended, try putting on a death metal record. The only reason rap caused controversy was because people could actually understand the lyrics.

Something that still does make the listener cringe was N.W.A.'s disrespect for women. There's no excuse for it despite how the women in the tracks disrespect everyone else including themselves. Main lyricist Ice Cube is perhaps the worst at this. He speaks about women who just stick with men to try and squeeze them for all they're worth. Ice Cube's theme song, "I Ain't the 1," states his personal motto, "You can't juice Ice Cube and you hate it." Kanye West said the same thing in his recent hit "Golddigger." The difference is West said it with a song that can be played in front of elementary school-children.



DEATH ROW RECORDINGS, 1992

MUSIC REVIEW



'THE CHRONIC'

Key track: "Let Me Ride"

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Here it is. "The Chronic" was the first and the best of its kind.

Although Dr. Dre was not the innovator of rap, he was the one to bring it to the forefront of everyone's mind.

Even today no rap album can top the diversity and emotion that was "The Chronic."

His stone-cold face on the cover of the album and the introduction clearly states his position of "I'm Dr. Dre, I know you've heard of me. Step off."

It makes anyone listening terrified of the man, and want to listen to the rest of the album. He used sound clips perfectly to flow throughout the CD.

He made it easy for listeners to know when to laugh and when to listen. Plus, with "The Chronic" people get the best of Dre and Snoop Dogg.

Where would the rap industry be without 'Nothin' but a 'G' Thang'? Blasting this in a residential area, as suggested to on the album, will get just as much attention as it did in 1992. It's loud, vulgar and the best rap, yet.

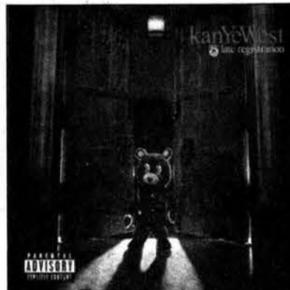
Forget Tupac, forget Rev. Run, forget Ice Cube. Dr. Dre is truly the grandfather of real, good rap music.

This was back when rappers would mix their own music or play keyboard, like Dre did.

This album was like a story, from intro to 'outro' and everything in between. Suge Knight did well in producing this.

When surrounded with artists like Vanilla Ice and MC Hammer, Dre managed to create a masterpiece. No offense to "Ice, Ice, Baby," but "The Chronic" had real lyrics mixed perfectly with professional beats, and every piece could stand on its own. Every track sounded different and could be a hit by itself.

No one can be a rap fan without buying this album.



ROC-A-FELLA RECORDS, 2005

MUSIC REVIEW



'LATE REGISTRATION'

Key track: "Gold Digger"

BY BOB AL-GREENE

There are quite a few people that don't like hip hop or rap simply because they have a preconceived notion based on what it has largely been up to until very recently. It's thug-hop, which is music glorifying the pimp game that dominates the culture. Experts plenty, black and white, openly express their worries about the overt glorification and celebration of violence, sexism and bling.

Kanye West could change all that with "Late Registration," a brilliant album on the whole and just great track-by-track. West is changing what rap should be for the better. He's moving it back towards the poetry that it can be instead of the superficial machine that it has been. And he's doing it by taking the simplest and most obvious route. He's rapping about things that are real, not only to the artist, but to his listeners. For too long, rap hit after rap hit has been in the vein of Ludacris' "Rollout" "Look at me, I'm rich, I've got booze, guns, cars, ho's, gold and diamonds."



RHINO RECORDS, 1980

MUSIC REVIEW



'THE BEST OF GRANDMASTER FLASH, MELLE MEL & THE FURIOUS FIVE'

Key track: "Freedom"

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Regardless of if this was technically good rap or not, Grandmaster Flash was truly the innovator of rap as we know it today.

He used the beats and the turn tables people have become used to.

It was definitely fun to listen to as far as a blast from the past, but nothing anyone would blast on their car stereo, peeling out of the parking lot to. That would be saved for the later generation of rap legends like Snoop Dog.

Still, in the midst of its half rap/ half funk sound, songs about child support and women pierce through all the bubble gum and shed some light on the times.

For a history lesson, listen to true grandfather of rap and hip hop. Grandmaster Flash really sheds some light on how rap came to be.

Sophomore prepares for upcoming performance in Omaha

BY JOE DELICH

"I wouldn't really call myself a rapper," he said. "I'm more of a motivational speaker."

Kevin Smith may only be a sophomore, but he is already a few steps ahead of most of his classmates towards realizing his dream.

Smith, who uses the name KB when he is rapping, said he really started to focus on rap when he reached high school.

"I started going hard on it about a year and a half ago," he said.

He said he recently made a six-song demo at a recording studio. Smith said he makes mix tapes, which are his original rhymes over other people's beats.

"I have to make mix tapes because I don't have anybody to do my beats," Smith said.

Smith said although the demo is finished, it hasn't been distributed to anyone yet, because he has to make copies of it first.

He said the only time he writes down his

lyrics before hand is when he finds the free time, or before he records at the studio.

"I only write when I get a chance or before I go into the studio, which is not very often," Smith said.

He said when he does write down his lyrics, he usually does it in his room at home.

"I close my door and turn my music up real loud with the beat I'm going to write my lyrics to," he said.

Smith said some of the things he raps about aren't always positive.

"I pretty much rap about what I've been through and how life has been for me," he said. "A lot of the stuff I've been through is not very positive, like gang life."

He said although his songs might not be about positive subjects, it's really a reminder there is a choice.

"It's like a motivation, either you can do right or wrong," Smith said.

Smith said he is performing a show put on by

an organization called Elite Good Ones (E.G.O.).

Roni Davis is the president of E.G.O. She said it is a non-profit organization aiming to build community one step at a time.

"We will do what we need to do to get the attention of young people and give them the outlets and resources to reach their potential," Davis said.

She said the event Smith will be performing at is the first big event for E.G.O.

"The purpose of the event is to unify the community and stop violence," Davis said. "We hope to inspire, motivate, educate and entertain."

She said there are approximately 30 performers who will be followed by a sideshow presentation of all the homicide victims from 2005. She said Smith was chosen as a performer after auditioning along with 150 other acts.

"We saw him perform and we thought he was one of Omaha's finest," Davis said.

She said the event had to be moved from the Doubletree Hotel to the Joslyn Art Museum because the crowd was so large.



PHOTO BY ZACH PLUHACEK/REGISTER

Junior Kevin Smith said he identifies himself with a different kind of rap than mainstream. He said he liked to consider himself a motivation to his peers through his music.

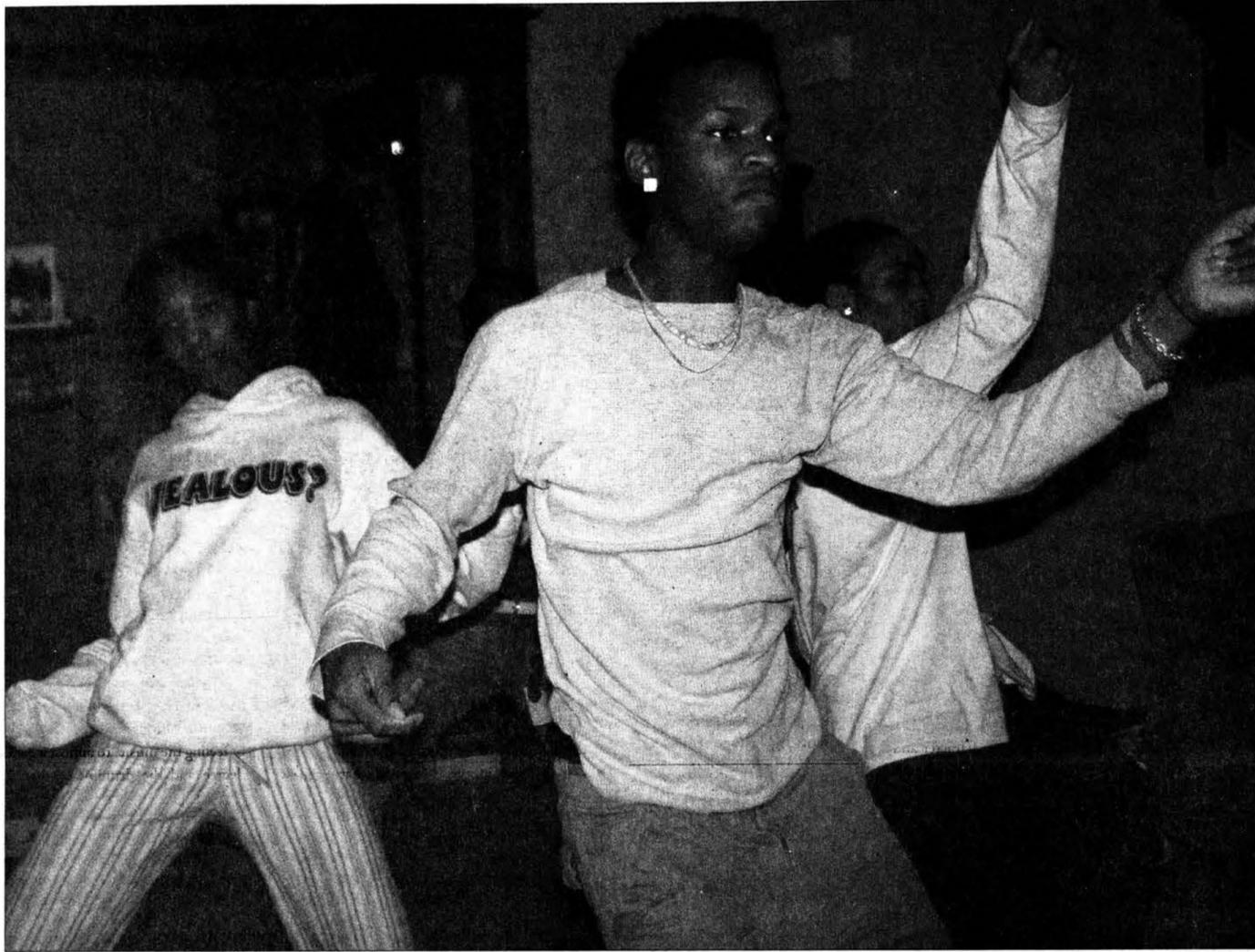


PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Members of the dance group Eruption practice for the Northwest High School talent show. Other than talent shows, this group has performed at Club Nico, for a Hurricane Katrina benefit, as well as dancing for local rap groups. (From left) Junior Makayla Jenkins, Burke junior Michael Dunlap and junior William Jackson tried to get a hip-hop dance team or club started at Central, but Jackson said he was unable to find a sponsor. They are still hopeful for next year, though.

Group shows its moves at local shows

BY MOLLY MULLEN

"That's my culture," junior Aaron Gregory said. "It's more than what you see in the videos."

He said there is an obvious stereotype about black people and hip hop and rap music, which was unfortunate. That's where it started, though, he said.

He said he had pride in both his race and his music, and that was why he took such an interest in his new dance group, Krucial. He said they do breakdancing and structured dance, more choreographed than just what happens on the dance floor.

Along with the rap revolution taking place in the Midwest, hip-hop dancers have been coming out of the woodwork, starting at the high schools. Krucial and Eruption are the two that consider themselves the best.

Gregory said he did a more structured style of hip-hop

dance, and he modeled a lot of what he did off Missy Elliott.

He said more than talent he needed dedication to learn. He said after all the hard work he put into this, he was proud to be able to perform at shows.

"It makes us (the group) feel accomplished," he said.

Krucial recently opened for Lil' JJ from the movie "Beauty Shop" and the Hope Skate. They will also be performing at The Double Tree Hotel.

Eruption, another hip-hop dance group features two Central students, sophomore Makayla Jenkins and freshman William Jackson. Burke junior Michael Dunlap choreographs all the groups dances. He said he plans on going somewhere in his dance career.

"My mom's sister used to dance," he said. "Then she got shot. I dance to carry on her memory."

He said dancing was the easiest way for him to express himself.

Jenkins said they all met at shows or at clubs. They started dancing together and became an official group. Now they perform at different local shows.

He said they just get better and better, and they plan on being the best.

Jackson said everyone knew about the group, and no one wanted to compete with it.

"People are scared," he said.

He wanted to get a club sponsor so they could have a dance club at Central. He said he couldn't find a sponsor, but will look again next year. He said there aren't that many groups that do what Eruption does in Omaha. He said if the group ever competes, they only ever have to look out for Krucial.

"You get to express yourself in different kinds of ways," Jackson said.

He said Eruption was looking forward to performing at Northwest High School's talent show.

Raps found to be an education too

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

Every student wants the so-called cool teacher, the one who isn't too hard and who makes learning actually enjoyable.

Aaron McLaughlin, a student teacher, who teaches History and World History, found the perfect solution. He raps. It's that simple.

"I did it so it would help my students, and to lighten the lesson," McLaughlin said.

However, he is a complete stranger to Central. He lives on Westside, but he loves teaching here.

"I want to teach here, but I doubt there will be a position open for me," he said.

The raps apparently helped students relate to history.

"I knew that I could do it (rap) well, so I did it," he said.

He created rap songs about civil rights, Brown vs. Board of Education, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr. and the Great Depression, and took the beat from artists like Dr. Dre and Dead Prez.

One of his students, sophomore Kenira Starks, said his raps were great because they were both fun and educational at the same time.

"I especially like the rap on Rosa Parks because it's black history month," Starks said.

He performed all of these raps for all of his classes, except for the one on the Great Depression.

"It just didn't feel right because it was about the Depression and the whole era is sad," he said.

But, he plans to write a rap about the Vietnam War.

"There's a lot of action for a rap," he said.

Writing the raps took a lot longer than it would normally be. He had to assimilate the lesson into a rhyme.

"If I did a bad rhyme, I would get booed off the stage," he said.

The student teacher has only one worry. He wants to keep his rap life and teaching life separate.

"I don't want to get too buddy-buddy with the students and I want my students to view me as a teacher and not a rapper," he said.

McLaughlin doesn't want to seem that he is such a cool teacher who doesn't care if his students learn or not. He wants to maintain a disciplinary air in the classroom and have fun with his students at the same time.

He also doesn't want parents to call him about some of the controversial topics and are very spiritual.

His feedback has been nothing but positive.

Starks, along with many other students, think the raps were not only appropriate, but fun as well.

"For the most part, my students ask me 'when are you gonna rap again?'" he said.

He has no complaints so far. He has also heard from other teachers.

"They say that so and so's favorite teacher is me," Anselmo told me that for example," he said.

"If I did this at Westside, I think I would still receive the most part a positive response, but not by as many people as here."

But, McLaughlin isn't exactly new to rap.

"I started to write rap music during my sophomore year of high school, and in my senior year I started a band called 'Series 8.'"

He is now in a hip-hop group, so he can perform outside of school.

THE ANATOMY OF HIP-HOP DANCE:

Here is the breakdown of one of hundreds of different moves in this style of dance. It is called The Matrix.

The Matrix is a simple move, but it takes practice and a physically strong body. It is named for the sequence in the film when the characters swerve to dodge bullets.

Instead of moving forward and popping out the chest, circle around in the opposite direction while moving your arms.

Bend all the way backwards until your palms can touch the ground and then pop into another dance move before circling back.

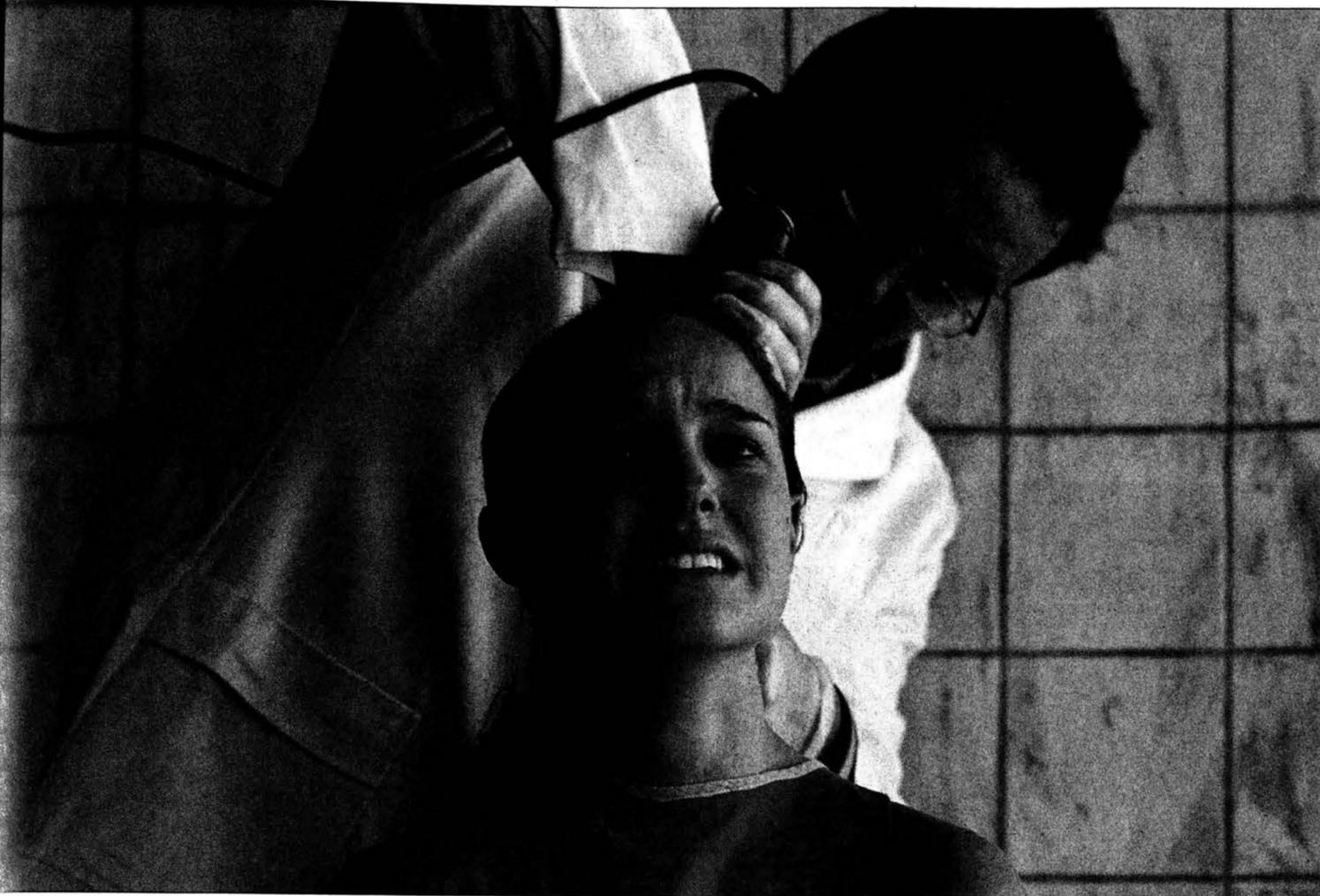


PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT

played by Natalie Portman, gets her head shaved after being captured as an accomplice to a terrorist. Portman was the perfect sidekick to the bizarre lead character of V, played by Hugo Weaving. She was not the princess from "Star Wars" in this "1984" style of movie. She was real, depressing and vengeful, which made her perfect for "V for Vendetta."

All-too-real movie makes audience think

BY MOLLY MULLEN

"V for Vendetta" was a shock for anyone with expectations of this short of reading the graphic novel it was based off of, no one would be prepared for the world portrayed in this film.

It was almost like seeing George Orwell's "1984" depicted on the screen for the first few scenes. The streets were dark and patrolled by soldiers all day and night.

There were curfews for everyone in the city and England had become a place of political tyranny and propaganda.

Through this one man, named V, shown through. His story was simple and complicated, but he was the one to lead the rest of the cast through their time.

His porcelain mask covered a face one could only imagine had become hideous after a fire scorched his body. He was the Phantom of the Opera as well as Super Man. He took the best and the worst from the famous heroes, and some could say villains, of all time and made them his own.

Natalie Portman played Evey. She has come a long way since she was titled the princess of "Star Wars." It took guts to do a role like this. Not because she had to shave her head, but because she took a deeply political role.

She was the star of the show, going from vulnerable, to angry, to active, to broken down, to hero. She hit every aspect of her character and more. She made every single bit of it believable.

She was the best crier in movie history, at least for awhile. Her tears dragged the characters in so close, they believed every word of what she said. This was important because then the surprises and

twists in plot came as a shock to the audience.

Hugo Weaving did a great job as V. He kept things light-hearted when he needed to, and also showed a darker, more serious side.

His plan was to blow up Parliament, to give a sign of hope to the British, and he was going to make sure his plans worked.

MOVIE REVIEW



'V FOR VENDETTA'

Starring: Natalie Portman

This movie was extremely ominous, but did what it was supposed to do. It made anyone watching reflect on their freedoms and government. It was something George Orwell would have loved to see hit the big screen.

In this day in age it is good that themes of books like "1984" and "Fahrenheit 451" are still prevalent and important. This movie went down with those pieces of literature in political fiction history.

Challenging instrument helps student win music award

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

Junior Aimee Koenig was the only Central student to win the Nebraska Young Artist Award for music.

She said she had to fill out the required forms and send in an audition tape.

Koenig said she sent in a three-minute solo on the bassoon for the judge to listen to.

It was a musical competition open only to students hosted by Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska-Kearney.

"I didn't practice much for it since I had already practiced (the prepared piece)," Koenig said.

She said the only other person to enter the music competition from Central was junior Brittany Koenig.

Koenig said she thought more students didn't enter because they didn't know about it.

"I had never heard about it before," Krijan said.

"Only a select few win. It's for all of Nebraska."

Krijan also entered the competition. She said band director Pete Wilger nominated her.

Wilger said there were usually two to three students selected for the award.

She said she entered a recital she had done in May. The name of the song was "Elegie" by composer Frere.

"I entered the bassoon because not a lot of people play it," Koenig said. "So it's a lot easier to get scholarships."

She said she has been playing the bassoon since 7th grade.

"My dad basically was the one who helped me choose it and I've had private instructors," Koenig said.

She said she also has played the clarinet for six years and the piano for ten.

"My family is very musical," Koenig said. "My dad used to be a band instructor and both my mom and dad play the piano."

She said her dad introduced her to all the instruments.

"Sometimes (playing an instrument is) a nice way to relax, get out emotions," Koenig said. "Other times it's just fun."

She said she was accepted to All-State two times and has been the first chair both years.

Krijan said she thinks Koenig was very good to say the least.

"I'm too nervous to really think (when I'm performing)," Koenig said. "I just want to get it over with. I'm thinking about the music."

Krijan like Koenig gets lost in her music while playing.

She said she just thinks about hitting the right notes and the rest of the world just fades away.

She said her favorite composer is Norway composer Edward Grieg.

"I try to practice at least every other day for 45 minutes," Koenig said. "I alternate between the instruments."

She said she learns and practices for the piano a song for a month or two.

"I'm going through a book for the bassoon, so I'm learning a new song every couple of weeks," Koenig said.

The biggest problem she said is the lack of time in a day. She said tennis is starting up, so now she'll have even less time.

"I'll probably go pre-med," Koenig said. "I won't major in music, but will play in the music ensembles."

She said both instruments have challenges, but the bassoon is harder to get a good tune.

Koenig in her spare time she taught a third grader once a week from her church piano lessons.

"It was a different experience," Koenig said. "It's sometimes hard to motivate her because she is so little."

She said the extra money was a benefit.

"I liked how she progressed," Koenig said. "I felt like I did something in her life."

Eagle Does represent all sides of school at show, silent auction

BY KIM BUCKLEY

Clubs and activities brought out paint, brushes and creativity to create an eagle as part of the Eagle Doe Project on display during the week of March 20.

From band conductors to the Constitution, each eagle represented a division of the departments.

Parents, Educators, Pupils (PEP) president Don Erikson said the Eagle Doe Project was a part of Fine Arts week, which took place during March 20-26.

He said PEP wanted something to highlight art specifically and decided the Eagle Doe Project after the J. Doe Project.

He said the Eagle Does were the centerpieces for the tables at the scholarship auction dinner at the Joslyn Art Museum on March 25, then auctioned off that night.

"It ties in art, it ties in the eagle because of Central and then it ties in all of the clubs," Erikson said.

He said PEP hoped the different clubs and organizations would create their Eagle Does to represent their activity or club.

"It's kind of a way to show pride in your department or club or organization," Erikson said.

He said PEP did its own eagle as well. He said forms to sign up to create an Eagle Doe were in the main office.

Art teacher Larry Andrews said there were 25 Eagle Does in the main office. He said at the auction, they were put on pedestals.

Andrews said he told the clubs and organizations they were allowed to come up with their own art supplies, but the art department would help furnish brushes and help the clubs come up with ideas.

He said he wasn't able to supply paint and other art supplies because the art department didn't have enough paint and supplies to



PHOTO BY KIM BUCKLEY/REGISTER

Sophomores Brianna Huddle (left) and Kim Nguyen help decorate the Eagle Doe for Key Club.

hand out to all of the clubs and organizations that were creating an Eagle Doe.

He said clubs were pretty much doing the Eagle Doe without any help from the art department.

Erikson said PEP thought if the students created an eagle it would be displayed during Central for Fine Arts week.

Andrews said the art department made a sample of an Eagle Doe, which was put on display in the main office, so clubs and activities would have an idea of what the project was and the different way they could use the sculpture to represent the department.

"We did it so people could have an idea of what they can do,"

Andrews said.

He said he was asked to be on the Fine Arts committee and being involved with the Eagle Doe Project was something he helped out with for the committee.

Key Club sponsor Polly Briles said Key Club received a letter talking about the project and the fund-raiser that went to all of the staff, and presented it to the club.

She said they took a vote and decided to do it.

She said the members of Key Club knew students could use the scholarships to go to college and Key Club was all about voluntary projects for the good of the community.

"They wanted to support the scholarships PEP gave out," Briles said.

She said the club had people who liked to do art and the members were familiar with the J. Doe project.

She said the club decided to use silver, white and purple tissue paper to decorate the Eagle Doe.

"I thought it was a good combination of service to the school and their fellow students and good use of their talents," Briles said.

Key club officer junior Nema Philip said she wanted to do an Eagle Doe because it was going to help with the scholarships and it would represent Key Club.

"It's fun and you can talk to other members while you're doing it," Philip said.

She said she didn't think decorating it was difficult, but said the main problem was how to agree and compromise about how the eagle should look.

"I thought it would be really fun and interesting how people would want to decorate it," Philip said.

The results said it all.



OPAQUE RAINBOW

A Column by Emma Phillips

Love of music is lifestyle

I don't have much school spirit. I don't particularly enjoy sports, but yet I have a very clear motivation to attend football and basketball games.

My love of the CHS band is what gets me to pay the \$7 required to enter a game.

I could care less about the score, or what dance team will be performing.

During halftime I stand next to my friends and as they are enraptured with the current play unfolding on the court my attention is focused on my classmates with the enviable skill to play an instrument well enough for it to count as a gym credit.

As soon as the music strikes up, I hush my friends so I can better hear the music and therefore better groove to the notes. At the one basketball game I attended, I spent the better of 20 minutes trying to figure out why all the members of the band were wearing their band-themed T-shirts other than the drummers who were located to the side of the bleachers.

Although I adore the band as a whole, my hands down favorite section within it is the drum line.

I don't quite understand my fascination, but I think it might have something to do with the fact that drummers as a whole always seem to be inexplicably happy.

At every concert I've ever been to the lead singer is usually bemoaning his pitiful existence, the lead guitarist is "feeling the music" to almost a comic degree and the drummer is happily pounding on the skins.

The sound of so many drums being beat in unison is transfixing. Whenever I hear it I stop and listen intently and when the music is over I'm sadder for it. Getting to hear the drum line is almost medicinal to me. Before I saw this year's Roadshow I was in an all-right mood, not joyful, but rather existing in my normal state of apathy.

After getting to hear the band as a whole and then the drum line individually I was in a state of euphoria.

So much so that on the way home my friend and I tried to mimic the choreography of the drummers as we walked down Davenport to my car.

To this day whenever I'm sitting in a class feeling particularly bored, all I have to do is think of that wonderful night and a smile will form on my face. As far as I'm concerned, anything the band does is brilliant, especially if it involves quite a bit of drumming.

If I could change one decision I've made in my life it would definitely have been to take band in elementary school as opposed to orchestra.

Don't get me wrong, the three years I spent with the cello were great, but somehow I think if I had picked up a flute instead I'd be happier.

Mainly because it would grant me admission to the class that I am most intrigued by, but yet cannot participate in.

Another major perk of being in band would definitely be the shirt. The first time I saw someone wearing the "I'm with the band" T-shirt in the hallway I knew that I was going to either going to have to steal, buy or trick someone into giving me their shirt. An opportunity to enact any of these plans has yet to present itself, but when it does I'll be ready.

Even though I have a strong love for the band, often it is not enough to get me to cough up the \$7 required to get into the game.

When later in the evening I'm talking or my friends with enough school spirit to pay to cheer on the home team, I'll politely listen to them tell me about how great pom or drill team was, or how amazing the last play was, but when I sense they are finished with their recount, I'll pause and say with almost religious reverence,

"Yes, but how was the band?"

ARTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

124 N 20TH STREET, OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102

POLAR OPPOSITES

Some want to spend their savings on prom. Others would rather make a dress out of duct tape. Here are some outfits in anyone's budget.



PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

A stretch limousine is the epitome of elegance for prom. Students get their best, most expensive clothes and big dinners before rolling up to the doors in a Hummer. Not everyone wants to go all out for prom. Some people buy outfits from the thrift stores, or even make the clothes themselves out of household items, just to save money and be a little different.

BY MOLLY MULLEN

In the 1960s a popular trend was mini dresses made out of newspapers. Last year, singer Samantha Mumba spent over \$6 million on a dress made out of diamonds, making it the most expensive dress in history.

Things have definitely changed, and the fashions at Central are changing along with them.

Students are making their own clothes for prom, while others travel out of state to find the perfect gown.

The outfits at prom are as diverse as the students.

Student Council president Ali Gorga was involved in the planning of prom this year. She said she was excited because she came up with a theme for the evening, developed it with some friends and the Student Council chose hers to use.

She said she bought her dress at "1/2 of 1/2," a store that sells expensive clothes for low prices

because of minor defects.

She said she didn't mind a broken zipper to get a \$150 dress for only \$30. She said all-in-all, her entire outfit was inexpensive.

"It just depends on your tastes," she said. "Some people would prefer to go all out."

Even though she had no plans of spending her savings, she said her senior prom was important to her.

"There's only 12 days of school left, and it's getting near the end," she said.

Some people can get anxious and worried about prom, she said, but for most people it's just a time to have fun before school gets out.

"Some people get worried about having a date," she said. "It's just fun to be with friends."

Senior Bailey Smejkal went to Kansas City to find her dress. She said she wasn't looking for something expensive, just different.

"Last year I wore a dress to prom and I saw two other girls with the same dress," she said. "I

didn't want that to happen again."

She said she found a silver strapless dress for \$135, and she was confident no one would have a similar outfit.

She said it was fun for her to get excited for prom and homecoming.

"I don't usually dress up, so it's fun for those two days of the year," she said.

Even though she went out of her way to find a dress, she said there were people who went overboard on prom by spending hundreds of dollars on dresses and dinner.

Counselor Wayne Palmer said style of clothes aren't the only differences since the '60s, he said peer pressure has changed. It's not only about drinking and drugs, and it doesn't have to be verbal.

He said teens worry about what clothes to buy way more than their parents because this generation of teens is the first to have a truly disposable income.

"Usually, if they want it, they can get it," Palmer said.

He said it doesn't have to be the latest, greatest and most expensive clothes and cars. Some people feel pressure to dress differently than the mainstream. Either way, young people get stressed out.

Many students today have jobs on top of high school, so they are already stressed and tired. Adding on problems with trying to fit in and be accepted can definitely cause anxiety, Palmer said. With jobs teens have the choice to buy pretty much whatever they want, he said.

"The pressure to be accepted is great nowadays," Palmer said.

He said some teens think to look good they need to spend all their money on the latest fashions. Hopefully this is where parents step in.

He said parents need to act as role models so adolescents can start making goals based on what they want, rather than their friends or society.

WHAT TO WEAR

Some prices and styles for formal attire

\$22.50
thrift store
for purchase:
suit, vest, shirt,
shoes and
pants



\$430
downtown
boutique
Turquoise, silk
blue dress with
fuchsia silk
flowers



\$125
formal wear
store
for rent:
suit, vest, shirt,
shoes and
pants



\$59.50
department store
Full length
spaghetti-
strapped dress



Dine in at our all-day buffet or take it to go!



\$3.99

All-You-Can-Eat Buffet

3205 Oak View Dr.
991-2992

346 N. Saddle Creek
934-8986

654 N 114th St.
991-0044

Choose from any of our 16 menu items including salad, pasta, pizza and desserts!

SPORTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REGISTER

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Freshman goalie, **PAGE 40**

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

GOIN' FOR THE GOLD

For the first time in about 20 years, one of the biggest boxing matches in the country came to Omaha. A former Central student, ranked third in the nation, has a chance to take it all.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Junior Joe Pollock (right) punches sophomore Rochele Pointer during a practice at the CW Boxing Club. Pollock had just started boxing, and it was his first time against an opponent. Pointer said boxing wasn't about the size of the fighter, but was more about the speed.

(RIGHT) Former Central student Terence Crawford practices with an assistant coach. Recently, he won a Golden Gloves match that was held in Omaha for the first time since the 1980s. The tour director for the Golden Gloves match said he expected Crawford to win the Golden Gloves, proving he was the best in the nation at that weight class.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Inside the ring of the CW Boxing Club, one might see a 7-year-old beginner or one of the top boxers in the nation breaking a sweat.

That's the kind of place it is.

The club today is very different than it used to be. There are more fighters coming in and more champions coming out.

The club started in 1985 by a man named Carl Washington, a close friend of current owner Midge Minor.

Minor, who had a history of boxing himself, took over three years later.

"We ended up having the best club in the state of Nebraska," Minor said.

Minor is the one who had trained Terence Crawford, former Central student and current Bryan High senior, from the age of 7 to what he is today. Crawford is currently ranked third in the country in his weight class.

"He would just swing and throw punches around," Minor said, "I had to teach him technique."

The March 18 match wasn't the 18-year-old Crawford's first trip to the Golden Gloves. A year ago, Crawford boxed the same man, Jeff Hazen, and won.

"I stopped him the first time in the first round," he said.

This time, Crawford said his opponent was a little bit more of a challenge. It took two rounds to knock him out.

"He came a little prepared this time," Crawford said.

Crawford, in the middle of the Civic Auditorium, danced around Hazen in the ring.

A whole cheering section yelled each time Crawford ducked. Minutes later Crawford was in the middle of the ring again, this time with his arm raised and a trophy to take home.

"I just wanted to box him at first," he said.

Minor started boxing when he was 14 years old. A year later, he won the Golden Gloves. Following that success, Minor won it three more years in a row, and he planned to go pro.

Minor said winning four years in a row was a big deal for him at that

Continued to **Boxing** on Page 36D

Special Boxing Focus
INSIDE
pgs. 36-37

Wrestler takes first title since 1999

BY MOLLY MULLEN

sitting quietly and watching the game, but he was glad students took notice.

Wrestling usually takes a backburner to sports like basketball and football, he said.

"I hope to get more light on the (wrestling) program," Smith said.

He said his goal is to help Foster recruit and build up the program.

If he could win State and do well, maybe other people would take an interest, he said. If people saw Smith's accomplishment, it might give them faith they could do it also.

Smith said he was ready for his last match against Creighton Prep's Anthony Salsido, an opponent who he had lost to in Districts.

"The whole match I flat out

Continued to **Champ** on Page 38D



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Senior Guy Smith wrestles teammate senior Charles Mulligan at the spring pep rally. Smith won first place in State wrestling for the first time at Central in seven years. He said he received support from both his family and the student body.

Athletic organization tries to stop steroid use

■ NIDA official says one out of 16 students have used performance enhancing drugs

BY CLAY LOMNETH

With the threat of steroids entering high school sports, the Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA) is trying to determine how big of an issue it really is.

Executive director Jim Tenopir said the NSAA distributed standard surveys last fall, asking not only the usual questions about tobacco and alcohol, but also this time about performance-enhancing drugs.

Students answered anonymously, but Tenopir said the results would be fairly accurate. Students might lie or embellish, but Tenopir said

the results were guaranteed because these factors balanced each other out.

Tenopir said what he was interested in was if there was a reason for concern or not. The raw data came to him around the middle of March.

Linn Goldberg, the head of the division of sports medicine at the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), said the Center for Disease Control had done youth risk behavior surveys for the 2003-2004 school year.

The results showed 6.8 percent of males in high school had used steroids at one point, as had 5.3 percent of high school girls.

In other words, Goldberg said, one out of 16 students, not just athletes, have used performance enhancers at one point in their life.

Goldberg said so far only local studies have

Continued to **Steroids** on Page 38D

Senior stays active during off-seasons

EMMA PHILLIPS

The sports of shot put and discus date back to the Olympians. Despite the age of these sports, they are still commonly played by many people, including senior DJ Jones.

"The shot put is an event where they (athletes) take a 12-pound ball and push it as far as they can," throwing coach Charles Williams said.

Williams said when athletes push the ball they are actually throwing it, but due to the amount of force and technique used, it is more like pushing the ball into the air than simply throwing it.

Jones said he started throwing shot put because his coaches told him due to his running experience and the fact he was big as a child, it would be beneficial for him. He also said he started when he was fairly young.

"I've been throwing probably since I was about 10," Jones said.

Williams said in order to be able to compete in these events successfully, the person throwing must be in good shape due to the weight of the equipment and the distance required to throw in competition.

Williams said in practice Jones has thrown the disc up to 140 feet, but he has not yet thrown in competition.

Jones said the fact that he participates in more than one sport is beneficial for him because it means he is continually working out and training.

He said weight lifting transfers easily between football and field events.

"It all kind of intertwines," he said.

Williams said one of the things that guarantee an athlete success in field events is technique.

It is rare an athlete will develop a perfect technique in his first year involved in the field events.

He said he has known Jones for four years and due to the time Jones has invested in the events, he has achieved a good technique and is still improving.

"I think he has started to get a really good technique," Williams said.

Jones said he thought just this year he has noticeably improved his shot put skills. He said the best way to improve is just through repeated practice and lifting weights. He also said last season his throwing skills were hindered due to a dislocated shoulder during the football season.

He said when track season began he had just finished physical therapy and therefore had to be easier on his shoulder and couldn't throw as far.

Williams said he could tell Jones was improving just by watching him during practice.

JV coach says young golfers need support

BY EMMA PHILLIPS

Junior varsity golf coach Robert Tucker said the golf team approaches each tournament with an equal amount of preparation and drive.

He said the team is comprised of 15 members this year, most of who are underclassmen. "A majority of them are freshmen and sophomores,"

he said.

Tucker said the reason for this was because the team was made up of mostly upperclassmen last year, most of who have since graduated. However, he said there were some players who returned this year.

"We have five or six returning people," Tucker said.

The team practices five days a week, alternating between Elmwood and Shoreline Parks. Tucker said both locations were close to Central and distance was not a problem for the players.

Also, it was good for their game to practice on different courses.

Tucker said a major tournament for the golf team took place over spring break, and that was one of the only times students would have the opportunity to see the team play because most matches took place during the school day. He said he would like it if students were able to attend more matches because that would make the team become accustomed to playing in front of people.

Tucker said being able to play in front of large groups of people would be a good thing for players to be able to do because there is a large gallery at the State championship.

CALENDAR



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Swimming on a college team doesn't seem too far away for junior Sara Hallgren. She said she would want to swim for Stanford because it has the best team in the country. At State this year she ended up swimming in a conciliation round for the 200 free stroke.

Junior qualifies for State swimming

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Junior Sara Hallgren was one of a few of the State qualifiers in swimming from Central, and although she was nervous, she was mentally prepared.

She ended up swimming in a conciliation round for the 200 free stroke.

This is just the beginning for Hallgren, with a bigger and better season of high school swimming coming up next year as well as aspirations to swim in college and beyond.

With a new coach came new expectations and techniques.

Members of the team would meditate before each meet and would visualize each specific part of their individual races.

"Mostly, I think about my races and how well I want to do," she said. "And, since I'm only a junior I think about how I can make up for my

races next season."

She said she loved swimming more than any other sport. She used to be in other sports like softball, but she gave everything up to concentrate on swimming.

She was on a year-long team and plans on doing it in college as well.

She said she wanted to attend Stanford because it had the best team.

Swimming was not something new to the Hallgren family.

She said her mother, aunt and grandfather all won medals and awards for swimming.

She has surpassed them, however, swimming in high school on two teams and winning on both.

She said she has made her family proud both in swimming and school.

She competed in the 200 freestyle, 200 medley relay, 100 fly and 200 individual medley.

"Sara is one of the hardest working people I ever met," senior Lindsey Anderson said.

She said even though she was going to college out of state, she wanted to come back to see Hallgren compete.

"She's a very strong competitor," she said.

Coach Meredith Kinman said the team should improve a lot next year.

Kinman said this year's team was one of the biggest teams she had ever seen.

It had over 60 people. Out of those swimmers, only four were seniors.

"This season took a lot of getting used to for the freshmen," she said. "Middle school (swimming) is only six weeks versus our four months."

If these freshmen stay on the team for the next three years, they will be a team to be reckoned with at State.

Upcoming Events

April

13 Dick Jones Track Meet

Central is holding a track invite at Burke High School, where it will compete against other Omaha/Metro schools. The field events start at 3 p.m. and the running events start at 4 p.m. There will be a new school participating, South Sioux City.

May

13,15,17 State Soccer

This soccer tournament will be held during a week-long period for this season's best teams in the state to go against each other to find out who's the best of 2006. The location of this competition will be announced at a future date. Districts take place May 2-6.

15-18 State Baseball

After the regular season, The Metro Tournament then Districts lead up to State, which will be held during a four-day period to decide the best teams in the state.

18-19 State Tennis

Girls State tennis will be held during these days. The location of State will be the Koch Family Tennis Center at Tranquility Park on 123rd and Maple St. Thursday the girls will play through the quarter finals. Friday morning all the semi final games will be held and later that afternoon the finals will be held.

19-20 State Track

This year's State track is being held at Burke High School. The best athletes will compete against each other during these two days of competition. To qualify to State, Metro and Districts will be held on May 2, 3 and 10.

23-24 State Golf

At 8 a.m. State golf begins at Lincoln's Pioneer's Golf course. For two days, golfers from each high school will play their best to try and win it all for their team. Metro and Districts preceded state on May 10 at Benson and May 15 at Fremont golf courses.

25 Spring Sports Banquet

Central will be honoring all spring athletes at this banquet to show accomplishments to friends, family and fellow students. The athletes will be awarded a certificate and their letters for their jackets. Outback Steak House will be supplying the food and all money made from the dinners will be used to support the athletic department.

Young player builds with second year

BY PASCALE ROUSSEL

Sophomore Mattie George's reaction when she found out she was on the varsity soccer team this year was excitement.

"I think this year is a growing year for the team," George said.

This is her second year on varsity.

"I have more confidence in myself this year because I'm not a little freshman any more," she said.

Conditioning before tryouts lasted four to five months, and George said she would practice with the team, and then some by herself.

She said varsity practices six days a week, every day after school and Saturdays mornings.

George's motivation for the year was not to think so much.

"I don't want to think about the game when I'm playing it, I just want to play in the moment," George said.

She said her mom and dad both were very proud she made varsity for the second time in a row.

"My mom said she knew I would make it if I tried hard enough," George said.

She said she tells herself practice makes perfect. If she's not a good player, then she's able to put my all into practice to prepare for the games, she said.



GEORGE

Soccer player adjusts to life in new country

BY PATRICK O'MALLEY

The Nebraska Schooling Activities Association (NSAA) regulations regarding eligibility to play soccer were a minor setback for the varsity boys soccer team.

Sophomore Sibhat Gebremichael had to sit out of the games and practices for the first part of the season due to a shortage of credits.

Gebremichael said he moved to Omaha from eastern Ethiopia, Africa on Sept. 2005.

He said he moved here with his father and had been living with a friend of his family.

"It's nice being here," he said.

Because he arrived approximately a second quarter, he only received partial credit.

Activities Director Charles Williams said a student has to have earned credit hours in the previous semester to be eligible to play any sport. Because he arrived late, Gebremichael only had one credit.

Head coach Tim Herbert said he had to send a hardship waiver to the NSAA in an attempt to let him play.

Herbert said Gebremichael brought a letter to him and he attached a waiver and permission and stating that he did not want to be simply could not have earned the amount of credits.

He said until he was approved he was not even allowed to practice with the team because it would be illegal.

Senior Alexander Henriquez said Gebremichael was one of the most talented players on the team, a good teammate and made an impact on the field.

"He is a good forward, he can score anytime," Henriquez said.

He said he felt he had the potential to become one of the best forwards in the state. Gebremichael said he hadn't ever played for an organized club until he came to the United States. He said he only played for fun with his friends. He said he enjoyed playing with a high school club.

"It's hard communicating with Gebremichael said.

He said because he had only been in Omaha for about 6 months, he was still having a hard time learning how to speak English.

Henriquez said when he first came to America from El Salvador he had a difficult time learning English so he learned what Gebremichael was going through.

Gebremichael said the other players were very nice to him he was glad he was part of the team.

Along with the language barrier, Henriquez said he had a hard time trying to find a way to all the games and practices. He said he was very excited once he found out he was allowed to play.

"The coach said congratulations," Henriquez said.

He said if he wasn't eligible to play this year, he was ready to play next year.



SPRING
SPORTS
CARDS

At the beginning of the spring sports season, the Register asked each coach to select a player who was expected to play the most vital role on the team.

The coaches chose the following athletes based on their expected role of leading their teams to successful years.

As the season continues, the coaches expect to see these players stepping up to the front and helping each respective team on to victory.



SPRING 2006
Ben Kline
"This will be his second year playing shortstop for us," head coach Scott Hodges.

BASEBALL
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: junior
POSITION: shortstop
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: He hit .375 last spring and had 29 RBI.
HEAD COACH: Scott Hodges
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Brian Benes (12), Kyle Judevine (12), Bryant Cotton (12), Craig Ecabert (12)
STRENGTHS: He is very athletic and has the background knowledge and experience of the game. He's a threat offensively.
KEY GAMES: Burke



SPRING 2006
DJ Jones
"Excellent athlete and a quick learner," throwing coach Charles Williams.

BOYS TRACK
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: senior
POSITION: shotput and discus
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: He received a four-year scholarship (football) to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
HEAD COACH (throwing): Charles Williams
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Andre McIntyre (12), Gransen Falkner (12)
STRENGTHS: He has good technique and the ability to adapt.
KEY GAMES: Millard North Meet



SPRING 2006
Kate Humphreys
"(She has won) medals in the high jump, 100-meter high hurdles, 300 low hurdles and 400 relay," head coach Trent Lodge.

GIRLS TRACK
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: junior
EVENTS: high jump, 100-meter high hurdles, 300 low hurdles and 400-meter relay
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: She won second place in Class A for 100-meter high hurdles and sixth place in 300 for low hurdles.
HEAD COACH: Trent Lodge
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Kailah Bailey (9), Jasmine Johnson (11), Ally Gorga (12), Rachel Glissmann (12)
KEY GAMES: none



SPRING 2006
Brittany Krijan
"She's very competitive and I can't wait to see how well she'll do," head coach Larry Andrews.

GIRLS TENNIS
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: junior
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: She's a strong doubles partner with Aimee Koenig (11).
HEAD COACH: Larry Andrews
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Aimee Koenig (11), Jenny Rosas (12), Krista Killion (12)
STRENGTHS: She's very competitive, determined and contributes a lot towards the team. Does really well playing doubles.
KEY GAMES: none



SPRING 2006
Drew Meier
"(He) respects the game of golf and Central High School," head coach Jim Galus.

BOYS GOLF
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: senior
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: He finished in the top 10 of a number of his tournaments.
HEAD COACH: Jim Galus
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Tony Distefano (10), Nick Pierce-Cramer (12)
STRENGTHS: His height helps him swing with high speeds. He also has the power to hit long distances.
KEY GAMES: Central's Tournament



SPRING 2006
Lisa Shirk
"She is a very versatile and knowledgeable player," head coach Michelle Pleiss.

GIRLS SOCCER
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: junior
POSITION: offensive positions
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: She wants to go to Dana College to pursue playing soccer.
HEAD COACH: Michelle Pleiss.
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Katie Gorga (12), Lindsay Meyer (12), Elisabeth Garvin (11)
STRENGTHS: She's strong, aggressive, quick and smart. She knows the game and anticipates the game well.
KEY GAMES: none



SPRING 2006
Kyle Samuelson
"Kyle is the epitome of a student athlete, he is on the honor roll and student council," head coach Tim Herbert.

BOYS SOCCER
CHS STUDENT ATHLETE

GRADE: senior
POSITION: forward
AWARDS/RECOGNITION: Named All-State player by the Lincoln Journal Star and tied the CHS record for goals in a season (20).
HEAD COACH: Tim Herbert
OTHER KEY PLAYERS: Dan Susman (12), Andy Monbouquette (12), Beauchamp Alejandro (12), Corey Lynch (11)
KEY GAMES: none

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KNOWING THE BASICS

Learn and perfect these few punches, and experts say the combinations will follow.



BLOCK

There are many different ways to block. The boxer must make sure he's always guarding his body. A good defense is a key in winning.



CROSS

Similar to the jab, the hips lead and the fist travels towards the opponent. The shoulders must follow through. This punch has the most power when feet are planted in one spot.



HOOK

Normally follows a cross. It's important to keep body in correct position. Turn body with a snapping motion, aiming for the opponent.



JAB

Most important punch. The knees should be bent with the chin down. Twist the arm in a cork-screw motion just before impact to make a more efficient hit.



STRAIGHT

Is usually followed by a jab. Start off from the face, staying close to the chin. The punch is thrown directly from the face towards the opponent's face.



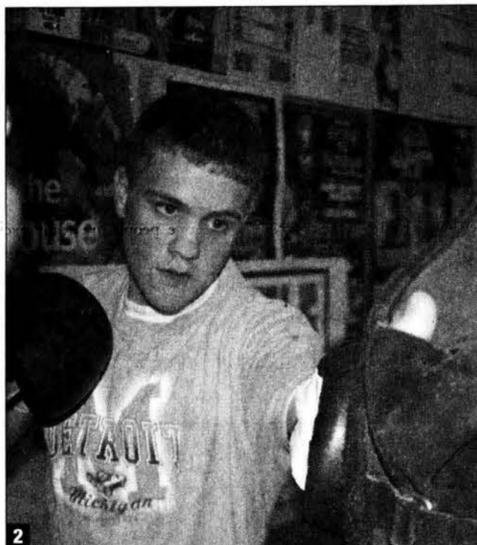
UPPER CUT

This is the most dangerous punch. Boxer should make sure they're close to opponent before swinging. A hook punch normally follows the upper cut.

INFORMATION COURTESY OF JOHN SCULLY
INFOGRAPHIC BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

BLOOD IN

The sweat, the blood, the sound of a glove knocking
Champions, may see a fifth. Former Central student Terence Crawford will



1. Terence Crawford practices at the CW Boxing Club, where he has been since he was 7. Since then, Crawford has moved his way up to third in the nation in his weight class. He competed in national events such as the Golden Gloves, held in Omaha this year. 2. Junior Joe Pollock works on his punches before his sparring match with Rochele Pointer. 3. Midge Minor (left) helps tie up Crawford's gloves before he begins practicing. Minor also won Golden Glove titles when he was boxing in the 1950s '60s. He said he was going to go pro, but decided against it. He said training Crawford is like living his dream.

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior expected to win national title, tour director says

■ 'BOXING' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33D

time. "Back then, there was a lot of prejudice," he said. "Nobody thought I could do what I did."

Minor said as his fame grew, the crowds would remain quiet during nearly the whole match. They would only cheer if Minor's opponent hit him.

"It was hard to hit. If they did get a shot in, the crowd went crazy," Minor said. "I kept them silent."

After four years, Minor's eyes turned to the professional boxing life. But, he said, to dominate in his weight class, it would require a move.

"For a small guy like me I had to go overseas," Minor said. His size of boxers competed overseas, he said, and in order to even be a contender, he had to travel.

Minor said he didn't want to do that, and a while afterward the man who was ranked second in the nation took over the CW Boxing club.

Minor said Crawford was just one of the many successful boxers he had trained at the club.

"I had him when he was really young," he said. "He had a chance to do what I couldn't do."

Being No. 3 in the nation felt great, Crawford said. However, he said he could see himself doing better.

"I see myself as No. 1," Crawford said.

Boxing is evident in Crawford's family tree. Crawford said he started boxing because his father, uncle, grandpa and cousins boxed as well.

"It's just in my family," Crawford said.

Minor said he now could tell who could be a good boxer and how to make them better with just 30 seconds of watching them.

Within that half of a minute of observing, Minor said he could tell if the boxer could win the match. More than that, he could tell how to make him win.

He said he watched to see if the boxer dropped his hand while jabbing or used his dominant hand. He said he also put his boxers up against people they may not bear to get them to progress.

"They way I teach, the kid can develop," he said.

As the student goes on, he raises the level of competition the boxer goes up against. Minor said he never puts a boxer up

against someone he can easily beat.

"I don't keep them at the same level," he said.

He said his coaching style worked, because out of the 35 or 40 members at his club, he expected well more than half would be major contenders in the future.

"We're not that popular because we win all the time," Minor said. "But we're more successful."

Minor said there was an appeal to boxing. He said young people who don't do well at playing football and basketball like the one-on-one competition of boxing.

All year round, Minor keeps the CW Boxing Club open. Minor said this gives him an advantage because some of the other gyms are only open part of the year.

"A lot of gyms close up during the summer," Minor said. "That might be one reason I end up with most of the champions, probably."

Harley Cooper, the tour director for the Golden Gloves, said he thought the Golden Gloves started in Chicago in 1928. Since then, the venues for the competition has been all around the country.

In the early 1980s, the Golden Gloves came to Omaha before. Now, with a two-year bid, the Golden Gloves came back. Cooper said most of the best-known boxers had been through the Golden Gloves.

He said one thing most champions had in common was they all were in the Golden Gloves.

Muhammad Ali, Mike Tyson, Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Leonard and Oscar De La Hoya had all boxed for the Golden Gloves at some point, Cooper said.

"Most of your guys have been through the Golden Gloves," he said.

What the Golden Gloves basically are, he said, are the best fights anywhere in the nation. The only thing bigger than the Golden Gloves is the Olympics.

Omahans have a good turnout, Cooper said, like the College World Series or other athletic events that take place.

"Omaha is a good sports town," he said.

The Golden Gloves has been a force in Omaha before. Crawford stands a good chance to be the fifth Omahan to win the final Golden Gloves match, the one that will prove to the nation who the best in the country is.

Before him, in 1980, there was Lamont Kirkland, from the

Hawkins Boxing Club who took it all the way.

Even with five winners, stars from Omaha are rare, Cooper said.

Cooper said the sport of boxing has changed a lot since last time the Golden Gloves were in the city.

For one, boxers today seem to have a lot less commitment to the sport. There are too many distractions for an athlete these days, Cooper said.

"Boxers now have a lot of sports to compete in," he said, pulling a lot of boxers away."

The appeal to boxing, Cooper said, was the thrill of one-on-one competition. Though the boxers beat each other up during the entire match, they shake hands before and after the matches. The challenge is to dominate and win against an opponent.

"Not necessarily to hurt them, but to win the competition," Cooper said.

To do this, Cooper said each person must overcome his own weaknesses and compete.

"That is the challenge," Cooper said. "The ultimate challenge."

Cooper said most of the champions come out of places like Texas, New York, Florida, California and most recently from Louisiana.

Omaha isn't a big draw for boxing, but it's not bad for population size, Cooper said.

"It's good for our area," Cooper said.

However, Crawford has other Omaha competition. Another boxer who has all eyes on him is Diego Murillo, 17 year old from the Downtown Boxing Club.

"We expect him (Crawford) to go a long ways," he said. Though he does expect him to go far, Cooper said Crawford still has a lot to do. The competition only gets tougher as he goes on. He will need confidence, determination and skills to make it but even then sometimes that is not enough.

"You have to have luck in your corner sometimes," Cooper said.

Even being rated No. 3 in the nation won't help him win said more or less, the ratings don't mean anything, anyone can do anything.

"When it comes down to it, the person who is better will take it," Cooper said.

THE RING

ponent's jaw loose. Omaha, home of four Golden Glove
against the best in the nation, following in footsteps of the greatest.

Senior looks forward to lifetime career in boxing

BY MOLLY MULLEN

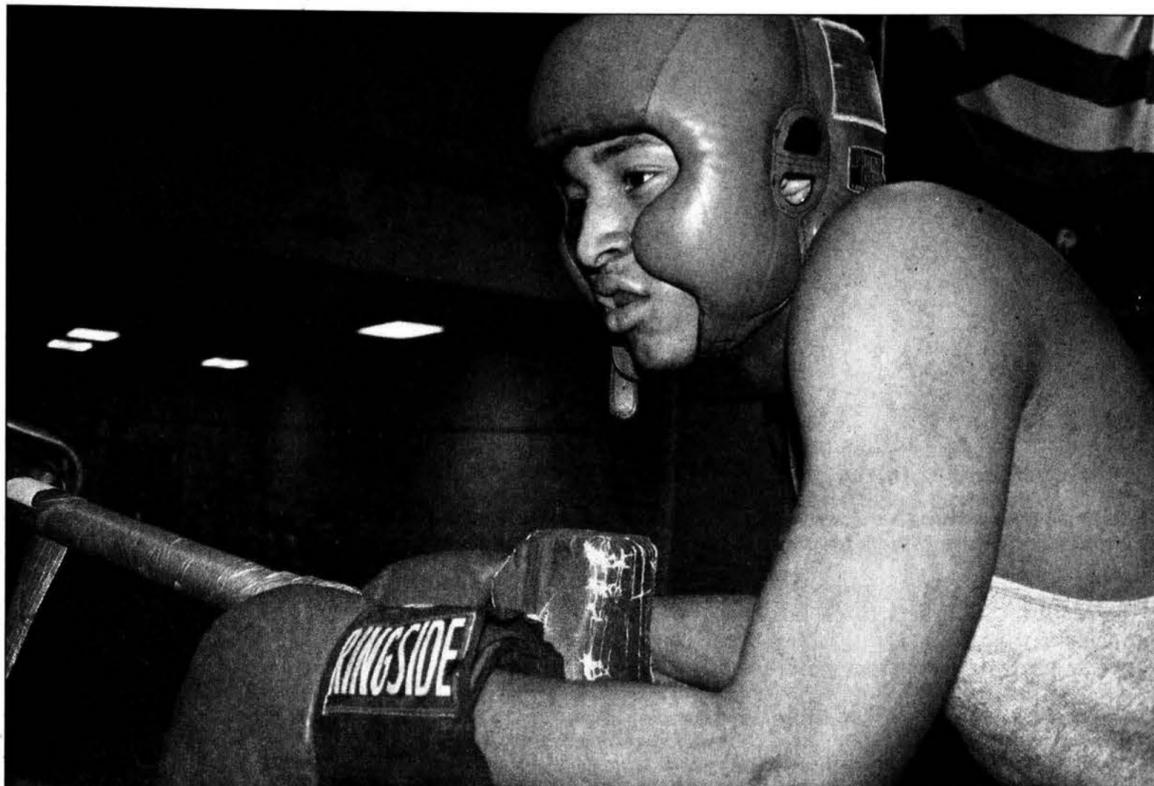


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Sophomore Rochelle Pointer said he started boxing after getting into street fights when he was only 10 years old. He said the thing he loved about CW Boxing Club was it was more than just a gym. "It's like a family," Pointer said.

as a beginner for CW Boxing Club, sophomore
le Pointer looks forward to lifetime career in
ort.

He said his first four matches were great, and
st fight he knocked out junior Joe Pollock,
gh it was only sparring.

It was quick," he said. "He just couldn't keep

He said in his last fight he knocked out his
ent in only two rounds.

He has been boxing since he was 12.

It just love the adrenaline in it," he said.

Before fighting at clubs he said he was street
g when he was 10.

Both his brother and cousin box, but he has
ought against either of them.

He said he loved boxing at CW, and it wasn't
st club he boxed at.

It's more than a gym," he said. "It's like a

He said after working at other clubs he knew
Boxing Club was the best, and the most
red to making professional athletes.

Pointer's boxing coach and owner of CW
Club is Midge Minor.

He said Minor has been teaching him new
and techniques over the past few months.

I've been learning practical stances and
ments to throw them off in the ring," Pointer

The main motivation for him is Muhammad

He's just the best," he said. "He's all about

the skills and movements he learned in boxing
in the real world, he said.

If something were to come up he said he knew
to defend himself. He has used his knowledge
past, and assumed he'll use it again.

Pointer may not be the biggest or bulkiest in
g, but he said that doesn't matter.

(It's)More than size, it's about speed and

strength," he said.

Minor said anybody who walks into his gym
is coached by him, although there are other coaches
to assist so everyone has one-on-one help with their
technique at all times. He said he didn't charge for
coaching, but they had to pay for an insurance card.

Although Pointer is on the beginners level,

Minor said he was able to tell fairly quickly he was
planning on sticking to the sport.

"He's coming on good," Minor said.

The first fight is the most important for
determining whether they have a future in the sport,
he said. He was glad to see Pointer start off with a
bang.

"Once they get hit," he said, "once they're in the
ring with one-on-one competition, they will know."

Minor said Pointer seemed excited at first, but
he had to see what happened in the fight.

"Some people are really excited before their
fight, but afterwards I never see them again," he
said.

New movies make teenager lust for old-school styles

Hot leather boxing gloves that are tattered and worn from years
use make contact with sweaty, steaming flesh in the ring, breaking
s and knocking out teeth, blood spattering
the floor.

Who wouldn't love this sport?

This is a man's game that proves ultimate
nance in its rawest form.

Everyone loves it, even if they don't know
e girls who fight in the courtyard, throwing
and uppercuts into her boyfriend's new
riend is nothing but a rookie boxer, although
g out chunks of her opponents hair seems
below-the-belt. And what about everyone
watches these fights?

They are no different than screaming fans in a steam-box of a
ng arena, throwing bits of popcorn and peanuts at the aged boxer
is last leg.

It seems like everyone has a boxing story, from that guy who sat
nd me in Spanish class, to my dad, to my grandma, everyone knows
ething about it.

Ever since movies like "Million Dollar Baby" and "Cinderella
" have been out and winning Academy Awards, boxing has been
veryone's mind.

I love movies, but these two in particular I loved. I saw Clint
wood give Hilary Swank that kiss of death in the final scene twice.
I saw Russell Crowe becoming "the spirit of the Irish" three times.
I couldn't get enough of this brutality.

"Cinderella Man," though, had special meaning for me. I watched
it over and over, trying to think what it would have been like.

My grandmother, a second generation
American, 100 percent Irish (or more if you ask
her), listened to that infamous fight on the radio
with her father. I went and saw the movie with her
and she remaniced about when she was just a little
child, looking up to James Braddock.

She heard Braddock, the exponentially
underrated underdog, come back in the final
rounds to defeat Max Baer, the man who murdered
boxers in the ring.

I can only imagine what that would have
been like for her.

The year is 1934. The radios are the size of big-screen televisions,
and West Omaha is 72nd Street.

Due to a last minute cancellation, Braddock is given the
opportunity to fight John "Corn" Griffin on the under-card fight for
that evening's heavyweight championship fight between Max Baer and
Primo Carnera. I would turn on the radio and between the scratchy
announcers hear "the hope of the Irish" dominate. He becomes the first
miracle in a long while for the Irish-Americans.

Luckily, Braddock is given another chance to fight. I would sit
in front of my radio in my living room for hours anticipating to fight
between him and the opponent, John Henry Lewis.

Once again, most predicted that Braddock wouldn't make it
through the fight. No one had anticipated the thoughts and prayers of

all the Irish on his side that night. Braddock proved the critics wrong
with a 10-round victory.

Joe Louis, "The Brown Bomber," would beat him in later years,
but he has been quoted as saying Braddock was his strongest and most
worthy opponent.

Braddock was considered to be the top heavyweight contender to
go up against Max Baer in 1935. This fight was not only the climax of
"Cinderella Man," but part of my grandmother's childhood.

It's June 13, 1935. Braddock and Baer enter the ring of Madison
Square Garden.

Baer would kill for the title "heavyweight boxer of the world."
Braddock was a 10-1 underdog and knew how to win.

After 15 rounds Braddock is named champion and the country
cheers. My 10-year-old grandma jumps up in her living room with her
father with happiness.

What I would have given to have been there.

Everyone I know has a boxing story, none as good as my grandma's,
but they have something. Either getting the crap beaten out of them
in amateur boxing as a teenager to seeing a landmark fight, they have
something.

What do I have? I've never fought, I've never even watched it
on television. For awhile after seeing these movies I thought I had no
connection to this sport I've come to love.

Then I realized Central in itself is one big boxing match. It seems
like the students at this school can't go one day without a good fight.
That's my boxing story, ring-side for some of the best fights.

Thank God for public schools.



NOT GONNA LIE TO YA

A Column by Molly Mullen

JUST LIKE THE PROS

This is what every boxer needs to start a career and go for the Golden Gloves. The key to the equipment is how well it fits.

Gloves come in a variety of sizes, from 10-16 ounces. The larger the weight class, the larger the glove. When worn, the boxer should not be able to feel his or her knuckles.



The headsets were introduced in the mid-1970s. They should be firm on the boxer's head, and not move around when hit.



Jock straps are important for low hits. As with all other forms of protection in boxing, it needs to fit well and stay in place while the boxer is fighting.



When one buys a new mouth guard, it needs to be boiled in hot water and then put in the boxer's mouth. This molds it to fit the teeth.

INFORMATION COURTESY OF MIDGE MINOR



REGISTER YOUR OPINION

Should boxing be a NSAA sponsored sport?



"Yes, I think it should be. I don't think it's a crime."
Ebonie Epinger (9)



"Yes, everything else is."
Ashley Pensyl (12)



"Yes, because boxing is just like any other contact sport."
Mark Toliver (12)



"No, someone is going to get hurt and the school is going to get sued."
Destiny Sipe (9)



"I don't know. I'm not a real big fan of boxing."
Mike Overgaard (9)



"Yes, if they do it safely I don't see why it's a bad thing. I don't see why it shouldn't be a school sport."
Emma Ferber (10)

Drinking at Quest worries NSAA

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Using the Qwest Center for the Feb. 16-18 wrestling match, the Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA) brought up the issue of alcohol being served in the suites.

The public relations manager for Qwest Dana Dyksterhuis said though it was an important issue, it was under control.

"I think the situation has been blown completely out of proportion," she said.

She said the suites serving alcohol is safe because it is a private place. Dyksterhuis said it was the same rules as on the street and in a house.

The suites, she said, were like houses, and public drinking laws didn't apply.

The only reason the issue was brought up, Dyksterhuis said, was because it was a high school event.

"I don't believe that's happened before," she said.

Most of the suite owners agreed not to have alcohol served in their suites, Dyksterhuis said.

She said no wrestlers would be staying in the suites, but fans watching it would be.

The suite owners know the rules when it comes to alcohol, she said. They know all the rules and don't want to breach their contracts at the risk of losing the suite.

"They're responsible suite owners," she said.

Dyksterhuis said a good example of everything working out is like at a Creighton game.

Alcohol is served, families are brought up to the suites, and nothing goes wrong. Dyksterhuis said the match will be treated like a NCAA basketball game. This meant there would be no alcohol in the arena except for the suites.

Nebraska Schools Activity Association (NSAA) executive director Jim Tenopir said the association knew there was going to be alcohol in the suites when Qwest first came to him about taking the tournament bid.

What surprised him, Tenopir said, was that alcohol was still going to be served in suites the closer they got to the tournament date.

But, he said, in the end there were no problems.

"If there was alcohol in State wrestling, it was alcohol brought in," he said.

Tenopir said the NSAA has had a long-standing policy about no alcohol anywhere at or around high school events.

He said the NSAA has always organized high school events differently than how professional and college events take place when it comes to alcohol. Drinking is allowed for Creighton games where it isn't at NSAA events.

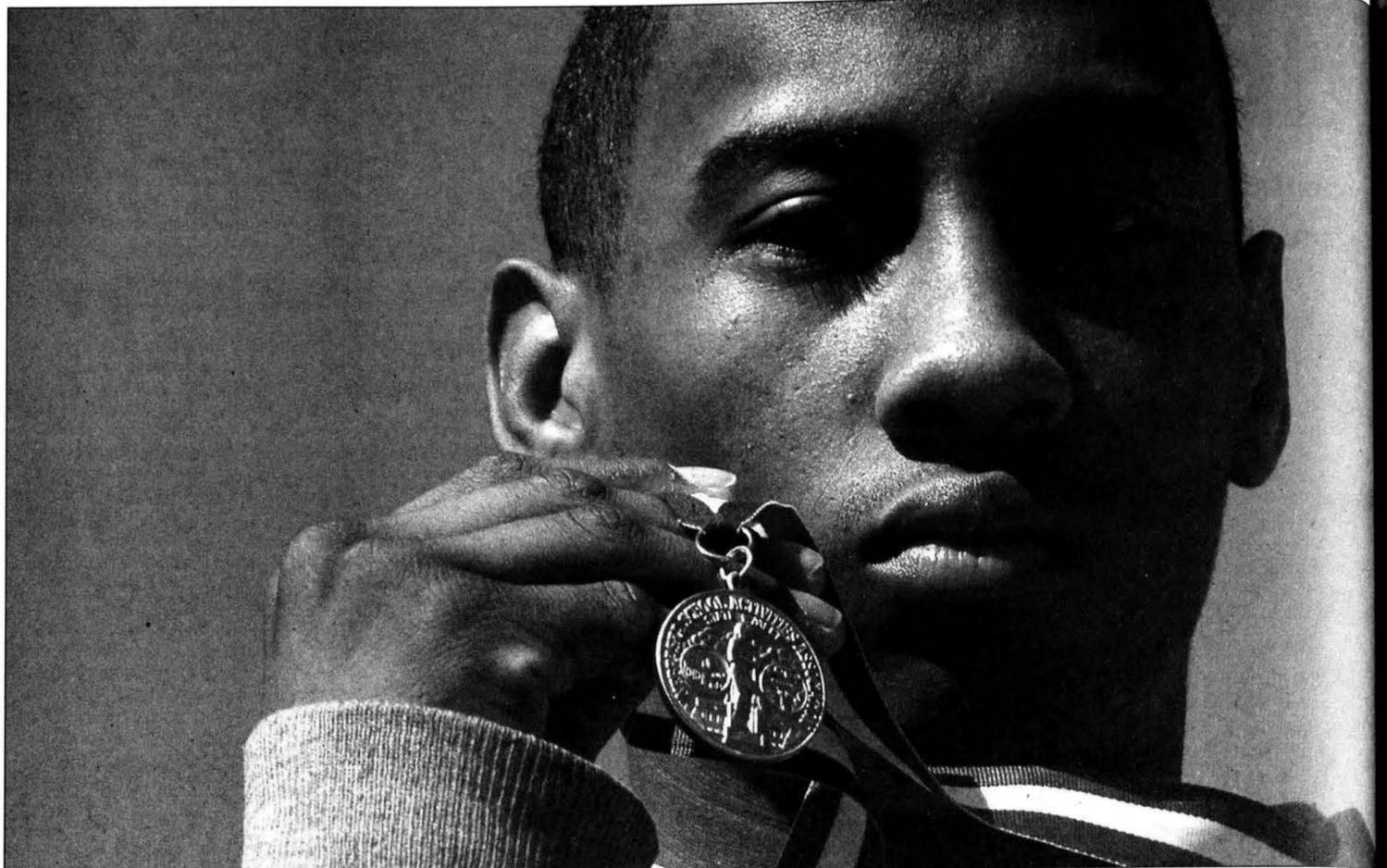


PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Senior Guy Smith won the State championship match in his weight class in wrestling. The last time Central did this was 1999. Smith said he dominated his last match against Creighton Prep's Anthony Salsido. "After he took me down in the first period I was ready to win," he said. Smith's entire family watched him take State and he said his mom was in tears.

State wrestler dominates higher-ranked opponent

■ 'CHAMP' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33D

dominated," he said. "After he took me down in the first period I was ready to win."

Coach Jimmi Foster said earlier in the season he expected Smith to take State, but after a rough season this was a nice surprise.

"He led from the beginning to the end," Foster said, "and he ended up getting a nice fall."

He said Smith had not been wrestling up to his ability before State.

"I knew he had it in him," he said.

Before his big win Smith said he had no

intention to wrestle in college.

Now he is planning on wrestling and playing football.

He said he didn't think playing football would be a conflict, and, if anything, it would help keep him in shape during both seasons.

He said he tried to be the best leader he could for all the younger people coming back next season, and help them all individually.

"It was tough, a lot was riding on me," he said.

He said he felt he reached his goal of making the younger wrestlers better by the end of the season.

Freshman Sam Almazan competed at State this season, and Smith said he expected him to return next year and do much better.

Senior Charles Mulligan wrestled at State after fracturing his wrist before the season started, and tearing some ligaments during Districts. He said it was difficult, but he wasn't about to give up because of an injury.

He had to tape up both his wrists before competing so his opponents wouldn't know which hand was injured.

He said the sport is about wrist control and positioning, and he didn't want them to go right for

the injury to get an advantage.

"Against the trainer's opinion, I wrestled the final match," Mulligan said. "I was in a lot of pain the whole time."

He did not place at State. He said he wrestled as well as he could have.

"I was down on myself for not making the finals," Mulligan said.

He said wrestling changed his outlook on life. "You have to give 100 percent at every match," he said.

Non-wrestlers can't understand how difficult it was, he said.

Kits used to cut down on performance enhancers in high school

■ 'STERIODS' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33D

been done on athletes and steroids, and the percentages nearly doubled. Twelve percent of high school athletes were found to have used steroids on some of the surveys.

Tenopir said by the data, they will decide whether or not there is a reason for concern about the steroid use.

"We can't help but believe there is some steroid use in Nebraska," he said. By the data, Tenopir said the NSAA will change its anti-steroid packets next year. The packets include materials such as posters, brochures and a DVD explaining the dangers of steroids. They are sent out to high schools across the state.

Testing every athlete for steroids would be too expensive, Tenopir said. The lab tests alone cost \$50, and that doesn't include the process of collecting the urine from every athlete. That, and the tests can be skewed.

"There are so many ways people have become adept at beating the steroid test," Tenopir said.

Some students who have used steroids could get a urine sample from a friend who is clean and nobody would know the difference.

Over the past 13 years, there has been an increase in high school steroid use according to these surveys. At the beginning of the 1993 school year, only one out of every 45 students had used steroids. But, even six years later, the numbers had risen to one in 20.

Goldberg said there were probably a few main reasons for this. First, he said, would be the professional athletes students look up to are getting in trouble.

Goldberg said he has been noticing steroids playing a part in the advertising world. Different companies as of late have been comparing their new products to old ones "on steroids," as a way to express how much better it was than before.

Lastly, Goldberg said society's image of a perfect body has changed over the years. When it first came out, G.I. Joe had biceps that were proportionally 12 inches on a real person. Now, he said those same arms have been bumped up to about 27 inches.

Steroids, in teenagers, can stunt growth, Goldberg said, and this was just the least damaging of its effects. Goldberg said steroids trick the body into thinking it is older, and it stops getting taller.

More serious side effects include an increased risk of heart disease because the body builds up more cholesterol. Aggressive tendencies and depression become more common also, he said.

Senior Kyle Judevine said he thought he and his teammates looked up to major league players, he said his teammates still chose not to use steroids.

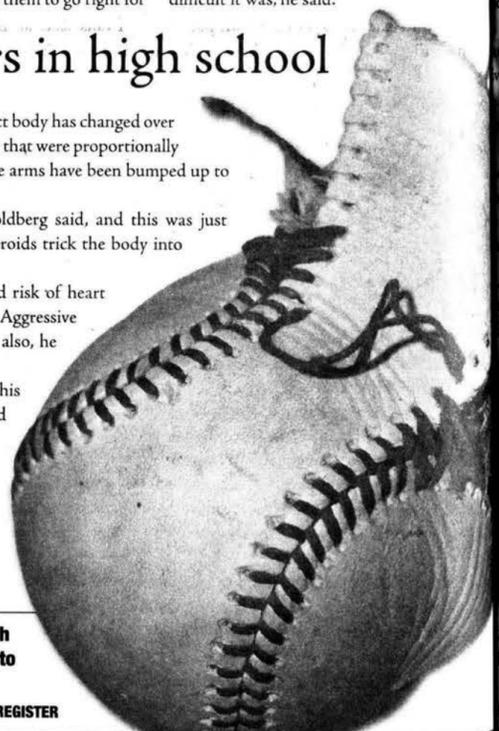
"I don't think it's a problem at our school," Judevine said.

Instead, Judevine said he works and practices to improve his game. Using steroids, he said, is just not having enough faith in oneself.

"I've never really thought about it," he said.

The increased use of steroids at the high school level is causing that level of athletics to unravel and come apart at the seams.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER



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PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior Will Smith and his teammates senior JR Powell and junior Mai Zhang are the first pole vaulters at Central in nearly a decade. They must drive out to Burke, the only Omaha school to have all the equipment for pole vaulting. Smith said pole vaulting was much different than what he was used to. "I like the fact you can feel that you fly," he said.

Senior continues unique sport

BY CLAY LOMNETH

For the first time in almost a decade, the sport of pole vaulting will return to Central High School. A sport dominated by Fremont, track and field coach Elliot Evans said out of the three volunteer pole vaulters this year, one of them had a chance to be on the Central record books. Senior Will Smith pole vaulted in the first meet of the season on March 25 at Millard High School. Out of his two other teammates, senior JR Powell and junior Mai Zhang, Smith was the only one to clear the 8-foot mark. Smith said he had no experience with pole vaulting. Regardless, he volunteered when coach Evans asked. "It looked pretty exciting," he said. "Now I have a good eye to pole vault." Smith ran in other events, including the 800-meter relay. But, he said, he thought he wouldn't do well in other events, and as a senior wanted to do something new. Evans said Burke was the only place in Omaha that had a pole-vaulting

kit, and the three pole vaulters must travel out there every day. There is only one certified pole-vaulting coach in the Omaha Public Schools, so the Central athletes must practice with everyone else. Practices take place every Tuesday and Thursday. Smith said so far he has taken to the sport very well. "I like the fact you can feel that you can fly," Smith said. A lot of people were scared to try pole vaulting, Smith said. He, however, said he found himself liking it more and more every day. "It's really an adrenaline rush," he said. Evans said at Burke the vaulters mostly practiced on their runway approach and then getting into the air and over the pole after that. "Just running carrying a 14-foot vaulting pole is not a simple task," Evans said. But it has changed over the years. Evans said when he vaulted in the 1960s, the technology of the actual pole had changed. Before, Evans said the vaulter had to almost scramble up the pole. "The poles didn't bend back then," he said.

"Now a days, you wait for the pole to react." At the Millard North meet, Smith said he didn't think he did as well as he could have. He said he needed to get the footwork down, but some of the little mistakes could have been because he hadn't pole vaulted a week before due to the amount of snow. "I think I had a pretty good meet toward the end," he said. Evans said Smith has the opportunity, if all goes well, to put his name in Central's history books as one of the top 15 best pole vaulters. He wasn't sure, he said, because he was still trying to gather information about Central's pole vaulting history. "Years and years ago they had some pretty good pole vaulters," Evans said. Passing the 10-foot mark would put him on the list of one of the best, Evans said. Evans said Central wanted to start it up again this year because Fremont was always gaining three or four more medals than everyone else and dominating State meets. These medals were because of that team's pole vaulting skills. In meets with

17 different events, Evans said Central couldn't afford to lose any medals. "We can't just not show up for different events," Evans said. During the beginning of the season, Evans said the three pole vaulters were making progress. "One thing it requires is athleticism and speed," he said. "And our kids have that." Though two of the pole vaulters didn't clear the 8-foot mark, Evans said this wasn't a bad sign. He said in the end, their work would pay off. "They're learning the correct way to do that," he said. Smith said the major key to pole vaulting was discipline, but it also involved a lot of athleticism. Smith said going up against Fremont in the upcoming meets and at State would be tough because some of the vaulters have been vaulting their whole lives. "Me just starting as a senior, the world is saying, 'oh, you can't do it,'" Smith said. "I'm going to try and prove them wrong."

Student influenced by father to officiate swimming

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

"I grew up there (Norris Middle School) on the sidelines," Anna Wiskel said. "I had gone through all the programs by the age of 7." Anna teaches swimming in her free time. Her father Roger Wiskel has been an official for sports games over 30 years. He has also taught swimming for 40 years at his Middle School. Anna's sister also officiates. Anna has been coming with her father since she was an infant, she said. She's been involved with lessons and wanted to be part of the program on her own. Roger said he started teaching swimming because his brother had him to take a water safety instruction course. Anna said she was an aide for her father for four or five years. "My teacher has his or her own methods." "I don't want to be an aide to anyone else," Anna said. "I don't want to relearn it." Anna was first an official for volleyball. One of the supervisors worked with recommended her for swimming. She signed up with Nebraska Schools Activities Association to officiate for State swimming. Anna was the official back-up timer. She used a stopwatch in case there were any discrepancies. "I love working with people," she said. "I love working with athletes."

She said for swim meets she had to make sure the guidelines were followed, the turns, exchanges and strokes were legal and there were no false starts. The swimming coaches were nice to talk to, Anna said. She said as an official at meets, she had to remain impartial. Anna said she also assigned the finishing places and was usually responsible for three or four lanes. "Officiating is not bad. The work load with swimming is two hours three times a week," Anna said. "Volleyball is harder. There are games at least five or six days a week. It usually lasts for three or four hours." She said during volleyball season, she had to push really hard. One time she had a 3 p.m. junior varsity game triangular in Iowa. She did not get home until after 9 p.m. "I don't have much of a social life when I'm officiating," she said. Anna teaches levels 1-6 for swimming. The swimmers range in ages from 4-17. "The best part is watching the kids try their best, especially if they're scared and they still want to try," Anna said. She said it's scary for the swimmers the first week, but by the end of 10 weeks the little children are taking off their gear and going off the diving board by themselves. "Their confidence grows and they tell themselves 'Hey, I can do this,'" Anna said.

She said she liked helping the children. "If they're scared, they won't cooperate with you," she said. "You have to put yourself in their shoes." She said she prefers teaching to competing because she doesn't find racing enjoyable. "I'm not that fast. Back and forth...Back and forth. It's boring," Anna said. "Officiating is fun and I keep an eye on everything." Roger said Anna has done very well as a teacher. "She's learned to be independent and to handle situations that arise," Roger said. He said in her position, she has to use a variety of techniques to get swimmers to put their face in the water and to jump off the diving board because of the wide range of ages. The parents work with her if the children misbehave, Anna said. Roger said she must also discuss with parents how their children are doing or how they're not doing so well. "She has to recommend changing to a different class whether a lower level or an advanced class because of how good they are," Roger said. She said she teaches swimming 20 weeks a year on Saturdays from January to April. She also teaches a four-week session in June. She said she plans on going to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and officiating in college.

Hunting deer becomes fun sport for teen

BY BOB AL-GREENE

He said an ideal shot was right behind the deer's shoulder blade. "That's where the lungs, heart, and other vital organs are," said junior Andrew Minturn. "You want the arrow to pass right through." Minturn is part of a Nebraska Game and Parks youth mentor hunting program that focuses on adolescents. He has been in the program for four years, and has owned a bow for three years. He said his uncle and his uncle's friends got him interested in hunting. Minturn said members of the program hunt on Metropolitan Utilities District (MUD) land about 45 minutes south of Omaha, near the Platte River, where MUD treats water. Because of the abundance of underground pipes and drains, there can only be a forest on the land. Senior Joe Iwen was already a member of the program when Minturn joined, and Minturn later got another friend, junior Matt Watson, involved. Minturn said he enjoyed the challenge of hunting the most, but the food was also a plus. "I don't like to kill animals and not use the meat," he said. He said a buck he killed two years ago lasted his family for six months, eating venison every night. He said he kept the buck's antlers. Minturn said fall is deer and turkey season, winter is goose and duck season, and spring is exclusively for hunting turkeys. He said there was also a possibility of a late season, in case not enough deer were killed, and he went bow hunting for deer about 10 times a year, and had killed one deer per season since he had been hunting, but other people were able to get more than that. Minturn said he and fellow hunters usually set up their metal tree stands before the season starts. He said they try to pick a spot near a deer trail, where the game is most active, and which are usually pretty obvious. He said a typical day of hunting starts at about 5 a.m. "You try to get into your stands early," he said. "Depending on when the sun rises. The deer start moving at dawn." He said the hunters stay in their stands all morning, and are usually gone by noon, at about 10:30 or 11 a.m. "When it gets hotter during the day, they're not active," he said. "You can do an evening hunt, too. They're moving at dawn and dusk." Minturn said when an arrow passes through a deer's body, most times the deer doesn't even know it's been hit. "It's pretty painless," he said. "They just run until they're out of blood." He said the first time he's ever owned a rifle was this year after the season was over, but he has never shot a deer with a rifle, even when he went hunting with friends and borrowed theirs. "Some people think rifles are unethical because it's so easy," he said. He said he thinks a bow puts the hunter and the prey on more of the same level. "With a rifle, you can shoot a deer from 400 yards away. Forty yards with a bow is a really long shot," he said. "And with a bow, you're so close, you have to be completely scent free and noise free. You have to take so much more into account." Minturn said he avoids musk perfume, which emits a scent like that of a buck. Many hunters use musk to attract bucks, but Minturn said it sometimes draws males, it also repels does. "I sprayed it on my boots once before to cover up their scent," he said. "Using musk runs the risk of scaring stuff away." Minturn said he plans to probably hunt for his whole life. "It depends on where I live," he said.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

SPORTS

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NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD

PUSHING FOR VICTORY

With a blowout loss for the girls in the first round of State last season, and returning seniors for the boys, soccer should be a spring sport to watch in the coming months. Both teams have something to prove.

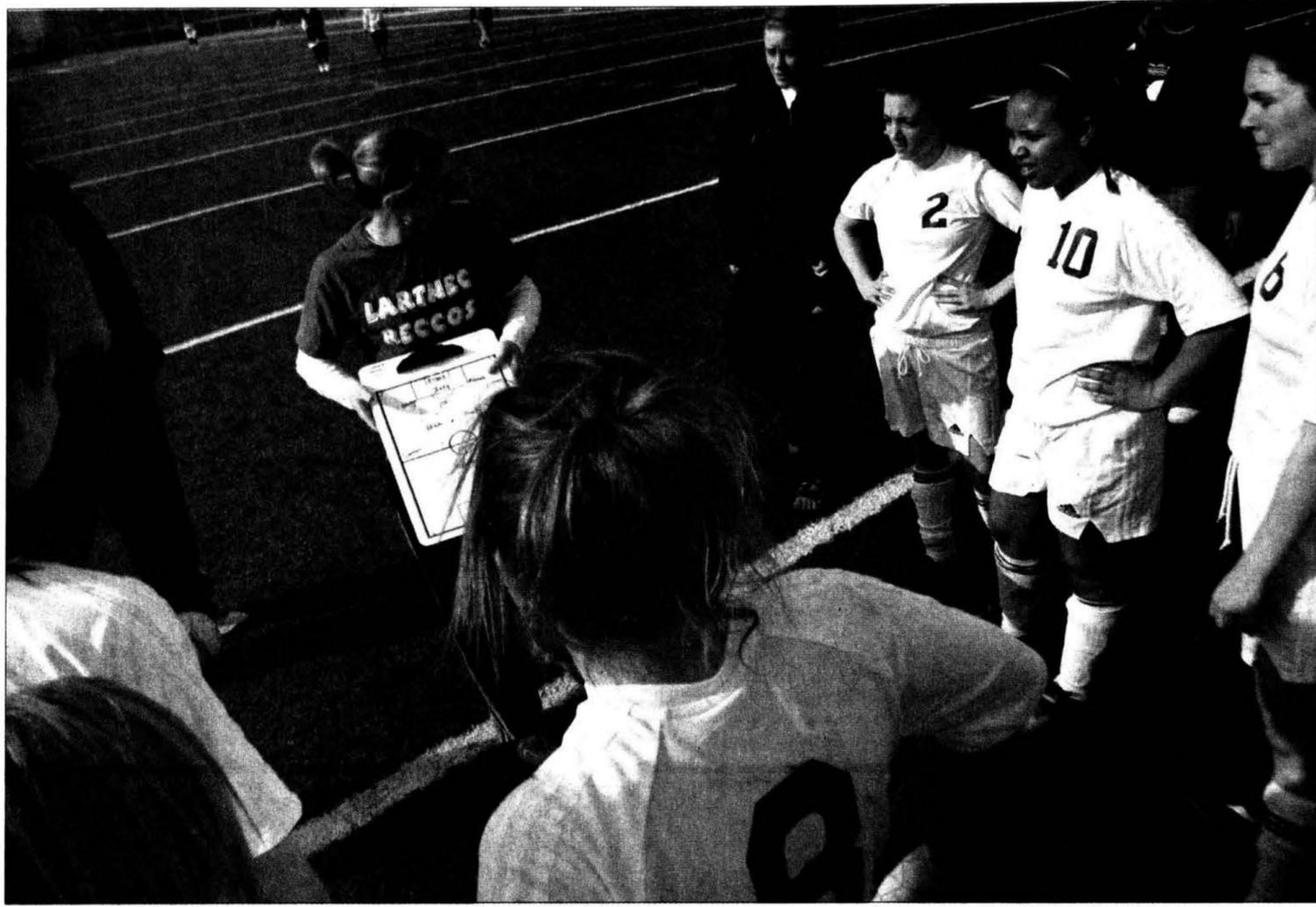


PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Coach Michelle Pleiss discusses final plans before a game on March 28. (From left) Pleiss, manager senior Lindsey Anderson, senior Katie Gorga, sophomore Adrian Monge and sophomore Mattie George listen to instructions from the coach. Pleiss said freshmen were important to the team this year and would be keys in the seasons to come.

Freshmen bring talent, energy to Lady Eagles

BY KIM BUCKLEY

The freshmen players on the girls varsity soccer team are proving the fact that talented soccer players are getting younger.

None of these freshmen are the next Mia Hamm, necessarily, but they represent the future of soccer for this school.

Girls varsity soccer coach Michelle Pleiss said five freshmen made the varsity team this season. Four of the freshmen were starters and one was injured.

"We lost eight seniors last year so they're excited to have talented newcomers," Pleiss said.

She said the newcomers on the team were hard workers both on and off the soccer field. She also said all of the new players had great attitudes towards both practices and games. They were

willing to work hard to win.

She said she believed the newcomers were going to be a major help to the team this season as well as the three years to come.

"They're going to be big," Pleiss said.

She said in the future she expects the freshmen are going to help make up a strong group since the team is going to lose some experienced players at the end of the season.

This year is their time to prove themselves, and next season will be the time to step it up.

Four out of the five freshmen played on the soccer team at Lewis and Clark Middle School, freshmen Anna French, Mackenzie Leahy, Kaiya McCormick and Isabel Benjamin-Alvarado. She also said sophomore Mattie George was also a teammate from middle school.

French said this year the team will get

a higher-level of playing they might have not experienced in middle school.

She said the freshmen were used to playing soccer with each other and they played with and against each other on club teams as well.

She also said they knew what to expect on the field with one another.

French said one of the toughest things for her in the beginning was getting used to playing experienced players.

She said she was usually playing against juniors and seniors who were for the most part bigger, tougher and more experienced than her.

"High school soccer is more aggressive than any other soccer I've played before," French said.

She said before tryouts she would have people tell her she would make the varsity team, but she went to tryouts not knowing what to

expect from the other players and coach.

However, great soccer talent didn't just come from Lewis and Clark this season.

Freshman Kelsey Cronin said she has been playing soccer ever since she was 5 years old. She attended St. Cecilia's Catholic School last year.

She said the attention from the spectators help a player realize what she is doing well or what she needs to improve on.

"You've got a lot of pressure on you, but it pushes you in a way and gives you a base to improve on," Cronin said.

She said the pressure helps her to excel at soccer and it helps improve her mental toughness as well because soccer can be physically challenging on a player.

"It's (the standard) like stepping stones," Cronin said.

Goalie buckles down for tough year with strong players

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER

Freshman Kelsey Cronin practices before her first game as a goalie. In the past she played the position of forward. "You can't be afraid of the ball," Cronin said, "otherwise, you just won't cut it as a goalie."

Freshman Kelsey Cronin said this is her first year as officially playing the position of goalie.

"In the past, I was just messing around," she said. "This year I was assigned to the position."

She took on the position because no one else was stepping up, she said. Therefore, she decided to try out for the position. One of the previous goalies had graduated and senior Jennifer Rue was coming from junior varsity. Rue was on a volleyball team during the beginning of the season. Cronin's major concern being a goalie is her collarbone because she broke it about three months ago during basketball season. She said she told herself if she didn't try, she wouldn't ever succeed. She plans to play goalie for her four years in high school.

"I have so much room to improve, but I know what to expect. I know what to do," Cronin said.

She said being a goalie required initiative.

"You have to push yourself and beat the other players," Cronin said. "You have to beat them in speed. You have to run faster."

Goalies have to know when the right time is to go for the ball. As a goalie, you can't be afraid to dive for the ball. Varsity coach Michelle Pleiss said Cronin did not have much of a challenge during the game against the Vikings, but she was always ready to go and on her toes.

Cronin said the first game didn't go well, but when the team was in the locker room, the other players were telling her that she did a good job.

"I let the ball get past me, but then I realized it had passed 10 others before it passed me," Cronin said. "So it wasn't that bad."

Cronin said as a goalie, a player had to take the initiative. She couldn't be afraid or hesitate. She couldn't be afraid of the ball, otherwise, she just wouldn't cut it as a goalie.

Cronin said she's not afraid of getting hurt.

"If you don't push yourself, you won't excel and win in the long run," Cronin said.

She said she was always pushing herself. She also said some of the challenges she faces include being afraid of the ball and diving for the ball.

"Mentally, I wasn't sure, especially when to dive," Cronin said. "I hesitated at the beginning of the season."

A player has to scare the guys coming at you.

"Show some teeth. It's a bit scary though," Cronin said. "You have to be ready to see where they're going. It's all about the hips. That's where they're kicking from."

When the ball is on the opposite side of the field from her, Cronin said she stands staring straight at the ball and at the ready. She also tells her teammates what to do because she is the only one who sees the whole field and all of the action.

Quick start gives Eagles home opener

BY PATRICK O'MALLEY

The boys varsity soccer team opened the soccer season at Seemann Stadium with a solid 4-1 win over the North High Vikings.

Junior Jared Dittman scored the goal with an assist from team captain Kyle Samuelson within 20 seconds, giving the Eagles an early lead.

Samuelson had been a starting player ever since his second game as a freshman.

A booming entrance easily matched the description of the game.

The solid overall performance and unity helped keep the intensity high throughout the entire game.

Fast-paced, cross-field action kept the stop for ticks of the clock.

Though the players were tired from constant play, they did not show any signs of exhaustion or carelessness throughout the match.

Twenty minutes into the first half, Samuelson broke down the right side of the field dribbling the ball towards the goal and scored a second point for the team.

A powerful defensive line of seniors aided the offense in the match.

Senior Michael Aguilar said there were many keys to winning and playing smart was a huge factor.

"Making crisp passes," Aguilar said, was also very important.

Swift passes and smooth ball handling skills were definitely not absent from any member of the team.

With approximately 11 minutes left in the first half, Samuelson scored another goal with an assist from Aguilar.

Roughly 3 minutes after Samuelson's second goal, a member of the Vikings scored a goal kick that awarded them their first point of the night.

The scoreboard read Central High Vikings 1 at the half.

Many students rushed to the stands during halftime to warm up with a cup of hot chocolate.

The second half started out much like the first.

There were not any immediate goals, but the cold crowd excited.

The same hard work continued throughout the rest of the game.

Samuelson, leading the team in scoring, proved his skills with his third goal in the second half which gave the Eagles a hat trick.

A hat trick is when a player scores three goals in one game.

The remaining 28 minutes were a stop battle between the two teams.

Though down by three points, the Vikings showed no sign of quitting.

Junior Corey Lynch said he felt the team was different from past seasons because the team had many experienced players and a team full of seniors.

"I think it will be less tense," Lynch said. "I think we have more confidence."

Expectations ran high among the players and crowd for not only the first home game but also the whole season.

Senior Andrew Monbouquette said he felt the team had a very good chance at winning a remarkable season.

"There's no reason we couldn't win the whole season undefeated," Monbouquette said.

He said his goal was to make sure the team possibly win a wild card.

Lynch said his goal for the year was to just play smart and make it as far as he could go.

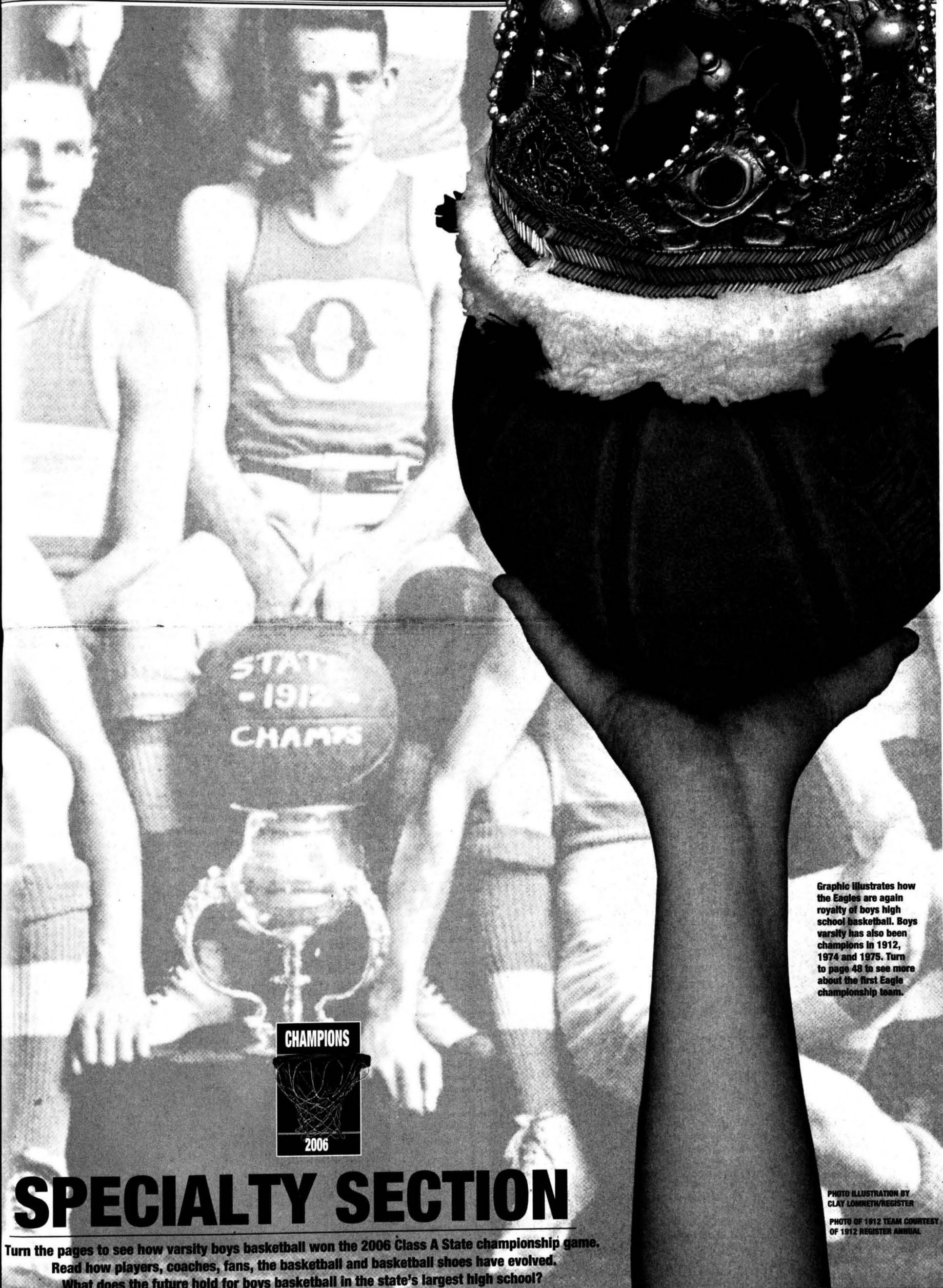
Earlier in the day the lady Eagles played the lady Vikings as well.

STATE

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2006

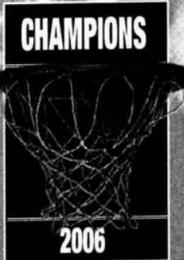
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Graphic illustrates how the Eagles are again royalty of boys high school basketball. Boys varsity has also been champions in 1912, 1974 and 1975. Turn to page 48 to see more about the first Eagle championship team.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CLAY LOMMETH/REGISTER
PHOTO OF 1912 TEAM COURTESY OF 1912 REGISTER ANNUAL



SPECIALTY SECTION

Turn the pages to see how varsity boys basketball won the 2006 Class A State championship game. Read how players, coaches, fans, the basketball and basketball shoes have evolved. What does the future hold for boys basketball in the state's largest high school?

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Champion coach
Coach Jim Martin remembers when his team won State for Central in the years 1974 and 1975.
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INSIDE

Nothin' but net
The 2006 boys basketball team wins the Class A championship game.
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Cheerleaders able to rev up fans, players

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

"I thought they had a chance, but I didn't think they were going to win until they got to the final three games," senior Jasmine Elmore said.

The two co-captains of varsity cheerleading, Elmore and junior Brittney Ruffin, were extremely passionate throughout the whole State basketball tournament.

Ruffin said even she had doubts at times. She said in the past, there had been more talented Eagle teams that had come close but didn't make it.

At the beginning of the season she didn't know what to expect since there were a lot of new players.

"We all had to do a lot to keep the spirits of the Central students up," she said.

For the games, they created signs that had the names of all the members of the varsity basketball team. It was Ruffin's idea, Elmore said.

"I had Drew Meier's sign," Elmore said.

Although Central made it to the quarterfinals, and then to the semifinals, there wasn't too much extra practice for the cheerleaders. They practiced in the morning most days and back in February they practiced every day for 30 minutes.

"We were so excited about State, our hearts were jumping," Elmore said.

She said at first she had some doubts about an Eagle win.

"I was a bit worried because both teams were really good at the 3-pointers," Elmore said.

During the game, the referees made a few calls which many Central students disagreed with. Elmore said she thought the referees were being too picky.

Also, she said she was sick of all of the intentional pushing by Bellevue West players.

She said the referees never called intentional fouls on any of the Thunderbirds.

During overtime, everyone was nervous.

"I was thinking that we were going to lose, even though we had come so close to a win," Ruffin said.

Going to State was one of the best highlights for Elmore in her entire high school career.

After the boys basketball team won State, Elmore was ecstatic.

"I was so overwhelmed, and the other members were crying," Elmore said. "I was so happy."

Ruffin said she was very excited after the Eagles won. She thought that it was finally time for Central's team to shine. She thought all of the players played a great game and supported each other the whole time.

"If (sophomore) Josh Jones was having a bad day, then one of the other starters would just take charge," Ruffin said.

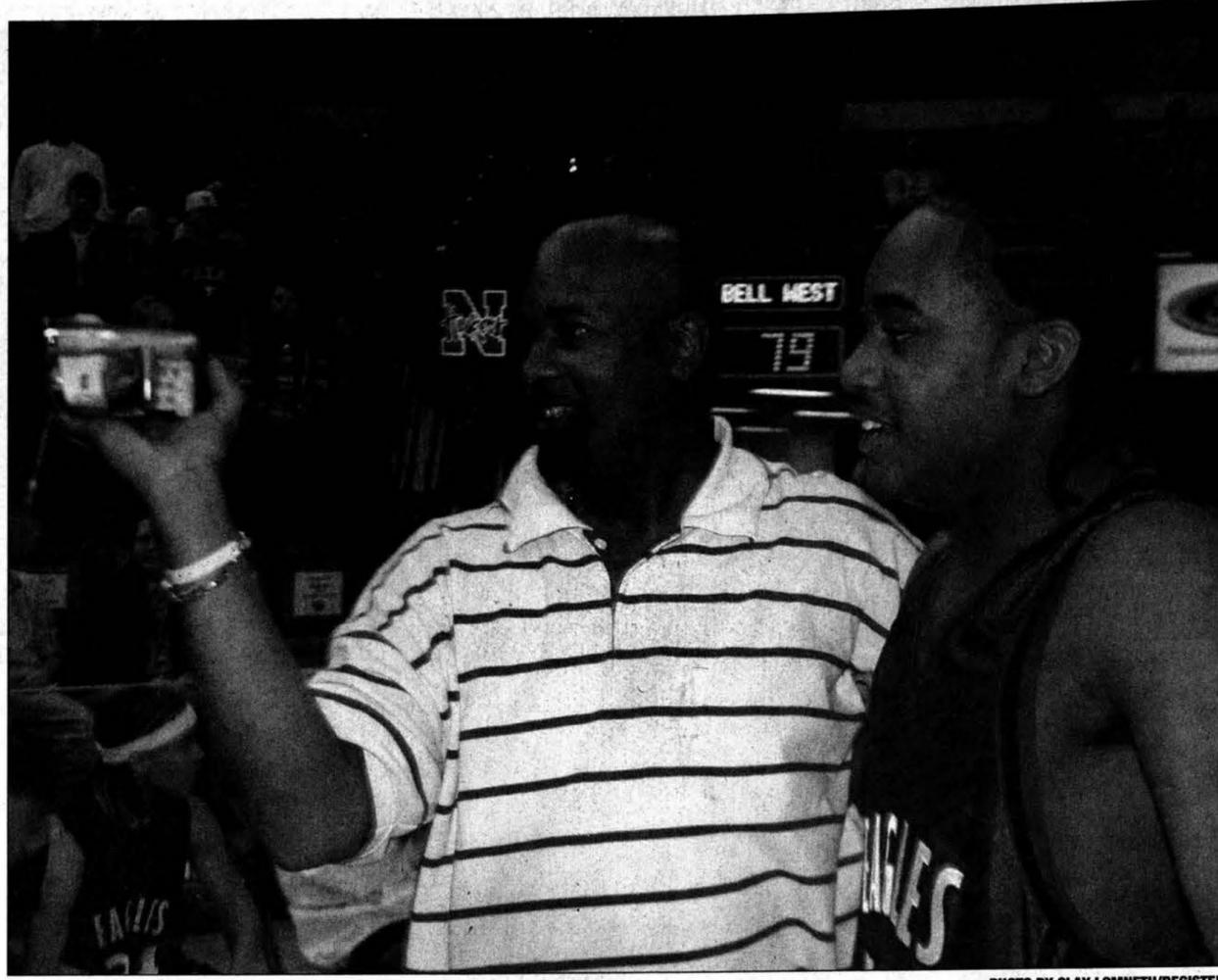


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Lawrence Wilson (class of 1976) stands with his son Lorenzo after the Eagles won the 2006 State championship. Wilson was on the 1974 and 1975 teams, both of which also won State. He played along with coach Jim Martin and Eagle basketball star John C. Johnson. Recently, Wilson went to a basketball banquet, which featured both this year's State winning team and players from former years as well.

Father, son share experiences of winning

BY CLAY LOMNETH

Lawrence Wilson, class of 1976, was on the Eagle team when it took the State crown in basketball in 1974 and 1975.

When the '74 won the title, it ended a 62-year drought since a boys varsity basketball team won it all.

Now there is a new sense of pride radiating from Wilson. His son, sophomore Lorenzo Wilson, was on the 2006 basketball team that won State.

"They've finally done it after all these years," Lawrence said.

In the history of Omaha Public Schools, or at least in the history of Central, Lawrence said he didn't know of any other father and son who both won State on the same team.

The 1974 team played Lincoln East and beat the Lincoln school 57-49. That year, the Eagles were predicted by some to win the tournament.

"I think that was a year we only had one loss," Lawrence said.

There were, however, a lot of people who had doubts about Central winning, just like this year.

In 1975 the Eagles played Creighton Prep, a huge rivalry as always for the Eagles, and beat them 47-38.

Prep had beaten them earlier in the year, as true with this year, at the annual Holiday Tournament that takes place during winter break.

Before the State game this year, Lawrence said he and former teammate John C. Johnson talked to the team in the locker room.

Lawrence said he and Johnson talked to the Eagles about forgetting the past and moving onto the future and winning.

The biggest rival of his time was Prep, and Lawrence said he was a bit nervous watching this year's game.

Like his teams in the 1970s, Lawrence said this

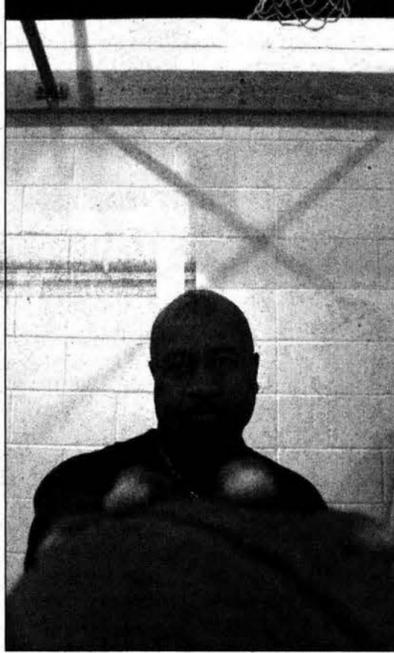


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Wilson stands in the new gym, where his son practiced all year preparing for State. He said the years he won State, the home games were played at Norris Middle School.

year's team was more unified and more trusting of each other than former teams. He said the unity played a huge part in the Eagle victories.

Four years ago, Lawrence and his 1974 teammates were inducted into the Nebraska High School Hall of

Fame. They were honored for the repeat of the back-to-back State tournaments.

He said he could see the current team making it this far in the future.

"There's no reason why they won't be there three years in a row," he said.

Lorenzo said his father never really spoke about the State game before he entered high school. Lawrence, like Lorenzo, first won his State tournament as a sophomore.

"It makes me feel good I can do it again my junior year," Lorenzo said.

He said all of the success he's had in basketball was because of his dad.

"He's been teaching me since I was in the second grade," Lorenzo said.

Lorenzo said there would be a lot of pressure after next year to beat his father's team's record of two State titles in a row.

Lorenzo said he thought the Eagles stood a good chance of also winning State next year, and maybe beat the record of two State titles in a row the year after that.

"We've got to work hard at it," he said.

Jim Martin, the coach of the 1974 and 1975 teams that Lawrence was on said he had the attributes of a good player, and that's why he was chosen to start.

Martin said Lawrence, despite his height at six plus feet, usually played guard. Martin said he could handle the ball well as a guard.

There were many differences between Lawrence's year and this year.

Martin said one big one was there were no 3-point shots.

Despite this, there were two main players that could hit outside shots. One was Clayton Bullard and the other was Lawrence.

Assistant recalls last State win

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

Former Athletic Director Pennington, who retired last year, came to Central in 1971.

He started coaching basketball first, then moved on to basketball time for a State title in 1974.

Pennington said winning the State Basketball back in 1974 was his first year as the assistant coach for boys varsity basketball.

"It was an outstanding accomplishment," Pennington said. "There was a degree of luck involved."

He said the players were confident going into State, and they won were incredibly excited like this season.

"We knew Prep was really good. The confidence level was high. I went in thinking we will win without being cocky," Pennington said. "We worked for our level."

During State in 1974, he had an ambassador that showed around. The ambassador was Lincoln City Athletic Bureau.

He said they drove down to State in vans, so they could come go as they pleased.

"We felt it was important for kids sleep in their own beds and get some rest," Pennington said.

Today, everyone scouts the team several times a year.

They watch them play and what to expect, Pennington said.

"We knew what we were going to do," Pennington said. "We were going to make the do what we were to do. It was a different approach."

Most of the players that were 6 feet 2 inches or 6 inches.

"Our offense was interchangeable," Pennington said. "Our players were quicker than tall players and taller than the players."

They played Lincoln East in 1974 at the Civic and Prep in the old coliseum.

"It was a neat atmosphere. There were 6,000 to 8,000 fans," Pennington said.

It was close quarters. They were literally right behind the players," Pennington said. There was no in between the fans and players.

He said talent wise this team and the 1974 team were comparable.

Junior Ben Kline and sophomore Ronnell Grixby were fast," Pennington said. Senior Ben Grace reminded him of a past player.

"The biggest difference is there are so many more things to do," Pennington said. "Kids have phones, Xboxes, iPods. It used to be easier to keep kids' attention."

Back then, he said, basketball was the big thing. Everyone was excited for the winter season and it really united the school.

Dedicated senior class officer leads crowd in cheering team on throughout season

BY CLAIRE ANDERSON

There were 15 minutes left on the clock as senior Ian Danielson raised his purple arms over his head and began a steady clap. Within seconds the entire student section was clapping with him, the volume booming across the court in a show of school spirit.

Danielson was one of the most spirited students at this year's State Basketball Tournament and could be seen in the front row dressed literally from head to toe in Central's school colors.

Danielson was one of several senior boys who chose to paint their entire body purple to show their school pride and support at the championships in Lincoln.

He said the seniors wanted the entire student section to be dressed in purple.

Danielson said he wanted to get the crowd pumped up for the games because he wanted to make the experience as fun as possible.

"You want to be loud, have fun and cheer," he said.

He said by starting cheers he and his friends were able to get the crowd and the team pumped during the game.

"Being an athlete I know when people cheer it raises your spirit and makes you want to try that much harder," Danielson said.

He said he was one of the first in line almost every day of the three-day tournament and even when waiting to enter the student

section he tried to boost the energy of Central fans.

"Let me tell you, it gets boring, so we wanted to get people pumped," Danielson said.

Athletic Director Darin Williams said Danielson and other seniors act as leaders and did a good job of keeping the students under control.

"We depend on student class representatives to help us, to be a go-between for students," Williams said. "They're more likely to listen to their peers."

He said students like Danielson are a big part of the games because they create an even more positive atmosphere.

"I think it really brought a lot to the game," he said.

Williams said school spirit is part of being in high school and an aspect necessary in basketball.

"Even in college they paint themselves, look at Lincoln with the red and white bodies," he said. "I think that's just part of being young." Danielson said as a senior class officer he tried to keep the student section moderately under control, but said he really wanted to get students as excited as possible.

"If anything I would totally help students get out of hand," he said.

Although he was looked to as a leader during the games, Danielson admitted to feeling some frustration when asked to sit during the first five minutes of the quarterfinal

game against Creighton Prep.

"Have you ever cheered sitting down?" he said.

Danielson said he has always had strong school spirit, last year he wore a cheerleading uniform to the State tournament and has painted his body purple for numerous athletic events.

He said he was also glad to see juniors Kenny Fischer and Dan Smith getting into the game and starting cheers with students seated farther back in the stands.

"I really just try to get everyone involved, so we can have a good time," he said.

Danielson said going to State as a senior had a lot to do with his increased student involvement. Compared to State games in the past, he said the student support was much greater this year.

Apparently Danielson wasn't the only one who thought so, a television announcer even commented during broadcast on Central having the most fan spirit out of all the schools included in the tournament.

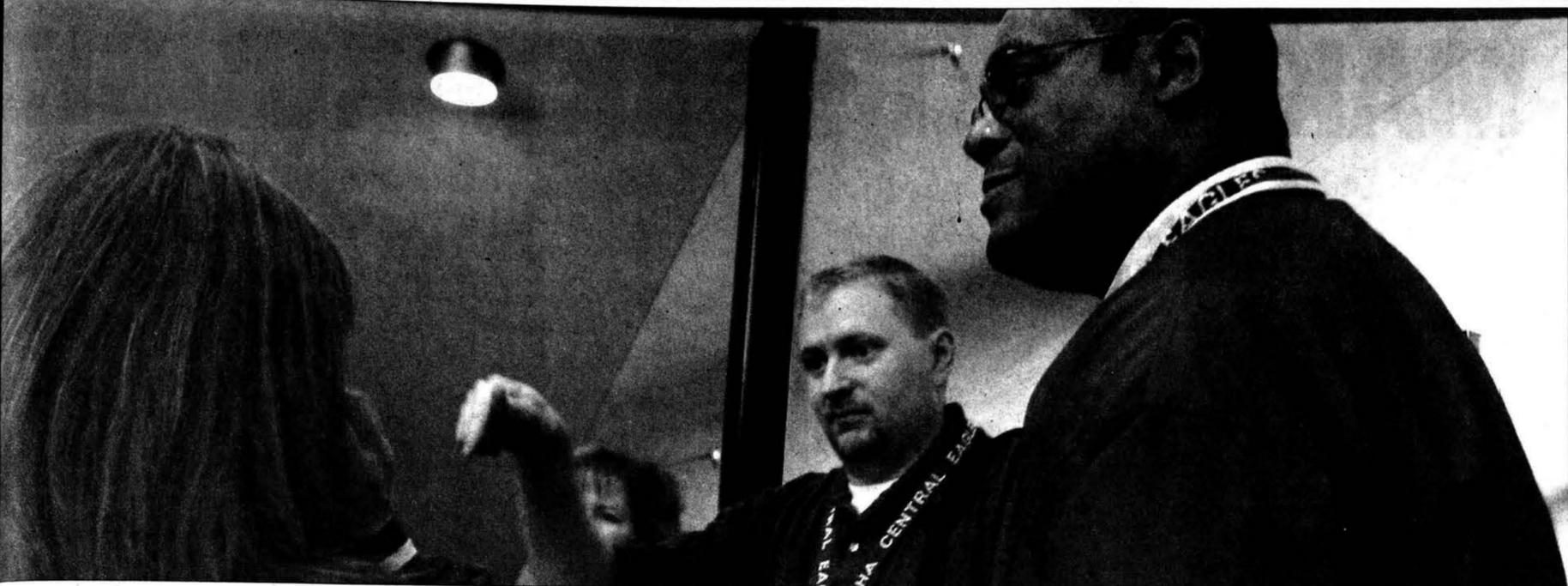
"I mean, we didn't get a sportsmanship award or anything, but if there had been a school spirit award, we definitely would have taken the cake," Danielson said.

Williams said in 2007 Central will work to receive the sportsmanship award as well as the State championship, and hopes to see another good batch of senior class officers like Danielson to carry on the tradition.



PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Senior Ian Danielson cheers in the student section at the first home game against Creighton Prep. As a senior class officer, Danielson said he tried to get the students as excited as possible while trying to keep them under control at the same time.



PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Math teacher Paul Nielson (left) and Athletic Director Darin Williams both helped organize and gather students at the State games. Nielson had the job of handing out tickets when the students arrived on the buses and later handing out wristbands that allowed them to sit in the student section. Williams kept in contact with the Nebraska Schools Activities Association during the whole State tournament.

Teachers take on extra work to make sure games run smoothly

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

"If adults don't get excited, why would students?" social studies teacher Rod Mullen said. "We have to set the bar, be willing to show up and support to you all otherwise why should you have those positive things?"

Mullen supervised the cheerleading and pom squad bus. He said Athletic Director Darin Williams appointed him.

"It was fun. The girls were very music oriented," Mullen said. "They played a lot of CDs. Madonna, Ice Cube, Madonna."

He said for the first two days of State he had to take attendance and make sure all of the students were accounted for.

He said the only difference between how students acted in the classroom and outside of school was they were louder.

Cheerleader junior Ally Herskind said it was different seeing teachers in that kind of environment, but it's also nice to see them out of

the classroom.

"They're calmed down, not so high strung," Herskind said. "It was so fun (on the bus). Mr. Mullen would bob his head to the music."

She said the girls didn't care that there were teachers on their bus. They were too busy dancing and talking with friends about the games.

"The teachers were happy and having fun," Herskind said. "They think it's cool seeing us."

She said she was surprised to see pom squad sponsor Jane Luethge and cheerleading sponsor Jennifer Fotsch on the bus.

"They were dressed up in the cheerleading and pom squad outfits and had bows in their hair," she said. "They had the pom poms and skirts."

Math teacher Paul Nielson also helped out. He said he was helping Williams with various tasks, such as distributing the wristbands that enabled students to enter the student section at the game. Central was allowed to have 240 wristbands. Sixty went to band members and three went to teachers who acted as statisticians.

The rest were handed out to students on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Nielson said he had been helping out with State for the last four years, so it was an old habit.

"It's nice to see them (students)," he said. "We have these kids in our classes...kids like to see us. It's awesome...they're pumped up about the game."

He said without the fans, there wouldn't be a game. Social studies teacher Scott Wilson was the official team scorebook keeper. He said he kept a record for the coaches.

"I'm in a position to tell the coach everything that's going on. Fouls, assists, things like that," Wilson said. "I provide the info for the coach."

He said this was his first full year of doing it. In the past, he had only done it for a few games.

Former Spanish teacher Vicki Anderson had the job for over 30 years, Wilson said. He got her job when she retired.

"It's not hard, but it requires lots of focus,"

Wilson said. "You can't let yourself be distracted by anything."

He said he thought it was important teachers came to events like this because it's their school, too. It's where they work and they should have pride in it. He said it was terrific the teachers came to watch the game because it showed a lot of school loyalty.

"You saw a lot of teachers (at State) who came down themselves," Wilson said. "So it speaks a lot about our school."

Wilson drove himself down even though he had an opportunity to go down on the cheerleading bus.

"It provided a little more freedom of when I could go and leave," Wilson said. "My uncle from the class of '65 was there and I was able to talk with him. I also planned on staying for some of the other games."

Social studies teacher Jim Galus also kept statistics at the games. He said he has been keeping statistics all year long.

This was the first year he had this duty. In the past, business and marketing teacher Trent Lodge did it.

"Mr. Lodge had a baby, so I helped out," Galus said. "He wanted to spend time with his family."

He told social studies teacher Robert Tucker the statistics he recording at the end. Tucker then entered the information into a computer.

"I keep track of rebounds, assists, time each player spends on the floor...everything that could happen on the court," Galus said.

Galus said it's harder during the boys game because everything happens quicker; it's faster paced.

"It's good to see students in different aspects. Performing. At games," Galus said. "It's good to see them in a well-rounded atmosphere."

Galus said he drove down with Tucker.

"Teens are more in the moment. We're reflective," Galus said. "We talked about family, school, careers. We talked about the game also."

the power of...

EXPLORING



Jason Decker didn't know which major to choose. He just knew he wanted options.

The senior management major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Lincoln High graduate started in General Studies and found just what he needed. Expert advisers. A chance to explore. And time to choose. Three years later, he's an executive-in-training with Target, and he has several job offers after graduation in May.

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MAKING A BREAKTHROUGH

Imagine, instead of living up to a 31-year legacy, it was 62 years since the last time the boys team won a State title. Here's a look at how the 1974 and 1975 teams won and what the stars are doing today.



PHOTO COURTESY JIM MARTIN

This photo was taken after the Eagles won State in 1974. (Back row) coach Jim Martin, student manager James Harrold, Michael Ashford, Jim Kriss, Lawrence Wilson, Jim Dorsey, Greg Bullard, student manager Tom Johnson and assistant coach Stan Standifer. (Front row) John C. Johnson, Sylvester Pierce, Kevin Buckner, Charles Lewis, Tom Allen, Ray Williams and Clayton Bullard. The roster changed during the year because some players were suspended. This allowed some junior varsity players to move up to the varsity level.

Last State win just as special today for players

BY CLAY LOMNETH

The year was 1975. Central was not expected to win State. It was up against its old rival, Creighton Prep.

Just two games before, the Eagles had taken on Burke for a real nail biter. Down by about 20 at the half, they came back to win the game by 2 points, 72-70, and move on in the tournament.

"We had to come from way behind," said the coach at the time, Jim Martin.

Central had won it the year before against Lincoln East. This gave them confidence they could win State again.

What was perhaps even more impressive than a back-to-back win, was the fact that 1974 was the first State victory in 62 years.

Going into the game with the knowledge that Prep had beaten them earlier in the year, however, was kind of tough, Martin said. He said it gave the Eagles the impression they were not invincible.

"It was kind of a wake-up call," Martin said.

Central's victories in 1974 and 1975 marked a new notch in the history of boys' Eagles basketball. It took the boys until this year to win another State title. Next year is anybody's guess.

Martin said there was one striking similarity between this year's boys' basketball team and

the ones he coached. Both of the teams had a wonderful chemistry between the players.

"They were an excellent student body," he said.

For example, Martin said senior Rodney Grace was humble and didn't seem to always want to be the star. This kind of mindset, he said, was what wins State.

"They just didn't have that self-serving attitude," he said.

There was also a combination of little things that won State, he said. The team needed talent, of course, and leaders to guide them through.

John C. Johnson (class of 1975) played his first varsity games that 1974 season. He was part of that talent that won.

"We had a good team," he said, "but a lot of people didn't know we could win it."

Johnson, who had what some would call a dream career at Central, said he lost about five games his entire time playing high school basketball. That included the junior varsity games he played as a sophomore.

"I was just used to winning," he said.

Some of the players had been together since the seventh grade, and that gave them a connection and an advantage.

Johnson said there was difference in the way

basketball was played now and how it was played when he was on the court. For one, he said, there are more schools to play against.

Another major difference is the skill of each player, he said. Today they train more and train sooner for basketball, he said.

"The talent is so much better now," Johnson said.

There was also no 3-point shot back then. The 3-point basket was introduced in the 1980s, so the style of the 1974 and '75 team was much more slow and thoughtful, instead of sending the ball to the outside for a shot, they would try to find a way right up the middle.

"We prided ourselves on our ability to jump," Johnson said.

Johnson got the chance to meet with this year's team in the locker room before the State game. He said he and former teammate Lawrence Wilson (class of 1976) told the team that the Bellevue West game may be the last chance at basketball for some of the players.

"I said, 'this is it for some of you guys,'" he said.

The 2006 team really belonged to an elite group, he said. A lot of professionals who play today never won a basketball championship in their state, Johnson said.

Sylvester Pierce (class of 1975) started on both teams that won State. In 1974, he said it was a bit overwhelming going into the tournament. He said most people expected Central to become the No. 2 team instead of winning it all.

"We beat the No. 1 team," he said.

Pierce said a lot of the players were together at Horace Mann, and that's how they got to know each other so well.

Unity was a huge factor, he said. The whole team felt comfortable together and were all friends.

"We played together, we did summer leagues together," Pierce said.

He said 1975 was a different story than the tournament the year before. They had three returning starters and Martin was still coaching.

"We were probably over-confident," he said.

Not only was the unity this year similar to the 2006 team, but the position going into the tournament was, Peirce said.

"It was very similar. We were underdogs," he said.

Tommy Allen graduated after 1974 after winning State that year. He said the year before that one, in 1973, the team had only lost two games and were so close to getting to State.

"We knew the potential for the next year," he

said. Allen said he agreed that a key to a successful season was team unity. The summer teams he and his friends were in helped a lot, he said. This made them learn to trust each other. Trust, he said, was what this year's team seemed to have. Allen said the Eagles seemed to be a lot closer to each other as a whole.

Henry Moore, class of 1975 with Peirce, said the one thing he remembered most was the Burke game. After trailing at half, he said he remembers being down by at least 10 points in the fourth period. He said winning after that was a great feeling.

"The championship was pretty much ours," Moore said.

Going up against Prep, he said, wasn't a problem, even though the Junior Jays were the only ones to give them their loss that year in the Holiday Tournament.

"It was one of those games we knew that we could beat them," Moore said.

He said the key to winning the game was the Eagle defense. He said Central had one of the best defensive teams in the state that year.

"Defense wins basketball games," Moore said. "You control the boards, you should win the game."

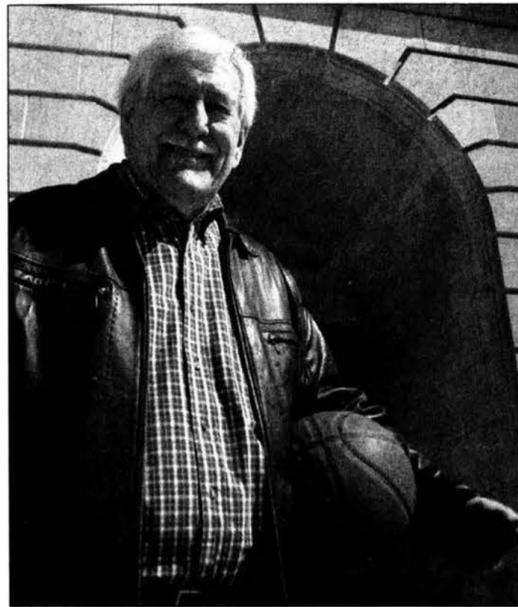


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

Former varsity boys' basketball coach Jim Martin was the head coach when the Eagles won State in 1974. It was the first time in 62 years the boys' varsity team won it all. The very next year, the Eagles won State again.

Coach remembers years he spent with champions

BY CLAY LOMNETH

The Eagle's success in the 1970s was due in large part to one man, coach Jim Martin.

Martin's long and diverse career in coaching started in 1959, when he started coaching all junior varsity (JV) sports at a small school in Milford, Neb. Two years later, Martin made the move to Omaha and started coaching at Benson High School.

For the first year there, he coached JV football, but he said that didn't work out too well.

"I'm really not a football person," he said. "They figured that out pretty fast."

His next three years there, he coached freshman and reserve basketball, which he said he felt more comfortable doing because it was his favorite sport.

After that, in 1967, Martin started coaching JV basketball at Central. A year later, he took over for a coach that had been a runner-up at State his last year. Ironically, Martin's team made it to the State championship again his first year, but they lost to Creighton Prep.

"We were ahead by one point at halftime, but got beat by around 23 points," he said.

Creighton Prep had always been a big rival for him, Martin said. While he was there, he said the Prep team went through at least three different coaches, but the rivalry

remained, and still motivates the Eagles today.

Martin said ending the 62-year-old record of not winning a boys' varsity basketball State Championship felt great for his team.

He said he found out after the 1974 game the officials in charge could not find time to hand out the trophies when they were supposed to because his team was having a good time.

"We jumped and danced and hugged on the floor for a full 10 minutes," Martin said.

What worked about the 1974, 1975 and 2006 teams above all, he said, was team chemistry. Also, other things matter, such as the coach's ability to control the players and what the players can do.

"Obviously, it starts with talent," he said. "Mostly I think it's kids developing a chemistry with each other."

Also a big factor, Martin said, was how much an athletic director supports the teams. Basketball wasn't the only sport Martin took State in. In 1972 he won what he thought was Central's only cross country State title.

This he coached for about five years after one coach had to leave and he was asked to step in. Despite the win, Martin said he still had a preference of sports.

"Basketball was my main involvement," he said.

There has been a lot of changes in the sport since he was coaching, Martin said. For one thing, because the 3-

point shot didn't come around until the 1980s, the team developed a more patient, deliberate style. They modeled the shuffle type style after Creighton University.

"We worked the ball a lot more," Martin said.

The shuffle type would move players all over the court. Someone who was point guard a minute ago could be himself down by the post. The fact all of his players were about the same height helped them do this.

This year's playing, he said, has become faster-paced and full of outside shots. Not that he didn't have players who couldn't shoot from downtown. Martin said Clayton Bullard, class of 1975, was the most talented on the outside. He said he could nail nearly everything from far away.

Martin said although he thought nobody could replace his star player, John C. Johnson (class of 1976), he said when he was watching this year's game he was really impressed by senior Rodney Grace's playing. He said Grace had a lot of humility from what he could tell, and was always worried about scoring the most points and being star every game.

Martin continued coaching until 1990, when he began to focus on just his math classes. Four years later, Martin retired all together, only to go on for five years teaching at Trinity Church school.

Now, he continues to substitute teach periodically at Creighton Prep and Trinity Church.



A LOOK AT THE PAST 1974-1975

1. The boys swim team finished its 1975 season with a 9-3 record. Head coach Brian Watson (**front center**) led the team to a fourth place showing at the Metro Conference meet and second place at a National Swimming Division competition. Watson said he had a dedicated team and considered each member to be a personal friend.



2. In 1974, the girls track team took State. The girls had a spectacular year. The team took second in Districts, then went on to win the Metro Indoor Invitational, Metro and finally State. The head coach was Joanne Dusatko (**back row, far right**).



3. The 1974 football team ended up with a 1-7-1 record overall. Ten years later, however, this would change. In 1984, the Eagles won the State championship with coach Joe McMenamain.



4. A girls basketball team was reintroduced in 1975. This was the year after boys basketball won State for the first time in 62 years. The team was coached by Paul Semrad (**back row, left**), future assistant principal, who would win State seven years later. Semrad retired last year. He said he had his best team in 1983 when the girls won 50 consecutive games and took State themselves.



5. The girls gymnastics team had to move to Northwest High School, South High School and Sherman Elementary School for practices. The team was coached by John Kocourek in 1974 and 1975.



6. Stage Band, an early version of the Jazz Band, was made up of about 20 members. The band would play at contests throughout the year and at jazz venues out of town. In April of 1974, the Stage Band even toured a few Omaha schools.



7. In 1974, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program was made up of the color guard, crack squad, ordnance team, rifle team, the cadet police, hussars and lancers and a separate girls drill team. Unlike today, the JROTC had candidates for its military ball.

8. Former Principal Dr. G.E. Moller was in his sixth year as principal when the boys team won the 1975 State championship. That year, 15 of the 104 teachers at Central were new.

PHOTOS COURTESY 1974 AND 1975 O-BOOKS

INFORMATION COURTESY 1974 AND 1975 O-BOOKS

THE PLAYERS

Here's a look at what the 1974 and 1975 players are doing now, and what they had to say about their winning teams.



**HENRY MOORE
CLASS OF 1975**

Working for Omaha Public Power District for 25 years

"The championship was pretty much ours to lose."



**JAMES DORSEY
CLASS OF 1974**

Working at Nebraska Department of Revenue

"It was amazing. Not only for the school but for the community."



**JOHN C. JOHNSON
CLASS OF 1975**

Working for Drake Williams Steel Company

"We had a good team, but a lot of people didn't know we could win it."



**LAWRENCE WILSON
CLASS OF 1976**

Working as a housing inspector for the city

"Every night one person could be the lead scorer."



**RODNEY OLIVER
CLASS OF 1975**

Working at Assertive Services

"We pretty much knew what we were all capable of."

THE JOURNEY TO VICTORY

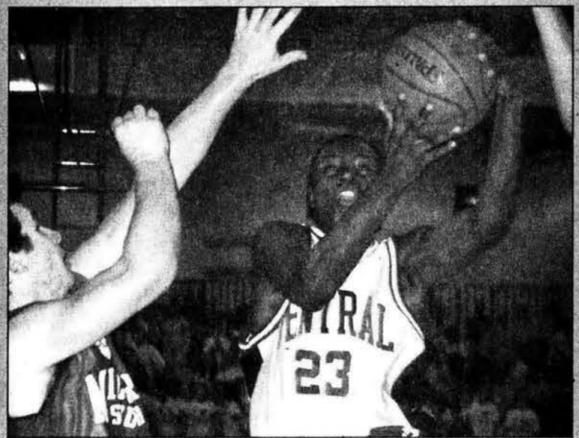
The road to State was not an easy one. Here's a look at the key games that got the boys the crown they haven't had for 31 years.



Dec. 2
Central vs. Millard West
77-68 W

In the first game of the season, Central established itself as a force to be reckoned with. This game also first started a mild controversy over pro-OPS T-shirts worn at the game.

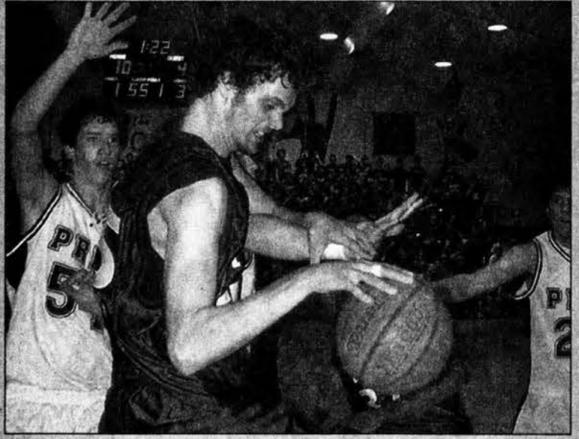
Junior Ben Kline was a big key in this game. He got a chance to show he was as skilled at 3-pointers as he was with free throws.



Jan. 6
Central vs. Millard South
57-38 W

The Eagles proved they were a dominant team at home. Beating Millard South at the first home game was just a taste of what was to come, both in talent of the players and dedication of the fans.

Sophomore Josh Jones (above) caught the crowd's attention with his eye for shots from downtown. He averaged 13.9 points per game this season.



Jan. 7
Central vs. Creighton Prep
50-49 L

At the Junior Jay's home court, the Eagles lost by just one point to this long-standing rival. This made the first semifinal game against Prep even more intense, playing a team that had beat them before.

The Eagles outscored the Jays offensively, but Prep won it with free throws. Senior Rodney Grace led both teams in scoring with 18 points.



Feb. 11
Central vs. Reserve Christian Shootout
81-70 L

Reserve Christian came all the way from Louisiana to play Central, and it went away with a win. The leading scorer in the country, Demond Carter, played against the stars from the Eagles at the Qwest Center.

Sophomore Ronnell Grixby (above), who had many important layups in the game, often scored two points and came away with the foul.

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH AND CLAIRE ANDERSON/REGISTER

WINNING THE 30-

First, it was 1912, when Central won the second... Eagles won back-to-back in 1974 and 1975. Now, to top...

Boys bring back first title since 1975

■ 'STATE' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

enough to relax completely. The Eagles took over again in the third period. Jones and Kline were especially strong during this one. Mixed in with what they were best known for, 3-pointers from downtown, were 2-pointers from the inside.

Sophomore Ronnell Grixby's shots began to land as well. Thanks to these underclassmen, Central had the lead coming into the fourth, 53-47.

Grace's fouls started to stack up again, but so did Bellevue West's points. It started to close the gap throughout the game, but the Eagles remained just ahead with their skill at free throws.

Kline was dominant in this area. For the whole season, he was about 85 percent from the line, an impressive stat compared to college players, let alone ones in high school. Kline's skill in shots from the outside would also be a key at all times in the game.

When the Eagles would need an extra 3 points, the ball would find its way to Kline.

Even after a 3-point play by Grixby, the Thunderbirds managed with 54 seconds left in the game to sneak up within a point at 62-61.

For the rest of the minute, what took place was some of the most back-and-forth trading of scores seen all season. The fans could tell the Thunderbirds wanted a third title, but they didn't know if they were too far behind.

With less than 17 seconds left in the game, the Thunderbirds got a chance to tie the game. Sophomore Antoine Young was up at the free-throw line with two shots, the score 65-63.

Only one shot made it in and the Thunderbirds had to kick it in again. They had less than 20 seconds to win the game.

Which meant the Eagles had less than 20 seconds to stay ahead of the Thunderbirds.

All Central had to do was hang onto the ball. If it held onto it, the victory was almost guaranteed.

With each second that ticked by, a 31-year old win crept closer and closer.

Just two seconds later though, Grixby stepped up to the free-throw line this time. It would be shots that could put the Eagles at a safe but bearable lead or put them at risk in the event of a Thunderbird 3-pointer.

It would determine whether or not the Eagles could breathe easier and try to steal the ball at risk of a foul.

Grixby's first shot bounced out, and the pressure was on again. His second one made it easily, though, and Bellevue West was within 2.

With exactly seven seconds, Young found himself again at the foul line. Every pair of eyes in the Devaney Center was on that basketball.

Both his shots sailed through the hoop, and the score was tied, 66-66.

The buzzer sounded throughout the stadium and chills were sent down the spines of both fan sections. The game could easily go either way.

It would be overtime. The teams were starting over again with exhausted players.

"Basically I thought it was the beginning of a game again," Kline said.

For this period, however, Grace would not be playing. Fouling out with just a few seconds in the fourth, he left the court to a flurry of applause from the Central fans.

Jones said this was where freshman Vondrae Tostenson had a chance to step up. He was put in, and a good thing he was. Tostenson proved himself to be a valuable varsity player and somebody to watch for upcoming years.

"Just because one of our best is out doesn't mean we're not going to put up a fight," Jones said.

The Thunderbirds won the tip to start off the extra period and Young had two points and the foul within

half a minute. Another 30 seconds later, Tostenson went an effortless 3-point shot to tie it up again, 69-69.

This is where Central began to pull away. Grixby let one go from the outside, and back on the Thunderbirds' side, only two points were put up.

At 1:44, Kline put up his first 3-pointer of the extra period. The crowd went wild.

But this wasn't the end for him.

Twenty seconds later, Kline let another one go. 3 more points went up on the board. The Central boys were now on their feet. It seemed there was no turning back by that point in the game.

"Twelve points in three possessions in that short a period was too much for them to overcome," Behrens said. "Twelve points that fast is just a dagger."

Bellevue West spent the rest of the time fouling the Eagles. As a ploy to stall for time, all it resulted in was a greater Eagle win, putting the Bellevue team further behind.

It seemed like a State championship for Central the first one in 31 years for the varsity boys, was in the bag. Before the game even ended, the Eagles looked the crowd and waved their hands to get the fans pumped up. They wound the clock down and Central came away with its first State championship in a long time, 84-77.

Ropes were put across the court in front of a student section, but for a school that hasn't had a varsity boys State champion in 31 years, a nylon rope was not enough.

The team crowded around the trophy, everyone getting a chance to at least put their hands on it, and what a three-decade-long victory felt like.

Grace said he would miss the special moment he had during his high-school career as he moves on to college next year.

State would definitely be something for him to remember.

"Probably my favorite team is playing with Junior Ronnell, BK (Kline) and Tim (Kanger)," Grace said.

Win over Kearney moves Eagles to final

BY CLAY LOMNETH

They didn't stay in Lincoln all day for nothing. Eagle fans were in for a treat at the second State tournament game March 10. Central beat Kearney 68-58 to move on to two-time defending champions Bellevue West.

Though Kearney won the tip to start the game, senior Rodney Grace was the first to put two points on the board. However, less than 10 seconds later, Kearney answered back with 6 points in a row by Kearney's junior Cody Kissel.

Things began to look bleak for the Eagles. Junior Ben Kline said he thought the Eagles went into the game too confident.

"I think we underestimated them a little," Kline said.

Sophomore Josh Jones said he also thought the Eagles misjudged the Bearcats.

"They knew us, we didn't know

them," Jones said.

The Eagles gained some ground, however, and tied the Bearcats at 5:36 with a 3-point shot from sophomore Ronnell Grixby. Kearney pulled ahead again with a 3-pointer from junior Joey Rousseau. Grixby matched it just seconds later with one of his own from the outside.

Kearney put up 2 more points, and this time senior Tim Kanger tied it at 11-11. Once again in the race for points, Kissel and Kline matched each other with threes.

To finish off the period, Kearney senior Drew Emken put up just one foul shot to keep his team barely ahead going into the second, 15-14.

Clean passes by Kearney during this period put it ahead in the beginning. With a time out by Central with just two minutes into the period, it was behind 19-16.

During this break, Kline said coach

Eric Behrens pumped the players up, saying this was their chance to move on and win State.

"During a time out, he got us going mentally," Kline said.

A minute after the time out, however, at 5:37, a technical foul was called on Grixby for a gesture he made at the referee. This sent both crowds into a frenzy.

Kissel was chosen to attempt the shots and he came away with both of them. Grace and Jones really stepped it up for the rest of the period, and by the end it was a tie again, 30-30.

The third period was Central's time to take over. Kline, Jones and Grace were major players during this time. They scared Kearney enough to compel the Bearcats to call at time out at 2:39. By then, the score was 45-39, Central.

Slipping into the fourth period, the Eagles widened their lead again. Kline, Jones and Grixby this time were the ones

to lead the pack. Smooth passes to the right players and quick thinking almost guaranteed more points on the board.

The difference between the first and second half, Jones said, was the fact the Eagles caught on to how the Bearcats were playing.

"We read what they were doing and we had adjusted to it," Jones said.

During a Central time out at 2:22 the Eagles had stolen a good lead, 59-49. It wasn't quite over yet, though. With only 1:31 left in the game, the score was 63-51, Central still up.

Kline said during the end, the Eagles realized they had the lead and started to get a bit lazy on defense.

Kearney managed to make some shots at the end, forcing the Eagles to scramble to keep their lead. They stayed ahead, thanks to foul shots by Grixby, Kanger and Grixby.

The game ended 68-58 and Kearney was pushed out of the tournament.

Asst. coach lives out dream of winning State

STEPHANIE WILHELM

"I've known since I was 12 that I wanted to coach. My dream was UCLA," assistant varsity boys basketball coach Herb Welling said. "Next to my senior picture in the yearbook, it said it."

Welling has been coaching since he was 16 years old, a total of 27 years. His high school coach gave him the chance to coach a summer league, but that wasn't enough for him.

Welling started coaching teams for pay when he was 18 years old.

"My specialty is individual skill development," Welling said. "I work with kids on fundamentals and skills."

Welling coached both the Cardinals and Junior Eagles in the past. Both are select basketball teams.

He stopped coaching those teams when junior Ben Kline and senior Tim Kanger's group were in eighth grade.

He has coached both Kline and senior Bryant Cotton since they were 4 and 5 years old.

Welling said he started a new program, Nebraska Jays, for sixth, seventh and eighth graders because he had requests to come back to the Cardinals.

He said he picked up the other players along the way, in addition to his veterans like Kline. One of those was freshman Vondrae Tostenson.

"Vondrae was always the young one," Welling said.

Sophomores Ronnell Grixby, Josh Jones and Chris Griffin went to Five-Star Basketball Camp with Welling in Chicago.

"Michael Jordan was discovered there," Welling said. "It's the most famous basketball camp. It's been in existence for 41 years. It's second to none."

Welling has known the place for 20 years, and has even contributed to books and videos sold there.



PHOTO BY MOLLY MULLEN/REGISTER
Boys varsity assistant coach and security guard Herb Welling talks to Student Resource Officer Matt Kelly at Central's spring pep rally.

It's easy to bring kids to him and to this school, Welling said.

When they first started out five years ago, Welling said they already had players lined up. Derek Russell was one to watch, but later they had their sights set on now senior Tim Kanger.

"One of the key things was getting Tim Kanger to come here, getting him to believe," Welling said. "He had some pressure on him because all of his brothers went to Creighton Prep."

Welling has talked with Kline and Cotton about these kinds of moments and their final destinations since they were little.

"I've had a daily effect on them," Welling said. "I talked to Kline's dad and Cotton's grandfather ever since they were 4 on a daily basis."

He said he had 11 kids in the State tournament who he had coached before, including Prep senior Richard Marion, Andrew King and Hank Jenkins.

"It was a joy to see them," Welling said. "It was very emotional time for me."

He said it was great to watch players he's known for so long, like senior Rodney Grace.

"He's improved so much from being a freshman," Welling said.

Welling's experience of 27 years of coaching has earned him a lot of connections all across the country. He said he uses his knowledge to help Behrens and the team.

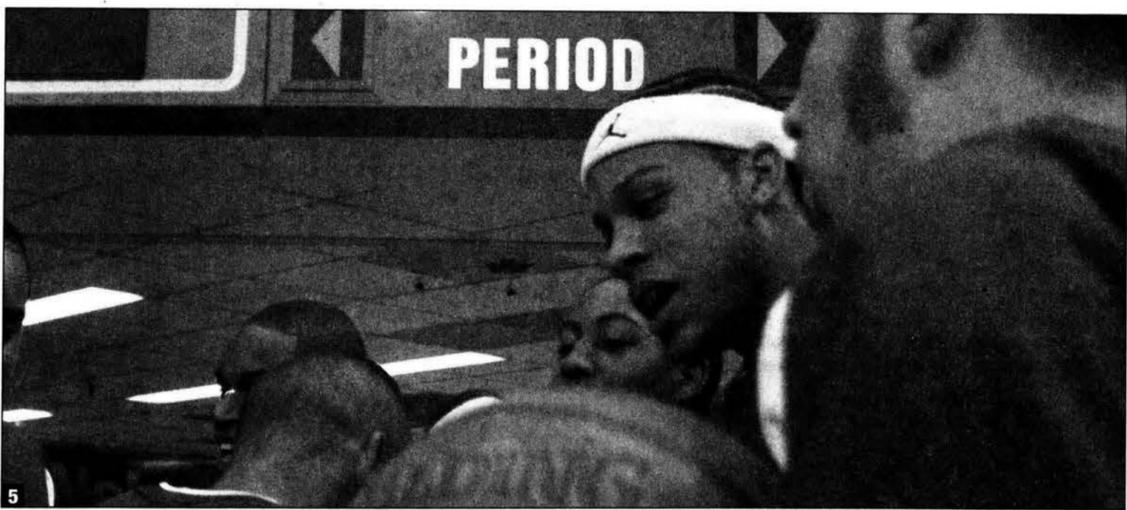
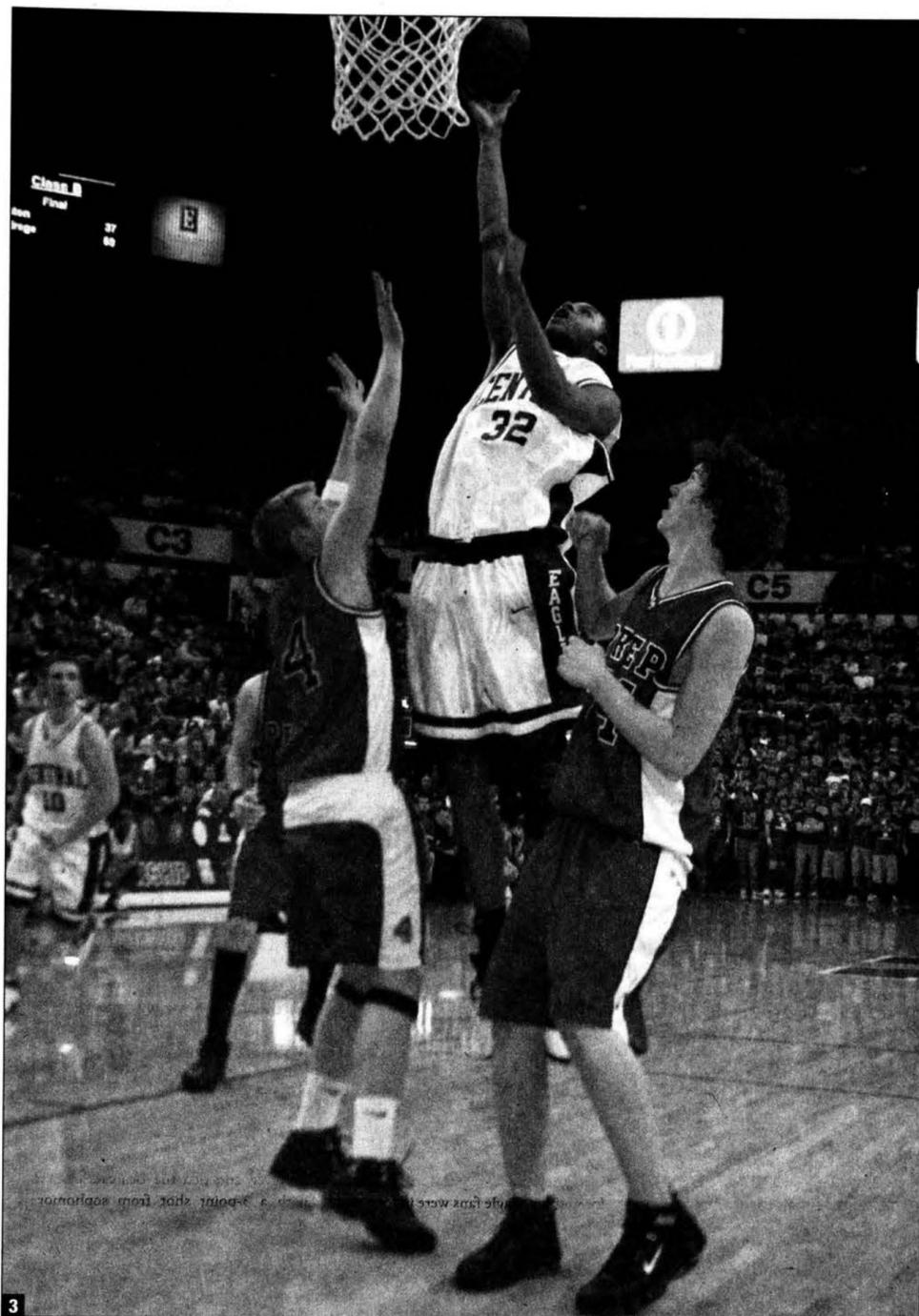
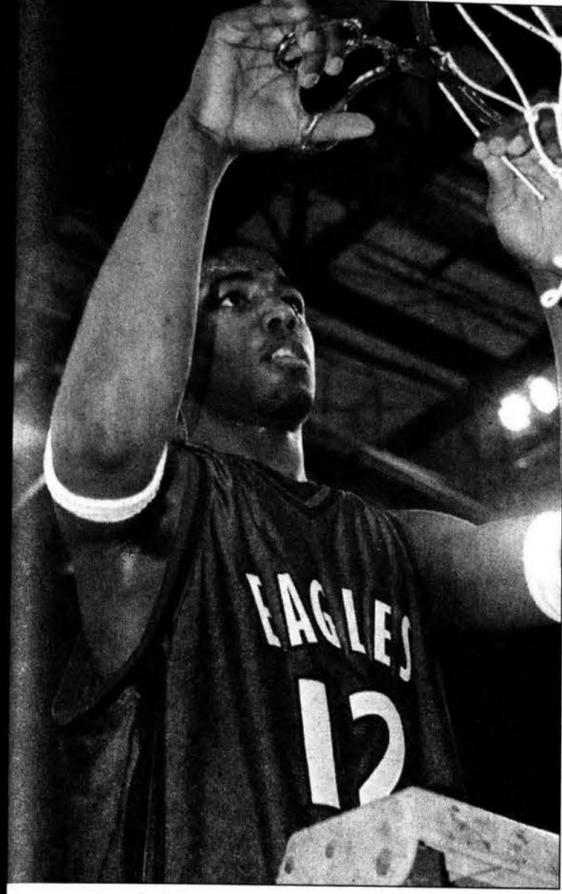
"I've been blessed myself. My friends are coaches in the NBA," he said. "I know Division I coaches can pick up the phone and call the coaches at Division I Michigan State."

He helps the players get scholarships and helps Behrens with the extras in the game, Welling said.

"I've invested a lot of time into them. I'm happy," Welling said. "It's a lot of hard work. It was a great and an awesome run."

YEAR VICTORY

er boys basketball State championship. Next, the
l off, the boys took home another State trophy, against all odds.



THE STARS

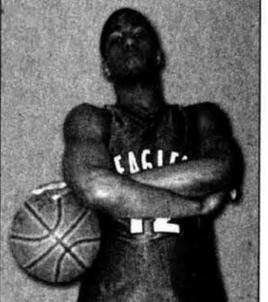
Here's just some of the players who played a large part in the Eagle victory.



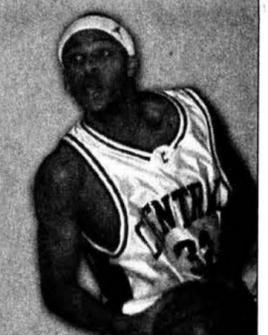
Ben Kline (11)
Height: 6'2"
No.: 20
Point Average: 13.4



Tim Kanger (12)
Height: 6'2"
No.: 10
Point Average: 6.5



Vondrae Tostenson (9)
Height: 6'4"
No.: 12
Point Average: 2.9



Rodney Grace (12)
Height: 6'6"
No.: 32
Point Average: 14.1



Lorenzo Wilson (10)
Height: 6'3"
No.: 14
Point Average: 2.0



Ronnell Grixby (10)
Height: 5'9"
No.: 3
Point Average: 14.0

1. Freshman Vondrae Tostenson cuts down part of the net after the victory over Bellevue West. The Eagles team won their first State championship since 1975. 2. Sophomore Carli Culjat buys a ticket to the game against Kearney. Other fans rode buses to Lincoln and were given their tickets when they got there. 3. Senior Rodney Grace leaps over Prep's seniors Stephen Ducey and Hank Jenkins. The Eagles first played Creighton Prep in the tournament, and beat the Junior Jays 74-61. 4. Grace tries to push past Bearcat's senior Blaine Gronewoller. The Bearcats were knocked out of the tournament by Central when they were beat 68-58. 5. Before the Prep game, players had their traditional pre-game huddle to get fired up.

Central tops once-dominant Creighton Prep

BY CLAY LOMNETH

In the regular season, they had lost to Creighton Prep by just a single point. In the first step toward a State title, the Eagles beat the Junior Jays this time, 74-61.

Right off the bat, within 15 seconds of the game, Central had the lead and junior Ben Kline had two points. Keeping them scoreless until after the 6:00 mark, the Eagles took an early lead, helped especially by great rebounding game.

"We knew it's a team we could beat," Kline said.

Under the basket nearly every time was senior Rodney Grace. The Eagles dominated the boards so much, sometimes two Eagles would be fighting for the ball.

"That game, I wasn't really thinking about State," Grace said. "I was thinking about revenge."

After that Eric Behrens from the Jays, what followed was a trading basket to the game against Kearney. Other fans rode buses to Lincoln and were given their tickets when they got there.

Behrens said he had the team working the whole week before to prepare for the State game, but especially for the first one.

"Prep really worried me," he said.

After Behrens and the team reviewed tapes of the last Prep game, he said the team knew going into the game what the weaknesses of the Jays were and how to play better against them.

"Most of our guys were more focused this time," he said.

Efforts by senior Tim Kanger included a 3-point shot he made look easy at the 3:15 mark, but the Jay's sophomore Zane Hinkel answered back with one of his own.

Sophomore Ronnell Grixby also put in a shot from the outside, and Kanger put up another 3-pointer at 1:35. Finishing off the period with just over one second left, Kline shot a 3-point foul and easily made all three.

This put the Eagles ahead by just 4 as they entered the second period. With a score of 20-16, Kline said he wasn't concerned.

"We've been in close games all year," he said. "It was still the beginning of the game, I wasn't too worried."

The second period had no major rebound as far as scores for the Eagles. The Jays stayed behind, but just barely.

The Jays senior Stephen Ducey, however, lead for Prep. With his shots from in the paint, he kept the Jays alive, albeit behind, and ended a 33-30 period.

In the second half, senior Grace started the scoring with a shot from down below. Following that, Kline and sophomore Josh Jones both put up two points each, and not far behind that Grixby put up the shot and gained the foul.

Sensing trouble, the Jays started fouling.

"Basically, we tried to get it into a good free-throw shooter's hands," Kline said.

Going up from the paint, Kline was knocked down with less than three minutes left in the third. Playing with an already stressed back from a District game, Kline's fall hit him hard. He stepped out, but was in again when the fourth period came around.

With the fouls, Central began to really take hold of the lead. Going into the fourth, the Eagles had a solid lead of 57-47.

"We just had to maintain the lead," Kline said.

And they did. Not only did they keep Prep from scoring, but they actually gained points in the process.

With two minutes left, Grixby put away a 3-pointer to try and silence the Jays.

They wouldn't go away, yet. Senior Richard Marion matched Grixby's three and added two more the next play.

Marion was a key for Prep the entire game. If the Junior Jays even so much as got in a tiny slump, Marion would kick it in.

As if threatened, Kline and Kanger each got their hands on the ball and got the foul for two shots. This only solidified their lead, ending the game 74-61.

"I know it felt really good for some of the guys," Kline said, "it just felt like a regular win for me."

Compared to the last game against Prep, Jones said he found this game easier.

"The first time we played in the Birdcage, it was kind of hard," he said. "The atmosphere got to us."

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH AND PATRICK O'MALLEY/REGISTER

SHOOTING SOME OLD-SCHOOL HOOPS

This is the largest and oldest high school in the state. The first time the boys basketball team took the State championship was in 1912. Here's a brief look back at what was going on 94 years ago.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 1912 REGISTER ANNUAL

These were the first kings of Central. Although Omaha High School (now known as Central High School) had been around for over 30 years, this was its first State win and the second State tournament. Beryl Crocker (captain and right forward), Leslie Burkenroad (captain-elect and left guard), James Gardner (right guard), Mark Hughes (left forward) John Over (sub-forward), Sidney Meyer (left forward), Vergil Rector (Center), Clarence Sharp (sub-center and sub-guard) and coach Clark made up the team that took it all. The team next went onto the Western Interscholastic Basketball tournament, according to the 1912 Register Annual, and tied Kansas City and Ottumwa. Lee Seemann, class of 1938, said little has changed since he played basketball for the Eagles. He said the only noticeable difference was the shoes. "The ones you have nowadays are amazing," he said.

Alumnus says little has changed with Eagle basketball in last century

BY MOLLY MULLEN

Think of junior Ben Kline in 1912 and you have the right guard Leslie Burkenroad. He was the star shooter back then and he was only in his third year in high school.

According to the March 1912 edition of the Register, Burkenroad scored 26 out of 30 points made against Geneva, the second game of the State tournament.

"It was through the sensational work of Burkenroad of Omaha (Central) that Omaha came out ahead," the Register read. "All of the scoring in the last half was done by him and his baskets at the critical moments strengthened the team and made them fight to win."

Back then Central was called Omaha High School. The courtyard was open and the senior class was just a fraction of the size it is now. The principal was Kate McHugh, the only female principal in CHS history. It was her first year after the former principal, Ellis Graff, went on to become the superintendent of schools.

One thing dominated the 1912 yearbook over any other sport or activity, and that was basketball. Just like today the State win meant something special. In the first game of the State basketball tournament, Omaha beat State Farm 51-11. According to the Register, Omaha had excellent form that game. The second game was a win over Geneva, but they were not as easily dominated as State Farm because Omaha High only won 30-28.

"Omaha had the biggest scare of its basketball career in the second game of the tournament," it read.

The first half ended in 22-10 with Omaha Central in the strong lead. In the second half the players relaxed a bit, as if they were guaranteed a win, allowing Geneva to rack up almost enough points to take the lead. University Place was the next opponent to Omaha, ending in a win 25-5.

The final championship game was played against South Omaha, which Omaha High also won, 22-8. After that it went on to play in the Western Interscholastic basketball Tournament

where it tied with Kansas City and Ottumwa.

Alumnus Lee Seemann has always been a sports fan, even having the new stadium named for him earlier this year.

He said the changes in the school since he graduated in 1938 are enormous. Since then the courtyard has been covered, and there was a new gym and lobby built so the Eagles can yet again have home games. Also, the multi-million dollar stadium was built in his name. Seemann played basketball his senior year, along with football, track and shooting on the crack squad, the equivalent to ROTC today.

"I wasn't a superstar (in basketball) by any means," Seemann said.

He said they probably lost between 5-7 games that season. The Eagles did, however beat the State champions of that year early on.

"They were a much better team," he said. "We weren't the tops."

He said although he wasn't the best player, he enjoyed it.

"I was a center," he said. "I did pretty well."

Of the few changes since his high school career, he said the biggest change in sports is they have gotten so much more attention.

"They are bigger and better now," he said.

Football players like Gale Sayers and Ahman Green made millions of dollars a year after leaving Central, he said. Nothing like that could have happened in his day.

"They start earlier (in life)," he said. "They know if they do well and try hard in any sport they can go to the pros."

The gym was new in 1938, just like what was seen this year. He said returning to Central now, it all seemed different.

"It just seemed enormous back then," he said. "Now it looks so small."

He said the game of basketball has ultimately stayed the same.

"The only big improvement is the shoes," Seemann said. "They are more cushioned and support your ankles."

He said back then they just had tennis

shoes, nothing particular to different athletics was easier to twist an ankle back then, he said. Seemann said he loved playing sports, but he had to do it all over again, he said he would be focused more on academics.

"I should have hit the books more," he said. "I was just in so much."

He said being in too many things put a strain on all his activities. Alumnus Carlyl Wilson was All-State from the 1938 team. He was there with Seemann earlier this year to commemorate the new stadium.

"I think we're the last two surviving players (from the 1938 team)," Wilson said.

He attended grade school with Seemann as well as high school.

"We played basketball and football together," he said.

Although the football team did well (second in the state), he said he enjoyed playing basketball more. Maybe because the facilities were different. They had a new gym versus the gravel practice field for football.

1912 TIME LINE

Averages

Loaf of bread: 5 cents
Gallon of milk: 6 cents
Car: \$500

Average yearly income: \$1,003

Jan. 12

A group of Polish women start a 10-week strike that over 25,000 people take part in. They were protesting a new law that cut the working hours of New England women.



Apr. 14-15

Late at night and midway through its first trip from Ireland to New York, the RMS Titanic crashed into an iceberg. Less than half of its passengers survived.

May 15

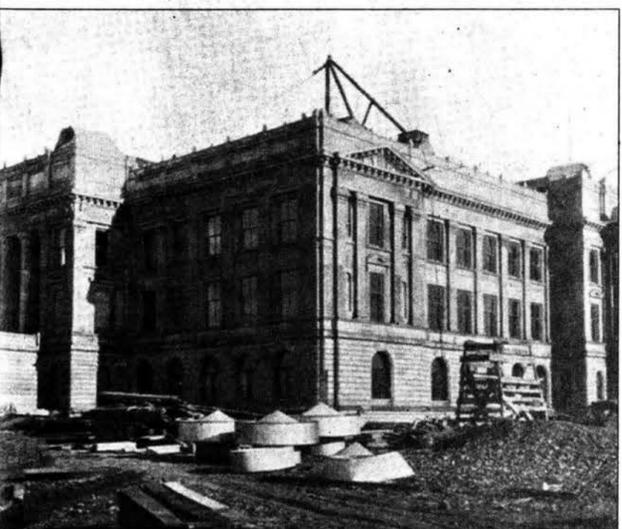
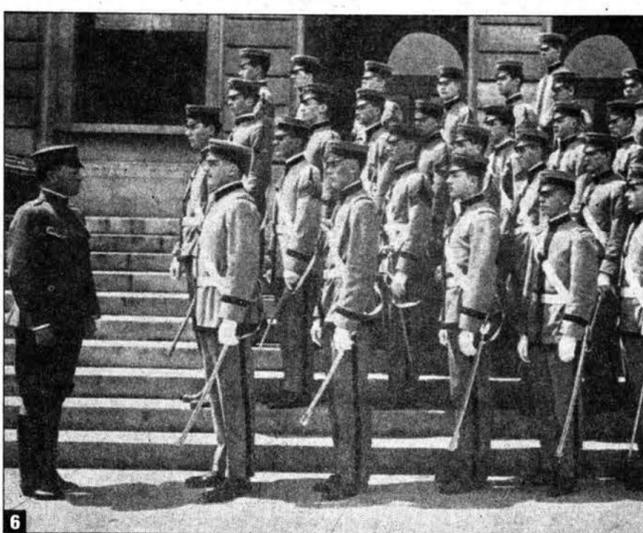
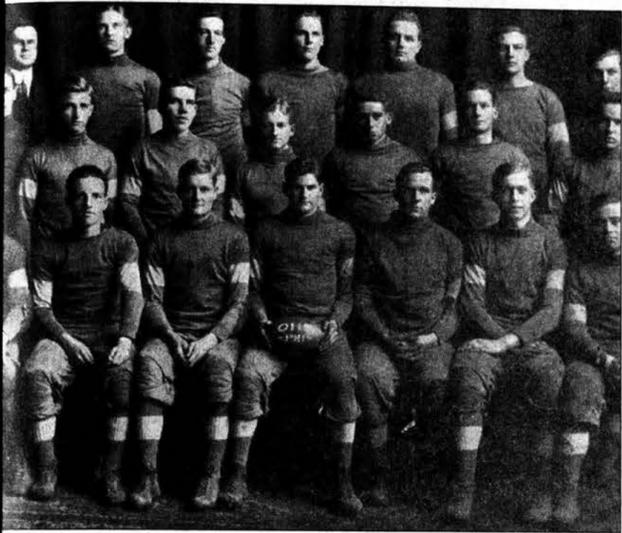
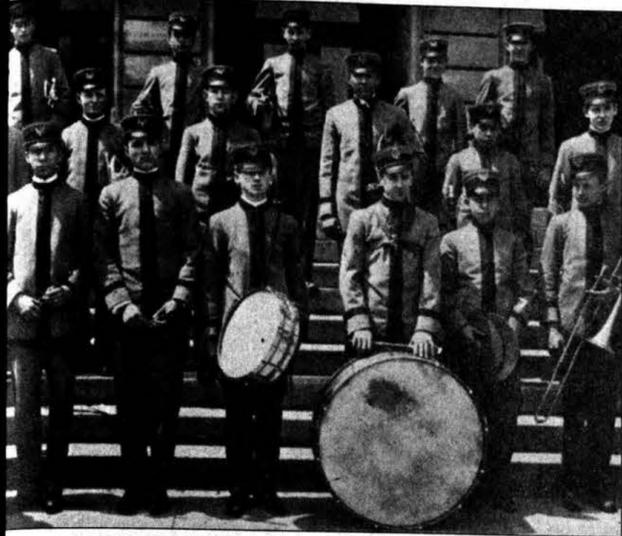
Ty Cobb rushes a heckler in a Highrider baseball game in New York. He gets suspended, and some fans protest at the next game.



Jul. 14

Legendary folk singer "Woody" Guthrie is born. He is most famously known for writing the songs "This Land is Your Land" and "The 1913 Massacre."

The year is 1912 and Omaha High just won State for the first time. What else happened that year?



A LOOK AT THE PAST 1912

1. The band in 1912 had 21 members, unlike today, with way over 100 students involved. There were three band leaders: Capt. Charles Sheets, 1st Lt. Waldo Shillington and 2nd Lt. Sam Slotky.

2. Nine games were played the entire football season, and Central won five of those. Opponents included Nebraska City, who it played on a rainy day, slowing down the teams and resulting in a scoreless game.

3. Every Wednesday during first and second hours, the girls basketball team would have its practice. Instead of playing other schools during games, the girls played different grade levels from Central. The school championship was awarded to the senior girls, after winning a game against the juniors, 30-17.

4. In the early 1900s, construction on the school started. Officials decided to just build the new school around the old tower. The school was built side-by-side and after one side was completed the classes were held in the completed section. This shows the west wing being constructed.

5. An annual indoor track meet was held in the auditorium. In 1912, Central had a good showing with its star and Capt. Robert Wood. At outside meets, a new pole-vaulting record was broken by Vergil "Verg" Rector, at 11 feet 7 and a half inches. He was also on the State-winning basketball team.

6. Central's military organization, a precursor to Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, was made up of the commissioned officers and three battalions, divided into companies A-I. The cadets also spent a week at Camp Penn, a military camp where a typical day was filled with military drills, marching and exercising.

7. The Annual Senior Hop took place Dec. 2, the same day as the Senior Prom. It was also attended by a large number of college students who were alumni of Central. The gym was decorated in gray and crimson colors, the colors of the senior class. Before the school had the official purple and white, each grade had different colors instead.

8. Kate A. McHugh was principal. Her staff included heads of various departments, including separate ones for chemistry, physics, German and Latin. The entire faculty consisted of about 90 people.

PHOTOS COURTESY 1912 REGISTER ANNUAL

INFORMATION COURTESY 1912 REGISTER ANNUAL

THE EVOLUTION OF THE BASKETBALL: from pigskin to foam, where it started to today



FIRST OFFICIAL BASKETBALL BY SPALDING

Before a real leather basketball was invented, people just shot soccer balls into peach baskets for fun.

It wasn't until the late 1800s that a new ball was created by Spalding specifically for the sport of basketball.

RED, WHITE AND BLUE BALL

First American Basketball Association commissioner George Mikan designed this ball to give a patriotic theme to the association in the early 1970s.

Children loved the ball, but people in the NBA made fun of it. It is currently used by the NBA for the All-Star Saturday shootouts.



SPALDING INFUSION WNBA BALL

It's the official game ball of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) since 1997.

In 2003, this ball was officially adopted by the WNBA.

It is known for its built-in, dual-action micro pump, so players can add air without a conventional pump and needle. It also has the micro-fiber cover.

SPALDING NEVER FLAT

This ball was made with state-of-the-art technology. Never before had there been an inflatable ball until this one.

This ball is guaranteed to never go flat for at least one year, which is 10 times longer than the original basketball.



SPALDING TF-1000 ZK PRO BALL

This is the number one choice for college and high school basketball players.

There's no need to break in this ball because the leather is designed to feel like broken-in leather from the first time it's used.

It also has foam-backed construction and wider channels to gear the spin of the ball or for better control.

THE ROCK BEILEIN SHOOTING

This ball was designed by West Virginia University head coach John Beilein.

He designed this ball to help the shooter analyze and correct ball rotation, accuracy and control from any distance.

Its purpose is to help those beginning or perfecting a technique.

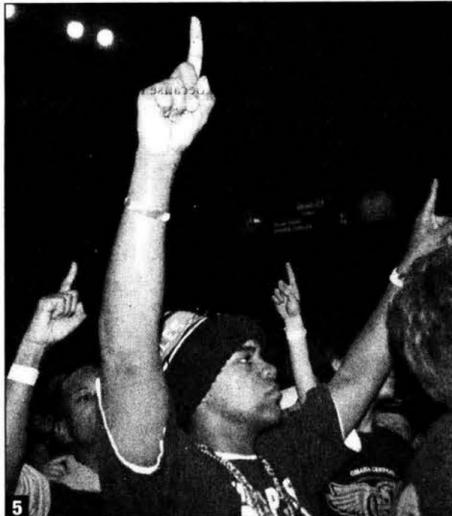
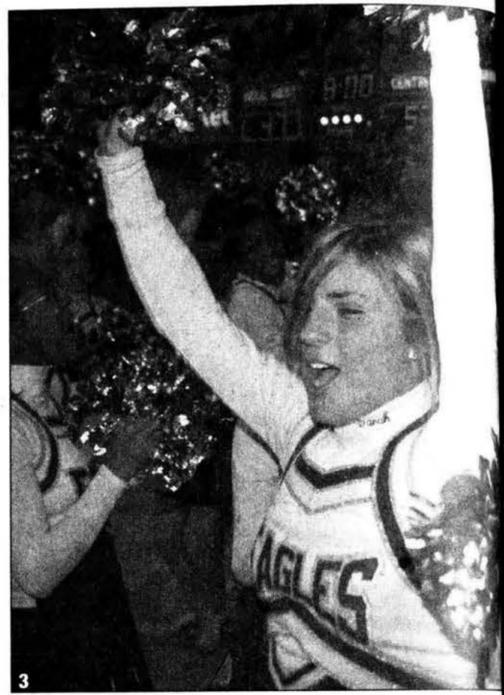


James Naismith holds a soccer ball, the first ball used for the sport. He invented the game in 1891.

“Student section is not about one person, it’s about the whole crowd getting loud.”

SENIOR | Nate Hall

DROWNING IN A SEA OF PURPLE



1. Band members freshmen Dana Bottger (left) and Crystal Overgaard (right) spray freshman Victoria Czerwinski's hair purple to show spirit. 2. Sophomore Nate Whittle steps off the bus the band rode to Lincoln in. The bus was set up right next to the student section. 3. Junior Sarah Kyler cheers after an Eagle score in the fourth period of the final game. Cheerleaders led the fan section in different cheers throughout the tournament. 4. Seniors Kyle Samuelson and Nate Hall cheer at the final State game against Bellevue West. Hall said he was the first person to arrive at the Devaney Center before the game against Prep. 5. Senior Alvin Samuels files out of the Devaney Stadium after the Eagle victory against the Kearney Bearcats. Students were led out right after the game ended, but sometimes took a while as they still celebrated. 6. Students rush the court after the victory against Bellevue West. The court was blocked off in the final minutes of overtime, but some students still managed to get by.

PHOTOS BY CLAY LOMNETH, PATRICK O'MALLEY AND STEPHANIE WILHELM/REG

Student crowd supports Eagles throughout State tournament

BY PATRICK O'MALLEY

Purple T-shirts and face-painted fans in their cars could be seen flooding the hour-long drive down I-80 to Lincoln. The anticipation was always at a fevered pitch.

The long drive to the Bob Devaney Center appeared to be no problem for the large number of enthusiastic students who made this trip.

Roaring, chanting, screaming, jumping and laughing bodies made up the vast population of the student section during the games.

Many students left Omaha with high expectations many hours before the games in anticipation of being the first to be there to cheer on the team.

EARLY ARRIVAL

Some student left up to three to four hours before the game.

Many students who were not able to find their own transportation rode in buses provided by the school.

Athletic Director Darin Williams said there were five buses that each held 35 to 40 people. He said as the team advanced in the tournament, there were fewer people who rode the buses.

Senior Nate Hall said he left three and a half hours before the game with some friends because he wanted to be there to get the crowd and players excited.

"I was the first person there (at the Prep game)," Hall said.

Hall said senior class president Alvin Samuels assigned him and senior Katherine Gorga the

position of Student Section Generals.

"They were always there," Samuels said. "I wanted someone who really had school spirit and people listened to them."

Samuels said he led chants a lot but because he was busy he wanted to have a few people who could start chants and help lead the crowd in a more organized fashion.

Hall said he felt he was a good person to be appointed to general because he was very enthusiastic and liked to try to get the crowd excited.

"I love to get the student section hyped," he said.

Hall said he played a big role in getting the student section loud.

"Student section is not about one person, it's about the whole crowd getting loud," he said.

There were many traditional chants the students brought into play that not only involved the student section, but the parents and other spectators as well. Some students had hopes of introducing their own new chants such as senior Kyle Samuelson. He said he came up with an original chant and wanted to use it during the first game, but in the end decided against it.

Hall said anyone who came up with a good chant just had to start yelling it and people would soon join in. There were different aspects and highlights of each game that made them exciting and unique.

CREIGHTON PREP

In the opening round against the Creighton Prep Junior Jays, the students appeared to be more

excited than any other game.

"As this being my last year I would just like to beat Prep in State," Hall said.

Hall said he thought the Prep game was important because there was such a long-standing rivalry with the Jays.

This year Prep had beaten Central in the Holiday Tournament.

Senior James Hubbard said he felt the Prep game was going to attract a big crowd.

"When you play a team like Prep, everyone is excited," Hubbard said.

Sophomore point guard Josh Jones said he felt the team had to be excited in order to play in such a big tournament.

"The crowd kept us motivated," he said, "but as a team we knew what we had to do regardless of who was behind us."

Williams said he was happy and surprised there were more students that made it to the Lincoln games than the home games.

"Friday and Saturday the student body really woke up," Williams said.

Before the eager Central students were allowed to use the stands a few of the Devaney Center staff members had to fix the bleachers because the Kearney fans, during the game prior to the Central-Prep matchup, had been jumping so much that the bleachers began to fall apart.

"We had to wait for Kearney to clear out, and they tightened the screws," Williams said.

He said the students were excited to get onto the bleachers and once they did they settled down for a good game.

Many students were upset to hear they

weren't allowed to stand on the bleachers at the start of the game.

Williams said they always went with what the other team was doing as far as standing.

What the Central administration didn't know was that the Prep crowd had a tradition of not standing until the Jays scored their first basket.

It didn't seem to matter anyway. The excitement was almost too much to handle.

Samuels said the that first game was a key in the tournament.

"Once we beat Prep we knew we had a chance," Samuels said.

KEARNEY

After the team advanced past the first round, the tired students came to Lincoln prepared for another exciting game.

Hubbard said he felt the crowd came out strong for the second game against the Kearney Bearcats.

Hall said on the way down to the game many of the students tried coming up with new cheers. Before the game a Central alumna from 1965 told a group of students they needed to use another chant.

Samuels said she had come up with a strange sounding chant, but he and the students like the sound of it and tried to perfect it before the game started.

Throughout the tournament, Williams said he felt the parents responded well and the students really cheered on the team.

"I thought it was just a first class job by the

students, staff and community," he said.

BELLEVUE WEST

Finally, Central was in the championship round. Hubbard said his goal for the final game was to go out stronger than they ever have before.

He also said the turnout for the championship game was so big because of the intensity and it had been 31 years since Central had won a championship.

Though the students were worn out, they as much as they could to focus on the one they all had. They wanted to cheer the Eagles victory.

Samuels and other fans even began to cough drops during the off-time to guarantee their voices wouldn't fail in a time of need.

"Every time I wasn't at the game, I had a cough drop in my mouth," Samuels said.

Ecstatic that Central had finally won the championship, the over-zealous students attempted to charge onto the court.

Hall said they had been planning on staying on the court for a while, but when they found out they couldn't they tried anyway.

Police officers, administrators and security guards with rope were all there to hold the students back.

"When the buzzer went off, everybody went in one surge," Hall said.

One officer was knocked down by students and hit his head on the court. Jones said he thought the fans didn't mean to hurt anyone.

"They were overjoyed we made it the way," Jones said.

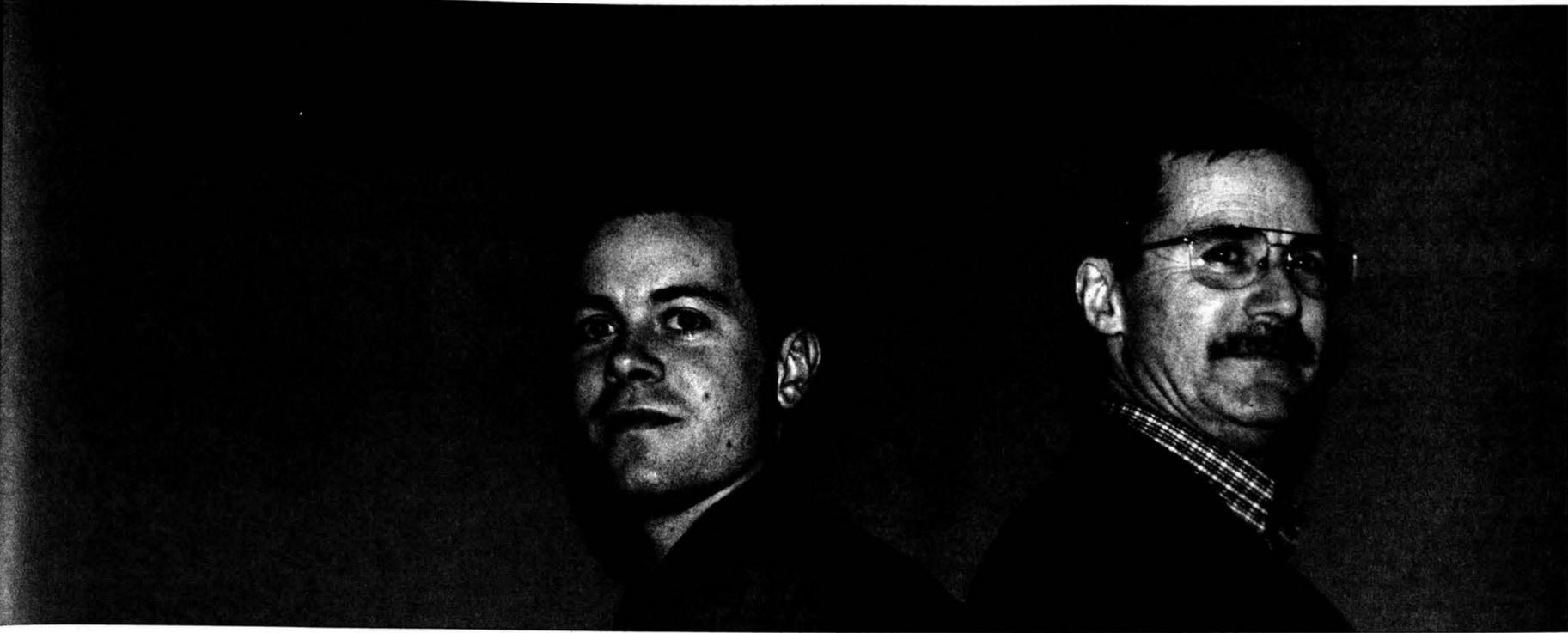


PHOTO BY CLAY LOMNETH/REGISTER

After retiring from coaching basketball for 27 years, Richard Behrens (right) said he had no idea his son Eric (left) would be taking the open position. Eric said although he applied for the job, he wasn't expecting to get it. He got the job and his first team in 2002 made it to the quarterfinals. It lost to Lincoln High by 6 points in overtime.

Coach follows in footsteps of father

BY STEPHANIE WILHELM

There is a good chance there won't be a State championship in basketball this year if it weren't for social studies teacher and retired varsity boys basketball coach Richard Behrens.

His son was the coach of the team that took it all this season.

"I don't know if I would be coaching if my dad wasn't a coach," varsity boys basketball coach Eric Behrens said. "He was part of the reason I started coaching. I know how it worked out."

Richard said winning State was very hard to do, and he was happy for his son on such an accomplishment.

"I was very proud and happy that my son won for a number of reasons," Richard said. "If he coached at a different school, I would still be rooting for him, and where at Central where he graduated and where we work, it's different."

Richard said he tries to go to all the games. The only time he doesn't make it is when the games sell out.

Richard said his son is very likeable. A lot of parents, players and students like him quite a bit.

He said Eric was also a very talented coach and the championship game proved it.

"Eric had a feel for the (State) game. What calls to make, what substitutions to do," Richard said. "He made some very good decisions."

Eric said his although his father was probably more organized in terms of records, statistics and paperwork, there was really no major difference between them.

He said they both used some of the same drills and the same practice schedule. But, he said, he lets his son do his own thing.

"I don't go down to practices," Richard said. "I don't interfere."

Richard was the one who started the Behrens tradition of coaching.

"There were no other coaches before me," Richard said. "My parents...no. They didn't play."

He said he has always liked basketball. He played in high school.

Even though he didn't play on the team at University of Iowa, Richard still played pick-up games and in intramurals during college.

He said he liked coaching, especially basketball and baseball.

Eric said he played basketball in high school too and wanted to stay involved with it.

"Coaching is the most obvious way to stay (involved)," Eric said.

Richard said he liked being around the players.

"I tell the kids high school basketball is a great experience," Richard said. "They think that they'll play in college, but at those games, especially at smaller games, there isn't a tenth of the crowd like in high school."

Richard said he tried to remind the players to enjoy the game and appreciate high school.

When he has talked with past players who have played anywhere from

five to 10 years ago, he said they tell him the same thing. They talk about how much they enjoyed playing. He said he knew how seriously each school took basketball when he started.

"I got a degree in teaching and I thought it would be nice to coach," Richard said.

He started coaching at Tech High School in 1974.

"I started teaching at Tech when he (Eric) was one or two years old," Richard said. "I brought him down to the games and practices. He would shoot hoops with the guys there when he was 7 or 8."

When the school closed in 1984, Richard transferred to Central.

He was the assistant coach for six years and became the head coach in 1990 after Jim Martin retired.

He said he stopped coaching in 2001 because he had been doing it for 27 years straight.

"I never had a year off," Richard said. "It's like working two full jobs at the same time."

He said he thought he had been coaching long enough and wanted some time to do other things like biking, hiking and getting out to do some exercising.

"During the season, everything gets jammed up. It's hard to find time to exercise," Richard said. "I wanted time to stay healthy."

When he retired at the end of the 2001 season, he said he had no idea Eric, who was then the head JV coach would become the next varsity coach.

Eric, at 20 years old, had been an assistant coach for boys varsity in 1997, before moving on to JV. The time he had as a head coach with JV, Eric kept the position of assistant varsity coach.

He applied for the job his dad left open, and amid the other possibilities, Eric got the job.

He said he didn't expect that he'd actually get the position, but he applied anyway.

Eric was excited and wanted to do good things when he was named head coach. When Eric was at a junior college,

Richard said he had a good coach there. There were other influences on Eric beside his father.

Richard's best record was 18-5 in 1997. The team won the Metro Holiday Tournament that year and went to State, but didn't win.

He said his next best record was around 14 wins. He said there were a couple of years when the Eagles won 11 or 12 games.

For three of four years, the team only won six or seven games, Richard said. Not all of the records were winning records.

Seven of Richard's 11 years as head basketball coach were winning records. He said he won over 110 games his entire career.

Eric said his overall record is 96 wins and 25 losses in five years. This year's record was 24-4.

He has never had a losing season, and with the State win this year, his Eagles will be the team to beat throughout Nebraska.

Player remembers girls' chance at State in mid 1980s

BY TANIKA COOPER



PHOTOS COURTESY 1983 O-BOOK

For her senior year in 1984, Maurice Ivy (right) received a plaque for breaking the state record for total points. Coach Paul Semrad and teammate Sarah Stohs present her with the award. Ivy is now the asst. coach for the University of Neb. at Omaha's women's basketball team.

They still hold the standing record of 50 consecutive Class A wins within a three-year period.

Paul Semrad retired in 2005 after being a teacher, coach and assistant principal during his educational career. He said while he was the girls head coach the Lady Eagles won the State tournament two years in a row, 1983 and 1984. They ended their reign with a record of 72-2 in 1985.

Asst. coach of the University of Nebraska at Omaha's women's basketball team Maurice Ivy was on the State winning team in 1984.

She was one of the high school All-Americans on the team. The other was Jessica Haynes.

Ivy said being an All-American didn't change who she was.

Of course it gave her a certain level of confidence, but she said her goal was to make the basketball program the best.

"When I played the game, I played with passion," Ivy said.

She came from Lewis and Clark Middle School and joined the team her freshman year. She said most of the girls who started that year had already played around five years in the Amateur

Athletic Union (AAU).

AAU is a non-profit, volunteer sports organization designed to help athletes in amateur sports.

Many of the players already knew each other from playing in the AAU. This, Ivy said, was a big advantage. They knew how the other one played and could work together.

She said the fact that they knew each other and got along played a big part in getting them to State, and ultimately winning.

The team got its first taste of State during Ivy's sophomore year. She said even though Central didn't win, just seeing what State was like gave players enough motivation to get them to prepare for the following year.

"By our junior year we made a decision that we were the best team in the state," she said.

She said after each win the community was really supportive, and happy to see a girls team dominate in a stereotypically male-driven sport.

"It was a great, great feeling to be a part of that," Ivy said.

One of the reasons the girls were able to accomplish so much was because of the conditioning directed by Semrad. She said he conditioned them into great shape and that was one of the reasons their opponents couldn't keep

up with them.

"We'd outrun the other team," Ivy said. The team was made up of girls who were very athletic, practically the whole team ran track to help them stay fit in the off-season.

She said Semrad was great at finding their strengths and talents to make sure they could benefit the whole team.

Semrad said a lot of their success came from the girls' athletic ability.

"They had great heart and they played well for me and I'll never forget that," Semrad said.

It was back when they didn't have a 3-point basket and the ball size was the same as the boys teams. It wasn't until 1986 that they added the 3-point line and reduced the size of the girl's ball by an inch. They had the talent, speed, communication among the players, and most of all they had teamwork.

"Everyone contributed, you don't just win that way with two people," Semrad said. "It takes a balanced offense and defense."

He said the girls had a lot of heart and they played like every game had merit to them. They didn't take anyone for granted.

"The team I had was arguably the best team in Nebraska," he said. "We had all the ingredients needed to be that successful."

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PHOTO BY ZACH PLUHACEK/REGISTER

Is this the end of a lucky year or the beginning of a new reign of kings? The five varsity basketball starters expected to return next year, freshman Vondrae Tostensen, junior Ben Kline, and sophomores Josh Jones, Ronnell Grixby and Chris Griffin, will all be looking to take leadership roles on next year's "team to beat." With these young players, all of whom got the chance to strut their stuff at the State games, the Eagles will have a lot to live up to next year.

Returning starters begin new dynasty for Eagles

BY ZACH PLUHACEK

After reaching high for the past three decades but coming up short, the Eagles finally tasted victory. They are the champs.

Some say the next step is building a dynasty. Is it possible?

"To me, you want it all," sophomore guard Josh Jones said. "I'm never satisfied."

As one of the stronger individual players on the varsity boys basketball team, he has offered to work with younger teammates and junior varsity athletes to build some depth around next year's skilled starting lineup. In that sense, he sees himself as a potential team leader.

Jones is one of five starters expected to return to Central next year.

Assistant coach Herb Welling said those players, in addition to a number of others who made a significant impact on the team, should open the door for at least one or two more State championships.

That's exactly why Welling and head coach Eric Behrens want to keep changes to a minimum. Why fix something that isn't broken?

But the young Eagles could use a bit of building, especially in the solidarity of their play.

"I think we probably need to be a lot better rebounding team," Welling said. "I think all of our guys are going to be bigger, stronger (and) faster."

Instead of focusing on skill, the players will be drilled for their maturity on the court.

To replace the number of athletes graduating this year, many sophomores and juniors are going to have to play like seniors, and Jones and freshman guard Vondrae Tostensen said they were ready for the challenge.

Tostensen, the youngest player on the team, is looking to be quite an up-and-coming leader next year.

He has the opportunity to score four State titles if the team plays its cards right.

"Put in a lot of hard work," he said, "and come in with the attitude that somebody else is putting in the same amount."

Tostensen, who made significant plays in the final State game, will be a key player in the next season and be the tallest player returning next year.

Because of his accomplishments, namely starting several games in place of senior Tim Kanger, he has already become one of the most widely recognized athletes in the school.

"Being a freshman on the varsity team in

football and basketball...it's a compliment," he said. "I'll probably be one of the youngest players on the team next year, too."

The great number of skilled sophomores returning as juniors next year will give the Eagles a chance to develop a strong team. One of the keys in this most recent season has been getting the players to work together.

"There was no individual, always team," Tostensen said. "I think our chemistry will be even better next year, since most of our guys have played together for five or six years—since grade school, actually."

Much of this team development, Welling said, will be done with the help of the new football coach Jay Ball. The passion and energy he is able to create next fall could have a drastic impact on the momentum going into the season.

The school's updated facilities, namely the new stadium and gym lobby, could also play a role. "I think it's a huge improvement that the school's made...we've been on the road a long time in both sports," Welling said.

Because of close ties within the athletic department, many players are already being recruited by big schools in more than one sport. Sophomores Ronnell Grixby and Chris Griffin

are looking at potential careers in football and basketball.

Junior Ben Kline, the only starter who will be returning as a senior next year, has been recruited by Ivy League school Cornell University.

Because of Central's already rich history, Athletic Director Darin Williams said recognition from a State title wouldn't have a huge impact on the school's visibility or ticket sales, although there has been some definite gratification from the alumni.

"I think winning a State championship, that comes along with it. Will it bring more money? I don't know, our games were already sellouts," he said. "I think it'll help (recruiting), but you want a student coming to Central for academics first."

Williams said most of the money sent from State championship revenues was used to cover the cost of busing, student meals and officials.

There was also a banquet for the varsity team on March 30, to celebrate its victories both in the final game and the entire season. The enthusiasm created by the recent State win will be a key next year, but Williams said players shouldn't count on the same surprise excitement of this season.

"We should look at that as our expectation, to win State," he said.



MOLDING THIS CLAY

A Column by Clay Lometh

State title acts as big motivation

Why did it take so long?

Thirty-one years without a State basketball title isn't exactly a moment in time. Think off all the Central made it within a game or two the title and then lost by less than 10 points. How does that feel?

Yes, 31 for the boys years may seem like forever, but what if it were more than doubling that. That's how long the boys varsity team had to wait.

What worked in those years? Something came together, a missing piece of the puzzle was found and it took home a State title.

This perfect fit all sort of came out of nowhere this year. People expected the same as last year, a "close but no cigar" showing at a State semifinal.

Students were still reeling with surprise and joy with senior Guy Smith winning a State medal in wrestling.

That first game against Prep didn't snuck up on us. That, if anything, sealed the win for Central. Beating a team that has been such a huge rivalry, that has beaten us by just a sliver of a point in so many Holiday Tournaments, was a huge let-up.

Even members of the 1973 team remember the rivalry. They remember losing to Prep by just a single point when they played.

What this means is Central will be the team to beat now. Next year, when they will be floating from the Bellevue West bench "let's get back our title."

Can this team, made up of extremely talented underclassmen, pull off a repeat? Or even a three-peat?

Winning State this year is something. Look at any professional today and ask him if he won that title in his home state. Chances are, the answer is no.

Put that against the fact that nobody thought the Eagles could do it off. Everyone was talking about how Central would pull a showboat move and screw its chances at the title.

Besides, Bellevue West was State champions two years in a row. Nobody could unseat the champs. At least that's what everybody else thought.

But it happened. Not by a stroke of luck either. No, a stroke of luck is not the ball at half court and making a basket. The Eagles won because of pure talent.

A lot of that talent is coming back next year.

Alas, still the reporters and sports editors from papers from all across the state will look at Central and say "chance."

Well, we didn't have a chance in 1974 and 1975. We had no chance in the girls in 1983 and 1984.

I'm assuming we had no chance in 1912, but we certainly had no chance in 2006.

That's got to be a great feeling to know all these people are against you and these people expect you to flop during the biggest moment of your high school career.

The Eagles just turned around and won it without looking back. Who are the doubters, anyway?

This team, like last year's team, had a lot of heart. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the players were focused on their minds.

There was no more deserving team than Central.

What a great way to send off the seniors.

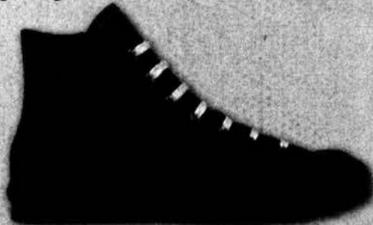
The future will be something to look forward to.

Maybe next year and the following year we can beat what the 1975 team set up for us. Two years in a row? About three or four?

IT'S GOTTA BE THE SHOES: from early styles to the trends of today

CONVERSE ALL-STAR

Marquis M. Converse designed this shoe in 1917. The shoe got its nickname Chucks from Charles H. "Chuck" Taylor, a basketball player for the Akron Firestones. In 1921, he became its first official endorser. In 1923, his signature was added to the All-Star Patch. It has been a growing trend with today's teens.



REEBOK PUMPS EDITION

This shoe was designed with an air bladder that when squeezed would tighten the shoe around the foot. The company suffered after producing this shoe because it was manufactured in African sweatshops.



NIKE SHOX

This shoe was inspired by Vince Carter of the Toronto Raptors. It combines six "shox" columns with a zoom air unit under the forefoot.

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