

#### ID BADGES

Like it or not, they're back,  
this time to stay.

OPINION, PAGE 6

#### 'WORLD TRADE CENTER'

Nicolas Cage stars in a  
heart-wrenching true  
story behind 9/11.

ARTS, PAGE 9

#### FOOTBALL

New coach Jay Ball reveals  
the strategies that will  
switch up J-Back High.

SPORTS, PAGE 12

11 TIME NSPA/JEA BEST-OF-SHOW WINNER

A HIGH SCHOOL PAPER PRACTICING PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD WINNER

## Principal takes over reins of 'flagship school'

BY BOB AL-GREENE

Greg Emmel said within a short  
time after Principal Jerry Bexten  
announced his retirement on March 1,  
he made the decision to go for the spot.

He said Bexten spent much  
of the summer with him, giving  
him information about Central and  
specifying his duties.

"That was very helpful," Emmel  
said of Bexten, who stayed through the  
end of July to assist the new principal.  
"That was huge."

Emmel said he maintains contact  
with Bexten through e-mails or phone  
calls about once  
a week.

Emmel said  
that before he  
came to Central,  
he knew that it  
was definitely  
the flagship  
school of the  
district, as well  
as the largest  
school in the  
state and one of  
the very best in  
academics and athletics.

He said he was also aware of the  
large amount of support from parents  
and alumni.

He said he considers Central  
unique, and that adjectives like diverse,  
urban and inner-city fit it quite well. He  
said he considered himself fortunate  
to have worked in environments like it  
for his entire career with Omaha Public  
Schools (OPS).

"You have a growing number of  
educators who want to be in an urban  
setting," he said. "You'd be amazed."

This will be Emmel's 29th year  
in OPS. He said after growing up in  
Sioux Falls, S.D. he attended Augustana  
College, where he gained BA degrees in  
English and history.

He began his teaching career in  
OPS in 1977, going on to spend almost  
10 years teaching social studies and  
language arts to 7th graders at Monroe.

After working for a short time as  
a Student Personnel Assistant at the  
central office, Emmel was the assistant  
principal at Northwest High for 10 years  
and the principal at McMillan until last  
year.

"When I look back to teaching,"  
Emmel said, "I was young and I was  
having fun... I was really busy."

He said coaching and building  
student/teacher relationships were an  
important part of his early career, and  
said being an administrator has been  
much more of a challenge, and has  
prepared him for his current position.

"Being a principal is what helped  
me the most," Emmel said of his seven  
years at McMillan.

He said learning to focus on the  
administrative tasks like balancing  
budget with resources helped him to  
learn what being a principal meant,  
along with becoming acquainted with  
the community.

He said those duties make the job  
different from what other school faculty  
do.

He said the most difficult aspect of  
his job did not have to do with balancing  
the budget, though.

"The hardest thing," he said,  
"is working with students who,  
unfortunately, make some poor choices."

He said watching good students  
who should be successful make a series

Continued to **Emmel** on Page 4

KATRINA

ONE YEAR LATER

# STARTING LIFE OVER

Senior  
Obadiah Davis  
talks about the year  
since Hurricane Katrina  
hit his hometown  
of New Orleans  
and the horrors  
he witnessed at the  
Superdome and the  
Houston AstroArena.

Story by Astrika Wilhelm  
Photo by Betsy Wallace  
Graphic by Bob Al-Greene

"So many people died," senior Obadiah Davis said.  
It has been a little over one year since Hurricane Katrina,  
and already so much has changed for Davis.  
When Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, many died and still  
more lost their homes, having their world turned upside down.  
Davis was one of the many evacuated.  
"Hurricane Katrina made me adapt and because of it, I met new  
people," he said. "It hurt."  
He moved to Omaha in the beginning of September last year.  
His cousin coincidentally had moved to Omaha from New Orleans  
just a year prior to the hurricane.  
Davis came with his older and younger sisters and nephew.  
Later on, they all met up with their parents.  
Although Omaha isn't his ideal place to live, he still likes it.  
"It's a lot of fun," he said. "It's a family town, a place to settle  
down or start over."  
His favorite thing about Omaha is Central, even though he had  
some problems at the beginning of the year. He said he's learning  
a lot of things he probably never would have learned in his high  
school, Fredricke Douglas High School.  
"Omaha has a higher (level of) education than New Orleans,"  
he said.  
But Davis said he misses his home town.  
"New Orleans is a party town," he said. "Every day you could go  
clubbing."  
Moreover, he hates Nebraska's snow.  
This past summer, Davis went back to New Orleans to visit his  
old life.  
"I expected it to be bad, but it wasn't that bad," he said.  
Davis said New Orleans was very unstable. He went back to the  
neighborhood where he grew up and was shocked.  
"My house smelled," he said. "You couldn't go in without a mask  
on."  
Davis said he's lucky.  
"My family was evacuated," he said.  
The experience made him see life in a new perspective.  
"I saw people suffer and I don't want to go through that again,"  
he said.  
He was one of the many people to move to the Superdome,

Continued to **Katrina** on Page 5

## Learning communities ignite debate over fairness

BY BOB AL-GREENE

"It (legitimate discussion) can't be  
with a foot on our throat," Omaha Public  
Schools (OPS) Superintendent Dr. John  
J. Mackiel said.

Almost a month after the plan  
proposed in Legislative Bill 1024 became  
law, debate has shown no signs of cooling  
down.

To Mackiel, heated arguments aren't  
as important as educated discussion.

The plan, which would consolidate  
11 school districts in Douglas and  
Sarpy counties into divided "learning  
communities," has drawn fire for its  
apparent forced segregation based on  
race.

"There's still a lot of vilifying, there's  
still a lot of finger-pointing," said Mackiel  
of the back-and-forth argument over the  
future of OPS. He said such behavior is  
patently wrong and destructive.

Since school-provided  
transportation within the communities  
would be limited if not nonexistent, the  
northern community, including Central,  
would contain primarily black students;  
the southern community would consist  
of mostly Latinos and the West of  
Caucasians.

The Legislature's decision to ratify  
and enact LB 1024 has caused an outcry  
from those who consider it blatantly racist  
and a considerable step backwards.

"Just the thought is a little bit  
disgusting," senior Aaron French said.

He said integration and education  
go hand in hand, and that diversity is a  
vital part of a school experience.

He said he and friends from Millard  
have had friendly debates on the subject,  
and said some kids don't know a lot about  
the issues.

He said they should learn and  
become involved in the decision-making  
process.

"It's not good to have adults who  
don't regularly attend school make  
decisions for kids," he said.

Two lawsuits have officially been  
filed in response to the passing of LB  
1024.

The first filed primarily by the  
NAACP in May was a federal suit  
addressing one item: the breakup of OPS.  
Mackiel said it is currently en route to the  
courts.

The second, headed by the Chicano  
Awareness Center in August, challenges  
the actual state constitution.

Mackiel said OPS, like other  
districts involved in the learning  
community dispute, will not be filing its  
own lawsuits.

"A school district cannot defend  
itself," he said. "It's interesting."

At the U.S. Civil Rights Commission,  
held Sept. 8 at the Omaha Hilton, Sen.  
Ernie Chambers, the co-writer of the  
bill, defended his position by claiming a  
quality education is more important than  
integration.

Mackiel said it was a false choice  
between education and integration.  
He said schools nationwide are having  
trouble using race to integrate and that  
the bottom line was OPS has been a  
national model for successful integration  
that has been, unfortunately, criticized at  
home.

"And I find that very concerning,"  
he said. "If you scream loud enough...  
you begin to form a perception."

He said he hopes the concept of a

Continued to **Mackiel** on Page 3

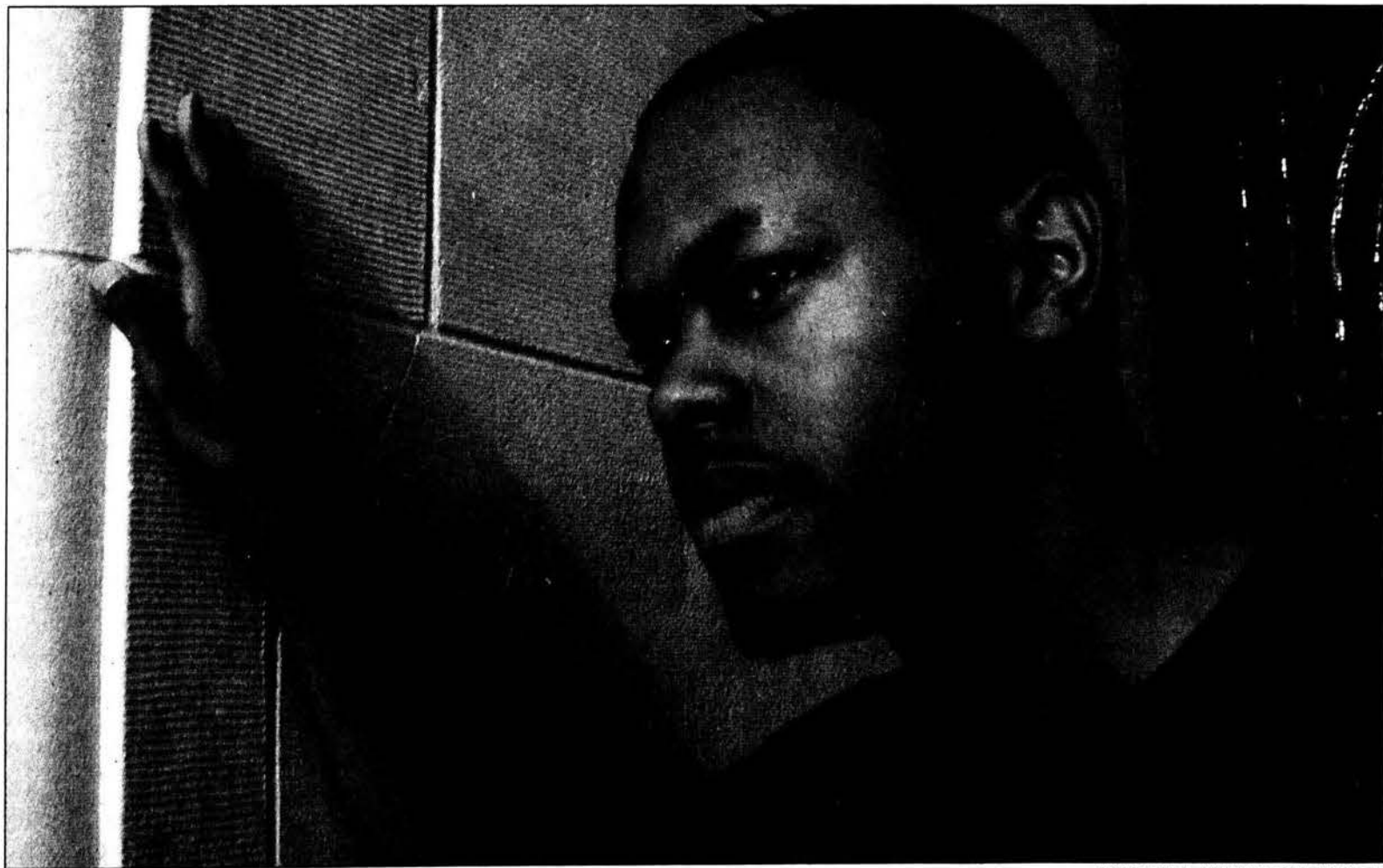


PHOTO BY BETSY WALLACE/REGISTER

Senior Obadiah Davis talks about when he had to leave New Orleans because of Hurricane Katrina, how the experience changed his outlook  
on life and how things are going in his new home of Omaha. He said he never wanted to experience another catastrophic event like Katrina  
again. Despite the tragedy, he said he wanted to go back to the South, although not necessarily New Orleans.



#### ID Badges

Administrators introduce new  
guidelines and punishments to keep the  
controversial badges in place.

PAGE 3

#### Frisbee Club

The club is growing more popular and  
members of the team hope to compete  
against other schools.

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## Teacher wins state award for history

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

"My whole life, I was curious about history," AP American History teacher Scott Wilson said.

This past June, Wilson was chosen as the Nebraska History Teacher of the Year. "You have to apply for it and the History Department Head, Charles Hinkle, along with Harris Payne, encouraged me to apply," Wilson said.

He, in order to be eligible for the award, had to perform many tasks required by the organization. He had to write an essay on why he loved teaching history, send in a clip of him teaching and send a sample of his planner.



WILSON

Wilson was notified he had been chosen for the award by Harris Payne during June.

Wilson doesn't know why he was picked, but the decision to pick him might have been influenced by his long-term project of student-written

papers on each of Central's World War II fatalities.

"It was a great project. I'm sure their work was great," he said.

Wilson said he feels very honored of being chosen.

"There are so many great teachers at Central. Anyone from Central could have won the award," he said.

Wilson was honored at a ceremony at an Omaha Public School Board meeting.

Wilson, along with the other winners in the other states, is eligible to be named the National History Teacher of the Year. However, Wilson said he believed the organization had picked the person already, and he didn't think it was him.

"I didn't get picked, but state is a big honor," he said.

This was his first history-related award, although he was chosen for the Buffet Award last year.

Wilson would have never been chosen for this award if he had not had an interest for history.

"My two grandfathers, both soldiers in World War II, told stories about the war," he said. "That made me curious about history."

## Science class offers new opportunities

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

It's unlike any other science class offered.

It's the parallel class to Enrichment Math. Enrichment Science, offered for the first time this school year, focuses on projects and competitions.

Chemistry teachers Jesse Busse and Jeff Fredrickson, one of the sponsors for Science Olympiad, were the ones to first introduce the idea of the science class.

Fredrickson is the one actually teaching the class during fourth hour to the 12 students.

He said he hopes enrollment in the class will increase over the next few years.

The class focuses on an assortment of projects, including building robots and boats.

"We'll do what kids want to do," Fredrickson said. "If students want to do it, we'll do it."

Students have to compete in at least one competition although they can compete in as many as seven, including Chemistry Field Day, Physics Field Day, Robot Olympics, Science Olympiad, CSI Doan and an engineering competition.

"We'll do the engineering competition with E-Math since it focuses on both math and science," Fredrickson said.

Fredrickson said he hopes the students will do better in the competitions, although many students did win awards last year.

"If we've not done better, then we've done something wrong," he said.

The class projects focus on physics concepts, even though the teacher's expertise is chemistry.

But, the students will not only work on physics.

Fredrickson will practice some labs on the students in the class, and, if they are successful, will give them to his chemistry classes.

Fredrickson, along with biology teacher Erik Albertine, talked to the students in Science Olympiad last year, persuading them to take the class, which focuses partly on Science Olympiad.

Over 20 of the members said they would take the class, but 15 or 16 were not able to take the class because of schedule problems.

There was still enough students for the class to be offered.

Albertine, for now, isn't doing anything with the class since Fredrickson is the one teaching it. However, he still is the main sponsor for Science Olympiad.

# CALENDAR



PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

Administrator Mark Smith makes ID badges for freshmen after school during the first part of the year. Upperclassment did not have to get new photos taken because their photos from the previous year were used. School officials said they hoped the IDs would be a success this school year.

## IDs reintroduced as positive force

BY ALI HODGE

They're back.

The ID badges and social skills are back and administration has some new ideas, tactics and approaches that will hopefully boost the success rates.

This year the staff is taking a more positive approach to encourage wearing the ID badges.

Mark Smith, administrator, said the staff was trying to encourage students to wear them because they would receive benefits instead of punishments.

Benefits such as items from the school store, and hall passes are being tried. Also if a student is wearing an ID in the lunch line, with a teacher's permission, he may skip ahead of a student who is not.

"They're mainly for safety reasons," Smith said. "The original reasons we decided to try this were because of safety concerns."

Smith said he believes the ID badges were very important and worth the money and approximately the 40 hours of work that he and fellow administrator Lynne Slobodnik put into them.

"We're hoping this year will go really well," Slobodnik said.

Her reasoning to why the IDs were unsuccessful last year was due to students not wanting change and simply the fact that they were new. Slobodnik estimated that it would take a few years for the IDs to become a regular part of the school environment.

"Nothing is successful unless we are all on board," Diane Allen, an English teacher, said.

Allen said she used the ID badges when she

approached students in the halls mostly. She said that it was easier to follow through on punishments if she could identify them.

Allen enforces the IDs with positive reinforcement verbally as well as giving out extra credit every now and then to students who are wearing them. She said she teaches the social skills in different cases.

She said she believed the social skills were very important for now in life and later on in everything teens go into.

"I would rather teach a student to be a good human being than teach them nouns and verbs because it is much more beneficial to the kid," Allen said. "I am focusing for a more efficiently run school so that we can focus on the issue at hand which is education rather than just baby-sitting."

It seems as if the teachers and administration have a very positive and hopeful outlook on the ID badges and the social skills. However, some of the students have a different view on whether or not it's a good thing.

They seem to understand why the administration is enforcing the ID badges, but some don't seem to care. Some of the students have arguments as to whether or not the social skills and ID badges are important.

"I see where they're coming from," junior Tyler Kros said.

Kros said he understood about safety, but he thought the whole idea about students wearing IDs was annoying.

Sophomore Zach Nutt said the only thing the IDs were was a library card that the teachers wanted

the students to wear all the time.

"Everyone enforced them, but no one checked them," Nutt said.

With many efforts from the teachers and administration, the photo IDs were enforced last year, but many students didn't obey.

Kros said he believed the IDs failed last year because students didn't care, and that some teachers would only enforce them for a few days, if any at all.

Sophomore Madison Crispin said no one took them seriously.

So, this year the administration and staff are working hard to create more IDs. Students said when they were given them again, they were undecided about whether or not they would wear them.

Crispin said she will follow the social skills, but if no one else wears their IDs, she won't either.

Nutt said if teachers seriously enforced them, and if he needed it often enough to keep it around his neck, he would probably wear it. The social skills were making a come back this year as well, new and improved. Students seemed to be just as thrilled about this as they were about the ID badges.

"It seems like they should teach them in sixth grade," junior Jimmy Marcum said.

Students said they noticed the lack of time some teachers put into teaching social skills, yet they expect students to use them.

"They're important, but by the time we hit high school, we should already know them," said Nutt.

Nutt said one or two of his teachers went over the social skills in his classes, but they were pretty self-explanatory.

## OPS wins in lawsuit against corporation

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

Omaha Public Schools (OPS) was one of the many school districts that received compensation in an antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft, which had breached its contract.

OPS was one of the parties in a class-action settlement.

A total of \$22.6 million was awarded to plaintiffs in Nebraska. OPS was awarded compensation as a result of filling out the necessary paperwork in order to be involved in the lawsuit.

"Some school districts took the initial payout and our staff decided to fill out the forms," school board member Mona McGregor said.

The over \$4 million is in vouchers. OPS has to buy computer software in order to receive the money. The money doesn't technically exist though. OPS has to buy over \$4 million in computers, then Microsoft will reimburse the district. The reimbursement is in two separate vouchers, both equaling \$2,029,000.88.

"We just have to prove we purchased computers," McGregor said.

Currently, asst. supt. Dennis Pool said the vouchers. McGregor does not know how the vouchers will be distributed or what exactly will be bought.

"We just got the money," she said.

She said some of the voucher money might go to the Teaching Administration Center (TAC) to update its hard drive.

This is not the first amount of money in vouchers OPS has received though. In round one settlement, OPS was awarded \$125,000 in vouchers.

The voucher was the result of round two. Now, there is only one more round left, and it is very possible that OPS might receive even more voucher money.

"It's highly likely," Pool said. "The amount isn't known though."

However, it seems a lot of OPS employees do not know about the vouchers. When asked, Latin teacher Rita Ryan said she had no clue about the voucher money.

"At this moment, nothing is planned. We don't know what we'll buy or who will get it," Pool said.

## Trip to Israel canceled due to war, fear

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

English teacher Jennifer Stastny planned to go to Israel this past summer, but unexpectedly the Lebanon-Israel War broke out just days before her plane trip and the trip was canceled.

"I was really disappointed and upset," she said.

Last school year, Stastny was chosen by the Anti-Defamation League to spend time studying at the Yad Vashem Museum in Jerusalem. Stastny would have gone to Israel, but many of the teams were broken up because one of the members backed out because of the war.

"Two-fifths didn't want to go because they were afraid," she said.

Since so many teams broke up, the whole trip was canceled, and they instead went to New York City to study the history of the Holocaust. In New York she met with Abraham Foxman and heard three scholars talk about anti-Semitism. She also heard three testimonies of Holocaust survivors. Stastny would have preferred to go to Israel, since rocket shots aimed at Israel wasn't a new thing. She said it was a shame that the fight continues.

"It's a travesty that terrorists control a country," she said.

Also, she wanted people to realize not all Lebanese support Hezbollah.

"So many innocents are killed, like all wars," she said. "If the leaders fought, the war would not last as long."

But, because of her trip to New York, Stastny decided to start a new class just about the Holocaust. It will be a one-semester literature class.

"Right now, I'm just reading a lot of depressing books."

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## Upcoming Events

### September

#### 29 Home Football Game

The #8 ranked Eagles play at Seemann Stadium against #2 Millard South. The Eagles hope to continue their three-game winning streak after the initial two losses to Creighton Prep and Omaha North.

### October

#### 3 Girls Golf Districts

The varsity girls golf team will be competing in the District Golf Tournament hosted by Bellevue East at Willow Lakes. The team, which only returned four starters, will be playing for a chance to compete in the State competition. Coach Linda Brock said the team will be taking the top five players to the tournament.

#### 6 Homecoming Football Game

The Eagles play Omaha South at 7pm. Head coach Jay Ball plays against his former team, which he coached for 11 years before coming back to his alma mater.

#### 7 Homecoming

The annual homecoming dance will be Saturday night, Oct. 7. The dance is a chance for students to interact in a fun, social environment. This year's theme is "A night of stars." The theme for this year's dance was decided by the captains of pom squad and cheerleaders.

#### 9 Men's Chorus Festival - UNL

The men's chorus will travel to perform at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln on Monday. The all-day event starts at 9:30. The festival will host 12 high schools, and Central will be bringing around 18 students.



# Teen experiences tension of war during trip to Jerusalem

BY ASTRIKA WILHELM

Tension abounded in Israel during the days leading up to the Lebanon-Israel War, and Seth Rich was right there to see them.

He was on his third and final trip to Jerusalem with a Jewish camp of 308 teenagers. He was the only Nebraskan participating in the Ramah Seminar.

"There was a little tension with Lebanon," he said. "If anyone told us about the war, we would have thought it was with Gaza or Palestine."

Rich was in Israel for six weeks, from the second week of June to the first week of August. After only five days of being in the country, the war started. During the month and a half period, Rich lived out in the country, where it was safer.

"I was slightly worried," Rich said. "I was aware there was a war going on less than 60 or 70 miles from me, but I never felt endangered."

As a precaution, Rich tried to avoid going to the North, since bombs were falling there. Also, he kept his eyes open, and if anything seemed suspicious he would tell the guards or officials of the camp.

"Some of the other members were worried, but anytime you go to Israel something might happen," Rich said.

When anyone felt unsafe, they would talk about it, and they would then realize they were safe.

"We all realized if a full-out war happened, we would leave," he said.

He did spend a week in Jerusalem and a few

days in a smaller city.

"We were in the south for a few days, where you chose what you did (like) hiking, archeological work or staying in the desert," he said.

He chose to go to an army base, a sort of a boot camp, where the people from Israel would go to serve their years in the military.

"We did field drills, learned how to raid houses and fired M-A6s," Rich said. "We did a lot of basic military training."

While he was at the base, commanders and soldiers were being pulled to the North for the war.

"Tensions were running high," he said.

Despite the war, he said his parents were not that worried about his safety.

"They called me once in a while, and they

realized it was only remotely dangerous," he said.

The biggest reason Rich called his parents in the states was to find the media portrayal of the war. The most memorable sight he saw in Israel was how the people acted.

"They kept living their life," he said. "If bombs were falling in Bellevue what would you do? I'll never forget how the Israelis didn't let their lives stop because of the war."

Whenever he could, Rich talked to the people.

"I didn't hear a single Israeli say that the war shouldn't be done," he said. "A lot felt that they shouldn't have pulled out six years ago."

There was an overall agreement for the war, but there was some disagreement.

"They disagreed on the type of war," he said.

Rich said he wasn't able to talk to any Lebanese because if there were any of them in the country they hid their nationality for fear of retaliation from the Israelis.

The other times Rich was in Israel, the atmosphere seemed different.

Rich said he believes that Israel was right to retaliate against Lebanon.

"The U.N. wasn't doing anything," he said. "There was a kidnapping and bombs were falling. They waited for the U.N. to do something, but they didn't do anything."

He said he thought it was about time Israel went back to Lebanon and took care of the issue, hopeful that Lebanon might kick out the terrorists, which has an unbreakable hold on the government there.

## Superintendents voice differing opinions on learning community debate

■ CONTINUED FROM 'MACKIEL' ON PAGE

learning community can be realized, and that opportunities can be advanced through collective planning. He said there were issues with the communities that need to be addressed, however, such as an imbalanced voting structure in which Bennington Public Schools (BPS), a school district with around 600 students who will be drawn into the communities, has the same voting power as OPS, with around 47,000 students.

Dr. Terry Haack, superintendent of Bennington Public Schools, said fairness on the voting issue is relative to the observer. He said the ability of OPS to annex any part of Millard, Ralston or other districts within city limits without their consenting votes is just as unfair from their point of view. He also said the focus and controversy should not have to be on integration.

"Education should be in the spotlight," he said.

Haack said the state of integration by itself shouldn't matter so much as how it contributes to the state of education. He said a number of factors make up the issue, and none of them are as important as the whole. Millard Public Schools (MPS) Superintendent Keith Lutz said the idea of one vote independent of the size of the population is a nationally accepted policy and there are plenty of similar examples, such as senators or district representatives.

"[The learning communities are] not an exception to the rule," Lutz said.

Lutz said he saw no problems to be addressed with the learning communities legislation as it stands now, but said that doesn't mean there won't be issues brought up and altered before there can be success.

"People are going to have to get used to working with each other," he said. "Working towards a common goal."

Lutz said the goal was to guarantee a quality, world-class education, not just simply opportunity. He said Millard views integration as an issue of not of poverty but of race, as do the courts.

"Our demographics continue to change," Lutz said.

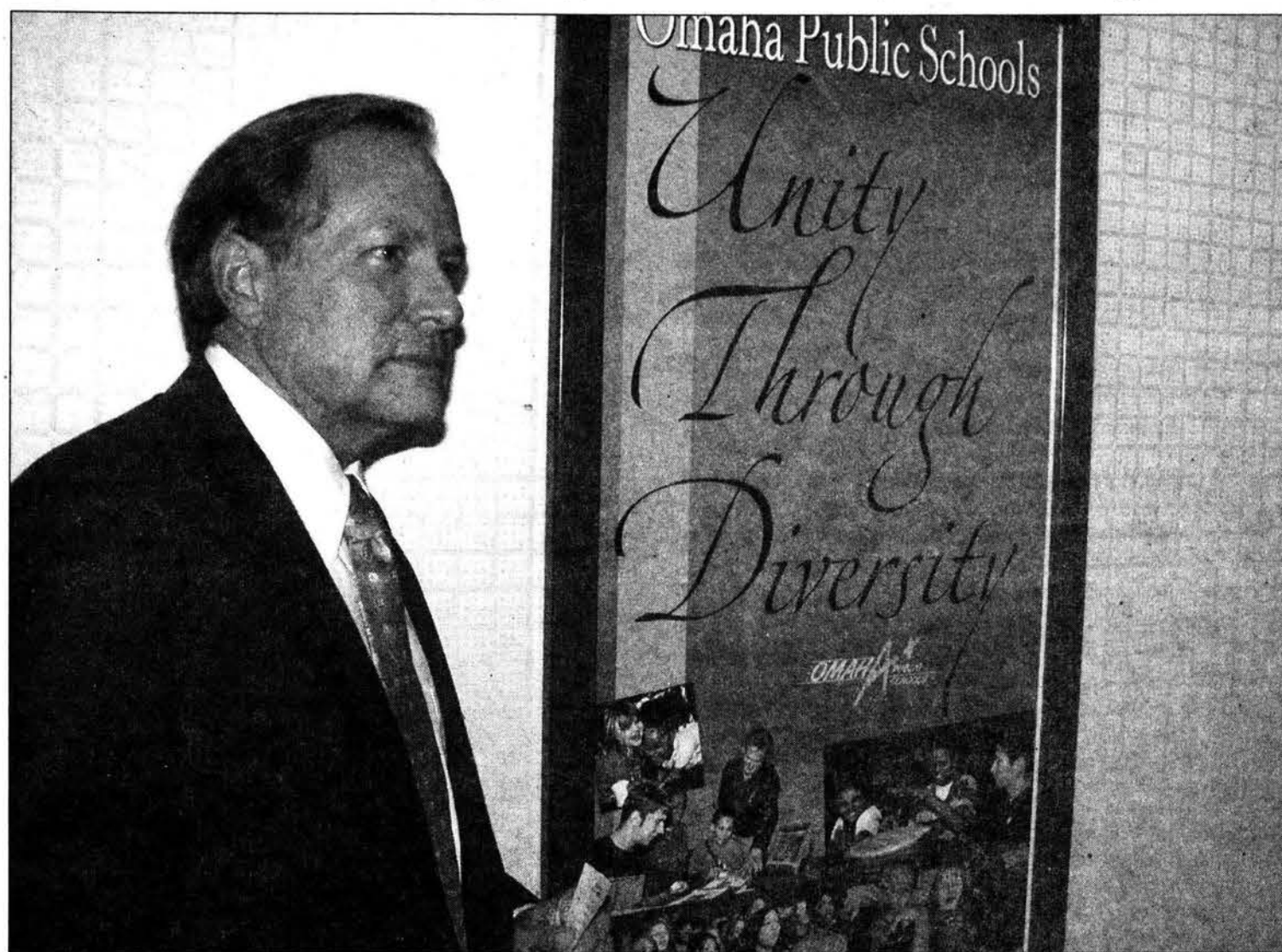


PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

**Superintendent John J. Mackiel said when it comes to the learning community debate, it is most important to emphasize and continue communication between the districts and put an end to finger-pointing and name-calling.**

He said whereas Millard was 96 percent Caucasian a few years ago, but today has a minority population of 10 percent, with a projected 25 percent minority in 12 years. Mackiel said it was of great importance to mix different races, cultures and beliefs into a common school experience. He said when students do not hear or meet other types of students, their problems are magnified.

"What is at stake is preserving the common school experience... that has made this nation strong," Mackiel said. "Once you isolate populations, I do think that's a tragedy."

He said that in an idealized school experience there would be support for the students beyond even problems with race or socioeconomic. He said expansion of choices for young people comes

with one tax base for an area, with businesses like car dealerships from all over Omaha and the suburbs supporting the entire city's schools.

"Right now," he said, "it's left to the wealthy. In District 66, the opportunities are different."

Mackiel said a common conception is such sharing is detrimental, but it really isn't. He used the example if a student in Elkhorn is allowed 10

crayons and a student in OPS uses five, and then the two schools are brought together by a plan like One City, One School District, both students would automatically be given seven crayons. He said parents in Elkhorn would be angry because their students would only be allotted seven crayons.

He said a community of schools brought together would not have to be handled that way, and individual needs of the students would be essential to decision-making.

"Are laptop computers important," he said, "to every student who walks into a high school?"

He also gave the Civil Rights Commission, and the negative attitude that was evident there, as an example. He said an OPS parent stood up to speak and was heckled. Mackiel said before there can be educational decision-making, district officials need to focus on continuing communications, dialogue and discussion.

"[We must] insist on civil discourse," he said. "Students are watching... We can model."

He said going back to the introduction of the One City, One School District plan, he has seen signs that a unified district would be better than a divided, segregated city.

"You can't sustain a system that separates people," he said.

He said the examples range from the horror that came with the disaster in New Orleans and the symbolism of riots in Paris to the outcry that resulted from the division of players by race on "Survivor" and the film "Crash," which dealt with heavy racial issues and won Best Picture at the Academy Awards.

He said the fact that the public finds great concern with those events, but remains largely quiet about LB 1024 is not a good sign.

"You step back," he said. "The silence is probably the greatest concern."

Mackiel said he definitely remains optimistic, however.

"We're going to get better," he said. "Is there cooperation on the major issues? There can be. Insist upon fairness. Insist upon equity. Do the right thing."

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### SESSION DATES

#### OCTOBER

(6:30 - 9 P.M.)

3

5

10

12

17

19

#### NOVEMBER

(6:30 - 9 P.M.)

2

7

9

14

16

21

#### THANKSGIVING

(8 A.M. - 3 P.M.)

22

25

26 (12 - 4:30 P.M.)

#### DECEMBER

(8 A.M. - 3 P.M.)

2

9

16 (8 A.M. - 2 P.M.)

#### WINTER BREAK

(8 A.M. - 3 P.M.)

27

28

29 (8 A.M. - 2 P.M.)



## Teacher travels to Guatemalan village, brings love, comfort

BY ELSE RICHARDS

Math teacher Christie Pfeifer went on a mission trip to San Andreas, Guatemala.

She went with some of her friends from church through Great Adventure Ministries. She was there for 11 days and taught about God's love and to bring some of the comforts of everyday life.

Prior to her trip she held a fundraiser with her classes to raise hair supplies. The classes combined raised over two grocery bags full of supplies. The supplies included stuff like hair ties, clips and bobby pins.

After she landed in Guatemala, they had to travel on a bus to San Andreas. All the roads were in very poor condition and extremely bumpy. Sometimes there would not even be a road to travel on.

"I felt like I was at the end of the earth," Pfeifer said. She stayed in one of the orphanages. There were two orphanages in the village.

One orphanage was for the kids and the other one was for visitors. They were unable to flush toilet paper because the plumbing system could not handle it. They all had to sleep on cots. She and other missionaries washed and cut the children's hair. Then with the hair supplies did the children's hair. Even other villagers came to have their hair done as well.

The children really loved having their hair done. They would count how many hairpieces were in their hair.

"It was fun because they really enjoyed it," Pfeifer said. "The kids were very excited to have us there."

For food she had chicken, beans and rice every day. She and other missionaries could only drink bottled water because of the bacteria in the water. Anything made with their water they could not eat. In Guatemala, it is a big no-no to show your legs. A woman can also not wear pants. The women there wore bright colored cotton dress.

The kids there were really taken care of at the orphanages, but were deprived of attention. Any attention that the kids received the kids soaked up.

Pfeifer and her friends performed puppet shows, colored with the kids and made brownies. When they made brownies the kids ate the batter like nothing else. She said the kids had brownie batter up to their elbows.

Pfeifer knew a little bit of Spanish from her husband. The kids helped her a lot with Spanish. However, some kids did not know Spanish or English. Some of the spoke Quiche, a native language.

She learned how to cope with the Internet, television and a phone. There was a phone, but it was for emergency use only. She also learned everybody wants the same thing in life and people are all the same even across the globe.

"It was kind of neat," Pfeifer said. "It was a good thing to go and serve them."

## New principal focuses on positivity, familiarity

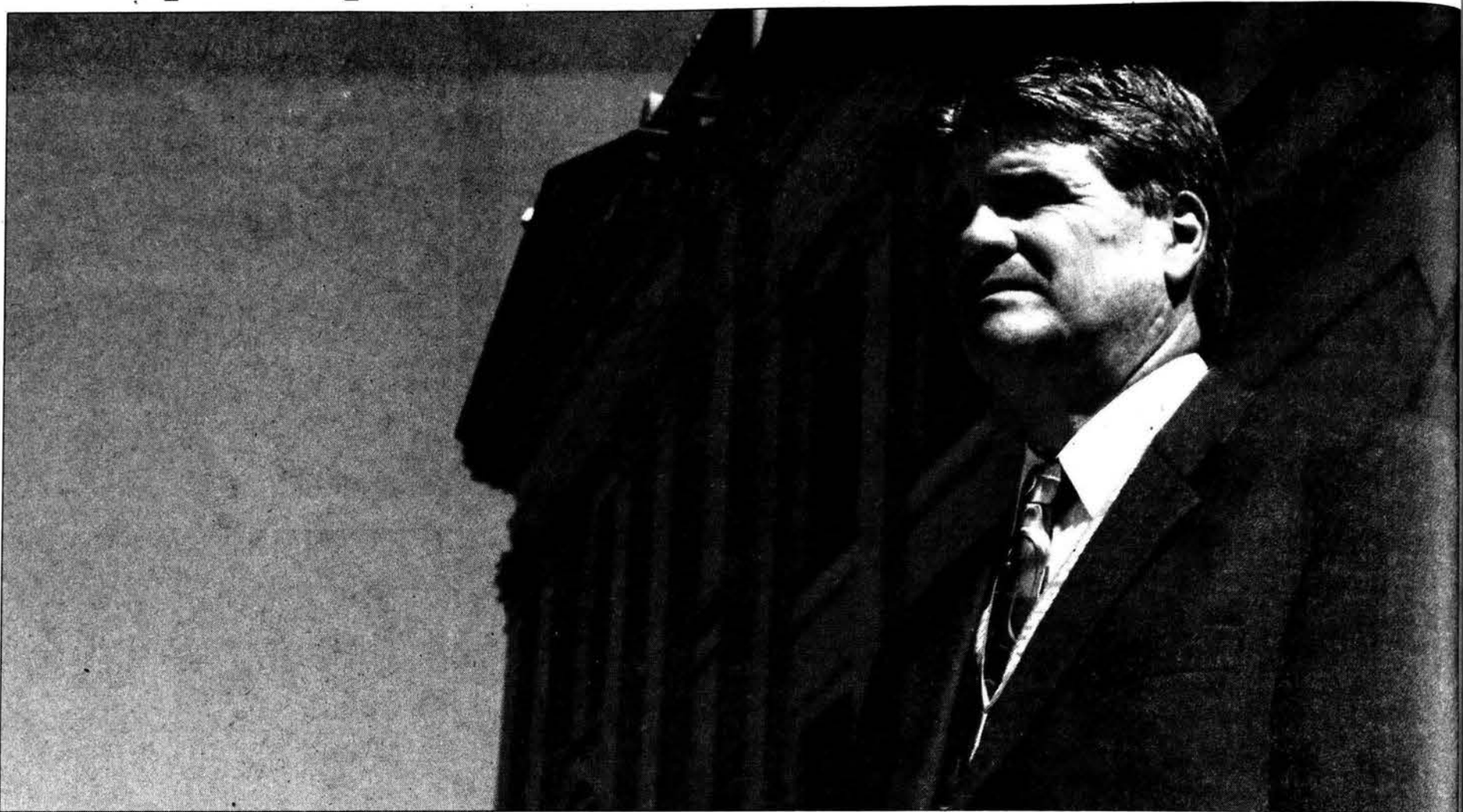


PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

Principal Gregory Emmel said he wants to focus in his first year on getting to know the school, the students and the staff. Emmel has spent 28 years in OPS and has been the principal at McMillan Magnet Center for the past seven years. He said his experience as principal and the assistance of former principal Jerry Bexten have helped him start off a good year.

### ■ CONTINUED FROM 'EMMEL' ON PAGE 1A

of bad decisions that lead them to consequences such as suspension, reassignment or expulsion was not a pleasant experience.

To gain the mutual respect and trust of the students and stay away from harsh consequences, he said, it was important to be polite, courteous and have a sense of humor.

"Show them you're human," he said. "In order to get respect, you have to give respect."

Bev Fellman, former president of the Central High Alumni Association and the International Languages department head, said a principal has to be calm in demeanor.

"That's very effective... for teachers in general," she said. "Not bad for students either."

Fellman said three weeks into the school year was too soon to judge Emmel's performance yet, and that no one would want to be judged that soon.

"I do like him," she said. "I want to see him do well and be remembered well."

Junior Will Robbins said his experience with Emmel has been very positive.

Robbins said he came in over the summer to work out a problem with his schedule and the principal was extremely helpful.

"[He was] really cool and down to earth," Robbins said. "Funny, too."

He said getting acquainted with the school was one of his top priorities for his first year as principal.

"One big goal would be getting to know people," he said. He said it would be a daunting task because the school is so huge.

"The school is people," he said. He also said he hoped to continue the tradition of

excellence started by past principals, but said it was easier said than done. He said he hasn't had a chance to interact with many student groups, yet.

"Ultimately," he said, "school is about students learning."

He said learning was one of the key factors he wanted to focus on himself.

Learning as much as possible about staff and students would be key to becoming a better principal.

He said this came into play when planning out parts of the year such as the reintroduction of identification badges, which he said he left up to administrators Lynne Slobodnik and Mark Smith.

"It would be presumptuous to say what needs to be changed," he said.

In the end, he said, he just wanted to maintain a positive atmosphere within the school.

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## Davis adapts to new life, different city

■ CONTINUED FROM 'KATRINA' ON PAGE 1A

where his older brother worked.

"It was hectic," he said. "There was a lot of chaos and drama."

Davis said there were a lot of fights among the different gangs.

Davis still looks back on those days after Katrina hit. He said he remembers so many horrible things.

"Someone committed suicide," he said. "It was a man saying that they're not gonna make it out. The man jumped off a 75 foot drop."

He also said he remembers a man who was completely beat up after he was accused of raping four children and murdering two of them.

However, his days in New Orleans were not all bad.

One of the good things he said he did was giving people food.

In the Superdome, there were two levels, the upper level and the lower level.

The upper level residents had blue bands, and they were treated much better because they were the families of the employees.

He said the people on the lower level were near starvation.

"We received real food like chicken nuggets, and they (the people on the lower level) got the army food," he said.

This was when he would help out.

"I would put my food in an army bag and give it to whoever needed it the most," Davis said. "They told me 'God bless you.'"

Another thing he said he thought was good was to give away all his extra clothing.

Davis was glad he was able to help people in time of chaos, and it didn't matter he was losing money.

"My brother just said give it to them because we'll make the money back," Davis said.

Since the hurricane, he has only reconnected with three of his friends, who live in Florida, Mississippi and Texas.

"Some of my friends passed away," he said.

Davis said 15 of his friends died, and about 60 or 70 people he knew died.

"I can name entire families that died," he said.

Davis still grieves for the family and friends he lost when the hurricane hit.

"One of my best friends passed away," he said. "I saw his mom crying and we just all prayed."

His 3-year-old cousin also died.

This isn't the first time he has evacuated because of hurricanes. Because of a previous storm, he and his family had to drive 12 hours to Alabama.

At that time there was almost no rain and they had evacuated for nothing.

He said he thought about moving back since he was born and raised in the city, but he doesn't know if he will.

# New assistant principal excited to join staff

BY ALI HODGE

"I love Central," Ed Bennett said. "The students and staff are very welcoming and considerate to me."

Bennett said he was enjoying his first year at Central as an assistant principal after a long history as a teacher, administrator and a director at the TAC building.

Now he can add assistant principal and data administrator of Central to his long list of accomplishments.

Bennett is the school's new data administrator. In other words, he is the administrator who handles all of the students' grades and makes sure those grades are in order.

He also participates in everything that goes along with being a high school assistant principal.

He said he loved everything about Central. Bennett appreciated the outstanding level of excellence that Central provides.

Bennett also has a long history of excellence. He was born and raised in Newton, Iowa and attended the University of Iowa to go on and get a degree in education to be an English teacher.

He then came to Omaha and got his masters degree at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He said he looks forward to earning his doctorate degree this spring.

He said he is very excited to be completing his education. Bennett encourages anyone who is interested in earning a doctorate degree to go for it.

He said getting a doctorate was more about perseverance than intelligence, even though intelligence had a lot to do with it.

During the course of his career, Bennett has been involved with almost everything there is to be involved in regarding education.

From 1992 to 1995, he was an English teacher at Bennett Community School, a small school in Bennett, Iowa with a population of 250 students all in the grades of kindergarten through 12th grade.

There he also was the sponsor of the yearbook, the head coach for boys basketball and boys and girls golf and a bus driver for the school.

He also was an English teacher at North High School in Omaha from 1995 to 1998 and an assistant principal at Buffett Middle School last year.

Also, he was the curriculum specialist at Brian High. He said it was like being a department head.

Bennett also worked at the TAC building as an assistant to the Curricular and Learning Department and the director of the Secondary Learning Department. As the director of the Secondary Learning Department, he was in charge of many things that had to do with the students.

For instance, he was in charge of meeting with different



PHOTO BY ALI HODGE/REGISTER

Administrator Ed Bennett stands outside the west entrance and patrols after school. Bennett said he loved working with the staff and students at the state's largest and most diverse high school.

publishers and researching the quality and prices of different text books for the district.

He said it was a lot of work, something that students don't even realize happens. He said students usually think the school just buys the materials, they don't realize all of the research that goes into bringing them the right book.

Bennett's co-workers said they enjoy having him at Central as much as he enjoys being here.

Assistant principal and Non-athletics coordinator Dionne Kirksey said she enjoyed working with him very much.

"He's awesome," Kirksey said. "He's a hard worker and he's fitting in well with the Central High staff."

## Chinese class opens doors for motivated students

BY PATRICK O'MALLEY

Mandarin Chinese was the only class where students were able to draw the language as opposed to writing out the words.

"There is a huge demand nation-wide for Chinese and we wanted to meet that demand," International Language Department Head Beverly Fellman said.

Fellman said Central was the second school in Nebraska to offer the course. Lincoln High School had offered it already. She said there is an Advanced Placement exam for students to receive college credit for an international language that went into effect in 2007.

"There are more than three languages in China, but because it is a united nation they pick one language which is Mandarin Chinese," Chinese teacher Shu-Fen Chien said.

Fellman said there were many reasons why she felt the class will be important for students to learn.

"I signed up because I feel the Chinese language is going to be extremely necessary in the future," senior Zachary Pope said.

He said he was intimidated at first and thought it was going to be tough, but he was

up for the task.

"I think kids need a challenge," Pope said.

Pope said he thought it was going to be crucial because China was a very influential country and the United States does vast amounts of business with the country.

"In the future the mastery of the Chinese language will be very important for political and economical reasons," Fellman said.

She said the department had been planning on adding the course once teachers started to see China rise as an economic power.

"This is a new program, so I think that is a challenge," Chien said.

Chien said she wanted to challenge her students and she didn't think it would be a problem because of the difficulty of the language.

"It is a highly disciplined language to learn because they learn characters not letters," Fellman said.

She said she was not expecting the students to do as well as they have been.

"Their pronunciation is better than what I thought and they practice outside of the classroom," Chien said.

She said she focused heavily on the

cultural aspect of China.

"I'll teach them Chinese Holidays and the relationship between Taiwan and China and their lives," Chien said.

She said she was going to develop her student's reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

One way she wanted to improve their skills was by having the students contact someone from China over the Internet.

"I wanted the students to have a pen pal in China to share their cultures," Chien said.

She said because it was the first year she only had two introductory classes. She said she would like to build up the program and eventually have more teachers for more classes. Chien said she decided to come to America because she wanted to experience a different culture.

She said she attended St. Cloud Minnesota State University because she had never seen snow before.

She said she always wanted to be a teacher and she loved working with kids of all ages. Chien said during her interviewing process, she heard Central's standardized test scores and that was what made her want to teach here.



PHOTO BY BOB AL-GREENE/REGISTER

Chinese teacher Shu-Fen Chien writes on the chalkboard. Chien said Chinese was a disciplined language to learn.

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# EDITORIALS

## Memories, feelings drive senior to avoid 9/11 films

Ask a parent or grandparent where they were or what they were doing when they heard President Kennedy had been assassinated, and if the old cliché is true, they'll be able to tell you.

My father happened to be walking to a college class when he encountered classmates talking, then heard Walter Cronkite breaking down and crying live on the air.

High school students don't have the assassination of a president sketched in permanent ink into our brains. But people our age aren't lacking in monumental tragedy to recall.

As for me, I can clearly remember walking into second-hour home economics and seeing the smoke billowing out of the first tower on TV. The teacher had a television on a cart and turned it off as class began. I missed the second plane by minutes. In third hour Art, I heard we were at war with Saddam Hussein, which I would ironically dismiss days afterward: "Well, that's preposterous. He had nothing to do with it."

And then in fourth hour, Mr. Day would make sure everyone was aware that both the towers had in fact fallen over. Apparently my Art class had been the only group of people in the country not glued to a television.

I asked him to clarify the statement and mimed the towers falling to the side like dominoes with my forearms, unable to comprehend just what had happened.

I can't imagine forgetting flashes from the rest of that day: my band director holding back tears, telling us we would grow up in a different world; foolish kids at lunch trading rumors and posturing about their patriotism (which would soon become a national pastime); finally getting home and seeing for myself, Dan Rather apologizing half-heartedly for the unedited footage, all home videos complete with a soundtrack of men and women screaming the same thing as the towers gave out: "Jesus f---ing Christ!"

I am certain I'm not alone in automatically committing those experiences to memory; the phrase "We will never forget" has been so overused that it holds almost no real meaning beyond the words, and as a result, people are already beginning to let it fade into the haze.

The horrible indignation has faded with the aftermath, the wars, the exponential increase in death, the aforementioned posturing. Those of us who really will never forget don't need to print out a bumper sticker. We won't forget because we can't help it. Sometimes, I wish I could, because that memory hurts so much. It was probably the worst single day I'll ever see - but I can't remember when I finally cried.

It might not have even been on that fateful Tuesday. It might have been the next day, or the next day, or any number countless more times between then and now. It could have been after seeing the cheesy telethon with Julia Roberts or Sean Penn, hearing myself try to say the words "It's so horrible", making myself as try for not fathoming the pain and loss until a week after the event.

It could have been after seeing Jon Stewart break down on his first broadcast after the attacks a few weeks later, claiming with a smirk that he and the Daily Show just kind of slipped under the wire, then openly sobbing like Walter Cronkite had almost 40 years before, not bothering with fake news stories. Claiming that his apartment had been filled with soot and ash for a few days, but that now the view from his window was the Statue of Liberty, and that maybe that meant something.

The feeling in the pit of my stomach and the back of my throat when he said those words is the most tangible sensation I can associate with a few weeks in September five years ago. Like with all injuries, it stopped hurting with time, but I finally felt it again not long ago, after years without it, at the most improbable, uneventful and unlikely time: in a movie theater.

And it wasn't even the movie I was watching - it was the trailer. The preview for "Flight 93". How weak is that? Probably less than two minutes, not even a complete story. I just needed a reminder, really - and I started weeping up.

In response to that, I decided I wouldn't go see the film, which is being hailed as one of the best of the year, and is now joined with another of its kind - the aptly titled and carefully nonpolitical "World Trade Center," which I will also miss.

So what does that make me? What does that say about me?

A number of things if you read into it. It could be that I'm unable to deal with reality, seeing as I would rather see a man in a cape catch the plane than see anonymous heroes save the day the only way they could.

I could be less than a patriot because I don't care enough to buy a ticket or something. I could be a coward, but I don't think that's it. I could be a coward. I could be.

But I, of course, would like to believe things are different. Would a rape victim want to watch a movie about themselves, even (or especially) a gratuitous and fact-driven feature?

Maybe that's a stretch, maybe I'm taking it too personally, but is that my fault?

I was born in Philadelphia and my grandparents live in New Jersey. That means when I go to visit them, I have the opportunity to check out some of the coolest sights on the east coast, Manhattan included.

The last time I visited, sometime before 2000, I got to go to the top of the Empire State Building.

Off in the distance I could see the towers rising above the skyscrapers around them, and even beyond that, the tiny topknot of the Statue of Liberty which Jon Stewart would later see framed out his apartment window. When we got back to street level, my dad asked me if we should go see the top of the World Trade Center.

"No," I said. "They'll be here next time."

A part of me likes telling that story because it's so ridiculous and honestly unbelievable. A part of me hates me for it. A lot.

## Love of sibling overwhelms student when brother leaves state for college

My brother finally left for college. I knew the day was coming, but I didn't actually realize what that day would mean.

Six days before school started for me, he left. Months ago I had a few main thoughts, including that I only have his room since it was bigger than mine and I will only have my sister at school. Months went by; he registered for his classes, he was told what dorm room he would be living in and he contacted his professors.

Then the Thursday before he left just jumped at me out of nowhere.

That was the time all of these horrible feelings started to rush towards me. I realized he was never going to live in the same house with me again.

Our family was never going to be the same. His leaving had a tightening grasp on me, and the sad, lonely feelings wouldn't leave no matter what I did.

It was a life-changing experience. I had my last lunch with him, my last dinner and my last breakfast the next morning when I reluctantly got out of the comfort of my bed at 5 in the morning just so I could see him one last time.

We shared our last joke, our last hug and our last words of "I love you."

Sure, we will share many of these things again later on in our life, but it won't be the same. He is no longer my housemate brother, but just my brother who lives in a college dorm room in Nashville.

We spent the last memorable summer together at Disney World.

Memories of me screaming on the rides, while sitting right by him, gripping his hand to make sure I wouldn't be the only one to fall out of the ride, permeated my thoughts. Him laughing at me for being so scared popped in my head.

It was his fault though. He was the one who told me right before I got on the Rock'n'Roller Coaster that a little boy had died on the ride just weeks before we had arrived.

Surprisingly, he was the one who told me the 15-story Slush Gusher wasn't scary at all. He lied. We had a lot of fun, and I knew we would never spend summer vacation together again.

He would be in Germany at a Summer Program, and I would be stuck at home working on my college applications. Although it was not the best vacation ever, I knew I would always remember it as the last one.

I always thought I eagerly welcomed change with open arms, but I was fooling myself. I thought I had so much change in my life just because I had lived in a number of different states. I always had my family with

me though.

Eating my Fruit Loops that morning, I tried to act as if nothing big was happening, but my emotions soon caught up to me. He gave me his toga he had borrowed from Ms. Ryan, and I knew that I would always remember that exact moment.

Then, it was time for him to leave.

We hugged and exchanged the "L" word, and then I stepped into the shadowy confines of the hallway, watching the whole scene play out before me.

My mother said good-bye to her only son, and my brother told her not to worry since he would be back in November for Thanksgiving. My sister said good-bye to him, and then sat down on a nearby couch.

I watched her intently because I had begun to cry, but I forced myself to stop. I made myself stop breathing; I did anything that would help me from crying. Shortly after my sister's lip began to tremble, and I, surprisingly, felt happy I wasn't the only one who was crying.

My father and brother left the house and started on their excruciatingly long trip to Nashville.

Before the door had even closed, I was in my room, wiping my eyes on some T-shirt I found on my bed. Making sure everyone else had gone to their rooms, I curled up in my bed and cried myself to sleep, thinking about life in general.

When I woke up four hours later, my thoughts became even more depressing. Next year, I am going to be the only one left with my parents. My brother will be back in Nashville and my sister would probably be in New York City.

Then the year after that, I will be gone. On my own. I started to cry even harder with that thought; I just wanted everything to go back to how it was. I wanted all of us to be in the same house and not two thousand miles apart.

Weeks have passed since that fateful morning when he left, and I still feel empty and lost. Since his departure my house feels like it's in mourning for a beloved person lost to the afterlife.

I look at his chair in the dining room, and it really does feel like he has passed away. No one has sat there except for him. His room is empty, his bed is made and nothing has been touched. A fine layer of dust is slowly growing on his furniture and on his computer.

I've spoken to him on the phone several times, and I even received an email from him, his successful attempt to help me with AP Chemistry. No emotion exists when I talk to him though. I'm too embarrassed to say anything too mushy in case my parents or older sister hear me.



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

## Reaction to IDs immature

Despite all the whining from students, identification badges are back again, and it seems as though everyone is having a bad case of déjà vu.

Just like last year, the concept of the ID badges seems to be regarded with very little respect from a majority of the members of the school.

The students put on the badges as though they are putting on torture devices.

The list of redundant complaints remains endless: "it ruins my ensemble," "they're hard to remember" and even "the picture is ugly."

Maybe if the badges were unreasonable, like if they had to be tattooed onto the students' faces, there would be more reason to complain.

But they're not. They're hung from one's neck. That's all.

ID badges are annoying, it's true. It would be quite a challenge to argue that they aren't.

But they are only a minor annoyance, so why are the students' stances against them so harsh? Why is there a standard that the badges aren't "cool enough?"

A teen's contempt for the badges is comparable to a teen's contempt for seatbelts or bike helmets. To submit to one of these safety precautions is embarrassing because they represent restriction and restraint, as minimal a level as it may be.

Students shouldn't spend so much time complaining about ID badges, and should just wear them. Badges were instated for their own good, no matter how much they refuse to believe it.

Unfortunately, some of the teachers seem to take it no more seriously than the students do.

The badges are mandatory, yet an absence of them goes relatively unnoticed. It's just accepted that students don't wear them.

Last year was the first year of ID use at school, and the difficulties that came with it were understandable.

But, after its lack of success, one would assume that changes would be made for a stronger attempt at enforcement.

Student necks were mostly void of the identification cards within two periods of them being handed out, having been neatly stuffed away in lockers or backpacks.

A vast number of teachers remained silent as these unidentified students roamed the halls.

Does it sound at all familiar?

It may bring to mind a strikingly similar vision of last year's ID badge installment. And it may induce a strikingly similar memory of its dismal failure.

To get the point of ID badges across, they could be compared to rules on a larger scale. Compare a small rule like wearing the badges to a small law like following the speed limit or stopping at stop signs.

While the rules may not be identical, the concept remains the same. Minor laws and rules act like building blocks for a greater structure: order.

You may be annoyed about being pulled over for speeding or blowing through a stop sign, but laws have a greater purpose of keeping unwanted hazards, from low-threat criminals to murderers, out of the worries of the public.

It isn't really a bad trade off if you think about it. Laws seem like a pretty good idea, right?

The ID badges are just like those laws. They may present themselves as an inconvenience, but if really put in effect, they could be worth the over-exaggerated toil. Minor rules, like wearing ID badges, are part of an effort to prevent disaster on a larger scale.

It cannot be overlooked that if the police only asked people not to drive drunk, only handed out occasional warnings and if they did not enforce the law, then laws might as well not exist.

It is the same way that ID badges might as well be abolished if teachers don't punish students for not wearing them.

EDITORIAL  
The OPINION of  
the Register staff

### 06-07 REGISTER

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

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

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

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

The Register has won multiple NSPA Pacemakers.

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

It has also won many Cornhusker

awards from NHSPA.

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

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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.

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**SOMEONE'S GOTTA SAY IT**  
A Column by Alli Hodge

## Sophomore learns about, relates to hard work at drum corp Nationals

The faint constant sound of drums rang through the downtown area like a heartbeat.

The loud, yet delicate cry of trumpets and horns echoed off of the buildings.

The faint noise of counting could be heard as flags flew gracefully up into the air and fell down again.

Last summer, crowds from all over the country gathered to watch the finals of the 2006 Drum Corps International World Championships warm up and drill down in any spare inch of the city. It was one of the biggest nights of those teenagers' lives.

It was the chance to earn the title of the best drum and bugle corps in the world. Both the corps and the fans shared the tension.

My father invited me to go on this trip with him and I must say, I was not too enthusiastic.

The last time I had attended a drum and bugle show, I was about 11. It was boring to me then, and so I thought it would be boring this time as well.

If it was as boring as I thought it would be, at least I would get to spend some time with my dad.

I don't have the opportunities to spend time with him as often as I would like. He's a truck driver, thus he is only home two or three nights a week.

When I do get to hang out with him though, we have a lot of fun. We have the pretty much the same taste when it comes to morals, political views, books, movies and music.

He's also a teacher to me. He has gotten a lot out of his life and he is always eager to share his stories with me and whoever is willing to listen.

We arrived in Madison about 11:30 that night. We checked into the hotel and fell asleep that night looking forward to the competition the next day.

My dad and I spent the entire next day walking down streets around University of Wisconsin's Randal Stadium, watching the corps warm up and listening to their instructor's pep talks.

Around every corner we saw kids in band uniforms, instruments, tour buses and many signs on surrounding buildings welcoming the corps and their fans.

It was about 1:30 p.m. in the afternoon when we heard the delicate and skillful sound of a horn line somewhere nearby.

The crowd around us, which was obviously doing the same thing we were, was headed to a bank building across the street.

We followed a sidewalk around the bank that led us to the outdoor eating area in the back.

We began to see the perfectly formed half circle of a division II Drum Corp, The Academy. Its eye-catching uniforms shone brilliantly of bright red and black with a sharp white trim.

The instruments were identical shiny silver and their posture was magnificent.

The Academy's director stood in the middle of the half circle directing them with full concentration and enthusiasm.

Every now and then he would shout over the blare of the horns to breath, or to hold out a note or to count.

Eventually he directed the band to a close.

With a snap motion he brought his arms down to his side.

Members of the corp followed by bringing their horns down to their chests in the same snap motion.

He told the band to go at ease.

The band's posture melted away as they put their horns down on the ground in front of them.

The director began to pace up and down the half circle.

"Remember guys," he began, "this is the best day of your life! You have worked hard for this, so let's go do it! This is the best day of your life!" He said it again, louder.

The band surrounded him like basketball players surrounding their coach during a time-out.

It was apparent that he was telling them something because they were all listening intently.

We heard his voice every now and then and a small laugh from some of the band members.

The Corp started clapping and their director pushed his way out of the crowd.

"This is the best day of your life," he yelled, his voice full of enthusiasm. "Let's do this! In formation!"

There was a small roar of excited talk as the band gathered the instruments and formed two very straight lines.

Trumpets first, horns second, and contra bass last.

Together with pride they crossed the street and entered Randal Stadium with the attitude that they owned the place.

Later on at the division I championship ceremony The Academy entered the stadium representing the winning drum and bugle corps of division II. Members of that organization were beaming!

They looked better than they did in their formation at the bank (if that was even possible). Their faces lit up and their posture was perfect. I guess it really had been the best day of their lives.

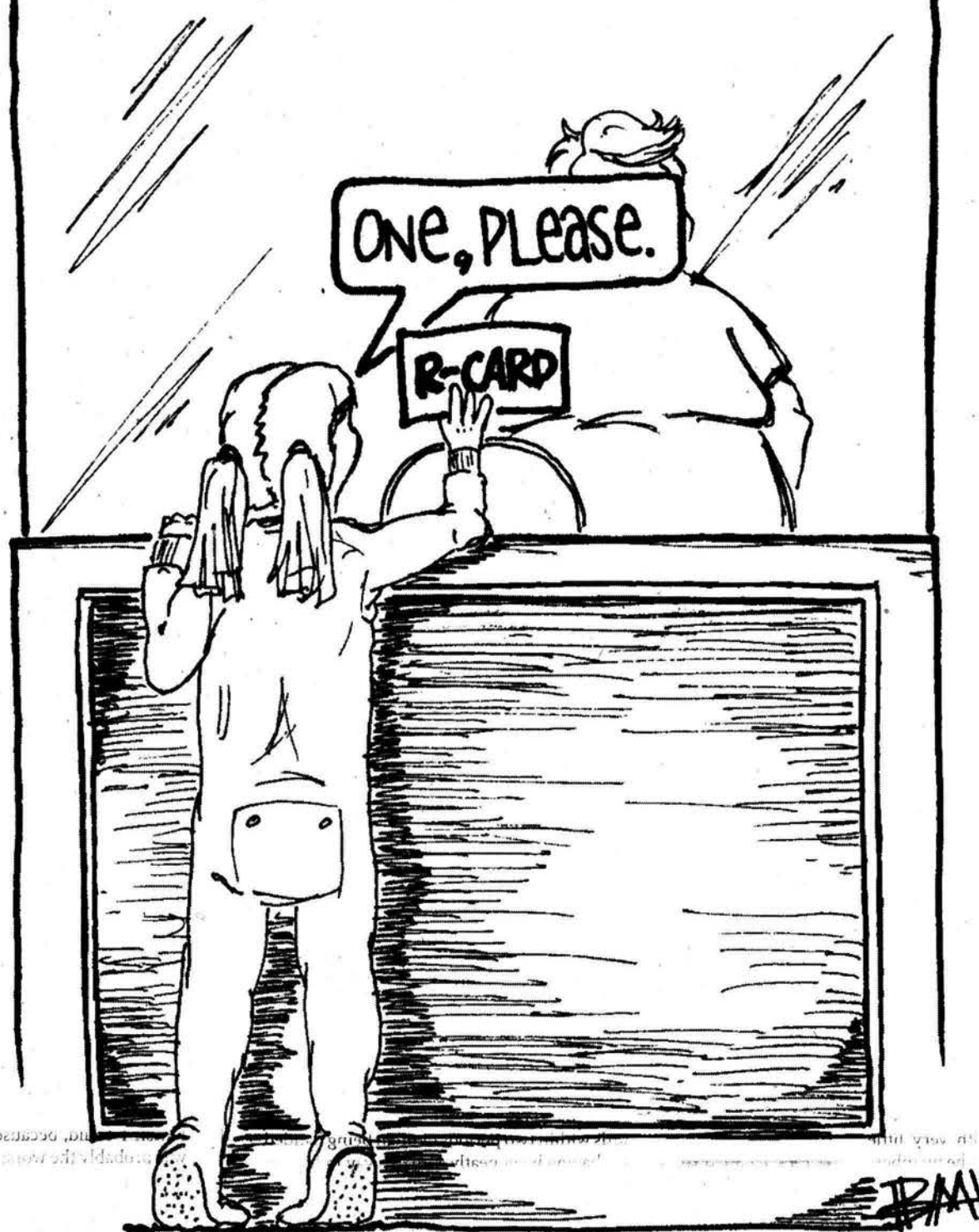
I'm in Central marching band and although we don't come anywhere close to the level of talent and skill that these corps do, I do know from experience at band camp that there is incredibly hard work and a lot of time that goes into marching and I can't imagine the effort these people put forward to make it this far.

The Drum Corps International World Championship is the definition of hard work, determination, pride and confidence.

These teenagers turned a hobby into something that can really be admired.

I don't think there was one person out of the thousands that attended who didn't leave with the desire to put 100 percent into everything that they do. After seeing what one can accomplish with that kind of drive and passion, how could you not?

## NOW SHOWING BLOODSLAYER 2: THE ROBOT KILLER DEATH SQUAD R



## R-Card raises too many questions

If there is a new R-rated movie out and you are not 17, then there is no reason you should be seeing it unless you are with a parental unit.

Traditionally, restricted films are reserved for a restricted audience- 17 years and older- just like traditionally, the front row at school sporting events is reserved for seniors and nothing should alter the tradition.

The R-card, which is a signed release from a parent, lets an underage child view an R-rated film. The idea of the card, which was introduced earlier this year- and surely it is a fine idea, has a few underlying faults.

First off, plagiarism. A 12-year-old forges his mother's signature and then gains easy admittance to "The 40-Year-Old Virgin." This is wrong on so many levels.

Number one, what happens when the 12-year-old boy is traumatized for months and obtains a case of acute paranoia? And number two, generations upon generations of teens- not preteens, not tweens- have perfected the art of sneaking into the films. They should just learn to sneak in by themselves, the way older, almost 17-year-olds have done for ages. If they get caught, that is his problem. If he is not old enough to learn to sneak in the right way, then he shouldn't be doing it at all.

In addition, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) set the rating system up for a reason. The R-card just totally abolishes the work of the MPAA staff, the system and guidelines that MPAA had previously established for a reason. If a 7-year-old wanted to watch "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" with a parent, go right ahead. But how wrong would it be if that same child flashed her R-card and got in easy as pie? Socially and morally that is wrong.

It's just like the situation with abortion and pre-teen and teenage girls. Pregnant girls could get an abortion without parent consent.

Until now, seeing R-rated movies has been a privilege one gains with age just like driving and voting. A 15-year-old cannot get a license unless he or she is 16, right? Say you're 18-years-old, and you are now eligible to vote. You are in line to vote for the new president and this 17-year-old flashes a card that lets him or her vote despite their age. That is just not right now is it?

People look forward to turning 17 and getting to watch their first R-rated movie. It didn't matter what the movie was, but as long as it was R-rated.

This new card takes that privilege and excitement away, doesn't it? The R-card should not be in use.

EDITORIAL  
The OPINION  
of the Register staff

LETTERS, E-MAILS, FAXES, POLLS, CARTOONS

## Students deserve a more relaxed lunch period

Dear Editor,

I think the teachers are too strict during lunch hours. The students just want to relax and enjoy their lunch. Then teachers come along and force us to follow all these rules that make no sense at all. I really don't understand why we can only have eight chairs at a table. How is it hurting anyone to have a couple more chairs? Also if you want to go talk to a friend at a different table, because they can't sit with you, the teachers won't let us stand and talk to our friends. I really don't understand the concept.

**Monika Heater (10)**

## No food at lunch because of ID not fair

Dear Editor,

The other day a teacher tried to force me to the back of the line because I had no ID badge. I was upset with this and decided to sit down. Some teachers enforce the rule "no lunch unless you have an ID badge." I find this method pointless. I don't believe they have the right to tell us we can't eat.

**Stefan Dwornicki (10)**

## CD players, MP3s should be in study halls

Dear Editor,

During study halls, students should be able to listen to music. For many, including myself, listening to music helps block out everything else so I can concentrate. Also when a student finishes his or her homework they would have something to do. It wouldn't cause as many disturbances unlike talking. Overall letting students use their cd players, Ipods and mp3s would be a great addition to study hall.

**Will Bowen (9)**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR WANTED

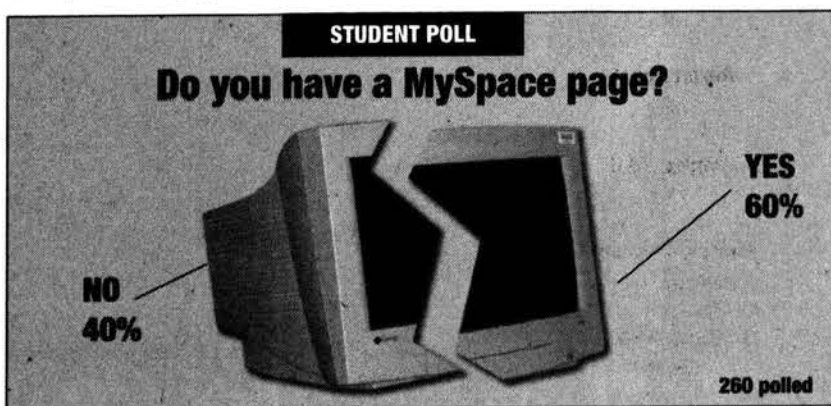
Letters to the editor are gladly accepted in room 030, via e-mail to Central.Journalism@OPS.org or can be placed in Mr. Deabler's mailbox in the main office. Letters must be factual and contain the author's full name and grade. Incorrect or unsigned letters will not be printed. The use of pen names is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

## Purple pride limited in student section at football games

Dear Editor,

I think most people who have attended a Central football game could say that our student section is definitely top notch. We cheer even when the team is down 20 points. There is barely any room to sit in the section because everyone is so intensely clapping, yelling and jumping up and down. I, as well as the rest of the student section, would like to stand in the student section. We are forced to sit during the game and only stand during the last two minutes of the game. It is our duty as spirited Central High students to paint ourselves purple and yell with the cheerleaders.

**Bailey Dlocker (10)**



## Myspace makes days more productive

Dear Editor,

I think we should be able to get Myspace on the Internet at school. The day is already long enough so when we get our work done in a class we should be able to get on the computer. There are excellent students who have Myspace accounts and get their work done faster. I think they should be able to get on the computer. Also students who don't get their work done as fast should be told they can get on the Internet as soon as their work is done.

**Brianna Hare (9)**

## IDs good concept, students respond poorly

Dear Editor,

I think that the school is trying hard to make this whole ID concept work and I think that it is a good concept for such a big school, with so many students, it's hard to keep track of the entire school body. To force people to wear them and limit their abilities by not wearing them doesn't seem worth it. It would probably be a lot easier if students would just wear them and not complain, but no one likes to wear them. If we were able to just have our IDs somewhere with us and only get them out when needed, then most students would be happier.

**Angelica Genovesi (10)**

## Eight-chair rule limits number of friends

Dear Editor,

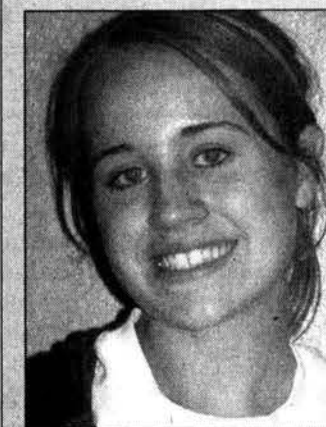
Why do we have to have eight seats at a table? We have friends that like to sit with us. The teachers know we like sitting with our friends. That is not fair that we have to sit with only eight chairs. That's not enough.

**Charlene Adams (9)**



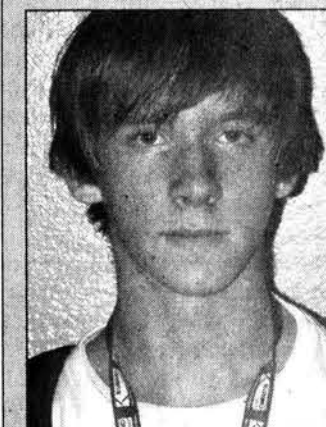
REGISTER YOUR OPINION

## Is the administration doing a good job of enforcing the ID badges?



"Yes, I think they're doing a good job because if you want to do stuff like eat lunch, you have to have the badges on."

**Bailey Dlocker (10)**



"Yes, because they check before each class and they remind you that you need to have it."

**Chris Buer (11)**



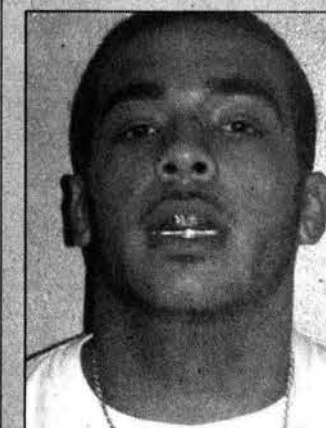
"Yes, because everyday in my class they ask you if you have it on. Sometimes you don't get extra credit if you don't have it on."

**Stephanie Hines (11)**



"Yes, because it keeps us a lot safer."

**Nicole Dawson (9)**



"Yes, they're doing all right. It's not as bad as last year, though."

**Bryan Berka (10)**



# CELEBRATING THROUGH ART

Students construct sculpture honoring the spirit, history and culture of Downtown Omaha to be displayed at the W. Dale Clark Library as part of citywide project sponsored by Bemis Center

BY KEVIN GIBBS

A six-foot statue was created by Central students who participated in the Art Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) project and was displayed last month in the downtown library.

Of the 12 students involved at Central, four seniors (then juniors) were team leaders: Michaela Bradley, Emily Harrison, Nicole Roberts and Lindsay Schulz. Schulz has participated in a Bemis project in the past.

"I thought it would be fun to do," Schulz said. "The kids who did work pretty much came all the time. There were about four or five people who came consistently."

Each school from around the city admitted its own creations into local libraries. Central's sculpture is prominently displayed at the W. Dale Clark Library, showcasing the heart of Downtown Omaha.

The statue stands about 6 ft. tall. At the top is an atom, with a Native American telling a child a story in the nucleus. From there, the statue swirls down and turns into buildings recognizable in the downtown area.

All around this statue, different types of transportation are displayed, from the railroads to skateboards and even horses. The pillar the main piece is sitting on continues the theme; the river and a railway flow together around the base with people traveling around it as they did above.

The piece is made of bronze and clay, and the base is made of wood and acrylic paint. At 11 a.m. on Aug. 26th, the statue was unveiled in its new location, in the library's lobby where it will

stay for a full year for all to view.

The Bemis Center sponsored the Art TEAM Project. This was the fourth public art project sponsored by Bemis.

In the project each school created concepts and mailed a letter to the Bemis Center. Then the schools began work on their own pieces.

Central started work in early January, by brainstorming ideas.

"We initially couldn't decide at all," Schulz said. They did, however, eventually choose a basic theme.

"The kids felt transportation was important in developing Omaha," said facilitator and art teacher Margaret Quinn.

That feeling is echoed in the sculpture. Quinn said the group considered Omaha the hub of the United States and the Midwest.

The group researched local professional artists, talked to them personally to get ideas and to see how the process of professional art works. They even had their statue bronzed by Les Bruning from the Hot Shops Art Center.

"I got to learn about collaboration and the history of the Omaha area," Bradley said. "There should be more projects like that."

All of the students involved contributed, and despite the fact it was pure volunteer work, no one dropped out of the project or slacked off.

"Everyone worked so well together," Bradley said.

Bemis is planning to do a new project in 2007 with the Qwest Center Omaha. It will be providing pictures and artwork from different communities.



PHOTO BY KEVIN GIBBS/REGISTER

Art TEAM leader senior Lindsay Schulz works on a piece during class. Schulz was one of four team leaders on the project, whose sculpture celebrated the culture of transportation Downtown Omaha.

## Samuel L. Jackson fits perfectly into long-awaited cult flick 'Snakes on a Plane'

BY BOB AL-GREENE

When it became public knowledge that there was going to be a feature film entitled simply "Snakes on a Plane," Internet message boards worldwide lit up.

When it was revealed that the movie would star Samuel L. Jackson, those message boards exploded.

By now, the story is legend. A simple horror flick with a deliciously cheesy title drew the box-office megastar and delighted nerds worldwide.

Filmmakers allegedly put in more profanity and nudity in order to make the movie everything irony-loving film fans would love.

Well, they succeeded.

From the opening credits and a cheesy "X-treme" motorbike ride, it was obvious "Snakes" might just go all the way. Soon, the cardboard-thin plot was in place, with all the right characters: Jackson played FBI Agent Neville Flynn, whose job it was to protect surfer and murder witness Sean Jones, played by Nathan Phillips. Crime lord Eddie Kim, the murderer, had

his men smuggle pheromone-maddened snakes into the cargo hold onto the passenger plane to break loose at cruising altitude and eliminate Sean, along with everybody else on the airliner.

So, to summarize: Snakes. On a plane.

Once on board, there were of course more than enough stereotypes to play off: the newlyweds, the snooty British guy, the two children on their first flight alone, the ethnic woman and her baby, the womanizing copilot the stewardess on her last flight. Even the rapper and his entourage.

Somehow, once the snakes got loose, they disabled some flight systems... or something. It doesn't really matter. The point is, after some brief exposition (complete with bad dialogue), some tasty build-up and a gratuitous sex scene, the slithering, often blatantly digital serpents were falling from the ceiling and biting every painful thing in their way, from breasts to eyeballs to tongues. Like freakin' "Gone with the Wind," I'm telling you.

But really, no one should have gone into "Snakes on a Plane" expecting anything but the biggest gross-out cheese fest. A rare

few movies stray into "So Bad it's Good" territory, and almost none can do it on purpose. To put out a nation-wide, full-blown feature film, with Samuel L. Jackson (literally history's biggest-selling box office star) starring, no less, was more than a risk.

After all, how could the film ever live up to the expectations of a million nerds with nothing else on their minds (or their calendars)?

That thought started to creep into my mind as the film progressed. The wonderfully disgusting and hilarious snake bites were more than enough to feed a certain appetite, but of Samuel L. was the main course, and he was there for two reasons: to drop F-bombs and be a badass. So when after some time he still wasn't, it began to get worrisome.

Then, things turned around.

As the passengers panicked and the plane was thrown into turmoil, Agent Flynn (who I insist on just calling Samuel L.) kept cool, stepping from seat to seat, shouting out orders and zapping those snakes in the head with a tazer. Promising. Then, he graduated to a broken bottle on a stick. "Ooh." Then, a

homemade blowtorch. "Aah." Then, in a moment made of pure awesome, a spear gun from someone's carry-on luggage. "Yeah, whoa."

Impressive, sure, but no one went to the film for the explicit reason of seeing Samuel L. shoot a spear gun. They came for a line of dialogue. One line. A brilliant line. A line I thought despite all the fixing the producers did to fit expectations, they not have made it in to the final cut.

But then, at the perfect moment, it dropped.

Barricaded into first class, the survivors were unable to land the plane that could become their coffin. The pilot and copilot were dead, grotesquely inflated by poison. One of the passengers might've been able to land the jet... but the cockpit was overrun with the slithering devils.

"Oh, enough is enough," Jackson yelled, camera tight on his enraged face. Then slowly, deliberately: "I have had it with these muthaf---ing snakes on this muthaf---ing plane!"

What came after that doesn't matter. That single line was worth admission, and was the best part of a movie that was, in retrospect, the most fun to be had in a theater this summer.

### MOVIE REVIEW

**"Snakes On A Plane"**  
Starring: Samuel L. Jackson

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There are numerous ways teenagers can be influenced by the Internet, good and bad. Experts say like with anything dealing with the Internet, parental supervision for teens is a good rule to follow. Somebody that appears to be a friend, could just be a person who has bad intentions.

## Web site brings friends, safety concerns

BY KIM BUCKLEY

In the growing world of technology and the Internet, there has been a growing concern about how safe sites like MySpace can be.

MySpace is a site that allows users to set up a page on which they can chat online with various people. Junior Antea Gatalica is just one of the many teenagers who has a MySpace page and uses YouTube, a site that allows people to watch videos for free.

"I used to live in Texas, and a lot of my friends had MySpaces, so in order to keep in contact with them, I decided to make my own," Gatalica said.

She said having a MySpace page was an easier way to communicate with her friends because not a lot of her friends had Xanga, a type of web log (blog).

"So many of my friends have it," Gatalica said.

She said she really didn't know why those kinds of web sites were popular, but said from personal experience MySpace could be addictive and there were several occasions where she would spend a long time on it.

"You can spend at least two hours on there," Gatalica said.

She said she didn't worry about how safe MySpace could be because she didn't accept friends without thinking about it first. She said she didn't know why those kinds of web sites were popular, but said from personal experience MySpace could be addictive and there were several occasions where she would spend a long time on it.

Gatalica said for instance, people could reset the privacy settings on their page after they turn sixteen. She said she believed the people running MySpace could make it more obvious about the privacy settings and how to change them. She also said she

didn't worry a lot about her friends having a MySpace page. She said it was because they were smart enough to realize they have a privacy block and they don't accept people they don't know as friends.

Gatalica said she updates her MySpace page a couple of times a week. She said she and her friends put in different backgrounds and music. She knew some people who put videos on their pages. She said she believed that she would eventually get over the craze and move in to other things in a few years. She said she believes it is more for the teen years.

Gatalica said she would go on YouTube to see videos her friends have uploaded. She said the videos can be funny and was good when people need a laugh.

She said even though she has not uploaded a video on to the site, she knows about five people who have uploaded videos. She said she doesn't visit YouTube as often as MySpace though.

Each day, hundreds of millions of videos are being watched by people on the Internet.

However, not all teenagers have a MySpace page. Freshman Brianna Rhoten is one of those teenagers. She said she hasn't even considered getting a MySpace page because she doesn't think it's that safe. She also said she thought the reason MySpace was popular is because people can talk to their friends on it and see photos of their friends. Rhoten said about five of her friends have a MySpace page, and she sometimes gets a little nervous about her friends having one.

"I don't want any of my friends doing anything stupid," she said.

She said the reason she sometimes had never considered

having a MySpace page because anyone could find way to get to a MySpace page and get kids to do things that they shouldn't.

Rhoten said she believed that MySpace should try to put blocks on the pages and buddy lists to make it safer. She also said MySpace could put up firewalls to block off any Internet predators.

She said she thought the privacy block on MySpace didn't need to extend the age limit though. She said she thought it was fine because when kids get older, they tend to get smarter and do things they wouldn't do when they were younger.

Amber Lindsay, the communications coordinator of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, said web sites like MySpace could pose a danger to teenagers on the web because of all of the personal information that predators can see on-line including a person's name, age, locations, pictures, what they do and where they go.

Lindsay said those web sites were like a personal journal on-line that Internet predators could see and read.

She said many industrial leaders of web sites like MySpace met recently at a summit at the National Center to talk about the risks associated with some of the web sites and to brainstorm ways to make sites safer. Lindsay said she thinks privacy blocks should be optional on those sites for people who want to be privately blocked, but the sites should offer them those options.

She said even though privacy blocks are a good idea, she said people need to remember that their friends have access to their site, and are not totally private. Lindsay said people need to be careful about what information they post on the web because once it's on the web, it's hard to take back.



PARAMOUNT  
John McLoughlin, played by Nicolas Cage, takes his men into the Towers to rescue people before getting buried under debris.

## Emotion gives 9/11 film heart

BY KIM BUCKLEY

After the lights came up in the theater, the audience knew one thing. This movie was one that had to be made.

"World Trade Center" was the perfect tribute to honor real life policemen John McLoughlin and Will Jimeno, who were on duty during the attack on Sept 11.

The movie, based on real life events, told the story of what McLoughlin and Jimeno went through during that day. Unlike most of the movies Oliver Stone has directed, this movie strayed away from politics.

Nicolas Cage played McLoughlin. He was convincing throughout the movie.

Michael Pena played Jimeno, and it was tough to say who was the better actor between him and Cage.

The fear on both of their faces and in their voices showed that behind their uniforms there were real people.

Both of them were able to convey their emotions with just a look on their face whether it was fear or despair.

The film perfectly showed the confusion and lack of communication that day. When the first plane hit the tower the officers talked about what they heard, something everyone in the audience could relate to.

It wasn't long before Jimeno and McLoughlin got buried way under the debris of the towers. It was dark and both of them were pinned, unable to really move, but were able to talk to one another.

Not knowing a lot about each other before, the two policemen got to know each other. The audience saw glimpses of their lives through flashbacks.

All of the emotion helped carry a film where of large portion of time was just the two men talking and encouraging each other.

Cage and Pena's acting ability jumped off of the screen and into the hearts of the audience, even with all of the grime and dirt covering the two men.

The movie also showed how the lives of the family members of Jimeno and McLoughlin were affected by the tragedy, constantly reminding us that these two men had family members who loved and cared for them.

Maria Bello played McLoughlin's wife, Donna, who had four children to take care of while trying to keep it together when she heard the news. Her beset scene was when she comforted a woman whose son was in the World Trade Center when it was hit.

Maggie Gyllenhall played Jimeno's five-month pregnant wife, Allison, who seemed on the verge of a breakdown.

Gyllenhall was an interesting contrast to Bello, and both of them were able to show strength even with all of the despair and fear they had.

Perhaps the most contrived thing to happen in the whole film was when former Marine Sgt. David Karnes, played by Michael Shannon, put on a uniform and got past the barricades to help out.

He seemed more like an overzealous patriot than an actual human being, but without him, McLoughlin and Pena might not have been found.

At times, the movie was absolutely heart wrenching, and it was hard not to cry.

The little things like Jimeno writing a quick shaky note telling his wife he loved her and McLoughlin wanting to get back to his wife so he could finish the kitchen cabinets were simple things that made it hard to watch at some points.

One of the main points of the film was that a lot of people died to help evacuate the building, but the end however drove home the point that there were people who survived the attack on the World Trade Center.

Stone didn't bother to sugar coat the movie.

One of the first images after the first plane hit was a person jumping out of a window and there was blood all over the officers and victims.

Stone managed to create a nearly flawless movie about the emotions and tragedy of that day.

The movie was one of the most emotional films of the year, and for a good reason.

Sept. 11 shouldn't be forgotten and this film helped capture everything we felt on that day.

## Drama sale allows students to buy creative clothing

BY KIM BUCKLEY



PHOTO BY KIM BUCKLEY/REGISTER

Sophomore Bonnie Cobb considers a black dress on one of the many racks of costumes. Students and staff took the opportunity to buy an assortment of used clothes at a cheap price.

Hanging from the racks were an assortment of clothing and in bins there were unusual hats for students to try on.

Students and staff were given the opportunity to buy the costumes worn in all of the past school productions. During Sept. 12-14, at 3 p.m. in the dramatorium, the drama department held a costume sale to get rid of all of the costumes.

On the 14th, the department sold the remaining clothing before the sale ended.

Drama teacher John Gibson said the costume sale was the first one and it would also be the last one the school had.

He said although he was there supervising the sale and he was involved, he wasn't the one in charge of it. He said one of his students took charge of the sale instead.

He said he also gave suggestions on the prices of the costumes.

"But they were only suggestions," Gibson said.

He said senior Amanda Pintore organized the sale and was in charge of it.

"She (Amanda) is my independent stagecraft person and she's also president of Thespians so she assumed the responsibility," Gibson said.

Pintore said the costume sale was to clear out the costume room in the basement to provide the school with more space.

"What happened was that the school said they needed room so they told us that we either had to give up the dramatorium or the costume room," she said.

Pintore said it was Gibson who made the executive decision to give up the costume room.

She also said she was a little worried about where they would store the costumes for the plays in the future.

"I do think it's (the costume room) kind of a loss, but we'll make do," Pintore said.

Gibson said during the last six years, they have rented costumes for the musicals and Roadshow and costumes and the company would ship them to the school. He said they would continue renting for future productions.

He said any left-over costumes from the sale were thrown out because they wanted to get rid of all of the costumes.

Pintore said she believed that students came to the sale because most of the clothes were everyday clothes or clothes students could wear to the homecoming dance.

She said the sale was also like a thrift store sale.

"They've (students) been seeing these clothes on stage for years," Pintore said.

She said she thought the sale went really well. She said more teachers came to the sale than she expected and students poured in to look at the clothes.

Pintore said the sale was hard to organize, but there was a lot of student help.

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FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Steven Carell stars in the comedy "Little Miss Sunshine," the story of one family's trip to a pageant.

## 'Sunshine' sparkles with dark humor

BY MAX LARSON

"Little Miss Sunshine" was a film that dripped with deception.

By its title, one might have been expecting a bright and cheery movie. With actors like Steve Carell, one might expect a formulaic script built to satisfy today's sellout standards.

Don't be fooled.

Stripped to its core, "Little Miss Sunshine" was a smart, dark comedy about a family traveling to California. It had superb, group-effort acting and stimulating characters. And to the relief of some, it was not Carell's film; he was not the star.

The writing was original and irrefutably refreshing. It could be held in comparison to any recent, yet more commercial films and claim superiority, standing as

a symbol of defiance against any comedy of this era with gimmicks and cheap laughs.

Any viewer able to stand this film's cynical humor would be greatly rewarded. The hopeless situations, though depressing at times, proved themselves to be hilarious. The depth of the film lay in the script, character interactions and depictions of the family.

The members had no real reason to associate with each other, but were united by a familial bond. The father Richard, played by Greg Kinnear, was a self-proclaimed winner struggling to maintain his family in middle-class status, was generally unlikable.

The mother Sheryl, played by Toni Collette, was a woman amid a faltering marriage and stressful lifestyle trying to piece her surroundings together in as positive a way as possible. Sheryl's brother Frank, played by Carell, was a scholarly homosexual recuperating from a failed suicide attempt.

The son Dwayne, played by Paul Dano, claimed that he hated everyone and completely refused to speak because of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. The grandfather, a mischievous heroin addict played by Alan Arkin, was frustrated at his helplessness when pitted against his own age.

And finally the daughter Olive, played by Abigail Breslin, was the main link between all of the family members in their journey to California for the Little Miss Sunshine beauty pageant.

Say that list of character descriptions isn't thought-provoking and filled with possibilities, you would be lying.

Each one was penciled into the script without being too outrageous, but at the same time carried a necessary amount of impact and interest. Maybe the writers behind one of Carell's recent films, "40-Year-Old Virgin," could take note.

The friction between each personality was unbelievably palpable, almost uncomfortably so. But the tension was always relieved by the humor. The stresses of a real family were displayed in an antic fashion that related to each member of the audience in some way.

Richard was always lecturing his family about how there are two types of people in life: winners and losers. However as the characters find their own labors or difficulties set before them, they become more grateful for what it is they already have. The filmmakers managed this without being too preachy.



COLUMBIA PICTURES

Will Ferrell plays Ricky Bobby, a famous NASCAR driver. The movie had stale humor and offbeat jokes. The immaturity of Bobby made the film hard to watch and not even Ferrell could save the film from dwindling into a sub-par comedy.

## Ferrell off-track in bland racing film

BY PAT O'MALLEY

"Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby" was a stale, nearly two hour long comedy of ignorant race car drivers filled with inappropriate, demeaning and womanizing jokes.

Will Ferrell played Ricky Bobby, the American NASCAR hero whose reputation of a champion was challenged by Jean Girard, a homosexual French driver played by Sacha Baron Cohen.

Ferrell and co-writer Adam McKay, who have been working together since his "Saturday Night Live" days, decided to team up to make a film about the NASCAR phenomenon.

Producer Judd Apatow could not quite match the humor of his last production "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy," also starring Ferrell.

It seemed that Ferrell played the same character that he has in his last four films.

The acting actors in the film all fit their characters well because they all had to play the role of an inarticulate person.

Not only did the film mock religion and homosexuality, it painted a humiliating image of the typical southern, NASCAR loving American. Though the public perception of NASCAR may be one of a "red neck" type, the jokes were not funny enough to make it work.

One fond of NASCAR might find it to be offensive and a stereotype of an ignorant, immature and disrespectful human.

The movie jumped right into the story of a young man and his love for speed and cars, and his repetitive rise and fall journey.

Soon after it shortly went into how he accidentally became a world famous NASCAR driver.

Just as any normal NASCAR event would have, the film was filled with corporate advertisements all over the racer's cars and clothing.

Ricky's dysfunctional family was made up of a drug-dealing father played by Gary Cole, who abandoned him at a young age to pursue his own racing career.

When he entered his son's life for the second time he told Bobby, "If you ain't first, you're last," a phrase that became his motto for years to come.

Leslie Bibb played Carley, Ricky's superficial trophy wife who left him and his children after his plummet from the top.

Carley's role throughout the film was to dress in revealing clothing and act like a sex

object.

They had two wild children who grew up with no regard for any rules but eventually grew fond of their strict grandmother Lucy Bobby, played by Jane Lynch.

At one point early in the movie, the two boys repetitively screamed obscenities at the grandfather.

Unlike the boys' parents, Lucy punished the boys for being disrespectful. She made the boys pick up trash for being so rude.

One example of the lame humor was after a terrible accident in a race, Bobby proceeded to take his pants off and run around the track because he thought he was on fire.

After his healing process, in a hospital where he thought he was paralyzed, he stabbed himself in the leg to prove his friends wrong then returned to the track to take clothes off again and run around naked during a practice round.

It was the typical humor and stupidity that Ferrell plays over and over.

After his fall from fame, Ricky Bobby worked a few dead end jobs and his long lost father returned to his life again to teach him how to race by overcoming his fear. He did this by pulling pranks on him, such as driving with a bobcat and calling the police and telling them that he had a kilogram of cocaine under his seat so they would chase him. Eventually, he overcame his fear.

Ricky was not the only one who was able to fix his character defects. His children quit abandoned their foul language and disrespect once Ricky's mother taught them how to behave and be polite.

After that it was the typical comeback story. It took only a short time and the little support he received from his family and friends to get back to the level of skill he had when he was at the top of the NASCAR world. It did not take much to bring Bobby back.

Bobby returned to the Talladega 500 race to face off against Naughton Jr. and Girard in the final showdown.

The race took a harsh turn and left some of the racers empty handed, but it did not bring them down.

The funniest parts of the whole feature actually took place during the credits. They were filled with the bloopers from the film, jokes and the cast joking around and having a good time.

One of the funnier parts of it wasn't until after all the credits were over, and the boys were giving their critical analysis of a piece of literature.

That the best part of the movie came when it was over. That says it all.

### MOVIE REVIEW

"Talladega Nights"  
Starring: Will Ferrell

## Sophomore finds radio programming lacking of substance

I hate the radio.

Not the device itself, but rather the lack of good quality programming on the 22 nearly identical FM radio stations in Omaha. It's gotten so bad that I've started to lose faith in radio programming all together. I no longer think the radio is the place to hear the music I like.

Some weekday mornings I turn on the radio thinking I might hear some high-quality tunes. The first thing I usually hear is a gross old man, otherwise known as the radio DJ, making up stories about an orgasm or talking about body parts, bodily functions and bodily fluids.

The guy, who in most cases stands a very dreadful chance of ever being married, gets done lying about the best sex he'll never actually have and the billboard top three songs get played. The first song is usually interesting

for the duration of one verse, but generally becomes annoying and overly repetitive, so I try tuning it out, but I usually end up grinding my teeth together. The second song is no better and the third is even worse.

After more than a few minutes of monotonous over-played chart-toppers, the booming sound of a commercial for a product or service I'll never need awakens me from a boredom-induced coma.

The commercials often run longer than the music, and they're always too loud to ignore. Once they end, the old guy is back to telling more repulsive stories.

Daytime and evening programming doesn't require listening to a male DJ being extraordinarily economical with the truth, but it still isn't much better. The void left in bad

programming where the gross DJ used to be is now filled with music, often no metal or unimaginative, top 40 power pop.

Where did the radio programming our parents' generation speak so fondly of go?

National Public Radio, maybe, but NPR is mostly news, audio columns and jazz. Did it just die out? I don't think so. Did it go to the Internet? Probably.

Clear Channel, the largest radio station group owner in the United States, which grossed \$3.5 billion in 2005, has driven the good programming once on the radio to the Internet.

They have sent worthwhile programming fleeing through censorship, cutting among other things music and talk criticizing the Bush administration and playing overly generalized top 40.

Currently the Internet is a nearly limitless world of sites where even the smallest bands can find fans in countries they've never heard of, or in their own neighborhood, without having to sign to a major label.

The Internet is a tool for music lovers anywhere to find

unfiltered and unrestricted music they actually want to listen to even if their favorite bands have a very small fan base.

The Internet can only be kept as a source of diverse programs as long as government officials don't listen to the many lobbyists hired by special interest groups, namely the Record Industry Association of America, who only look after the interests of large record companies, such as Epic Records, the record division of Sony.

The Internet would become another place for top 40 hits, but cast a shadow on good music if the government listens to the companies, five of whom own the rights to and get most of the money from 95 percent of the records sold in the United States. It would become a place where commercials and high-priced downloads of music many consumers don't really want to listen to could run rampant.

So let's keep music on the Internet uninhibited, and let the radio boot, or make radio more like the Internet.

Either way get rid of the garbage.



### MORTAR AND BRICKS

A Column by Mason Busboom-Piercy

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## Senior signs with Huskers for baseball

BY MAX LARSON

By his performance in the State Basketball Championship last year, most would probably assume senior Ben Kline would have been offered to play ball in college, but he has.

Here's the catch; he's not playing basketball. He's playing baseball.

The four-year varsity veteran, who was the first Husker baseball recruit from the class of 2007, said he was excited to be a part of the program.

He said he has been aware of interest from other schools like Cornell, Stanford and Creighton, but he liked the University of Nebraska at Lincoln because it was close to his home and he would have a chance to play in the College World Series.

He was discovered by the Huskers while playing in a baseball tournament in Minnesota.

He was playing for a Central team, but it was the summer of his sophomore year.

He said that his classmates usually consider him a basketball player.

He tells them that, as of right now, it would just be more comfortable for him to play baseball.

"People always ask me why I'm leaving college baseball," he said. "Most of us go to basketball games and almost all of us go to baseball games."

Varsity basketball coach Eric Behrens said that he was not surprised Kline's decision, despite his talent at basketball and his contributions to the team.

"I think he's going to fit in," Behrens said.

He said he's glad that Kline has a chance to join one of the premier baseball programs in the country.

Behrens said Kline has really tried hardest to become a quality asset to the basketball team, and he trusts Kline to be successful in whatever sport he chooses.

"He's a good baseball player," he said. "He's a good athlete. He works hard."

Kline said he has talked to UNL's baseball coach about walking on, but in great detail.

For the time being he will just play basketball.

Kline said at this point he is more comfortable at baseball than he is at basketball, though it is hard to tell.

The Eagles' first baseman Danny Smith said that he thinks Kline is a leader on the baseball team.

He said Kline contributes through his skill in hitting and fielding.

Smith said that Kline possesses athletic ability and a smooth playing style.

"He's the nucleus of our hitting and fielding," Smith said. "He's one of our most experienced players."

Varsity Eagle third baseman John Shanahan said Kline is good at both baseball and basketball.

He, like Smith, said Kline can be a leader on the baseball team.

"He knows all the basic fundamentals," he said. "He's an all-around great player. All his techniques are smooth."

He also said that he had respect for UNL's baseball program, one that has won several trips to the College World Series in the past few years.

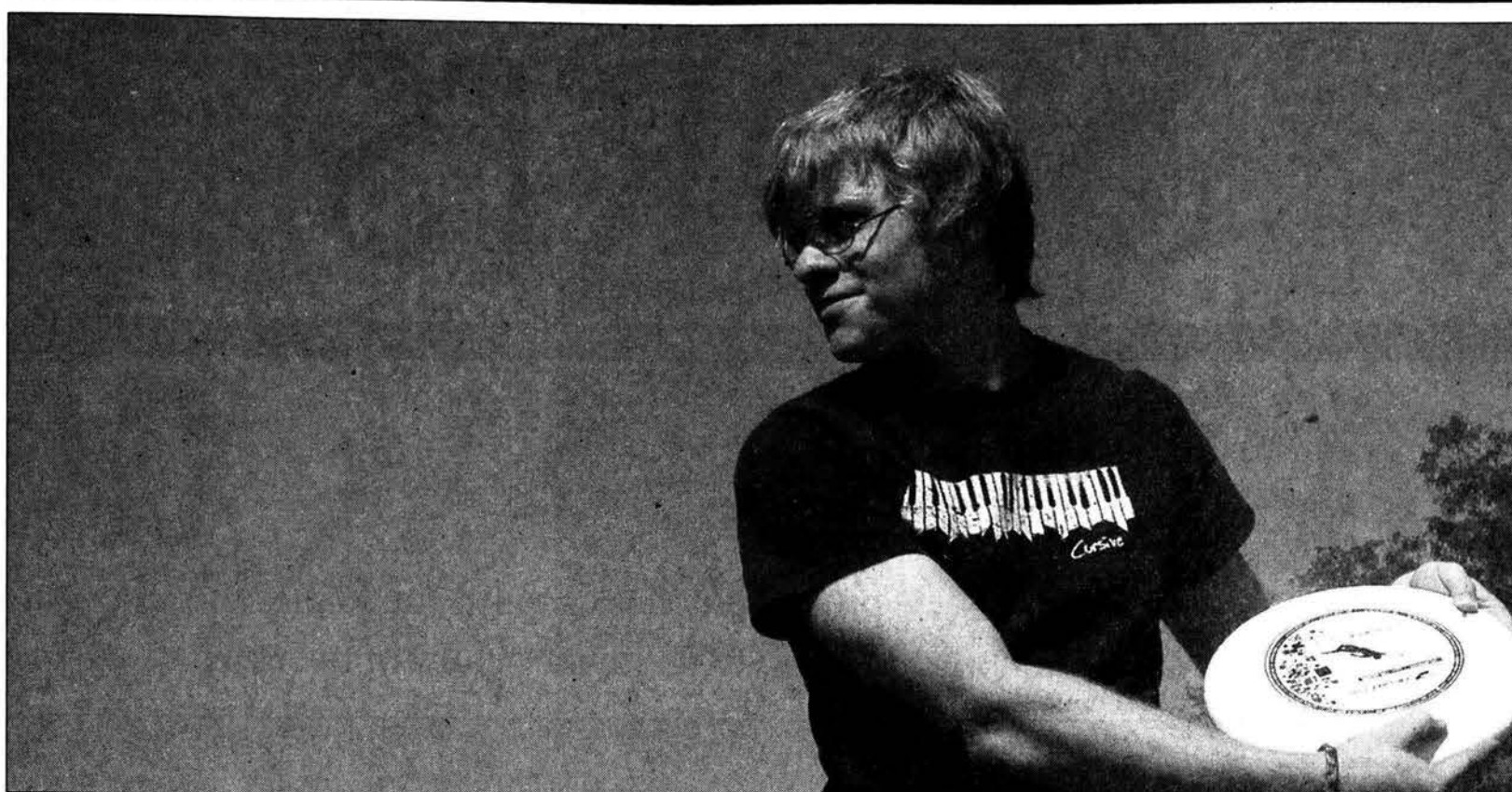
"I think they're one of the best programs that baseball has," Shanahan said.

Kline said he plans to play the position of shortstop, like he does now at Central, but he will have competition from the older, more experienced players at UNL.

He said at the moment he has to focus on becoming stronger.

As for the future, he said that he would like to extend his playing career to both college and professional.

"I'll hopefully make it to the pros," he said. "But I have to work hard. Right now it's just a goal."



Senior Peter Rafferty, captain of the Ultimate Frisbee team, practices his throwing before heading off to a frisbee match at "the sunks" in Dundee. The club is getting more popular this year.

## Frisbee club looks towards a better year

BY PASCALE ROUSSEL

Ultimate Frisbee, or Frisbee in general, is becoming more and more popular with every generation.

The Ultimate Frisbee Club is one of the newest clubs known to Central High School.

Senior Peter Rafferty is the captain of the Ultimate Frisbee team and he started the club last school year with Jared Dittman who is also a senior.

Dittman isn't able to attend any games or meetings because of cross country, so Rafferty is taking over for now.

Rafferty said they club plays at least twice a week.

"We play on Tuesday afternoons at 4 and Thursday evenings at 7," Rafferty said.

He said not a lot of people came to play last year, so it kind of fell through. However, he knew this year would be better.

"This year we're having meetings and hopefully playing games against other schools," Rafferty said.

Rafferty said they want to play with or against the Westside and Creighton Prep teams since they already have teams or clubs developed.

The Central Frisbee Club plays at "the sunks" in front of Dundee Presbyterian Church on Happy Hollow and Underwood streets. They also sometimes play games at Elmwood Park.

Rafferty said the games of Ultimate Frisbee are usually played seven players versus seven, sometimes more, sometimes less.

He said there have been about double the players in the club since it started this year. Also, they play, on average, two to three games per afternoon.

Derek Leslie, economics teacher, is the sponsor for the Frisbee Club. He said

he was very happy to be the sponsor. He also said he didn't have any set backs, either.

"I've always wanted to work closely with Peter and his contagious and bubbly personality," Leslie said.

He said he has never actually played with the club, but he's gone to watch a few times.

"They keep bothering me to play, but I don't think I can now that I'm getting old," Leslie said.

Leslie said he played some Ultimate Frisbee in college, but nothing more recently than that.

There has also been a bit of talk about a teacher versus student game. Leslie said that would be fun.

"I might play then," he said, "but I don't think they could handle how badly we would beat them."

For the more recent games, there have been at least 15 to 20 students from Central. Most of them are boys with the exception of a couple girls who dare to play.

Senior Abby Fleek is one of the few exceptions. Although she hasn't been playing for very long, she said she likes the idea of a Frisbee Club.

"I like watching and playing," Fleek said, "but playing is more fun."

Fleek also said she thinks having a Frisbee Club is a good idea.

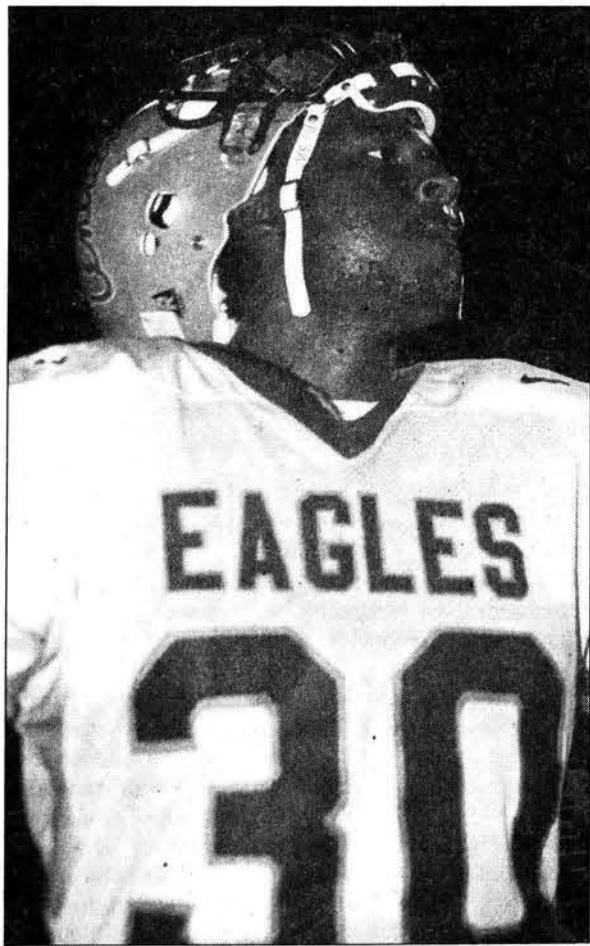
Senior Kenneth Fischer said he's been playing Ultimate since sophomore year. He said he thought the idea of having a club was fantastic.

Jackie Pirtle is another girl on the Frisbee team. She said she plays when she's not busy.

"I've been doing cross country and they conflict, so I have to miss it," Pirtle said, "but when I'm able to, I go to play or watch."

## Eagles lose while former player shines for Bluejays

BY PATRICK BREEN



While having his finger taped, junior Brandon Bradford watches the Eagles recover a fumble. The Eagles dropped to 0-2 after losing to Creighton Prep. They've since won two in a row.

The chant of "Traitor" emanated from the Eagles' student section.

But the shouting didn't bother former Eagle Vondrae Tostenson as he propelled Creighton Prep to a 31-12 victory.

After winning the State Basketball Tournament, the sports star transferred last June to the Bluejays, spurning many players and fans by doing so.

A few months later, he caught two touchdown passes and one interception to help beat his former team.

"He made four huge plays in the game," Eagle head coach Jay Ball said. "He was certainly a difference maker. We respect our opponents and give credit where credit is due."

The first half was dictated by the Bluejays' tough defense and unstoppable offense.

On the first drive of the game, Prep Coach Tim Jaworski mixed his play calls with runs, passes and trick plays.

After a quick 10 yards on the ground, the team ran a reverse to number 22, Tostenson. Although the Eagles' defense recognized the reverse, they did not see the possible pass.

Tostenson threw a sharp 18-yard pass for his first yards of the game, which led to a field goal and Prep's lead.

A lead that Central never came close to again.

The chants of "Traitor" continued, but the screams didn't even seem to make Tostenson flinch.

"Our team played hard, but it was one bad quarter that really hurt us," Ball said. "It wasn't for lack of effort, we came back and kept fighting."

In the second quarter, the game turned into a showcase for Tostenson, a receiver and safety.

In the following Prep possession Tostenson jumped high and caught a touchdown pass in the back of the end zone.

Tostenson got off the ground and threw his arms in the air as the Prep fans cheered and Central fans resumed their chant.

The following Eagles' possession started with some opening yards on the ground, but ended with quarterback Chris Griffin throwing an interception to the unseen Tostenson.

Who came to his feet and didn't even look back at he Eagles' sideline.

The "Grape Crush", as the Eagles' Defense is called forced a long 3rd and 12 in their own territory, but failed to stop another amazing grab by Tostenson, resulting in his second and final touchdown.

At the end of the first half, the score stood 24-0.

The Eagles fought back, never giving up. The third quarter ended with Prep pushing in another touchdown run, and extended the lead to 31 points.

The team showed heart, fighting back in the final quarter with hard-hitting defense that forced two fumbles.

Both fumbles resulted in to scoring drives, which were two pounding one yard runs by tailback Ronnell Grixby.

"The team showed a lot of heart," Ball said. "They showed they were really competitors."

Even with the quick touchdowns, the time ran quickly ending the Eagles chance at a comeback.

The team dropped its record to 0-2.

"We need to work harder and it starts on the practice field," Ball said.



### FAKING A SMILE

A Column by Patrick Breen

## Eagles lack fan support

Where is the love and the loyalty?

After two losses, one close and the other a blowout, the Eagles and their brand new coach, Jay Ball, are under fire.

Students, parents and anyone with half an opinion leaving either of the two games questioned the players and coaching.

The team has recovered with three wins in a row, but stands at a .500 record, which is sub-par compared to the hyped expectations.

The sold-out stands at Seemann stadium were stunned as Central, ranked #8 before the season started, lost to #10 Omaha North.

To add to the agony of a first and one yard loss, the Eagles followed up with a devastating loss to Creighton Prep.

Emotions were sour, and fans were tossing around the idea that "maybe Ball was not the right choice to replace McMenamin." The grumbles were followed by or included heavy curses and vulgar language.

Should the fickle crowd of Central turn like a pack of wolves on the team and the coach that they fell in love with just a few months before?

Of course not. They were two games. The first two games for a brand-new defense, offense and core of players. Whenever there is a new coach, there is a new learning curve. It has to be expected.

The North game was a complete and utter dogfight, and although Central was ranked higher, several sports personalities favored the Vikings and the star duo of Phillip Bates and Niles Paul.

The Eagles played hard, and never gave up. The coach was forced to make a tough call, and made the gutsy decision.

Had they made the touchdown and won, he would have been a genius for going for the goal. Since he lost, people call him crazy for not tying the game with a field goal.

The second loss was not a nail biter, but hurt just as much. Creighton Prep annihilated the Eagles in the second quarter, and went on to win big.

So with the loss, should we all pile on top of the battered and bruised team or commend the players and coaches for their effort and support our home team?

Now, after the first win of Central's season and of Ball's career coaching the Eagles, the fickle fans surrounding Central are gaining more support.

The Eagles came back into form against Benson and Bryan, beating both by more than 10 points.

If Central keeps winning, the fans will continue to grow and show support. But if the game for the Eagles goes sour, the fans will bite back harder than ever before, even after the disappointment of those first two losses.

Talent has never been a problem at Central. But winning has.

The pessimists at this school will rant and rave about how our football team never wins and no matter the talent, that will never change.

If you take that position, you should take your pride and stand behind it.

It's true the Eagles haven't been the strongest team in the last few years despite the immense talents of our Division I recruits.

The team hasn't made a solid run at state since before most of the students here were born.

But that doesn't mean people should abandon ship. No matter the record. I believe in my team and its players. And there won't be a day when you won't see me cheering them on.

Atmosphere at the games is very positive, for now. But I hope the fickle fans can pick a side and stay with it.

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## Vikings stop Eagles a yard short of goal

BY PATRICK BREEN

Only one yard separated the Eagles from a perfect start to the new season and a new career.

Down 22-19, the Eagles only needed 1 yard for the win.

New Head Coach Jay Ball elected to go for the win, not the field goal to tie.

With 21.5 seconds left, quarterback Christopher Griffin took the ball outside and hit the wall of North defenders, ending up well short of the goal and the win.

The loss was the first of Ball's career at Central. Looking back, Ball said he would stick to his decision.

"We're going for the win," Ball said. "The biggest reason we went for it was our brand new kicker. I didn't want to put this all on his shoulders."

Ball said he had confidence in the kicker, but felt that the team could make the 1 yard to win the game.

The biggest plays of the game came from North's senior play-makers, Iowa State recruit Phillip Bates and Lincoln recruit Niles Paul.

On a pivotal fourth down play, the Vikings lined up for a field goal, but had their quarterback Bates take the fake and run in for the lead, 15-12.

The Eagles rebounded and took back the lead after a huge 60-yard interception return for a touchdown by senior Taylor Cook.

Just into the fourth quarter, the score was a close 19-15.

On the next possession, the Eagles' defense held the Vikings and forced a long third down.

With nine yards needed for the first, Bates looked to be in trouble, scrambling from the defensive pressure when he threw a pass to wide receiver Niles Paul.

Paul drove with the ball and two defenders from the 10-yard line to the end zone.

After a pass for a two-point conversion, North regained the lead, 22-19.

Down late in the game, the Eagles never gave up. Kick returner Jermaine Blackson sprinted through the Vikings' special teams before tripping on one of the last defenders.

The Eagles then had big plays from running back Ramel Thompson, who played for the cramped Ronnell Grixby.

On the 40-yard line with less than two minutes remaining, Thompson was called on.

He spun and broke several tackles, delivering a 32-yard run and putting the Eagles within range for a field goal.

After a few plays and a Vikings penalty the Eagles lined up on the 1-yard line.

The option to the right was stopped almost immediately, and the Vikings celebrated their first win of the season.

"The team played hard," Ball said. "We just made some typical first game mistakes."

The new defensive focus could be seen on the field.

The Vikings had two consecutive drives that stopped inside Central's 20-yard line because of big fumble recoveries.

Wide receiver Robert Clay said the game was a heartbreaking way to start the season, after working so hard before the season started.

"We worked hard and focused on the fundamentals," he said.

The Eagles also had a balanced offense throughout the game.

The first touchdown was an outside 28-yard touchdown run by junior Ronnell Grixby.

After a Vikings touchdown, junior Randy Burns caught a high pass for the next Eagles touchdown.

The team wasn't happy with the outcome of the game.

Ball said the team could learn from the loss by working on fundamentals. Little things like botched snaps and missed blocks plagued the players, but with practice the team will continue to improve its execution.

"I don't like to single players out," Ball said. "Everybody had great moments and bad moments."

Central lost its following game against Creighton Prep before winning on the road against Benson.

Ball said he and the team will be studying film and working on a game plan for the upcoming schedule.

He said he team is working hard. "We tell them, if you're not getting better, you're getting worse," Ball said.

## A NEW BALL GAME

A new coach with a new philosophy hopes to lift the Eagles into the State Tournament and rebuild the team to its former glory of over two decades ago

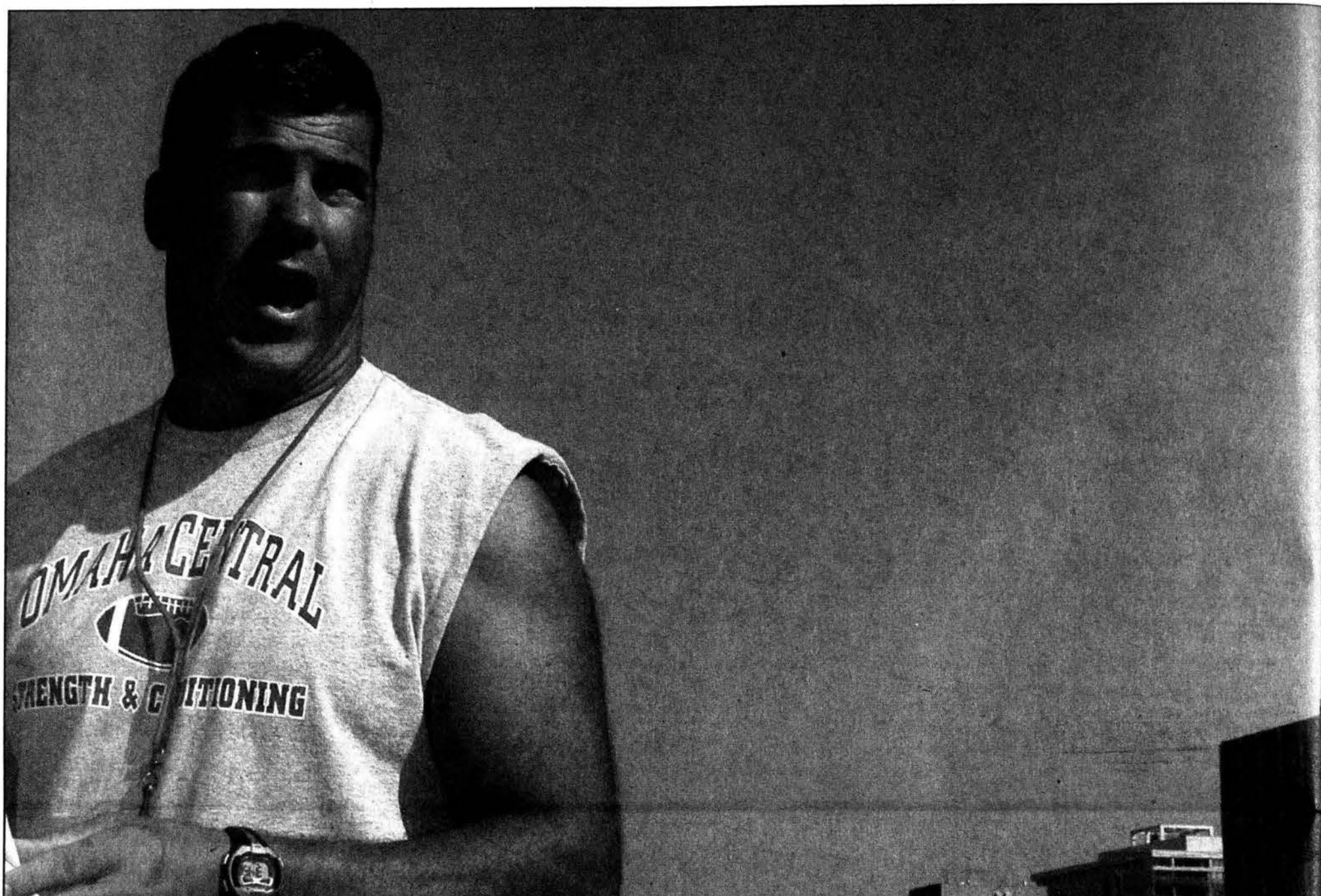


PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

Head Coach Jay Ball instructs his players at a mid-week practice. After losing the first two games against North and Creighton Prep, the Eagles rebounded with a win over Benson and Bryan. Ball said by focusing and building around defense, it is possible for a team to push through pressure.

## New coach's 'Grape Crush' replaces 'I-Back High

BY PATRICK BREEN

The football isn't the most important "ball" on the field anymore.

After 11 years of coaching at South, Jay Ball has returned to his alma mater with a new focus, hoping to lead the Eagles to the State Tournament.

"Our goal is always to play in November," Ball said.

Players' goals remain the same, and the senior leaders said they could win it all.

"Honestly, we can go to the championship," senior Robert Clay said. "It took us a little bit to come together as a team, but now we are gelling. If we continue to work hard, we can go all the way."

The new focus of this year's coach and team is defense. Ball knows firsthand how important defense is, because he worked at Omaha North as the Vikings' Defensive Coordinator.

"Defense is what we are trying to build around," Ball said. "It keeps you in every game. If your offense struggles, your defense has to be there to keep you in it."

Due to the number of great running backs like Gale Sayers and Ahman Green the school has produced, Central had come to be known as "I-back High." But Ball is hoping to begin a new era. He likes to call it "The Grape Crush," coining the phrase from the Denver Broncos' defense, "The Orange Crush."

Clay said the team had a strong defense that would continue to improve and help the team. The defense has several senior starters and came close to shutting out its first opponent.

"A 'team first' attitude is always a key to a good team," he said.

The defense didn't hold against the star players of North, Phillip Bates and Niles Paul, and Central lost the close battle.

The defense played strong in the away game against Creighton Prep and lost because of one bad quarter, Ball said.

The defense then rebounded against the Benson Bunnies. The starters allowed no touchdowns for the Bunnies, leaving the game with a 20-0 lead.

Ball came to Central after hearing rumors coach Joe McMenamin was retiring and wanted to return to coach at his alma mater, so he had applied for head coach. After hearing the news he got the job, he knew there would be pressure to take the team to the next level.

"There's always pressure and expectations to win," Ball said, "but most of that is self-imposed. You have to work through the pressure and just do it."

As a former player, Ball said that he knows what it takes to be a good coach and make a good team. He described his coaching as hands-on.

"Demonstrative," Ball said. "I'm always active and involved. I'm a high energy guy."

Players said that Ball was detail-oriented and focused on the little fundamentals and discipline. Ball said he pushes the athletes hard.

"We push the kids a lot harder than they probably like," Ball said. "We try to take them further than they can take themselves."

Wide receiver Clay agreed. He said before this year, he slacked off in practice.

"It's senior year, everyone looks up to us, and you have to always work and play hard," Clay said. "We have to lead by example."

Ball said the athletes learn from winning, losing and playing hard.

"I think football teaches them responsibilities," he said. "It gives them courage, knowledge and perseverance. It teaches them, if you get knocked down, you have to get back up."

In his Central coaching debut, Ball was faced with a tough decision. Down 22-19, on the one yard line, he decided to go for the game-winning touchdown instead of the game-tying field goal.

The Eagles lost, but many commended the coach for making a tough call. Ball said he works hard to get the team ready for every game by having the team watch video of the opponents' games.

"Most people don't realize how much work goes in before the game," he said. "We (coaches) copy film on Saturday, and watch it to six hours of it that night. Then we practice Sunday from 8 to 11, then the coaches watch another 4 to 5 hours of film. After practice we watch it Monday and Tuesday. And then we scout on Thursday."

With the intense after-school practices and the long nights watching film, coaches put in an immense amount of time to be ready for the next week's game.

"We don't ever count how many hours we put in," Ball said. "It would be depressing."

Coach Ball lost his first two games as Central's head coach against the rival North Vikings and Creighton Prep, but after recent victories, said he felt that the team could continue to improve and become a state contender.

## JV Eagles beat Benson with strong defense, explosive offense

BY PATRICK BREEN

Big plays helped spark the Eagles' junior varsity football to a 2-0 start.

After the confidence boost that came with the opening game against Bellevue East, the team continued its hard-nosed defense and explosive plays in the game against Benson, beating the Bunnies 20-12.

JV Head Coach Jody Phillips said the team played well.

"I was proud of how they played," he said. "It was a tied game at half, and they could have easily given up, but they didn't."

Defense was the name of the game, as the score stood 6-6 at halftime. The crushing defense led by sophomore Josiah Gauff and junior Ryan Steffen disrupted the Benson quarterback, forcing him to scramble and tackling running backs for losses.

The Eagles picked up in the second half, as Gauff intercepted a long third down pass and returned it to the Bunnies' 47 yard line.

The resulting possession left only a dropped pass, though, and neither team scored in the third quarter.

Junior Robert Bradshaw said the team has talent, and could go the season without a loss.

"We think we could be undefeated," he said. "We have a lot of talent."

Even with great field position, Central couldn't score, and had to punt the ball. Both teams held strong when their side of the field was invaded. The third quarter ended with the score the same. The fourth quarter certainly didn't.

"Benson was a tough opponent," Phillips said. "But later in the game, the heat got to them."

Benson intercepted the ball with 9:06 remaining and looked poised to take back the lead, but Central's defense forced a fumble, regaining possession just 30 seconds after losing it. The momentum shift was swift and quick.

After the two opening wins, Central looks to improve to 3-0 against Omaha North.

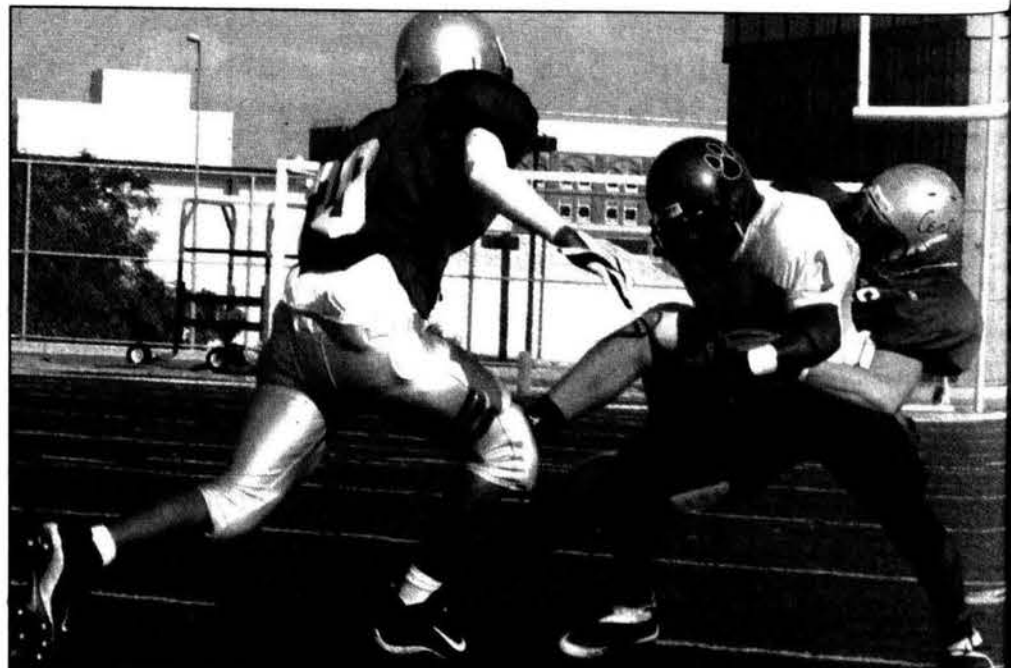


PHOTO BY PATRICK BREEN/REGISTER

The Eagles' Ryan Steffen grabs hold as Yarde Retta charges to take down the Bunnies' De Tolbert in the backfield. The Eagle defense held Benson to 12 points.