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Milk, recent trends may prompt early menstruation

Molly Huber
Managing Editor

Research published in the medical journal *Pediatrics* in April 1997 shows that the age of puberty and menstruation is getting earlier for girls in the United States, though researchers are at a loss to conclusively determine why. The 17-18 year-old norm of 150 years ago has been lowered to nine- or ten-years-old as a common age for menarche. The pediatricians who conducted the research evaluated 17,000 American girls and discovered development of breasts, pubic hair and/or menstruation at an average age of 8.9 years.

Researchers are divided on the causes of this early onset of puberty, which is ten times more common in girls than in boys. Some believe that early menstruation is related to recent media and food-processing trends in America. According to an ABC News article published in 2001, "an increase in obesity among children, low birth weight, absent fathers, unrelated males in the household, a sedentary lifestyle, chemicals that act as endocrine disrupters and the sexualization of children by the media" are all possible contributors. Some research contends that a young girl's exposure to sexual hormones from unrelated men in her household, such as a stepfather, prompt early sexual development, and sexual images on television trigger menstruation "in a way that food stimulates saliva." Chemicals found in everyday products, such as the phthalate ester added to vinyl to make it more flexible, and which can be found in plastics and cosmetics, are also targeted as likely causes by recent media reports.

Despite the many theories, other researchers claim the cause of early menstruation has nothing to do with recent trends, and the reasons remain different for all girls.

"The vast majority of these theories have been unproven," said Ms. Luann Moraski, DO, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin in a recent *Healthlink* article. "There are no proven links to cosmetics, meats or other factors in this country that I know of."

Instead, Moraski points to heredity and behavior as more plausible causes of precocious puberty. According to her, family patterns and the physical activity of a young girl tend to most heavily affect menstrual functions. In the natural process of menstruation, the brain releases a hormone called gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH), which stimulates the growth and maturation of the ovaries. Moraski claims that if a girl's mother menstruated at an early age, the GnRH will be released early in the girl as well. Girls that engage less in physical activity or who are overweight are also theoretically inclined to release the hormone earlier. Rare causes of early menstruation may include ovarian cysts, thyroid problems or McCune-Albright syndrome, a unique, non-fatal disease characterized by irregular skin pigmentation, bony abnormalities and sexual precocity.

Perhaps the most notable theory however in the struggle toward an explanation of early menstruation is that of hormones in milk, which allegedly expose young girls to additional, and unnecessary, sources of estrogen in elevated numbers. Each sip of cow milk contains 59 different bioactive hormones, concluded endocrinologist Clark Grosvenor in the 1992 *Journal of Endocrine Reviews*. In addition to these hormones, farmers nationwide may be injecting their cows with Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH), a genetically engineered copy of a hormone cows naturally produce. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the use of the Monsanto Company's rBGH in dairy cows in late 1993, and it has been in use since 1994.

The hormone has the potential to increase milk production by 10-15 percent, but may be extremely harmful to consumers. *The Monsanto rBGH/ BST Milk Wars*

See EARLY, page 2

Authorities tackle spread of meth labs

Kansas, Missouri crack down on drug trafficking, take steps toward prevention through public involvement and legislature

Carina Murphy
Staff Writer

Drano, Sudafed, tubes, funnels, coffee filters, beakers and lithium clutter a disheveled house. Gaseous fumes permeate the air. Could this be the laboratory of a mad scientist? A sleep-deprived chemist in poor health, perhaps? Not quite — this is a meth lab, a scene that is becoming increasingly popular across Missouri and Kansas. The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has already reported 2,788 meth lab incidents in Missouri this year.

According to Mr. Kyle Smith, deputy director of the Kansas Investigation Bureau, the law enforcement and state legislatures often overlook methamphetamine production because of its cheapness, popularity among lower social classes and prevalence in rural areas.

"We're better shaped to deal with importation [of drugs]," said Smith. "We can wiretap and have border control, but when you have Beavis and Butthead going down to the local Wal-Mart to buy supplies, exposure is minimal until they blow up."

Because Interstates 35 and 70 serve as vital drug trafficking gateways, methamphetamine production and transportation is widespread throughout Missouri and Kansas. The DEA has dubbed it the principal drug of concern in Kansas, with 584 meth lab incidents in 2004.

However, since Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius signed the Sheriff Matt Samuels Chemical Control Act last April, meth labs have decreased by 64 percent, according to Smith.

The law limits the amount of

cold medicine that can be sold at one time because cold medicines, such as Sudafed and Cenafed, contain pseudoephedrine, the active ingredient in methamphetamine. The Missouri state legislature passed a similar law in June, requiring that all pseudoephedrine products be put behind the pharmacy counter and a logbook be kept, according to Ms. Shirley Armstead, special agent for the St. Louis Division of the DEA. Before the law was instituted however, Samuels, a sheriff in Greenwood County, Kansas for whom the bill is named, died during a meth arrest last January.

"The incident happened while we were actually trying to pass the bill," said Smith. "He was walking up to a house, suspected of containing a meth lab, and was shot and killed."

According to Smith, this incident brought attention not only to the strain put on family members of drug enforcement officers, but also the emotional tolls meth takes on addicts and their families. According to Mr. Preston Washington of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence,

women, particularly mothers, are especially vulnerable to meth abuse.

"[Meth-addicted women] really have some control issues and don't know how to exert themselves," said Washington. "They are easily influenced, intimidated in relationships, even if they don't really have direct substance abuse problems. They have a high codependency quotient, which means they're being controlled."

Meth-addicted mothers and meth labs pose risks for children by exposing them to highly toxic ingredients, chemical burns, respiratory problems and many other dangers.

"Collateral damages are extensive," said Smith. "Once in Cherokee, Kansas, the neighbors were extremely upset when there was a fire from a meth lab. The people in the house ran outside and went back in[to] the house three times. The first time, they went in for their meth, the second time, they went in for their glassware and supplies and finally they went in a third time and came out with their kids."

Although there is a high concentration of meth labs in rural areas, specifically in south-east Kansas where Cherokee County is located, Armstead claims that meth labs can be just as dangerous in cities.

"In the city, in close confined areas, there are gas lines that can be ruptured," said Armstead. "A meth explosion in the city could cause a whole block to burn down."

Several organizations are currently working to provide education for prevention of methamphetamine abuse and labs. The DEA recently sent Armstead to the BJC Home HealthCare Agency in St. Louis to give an informative presentation and provide training sessions for detecting meth activity.

"I gave them information about the sights, sound and smells of methamphetamine," said Armstead. "When

The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has already reported **2,778** meth lab incidents in the state of **Missouri** this year.

The DEA has noted methamphetamine as the **primary drug of concern** in the state of **Kansas**.

Methamphetamine is generally produced in private homes and sold by independent dealers. According to *The Kansas City Star*, Kansas City is "riddled with meth houses".

methamphetamine use in the metro area

Juana Summers

See METH, page 2

Peace advocate works against genocide

Emily Becker
Staff Writer

Imagine the country in complete turmoil. Imagine being a racial minority and wondering everyday if you will become another number in the death toll, which will eventually reach over 150,000. Imagine trying to sleep at night while the sound of your neighbors being slaughtered drifts into your room. For Mr. Prosper Ndashuriye, this was not a nightmare he could wake up from.

Since 1993, Ndashuriye's homeland, the African country of Burundi, has been struggling to end the civil wars and genocide between the Hutu and the Tutsi peoples. Sept. 29, the Peace, Biodiversity & Justice club (PBJ) brought Ndashuriye, Mr. Mike Seymour and Mr. Will McDowell to STA to share their stories.

"He brought a lot of awareness," said senior Lizzy Beier, who co-leads PB & J with senior Anna Johnson. "People didn't realize the issues and how much destruction the issues brought."

In 1994, Ndashuriye created Youth in Reconstruction of the World in Destruction, an organization dedicated to rebuilding the villages and promoting peace and justice in the war-torn areas of Burundi.

"He had a great story," said Johnson. "It was inspirational. It was remarkable how he could help these people overcome

their hate."

According to Youth in Reconstruction's website, www.jymd.org, in the next five years, they hope to build 2,650 homes, create campaigns to help spread peace and extend their work to five other countries.

"The more people that can help around the world are the more people that can help rebuild [Ndashuriye's] land," said McDowell. "And by him reaching out to the world, he can show the people of his country that the world will reach back."

Now Seymour, who worked with Ndashuriye in Africa, is traveling with Ndashuriye on a cross-country tour.

"Being in the presence of Prosper, being around someone like that makes you want to re-evaluate what's important and makes you realize in the face of violence, you can act in peaceful ways," said McDowell, who works for People to People International, a Kansas City-based group which promotes peace through cultural awareness.

According to Johnson, it was a coincidence that Ndashuriye came to speak to the STA community at a time that coincided so well with PB & J's first quarter theme of "peace." The month and a half tour stopped in Kansas City for two days and McDowell contacted Johnson and Beier about having Ndashuriye visit.



Juana Summers

Prosper Ndashuriye, peace activist from Burundi, addresses the STA community Sept. 29. Ndashuriye works with the Youth in Reconstruction of the World in Destruction to bring peace to the conflicted country.

While Johnson and Beier were lucky with timing, many STA students were happy that Ndashuriye was able to come at all.

"I thought it would be interesting to learn about peace from someone who

See PEACE, page 2

October 27, 2005

EARLY: Milk hormones may fuel precocious menstruation

Continued from page 1

Handbook by Dr. Samuel Epstein of the Cancer Prevention Coalition states that rBGH causes sickness in cows, such as udder infections (mastitis) and inflammations. As a result, rBGH milk may often be contaminated by pus from rBGH-induced infections, and antibiotics used to treat those infections. Due to increasing knowledge of the potential dangers of rBGH, Europe and Canada have banned the hormone and 95 percent of US dairy farmers have boycotted it. Those products that *do* employ use of rBGH milk are not required by law to include this information on product labels, although pioneering companies such as Ben & Jerry's have placed a "rBGH-free" label on their products in an effort to raise consumer awareness.

An article published by OrganicConsumers.org entitled "BGH: Monsanto and the Dairy Industry's Dirty Little Secret" claimed that 75 percent of the 32 million gallons of milk purchased each year in the US by the high-grossing Starbucks franchise comes from dairies that allow cows to be injected with rBGH. Three-fourths of most Starbucks drinks are milk.

"Once Starbucks' 15 million customers learn that most of their latte or cappuccino drinks they're paying top dollar for contain an extra dose of pus, antibiotics and growth hormones...they may decide to take their business elsewhere," the article stated.

The milk industry *has* taken their business elsewhere. In 1946, following World War II and the occupation of American troops, milk took its hormones all the way to Japan. The introduction of dairy prod-

ucts, which had been previously unknown to the culture, had dramatic effects on the population, especially on young girls. In a study of 20,000 Japanese people conducted from 1950 to 1975, researchers found that the per-capita yearly dietary intake of an average Japanese person skyrocketed over 2,100 percent. During these 25 years, the typical Japanese girl grew an average of 4.5 inches and gained 19 pounds. She also began ovulating at the age of 12 years old, three years earlier than she had in 1950. Mr. Robert Cohen of the Health101 Institute speculates in his article, "Early Sexuality and Milk Hormones," that the cultural infiltration of milk and the wealth of dairy products it fosters are to blame for these dramatic changes.

"Little girls are born with bodies that are genetically pre-programmed to transform them into women," said Cohen. "By consuming cow's milk and cow's milk products, little girls become big girls long before Mother Nature intended."

The "little girls" that have become Academy women are indeed menstruating earlier than their foremothers 150 years ago. A school survey of 100 STA students showed that most girls start menstruating at an average age of 12 years old, approximately five years before the school's first students. Twenty-six percent of girls had their first period at 13 years old, 24 percent at 12 years, 23 percent at 14 years, 15 percent at 11 years and a

mere five percent of the surveyed student population had begun menstruating later than 14 years old. Another five percent began menstruation at 10 years old, and two percent of researched students had not had their periods yet.

Ms. Anita Reznicek addressed the topic of menstruation with her Women in Theology class in one of their first in-class discussions. She believes that menstruation deserves attention and the fact that it is occurring for modern girls much earlier than for girls of past generations is a definite issue of concern.

"Most of what makes us women hasn't changed for millions of years," said Reznicek. "I think it's shocking for some students to hear that menstruation is changing. We tend to think that everyone's like us and that they always have been."

Although Reznicek cannot name for certain the cause (s) of early menstruation, she believes that the reasons lie in our food supply.

"I will say this: something's happening to our food supply that's affecting the schedule of girls' maturity," she said. "We need to start thinking about what it means for a girl to start menstruating sooner. Girls need to know how their brains think, how their hearts feel and how their bodies work. This includes knowing about how they menstruate, because this is what it means to be female."

By consuming cow's milk and cow's milk products, little girls become big girls long before Mother Nature intended

-Mr. Robert Cohen, Health101 Institute

RING: Involvement of family leads to athletic successes

Continued from page 9

"They usually stand at the end with the other spectators and cheer," said Libby.

Libby was filled with a sense of accomplishment at the end of the race.

"It was fun, but I'm always glad it's over," said Libby.

Libby did not realize that she had come in first place. There was not an awards ceremony for her age group, so she headed home with her family.

A few weeks later, Libby found an envelope sitting on her kitchen table with her gold medal from the triathlon inside.

Mary felt that Libby was greatly affected by the experience.

"It has helped her realize that she can face her fears and push herself through tough situations," said Mary.

Corrections Issue One

The Dart apologizes for misprinting the photo of Katrina evacuees on the front page. The correct photo depicts sophomore students Caroline Gernhauser and Erin Davis among their STA classmates.

The correct version, photographed by Sarah Tampke, Lifestyles editor, appears below.



Sarah Tampke

STA sophomores Caroline Gernhauser, left, and Erin Davis eat lunch with new friends in The Commons Sept. 21. The two girls recently fled the New Orleans area due to the flooding of their school and homes during Hurricane Katrina.

Juniors explore opportunities to serve the community



Breanne Sigler

Junior Christina Fuerst receives service information about Sheffield Place, a long-term shelter for women and children, from STA alumnae Ms. Meghan Tallman at the Junior-Senior Service Fair Friday, Oct. 21. Sheffield Place, along with almost 20 other service agencies, offered helpful insight to upperclassmen about their numerous opportunities for service hours. Juniors were required to attend the service fair, and to visit with at least three prospective service agencies. "[Service] gets them to see the world through others' eyes," said Ms. Robin Good, theology teacher. "It gets them to step out of their comfort zone and learn in other ways. It gives them a broader view of the world."

PEACE: When confronted with injustice, STA students make commitment to peace

Continued from page 1

experienced war," said sophomore Anna Boisseau, who attended the event. "It made me want to go out and do something."

According to Johnson, about 70 students were present and she was pleased with the response from the STA community.

"It made me feel that this wasn't a complete waste of time," said Johnson. "People wanted to get involved."

A main feature of Ndabishuriye's speech was a song from Burundi he taught the audience.

"It basically said, 'Praise God, God is great,'" said Beier. "It really brought

attention back to the speakers and got people energized."

During the event, Seymour also showed a video he made in Africa about the work of Ndabishuriye's movement

and the audience received flyers about getting involved.

"When we were handing out the brochures from Prosper, people just swarmed me," said Johnson.

No matter which aspect of his presentation the students enjoyed most, Ndabishuriye left his mark on the STA community.

"I really want to try to stop war," said Boisseau. "And that's not really easy, just to stop war, but I want to do whatever I can to help."

That's not really easy, just to stop war, but I want to do whatever I can to help

-Anna Boisseau, Sophomore

METH: Awareness key in preventing drug-related incidents in communities

Continued from page 1

there are chemical smells where there's no chemical factory, and you're smelling ammonia, acetone, you could have a neighbor who has a meth lab."

Smith believes methamphetamine production and abuse is unlike any other drug problem in the Midwest. Even though there are several ways to distinguish a meth user - dilated pupils, dry skin, facial lesions and scabs

Armstead claims there is no definite way to tell, which is why tip-offs and suspicion are vital to drug enforcement units.

"For me, it's important that people

in communities understand that they are the eyes and ears of the police," said Armstead. "If they suspect anything, they need to call. They can call from a cell phone or anonymously from a pay phone, but they must call."

Also, the availability of meth ingredients still presents an obstacle to overcoming the spread of meth labs and meth abuse.

"[Meth] is extremely difficult to deal with," said Smith. "They're much more complicated cases and put a lot more demand on forensic examinations, police departments and prosecutors. But I'm hoping we're turning the corner."

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Ownership and sponsorship: *The Dart*, a monthly newspaper, is written, designed and typeset by student members of the newspaper staff. Students enroll in the newspaper class after completing Introduction to Journalism during freshman or sophomore year. *The Dart* is published with funds from the St. Teresa's Academy general operating fund and advertising revenue. St. Teresa's Academy is a Catholic, independent college preparatory school, sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

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Photo Illustrations: Photo illustrations are conceptual photos that combine the limitless possibility of the drawing with the realism of the photograph.

KC reaches record 105 homicides; gang activity may be factor of rise

Mikhala Lantz-Simmons
Staff Writer

The homicide count in Kansas City has increased 33 percent since 2004, which makes Kansas City citizens question the cause in this rise in crime. Are gangs a factor in this surge of murders?

Sergeant Terry Finn of the Kansas City Police Department said that many of the killings are gang related but not all of them. Finn will have been on the police force for 23 years this January. He was assigned to a gang task force in 1987 when the Bloods and the Crips came to Kansas City. Now, he deals mostly with shootings and homicides.

"Gang-related" makes it sound like an organized effort, but Kansas City's gangs are not real structured like those in California," said Finn.

While the Crips and the Bloods are more predominant in larger cities like Chicago and Los Angeles, Kansas City's gangs are based on geographical areas. According to Finn, the police department is increasing patrol in those troubled

areas to fight the rise in crime.

"We're doing a good job of catching the people doing the shooting," said Finn.

A 20-year-old former gang member from Kansas City, who wished to remain anonymous because he feared gang retribution, joined a gang at age 14 because of pressure from family members and friends. In order to join the gang, he had to be voted in.

Then he had to kill someone. While he admitted shooting at a random person sitting on their porch, he was unsure of whether or not he had actually taken their life.

"We just wanted to prove that we weren't punks," he said. "I liked putting fear into people: seeing people's face when you shot at them."

At age 18, he left the gang because he was tired of the violence.

"It just got old," he said. "You just reach a point where you've got to move on."

He never got caught for any criminal activity, but two of his close friends are

serving life sentences for murder. When asked if he regretted anything, he responded with an emphatic "no."

According to the National Youth Gang Center (NYGC), most gang members are between ages 12 and 24. Dr. Christopher Thomas stated the following reasons for gang affiliation in a 2005 article for the *Psychiatric Times*: "An early history of antisocial behavior; availability and early use of marijuana, parent-child conflict, poor academic performance and school attachment or living in a troubled neighborhood with high rates of delinquency increases the likelihood of gang membership."

Finn suggested that media, especially rap music, also play a role in attracting prospective gang members.

"It's a lifestyle that they want to emu-

late," said Finn. "The thug life looks cool."

Despite all the hype about gangs, Finn feels that the public needs to keep one thing in mind. He stressed the fact that the majority of inner-city kids are not committing crimes. "Keep in mind that the gangs get the most exposure," said Finn. "There are tons of good inner-city kids that aren't involved in gangs or violence. You don't hear about them because they're below the radar and no one takes notice. People get the wrong impression that all of these kids are bad."

Around this time last year, the total number of homicides was 76, compared to this year's current 105. According to the *Kansas City Star*, 81 percent of the weapons used in this year's homicides were guns. Finn attributes the high number of homicides to a larger amount of bullets hitting their mark than in the past.

"It's a fluke," said Finn.

We just wanted to prove that we weren't punks. I liked putting fear into people: seeing people's face when you shot at them.
-anonymous former gang member

Students promote Catholic teachings during Respect Life week

Alison Raybould
Sports Editor

Respect Life Sunday was observed by Catholics on Oct. 2. At STA, Respect Life Week kicked off Oct. 3 with an intercom announcement during advisory period about the Catholic Church's stance on euthanasia, or mercy killing.

"The goal of pro-life week was to raise awareness in the student body about the many types of respect life issues," said senior Katherine Schilling.

Ms. Mimi Harman, who helped the students prepare for the week, agreed.

"It's important to educate our community on the many respect life issues," said Harman. "We wanted to make students aware that every decision they make either supports life or destroys it."

Throughout the week, a group of students promoted life with daily announcements, addressing euthanasia, war, drunk driving, abortion and the death penalty.

"We chose these issues because we felt they directly impacted the student body, especially drunk driving," said junior Brynne Lee.

According to Harman, it was important that they educate the student body on issues other than abortion, so they could stick to the Catholic Church's "consistent ethic of life," or, the belief that all life is sacred and to be controlled only by God. Likewise, Lee said that though students should be informed of the Church's pro-life stance on abortion, there were many other issues that needed to be discussed.

"When people hear the word 'pro-life,' they immediately think about abortion," said Lee. "But we tried to focus on all aspects of life."

In dealing with such controversial issues as abortion, Lee knew the planning committee had to be careful not to offend anyone.

"We just wanted the student body to give [all pro-life issues] a second thought," said Lee. "By sticking to statistics and offering the facts, we were able to avoid any controversy."

Schilling agreed that it was important to respect others' views, while still spreading the Catholic Church's stance on life.

"Because [abortion] is such a controversial issue, we knew we had to be careful not to tell people how to think," said Schilling. "Instead, we wanted to invite people to consider the issue from all aspects



Breanne Sigler

Ms. Mimi Harman, Campus Ministry co-leader, looks on while, from left, sophomore Elizabeth Nelson and juniors Libby Conwell, Shannon VanBuskirk and Brynne Lee cut cake to hand out for the Respect Life Week baby shower. The shower, held on Oct. 6, raised over \$100 for Lighthouse, an organization that assists mothers who decided against abortion. The committee also collected about six bags full of baby items to donate to the organization.

and cause them to question their current beliefs. Basically we encouraged the respect life alternative."

Along with Schilling and Lee, the pro-life committee consisted of seniors Jessica Collins and Sarah Farnet, juniors Libby Conwell, Meredith Snyder and Shannon VanBuskirk and sophomore Elizabeth Nelson.

To supplement the announcements, the pro-life

committee prepared several visual aids including posters with a list of the 39 men who have been executed this year and a poster that compared deaths from war to the deaths from abortion.

The pro-life committee sponsored a baby shower Oct. 6, in which students had the option of bringing in a baby item or purchasing a piece of cake for \$1. The gifts and money from the cake

sale were donated to Lighthouse, an agency run by Catholic Charities. The agency helps Kansas City mothers who chose to give birth to their child when considering abortion. They raised over \$100 and received about six bags full of baby items, including diapers, formula and bottles.

"All in all, I would say that the baby shower was a success," said Lee.

Unitown: Participants aim to raise community awareness



Kathleen Pointer

Unitown counselors and facilitators meet on Oct. 10 in the Music & Arts Building conference room to plan and discuss the upcoming event.

Nicole Farley
News Editor

Unitown, a two-day program designed to raise awareness about prejudice and oppression and to help participants become active leaders to solve these problems in their communities, will take place at STA tomorrow, with about 45 students participating.

The program, a shortened version of the week-long summer program Anytown, is sponsored by Harmony NCCJ (The National Conference for Community and Justice). It focuses not only on helping participants to gain a deeper awareness of social injustices such as racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism, but also to develop the leadership skills necessary to take their training with them and apply it in their own communities.

Mr. Craig Whitney, who oversees the Unitown program at STA with Mr. Mark Fudenberg, said that the idea behind the program was to build a sense of tolerance and acceptance.

"I think it's about walking in some-

one else's shoes, seeing something from someone else's point of view," said Whitney. "And I think for all people, and certainly for young people, it's not something we're customarily doing."

First time participants in the program are referred to as delegates, who are led through activities by counselors. Whitney said that generally freshmen and sophomores are chosen as delegates, so that they may then put their leadership skills to greater use over their last few years at STA. Counselors are chosen based upon past participation in Unitown, as well as meeting the mandatory requirement of attending the summer Anytown program.

Senior Trenisha Ford was chosen as a delegate during her freshman year, but was unable to attend Anytown until the summer before her junior year. However, after attending Anytown, she was a counselor at Unitown during her junior year and will be returning as a counselor this year. Ford said that as a delegate during her freshman year, she didn't know many people; however, time spent

at Unitown changed that.

"There were more people, older people, who I got to know, and it helped me to come out and say what I needed to say, because I was comfortable around them," said Ford.

As a counselor, Ford saw similar reactions from the younger delegates she led.

"They didn't really say as much as they could have," said Ford. "But I know that by being there, it got them more comfortable with the school and with the people around them."

Whitney said that he usually witnesses positive results around STA after Unitown. He said that often, students will make offhand remarks without realizing the potential offensiveness of their statement. After returning from Unitown, participants take care to correct other students.

"We need to be aware that when people say stuff, it can hurt somebody," said Whitney. "And do we really want to do that? If we knew that we were doing that, would we choose to do it?"

PHOTO

How do you feel knowing Osama Bin-Laden has not been captured?



"I really think that we got distracted from the goal. We haven't tried that hard to capture him. He was the point of the war and we didn't do much."

Emily Schapker, freshman



"I think that we've tried our hardest to find him. I think that he is dead, we just haven't found his body yet."

Julie Sear, sophomore



"I think it's ridiculous because it shouldn't be that hard to find a person who caused that big of a disaster to our country."

Lindsay Carvan, sophomore



"I don't really think about it. I trust that whatever needs to happen with our country is happening."

Sarah Farnet, senior

Who would you like to cater lunch at STA?



"Panera. They have healthy, good food."

Leia Darden, junior



"McDonald's, because it's cheaper and more people would eat it."

Brianne Taormina, sophomore



"Chipotle. You could make your burrito every day. It's so exciting!"

Marina Guerra, senior

compiled by Alexandra Bojarski-Stauffner

Are Social Security benefits in danger?

A topic of recent political debate is the ongoing feud over Social Security, the program the government has set up that uses public funds to provide a sense of economic security for Americans. This Social Security we have been investing our paychecks in has begun to enter an unstable financial state. It is hypothesized by political analysts that in less than 15 years, Social Security will begin running a debt, spending more money for benefits than it generates through taxes. At this point in time, Social Security will have to fall back on the "Social Security Trust Fund," a program set up to ensure that citizens be able to maintain a reasonable financial state until as early as 2042 or as late as 2052.

In the United States, both employers and employees must pay Social Security taxes. Money the government raises from those taxes goes to providing benefits for mainly the retired community and senior citizens, with additional subsidiaries providing benefits for those in poverty and disabled people. In theory, today's workers provide funds for citizens drawing benefits today and, in 25 years when today's workers retire, the workers of the

next generation will provide funding. Citizens receive Social Security benefits based upon the amount of Social Security taxes they have paid, which is based on one's income.

What much of the public does not know about the Social Security Trust Fund is that the supposed funds are claims on the United States Treasury; there are no actual paper assets in the Social Security Trust Fund. The Social Security Trust Fund was set up as an estimate to account for future savings. In less than 15 years, the federal government will be scrounging for billions of dollars to help ensure the financial stability of its retired, elderly and disabled citizens. Those legal responsibilities have reached nearly \$12 million in the last year, getting progressively worse as the years pass. Every year we wait costs \$150 to \$600 billion in loss of benefits.

Our president has proposed the idea of "privatization," the idea that Americans should have personal accounts, funded by allowing individuals to maintain control of a portion of their taxes. Privatizing Social Security into personal accounts could very easily harm the economy, making matters all the worse for the

Social Security Administration. It would only increase federal deficits, which in the long-term, would reduce economic growth and diminish funds to provide Social Security to the baby boomer generation. Statistics from the Social Security Network show that in nearly 30 years, the debt on every family would be \$32,000 higher because of privatization.

As women, we need to be knowledgeable about the situation at hand and how it will affect us. Women are becoming more predominant in executive positions of the work force, but the population of "home-makers" is still large. Privatizing accounts would endanger the income those women are currently entitled to receive under Social Security. Women are asymmetrically dependent on Social Security benefits; almost twice as many women retire in poverty than men. In the next 15 years, Social Security will only be able to pay approximately 72 percent of its scheduled benefits, dropping female average monthly benefits by nearly \$175.

Proposals of reform are the most tactful way of approaching the issue. The government should re-evaluate

how they distribute funds, percentages on which they tax citizens and be more conscious of our rapidly declining economy. Officials should be hesitant in the way they distribute Social Security to disabled persons; those who are simply applying for disability due to "tennis elbow" should not be allowed benefits.

Less than three years from now, the baby boomer generation will begin to retire. Do the math. Taxes will increase in order to support those in their retirement, which will put a huge strain on the economy. As Americans, it is our duty to stay informed and active in our increasing instability. We want our children to be able to live in a world where they are free of worry. By addressing this issue and related topics, we will protect future generations who rely on Social Security benefits. Nearly half of today's seniors would be under the poverty line if it were not for Social Security benefits. These future generations deserve to receive equal or greater benefits than today's seniors. We need to protect our nation's future and the lives of our children. They are the ones that will rely on Social Security the most.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job."

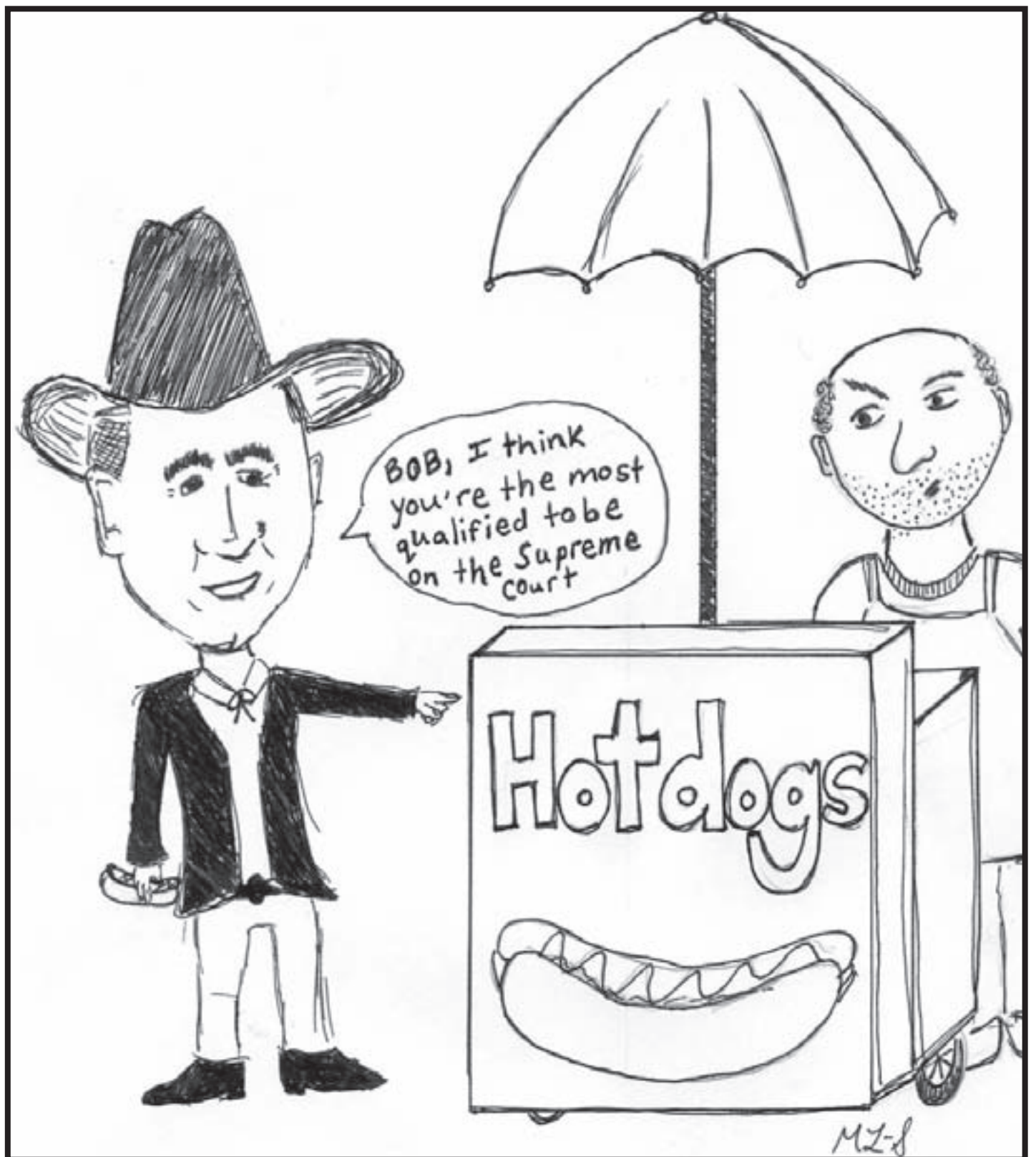
These were President Bush's now famous words to FEMA director Michael Brown on September 2, days after the catastrophic arrival of Hurricane Katrina. The Superdome evacuees were trapped in a human cesspool while outside criminals looted stores and fired shots at the New Orleans police force. Hundreds of corpses floated in the now toxic waters as survivors looked on helplessly, unsure of where to turn. In the world's most powerful nation, people were starving and dying from thirst.

The President, however, was using third-grade nicknames and commending a man who couldn't even keep a job at the International Arabian Horse Association. "Oblivious, in denial, dangerous," US Rep. Nancy Pelosi said of Bush and his inappropriate response to the devastation.

In times of national tragedy people normally look to their leaders for compassion and support, but when Katrina hit New Orleans President Bush was not in the Oval Office taking command and reading supplies—he was playing a guitar and singing country songs while vacationing in San Diego. It took two more days and Karl Rove to actually get Bush to the Gulf Coast, where his compassion was further questioned after commenting on his eagerness to rebuild, in particular, Senator Trent Lott's multi-million dollar estate: "I'm looking forward to sitting on the porch," he said laughing.

With a disaster as large as Katrina, it is impossible to place the blame on any one person. Federalism failed at all levels, and responsibility lies with the local government as well as the federal. But it is a president's duty to restore people's confidence and to take action, not stand awkwardly on the sidelines and wait for someone to tell him what to do. Bush's foremost job was to lead, and at that he failed. Miserably.

-- Senior Kate Harbin



cartoon by Mikhalta Lantz-Simmons

Gossip promotes gender inequality

Sarah Tampke
Lifestyles Editor



It's Friday night around 8 and you have just arrived at a party with all your friends. Girls stare and whisper to each other about the clothes you are wearing and the guys you are with. "She is such a slut," one girl mumbles under her breath. "It's so obvious that she is having sex with her boyfriend; they have been going out forever." The other girls agree as they watch their guy friends head off to back rooms with random girls, thinking nothing of it. They are boys after all, so that kind of behavior is okay.

Why are women in our society held to higher moral standards than men? Are men so above women that morals don't have to be a part of their character? Or

is it that women are so beneath men that they need to work harder to improve their behavior?

The belief that girls are supposed to be conservative, proper and ladylike is something that has been passed down through generations. According to British Literature teacher Ms. Pat Dunlay, a woman's virginity was highly valued as far back as the 11th century. It's odd that I have never read one piece of historical literature mentioning the importance of a man's virginity.

Ms. Anita Reznicek pointed out in Women's Theology that another example would be in the Bible, when Jesus tells the story of the adulteress that was to be stoned. Where was the adulterer? Why wasn't he punished for his infidelity? It must be because it was the woman's fault, right?

Girls are also held to different

standards when it comes to drinking and smoking. My mom has always told me, "There's nothing attractive about a girl who smokes." I don't want to smoke but I wonder where we get these ideas. Also, if a girl drinks she is out of control, but if a guy gets completely smashed, it is explained with the classic mantra, "Boys will be boys."

The sad thing is that women cause the cycle to continue every time they criticize another woman for her actions. How many times have you heard yourself calling another girl a "tramp," "slut," "skank," "hooker" or "whore"? The words have lost their meaning to me because I hear them so often. It's scary to think that we are keeping ourselves in this position.

I do know on the other hand that some girls can be very promiscuous. For example, some girls never have a

boyfriend but make out with different guys on the weekends. Would you think the same of a guy doing that? I wouldn't. The way girls are supposed to act has been embedded in my brain time and time again and therefore criticism is expected.

The standards of female behavior should be lowered but the standards of male behavior should be raised. Men and women should both respect their bodies by not abusing drugs and alcohol. They also should respect their bodies and their partner's bodies when it comes to sex.

I see more now than I did my freshmen year criticisms of men that have "been around the block." That's a start, but it doesn't mean girls will stop talking about each other. The problem will not stop until men and women both confront their friends about their behavior. Gossiping does not fix anything.

Seeing past a sister's shadow

Colleen Owens
Features Editor

Some STA students wake up each morning with their sister. They step into the same red-checked skirt and put on the same black knit sweater. Many siblings attend STA everyday and while for some this task is possible and even helpful once in a while, for others this coincidence can become quite burdensome and overwhelming.

Who at STA feel this way? Is it possible to attend this school with a sibling while making it their own, or is two just too many?

According to freshman Lauren Damico, sharing a last name with senior Andrea Damico simplified her transition into high school.

"She made me want to come because she made so many friends," said Lauren. "It was easier for me since I know more of the upper classmen."

Lauren explained how Andrea would always talk to her about things she should know upon entering STA, such as homework, teachers and Ms. Ann Bode Rodriguez, her advisor.

"I love having her there, she's just another person I see in the hallways," said Andrea. "I kind of like helping her out."

For other sister students, competition is unavoidable, as is the relationship between sophomore twins Julie and Leslie.

"If she does something better, then I feel that I should do better," said Leslie.

Julie reacted similarly towards the situation.

"I have always felt competition," said Julie. "I would study more to get a better grade. It definitely determined me to try harder."

Despite occasionally being called the wrong name both agree that having her sister at the same school has been a positive experience.

"We always forget books and the other one always has the book...it's easier not having to drive 20 minutes to get it," said Leslie.

Some students have sisters long gone from the STA campus, yet their presence still haunts their experience. Senior Melinda Krum did not want to refer to her alumna sister Lauren Krum as "popular," because her description as "legend" seemed more appropriate.

"In a way...my sister was amazing," said Melinda. "She was kind of in all the plays while I had stage fright."

According to Melinda, teachers hold a preconceived notion of her as a student, which was a barrier she had to break.

"I knew that I could do better than her [in school] and impress my teachers and parents," she said.

While Melinda became herself, she could not help but wonder if she was still in her sister's shadow.

"I would kind of joke around with [Lauren] and say 'Yeah right, everybody likes you more,'" she said. "But people think I'm funny too."



Rosemary Neenan
Sophomore Janice Schrader, from left, freshman Janie Schrader, senior Mary Jean Schrader and freshman Elizabeth Tilson walk into school together. For the Schrader sisters, school activities such as cross country are family affairs.

Students consider dieting for better figures

Attempting to achieve perfect body not always safe

Rachel Schwartz
Staff Writer

At lunch, a girl sits and watches as huge chocolate chip cookies are passed out. She looks longingly at the heaping platter, but declines an offer to eat one.

"I can't," she says. "I'm on a diet."

A study from the National Institute of Mental Health shows that around 50 percent of girls between 8 and 10 years old are "unhappy with their size."

According to STA counselor Ms. Karen Sinco, girls start dieting as young as elementary school.

"Girls are not fully developed until their late teens," said Sinco. "If you start dieting too early, it can alter your basic makeup."

Many teen girls start dieting during puberty.

"It has to do with girls being too impatient to wait and see what their bodies will be like," said Sinco. "It's their way of cheating heredity."

Freshman Gabriella Garozzo knows a girl who became anorexic last year.

"She became so obsessed with [dieting] that she just stopped eating completely," said Garozzo. "She was kind of overweight so it was okay to diet a little bit, but it went too far."

Garozzo said that it's okay for some people to diet.

"If you're unhealthy because you're overweight, I think it's good to go on a diet and lose a few pounds, but some people get obsessive about it and stop eating," said Garozzo.

Sophomore Maranda Le is currently on a diet.

"I am eating smaller meals and less meals," said Le. "If I eat lunch, I won't eat dinner, or will just have a snack."

She said that her family noticed she was gaining weight, but she also started dieting for other reasons.

"I feel like I want to be skinny because of the stereotype that most Asian women are small," said Le. "My mother is 5 feet 3 inches and 110 pounds, and she feels that I should be smaller than her because I'm younger."

Sophomore Stephanie Chapman knows other reasons why teens diet.

"Some teens are not pleased with themselves or think they are fat," said Chapman. "They try to achieve a goal with their weight that is sometimes extreme."

Sinco feels that hormonal changes and the media's influence are two reasons teen girls diet. She believes their self esteem

related to boys also causes dieting.

"Sometimes boys opinions count more to a girl than her own, which is very sad," said Sinco.

Garozzo advises that you should diet for yourself.

"She became so obsessed with [dieting] that she just stopped eating completely."

-Gabriella Garozzo, freshman

"It all depends on the reason you're dieting," said Garozzo. "It's better to diet for yourself than to impress a guy."

Sinco doesn't agree with extreme dieting, but encourages exercise and eating right and said that a lot can be accomplished with minor adjustments in your lifestyle.

Chapman tries to eat healthy, but has grown up eating a little differently than some. She and her parents do not eat red meat. However, she occasionally eats chicken or turkey and often eats fish.

Recently, she has been trying to make healthier choices when she eats, but says she is not exactly "dieting".

"When I'm bored I usually eat a lot," said Chapman. "I mean, I know I'm not fat or anything, but sometimes I do not make the best food choices. Instead of eating fatty foods, I try to eat fruits and vegetables. Le is trying to eat healthier by eating more Vietnamese food which she is accustomed to eating."

"It is proven to be less fattening," said Le. "I am now eating less American food and drinking more water."

Sophomore Libby Ring said that when choosing what to eat, she eats a fruit salad instead of a hamburger. She also believes that diets aren't the best way to stay healthy.

"I think that some diets are unintelligent because they're dangerous," said Ring.

Chapman believes that besides developing healthy eating habits, exercise is a key component in staying healthy. She has been doing an exercise plan that she found in a magazine.

"It has made me more motivated," said Chapman. "Now, I look forward to exercising."

Ring stays in shape by running cross

country, but knows there are other ways.

"Any sport you participate in or any physical activities are really good for you because they help you stay in shape," said Ring. "And if you're in shape you won't have to consider going on a diet."

Garozzo agrees with her, and exercises so that she doesn't have to worry about what she eats.

"I run cross country and I play soccer," said Garozzo. "I try to do physical activities so that I am able to eat excessively, because I like food. Sometimes if I feel sick from eating too much I'll go out on a run."

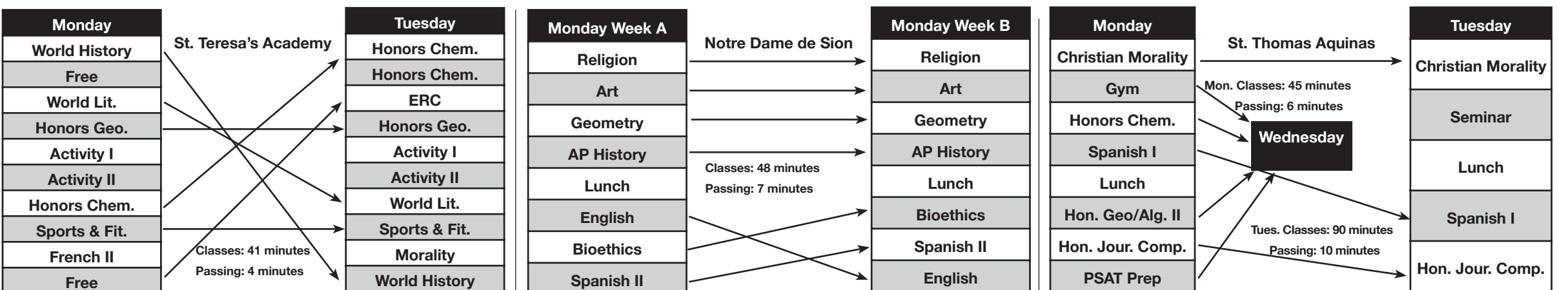
She said that dieting should be done in moderation.

"It's okay to go on a diet if you're going to lose a certain amount of weight like 'Oh, I just want to lose 10 pounds' and then you won't diet anymore," said Garozzo. "But if you don't have a set amount of weight you want to lose and don't stop dieting, I think it's dangerous."

Sinco knows that this can happen to girls and that many girls have image problems.

"You have to be happy with your self on the inside before you can ever be happy with your self on the outside and your image," Sinco said.

Schools use different schedules for different reasons



The above graphic displays different day-to-day schedules from three area private Catholic high schools. All three schedules have their perks and disadvantages according to students.

Graphic by Sarah Tampke

Claire McInerney
Staff Writer

On a regular school day, 514 STA girls trudge across the quad and up and down stairs between their eight classes and activity based on the modular scheduling. At Aquinas and Sion, students shuffle from class to class following different scheduling techniques.

According to the STA's mission statement, the schedule is created to prepare students with a college preparatory curriculum.

Aquinas's block scheduling consists of four days that have four 90 minute classes and one day with eight 45 minutes classes.

"I like hour and a half classes," said

Aquinas sophomore Abby Hannifan. "It sounds long, but it's not that bad."

Sion's classes are the same seven classes every day but the order of the final three rotates weekly. The girls have A, B, and C weeks that rearrange the afternoons.

"I like having all my classes daily, it's the only way to do it right," said Sion sophomore Stephanie Brown.

STA sophomore Katherine Poppe transferred from Sion this past summer.

"At Sion, I liked having the same people in each class," she said. "I liked to know who would have my homework and who had already had it."

Poppe noticed differences in schedules pretty quickly.

"STA has mods and Sion doesn't,"

Poppe said. "Sion is the same every day and easy to learn. STA is harder and I haven't really memorized it."

Apart from the obvious difference between the three schools, the most extreme distinctions are the amount of time allotted between classes. Aquinas has ten minutes, Sion has seven minutes and STA has four minutes.

"I don't miss seven minute passing periods at all," said Poppe. "It was so easy. It would take a minute or two to get to my class then I would have five minutes to talk with my friends. At STA I have four minutes which is harder for me to get from the third floor of one building to any floor on the other without talking and still be on time."

Brown agrees that Sion's passing periods are one of the best components.

"My seven minute passing periods are definitely my favorite part," she said. "I also like lunch a lot."

The schools do have similarities though. At Aquinas, a 90 minute class is just over what a double mod would be at STA.

"Block scheduling would be weird," Poppe said. "I wouldn't be able to focus. In chemistry, my double mod, it isn't too bad because we are lighting stuff on fire usually. But I definitely wouldn't be able to concentrate in classes like English and math."

Hannifan enjoys block scheduling because of the teachers and the extra day

to do homework.

"I actually like hour and a half classes because I like all the teachers," Hannifan said. "I don't mind spending that much time with them. If I didn't like them maybe it would be different."

Hannifan also said the day between classes helps her.

"I like my schedule because it helps relieve the stress of getting everything done in one night," Hannifan said.

If forced to choose between the three, each girl would choose her own.

"My favorite schedule is STA," Poppe says. "I like frees and late starts. We didn't have either at Sion. Also the classes are the right length for my attention span."

Fretting over a go



1.



2.



From A+'s to Zzzzzz's:

Teens cope with irregular slumber patterns

Kelly Nelson
Staff Writer

1. Senior Mary Rucker focuses on preparing for a college entrance exam in the library. One of the many outside pressures for seniors is the college entrance process.

Application deadlines add to homework and extracurriculars which may cause additional feelings of stress. Photo by Kathleen Pointer

2. Sophomores Hailey Caywood, from left, Maddie Hickey and Tara O'Flaherty prepare themselves for their next chemistry exam in the MSRC. Honors Chemistry, one of STA's most difficult classes, consumes much of a student's time with formal lab papers and worksheets further demonstrating the laws of chemistry. Photo by Alexandra Bojarski-Stauffer

3. Jillian Blanck, from left, Katrina Abella and Amanda Wilson, juniors, confront their stress in AP American History on Oct. 18. Blanck and Wilson rest their heads on the table after a lecture on nationalism and secularism in 19th century America, meanwhile Abella continues the lesson by reviewing her notes. Both AP American History and Literature prepare students for extensive exams in May that offer possible college credit.

4. Jill Cousins, senior, quickly falls asleep in one of her unscheduled mods in the back of Ms. Renee Blake's room on Oct. 17. To prevent disruption Blake only allows three students in the back room of her class room, but Cousins less than 40 minute cat nap does not disturb the surrounding classes.

5. After studying American Farmer in AP Literature class on Oct. 13, Maggie Burke, junior, rests in Mr. Mark Fudemberg's chair during a free. Burke recuperates from the class discussion on the "American Dream," a concept thoroughly covered in the junior curriculum. Fudemberg's class room fills with underclassmen during his unscheduled periods, yet Burke pays not attention to the dynne. Photos by Kelly Nelson

Junior Jessie Kramer returns home after winning the varsity team's volleyball quad at 9 p.m. She walks in the door, dropping her volleyball bag to the ground on her way in. She quickly eats a plate of that night's dinner leftovers before leaving the table for a quick shower. Immediately following that, she gets ready for bed, sets her alarm for the next morning and falls right to sleep. When her alarm goes off in the morning, she yawns and looks at the clock; it reads 4 a.m. Like so many nights before, she turns on a light in the dark room, pulls out her assignment notebook and books, and begins the previous night's homework.

While this kind of sleep deprivation is a common occurrence among some teenagers, it does not come without a cost.

"[Lack of sleep] definitely affects me," said junior Abby Fagan. "It makes me unable to focus as much the next day."

Dr. Bob Schloegel, a pediatrician at St. Luke's South, agrees that lack of sleep can have negative affects on teens. He also said that it can contribute to illness.

"If you're really stressing your body and not getting enough sleep, it can affect your chances of catching colds and viruses," said Schloegel.

According to Schloegel, on average a teen should get at least eight hours of sleep but the number is different for everybody.

"There's a range of what is necessary for each person," said Schloegel. "Some people can get by with a minimum of seven hours a night while some teens need up to ten hours a night."

Dr. Suzanne Steven of the Sleep Disorders Institute in Overland Park, KS said that this number can differ because of different reasons including genetics and the environment.

Steven also added that she thought that teens needed more sleep than others.

"Sleep helps [teens] produce hormones and nutrients that help them grow," She said. "If you don't get the proper nutrients, it might interfere with cognitive development and growth."

Steven agreed with Schloegel that lack of sleep in

teens can have negative affects.

"If someone is sleep deprived, they can gain weight because their metabolism is all thrown off," She said. "If they don't get enough sleep it can also cause problems like irritability and daytime sleepiness."

So, how much sleep are teens really getting? Both Fagan and Kramer said they get between four and five hours of sleep each night.

"It's mostly because of bad time management and procrastinating," said Kramer. A member of the varsity volleyball team, Kramer also has to balance her sleeping and schoolwork in accordance to practices and games. Instead of staying up late to finish her homework, she wakes up early the next morning.

"A lot of times we'll get home at like 9 or 10 p.m. from a volleyball quad and I'll just go right to sleep, then the next morning I'll get up at 3 or 4 a.m. to finish homework," said Kramer. "It's the only way I can do it, I can't focus at night."

Steven said avoiding irregular sleep patterns like this is important.

"In general, what's recommended is to go to bed and wake up at the same time everyday," She said. "If you don't get a regular amount of sleep, it's just a vicious cycle because you stay up later and later and lose sleep and can't concentrate or get things done and everything falls apart."

Both Fagan and Kramer said they pull all-nighters at least once a month.

"Most of the time the next day I'm not very tired," said Fagan. "Then that night I just crash."

The girls said they use the weekends to catch up on sleep.

"I probably get about eight hours a night [on the weekends] or basically just as much as I can," said Kramer. "On Sundays I sometimes take about a three hour nap."

Schloegel agrees that naps can help teens to recuperate and reenergize, however he recommends sleeping for a shorter amount of time.

"A cat nap, a lot of times, is a good habit to get into," said Schloegel. "Teenagers have a lot of homework and studying to do but they also play sports and are exhausted and can recharge their batteries with a 15-minute cat nap, because any longer of a sleep is harder."

In addition to getting the right amount of sleep, specialists such as Steven recommend other healthy habits to help teens get the best quality sleep they can.

"It's important to avoid caffeine after 4 p.m. and any heavy exercise within three hours before you go to bed," said Steven.

Mr. Theseus Crabb, a sleep technician at Total Sleep Diagnostics agrees with Steven.

"Basically you should cut out sugar and caffeine intake, anything that could cause an adrenaline rush," said Crabb.

However, not all teens have unhealthy sleeping patterns. Junior Carolyn Wiedeman maintains good sleeping habits by making sure she gets around eight hours of sleep each night.

"I can't stay up to do anything past 10:30," said Wiedeman. "It's physically impossible for me."

Wiedeman tries to finish as much of her homework as she can at school and right when she gets home so that she avoids staying up late on weeknights.

"It usually hits me in the afternoon if I'm tired and I don't want to stay up late because the next day I'll be worthless," said Wiedeman. "If I go to bed early I feel so much more refreshed."

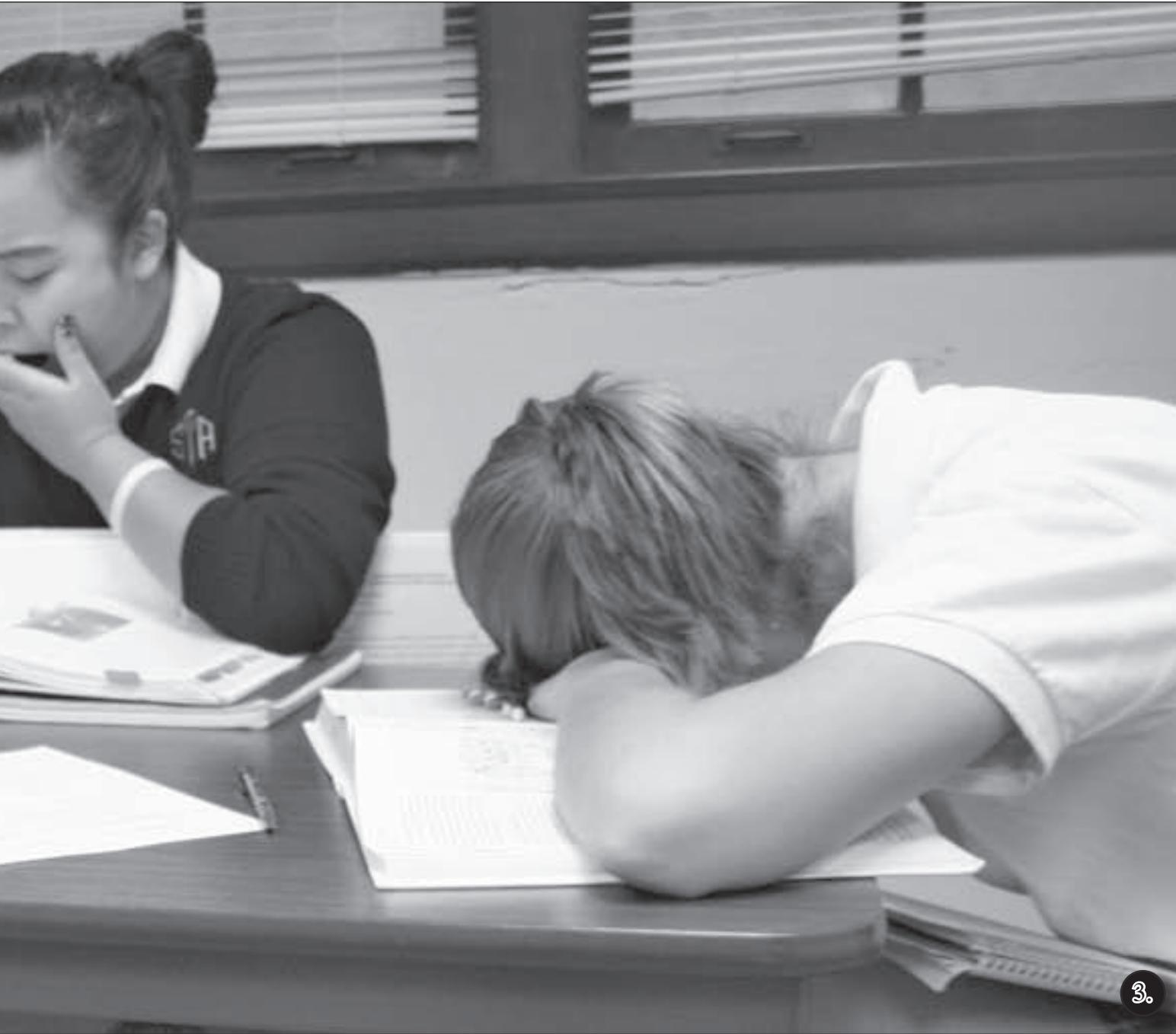
Since not all students are able to fall asleep as easily as Wiedeman, Schloegel recommends a supplement that helps teens asleep.

"Melatonin is a natural occurring protein in the body that is a good supplement to take for insomnia for kids and teens," said Schloegel. "Taking it one hour before bed has shown to be very helpful."

According to Schloegel, the supplement can be purchased without a prescription at any drug store. He also stated that to get the best sleep, there was no substitute for good eating and exercising habits.

When the 3 p.m. bell rings for school's end, Carolyn Wiedeman checks out at advisory and heads home. She greets her mother and younger brothers and walks up the stairs to her room to begin her homework without delay. After seven hours, Wiedeman is ready to hit the sack at 10:30 p.m. She finished all her homework, ate dinner with her family, read in her book and watched her favorite show. She brushes her teeth, changes, slips under her covers and falls asleep, ready for another day.

Good night's rest...



sleep and stress collide

Students sustain tension, look for alternative solutions

Experts emphasize healthy habits for dealing with outside pressures

Aly Brownlee
Staff Writer

According to a stress survey done by the Better Sleep Council, 66 percent of Americans are losing sleep because of stressful issues. A recent study by the Franklin Institute shows that when students lose sleep, stress often plays a factor, preventing people from getting the proper amount of sleep needed to refresh and ready them for the day.

"A lack of sleep can cause difficulty concentrating," said Ms. Karen Sinco, STA school counselor. "Social skills, grades, and tasks that may have been easy before become much harder. Lack of sleep can cause people to tolerate stress less easily."

The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) says that teens need to receive an average of nine hours of sleep a night. However, most teens receive only an average of five to seven.

"I get about five to six hours of sleep on an average night," said senior Jordan Gribble. "It's hard because I have homework and so many things to do. Sleep just isn't as important."

The Franklin Institute has done studies that show pulling an "all-nighter" to study for a test is not as beneficial as sleeping an extra hour and then studying.

"Your mind retains more information when you're not tired," said Sinco. "Teens will actually retain more information if they study for two hours and sleep, than if they were to study for four hours and not sleep at all."

Sleeping can enhance brain connections and memory retaining abilities. Getting enough sleep can also improve performance, not only in academics, but also in sports, social aspects and within family matters.

"I try to plan out my night," said freshman Katie Kenney. "I have a goal time to get into bed, but sometimes it just doesn't work out."

If students do get into bed at a decent hour, the NSF has shown that stress can cause insomnia, making it difficult to sleep anyway.

"Sometimes I go to bed early, but then I lie there and make lists in my head," said Gribble. "I think about all the things I could've done, or everything that I have to do tomorrow."

defining sleeping hours and taking time off from exhausting schedules.

Senior Katherine Schilling said that for her, stress is becoming overwhelmed and losing sight of what is important. To stay in control she has learned to prioritize.

"The only pressure I have is the pressure I put on myself," Schilling said. "That's good because I can easily remove that pressure."

Maize, Harbin and Schilling all take time out to do things that they enjoy.

For Maize soccer practice is a time to relax. It is a time when she does not have to worry about homework or tests.

Likewise, Schilling participates in yoga classes.

"[Yoga] helps me let go of anxiety, re-center myself and be at peace," said Schilling.

Harbin's approach to relieving her stress is different.

"I'm excited," said Harbin. "I've been so stressed out that I'm going to have a reward weekend. I'm going to lie on the couch in my pajamas and rent *Pride and Prejudice*."

Experts advise avoiding artificial energy boosters such as Redbull, that people occasionally use to deal with stress. The list also included sugar, caffeine, alcohol, solvents, drugs and tobacco. These boosters do not offer outlets to stress because they are not capable of maintaining balance in ones schedule. This can lead to "a roller coaster of good and bad feelings," a common occurrence among those who say they are stressed. Mood swings is one of the many symptoms stress causes. The continuum of symptoms ranges from the physical such as head aches, indigestion and skin break outs to the mental which encompass forgetfulness, loss of interest and negative self talk.

The "Helpguide," an online group of doctors and therapists, places importance on being attentive to the negative affects of stress. Due in part to 90 percent of illnesses are related to stress.

For additional information about the reduction of stress or complete list of symptoms visit helpguide.org.

Mollie Esposito
Copy Editor

Technically stress is a chemical imbalance with physical symptoms. For many STA students stress is more lifestyle.

During a regular school day the topic of stress comes up over and over

"I do stress out a lot," said senior Kate Harbin. "I will stress about things everyday."

But what is stress? Where does it come from and how can it be reduced?

According to the "Teens & Stress" web site there is a difference between outside pressures, what are known as stressors and the body's reaction to too much of these pressures, stress.

Stressors can include pressures from school, family, friends and work.

For sophomore Rachel Mize most of her stressors come from school. She feels stressed when she has too much home work and too many tests.

Harbin's stress comes from other areas as well.

"I mostly stress myself out," she said. "I think, 'College wants me to do this, my parents want me to do this and my friends won't like me unless I do this.'"

According to the "Teens & Stress" web site stress is a chemical imbalance due to too much pressure from stressors. This pressure can cause the production of certain chemicals to fail. Lack of chemicals such as serotonin, noradrenalin and dopamine can lead to a deficit of sleep and energy and sometimes endorphin failure, a protein that reduces stress and relieves pains.

Both Mize and fellow sophomore Kellyn Smith said that when they get overstressed they have a feeling of being over tired or worn-out.

Harbin said that for her, stress takes an emotional toll. During her worst burn outs she said she often cried for no reason and felt angry at random people.

The "Teens & Stress" website listed do's and don'ts for managing stress. Suggested activities include exercising,

The Better Sleep Council said losing sleep one or two nights a week will generally not affect people. However, when sleep loss becomes a habit, it can impact performance. In order to prevent insomnia, the council recommends a routine, or a relaxing habit, to perform before bedtime.

"Sleep needs to be a planned priority, just like any other activity," said Sinco. "Sometimes you have to limit your activities and find a relaxing moment. Getting into a routine helps too because if it becomes a pattern and a habit, then you're more likely to do it every night."

Theology teacher Ms. Robin Good agrees. Once a week, her spirituality classes meditate, as a habit to relax the students' bodies and minds.

"The world is moving so fast and at such a rapid rate," said Good. "We just have to take time to relax and slow down during the day. The mind, body and spirit are all connected and we have to take care of the spirit and the mind, in order to relax the body."

Taking a bubble bath, reading, writing and listening to music are all tips that NSF suggested to help insomniacs. The Better Sleep Council also advised cat naps.

"Napping is only good for you when it's 20 minutes or less," Sinco said. "Cat napping can leave people feeling refreshed and able to work. However, if it's over 20 minutes, a nap can actually make you feel more tired."

NSF says that naps longer than 20 minutes can cause insomnia, due to the fact that people are getting their sleep as they nap. Still, some students do not have time to nap.

"I just don't have enough hours in the day to get everything I need to done," Gribble said. "Especially with college and deadlines, I end up feeling very stressed. I stay up later and later to get things done, and I have to get up early every day."

This sleep loss can also affect people physically, and stress added can make someone ill. Health risks include hypertension, memory-loss and even depression.

"Students are under a lot of stress [at STA]," said Sinco. "But they have to make sleep a priority. It can help them with their performance, and they shouldn't underestimate the value of a good night's rest."

'Insomniac Tour' raises the bar on blue comedy

Kate Rainey
Staff Writer

Dave Attell is not politically correct. This is all too evident in his Comedy Central special "Dave Attell's Insomniac Tour," featuring comedians Greg Giraldo, Sean Rouse and Dane Cook. The four toured across America, ending in Las Vegas where the special was filmed.

The show had three themes: sex, drugs and gambling — all fitting for Vegas, but not for primetime TV. Shockingly, no parental warnings were issued before the show started or after commercial breaks. Normally when shows with inappropriate content run, even late at night, they have the decency to warn you.

This is not to say that "Tour" was boring. Shouts of "oh my God" and laughter filled my room. That sums up the entire show: shocking, but funny.

During the show, Attell smoked on stage. And unlike Gretchen Wilson, who kept her Skoal can in her back pocket after receiving an angry letter from an antismoking organization, Attell doesn't worry about being a bad influence. He also insults every racial group. Perhaps this is a new form of racial equality: if you make fun of everyone, no one can call you a racist.

Attell is known for having a risqué sense of humor. Each week on his show, "Insomniac with Dave Attell" (also a Comedy Central production), he wanders famous city streets looking for bars and women willing to flash a camera. But he's not a stupid comedian. He makes unique, intelligent observations cloaked in jokes about obvious things. His routine in the "Insomniac Tour" reflects this. He makes fun of his alcoholism, sexuality and career in a believable way. It's not just a shtick. He probably gets drunk every night, wakes up the next morning and writes about it.

Odd man out

Sean Rouse is an introvert, keeping company with three extreme extroverts. He differs from the other three comedians, on stage and in footage of the gang before the show. He has a sweet, innocent face and a charming Southern drawl, but the things that come out of his mouth make your jaw drop and your face go red. He ended nearly every bit with, "Ya'll are goin' to Hell for that joke."

Fed up with women

Greg Giraldo cursed and screamed about Americans, marriage and women in general, but he was hilarious. Giraldo interacted with the audience more than any of the other comedians. He even got into a heated conversation with a woman in the front row about whether she thought that women have the same sex drive as men. He proved his point with examples of the stupidity of men, probably drawn from personal experiences.

Manic comedian takes us home

Dane Cook made creative observations, like when he throws up, he imagines he's a flying, vomit-breathing dragon. He finished his routine, and the show, with the story of the first time he received oral sex. It embarrassed me so much that I couldn't make eye contact with myself in the mirror. Bleeping out the curse words wasn't enough the content needed to be censored.

Like most Comedy Central specials, the four men came out on stage together and made toasts (including one to cleavage) before the credits rolled. I felt guilty for watching because it seemed so inappropriate. It was unnecessary to have that much sexual content, simply for shock value. The special would have been just as funny without the offensive material.

The "Insomniac Tour" is worth watching because it's guaranteed to make you laugh. I just recommend that you don't watch it with your parents.

Random Things to do This Weekend:

Go to a show at EI

Torreón

3101 Gillham Plaza Kansas City, MO 64109

10/28: The Eye liners, God Awfuls, Love Equals Death and Ten Hour Drive.
Tickets: \$7-10

Go to haunted houses:

The Beast and Edge of Hell combo
Under the 12th St. bridge
Tickets: \$30-36 if ordered in advance.
Door prices vary.

Times: 10/28- 8 p.m., 10/29- 6:30 p.m.
10/30- 7:30 p.m., 10/31- 7:30 p.m.

Students make dramatic choice



Mikhala Lantz-Simmons

Sophomores Elizabeth Warwick, from left, Stephanie Chapman and Blue Valley West freshman Chelsea Basler dance to the song "I'm In Love with a Wonderful Guy" during an Oct. 18 rehearsal for Rockhurst High School's production of the play "South Pacific."

STA, Rockhurst theaters play well together

Kate Rainey
Staff Writer

The theater departments at Rockhurst High School and STA draw similar audiences and actors from the Kansas City area. Although the two programs possess unique variations, from the budget to the show selection, these programs are different.

For the past several years, the casts of all STA productions have been single-sex.

"It's an all-girl cast so you don't have to worry about anything — you can look bad," said sophomore Julia Adriano.

The shows selected each year also create differences between the two theater programs and make them different.

"I [usually] have shows in mind, like 'The Women' and 'Nunsense,'" said STA theater director Shana Prentiss. "This year I had no ideas. [I] ordered \$100 worth of scripts and read 35-40 scripts."

Ms. Kathy Kane, theater director at RHS, has a different technique.

"I don't want to do plays any other high school is doing," said Kane. "I get mad when other schools bring in our shows."

Sophomore Maureen O'Rear said that RHS is known for performing large-scale productions, like "Jesus Christ Superstar." STA often presents lesser-known shows.

"This show that Ms. Prentiss is doing, 'A Voice of My Own,' I never heard of it," said senior Magdalene Vick. "It's a risk and you have to take risks in theater. This one is going to be really cool."

The audition processes at each school are also different. Vick believes that RHS

auditions are more difficult because they require a prepared monologue. RHS's musicals additionally require actors to prepare 15 bars of music. If an actor is called back to audition further, they do cold readings, an auditioning style in which an actor has no time to study the piece. Kane prefers this audition style because, with a monologue, she can tell if someone is good for the part in the first

Some students agree with this method.

"It's a good thing because it shows if you have talent," said Adriano.

Prentiss has a different approach to auditions. She has the students do a cold reading, rather than a prepared monologue.

"I feel like [a monologue is] a little too intimidating for this age group," said Prentiss. "[I] cuts too many people out. I really encourage a lot of girls to audition, [but it] always tends to be the same girls who audition — girls who are interested in drama."

About 70 students audition for RHS's main stage productions while between 30-40 actors audition for the school's student productions. For large-scale musicals, it often fits 40-60 students into the cast. RHS also offers students the ability to choose between a minor role in

the main stage production and a leading role in the student production, which run simultaneously.

About 40-60 students audition for plays at STA, where roles are usually limited. Prentiss attempts to add roles to some shows, but she is limited by the size of the stage. For example, for "A Voice of My Own," Prentiss expanded a five-woman cast to include approximately 15 girls and a small chorus.

The production of "A Voice of My Own" will run in the STA theater from Nov. 10-12 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$4 for students and \$6 for adults.

The RHS production of "South Pacific" will run in the Rose Theater from Nov. 2-5 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 6 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for children and \$10 for adults.

"We have a lot of talent, which makes my job easy and difficult," said Prentiss. "I don't like to make people sad. Hanging that cast list up turns my stomach."

If a student's name is not on the list, Prentiss recommends signing up for crew because there's a place for everyone. This is an option that RHS does not make available to STA girls. The RHS drama club trains its members in technical work and sets up the stage during school activity periods.

Vick also says that the theater department's budget at STA brings additional problems.

"The theater budget is very low and that is a big downside to making the show really great for Ms. Prentiss," said Vick. "Not as much attention is given to the theater department as there should be."

While the department is mostly self-

funded through individual fundraisers, the school offers \$2,000 to the department every two years for the fall play and spring musical.

"Obviously budget is a large concern for me," said Prentiss. "It affects the costume design and set design."

RHS has had a consistent budget since Kane began teaching and directing, but she's unsure of the actual amount.

"I really don't know what our budget is," Kane said. "I just know that I go under our line. We've never gone over our budget."

According to Vick, actors are "babied at Rockhurst because of the budget" and because the theater is physically more modern. She prefers STA's theater to RHS's.

"This theater is so classical that I love the feel of it," said Vick. "You don't go into theaters like this very often."

There are different advantages to each program; working with a new director and a diverse cast can challenge students and make them better actors.

"My advice to anyone interested in theater who [doesn't] know where to audition... keep your options open," said Vick. "Both places have really good qualities that [actors] can learn from."

There are no hard feelings between Prentiss and Kane; both encourage their students to audition wherever they can.

"If you can do theater do it, if that's what you love to do," said Prentiss. "[That] doesn't mean I don't tease the girls about [auditioning at RHS]."

Orchestra strikes chord with students

Libby Conwell
Staff Writer

Music floods the vacant halls of M&A. The collaboration of instruments reveals various melodies and harmonies. The music concludes on a sharp note, all instruments in unison.

This is the STA orchestra. The girls laugh and joke with one another as they move to the next song. "Deep River." The clarinets begin, followed softly by the flutes; next, the piano enters. The violins commence and finally the trumpet penetrates the piece. Ms. Shauna Moore snaps out the counts as the five instruments follow the beat. They finish the song and lower the instruments.

"Ladies, the balance sounds great," says Moore. "You should feel really good about these pieces."

The girls smile at each other. However, even if they are confident in their pieces, they do wish for one thing: to be recognized by the STA community.

"Hardly anyone knows about the orchestra," said sophomore Kathleen Bryant, clarinet player. "STA is known for their choir and the orchestra is like a forgotten middle child."

The STA orchestra has been around for nine years. The class is designed to offer experienced musicians the chance to use their skills and talents and to perform publicly as an ensemble. They perform three concerts a year: the fall concert, which took place Oct. 13, a Christmas concert scheduled for Dec. 8 and at the spring Fine Arts Showcase April 19. Although the girls get the opportunity to play at these performances, some students, such as sophomore Ashlin Bryde, feel as if no one knows who they are.

"Last year, this girl walked past me after an orchestra concert," said Bryde. "She looked at me and was like, 'We have an orchestra?'"

These girls believe they deserve some recognition, especially Bryant, who has been playing the clarinet for eight years. However, to her, orchestra does not feel like a class, but like a hobby.

"I've been playing clarinet all my life," said Bryant. "Once I got to STA, I thought I'd just continue doing it."

Other students, like junior Christina Fuerst, feel the



Libby Conwell

Juniors Katarina Vaughn and Christina Fuerst perform at the Fall Concert Oct. 13. Vaughn has been playing for 14 years and Fuerst has played for seven.

same way. Fuerst has been playing the violin for seven years and joined the orchestra because she liked playing as a group.

"The violin is really relaxing," said Fuerst. "I really like the sound and when you play with different instruments, it's neat to hear it all come together."

Though Fuerst and Bryant enjoy playing, they note the class requires something that most classes at STA do not: practice and experience. The orchestra meets four days a week and the students are expected to rehearse outside of class as well. However, since there are ten students in

the class, the girls establish strong relationships with one another.

"It's a really small group," said Bryant. "So you really get to know everyone pretty well."

Each of the girls in the orchestra has their own individual goal, but together they share one common ambition.

"Our unspoken goal is to try to get our school to know we have an orchestra," said Bryant. "We're really good, we've been around a long time, we're very different from choir and we want to make a name for ourselves."

Family ties help sophomore win annual triathlon

Breanne Sigler
Staff Writer

Sophomore Libby Ring awoke at the crack of dawn on the morning of her yearly triathlon race.

Her adrenaline kicked in when she saw the long line of cars parked alongside the course at Longview Lake.

Libby checked in, along with her brother and dad, and had her race number drawn on her arm and leg in permanent marker.

"They have to write our numbers right on our bodies, because if they pinned paper numbers on, they would get wet and fall off in the water while we were swimming," said Libby.

Libby was one of three girls in the 13-14 age group.

"It's not a lot of pressure, so I'm not really nervous," said Libby of her feelings before the race. "I guess I'm just excited."

Next, she and her father, Dr. Kevin Ring, walked the course and put their shoes and bikes in place so they could easily grab them after each leg of the race.

Ms. Mary Ring, Libby's mother, cheered on her children and husband at the sideline.

"It's nerve-wracking as a parent to watch," said Mary. "Before Libby's first race, she was really nervous, but we just told her 'you can do it' and encouraged her."

The first part of the triathlon is the 500-meter swim, which is Libby's favorite part of the race. The triathletes waited for the horn to blow, signaling the start.

"I swim the breast stroke most of the way, but I switch to free [style] when I pass people," said Libby.

The racers swam halfway out into the lake, then turned towards shore and swam back to the start.

Libby completed the swim, climbed out of the lake and threw on a running top, shorts and tennis shoes. She jumped on her bike to ride the 13-mile course, her least favorite part. Libby said that biking is not one of her natural talents.

"I usually sing songs in my head during the biking part," said Libby.

Libby reached the end of the road and threw down her bike for the 5K (3.1 miles) running portion of the race.

"The running part is the most challenging," she said. "It's hard because I just finished the two other parts of the race, so I'm tired. It gets kind of hot."

Mary waited for Libby at the finish line, along with Kevin and Libby's brother, Gallagher, who had already finished the race.

See RING, page 2

Women tackle stereotypes



Sarah Tampke

Mr. Chris Murray, left, coach of the Kansas City Storm, runs drills at the tryout Oct. 9. This is the team's second season in the Independent Women's Football League (IWFL).

Sarah Tampke
Lifestyles Editor

Ms. Deneane Summers was taking her two sons to see Santa at the Metro North Mall last winter when she was approached by staff members of the Kansas City Storm. They told her she should try out because she would make an excellent tackle.

"I'm gonna tackle you," replied Summers.

The KC Storm, a women's football team, starts its second season this month with tryouts. The Storm plays in the Midwestern Conference of Independent Women's Football League (IWFL).

The IWFL was founded in 2000 by owners of women's tackle football teams. The league's mission is to enable women to play tackle football and support its owners with a stable organization that can draw on and combine resources to promote female athletes who play football. The league also offers opportunities for men and women to coach, manage or own a team.

The Storm joined the league in 2004 after the previous professional women's football team, the KC Krunch, dissolved.

"Most of the girls who played for the Krunch are trying out for us," said Ms. Nance Wernes, owner of the Storm. "There just wasn't a need to have two women football teams in Kansas City."

Wernes has had a passion for football

since her childhood. She loved playing in neighborhood football games when she was little. Her Catholic high school in Des Moines, Iowa had a very competitive football team so she was intimidated to try out, but participated in other sports like softball and cross country instead.

"I've always liked football," said Wernes. "Now that I've started playing it, I have learned so much about its complexity and have a greater appreciation for it."

Wernes first played for the KC Krunch and now plays for and owns the KC Storm.

The team is made up of 35 players, all women ranging in age from 18 to 40. According to Wernes, it is important to find a lot of players because so many different kinds of athletes are needed on a football team. She pointed to some of the women trying out naming the positions they would do well in based on their body types. She added the team was very diverse last year and that was a good thing.

"The girls are so excited because they've never been able to play on a team before," said Wernes.

Summers had absolutely no football experience but decided to try out anyway. She remembers how tough the first week of practice was and she did not know how she could balance managing a tanning salon, being a mom and playing football. She decided to play and said it was one of the

best experiences she has ever had.

"I have never in my entire life met more supportive and outgoing women," said Summers.

She also said that her husband who did not even like watching football was her biggest fan and encouraged her to play. Summers mentioned how supportive the coaches were.

"[The coaches] actually teach you how to play," said Summers. "They are very dedicated to the game."

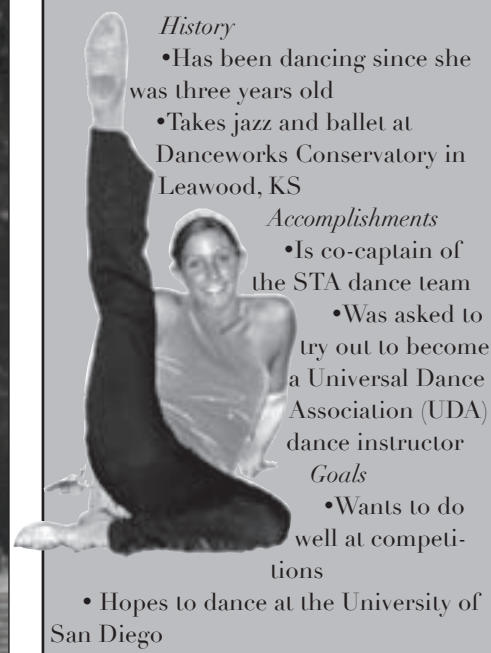
She said that men do not give women players as much respect as men and the same holds true for men coaches.

"Other men look at you differently when you coach girls," said Summers.

The head coach Mr. Courtney Porter led the team to finish second in their division last year. Porter has coached football for seven years, previously was a coach for the KC Krunch and currently coaches for Blue Valley Northwest High School. He has been playing football since he was kid, played arena football and in the NFL.

When the last session of tryouts concludes, the final team will be chosen. They will start practicing together sometime in the winter although their season does not begin until March. The location of their home games is undetermined until Wernes receives the final game schedule at the owner's meeting this month.

Star Athlete Senior Ashley Noonan



History

- Has been dancing since she was three years old
- Takes jazz and ballet at Danceworks Conservatory in Leawood, KS

Accomplishments

- Is co-captain of the STA dance team
- Was asked to try out to become a Universal Dance Association (UDA) dance instructor

Goals

- Wants to do well at competitions

- Hopes to dance at the University of San Diego

CROSS COUNTRY

After placing fourth at Districts, the Stars will race in sectionals Saturday at Lake Jocomo. Four STA runners received All-Districts, including: sophomores Elizabeth Keaveny, who placed seventh, and Emily Thompson, who placed 15th; senior Jessica Reid, who placed 18th; and junior Alex Bojarski-Stauffer, who placed 27th. Earlier this season, the Stars placed third at the Miegie Invitational Oct. 1, and fourth at the Excelsior Springs Invitational Oct. 4. Keaveny won the Clinton Invitational Oct. 8, leading Varsity to fourth place. The Stars placed tenth at Richmond Oct. 20.

GOLF

The Stars set a school record for the best team finish at State, placing sixth with a combined score of 765, Oct. 17-18 at Fremont Hills. Junior Mary Kate Bird shot the lowest round of all the golfers on the second day with a score of 76, placed tenth and received All-State honors. They placed second at Districts, led by Bird who won the match and set a record for best individual finish.

VOLLEYBALL

As of press release, the Stars are ranked first in Districts and received a bye for the first round. They played Raytown South yesterday in the semi-finals. If they won that game, they will play the winner of the Blue Springs v. Blue Springs South match tonight at 7:00 at Raytown South in the district finals. Prior to Districts, their record was 27-4-1. They beat Sion last Thursday in two games with scores of 25-23 and 25-20. In the Francis Tournament Oct. 8, they beat Northwest House Springs, Fox High School, Francis Howell High School, Eureka High School and Marquette High School. They beat Lawrence Freestate, Shawnee Heights and Shawnee Mission North West Oct. 12. They beat Harrisonville Oct. 14 and defeated Liberty, BVNW, Bishop Carrol and Shawnee Heights in the STA Tourney the next day, but lost to Wichita Kaupau.

TENNIS

Senior Franny McShane and freshman Maddie Keller placed second in doubles at State last Thursday in Springfield, MO. Freshman Jenny McLiney also competed in the singles division, but lost her first match to the eventual state champion. The Stars competed in Districts Oct. 6, where the first- and second-place finishers would advance to State and the first and second place teams would move on to Sectionals. McShane and Keller won the doubles division; McLiney placed second in singles. The team collectively placed second and advanced to Sectionals, where they beat Blue Springs and Park Hill South Oct. 12. They lost to Sion in the quarterfinals Oct. 15, ending the team's chances for a state title.

SOFTBALL

The Stars finished their season with a record of 1-18. They lost to Oak Grove 10-6 on Oct. 4. In Districts, they lost to Park Hill South.

DANCE

The dance team performed at Rockhurst Friday. They will compete in Fort Osage Dance Competition Nov. 19.

BASKETBALL

Tryouts start Monday for sophomores, juniors and seniors and Tuesday for freshmen. Teams will be posted Nov. 5.

Absence of trainer affects athletes

Sarah Cooper
Staff Writer

School administrators and local athletic trainers have mixed opinions regarding the absence of a trainer on staff and the effect it has on coaches and athletes.

According to Mr. Mike Egner, STA's athletic director, the school employed a trainer through St. Luke's Hospital until the trainer program ended three years ago. After that, the cost of a replacement trainer was too high. The cost per year for a part-time trainer was \$1,500 with St. Luke's program and the cheapest alternative Egner found was \$7,500.

"The expenses, we felt, became higher than the benefits of a trainer," said Egner.

The jump in cost and a poor evaluation of the last trainer were both factors in his decision to hire a trainer for the following year. However, the National Council of Athletic Training claims having a certified trainer on staff is one of the best defenses against lawsuits regarding sports injuries and could save the school a lot of money.

According to the National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification, athletic trainers are educated in the prevention, assessment, rehabilitation, reconditioning, evaluation and care of athletic injuries. They also refer injured athletes to the appropriate medical professionals, handle health care administration and educate parents, coaches, student trainers and athletes.

Mr. Doug Weisner of Sports Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. employs trainers for Rockhurst and St. James high schools. The trainers must pass a National Athletic Trainers' Association board exam to become eligible for a license in Kansas and Missouri. He said an athletic

trainer is more qualified than coaches in dealing with emergency situations.

"Most high school coaches have basic first aid training, but that may have been from years ago," said Weisner.

However, Egner and assistant athletic director Jack Garvin agree that STA coaches have basic trainer knowledge. After making the decision not to hire a trainer, coaches attended a first aid and training class where they learned about various injuries, CPR and taping techniques. Several staff members were also re-certified in Automated External Defibrillator use Oct. 11.

Egner has had athletic training and is at almost every home game. He and Garvin agreed that in the case of a serious injury, a trainer cannot do much more than coaches and parents.

"I can fill in and do pretty much anything a sports trainer can," said Egner.

Though he is present at games, studies by Children's Hospital Boston show that 60 percent of injuries occur during practice. Also, coaches are not always as confident in their knowledge. Varsity volleyball coach Amy Carlson said her players assume she knows a lot about injuries.

"I have to research a lot more about injuries in general," said Carlson. "It is a big time-consumer."

The last trainer came to all home volleyball, basketball and soccer games and was available once a week during practices to evaluate injuries.

Carlson and cross country coach Karen Moran said that a trainer would be helpful in making the unbiased decision of whether to play or hold an athlete without the influence of a coach's desire to win.

"A trainer can differentiate between what an athlete can work through and what



Kathleen Pointer

Sophomore Sami Setter, left, and freshman Lauren Medina take an ice bath after cross country practice. Ice baths help speed up the athletic recovery process that could be delayed by the lack of a trainer on staff.

injuries can sideline an athlete," said Moran. "It's hard for me to make that distinction."

Egner said that the sports with the most injuries at STA are basketball and soccer. Moran said her runners endure knee injuries, shin splints, stress fractures and other repetitive-motion injuries. Carlson said her players have experienced muscle tears, ankle sprains, broken fingers and sprained thumbs. She said that without a trainer, her players do not heal as quickly and some-

times have to go to doctors, affecting them financially.

The absence of a trainer also forces coaches to be more cautious.

"It makes me more responsible for making decisions about my athletes' health and well-being," said Moran.

However, Egner maintains his position. "We seem to be doing fine without a trainer because our coaches have training to handle almost all emergencies," he said.

Web of Faces

Students welcome the mystery of Internet communication

Story and web by Colleen Owens
Features Editor
Photo Illustrations by Kathleen Pointer
Photography Editor



Students write on "walls" to send messages:

Mirror mirror on the wall... write on my facebook and give me a call.



Teens have the opportunity to place personal information on the web:

You may post your number because you're quite a talker... But be careful, you could wind up with a stalker

Sitting hunched over a computer, hands typing steadily on the keyboard, there are currently 242 STA students who have joined the Facebook nation.

"At heart, Facebook is an online directory that connects people through social networks at schools," said Facebook spokesman Chris Hughes. "We enable students to exchange information about themselves screen names, favorite movies, classes, friends, etc and

provide an online structure for them to do it. The idea is to offer students a resource of information and a means for communication, but at the same time, a tool that is fun to use."

According to Hughes, Facebook is the tenth most trafficked Internet site and received a record-breaking 8.5 million visitors in September alone.

"I've just kind of leapt into it," said junior Jillian Blanck, a new Facebook user. "The only thing I've done so far is put my name and birth date on it, joined some clubs and made some friends... I haven't really done that much."

Blanck wondered why all her friends were joining the infectious community.

"Lately now that my friends are into it more, I've been making an effort to get online and check it out... it's very interesting," said Blanck.

Ever since the creation of Facebook for high schoolers in September, 22,000 high schools from across the nation have logged on to become a part of a web of friends.

The web site provides contact information

tion, privacy policies and terms of agreement that allow any subscriber to understand the Facebook world.

"It was pretty much easy for me to figure out after a little bit... once I realized there's really not a whole lot you can do with it besides sending people messages," said freshman Mallory Sweatt.

Many users write comments and inside jokes on "walls", which are spaces provided to display messages. Some students decide to "poke" friends, which can be paralleled to tapping them on the shoulder while walking across the quad. Another activity includes joining clubs students have created as meeting grounds for groups of people with similar interests. The most time-consuming of Facebook activities is browsing through others' profiles. For most, the greatest appeal of Facebook lies within this very act, to rummage through a vast web of friends.

For senior Meigan Yarbrough, the Facebook intrigue was encouraged by her older sister, STA alumna Ms. Tyler Yarbrough, a college Facebook user at Northwestern University.

"The [colleges] need their Facebooks more than we need ours because we pretty much know everyone in the Kansas City Metro area, but when in a different state it's necessary to have," said Meigan.

"It's not as vital to us... it's just a way

for us to keep in touch."

Is Facebook foolproof? Not so for sophomore Julia Adriano, who refused to join due to its probable demise.

According to junior Mary Nulton, her mother, Ms. Maura Nulton, grounded her for making a Facebook page due to the danger that could result from the web site.

"She said it was a way for people to get my information and that she didn't want me to have it," said Mary of her mother's response to her Facebook.

Teens are often the targets, Maura feared, to online predators and Internet scams.

"I'm suspicious that when you join these web sites, they can sell [your personal information] to companies focused on these teens," she said.

To legitimize her suspicions, Maura researched the Facebook policy agreement and discovered truth in her fears.

"We may share your information with third parties, including responsible companies with which we have a relationship..." said the Facebook policy instructions. "We may use third parties to facilitate our business, such as to send E-mail

so-litations... our service providers may have access to your personal information for use in connection with these business activities."

To Maura, this was an immediate red flag.

"They basically share information, alter information," said Maura. "Once you give information, it's theirs and they are releasing themselves of all liability."

Most however are convinced of Facebook's innocence. More on the minds of the users is the continual satisfaction of being connected.

"These Facebook... things, they really bring people together," said Adriano.

Joking is one action of Facebook: joking is simply joking with a twist, so push out your finger and close your fist.



Facebook sells information to businesses:

Some believe Facebook is a lie, when they are handing over student's information to buy:

Unconventional humor eases tensions in awkward situations

Rosemary Neenan
Staff Writer



In my basement a few Thursdays ago, I was watching my weekly TV show, "The Apprentice," when the commercials came on. I began to watch them because of my body's refusal to move and grab the remote. So I just zoned out and thought about other things until one commercial caught my attention. First, I saw a man with insect wings hovering stationary over a young teenager on a trick bike. The flying man was yelling at the teenager; from the motivating and threatening words, and

the mixed look of excitement and nervousness on the flying man's face, it was obvious that he was giving the teenager a pep talk. The teenager looked like he was having second thoughts until the flying man yelled at him, saying how even his grandmother could do it. Then, out of nowhere I watched as the teenager on the bike gained speed, and jumped his bike three feet into the air. Bike tires landed on a short handrail that lead down a flight of concrete stairs. The teenager slid down the handrail and was close to the end when the bike slipped from underneath him and fell tumbling to the ground. When the bike fell, the teenager did not fly forward with it. Instead, gravity pulled him straight down toward the ground.

The teenager landed with the handrail between his legs.

As I watched his painful fall, I cringed and thought of the pain he must have been. But as I was grimacing, I chuckled to myself, like many others would have, in the empty echoing basement. I was so amused at the commercial that I don't recall what the commercial was for or even why there was a flying man. However, the picture of that painful fall is still stuck in my mind weeks later. Why I laughed, I do not know. I do know that many would have laughed too, without knowing why.

Laughing at people getting hurt is just a natural reaction for some. Sometimes, like at the bicycle commercial, we laugh because we are watching people doing

stupid things that we cannot imagine ourselves doing. Other times, we feel like we are prone to make the exact same mistake, like running into doors or kitchen counters. We could also be laughing because we are not them. We cannot feel their pain, but just seeing what happened and the look on their faces makes us laugh.

Some might laugh because they feel smarter than that person. When people watch *America's Funniest Home Videos* and see people skiing into trees or falling off motorcycles, we think to ourselves that we would never be stupid enough to ski into a still tree or ride a motorcycle while looking at something behind us.

Most of the time when we laugh at people getting hurt, it may be because

we don't know what else to do. We can either feel uncomfortable and pity that person, or we can laugh at them to erase the uneasiness of the situation. This uncomfortable feeling of seeing someone getting hurt takes me back to a sixth grade playground incident. My friends and I were fake-throwing balls at each other, so I decided to try faking a throw at one of my friends. I ended up throwing it accidentally and pegging her right in the stomach. As I watched her fall to the ground, I ran to help her up. Everyone else was laughing, and after thinking about what happened, I started to laugh too. I thought that laughing at the situation would ease the tension and add humor, and sure enough it did.