



Project Love Part II Will Ann Stacy find love?

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Macintosh in Africa

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A Capella Choir prepares for LA

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THE DART



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Students turn to cheating as finals loom

According to a survey of 100 girls at STA, these are the most popular ways to cheat.

The Ways of Cheaters

- The Internet
- Leaving a notebook open to notes underneath a desk
- Writing notes on thighs underneath their skirt
- Picture phones/text messaging
- Writing notes underneath a calculator lid/programming answers in calculator
- Writing on paper and putting it inside a see-through pen
- Writing answers on a rubber band/eraser
- Writing answers on gum
- Tapping a certain number of times for a certain answer
- Paper clipping the answers underneath their skirt
- Writing answers on the inside of water bottle labels
- Asking a friend in an earlier class

Recent survey finds over 80 percent of student body admits to being guilty

Ann Langworthy
Managing Editor

With finals approaching, many students are beginning to prepare for their upcoming tests. Many are not. Cheating has become commonplace in middle schools through colleges across the nation. Even students at STA are willing to compromise their morals to achieve that perfect score. Many educators worry cheating has become an epidemic. A recent national survey by Rutgers' Management Education Center of 4,500 high school students found that 75 percent of them have taken part in serious cheating.

Recently the Dart surveyed more than a 100 STA students regarding

their cheating habits. Eighty-four percent confessed to cheating on homework or class-work at STA. Forty percent of STA students admitted to cheating on tests or finals. Only 3 percent of the admitted cheaters reported being caught or punished.

"I'm very realistic," said Ms. Nancy Hand, principal of academic affairs. "[Cheating] is a fact of life. I'd like to be able to say that our kids are perfect. But, I don't think these are incredibly high numbers in comparison to other schools."

While 87 percent of students reported they felt cheating was unacceptable, there are some students who disagree.

"I've never felt guilty about

cheating," said Susie Smith, senior at STA whose name has been changed for this article. "I don't think I have a conscience. Everybody has cheated at least once in their life. I pride myself that I have never been caught."

More than 86 percent of students said that academic pressure is the number one reason behind cheating. Students compromise their morals to meet the high standards of teachers, parents and colleges.

"Students are under tremendous pressure," said Hand. "They have so much on their plate and they think [cheating] is what they have to do. They just think of the final benefit."

Students confessed other reasons behind cheating to be laziness and

not enough time to study or complete assignments.

"I can definitely see students cheating on homework," said Ms. Kjersten Metzler, chemistry teacher. "I don't like it, but I can see it. I'd like to think students don't cheat on my tests."

Some students have different philosophies.

"I cheat more on tests or finals," said Smith. "They are worth more points and easier to cheat. With homework you have to reword it, which takes too much work."

The most popular method of cheating among students who

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Federal law defines education standard

Chandler Domian
Staff Writer

The No Child Left Behind law, implemented in 2002 by the federal government, is creating nationwide controversy as some recognize a sharp contrast between the intentions and implications of the law. As stated by the law, all children should be proficient in reading and math by 2014.

According to Kansas City, Missouri School District board member Ms. Ingrid Burnett, No Child Left Behind has a good premise, and is well-intended, but is not well thought-out.

"It is not possible; it is not a realistic goal," said Burnett. "There are going to be children who will not reach the developmental stage to understand key concepts."

According to President George W. Bush in a 2002 presentation, the No Child Left Behind law is meant to improve public schools through real accountability, unprecedented flexibility for states and school districts, greater local control, more options for parents and more funding for what works.

Burnett said that schools that do not meet adequate yearly progress are not supplied with proper funding to make necessary changes. She also believes that although the law is supposed to give more control to state governments, a school gets taken over by a governmental agency when they face sanctions for not meeting requirements.

"The bill is over 1,000 pages long, and within it, there is a lot of conflicting regulation," Burnett said. "The bill gives more control to local districts, however, when you start bumping up these regulations anytime you are talking about the removal of funding the control is back on the federal government."

Under certain sanctions, schools must give students the option to transfer to better-performing schools in the district, offer tutorial services and in cases where the school has not met Adequate Yearly Progress for four years or more, the school must replace staff, change curriculum and extend the school day or school year.

Forty schools within the Kansas City, Missouri School District, including 13 of the 17 charter schools, have not achieved Adequate Yearly Progress for two or more years. Paseo

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Season brings charity to mind



Nicole Farley

A Plaza shopper places his contribution inside a Salvation Army kettle on Nov. 27. Proceeds from kettles located all around the Metro are expected to amount for \$1 million of the organization's \$4.2 million seasonal goal.

Nicole Farley
Staff Writer

On the Saturday morning after Thanksgiving, shoppers hustle by on Plaza sidewalks, carrying bags full of bright packages for their family and friends. Decked in Salvation Army aprons, Danny and Debbie Kohrs stand outside of Barnes & Noble with their daughter Kayla, on her 2nd birthday, ringing their bells in the late-November air. They wait for someone to stop for a few seconds to drop a coin or two in the red kettle, be greeted by a wish of "Merry Christmas" and make a difference in the life of someone less fortunate.

Over 800 million of these "less fortunate" people will go to bed hungry

every night, according to the Solcom House web-site. About 24 thousand people die from hunger-related problems each day, averaging out to approximately one person every 3.5 seconds. Yet, Solcom House also reports that there is an abundance of food in the world meaning enough food to properly feed each person daily.

The National Coalition for the Homeless reported that, in a 2003 survey of 25 American cities, the US Conference of Mayors found that 40 percent of homeless people are families. The 2001 version of this survey found that children under the age of 18 made up about 25 percent of the urban homeless population. Unaccompanied minors

made up about four percent of the same group.

Some may wonder what they could do to make a difference. Junior Rachel Somodi, who volunteers at area organizations such as the Kansas City Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter for men, said that fear can often be a factor in keeping people from volunteering.

"A lot of girls, I can imagine, are probably either scared or just alienated to [volunteering]," said Somodi. "They don't know what it's like, so they probably make assumptions."

Junior Hannah Moore, who works with assorted charitable groups both inside and outside of STA, agrees that some teens don't think enough about

volunteer work.

"There are a lot of teenagers that really feel the need to get out there and help other people," she said. "And then there are a lot of people that don't even care."

Volunteering becomes a requirement for students during their junior and senior years at STA. She said that the projects may even be able to encourage girls to continue volunteering after they have completed their obligatory time.

"If they realized that it was cool...or they found something they liked... then they might want to further go into that kind of thing, or volunteer somewhere," said Somodi.

Moore says that the satisfaction she gains is not always instantaneous. However, she says it is there, through her participation in activities like Food for Thought, an annual food drive that STA students participate in.

"I never feel [soon after volunteering] like, 'Oh, I'm so glad I did this,'" said Moore. "It's usually a little bit afterwards, and I had time to reflect on something I've done, like Food for Thought... now that I can kind of think about it, and think about how many people were helped by that food, it means more to me now than it did right after."

Options for volunteer opportunities vary. Food drives are available through different organizations, such as Harvesters. Area food kitchens and homeless shelters, like the Kansas City Rescue Mission, need volunteers to help serve meals. These groups are in need of food and monetary donations.

More opportunities are available during the holiday season. Heart of America's United Way sponsors Project Warmth, a program that collects coats for the needy.

The Salvation Army sets a goal for the amount of money they wish to raise in each holiday season. This season, the goal is \$4.2 million. Representative Sally Zahner said that about \$1 million of this is expected to come from bell-ringers. The bell-ringers work until Dec. 24, and Zahner says volunteers are still severely needed. Yet she remains confident.

"Kansas City has always come through for us," she said.

Somodi believes that volunteers are necessary because, otherwise, no one will be helping the people in need.

"You really are helping them, in a big way," she said. "[Serving food is] something you see as so small, but... if people didn't come to KC Rescue Mission and [places] like that, and volunteer to do just that one thing then it wouldn't get done. And they wouldn't have food, or they'd be cold, or they wouldn't have a place to stay."

beyond
cool

Rose Dillon
Features Editor



The other day (and by that I mean sometime in the last year or so), I was told that being a fan of *The Simpsons* is cliché. I promptly freaked out and, delirious with rage at the young man's insolence, forgot his name and anything he said before or after that point. How dare anyone tell me that what I like isn't cool?

The issue at hand doesn't have anything to do the fact that *The Simpsons* is a great and hilarious show (and so not cliché! I am offended). The issue is that so often we get completely wrapped up in what we like and what we think is awesome that we begin to rip apart other people for not doing what we do. Unkindness about style is not a good habit to get into. In fact, it's rather bitchy.

To be clear, we need to define wicked sweet versus totally boochie. The only two things that are always (yes, always, no matter how much Seventeen Magazine may tell you otherwise) un-cool are animal cruelty/sweatshop labor, and tapered jeans (two words: mom pants). I guess technically that's three un-cool things ... I should learn to count. Or maybe I'm just fighting the establishment by creating my own form of accounting (rebellion = always fresh).

Speaking of counting, how many times have you personally heard someone, male or female, rag on another person about her clothes? On second thought, don't answer that question. I don't think I want to hear the answer.

Because it's all too often that people say things like, "She always wears those boots. She thinks she's soooo cool." And rightly so, I may add. If she thinks she's hot stuff, so be it. It is not our place to ruin her self-image with catty comments or dirty looks. It's a pair of boots!

Girls, we've got to stick together and stop the negativity. Just because you think her shoes are ugly does not mean that you should be mean about it. I'm the first to admit that I do it too; I finished cross-country races by picking out the girls who had "bad hair" and trying to beat them. But I also know that it's not healthy.

St. Teresa's is a pretty drama-free environment, at least as far as I've seen. Petty gossip blows over quickly compared to the way it ruled my coed grade school (granted, that could have been due to 8th grade girls' usual lack of maturity). But we still have a long way to go.

One good thing is that girls admit that they can be cruel. Ever seen the movie *Mean Girls*? (Great film, by the way. Lots of pink.) But females need to stand together, to love each other. Don't perpetuate stereotypes. Refrain from saying the horrible things that you're thinking. After a while, outward positivity can creep inside your psyche and become a way of life.

This isn't to say you can never say a bad thing about someone ever again. Venting can clear your mind. But keep it real. If she's said something to you that made you angry (such as, "You're tacky and I hate you!"), that's one thing. If she hasn't plucked her eyebrows to your personals specifications, leave it out. That brief feeling of personal vindication is not worth curdling your soul.

On the same note, don't let other people bring you down. If they don't like your hair, your clothes, whatever, it's their loss. You, by nature, are slamin'. Don't ever forget it. Someone may decide that because you have "emo bangs" (known in some circles as a swoop), you're going to think a certain way or listen to a certain type of music. Show them where to get off. Because you're an original, confident, beautiful St. Teresa's girl, you don't have to fit into anybody's misinformed construct of how you're "supposed" to be. We've already rejected the societal value that imposes cleanliness and smooth, hairless legs on American women. Refusing to abide by one person's (totally wrong) idea of you is easy by comparison.

That said, I leave you with this: it's all good. Close your eyes for a moment and instead of taking people at their face value, take them at their spirit value. See how the other half (i.e.: not you) lives. If you don't pigeonhole other people, it becomes harder for them to pigeonhole you. Living this way might be more refreshing than you expect.

Out of STA and into Africa

SPANISH TEACHER MS. HEATHER MACINTOSH PLANS A TRIP TO HELP THOSE AFFLICTED BY AIDS

Kathleen Pointer
Staff Writer

SHE'S GOING TO AFRICA...

On Jan. 6, Spanish teacher Ms. Heather Macintosh will get off a plane in Cape Town, South Africa, with

in an Ecuadorian village for nine weeks through Amigos.

"[Teaching] has a more powerful impact when you are from the United States," said Macintosh.

BUT SHE'S LEAVING STA ...

According to senior Merritt Lee, Macintosh's room is the

Macintosh will be sad to say good-bye to the girls of STA as well.

"I'm going to miss my students," said Macintosh. "Especially this graduating class. It's going to be hard to miss graduation, because I know when I come back my family and friends will still be around but those girls will be gone."

Although Macintosh has wanted to go to Africa for seven years she didn't approach the administration about the possibility of leaving until last year when teachers renewed their contracts. Macintosh said that the administration was very supportive, especially because some of her time will be committed to service. By the end



Ms. Heather Macintosh teaches her Spanish three class.



Rose Dillon Macintosh looks awesome in a sombrero.

Juana Summers Macintosh examines a worksheet.

one backpack and very little knowledge of what will happen to her in the coming months.

What she does know is that for three months she will be in Cape Town either teaching or working for AIDS prevention. There she plans to live with a host family and work eight-hour days. Macintosh she will spend the rest of the time traveling and doing freelance writing and photography. Other than those plans, she is in the dark.

"It could be completely unorganized," said Macintosh. "I have no idea until I step off that plane."

Currently Africa is plagued by the AIDS epidemic and extreme poverty.

"[The most difficult part will be] the desperation," said Macintosh. "It will be hard seeing first hand the devastating effects AIDS and the poverty have on people."

According to reports from the United Nations there are presently 26.9 million people infected with the HIV virus. Reports also indicate that 22.9 million people have died from AIDS in Africa, including 2.3 million in 2003.

"In [my] backpack I sometimes will have more than some of the people around me have ever had," said Macintosh.

Packing for Africa isn't like packing for a regular trip. Macintosh will begin her journey with one backpack.

"What you can't carry [in your backpack] isn't going," said Macintosh. "You have to be able to walk for miles. It's amazing what you can live on comfortably."

She will purchase various small products as they become necessary. One vital object will be her tent. Even when she stays at hotels it could become necessary to sleep in a tent, in order to avoid malaria.

Venturing outside of the United States isn't a new experience for Macintosh. She's seen poverty in India, spent time in the Andes Mountains and she worked

place to be during activity period. "My friends and I tell Mac everything," said Lee. "I feel kind of bad [because] once 11:15 hits 30 girls bombard her desk. We talk about boys, our weekends, classes that stress us out. I'm really going to miss activity with her."

Her absence will also be noticed in her classes and during advisory.

"I'm sad [she's leaving]," said sophomore Lizzy Duff. "We always have a good time in class. It's going to be hard [for a substitute teacher] to be as good as Ms. Macintosh."

of the school year Macintosh had contacted InterExchange Online, and made definite plans to go.

The next step was informing the STA community. Lee and

Duff both said that they found out about her leaving through a widespread rumor.

Neither were surprised because Macintosh's past experiences with travel are well known. Junior Anna Johnson, a member of Macintosh's famous advisory, finds the trip inspiring.

"She makes you want to just grab a suitcase and go," said Johnson.

This Christmas break reveals a bitter-sweet feeling for some. It not only brings two weeks off school but also the last days for Ms. Macintosh this school year.

"I'm going to miss everything, the whole Mac Pack," said Lee. "Her cute little smile, being able to tell her things. It's sad that she's leaving but it's what she really wants to do."