

THE DART

ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY

Jingle Bell Rock:

Students enjoy "Tacky Christmas" theme at Friday's dance, sponsored by SCO.



Page 2

All You Want for

Christmas: Consumers spend excessive dollars on presents, promote materialism.



Page 7

Home for the

Holidays: Kansas City offers wide variety of festive holiday, winter activities.



Page 18

Lighting up the Season

The Dart decks the halls of St. Teresa's with Christmas cheer

Airbands light up annual Christmas dance



Lean with it, rock with it * Seniors Caitlin Clark, left, and Rachel Janose perform their airband dance routine at the Christmas dance last Friday. Seniors Ciera Trejo, Katherine Williams and Michelle McGill were also a part of the performance. Only two groups overall participated and no places were awarded to either band. **PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS**



Reindeer rock * Sophomore Nicolette Anderson snaps her fingers to the music at the Christmas dance last Friday night. The theme was Tacky Christmas. Anderson adorned herself with a tacky sweater and reindeer antlers. **PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS**

SCO-sponsored tacky-themed dance allows students, guests to relax before finals madness begins this week

by **CLAIRE McINERNEY**
Staff Writer

Temperatures dropped outside as the Christmas Dance heated up the Goppert Building last Friday. SCO sponsored the annual event, selling more than 600 tickets this year.

“Last year there were a lot of people with the snow day, so the administration decided to not go over 600 tickets,” said senior Amanda Morrall, vice president of SCO. “We had a set number, and when we sold all the tickets, we couldn’t sell anymore. Some of the girls didn’t get tickets so we sold one ticket to each girl.”

Despite the confusion, Morrall feels there weren’t any major problems with the dance.

“There weren’t any problems before the dance,” said Morrall. “The decorations were simple and we left the gym around 4:30 to go home and get ready. The only thing was deciding when the air bands [would perform] and snow court [would be announced].”

This year, SCO introduced the air bands. According to Morrall, four groups signed up, but two dropped out before the dance. Although Morrall found they were a fun thing for the seniors, Rockhurst High School junior Sebastian Cavallo was disappointed.

“The air bands [were] so bad,” said Cavallo. “The Rockhurst ones were good, but these weren’t.”

Cavallo thought the dance was fun overall, except he preferred the DJ from Teresian.

This year, DJ Kirby was hired from Mix 93.3 for the dance. Freshman Kelly Fitzpatrick thought the music could be a little different.

“The dance was fun, but I wished they played something with more of a beat,” she said.

While Morrall agreed the DJ wasn’t the best, she felt he was very helpful. She said he was patient, especially during the air band performances.

Along with the addition of the air bands, this year SCO tried to make the theme more important. With the optional dress code of Tacky Christmas, some people went all out.

“I didn’t dress up, but I saw a lot of creative outfits,” said Morrall. “I saw everything from Santa to people in trash bags. A lot of people wore tacky sweaters and I saw a lot of leggings and socks; I even saw someone with pink socks with black fur on the top.”

Overall, Cavallo, Fitzpatrick and Morrall deemed the night a success. According to SCO moderator Stacie O’Rear, approximately \$3,000 was raised.

“I help with fundraisers most of the time,” said Morrall. “Some of the money is going to student appreciation day and maybe the SCO scholarship. “I’m not exactly sure. We raised the money from the students, and we want to give it back to the students.” *

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*in brief

Holiday history

The birthday of Jesus Christ has been celebrated on Dec. 25 since AD 354, in the Western world. This date replaces an earlier date of Jan. 6. The Christians then stopped many pagan festivals and traditions surrounding the day, practiced mainly in the Middle East and Europe. The earliest English reference to Christmas Day as Dec. 25 did not appear until 1043 AD.

inside out



Bull’s eye:

The first of two features on the top 10 most influential women of STA, and the most influential male.

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Tennis members spend time in the community offering free lessons to underprivileged

children for charity.

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SISTERHOOD OF THE PLAID SKIRT

True Life: Zoey Ferguson, an STA enigma

I hear Zoey Ferguson is six feet tall. I hear Zoey Ferguson's related to Uncle Jesse on "Full House."

Well, I hear Zoey Ferguson was on Full House!

What is all this hoopla about Zoey Ferguson? The rumors of STA's newest senior student flooded the hallways at lightening speed. Everyone was talking about her \$1,000 hair extensions and her membership to MENSA, but has anyone really taken the time to find out who this girl really is? I have. Unfortunately, her number was not listed, so I had to do some in-depth research to root out this girl, who, by-the-way, lives north of the river, over a bridge that sometimes disables any drivers from passing. It is because of this Zoey cannot make it to school as often as she would like. In a sit-down interview, Zoey explained herself to *The Dart*, in hopes of her story spreading to you all. This is the real Zoey Ferguson.

C: Zoey, I would first like to thank you for finding the time to cross the bridge and speak to me. I cannot imagine how difficult it is to be here sitting in front of me in the flesh right now.

Z: Well, Coco, it really is. But I am grateful to be here, out of the house and away from my 13 screaming siblings (laughs uncomfortably).

C: You have 13 siblings? I had no idea. Do you have to share a room?

Z: Back when we only had nine, I got to keep a pretty sweet room all to myself down near the garage. But since the new additions, I don't mind sharing the space with four cribs...and four screaming children (laughs uncomfortably).

C: Before STA, where did you go to school?

Z: I did go to grade school...in a basement. We only had about seven people in my class, so we got to go on a lot of field trips. Our school colors were red, white and blue. Toward the end, though, there was some embezzlement or whatever. So, my mother has homeschooled me ever since. We study in the basement there too. So I guess you could say this is the first time I have ever learned in rooms with windows on the walls.

C: Fascinating. What is your favorite song?

Z: (Pause) "Summer Nights"...from the Grease Soundtrack.

C: Favorite movie?

Z: Hmmm, I would have to say *The Parent Trap*, but not the Olsen Twins one, the one with Lindsey Lohan.

C: Oh, you admire Lindsey Lohan?

Z: Only for her natural acting abilities and her down-to-earth approach to life.

C: Lastly, the question on everyone's mind Zoey. Who are you dating?

Z: His name is Zeke; I met him at the Kansas City Public Library, next to the self-help bookshelf. He was reading a book about how to be more confident. I was instantly attracted.

C: Zoey, thank you so much for coming here. On behalf of STA, we thank you. Any last words for our avid readers?

Z: Yes...VOTE ZOZY FERGUSON FOR ACADEMY WOMAN!!! *

Pennies start war



Raking in the money * Senior Jessie Kramer counts pennies in the front hall of the M&A Building Dec. 4. Kramer organized the Penny War for her senior project as a member of the Community Service Club. The junior class won the war. PHOTO BY SARAH COOPER

Thrill of competition among classes prompts students to donate change

by ALY BROWNLEE
Web Editor

Ker-plink, ker-plank, ker-plunk.

That is the sound that could be heard from the table outside the M&A office, as students pour their spare change into the Community Service Club's annual Christmas project. This year, it is a Penny War.

The War lasted about two weeks, from Nov. 29 to last Monday. On Wednesday, the winning junior class received an out-of-uniform day and a treat. Because the STA community raised more than double the target goal of \$1,000, the administration granted all classes the reward of dressing down today. The STA community raised \$2,426 in total for the fundraiser.

"All the money goes to benefit the St. Joseph's School for the Deaf," said senior Marisa Henderson. "It also goes to Sisters working in Uganda. They help brutalized kids."

The club is donating all of its proceeds to charities linked to the Sisters of St. Joseph, in an effort to bring more attention to their order that sponsors STA.

"We are really connected to them," said senior Jessie Kramer. "They have a real need for funding, and we have a mission to help kids this year. We want to help them on a local, national and international level."

The Penny War was a competition between all four classes at STA to see which grade could collect the most money. Faculty and staff decided to join the competition Friday. Students and teachers brought in spare pennies and dropped their change in their respective class buckets. They could also bring down other class totals by dropping silver coins or paper bills into the buckets of other classes.

According to Henderson, Community Service Club had hoped to raise at least \$500 or more. She said that Rockhurst had also done the fundraiser and



Show Me the Money

Community Service Club tallied the total earnings from the Penny War fundraiser. They raised \$2,426, over twice the goal.

Juniors	\$427.64 3,412 pts.
Sophomores	\$500.26 1,574 pts.
Freshmen	\$274.09 -12,051 pts.
Seniors	\$650.69 -15,375 pts.
Faculty	\$452.24 -45,706

GRAPHIC BY BREANNE SIGLER

had profited well from it.

Community Service Club moderator Betsy Hansbrough agreed, saying the seniors were getting into the competition and that the faculty liked being involved as well. Last year, the faculty went to a Veterans home, and this year, they have plans to make care packages for a unit of soldiers that has not received much attention.

"People are very generous this time of year, and we're always surprised," said Hansbrough. "They do a tremendous amount of work, and really emphasize reaching out to others."

The total profits raised from the Penny War will be sent by check to the St. Joseph's School for the Deaf. Prior to the war, the club also hoped to be able to send money to the Sisters working in

Uganda, to aid the agency with needed funding.

Kramer thought they war would be successful because of the natural competition between classes at STA. The club also made daily announcements encouraging students to participate in the event.

To help publicize the Penny War, seniors from the Community Service Club went around to each class at class meetings to explain the rules of the War. They also put up posters around the school to encourage the classes to give more money, and made announcements. The incentive of winning the competition took care of the rest.

Henderson felt having a competition would be more fun than having a clothing drive to donate items. *

*in brief

Penny Facts
The penny, formally known as the one-cent coin, was the first currency issued by the United States. The design was suggested by Benjamin Franklin and was over five times heavier and 50 percent larger than its counterparts. The word "penny" is derived from the British coin pence. Over 300 billion one-cent coins, featuring 11 different designs, have been minted since 1787.

Organization presents winter showcase

KCYA hosts annual student Big Snow show, showcases creativity

by **CARLIE CAMPBELL**
Staff Writer

Many Kansas City Young Audiences students and their families and friends crowded The Commons for the Big Snow Winter Showcase and Silver Mic awards Dec. 1. There were refreshments, craft projects, visual art and writing displays, but the highlight of the afternoon came with the performances from the acting, music, choir and dance classes from KCYA's fall semester.

"It's a great chance for them to get to kind of show off some of the stuff that they've learned," said KCYA Registrar Jamie McCall. "It's not so much about how amazing you are, or really super-talent-based, as much as it's just sharing what you've learned during the semester with the rest of the people in the school as well as your parents and friends who maybe haven't gotten to see you perform yet."

KCYA operations manager and community liaison April Collins arranged the awards and assisted McCall in organizing the student performance show. The Big Snow includes an art project, displays by visual arts classes and performances from several dance, acting, chorus and music classes. The classes who create written works, like poetry, had what they worked on for the session published in a book that was displayed at the showcase.

The show began in The Commons where all the art and writing was displayed and an art project was offered to kids while they were waiting. The choir and garage band classes performed there. The show then moved into the



To be or not to be * Rason Wofford contemplates the values of friendship during an exercise in an KCYA acting class Dec. 4. Acting students, taught by Ms. Antonia Johnson, participated in KCYA's Big Snow Dec. 1. **PHOTO BY CARLIE CAMPBELL**

auditorium for the remaining performances.

New to the showcase this year, KCYA had two students emcee the event, rather than a staff member they had in previous years. Brandin Tolbert, who is enrolled in the Improvisation Class, and Zoe Arvizu, who has taken several acting classes at KCYA, did some comedy bits throughout the course of the talent show.

After the performances finished, the Silver Mic awards were presented to the students.

"It's kind of cool because it's not really talent-based, or 'who's the most fantastic in class?'" said McCall. "It's more based on who really put forth the effort and who the other kids think should win."

The students voted for classmates in their classes that they felt displayed the

traits teamwork, kindness, attendance and enthusiasm.

Acting teacher Antonia Johnson wants her students to gain from her class a sense that they are achieving the best they personally can. Johnson assesses the skills of each individual as she teaches.

"They're all unique and I encourage them to embrace the uniqueness that they have," Johnson said. *

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College parties

A survey recently taken by the Harvard School of Public Health in 2004 found that most colleges are concerned about drinking, but did not know what action to take.

Key facts from the survey:

- 81 percent of college administrators say students' use of alcohol is a problem on campus
- 34 percent of colleges have banned alcohol on campus
- 43 percent of colleges banned alcohol in residence dorms
- 44 percent of colleges restrict alcohol at school events
- 90 percent of colleges provide some form of counseling or treatment for substance abusers

University implements on-campus party regulations

Columbia City Council creates ordinance to prevent excessive alcohol use at student-hosted campus parties

by **COLLEEN OWENS**
Managing Editor of Design

The Columbia City Council approved new regulations to subdue on-campus parties and crack down on the hosts and landlords of such activities. The ordinances imposed harsher punishments for gatherings of ten or more people in a single dorm room, due to the constant complaints of disruptive noise.

"At MU, we try not to wait until a tragedy occurs; we try to be as proactive as possible," said Ms. Kim Dude, the University of Missouri's director of the wellness resource center. "Certainly, we have our share of out-of-control parties, but we try to prevent them and when they do occur, [we try to] address them in the most appropriate means as possible."

In a freshman class of 5,780, STA alumna and MU student Katie Kennaley predicted about half of them drank and attended such parties.

"I feel like MU is a party school because every Friday night I will hear about six different parties," said Kennaley. "But it all begins on Wednesdays when students go out and get kind of crazy. Thursday is less wild, but then the weekend hits and people get crazy again."

Kennaley, last year's president of SADD, said she did not participate in such activities and has made friends with many students who do not drink. She acknowledges the college's direct attempts to curb on-campus parties, having grown accustomed to the Resident Advisors (RAs) constant weekend dorm check-ups and to the police's increasing presence on

campus.

"If you are loud, the RA will notice," said Kennaley. "If tons of people are filing in and out of your room, they have the right to search it, and if they find alcohol, they make you pour it out while they watch. A few days later, you will get a letter telling you to see the head RA, and that [individual] will allow you two options for punishment. The first option includes listening to a CD about alcohol abuse and then writing a paper on it, a lesser punishment in my opinion. The other option makes you pay \$60 and take a class."

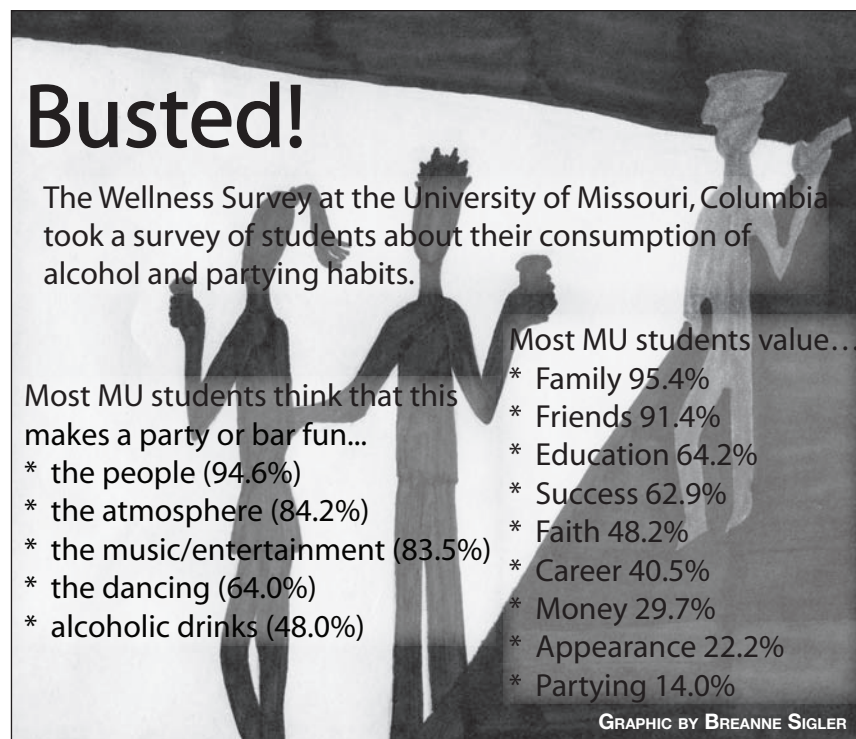
The new ordinances would hold violators more accountable, charging them anywhere from \$500 to \$4,000.

Besides stricter penalties, MU has taken an active role in many preventative measures, which include devoting countless websites to the topic of alcohol and drug use.

At www.partysmart.com, viewers can look up safe party tips, local and state-wide alcohol laws, Blood Alcohol Content calculators and mocktail recipes with drink names like the prohibitionists martini and sangria's sobriety.

Another web site, www.wellness.missouri.edu, assigns a portion of its content entirely to debunking common myths many MU students might hold on the subject of campus partying. For example, it is rumored that simply setting down an alcoholic beverage at a party when the police arrive would clear the drinker of any suspicion that he or she was drinking.

According to the Missouri Police De-



partment's Captain Brian Weimer, this is false. Whether or not there is a cup in hand, anyone is at risk for questioning.

Besides online programs, Dude stresses MU's diverse efforts to develop safer student activities.

"We have a campus community coalition [which] discusses this subject frequently," said Dude. "We work closely with the police to improve enforcement laws. We also do peer education programs in the residence halls, Greek hous-

es and classrooms on responsible drinking and safe partying."

Kennaley agrees with the way MU has handled partying issues and feels the college's efforts have influenced many people's weekend decisions.

"Everyone knows their limits," said Kennaley. "Campus rules are strict and nobody really wants to get into trouble. Considering how bad most state schools are, MU is doing a great job. Everyone is safe here." *

Year in review

by MARY KATE BIRD
Managing Editor of News

JANUARY

Alito sworn in



I solemnly swear * Samuel Alito, President George W. Bush's nominee for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, is sworn in before the Senate Judiciary Committee during his confirmation hearing on Jan. 9, in Washington, DC. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT DIRECT

Samuel Alito was sworn in as the 110th Supreme Court Justice Jan. 31 by a Senate vote of 58-42. The vote was the closest since Justice Clarence Thomas was confirmed 52-48 in 1991. On the day preceding Alito's confirmation, Democrats, including Massachusetts Senators John Kerry and Ted Kennedy attempted to block his nomination with a filibuster. Alito's supporters in the Senate, however, managed to cut off debate and proceed to the vote. Only one of the Senate's 55 Republicans voted against Alito and four Democrats broke party boundaries by voting for Alito. *

FEBRUARY

Mohammed protests

The *Dutch Jyllands-Posten* newspaper caused a controversy throughout the world by publishing 12 editorial cartoons, most of which depicted the Islamic prophet Mohammed. The newspaper argued that its publication of the cartoons was a contribution to the debate surrounding the criticism of Islam and self-censorship. In response to the printing of the cartoons, Danish Muslims held public protests and spread knowledge of the printing. As controversy grew, examples of the cartoons were picked up by newspapers in more than 50 different countries, which led to both violent and peaceful protests, most notably rioting throughout the Muslim world. *

MARCH

Abramoff sentencing

US political lobbyist Jack Abramoff was sentenced to 5 years and 10 months in prison on March 29 after pleading guilty to three criminal felony counts related to the defrauding of American Indian tribes and corruption of public officials. His prison sentence included an order to pay restitution of more than \$21 million and was the minimum sentence under a plea bargain with federal prosecutors, due to his cooperation in the investigation. In October, he was ordered by a federal judge to report to federal prison by Nov. 15. *

APRIL

Marijuana rejection

The Food and Drug Administration announced April 20 that "no sound scientific studies" supported the medical use of marijuana, which cancels out a report made in 1999. Eleven states have legalized medicinal uses of marijuana, but the Drug Enforcement Administration has opposed those efforts. A Supreme Court decision in 2005 allowed federal governments to arrest anyone using marijuana, even in those states that legalized it. The FDA said state initiatives that legalize marijuana use "are inconsistent with efforts to ensure that medications undergo the rigorous scientific scrutiny of the FDA approval process." *

MAY

Moussaoui sentencing

Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan descent, was convicted of conspiring to kill Americans as part of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks May 4. He was sentenced to serve life imprisonment without parole at a maximum security prison in Florence, Colo. During the trial, Moussaoui initially said he was not involved in the Sept. 11 attacks, but was planning an attack of his own. After a jury decided against the death penalty for him May 3, Moussaoui, shouted as he was led from the courtroom: "America, you lost...I won." Judge Leonie Brinkema responded the next day by telling Moussaoui he would "die with a whimper" and "never get a chance to speak again." *

JUNE

Amendment defeat

The Senate voted to reject a constitutional amendment that banned same-sex marriages June 6. The decision marked a defeat to President Bush and Republicans who had hoped to use the ban as a measure to energize conservative voters on Election Day. Republicans had predicted they would not receive the two-thirds majority vote needed to ratify it as a constitutional amendment, but they had predicted a majority of votes. Instead, they fell one short, 49-48. Seven Republicans voted to kill the amendment. Five Republicans voted against the amendment, Senators Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island, Susan Collins of Maine, John McCain of Arizona, Olympia Snow of Maine and John Sununu of New Hampshire. *

JULY

Indonesian tsunami

The July 17 tsunami started as a 7.7 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Java, Indonesia. The earthquake caused a three-meter-high tsunami, which destroyed houses on the south coast of Java, a 110-mile stretch that was unaffected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, an estimated 668 people were killed and at least 65 missing. Waves were recorded at more than six feet high and reached 200 yards inland at the Indonesian coastal villages of Cipatujah and Pangandaran on the coast southeast of Bandung and Garut. *

AUGUST

Pluto demoted

Pluto was re-classified in August as only a "dwarf planet," one of three in the solar system. The International Astronomical Union in Prague approved a resolution that requires a planet to "dominate its neighborhood." Dwarf planets, are large enough for gravity to make them round, but not big enough to clear out their orbits. The decision to demote Pluto was overwhelmingly passed by the IAU, leaving only eight planets in our solar system and three dwarf planets: Pluto, Ceres (formerly an asteroid) and the largest dwarf, UB313, popularly known as Xena. *

OCTOBER

Fence to be built



Closing the doors * Crosses on the fence that separates Nogales, Mexico with Nogales, Arizona mark the names of those that died trying to cross into the United States. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT DIRECT

President George W. Bush signed into law the Secure Fence Act of 2006 Oct. 27. The Act is a plan to build a 700-mile fence between the United States and Mexico, in an effort to prevent illegal immigration. The border fence, which Mexico has expressed strong opposition against, will cover about one third of the total border length. Congress passed the bill in September with a convincing majority, leaving Bush to arrange a \$1.2 billion budget for the fence, which will feature cameras, sensors, satellites and other security measures. *

SEPTEMBER

Foley steps down

Florida Republican Representative Mark Foley resigned Sept. 29 amidst scandal centering on suggestive e-mails and sexually explicit instant messages the Congressman sent to young men who had served as congressional pages. The scandal grew to encompass the response of Republican congressional leaders to previous complaints about Foley's contacts with the pages and inconsistencies in the leaders' public statements. Another allegation followed that a second Republican Congressman, Jim Kolbe, had improper conduct with at least two youths, a 16-year-old page and a recently graduated page. The scandal is believed to have contributed to the Republican Party's loss of the House of Representatives in the November elections. *

NOVEMBER

Democrats victorious



New Voice * Ms. Nancy Pelosi, who will be named Speaker of the House in January, speaks to the media on Thursday after the Democrats met to choose their new leaders on Nov. 16 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT DIRECT

The Democratic Party won the majority of the state governorships, the US House and Senate seats for the first time since 1994, during the 2006 mid-term elections. For the first time in the history of the United States, no Democratic incumbent lost, nor did Republicans capture any seat previously held by a Democrat. The Democrats won a 231-198 advantage in the House and a 51-49 advantage in the Senate. *

DECEMBER

Study released

The much-awaited Iraq Study Group's report was released last week. The group's bipartisan co-chairs, former Secretary of State James Baker III and Lee Hamilton, a former Democratic congressman, made strong recommendations that the US should withdraw all troops from early 2008. The group also recommends that President Bush at least talk to Syria and Iran. The White House has not yet made a commitment to any of Baker and Hamilton's suggestions. *

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Space arrival
Last Monday, after two days of traveling, the space shuttle Discovery and its seven person crew reached the international space station. The crew is headed by commander Mark Polansky and all but one member will return to earth after a week. The seventh member, Sunita Williams, will live at the station for seven months, replacing German astronaut Thomas Reiter. Williams will be the third woman in history to reside long-term at the space station.

Merry Christmas?

The main editorial board of The Dart concluded in a 4-1 vote that the phrase "Merry Christmas" should be used, as opposed to "Happy Holidays." Our editorial board is comprised of the co-editors-in-chief and managing editors.

Happy Holidays?

'Merry Christmas' shows acceptance of differences, understanding of cultures

I will continue to say the phrase Merry Christmas until the celebration of Christmas ceases to exist...and yes, I said *Christmas*.

Some believe the phrase "Happy Holidays" is a lovely phrase, appropriate for all cultures and religious backgrounds. However, Hallmark and other major corporations have commercialized the phrase; these same corporations are largely responsible for turning Christmas and the birth of Christ into a celebration of uncontrolled capitalism.

Moreover, the phrase "Happy Holidays" fails to capture the true, spiritual and historic purpose of the holiday.

And while the United States may not have declared Christianity as its official religion, Christians do indeed constitute nearly 82 percent of the population. Thus, the holiday greeting "Merry Christmas" upholds what the season means for a significant majority of the population.

"Happy Holidays" was invented to appease overly sensitive individuals who wish to uphold the ridiculousness of political correctness. Businesses that expect their employees to greet their cus-

tomers with the diplomatic phrase "Happy Holidays" are just calling for a public outcry. It's a ridiculous ideal to expect - one that is unnecessary. People who are offended by the phrase "Merry Christmas" are overreacting and overly-sensitive.

And how do these politically correct people explain why the world as we know it shuts down December 25? Christmas! Quite honestly, who are these individuals anyway? I, for one, would never be offended by the greeting "Happy Hanukah." After all, someone who extends this phrase does so with the hopes of sharing his or her culture. In fact, holiday greetings specific to one particular religion teach others to embrace diversity. The more the merrier.

The consumer-driven market, in recent years, has tried oh so carefully to not step from the thin line of Happy Holidays, in fear that a riot might ensue.

Can't our dialect incorporate every seasonal phrase with every religion that has one? It would be wonderful to hear Feliz Navidad, Happy Kwanza, Happy Hanukah, Happy Solstice and Merry Christmas all in unison. We should not have to dilute our seasonal phrases into one ugly, unflavored block of Happy Holidays. *

'Happy Holidays' creates respect for all Americans, not just Christian majority

With the approaching holiday season comes a debate over the perpetuation of religious discrimination in America. It is a commonly-asked question: should workers in retail stores, restaurants and other businesses wish their customers a "Merry Christmas," or a "Happy Holidays?"

Those in favor of a "Merry Christmas" say because the United States is predominantly Christian, the greeting is appropriate. However, there is still another 18 percent of the population that does not identify with the Christian religion.

This group constitutes nearly one-fifth of all American citizens, whom "Merry Christmas" wishers are ready to simply discard as a minority whose opinions and feelings do not matter. The assumption that by sheer law of odds, saying "Merry Christmas" will be applicable to most people is clearly stereotypical and is highly discriminatory to a large percentage of our population.

"Happy Holidays" is a much more inclusive phrase that can extend to those who celebrate other holidays. It also incorporates Thanksgiving and New Year's, both

of which are secular holidays celebrated in the American tradition. Though many "Merry Christmas" supporters view the phrase "Happy Holidays" as a ban on Christmas, it simply is not. What is wrong with creating a phrase that includes everyone? Isn't it in the holiday spirit to wish goodwill toward all? Acting in a way that is unsympathetic of diversity in our country is out of line with both the holiday spirit and the American spirit.

The assumptive nature of wishing all Americans a "Merry Christmas" is similar to the inclusion of the phrase "one nation, under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. Though the Bill of Rights offers "freedom of religion," many Americans argue the religious expression of belief in the Christian God, in what is supposed to be a pledge for the whole country, is a violation of this basic right. The people who refuse to say the religious phrase in the Pledge garner the same negative opinions that those who support an inclusive wish of "Happy Holidays" receive, when they are merely trying to promote the ideals of basic freedoms and inclusion in our country.

If we wish to be accepting of all our fellow citizens, a phrase such as "Happy Holidays" that includes everyone is clearly the best choice. *

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Iran Speech
Monday, Iran began a conference questioning the Holocaust and the number of Jews murdered. Tuesday, a group of Iranian students burnt pictures of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and chanted "death to the dictator" during his speech at a university in Tehran. The protest was said to be against the "shameful" conference and the "fact that many activists have not been allowed to attend university." During the speech, Ahmadinejad accused the protesters of being "Americanized" and said the conference showed Iran was a champion of free speech.

the dart staff

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Consumerism exposed through holidays

SARAH SMITH



STAFF WRITER

The dollar value of my Christmas list this year might be enough to feed a small country for a week.

At 7 a.m., when I stumble into the living room, honey baked ham still heavy in my stomach, squinting through the Las Vegas display of lights on the tree, I admit I'll be disappointed if I don't find several specific items from my list which I've been carefully crafting since May.

I donated to the penny drive, volunteered at a soup kitchen, and therefore feel completely justified in asking for a car (even a used one would be OK!), dozens of items from my Nordstrom.com wish list, Chipotle gift certificates in my stocking and most importantly the \$40 pack of every color Sharpie marker known to mankind.

I know how much stress this causes my parents. This year, my mom related her experience with the Christmas season to the five stages of dying. Once she gets past the denial, anger, bargaining and depression she can move on to the acceptance - Christmas is fast approaching and there is almost no way to escape the torrent of gifts.

It is too easy to become hypocritical about holiday consumerism, it is something that has been meticulously created through clever marketing and at this point is almost out of our control. Every year, no matter how hard we fight it, eventually we will give in to the addiction and stretch our pocketbooks to spread some holiday cheer.

Excessive spending has been equated with being patriotic. We place our self-con-



CARTOON BY SARAH SMITH

fidence on a debit card and prove ourselves as loyal Americans. The holiday season brings out an inherent greed and dependence on material goods.

The average money spent by an American during the holiday season in 2005 was \$942, according to the American Research Group. Fistfights broke out the day after Thanksgiving at Nebraska Furniture Mart over the last laptop and eBay has become a black market for the Playstation 3. When camping overnight in sub-zero temperatures to be first in line at Best Buy doesn't sound absurd, something needs to change. An aggressive craze sweeps over the country and makes people shed all inhibitions, throwing a few punches to get to the nearest clearance aisle.

So why do the holidays create this incessant drive for consumption? It has become a meaningless form of existential credit, wrapped in red ribbon.

"We live in a world where kinship ties are weak and narrow," said Mr. Webb Keane, associate professor of anthropology at

the University of Michigan, an expert on money and material culture. "Families are small and scattered, the divorce rate is high and people move around a lot. The giving of gifts is one important ritual that allows people to affirm their social ties and forge new relationships."

Christmas is one of the only times I've felt fortunate to have divorced parents. It is assumed that means twice the presents, which would imply twice the satisfaction. That isn't usually the case. With this said, Americans look pretty pathetic. These bonds being forged take a lot of time and energy and, as Keane points out, if giving gifts was purely a commercial transaction, you wouldn't care if your boyfriend gave you a really ugly sweater. It goes deeper than that. Giving the right gift is a sign that you really know someone and you care enough to show it. Keane describes gift giving as a ritual, taking off the price tags, wrapping it and the expected "Oh, I love it!" even when you don't.

See CONSUMERISM, page 22

Colleges miss academic mark with athletics

MARY KATE BIRD



MANAGING EDITOR OF NEWS

Every morning I open the Sports section of *The Kansas City Star* to find yet another NCAA institution on probation for athletic department violations. In the sports world, violations are big news and on college campuses nationwide, students, teachers, athletes and officials ask: Do college athletics run universities?

Athletic programs at the Division I level are run much like professional sports. Ticket prices can reach hundreds of dollars, merchandise sales pull in enormous revenue and athletes' faces are plastered on every wall from Lawrence to Columbia.

Yes, college athletics provide exposure to universities across the country, but a reminder needs to be said that only an elite group of individuals participate as athletes. Only 2 percent of college students are involved in collegiate athletics, leaving 98 percent of the student body nearly forgotten.

With Division I athletics, scholarships are awarded and exceptions are made. At every level of NCAA athletics, the rules change for each institution. Division II athletic programs are allotted less money to spend on scholarships for their athletes. Finally, Division III athletic programs provide ZERO for athletic scholarships for their athletes and financial aid directors are not allowed to know who is a "recruited athlete." Many people consider Division III athletics to be the "pure" colleges and universities that have understood the balance between academics and athletics, and whose students understand balance as well.

For universities like Kansas and Missouri, both Division I programs, a stereotype may be placed that the draw is the athletic programs rather than the academic programs at universities like Yale and Columbia. When students attend Kansas more to watch a potential national champion in the basketball team, rather than attend the school because they have an excellent architecture program, we have to realize that our priorities are out of order. On top of that, when you watch ad campaigns for Missouri and the football team smashes through the defense of the Kansas football team, the question bears to mind: Do the students spend time in a classroom? For the athletic department to run the university, highlighting the accomplishments of 2 percent of their student body and leaving the other 98 percent in the dust is a travesty.

The emphasis needs to be placed in the classroom and off the football field, basketball court or golf course. The Centennial Conference of Division III athletics recently reduced the maximum number of contests for each sport by 10 percent in an effort to place more attention on studies and in the classroom. These measures being demonstrated by the Centennial Conference are examples of what Division I college athletics need to restore the balance to - between athletics and academics, this statement coming from a 2007 bound Division I athlete. *

Individual privacy disregarded for technology

KATIE MEYERS



SECTION EDITOR

Fifty-seven years ago, in his science fiction novel "1984", George Orwell predicted that one day there would be surveillance everywhere and that "Big Brother" would be watching. He may have miscalculated the time by 22 years, but Orwell's idea seems to be rapidly becoming a reality in the United Kingdom, coincidentally, the setting of "1984" (although Orwell called it Oceania).

According to a report released by Britain's Information Commissioner, Richard Thomas, in England, a person can be captured on up to 300 cameras per day.

A world league table of western democratic countries and their protection of individual privacy ranked England near the bottom of the 36 country survey alongside Russia. The two worst ranking countries were China and Malaysia.

According to the report, by 2016, shoppers may be scanned as they enter stores, schools could bring in cards allowing parents to monitor what their children eat, and jobs may be refused to applicants who are seen as a health risk, based on biometric and psychological tests.

Even we, who live in this slightly less monitored country, leave "electronic footprints" everywhere through our mobile phones, the internet, credit cards and sat-

ellite navigation systems.

Think about it for a moment: there is a record of that bra you bought at Victoria's Secret last week. There is a record of the 45-minute conversation you had with your boyfriend last night. There is a photo of you running a red light on your way to school this morning. Where does all of this information go?

Is it packed away in some master file - the grown up version of a permanent record - and stashed away until you screw up so "Big Brother" can whip out all of your dirty secrets and use them against you?

And how well is this information protected? Can your prospective employer look up your credit card balance and use it when deciding whether or not you are worthy of the job?

What happens to all of the information once you die? If Mother Teresa had some shady credit card purchases or ran a few red lights would that have been Jay Leno's opening act the day after her funeral?

These questions are crucial and, quite frankly, terrifying. It is true that extensive surveillance has helped combat crime and terrorism, but is there ever a stopping point?

Continuing to increase surveillance and punishment cannot and will not eliminate crime; it will simply make it better planned and probably more heinous. You

can only hold people back so much before they snap.

Five years ago, Steven Spielberg released the movie "Minority Report." The movie is set in the future when criminals can be found and caught before they commit crimes. There were retina-scanning cameras in every public building and the black market of the day was known for selling human eye transplants to fool the retina scans from detecting criminals. Scary, isn't it? But is it really much of a stretch?

Is it not believable in the next ten years, airports will be installing retina scanning cameras to further prevent terrorism? Do

you think a person who committed a crime and was never caught walking by a retina-scanning camera would be arrested by the police? Is it not accurate to say when there is a demand for something, someone will find a way to supply it?

You catch the drift.

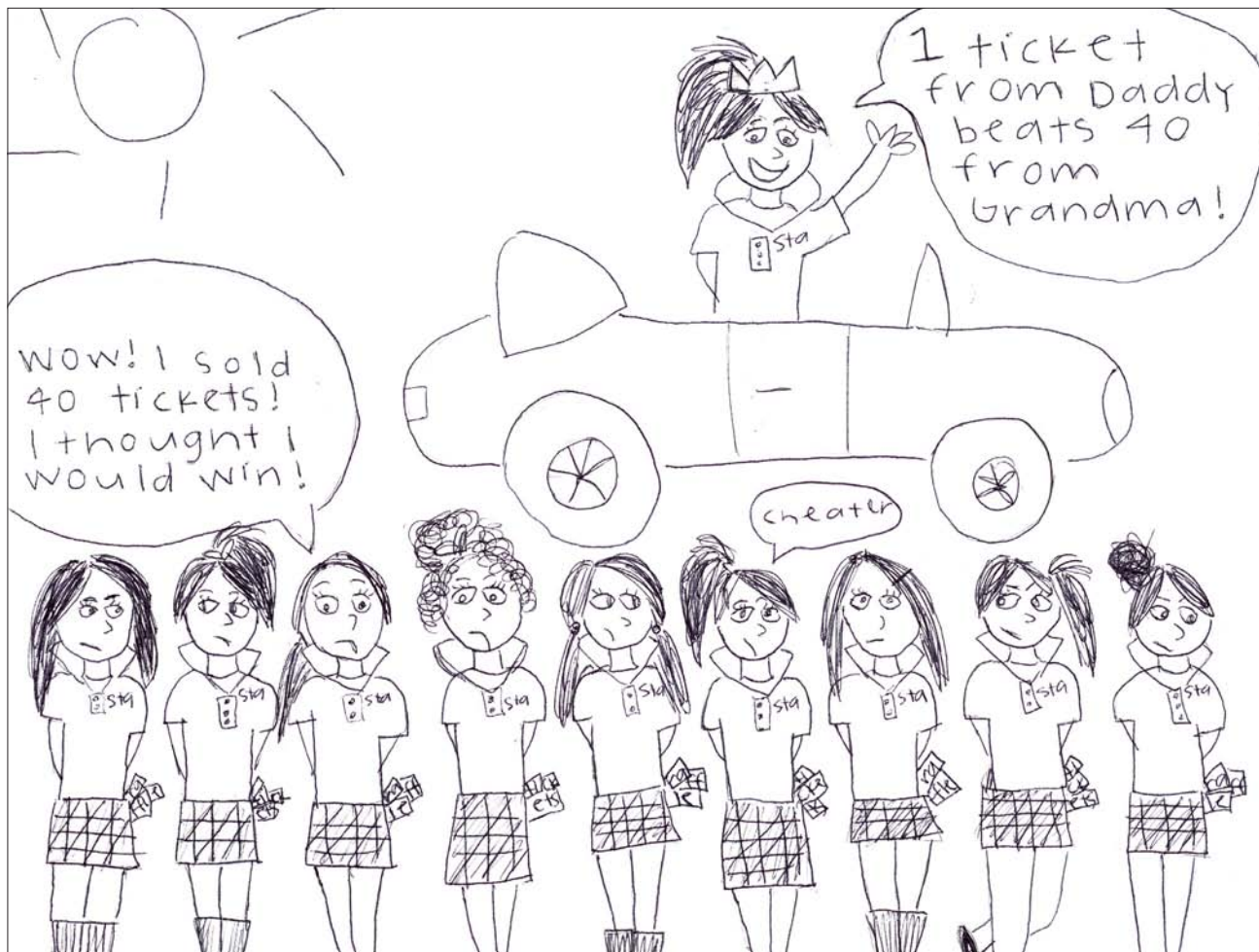
The point, my friends, is this: no one knows. There are so many questions and so many possible answers it is up to you to figure out what you believe in. Are these technological advancements for our protection or our control? The surveillance clearly suggests that people cannot be trusted, so how do we trust the *people* who have access to our information? But I suppose the most important question continues to be: *How important is individual privacy to you?* *

"Surveillance clearly shows that people cannot be trusted, so how do we trust the people who have access to our information?"

14 december 2006
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The Dart
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St. Teresa's Academy

*in brief

Christmas Tree
Christmas trees were removed from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in response to local Rabbi Elazar Bogomilsky's request that an electric menorah be added to the display. In response to the removal, Bogomilsky said, "I am devastated, shocked and appalled at the decision that the Port of Seattle came to." Once news had spread of these actions, Bogomilsky began sending hateful messages for his declaration of a so-called "war on Christmas."



CARTOON BY JOURNALISM STUDENT LANE LIVERS

Voice Off

Do you think Christmas decorations should be displayed on government property such as airports and courthouses?

84 percent said "yes"
13 percent said "no"
3 percent said "I don't know"

PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT DIRECT

14 december 2006
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*in brief

Kofi Annan
United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan made his farewell address in Independence, MO, on Tuesday. In his speech, he criticized the United States and also cautioned sacrificing its ideals to battle terrorism. Although Annan did not mention Bush or his administration specifically, he noted that he is very unhappy with current American leadership.

Humorous film should not be taken seriously

ELIZABETH NELSON



POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The recent film "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" has been called one of the funniest movies of all time. It has also been called disgusting, misrepresentative and crude. Whether it is funny or not, the fact is, people are taking it too seriously.

"Borat" is the story of a reporter named Borat Sagdiyev (Sacha Baron Cohen), from Kazakhstan who comes to the United States in order to make a documentary about America. His goal is to show his country how to become like the "greatest country in the world."

Throughout his journey, he meets Christian evangelicals, Jewish bed-and-breakfast owners, Pamela Anderson and all different sorts of characters.

What makes this film unique, however, is that it was made as if it was a real documentary. Cohen went up to random strangers and tried to get them to talk about political issues. Those who did talk to him were sometimes offended by his odd behavior and discriminatory opinions, while others showed how ignorant they were by agreeing or answering seriously. For example, when he asked a Hummer dealer how fast he would have to go to kill someone, the man actually told him an estimated speed.

Borat showed how ridiculous some Americans are, and also portrayed many stereotypes we have about each other. But it was supposed to be a funny movie and that is why people should just stop whining and laugh at it. There are obviously certain limitations on what a person can say or write, but a film that pokes fun at just about everyone and is meant to be extreme and unrealistic should not cause so much uproar.

When I saw "Borat" a couple weeks ago, there were only a few people in the theater. Including myself, there were probably about five people who laughed at everything. The woman behind me who was probably in her eighties sighed and made comments to her husband after every joke. Two African Americans in the front laughed especially loud at the jokes about Caucasians but yelled comments after a joke about their race.

It just seems interesting that people are not willing to laugh at themselves. It is pretty hypocritical if you cannot laugh at a joke that is not meant to be rude, but to show the ignorance of the speaker, about yourself.

Honestly, we all need to be a little bit more relaxed. Cohen is himself Jewish, the main group of people Borat makes rude jokes about. He had no problem making offensive comments about his religion because he wanted it to be funny, not hateful.

Instead of just laughing at others, why not laugh at ourselves, too? Life would be less tense and less intimidating. *



Photo Poll

COMPILED BY SARAH COOPER

What do you plan to do after you finish finals?



"I'll probably go out to eat at Chipotle or something...then I'll probably go home and take a nap." - Katherine Poppe, junior



"I'm going to go home and watch ol' Westerns on TV." - Dr. Joe Grantham, math teacher



"I will be going home, putting on fluffy slippers and drinking hot chocolate while watching Lifetime." - Danielle Martens, junior



"Relax and lock my backpack in my closet." - Ellie Altomare, freshman



"I plan to do nothing because I don't have to study. Also, hang out with friends and just have a good time." - Katelyn Schleicher, sophomore



"I'm going to hang out with friends and then I'm going out of town for the holidays." - Caitlin Clark, senior

STA teachers advocate math, sciences

Department leaders hope students pursue typically male-dominated fields

by NICOLE GRAVINO
Staff Writer

Women held 10 percent of all PhDs earned in mathematics in 1973. They earned four percent of all PhDs in physics and 10 percent of those in chemistry in that same year. The amount of women holding a PhD in math had increased to 28 percent by 2001. They held 16 percent of all PhDs in physics and 34 percent in chemistry in 2001. The AIP Statistical Research Center compiled these statistics for the National Center for Education Statistics.

"There is definitely still to this day a feeling among men that they are superior when it comes to math," said math teacher Arlene Herson. "To them, a woman who is good at math is the exception while men by rule are good at math."

"If girls at a school like STA don't make a difference, I don't know who will."

Arlene Herson, math teacher

Since January of 2005, when Lawrence Summers, president of Harvard University, gave a speech concerning the intellectual potential of women compared to men, the issue of equality for women in the fields of math and science has grown.

"If girls from a school like STA don't make a difference, I don't know who will," said Herson. "It is cultural. It has nothing to do with ability."

When STA hired Dr. Faith Wilson as a biology teacher in 1976, the school did not offer honors, advanced or Advanced Placement math or science classes. The required science credits for graduation



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KATHLEEN POINTER

consisted of one semester of biology. Today students are required to complete three credits of both science and math.

"When I first came to STA, there were four seniors enrolled in a math class and no physics class," said Wilson. "Today at STA, almost every senior takes a class in math and science and a much higher percentage of graduates go on to pursue a career in math or science."

STA is celebrating 140 years of tradition emphasizing the importance of a single-sex learning atmosphere and high academic standards. If ability is not holding women back in math and science, then what is?

"It's a social setting we need to work on to bring more women into science and ensure they remain in science," said Dr. Faith Wilson. "The message women get, and no one's saying this out loud, is 'I'm going to put out a lot of work and

not get anywhere'"

Herson sees students in the honors and accelerated math classes as potential math majors and so she teaches those particular classes with that idea in mind. She wishes students who do not have as much interest in math would see its importance even if they do not wish to pursue a career focused in mathematics.

"I don't want math to be a stumbling block for those who don't have as much enthusiasm for the subject," said Herson. "I don't want them to be held back by being afraid to take a math course."

Science teacher Mary Montag shares similar feelings toward students who do not wish to have a career in science.

"I hope that students see science everywhere and that even if it is not their favorite subject that they are not scared or intimidated by the subject,"

said Montag. "I try very hard to show my students the relevance of science in their everyday lives."

Montag encourages girls interested in science to pursue it throughout high school and keep after it as long as the subject interests them.

"Take as many science classes as you can while in high school," said Montag. "Talk to people who have the job you want. Most people love to talk about what they do."

Herson had one final piece of advice for the girls at STA.

"Life is not going to be all A's," said Herson. "If you are getting A's all the time it means the classes you are taking are not hard enough. I think students need to know the difference between excellence and perfection. No one is perfect, but everyone can reach excellence." *

New program hones teachers' writing skills

STA alumna co-founds Literacy Academy to improve students' writing abilities by educating their teachers

by KATE RAINEY
Copy Editor

If you want to fix a problem, go to the source.

This is the philosophy of the Greater Kansas City Writing Project (GKCWP), an organization working to improve the reading and writing skills of students in Missouri by educating their teachers.

"The Missouri Writing Project Network developed the Literacy Academies as a way for our statewide network of National Writing Project sites to better impact the professional lives of teachers across Missouri," said STA alumna and director of GKCWP Katie Kline in an e-mail interview. "The goal is to improve the reading and writing of students by providing sustained and exceptional professional development to their teachers."

When the Literacy Academies began, Kline chose English teacher Mark Fudenberg to help facilitate the Warrensburg site. Not only is Fudenberg a former teacher of hers, but he has been associated with GKCWP for many years.

"It sounded interesting to me, is the first thing," said Fudenberg. "Secondly, I feel, professionally, I've been privileged, and as a result, I feel some professional responsibility to stay involved and make available to other teachers the same opportunities I had. Thirdly...I get paid really well, \$500 a day, which, for a teacher, ain't bad."

According to the GKCWP website, the Literacy Academy is a three-year program that began last summer. Each year will focus on a different skill: the first year of the program will focus on building teachers' professional knowledge and skills, the second on improving practice and the third year on building leadership.

According to Fudenberg, each meeting focuses on extensive writing practice to develop the teachers' writing skills.

"They do a lot of writing, reinforcing the belief that teachers of writing should themselves be writers so they understand the struggle and process they're asking their students to [undertake]," said Fudenberg.

The program is meant to provide

The Write Stuff

The National Writing Project (NWP) is a nationwide, nonprofit education organization that promotes kindergarten through age 16 training programs to teach writing.

<p style="text-align: center;">NWP Stats</p> <p>The NWP has conducted 7,288 programs in 2005 in the US and abroad.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">History</p> <p>The NWP began in 1974 at the University of California, Berkeley with the creation of the Bay Area Writing Project.</p>
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GRAPHIC BY BREANNE SIGLER

teachers with methods to help their students become better writers and critical readers.

"No one deliberately sets out to bore students or not have them engaged in meaty tasks," said Fudenberg.

"It's a question of giving teachers an introduction to the philosophy, which will [give] them concrete examples of strategies that stress reading/writing connections beyond study questions in the back of the book." *

***in brief**

Fighting hunger
The government-sponsored program that provides free and price-reduced breakfasts for students in low-income families served a record 7.7 million children last school year. The program is funded by the Department of Agriculture and views providing breakfast as a method of improving academic performance.

Administration approves various finals formats

Teachers create tests to suit learned material, find variety appropriate

by KELLY NELSON
Section Editor

Tomorrow, senior Amanda Wilson will begin the three-day-long finals process each STA student endures twice a year. Since Wilson takes a variety of both honors and regular classes, she expects to encounter multiple test formats. According to STA principal of academic affairs Nancy Hand, teachers are allowed to vary their test types at their own discretion.

“Every teacher has to meet with their class during their testing time and have a test or project,” said Hand. “I support the teachers in whatever [format] they feel is best.”

English teacher Pat Dunlay believes comprehensive semester tests best suit her British and world literature classes.

“Comprehensive finals are important because I want [students] to learn the whole scope of what we’ve done so they can understand it from the first unit to the last,” she said. “I expect them to learn and remember the things we read in class for the rest of their lives. The work that you do is meant to stay with you and testing you in a cumulative way helps with that.”

History teacher Mike Egner believes a smaller unit test would suit his advanced college credit program western civilizations class better than a cumulative one.

“There’s too much material,” he said. “The way college exams are put together are less frequent and only comprehensive in blocks. I never took many comprehensive finals when I was in college.”

Wilson prefers finals similar to Egner’s, less material to study.

“I like when [teachers] give projects or unit tests,” she said. “With cumulative, you know what you have to study for it,



Cracking the books * Junior Hailey Caywood studies for her cumulative pre-calculus final at her home Dec. 12. Caywood crafted a study timeline for her finals, dedicating a block of time to review for each class. PHOTO BY BREANNE SIGLER

but it’s so hard to retain all the information you learned.”

Wilson is also a member of Dunlay’s college composition class and believes the poetry project and essay they will receive fit that particular class best. Though she finds studying for unit tests easiest, she thinks only teachers know which finals fit their classes best.

“The college composition final is about

writing, just like the class,” she said. “Pretty much all of my finals use the skills that are meant to be taught.”

According to Dunlay, tests are meant to assess the skills students have learned in a given amount of time and encourage them to gain more understanding of the course’s material.

“I’m a pretty big believer in tests,” she said. “If they’re written well, they

can really indicate what [students] have learned. It teaches kids to read better and more carefully. That’s why I do it, not to be mean.”

Like Dunlay, Hand knows holding finals is solely for the benefit of the students.

“We’re college prep, so we’re preparing students for college and that’s what happens there,” she said. *

14 december 2006
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*in brief

Text speak
New Zealand high school students will be allowed to use “text speak,” the language commonly employed by teens in Instant Messaging and text messages, in their national exams this year. New Zealand’s qualifications authority Bali Haque said credit will be given for answers that demonstrate understanding, but the abbreviations will be penalized in certain exams, including English.

Ballet burdens junior’s academic, social life

Alex Miller quits ballet after 13 years of participation, capitalizes on free time, appreciates newfound freedom

by RACHEL SCHWARTZ
Staff Writer

Junior Alex Miller had been putting on a leotard, tights and ballet shoes almost everyday since she was three. She would dance for hours at Kansas City Ballet and, some nights, be up doing homework until past midnight.

Gradually, Alex’s love of ballet faded. Due to ballet commitments, the Miller family had not been able to travel over Christmas Break since she was in third grade. Plus, Alex felt like she could rarely do anything outside of ballet, including hanging out with her friends.

“Alex came downstairs one morning and said she couldn’t do all this,” said Donita Miller, Alex’s mother. “I don’t see how I’m going to be able to do everything I need to do with school this year and still do ballet. I just don’t love it anymore, Mom.”

Now a big part of Alex’s life is missing.

“I think the main reason was that she wasn’t enjoying it much anymore because mostly she couldn’t take advantage of all the opportunities STA had to offer and she had to miss out on everything,” said Donita. “She had to say no to everything besides ballet. Ballet is kind of all or nothing.”

Alex said ballet was just not as fun anymore.



Miller

“I’d say for about two years, I hadn’t liked it as much as I used to and I just didn’t really look forward to going,” said Alex. “Participating in Kansas City Ballet puts you in a social bubble. You’re with girls from different schools, but it calls for you to make a commitment, so you have a life, but no free time. I’d been down there since I was five and spent all my time down there, weekends and nights. I was never usually able to do things Friday nights with friends.”

Junior Libby Hastert, a friend of Alex, noticed Alex never had time to go out on the weekends.

“On Friday, whenever we would always go out, she either, A, couldn’t go out because of late practices or, B, couldn’t go out until like 9:30 p.m.; so I know it affected her social life,” said Hastert.

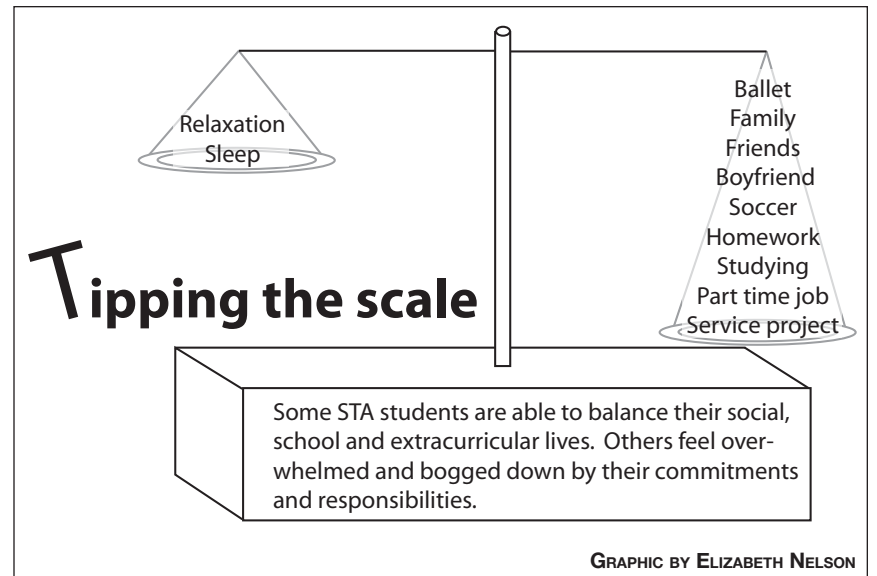
Alex went to ballet camp last summer for five to six weeks. Hastert believes this was when Alex realized she did not want to dance anymore.

“I talked to her on the phone and, when I did that, that was just like her breaking point,” said Hastert. “I didn’t really realize it at the time, but she didn’t really seem that enthusiastic. Now, she says that last summer at ballet camp, she could tell and she was probably really burnt out.”

Alex feels ballet was becoming more like a chore instead of something fun.

“I would make up excuses not to go to class...like having to do homework, when homework had never really been a problem for me,” said Alex.

Although Alex feels ballet took up a lot of her time, she does not feel like it



GRAPHIC BY ELIZABETH NELSON

affected her school work negatively. If anything, she says she spent too much time on everything.

“I found that when I did ballet, I would overdo things,” said Alex. “I was just overworking. Instead of doing way too much now, though, I just go at a moderate pace and do not do crazy amounts of stuff.”

Donita feels Alex’s ballet experiences and schedules helped her developed time management skills.

“Like any athlete, all that cramming of the homework is all worth it because you are doing something you love,” said Donita. “The ballet was incentive to get her time managed really well because she loved ballet. When she stopped loving it that much, that’s when she knew it was

time to let it go.”

Hastert believes Alex misses ballet.

“I think that once you do something for that long, you are going to miss it,” said Hastert. “I know she still liked it when she quit, but she was just kind of getting tired of it. You are missing part of your daily routine. She was looking for stuff to do because she was shocked with all the extra time she had without ballet.”

To fill this extra time, Alex works as a hostess at McCormick and Schmick’s. She enjoys her job, but was unsure at first if she should even quit ballet.

“I think my parents had told me a couple of times that I needed to start going to every class or quit ballet and get a job,”

See MILLER, page 22

Energy drinks foster caffeine addictions

Junior shares struggle with 'AMP' beverage addiction; doctors emphasize health risks, advise against intake

by CAROLINE QUINN
Staff Writer

When people think about addictions, alcohol and drug abuse may come to mind. Now there is a new addiction that has doctors and students alike worrying: energy drinks.

According to Dr. John Amick, a general practitioner at Cobblestone Family Health in Liberty, the latest arrival in the world of caffeine addiction is energy drinks. Amick says that the recent energy drink fad illustrates people's vulnerability to addiction.

"The business of addiction is a good bottom-line business," said Amick. "People are addicted to caffeine, so they're going to keep buying energy drinks."

Dr. Aaron Travis of Harrisonville Family Medicine also believes that like coffee and soda, energy drinks are addicting because of their high caffeine levels, but Travis is also concerned with the health effects of the beverages.

"The intake of energy drinks causes elevated blood pressure, elevated heart rate, usually what we call 'psycho motor stimulation,' fidgeting and tremors," said Travis.

Junior Brianna Taormina identifies with the negative effects of energy drinks because she was addicted to energy drinks last year.

"Every day before school, I had to have an energy drink," said Taormina. "At some point, I just got so used to drinking [energy drinks], like a coffee addict drinks coffee."

Energy drinks range in taste and potency, but typically contain about 80 milligrams of caffeine and 40 grams of sugar. Many energy drinks are also boosted with taurine, an amino acid found in high concentration in blood cells and muscles, and guarana, which is an extract from trees in Brazil and Venezuela that offers a fruity taste and added caffeine to beverages. According

to Amick, this combination of ingredients in energy drinks causes psychological dependency and behavioral changes.

Taormina noticed changes in her conduct when her intake of the drinks increased.

"I was more tired and I just couldn't stay focused," said Taormina. "I was a different person in general. I could actually stay awake, but I would shake all the time."

"The business of addiction is a good bottom-line business. People are addicted to caffeine, so they're going to keep buying energy drinks."

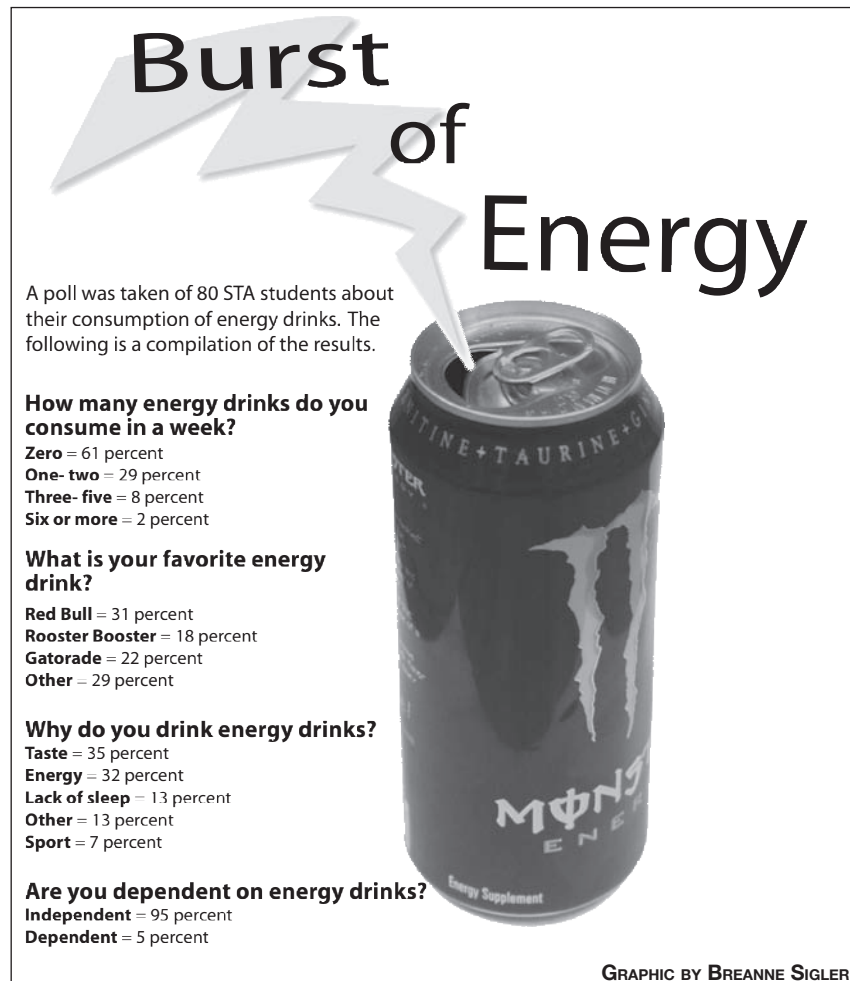
Dr. John Amick

At one point last year, Taormina estimates that she was consuming three 8-ounce cans of AMP Energy Drink daily and spending at least \$40 of her own money a month to supply her habit.

Spanish teacher and cross-country coach Karen Moran Redlich thinks that the hype over energy drinks has increased over the past few years, luring in teenagers.

"The popularity of energy drinks is increased by the media," said Moran Redlich. "There's so many television commercials and magazine ads with energy drinks showing that it looks cool."

Moran Redlich credits the popularity of energy drinks to people's desire for a quick fix when they feel tired or need a



boost. Amick says energy drink sales are booming because of America's fast-paced lifestyle.

"We are a caffeine and stimulant-run country," said Amick. "We're easily addicted. I personally have stock in Starbucks, and it's doing great."

Taormina says that she never became too concerned with her intake of energy drinks because she knew her limit and

switched to Gatorade. While she feels that energy drink intakes can be easily controlled, she says that the beverages are a growing issue among young people.

"I do feel that energy drinks are a problem," said Taormina. "When people are drinking 16 a day to get the giant rush, there's something wrong with that." *

Cooking up a HAPPY HOLIDAY

Prentiss' Super Easy and Positively Scrumptious Peanut Butter Balls

"These are awesome! It's one of my favorite recipes ever. They are peanut butter balls with powdered sugar and Rice Krispies dipped in chocolate and butterscotch goodness." ~drama teacher Shana Prentiss

Ingredients

2 cups smooth peanut butter
 ½ cup butter
 4 cups powdered sugar
 3 cups Rice Krispies
 1 cup butterscotch chips
 1 cup chocolate chips

In a saucepan, melt peanut butter and butter on medium low heat. Be careful not to burn the peanut butter. In a large bowl, combine the powdered sugar and Rice Krispies. Pour the melted peanut butter mixture over the cereal. Here's the fun part (my kids love this). With clean hands, dig in and mix the cereal and peanut butter together (be careful, the peanut butter is hot!). Form the mixture into one-half inch balls and place on a cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Chill in the refrigerator for one hour or until firm.

Once the peanut butter balls are firm, melt the butterscotch and chocolate chips together on low heat. Dip the peanut butter ball half way into the chocolate mixture and place on the waxed paper to set. Chill in the refrigerator until firm.

Ms. Gargallo's Escudella Soup (a typical Catalan Winter dish)

"My family has always eaten this on Christmas when my mother used to make it. People have been eating it in Spain for hundreds of years. Farmers eat it in the winter because it is a complete meal with different food groups. These ingredients vary, people in Spain put in whatever they have available." ~Spanish teacher Julia Gargallo

Ingredients

Salt (to taste)
 1 cup white beans
 1 cup garbanzos
 ½ pound of cooked ground meat
 1 cooked sausage chopped up
 Garlic
 1 celery stalk chopped
 4 carrots chopped
 1 package of noodles (I use angel hair pasta because my daughter doesn't like big noodles but you can use whatever kind you want)
 ½ of an onion

Boil everything in water (except the noodles) for 90 minutes and then add the noodles until they are cooked. It takes about two hours to prepare.

Girardeau's Almond Crescents

"We make these every year around Christmas because we used to go to cookie parties and I would make them to bring, so they just sort of stuck. Plus they are scrumptious." ~Junior Hannah Girardeau

Ingredients

1 cup of sifted powdered sugar
 1 cup of butter
 2 tsp. of vanilla extract
 1 tsp. of cinnamon
 1 cup of blanched almonds
 2 cups of flour

Mix together powdered sugar and butter in a bowl until blended. Add vanilla and cinnamon and blanched almonds and mix until evenly distributed. Knead flour in by hand and chill dough in the refrigerator for 20 minutes. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Take teaspoon sized balls of dough and form into a crescent shape (but make sure it is still puffy). Bake on a greased cookie sheet or parchment paper for about 15 minutes or until they are lightly brown.

Once cooked, cool the crescents until they are slightly warm and roll in powdered sugar. It is important to do this when the cookies are still warm or else the sugar won't stick, but if they are too hot it will become all gooey; it is sort of a touchy cookie.

COMPILED BY ANNE TAMPKE

14 december 2006

*
The Dart
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St. Teresa's Academy

*in brief

Bird flu
 Nations donated \$475 million to combat the H5N1 strain of bird flu in response to the United Nations' request for funds Friday, according to the Associated Press. The United States was among top donors and contributed \$100 million. Officials say effectively fighting the disease would require a minimum of \$500 million and had hoped for \$1 billion.

14 december 2006 • The Dart • St. Teresa's Academy

The Top 10 Most Influential Women

10 Sister Harriet's Humanity
Old age does not sideline this CSJ in teaching arena

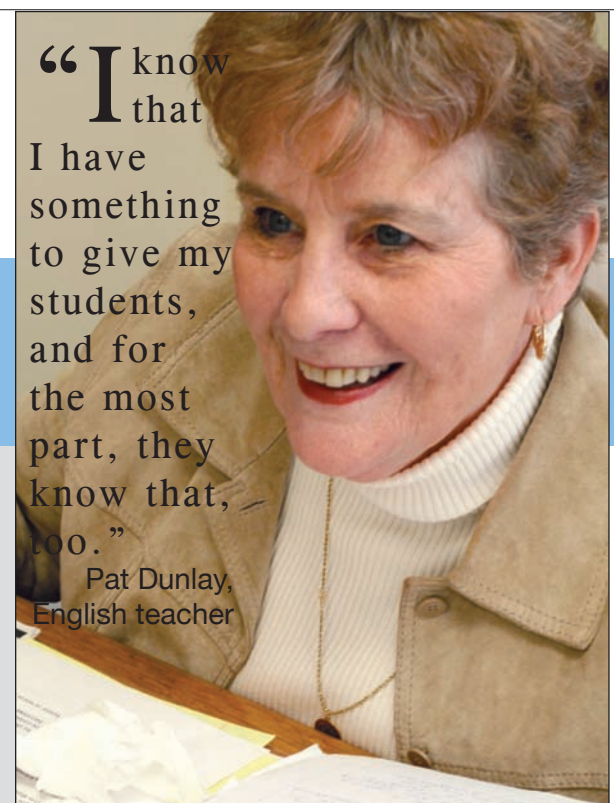


“You can't argue that I am not fair.”
Sister Harriet, Former chemistry teacher

“You know that we are supposed to be in uniform?” Sister Harriet Koutsoumpas’s soft voice echoed through the English Resource Center, reminding a sophomore of the school rules. Part of Sister Harriet’s job is to enforce school policy. “I may seem like a grouch because I insist on following the rules, but at least I am mean to everybody,” said Sister Harriet. “You can’t argue that I am not fair. What’s the rule for one person is the rule for all. And I think you girls appreciate the consistency.” Sister Harriet was forced to retire from teaching in 2000, when her speech became infected with Bell’s Palsy, a nerve-damaging virus. But the school allowed her to stay on and help where she could at her “home away from home.” Even though she no longer teaches in the formal sense, students still consider her influential, voting her as the tenth most influential woman at STA. “I was probably voted as [one of the top ten most] influential [women at STA] because I came with the building,” joked Sister Harriet. “I have been here so long, and I am one of the few sisters left here, trying to carry on the mission of the CSJs.” During her 20-year reign as chemistry teacher—she also taught math, religion and physics for a time—Sister Harriet had many expectations. “I was such a strict teacher and very demanding of my students,” said Sister Harriet. “I hated having to put up with mediocrity.” However, she held that same rule of always

See Sister Harriet, page 23

7 Dunlay's Dynamic
English teacher prompts students to interact with literature



“I know that I have something to give my students, and for the most part, they know that, too.”
Pat Dunlay, English teacher

In class, English teacher Pat Dunlay jokes that her students are “getting their moneys’ worth” with her as their teacher. She is not afraid to admit that she has an effect on the STA community. “I know that I influence my students because they listen to me,” she said. “At first, they might be slightly timid, but by the end of the year, everybody loves everybody. Okay, I might be exaggerating, but they certainly do open up.” Dunlay continues to joke that she was voted the seventh most influential woman at STA because of “longevity.” “I have lived a long time,” she said. Dunlay has worked at STA for 18 years, leaving behind a significant legacy. “The first thing that comes to mind [in defining the word influential] is remembered; if people remember what you said and what you did, and if they act on those sentiments,” she said. Dunlay said that when past students revisit her, she realizes how influential she can be. “I have heard back from many of my students about how I affected them,” she said. “And some of the things that they tell me influenced them the most, I hardly remember.” Dunlay said that she has a “direct” influence; the skills that she teaches are skills that students use immediately. “I know that I have something to give my students, and for the most part, they know that, too,” she said. “Students, especially seniors, sign up for my classes because they want to work hard.” When Dunlay sets out with her lesson plan,

See Dunlay, page 23

Pat Dunlay
Years at STA: 18
Position: English teacher
Why I think Ms. Dunlay is influential: As a teacher, she is empowering, respectful, tough, yet devoted to her students. ~ sophomore Kate Duffey

9 Joan and Terri's Talents
Development office team drives school finances



“We respect the other for her talent.”
Joan Jordan, Development Office

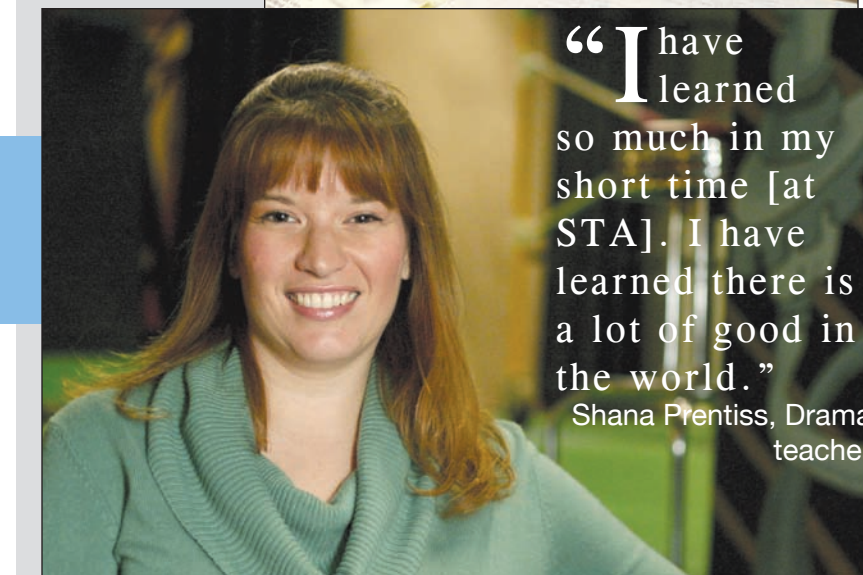
Joan Jordan and Terri Egelhoff
Years at STA: 20, 20
Position: Development Officers, plan the auction, TNT, the golf tournament, alumnae reunions, Grandmother's Tea, awards night dinner, plant sale, help organize the Father-Daughter Dance and the Mother-Daughter Luncheon, scholarships ~

Why I think “Joan and Terri” are influential: Because of their remarkable fund raising efforts. ~ Ms. Barb Haden, senior Tracy Haden's mother

“Well, if we have been influential, I think it is because of our relationship with the students, and also, hopefully, I've set a good example,” said Ms. Joan Jordan of the Development Office. “I know that I have set a good example,” reports Jordan's colleague, Ms. Terri Egelhoff, who is also a graduate of the class of 1961. Jordan and Egelhoff have been finishing each other's sentence in the Development Office for the past 20 years, but they have been friends for at least ten more. “We respect the other for her talent,” Jordan said. “And when one of us leaves STA, we both will have to leave because neither of us knows what the other does,” said Egelhoff in reply. The two women have formed such a bond in their time spent working on what they call “projects,” school-sponsored events such as the auction and the father-daughter dance, that they have been given the nicknames Toan and Jerri. “That all started when one student got tongue-tied,” said Toan. *I mean Jerri. I mean Joan.* “But we have some better nicknames,” said Egelhoff. “One year, all the male volunteers decided to call me Attila...” “Because she was a mean leader,” Jordan finished her sentence. “And another year, they called me the Little General.” “And me the Warden,” said Egelhoff. With these two personalities as its driving force, the Development Office is flooded with people and activity.

See Joan and Terri, page 23

6 Prentiss's Performance
Drama teacher steps into the spotlight



“I have learned so much in my short time [at STA]. I have learned there is a lot of good in the world.”
Shana Prentiss, Drama teacher

Drama teacher Shana Prentiss glides confidently into silent study with a huge grin across her face. Her clothes—a coral pink dress with a large graphic print, polished white cardigan and chocolate suede boots—match her personality. She has a coffee mug in hand, but her cheery smile reveals that the caffeine has already kicked in. Some might say that Prentiss is in a particularly good mood for mods 1-2 on a Thursday morning, but she says that she is simply “happy to be at St. Teresa's.” “I have learned so much in my short time here,” she said. “I have learned that there is a lot of good in the world. We hear all these horrible stories on the news, but then I come into this community and see the people that I get to work with and the students that I get to interact with and I realize that it doesn't have to be that bad. There are people here that can make a difference, and we are surrounded by them everyday.” Perhaps out of humility, Prentiss doesn't describe herself as one of those people. “I wouldn't necessarily define myself as powerful,” she said. “Someone that is powerful has a lot of authority and is in a position of control. I don't need to be in that position.” Yet, Prentiss was voted as the sixth most influential woman at STA, most likely because of her relaxed approach toward students. “I think that students are comfortable with me because I am a confident woman,” she said. “I

See Prentiss, page 23

Shana Prentiss
Years at STA: 6
Position: Drama teacher, Drama Club moderator, directs two productions each year
Why Ms. Prentiss is influential: She has a sometimes strange sense of humor and can always cheer me up. ~ Katie Burns-Yocum

STORIES BY ALISON RAYBOULD
PHOTOS BY KATHLEEN POINTER

8 Dolan's Dedication
English teacher devotes herself to students



“I cannot help but apply my personality to everything I do.”
Katie Dolan, English teacher

Katie Dolan
Years at STA: 8
Position: English teacher, Spirit Club moderator
Why I think Ms. Dolan is influential: “My inspiration at St. Teresa's would have to be Ms. Dolan. Over the years she has guided me in many ways with her bubbly personality. St. Teresa's would definitely not be the same without her.” ~ junior Britney Scott

During a free Dec. 4, two seniors march up to Ms. Katie Dolan's desk and ask her for the latest news on her love life. Dolan chuckles, but she does not shy away from their prying questions, answering them directly. Then, a junior pipes in and with one comment, she reverses the role between teacher and student, advising Dolan, “Don't settle.” Dolan, now clutching her delicate, silver Kairos cross, accepts the advice with a smile and more laughter. She views the junior's two cents as more than just relationship advice; she sees their conversation as a learning opportunity. “I never want to miss an out on opportunity to learn something from someone because each person you encounter has something special, a new and original perspective,” said Dolan. During her past eight years at STA, Dolan admits to feeling more influenced than influential. “I don't think of myself as one of the most influential women here because I am surrounded by so many dynamic women in this community,” said Dolan. “But having that mind set makes me more aware of how I can be influenced and what I can learn from the people here at St. Teresa's.” However, Dolan was voted by students, faculty, alumnae and teachers in a poll for *The Dart* as the eighth most influential woman at STA. She attributes this vote to be a reflection of her character. “I cannot help but apply my personality to everything that I do,” said Dolan. “I would like to think that I am open-minded, optimistic, compassionate and goofy. I'm sarcastic, which is something I need to work on. And I am very faithful both in terms of my Catholic faith and in terms of people. I'm loyal to people, to Diet Coke and

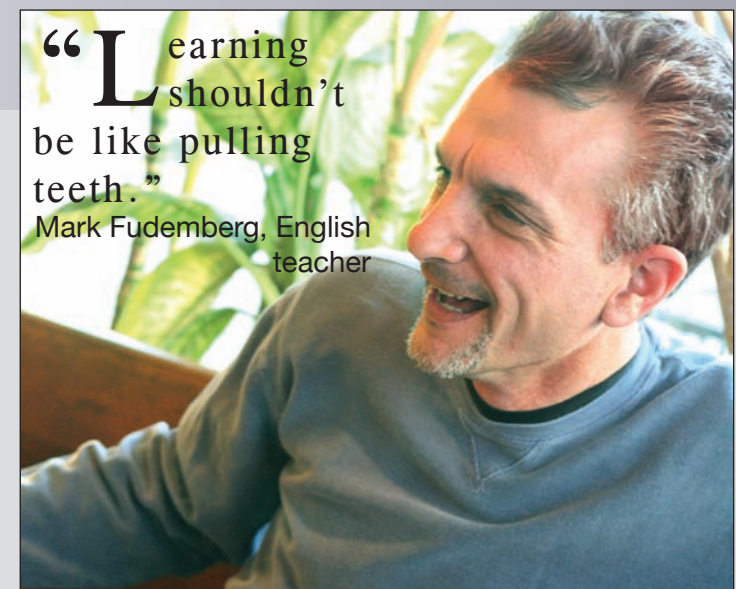
See Dolan, page 23

Fud's Following
Students vote teacher most influential male

Fudenberg approaches teaching in the same relaxed manner with the hope that his students will feel like learning can be fun. “[Learning] shouldn't be like pulling teeth,” he said. “To be fair, literature lends itself to enjoyment. It's hard to crack jokes about the periodic table.” In fact, he believes that sometimes a dose of humor is necessary to revive the life of his classroom. “The reality is that on any given day you might be coming to my room after a grueling chem. lab or algebra test,” he said. “There is something healthy about taking five minutes to goof around. Some might see that as not being ‘time on task’ or a waste of time, but I think that it can really refocus a class.” Fudenberg also invites students into his classroom by creating a welcoming environment. Senior Carina Murphy appreciates the “unorganized mess” of scattered desks, which she says adds to “the room's overall Feng Shui.” Copies of *The Scarlet Letter*, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* litter his desk, which at this moment is organized for Fudenberg. The walls are lined with black and white posters of musical legends, including Miles Davis, Bob Dylan and Dave Brubeck. “It's kind of like a little living room,” he said. “I just put the stuff that I love in there.” STA originally hired Fudenberg for one semester, fulfilling the gap of a teacher on maternity leave. But one semester turned into 24 years, and now, he has been voted as the most influential male at STA, partly as a result of the tempo in his classroom.

See Fudenberg, page 23

Mark Fudenberg
Years at STA: 24
Position: English teacher, organizes Unitown, Indie Film Club.
Why I think Mr. Fud is influential: He makes students think for themselves and strive for uniqueness. ~ freshman Mollie Pointer



“Learning shouldn't be like pulling teeth.”
Mark Fudenberg, English teacher

SEESAW SEASON

Record teeters with defeat at home; coach hopes practice will benefit team

by ALLISON POINTER
Staff Writer

The clock ticks its last seconds and the loud buzzer echoes throughout the gymnasium. Along the sidelines, head coach Rich Wilson looks at the final score, 65 to 41. Though the Columbia Hickman Kewpies won, Wilson acknowledged them as a talented team.

"[The Kewpies] are probably the best team in the state, I think," said Wilson.

The STA varsity basketball team competed in the McDonald's Blue Springs Girls Division Tournament Dec. 5. Their opponents defeated the Stars by 24 points, but according to Wilson, he believes his team will be better equipped at their next match.

"We get to play them again in the end of December," he said. "I'm sure the outcome will be much better."

After the first half, the Stars had scored a total of 16 points and by the second half, they scored 25 more.

"We didn't play like we were capable
See BASKETBALL, page 22

game line

HOME GAME, DEC. 11
STA...42

St. Joseph Benton...54

HIGH SCORER:
Abby Duethman...12

LEADING REBOUNDER:
Paige Kuhlmann...5

MOST ASSISTS:
Megan Konz...5
Alexandra Kurth...5



On the ball * Senior Leia Darden guards Benton High School's Alicia Bell during the Monday night home game. The Stars lost 54-42. Coach Rich Wilson believes the Stars will only continue to improve as the season goes on. **PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS**

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*in brief

Cousins Commended
The *Kansas City Star* recently named junior Ellen Jantsch and senior Michelle Jantsch as first team All-State for Missouri Class 4 volleyball. Following the defeat of St. Joseph's Academy in the state championship, Michelle was awarded the 2006 Evelyn Gates Award, given to the best player in the Kansas City area. She also signed a letter of intent to play at the University of Ohio. Ellen has already committed to play soccer at Notre Dame University.



Taking the lead * Senior Kelli Hansen teaches sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders during the dance team junior clinic Dec. 9 in Goppert Center. The junior dancers performed on Monday before the varsity basketball game. **PHOTO BY LIBBY CONWELL**

Dance team holds junior clinic, raises funds for Nationals

Members of team spend Saturday teaching young girls routine, showcase performance before basketball game

by RACHEL SCHWARTZ
Staff Writer

Girls in black and gold uniforms, intermingled with younger preteens, sat in a circle on the gym floor. "Down by the banks..." rang throughout the gym as they waited for the dancing to begin. More preteens piled into the gym with smiles on their faces as they joined the circle.

This was the beginning of the dance team Junior Clinic held last Saturday. Dance team member Kyle Houghland said the clinic is put on to raise money for the dance team.

"It's a really good fundraiser for us since dance team is a performance sport, there are lots of things we need, like rhinestones, traveling costs, costumes, stuff like that," said Houghland. "This year, we are going to Nationals in Orlando, Fla. and, I mean, think about how much it costs to go to Florida...that's a lot of money. [We] have to do a lot of fundraising."

The fundraiser is not just an opportunity for the team to raise money. It is also an opportunity for kids in kindergarten through eighth-grade to come and dance. However, Houghland said not all of the kids who come are dancers.

"Being on dance team, I feel like we are really good role models for younger kids," said Houghland. "A lot of kids aren't dancers, so they don't just come to clinic to get dance experience. They come to have good role models."

Among those who came was third-grader Caroline Embree, dance team member junior Katie Embree's sister. Katie said she enjoyed having her sister there.

"She's gone to all of our clinics previously that she could go to," said Katie. "It

was fun because I wouldn't always be her teacher, so I could walk around and watch her learning. It's just fun to watch kids that I know."

The dance team did a lot to prepare for the clinic.

"First, we get music and choreographing," said Houghland. "Then, the captains and coaches and parents do a lot behind scenes stuff to get the clinic out there, like flyers and such."

Houghland and Katie also said the hard work was worth it.

"My favorite part was watching the girls have fun and dance because it's just fun when you teach someone something and they really understand it and they get the most out of it," said Katie.

The kids were also able to talk to some of the Chiefs' cheerleaders, get their makeup done, decorate ornaments and eat pizza.

"We tried to teach [the girls] about work ethic and technique and how to treat team members," said Embree. "Since Catherine is a Chiefs' cheerleader, she called some of her fellow cheerleaders and they came to talk about that."

Caroline liked talking to the cheerleaders and the signed poster they gave her, but she had a long list of enjoyable moments.

"My favorite part was probably getting my makeup done," said Caroline. "And probably I have another favorite part for later...pizza. And another one, doing my dance."

After a full day, the girls showed off what they had learned to their gathering parents. They performed the dance they had been practicing the whole day. This dance was not only performed for their parents, but also in between the JV and Varsity basketball games Monday. *

Duo teams up to serve community

Sophomores volunteer with tennis foundation, provide children support

by CAROLINE QUINN
Staff Writer

Mentors Jenny McLiney and JoEllen Redlingshafer grabbed their coats and headed toward their cars after a day full of tennis instruction and tutoring. They noticed 10-year-old Emerson, a girl whose illuminating smile, chubby cheeks and colorful hairclips made her stand out in the program, coming near them in the parking lot. The girl approached nervously and mentioned her birthday would be next week. Smiling timidly, she handed a slumber party invitation to McLiney and Redlingshafer, both freshmen at the time.

"[Emerson] is so cute because she would give me the hugest hugs," said Redlingshafer. "I thought it was just adorable how she invited Jenny and me to her birthday party."

According to McLiney and Redlingshafer, this moment with Emerson is only one of many memorable experiences gained while volunteering at the Stephanie Waterman Foundation during the last school year and summer.

Ms. Jennifer Waterman established the foundation in 1987 in memory of her daughter Stephanie, who died while attending school and working in French West Africa in 1985. The purpose of the program is to provide disadvantaged children the chance of a better life through tennis instruction, tutoring and mentoring in all aspects of life. Stephanie's love of tennis and devotion to aiding others inspired Waterman to create the program.

Waterman believes McLiney and Redlingshafer have contributed greatly to the success of the program.

"Jenny and JoEllen have helped in the most important way," said Waterman. "One thing that really helps the program is their individual instruction. Tennis is a very difficult game, and they seem to love it. The girls are great at it."

McLiney appreciates volunteering in the program because the children, ranging in ages seven to 18, have great senses of humor.

"The kids are so hilarious," said McLiney. "They are just the funniest kids ever. I love them. They're always dancing and stuff, and it's just great."

Redlingshafer particularly enjoys the annual holiday parties put on by the foundation. During the parties, volunteers meet with the children to enjoy indoor activities like board games, flashcards and reading games. The children then take buses to the Plaza to take carriage rides and view the festive decorations. Finally, the volunteers distribute gifts to each child.

"I know this sounds cheesy, but it feels really good to give them [presents]," said Redlingshafer. "I like it because I know that they don't get things very often."

Waterman said McLiney's charisma and authenticity draw the children toward her.

"Oh, Jenny with her constant smile," said Waterman. "She never gets irritated with the children. The biggest part of the mentoring is interacting with the children. Jenny obviously likes what she's doing, and the children just love her because they know she means what she says."

Waterman believes Redlingshafer's ability to work with the children makes her a perfect fit for the program.

"I think that wonderful smile and those loud greetings are unique to JoEllen," said Waterman. "She always remembers names and she is a good teacher. To be able to love the children and to discipline them at the same time and follow directions is not easy."

Despite the many laughs McLiney and Redlingshafer remember about their sum-



Friendly faces * Sophomores Jenny McLiney, left, and JoEllen Redlingshafer talk with girls at the Westport Community Center while they help out with a group tennis lesson Thursday. They volunteered on a regular basis this summer. PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS



Lending a hand * Redlingshafer demonstrates the fundamentals of tennis for participant Naiama, at the Westport Community Center. The kids were instructed to count how many times they could bounce the tennis ball on the racket. PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS



Fun and games * McLiney demonstrates the proper techniques of ball control in front of three boys at the Westport Community Center Thursday. Senior Maggie Burke and sister Caitlin Burke were also there to volunteer. PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS

mer days volunteering at the Stephanie Waterman Foundation, the two volunteers recall most of all how their experiences with the program have changed who they are as individuals.

"I see how poor the kids are, how they can't afford much and how they get so excited about a piece of candy and it just makes me so much more appreciative," said McLiney. "I know that I have become a big part of [the children's] lives and when they think back about how they began playing tennis, they'll think of me. Sometimes I get so tired of tennis and I want to quit, but then I think about how much they appreciate me, and so I keep doing it."

Like McLiney, Redlingshafer believes the children's enthusiasm and gratefulness of the smallest things have made her a more thankful person.

"I just love seeing [the children] happy," said Redlingshafer. "When they say

'tennis is my favorite sport' and I see siblings playing together, it just makes me happy. It makes me appreciate my family, tennis coaches and how I can afford school and tennis. It's nice to be able to give something back by helping them."

According to Waterman, this enthusiasm demonstrates the unique characteristic of McLiney and Redlingshafer.

"These girls have not been in contact with disadvantaged children for the most part," said Waterman. "But they jump right in there anyway. Jenny and JoEllen love [the children] and treat them just like any other child."

Back in the parking lot, McLiney and Redlingshafer stalled for a bit, wondering how they could gently decline Emerson's invitation. But at the sound of a mumbled "sorry, Emerson," the little girl wrapped her arms around the two mentors, who she likes to call her best friends. *

Just a side note

Quick Facts about The Waterman Foundation

- According to the website, "The purpose of our program is to provide disadvantaged children the chance of a better future."
- Named after Stephanie Waterman after she passed away in 1985 because of her passions for tennis and helping others.
- More information can be found at: <http://www.watermantennis.org/>

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*in brief

Gifted Golfer
The Kansas City Star awarded senior Mary Kate Bird, All-Metro golfer of the year following her first place finish at State with a record score of 69. Bird, who plans to play at the University of Nebraska next year, was selected from the four area golfers named First Team All-Metro. The Star based their decisions on the opinions of the high school sports staff as well as the ballots from area coaches.

Athletes work hard, watch from sideline

Practice does not always make perfect for those excluded from the line up

by MADDY MCGANNON
Staff Writer

Junior Tess Palmer laces up her tennis shoes and straps on her knee brace at the beginning of volleyball practice. She finishes her warm-up jog next to junior Erin Vogel. During a drill later in practice, Vogel goes up for a hit, making coach Lori Hanaway duck behind the volleyball rack. On the other side of the gym, Palmer fights through her knee pain as she dives to dig Mary Jantsch's hit.

They both push themselves, with the upcoming Sion game in mind. While Vogel prepares to play almost every minute of each match, Palmer plans on watching the varsity game from the bench.

Palmer started on junior-varsity this year and suited up for varsity, backing up Vogel. However, Palmer is not alone on this one. Many athletes at STA serve the position of a backup.

"It's frustrating sitting on the bench during a [varsity] game," said Palmer. "I knew I wasn't going to get to play, so I was there for support."

Some athletes would agree that the greatest rewards to playing a sport are the games and tournaments. However, Palmer said being a part of a state-winning team was enough. She was able to be a leader on JV, and at the same time look up to the players on varsity.

"I've been on JV since my freshman



Benchwarmers * Junior Sarah Luecke stands to the side of the rest of the dance team in the dance studio Dec. 6. Luecke is an alternate and does not always get to perform. "It's actually more challenging," said Luecke. "I have to learn four parts of the dance instead of just one." PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS

year," said Palmer. "I remember the juniors when I was a freshman and how much I looked up to them on and off the court. I wanted to set a good example for the under-classesmen."

Palmer strives to play out two roles. During varsity games, she not only cheers on the bench, but also provides a laugh when everyone is nervous for a big game.

On JV, she encourages her teammates by talking to them about being intense during practice.

"I want the [JV players] to look up to me as a player," said Palmer. "I try to set a good example so they will push themselves in practice."

Palmer said the season consists of
See BACKUP, page 22

★Scoreboard★

Varsity Basketball (2-4)

Nov. 27	Lee's Summit North *	W (49-37)
Dec. 2	Hickman Mills *	L (40-69)
Dec. 4	Columbia Hickman @	L (65-41)
Dec. 7	St. Pius X @	W (53-49)
Dec. 8	Blue Springs South @	L (49-55)
Dec. 11	St. Joseph Benton	L (42-54)

* Denotes Lee's Summit North Tournament
@ Denotes Blue Springs Tournament

JV Basketball (2-3)

Nov. 27	Lee's Summit North *	L (46-63)
Dec. 2	Hickman Mills *	W (44-38)
Dec. 4	Blue Springs South @	L (29-55)
Dec. 7	Liberty @	W (38-25)
Dec. 11	St. Joseph Benton	L (40-45)

* Denotes Lee's Summit West Tournament
@ Denotes Blue Springs South Tournament

Freshman Basketball "A" (3-2)

Nov. 28	Blue Springs	L (28-32)
Dec. 2	Bishop Miege	W (34-27)
Dec. 7	Blue Valley Northwest	W (33-30)
Dec. 9	Shawnee Mission East	L (23-34)
Dec. 11	St. Joseph Benton	W (44-14)

Freshman Basketball "B" (1-2)

Nov. 28	Blue Springs	W (32-30)
Dec. 7	Blue Valley Northwest	L (30-37)
Dec. 9	Shawnee Mission East	W (42-34)

Friday practices discourage swimmers

New swim coach adds extra practice, loses members of swim team

by LINNY KAUFMAN
Staff Writer

Tiring Friday night practices discouraged many athletes from rejoining the swim team. The STA swim coach Kim Koenig said the practices are a sacrifice swimmers should be willing to make, and if they don't like it, "tough nuts."

From last year's swim team of 32 athletes, four went to State in the relay and backstroke. Sophomore Ellie Mullane was part of that relay team and is swimming for STA again this year. She said she sees a significant decline in participation from last year to this year.

"Not enough people went out for the team this year to even have cuts," said Mullane. "A lot of people that swam last year didn't this year. I think a big reason is because of the new Friday practices."

Koenig said many swimmers who came to the informational meeting did not show up for the first day of practice. It was obvious to her that they did not like the idea of Friday practices, which last from 6-8 p.m. Koenig said since she wanted a maximum of 35 swimmers on the team and only 26 tried out, the team had no cuts this year. She said Friday practices are a sacrifice athletes should be willing to make.

"The girls do not like practices on Friday nights, but I just tell them 'tough nuts,'" said Koenig. "That's a sacrifice we make for the sport of swimming. Being committed is part of being an athlete. If you love the sport and you can excel at it, then you make that sacrifice."

Sophomore Maddie Effertz was on the JV swim team last year. The extra practice discouraged her from rejoining the team.

"I didn't want to swim again this year because there are too many practices," said Effertz. "I also didn't want to have



Nightswimming * New STA swim team coach Kim Koenig looks on as her swimmers complete time trials at Shawnee Mission East High School Dec. 4. She made the decision to increase the workload by adding a Friday night practice. PHOTO BY SARAH COOPER

to practice on Friday nights."

Mullane would rather not practice on Friday night, she still manages to see her friends after practice.

"The Friday practices are sometimes kind of bothersome," said Mullane. "But when practice ends, I'll usually just go meet my friends to hang out right after."

Koenig agrees swimmers should have enough time to see their friends after practice.

"They absolutely have time to go out after practice," said Koenig. "It ends at eight, which means they're out with friends by nine and can probably be home in time to make curfew."

The team practices Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday each week. Mullane believes her new coaches, Koenig and Ms. Miranda Spini, are trying to challenge the team.

"The new coach is a lot tougher," said Mullane. "I think she wants the team to get better and that's why she's adding more practices. Last year we only had three, but she added another so the team can improve."

Effertz also thinks this year's coach is tougher than last year's.

"They got a stricter coach this year," said Effertz. "She thought they could practice more to get better. They prob-

ably will [improve] because they practice more often and they practice harder than we did last year."

Koenig, who hopes to take one relay team and two individuals to State this year, chose to add the Friday practice because she wanted the girls to have an extra day to workout. Friday was the only other day they could use the pool. She agrees her practices are difficult and said the Friday night practices are not an exception.

"The practices are tough," said Koenig. "They swim around two miles in an evening; they are tough workouts and I'm very proud of the girls. Even though

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Arena Attracts

According to North Carolina's *Charlotte Observer*, Kansas City may become the home of the Charlotte Sting, a WNBA franchise.

With the Sprint Center's impending completion next fall, much speculation has been focused on the revenue and sports teams that could possibly join Kansas City. The Big 12 basketball tournament has already been promised to the coming arena.

Exhibition room

The exhibition room, in the front hall of the Donnelly Building displays student artwork throughout the school year.

senior Kate O'Flaherty

The Fibers class was given three yards of fabric to dye and sew in any way they chose.

O'Flaherty dyed her fabric using a low water immersion dyeing process and a thermascreen, similar to a silk screen. She used the dyed fabric to make a purse.



Junior Amy O'Connor

The Ceramics I class was given an assignment to build a 10-inch vessel that was capable of holding water. The only restriction was that it must be built with either coils or slabs of clay.

O'Connor coil-built her vase. Later, she coated it in white glaze and decorated it with a cobalt carbonate wash.

sophomore Molly Fakoury



The Advanced Drawing class was given the assignment of drawing an assortment of items that sit on top of a set of cabinets in the art room. They were to use conté crayons and to create their own color schemes.

PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH NELSON
GRAPHIC BY KATIE MEYERS

Ballet production keeps students on their toes

Dancers try to balance commitment with school, rehearsals, friends

by ALY BROWNEE
Web Editor

As a child, freshman Lauren Christensen watched a ballerina dance across her TV screen and knew that was what she wanted to do.

"I saw a ballerina, and I knew I wanted to be that way," she said. "I was so excited to watch, and I thought the dance was beautiful."

"The Nutcracker" runs from Dec. 2-27, with 20 performances. For the first time in 16 years, the production has returned to the Music Hall downtown, from the Midland Theater.

Christensen has spent three years taking lessons at the Kansas City Ballet School and is a cast member in the 34th annual production of "The Nutcracker."

"Auditions are open to anyone who's enrolled in the school," she said. "And depending on what level you are, and what height, you can audition for certain roles specifically."

Though this is Christensen's 11th year dancing ballet, she has only been in the production for five years.

"Each year, I've had a different part," she said. "It can get kind of nerve-racking because I have to learn a different dance every year. This is my first year getting to dance on pointe, though, and it's a big deal. I'm nervous to see how it goes."

"They train a lifetime for these roles."

Ms. Ellen McDonald, media relations director

Early in October, planning gets started in the school, with 202 students becoming involved in the production, and two full casts from the professional Kansas City Ballet Company.

"Everything works like a well-oiled machine," said Ms. Ellen McDonald, media relations director for the school. "They have three casts of students and weekend rehearsals so [the production] will not interfere with school. Everyone knows where they need to be."

McDonald realizes the production is a

big commitment.

"People give up a lot to be a part of this production," said McDonald. "It's a historic piece, and we don't make very many changes to it because it's very old."

Sophomore Elizabeth Meyers agrees, saying the commitment to the show is difficult to work around school and friends.

"Students have the most pressure," she said. "Most teachers understand, but it's still hard to make up the days you miss class for performances. I get really excited, but I can't always do stuff with friends. But, I love doing the shows. It's worth it."

Meyers has been taking ballet for ten years, and this is her fifth year in the production. She says that the younger students are more nervous about their roles, but as they get older and become more involved with the company members, they calm down.

"Backstage, everyone's doing costume changes and hair and makeup, and things get hectic," said Meyers. "There are a lot of quick changes, and a lot going on at the same time."

The students in the play range from ages 6 to 18, and many of them have been dancing since they were young.

"These dancers excel at what they do," said McDonald. "They train a lifetime for these roles." *



Staying on point * STA Freshmen Angelique Short, left, and Lauren Christensen dance in their morning warm-up class before their Nutcracker performances Nov. 9. On that day, Short and Christensen both had to perform at 2 and 7 p.m. and dance the part of a mirlinton. PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE

*in brief

Dancing daddies
KCYA is offering a special father-daughter dance class where STA students and their dads can prepare for the Father-Daughter Dinner Dance, Feb. 11. The classes are Tuesday evenings from 6-6:30 p.m. and cost \$100 per pair.

It's the Holiday Season!

Here are some festive holiday events and activities that are going on in Kansas City,

JOY
A Legendary Holiday
Every Saturday from
Nov. 25 - Dec. 23
Legends center at
Village West
1-435 & Parallel Pkwy
Kansas City, Kan.
(913) 788-3700
Admission is free.

PEACE
"Every Christmas
Story Ever Told"
Nov. 3 - Dec. 31
American Heartland
Theatre
2450 Grand Blvd.
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 842-9999
\$17.00 - \$32.50

Christmas in the park
Nov. 22 - Dec. 31
Longview Lake Park
Blue Springs, Mo.
(816) 503-4830
Donations accepted.

A Christmas Carol
Nov. 18 - Dec. 24
Kansas City Repertory
Theatre: Spencer Theatre
4949 Cherry St.
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 235-2700
\$18-\$39

Trans-Siberian Orchestra
Dec. 26 - 3 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Kemper Arena
1800 Genessee
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 931-3330
\$32.50 and \$42.50

New Year's Eve Party
Dec. 31
Union Station
30 W. Pershing Road
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 460-2020
\$54.95

A Season of Romance
Nov. 13 - Jan. 6
Cafe Trio
3535 Broadway Blvd.
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 756-3227
Admission is free.

**Kansas City Ballet
"The Nutcracker"**
Dec. 2 - Dec. 24
The Music Hall
301 W. 13th St.
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 931-2232
\$25.00 - \$80.00

**Christmas in
Puppet Land**
Dec. 9, 16, 23
Puppetry Arts Institute
11025 E. Winner Rd.
Independence, Mo.
(816) 833-9777
\$5

Celebrate Peace
Dec. 1-30
Community of
Christ Temple
201 S. River
Independence, Mo.
(816) 833-1000
Admission is free.

**Holiday Customer
Appreciation**
Dec. 16-17
Rivermarket
Antique Mall
115 W. 5th St.
Kansas City, Mo.
(816) 221-0220
Admission is free.

**Christmas with
the Trumans**
Nov. 15 - Dec. 30
223 N. Main St.
Independence, Mo.
(816) 254-9929
Admission is free.

**Homestyle
Holidays in the
Spirit of
Christmas Past**
Nov. 24 - Dec. 30
129 W. Lexington Ave.
Independence, Mo.
(816) 461-1897
\$4-\$12

**With the boom-de-doo,
and hickory hock...**

GRAPHIC BY NICOLE FARLEY

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***in brief**

Princely party
Princes William and Harry announced that they are planning a concert and memorial service in honor of the 10th anniversary of their mother's death.

The concert will be held on Princess Diana's birthday, July 1, in Wembley Stadium in London and will feature Elton John and Duran Duran.

KATE RAINEY



VIDEOPHILE

'My Boys' plays it safe through cliché premise

I'm tired of stereotypes on TV. Maybe I overestimate the creative capabilities of the typical TV writer, but I don't see why it is so difficult for TV people to create well-rounded characters.

"My Boys," which airs Tuesdays at 9 and 9:30 p.m. on TBS, tries to present a different kind of woman. Rather than a girly-girl, the star is a tomboy.

I appreciate the show's attempt at originality, but it fails miserably. Not only does "Boys" resemble "Sex in the City" in theme and style, but the main character is merely a different stereotype – not a real woman.

"Boys" shares quite a bit in common with "Sex." Just like Carrie Bradshaw, the main character is a young, single woman struggling with relationships. This woman, PJ (Jordana Spiro), is a journalist, although she is a sports reporter rather than a sex columnist. The most annoying similarity is the voiceover narration that accompanies each episode.

PJ struggles with dating because she acts like a man, which according to her love interest, Bobby (Kyle Howard), is not attractive. She makes him "feel like the chick" in the relationship. PJ sounds like a man. She is interested in "manly" things (like sports, poker and beer) and most of her friends and colleagues are men. Plus, her name is PJ. That's right. Even a masculine name.

"There is more wrong with the show than stereotypical characters. It's also boring."

There are only two other women on the show, and only one of them gets airtime. One is PJ's only female friend, Stephanie (Kellee Stewart), who happens to be extremely girly. The other is PJ's sister-in-law, who is described by the other characters as a super-nag.

Each woman is a different stereotype. The creator, Betsy Thomas, is saying women can either be manly, girly or nags.

Women can like baseball and shoes. There is no reason they can only enjoy one or the other. It is perhaps more complicated to create a woman who enjoys both watching Monday night football and shoe sales, but that does not mean it is impossible.

There is more wrong with the show than stereotypical characters. It's also boring. The first four minutes of the first episode was a string of baseball metaphors. Boring, cliché baseball metaphors. "My friends and I are like a baseball team ..." blah, blah, blah. Even a sports fan wouldn't want to hear relationships broken down into cheesy sports terms.

Come on, TV people, use the creative center of your brains. There is no reason the same six shows keep being made over and over again. Yes, "Sex" was successful, but that doesn't mean we need a billion slightly different versions of it. Just because you alter one small detail does not mean it is original. Come up with something new – or at least something realistic. *

Sushi service leaves student disgruntled

Sushi-lover experiences bad service, misplaced Christmas music at Domo

by KATHLEEN POINTER
Managing Editor

Sushi. Some balk at the idea of raw fish, making Domo, the new sushi bar and restaurant in Brookside, not a very viable option. Before I proceed with my encounter, I would like to let all of those reading this that are growing slightly nauseous at the idea of cold, uncooked fish that Domo has several noodle and salad dishes that are completely raw-fish-free. I, being the avid sushi consumer that I am, went with one of the many sushi options displayed on the thin paper menu.

The evening itself felt a little off. When I walked into the restaurant, I began to feel slightly uneasy; we were slightly under-dressed in our jeans and sweaters—something I took immediate notice of in such a small venue. I also couldn't help but realize there weren't any other teenagers in the place. I felt slightly conspicuous, but since it wasn't really important, I decided not to worry about it.

After we were seated, and as I perused the various tea drinks available and the array of sushi dishes, I found myself humming along to "Here Comes Santa Claus." And while I enjoy the holiday season as much as the next teenager, I couldn't help but feel Christmas music didn't quite fit with the restaurant. The décor was pleasant enough; everything was cool colors and smooth lines. But the Christmas music? Not so much.

After I mulled over the oddness of the music selection, I realized quite a few moments had passed and a server was nowhere to be found, at least nowhere near my table. Granted, water was on the table, yet I couldn't help but feel as if we had been abandoned for an eternity. And it must have been an eternity because by the time a nameless server appeared, I'd decided on my meal, which is unusual; I'm always the person who hurriedly stammers, "Come back to me." I barely had time to ask one question and hand the server my sushi menu before she disappeared as quickly as she had appeared. I was a little upset; I didn't have time to order a tea, as drink orders were never taken.

As my friend and I waited for our su-



Please, sir, can I have some more? * Diners visit Domo, a new restaurant located in Brookside on Dec. 7. Domo serves a variety of sushi as well as noodles and salads. PHOTO BY MADDY MCGANNON

shi to arrive, I found we had to awkwardly avoid glancing at the people seated so closely on either side of us. I think that's why I'd found that restaurant so quiet when I'd first entered; everyone was awkwardly whispering to avoid unnecessary interaction with the people sitting, invading their space. I breathed a sigh of relief when the bickering couple seated next to my table got up to leave; I just wasn't that interested in their petty argument about which movie to see after dinner. I didn't feel like my friend and I could even have a conversation until the table next to us left. They were just seated too close for comfort.

The sushi finally arrived by the very

reluctant server. Despite the weird evening, thus far I found the sushi proved satisfactory, reasonably priced and fresh. The white plate on which it was brought was also cleverly adorned with an Asian inspired colorful paper ornament. Even my sushi-skeptical friend found everything to be quite good.

The evening ended abruptly as the server dropped off the check without much ado or inquiring about dessert, helpful, I suppose, since I usually spend eons debating whether I really must have something after my meal. The server helped me avoid a long decision-making process by not offering me any options. How thoughtful. *

Let a cold hippopotamus buy Christmas shoes

KATIE MEYERS



SECTION EDITOR

I'm told that Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. But if Christmas is so wonderful, I wonder, why does it have to be shoved down everybody's throat? And is it because Christmas is shoved down everyone throats, that we think it is wonderful?

As a skeptic of Christmas wonder, I face many opponents. Don't get me wrong, I totally get the Jesus's birthday part, I get the partying with the family part and I definitely get the food part. What I don't get is the enormous pressure surrounding gift-giving and receiving and most of all, I don't understand the *endless* Christmas music.

That's not to say I genuinely despise the stuff. I grew up in a house where, on the last few days before Christmas, every-

one in the house wakes up to the blasting of Bing Crosby Christmas tunes, and dad belting it out along with him. Believe me, I like Christmas music just fine. What I don't understand is who came up with the crazy idea of playing it non-stop for two solid months?

"Is it because Christmas is shoved down everyone throats, that we think it is wonderful?"

On Nov. 1, 2006 (the day after Halloween) I believe the temperature in Kansas City was in the mid-70s. I remember I was sitting in my Ceramics I class, nearly sweating, when a classmate of mine decided to turn on the radio. The next thing I knew, Dean Martin is telling me that "it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas." Hmm, I thought as I took off my sweater because it was too warm, maybe "Mele Kalikimaka" would be more appropriate.

The next week, I went into the candy store in which I work, only to discover

STAR 102 had begun to play Christmas music as well, and for the next month and a half, Christmas music was all I would be hearing. And while I have encountered several people who love the idea of constant Christmas music, I simply don't understand. My only theory is that all of the DJs save their vacation time for that six-week period and they simply put the same fifteen Christmas song on repeat. The more I think about this theory, the more I believe that it must be true, because if I were a DJ and I had to listen to Mariah Cary sing "All I Want for Christmas is You" every half hour until Christmas, I think I would last about three days before I pulled a Milton and set the building on fire.

Despite all of this, my immersion into the world of Christmas music has taught me four important lessons: 1) "Mary Did You Know" is probably my favorite song ever. 2) There is quite a bit of mystery surrounding the "I want a Hippopotamus for Christmas" song. The truth is that it was sung by a girl named Gayla Peevey in 1953. 3) There are way too many versions of the song "Let It Snow." At least six are on regular rotations. And finally, 4) You can listen to the "Christmas Shoes" song exactly two and one-half times in a six-hour period before you want to rip your own ears off with a pair of pliers. Merry Christmas!!!! *

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*in brief

Career suicide?
Mel Gibson's "Apocalypto" debuted as number one in the box office this weekend. The \$15 million draw quashes all fears that Gibson's drunken arrest and anti-Semitic rant would have a negative effect on his career.

Planning ahead

Self-taught freshman, Celeste Bremen,
excels in math, language due to helpful aid

by JAIME HENRY-WHITE
Staff Writer

Go ahead. Mention the name “Celeste Bremen” at STA. When you do, you are bound to hear many complimentary remarks. You’ll listen to junior Eleanor Dillon exclaim, “She’s a Genius!” You will hear Spanish teacher Ms. Julia Gargallo’s say, “She’s an excellent student.” As many may know at STA, for Celeste, advanced has become the new normal.

As a freshman at STA, Celeste takes junior and sophomore honors and accelerated classes, such as honors algebra II and Spanish III, because she taught herself both geometry and Spanish II before coming to STA. This enabled her to skip ahead in required curriculum classes.

Celeste attended grade school at Visitation Catholic School, where her teacher, Mr. John Schofield, and tutor, Dr. Elizabeth Applebaum, helped her become more advanced in mathematics than most 7th and 8th graders.

“It’s difficult, but it’s nice to have a variety of different things to do,” Celeste said. “I like to do the best that I can and I know what my best is. As long as I do that, then I’ll be okay.”

At the start of freshman year, new school, new people and new rules are fresh on most brains. However, Celeste, in addition to the unfamiliarity, has tackled her first year in high school with the “heavier” classes offered by STA. Her school planner is covered with homework assignments for honors algebra II, computer sciences, drawing I, accelerated biology, theology I and Spanish III.

“She’s very focused,” said Ms. Jo Ann Weller, the STA honors algebra II teacher. “She’s very inquisitive. You can tell she enjoys math and she’s very enthusiastic.”

Most of Celeste’s teachers, as well as most people who know her, admire her work ethic and personal determination.

“I would see her as thoughtful, both about people and how she does things,” said Ms. Arlene Hennon, Celeste’s advisor. “She’s a very gentle person and clearly she’s responsible. I think she’s just neat.”

Freshman Mia Hawkins, long-time friend of Celeste, agrees with Weller and Hennon, and sees Celeste as someone who possesses a positive mind.

“I think she deserves [the classes she is in] because she worked very hard and diligently,” said Hawkins.

Celeste, through self-motivation and through the support of teachers, family, and friends, has partaken in accelerated opportunities since Visitation.

“She’s always done well at school,” said mother Roxanne Bremen. “But, [she was] really fortunate to have Mr. Schofield at Visitation grade school. He was the one who offered for her to get ahead [in math].”

That’s when it all started, with Mr. Schofield.”

Schofield noticed Celeste when she came into his 7th grade pre-algebra class. She was doing well in class, participating, working hard and receiving 98 percent and above on her tests.

“I let her go as fast as she wanted to [in math],” said Schofield, who offered Celeste the chance to work at a quicker pace than most of the class. “And she worked fast. She was a self-starter.”

Schofield advised Celeste to work ahead in her 7th grade pre-algebra book.

Everyday during math class, Celeste would sit in the front row of old wooden desks, always next to Hawkins. Celeste would pull out her yellow mechanical pencil and special graph paper; it was time for her to get to work.

With this routine, and with the aid of Schofield, Celeste finished her textbook by Christmas break.

“I just tried to go as I far as I could go [in math],” said Celeste. “I would just go at a pace I felt I could go at. My eventual goal was to be where I am now in the ninth grade.”

In addition to her in-class work, Celeste also worked on the weekends. In her corner bedroom, as jazz music played in the background, Celeste would study on her bed, surrounded by pillows and papers.

“There were always moments when I just couldn’t understand what the book was saying,” said Celeste. “It’s really hard to do it all in a row, especially if you’re frustrated.”

When she became frustrated, Celeste closed her books and slept on what she had worked on overnight and then come back to it the next morning; that usually did the trick.

According to Celeste, her cat, Pierre, would lie upon her books or pillows as moral support. Occasionally, Celeste would take a break and peer out her bedroom window to gaze upon her 17 horses.

After summer vacation, her algebra I work was completed. Now, Schofield and Celeste were left with a puzzle over what she would accomplish during her 8th grade year. Their choice: geometry.

“I thought it was a great idea,” said Roxanne. “I was pleased that the teacher wanted her to [work ahead] because mathematics is very important for girls.”

Schofield was happy with Celeste’s decisions and efforts.

“She was cooperative and she was always ready to do whatever you asked her to do,” said Schofield. “She always went the extra-mile. She’s all those things you say about a person like that. She’s just everything.”

After purchasing a geometry book, the same as the one used in accelerated geometry at STA, Celeste began teaching herself the material. Although she understood most of the concepts the book discussed, she eventually needed help for the last half of her book. Roxanne found her daughter

a tutor to visit once a week.

“My mom’s very supportive,” said Celeste. “She just always wants me to do my best. And, even if I couldn’t do [what I do], she just wants me to do what I am capable of doing.”

Celeste’s mother finds great pride in her daughter’s accomplishments in school.

“She’s a hard-worker,” said Roxanne. “She takes her work seriously. She likes to have it done a certain way, which is hopefully the right way. She likes to get it done before it’s due.”

Dr. Applebaum, a PhD in mathematics, became her tutor. With her vast Crayola marker collection; color-coding skills and “touchy, feely” approach to learning math, Celeste began to understand geometry more clearly.

“I don’t think that if I hadn’t worked ahead in 7th grade, I wouldn’t have gotten as far as I had [in math],” said Celeste.

In addition to her geometry book, Celeste also purchased a Spanish workbook. Although she took Spanish classes at Visitation, only the fundamentals were taught. Visitation’s foreign language education was not enough for her to test out of Spanish I at STA.

Her family’s love of foreign languages motivated her to learn Spanish. Her grandfather spoke six languages and her aunt teaches French.

A piece at a time, Celeste taught herself as much Spanish as possible. After doing so, she took the foreign language test for high school, and tested out of Spanish II, not just Spanish I.

“I felt I really knew the material and there’s no harm in trying,” said Bremen.

Her high score on the High School Placement Test and on this foreign language test enabled her to enroll in accelerated biology. Also, she proved her capability of joining upperclassmen in honors algebra II and Spanish III.

“It’s kind of scary if you think about if all people applied themselves like she does,” said Schofield. “Think of where the world would be today.”

Eventually, Celeste will need to take off-campus college courses during high school because of her accelerated studies in mathematics and Spanish. She also strives to take accelerated, honors and AP English and history classes throughout her remaining years at STA. She will pursue her dream career at either Harvard, Yale or Oxford.

“I’d like to get a law degree and a business degree,” said Celeste. “And I’d like to get the foreign language down because with that you can do a bunch of stuff.” *

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*in brief

Taking a break

In her spare time, Celeste Bremen plays the banjo, tutors at Visitation School and rides one of the 17 horses her family owns. She also took ballroom dancing lessons for six years and used to participate in dog agility competitions.

Get notes
from
English



Taking on the competition * Freshman Celeste Bremen eats lunch in Dr. Jo Weller's room on Dec. 5. After lunch, Bremen and other members of the STA Math Team participated in the individual Mathfax competition. **PHOTO BY ALLISON POINTER**

THUR 14

Day

Celeste's projected class load senior year:

- College Composition
- Western Civilization I & II
- Spanish VI
- Calculus II
- AP Physics
- World Faiths
- American Government
- A Theology class
- An elective credit

FRI 15

Day

0101 Theology I Bertalott M102	7003 Drawing I Wallerstedt D12	1114 Acc Eng. I Filipowicz M307	0102 Theology I Bertalott M102	0100 Theology Bertalott M102
4321 *HonAlgII Weller D207	4322 *HonAlg II Wallerstedt D12	6543 Span III Gargallo M206	4324 *HonAlg II Weller D207	4320 *HonAlg II Weller D207
7002 Drawing I Wallerstedt D12	8002 Computer I McCarthy D204	8003 Computer I McCarthy D204	8004 Computer I McCarthy D204	7000 Drawing I Wallerstedt D12
9001 #PE/Health Bode-Rodrig GYM		9002 #PE/Health Bode-Rodrig GYM		9000 #PE/Health Bode-Rodrig GYM
	6542 Span III Gargallo M206	7004 Drawing I Wallerstedt D12	7005 Drawing I Wallerstedt D12	6540 Span III Gargallo M206
	5211 AccelBiolo Blake D302	4323 *HonAlg II Weller D207	5213 AccelBiolo Blake D302	8000 Computer I McCarthy D204
8001 Computer I McCarthy D204	5211 AccelBiolo Blake D302	5212 AccelBiolo Blake D302	6545 Span III Gargallo M206	5210 Computer I Blake D302
1112 Acc Eng. I Filipowicz M307	1113 Acc Eng. I Filipowicz M307		1115 Acc Eng. I Filipowicz M307	1110 Acc Eng. I Filipowicz M307

NOTES

• buy some more
notebook paper

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***in brief**

Self-Taught
Starting in seventh grade, Celeste Bremen began to teach herself Spanish and Math. The following is a list of the books used.

Puntos de Partida
Student Edition
+ Comprehensive Audio CD
Price:
\$111.25
Published by:
McGraw Hill

Geometry
Price:
\$86.88
Published by:
Houghton Mifflin

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***in brief**

Christmas tree

The fir tree has a long association with Christianity. It began in Germany almost 1,000 years ago when St. Boniface, who converted the German people to Christianity, was said to have come across a group of pagans worshipping an oak tree. In anger, St. Boniface cut down the oak tree, and to his amazement, a young fir tree sprung up from the roots of the oak tree. St. Boniface took this as a sign of the Christian faith. But it was not until the 16th century that fir trees were brought indoors at Christmas time.

Information from <http://www.christmas-tree.com/where.html>.

Miller: Student quits ballet to deal with school stress

Continued from page 10

said Alex. "It was kind of scary at first to think about quitting. The idea of getting a job just wasn't an option for me at first. Finally, they were saying that and then I was like yeah...It was my decision."

It took Alex a while to get used to her new job, but she is now happy with her decision.

"I had just been in that bubble for so long," said Alex. "It took me a long time to realize that I hadn't liked it for that long. At first, I felt really bad and my parents were worried that I'd be really lazy. But, then, after I quit, I was really excited to get a job to show my parents I could do something on my own and get up and do something. I like it now; I just make my own decisions." *

Backup: Athletes excluded from starting lineup

Continued from page 16

more than just games, and she felt like she was equally a part of both teams.

"I understand how sports work and that not everyone can play at the same time," said Palmer. "I wanted to be on the [varsity] court, but understood my position. I'm just working hard for next year."

Junior Betsy Koehne was an alternate on dance team last year. This year, Koehne made the team with a guaranteed spot to perform.

"I learned what it really means to be dedicated," said Koehne. "It was different because I didn't just loving the performing part. I learned to be dedicated at practice. I had to love and appreciate every little part of [dance team]."

Koehne was forced to motivate herself as she practiced off to the side during rehearsals, with little encouragement from teammates and coaches.

"I always tried my hardest because I wanted my coach and everyone else to notice I was working hard," said Koehne. "If I did work harder everyone would be surprised and give me more respect."

Koehne not only had to learn each dance itself, but every individual part of the dance in case she was needed as a substitute. In a way, she had to do more work than the members who were guaranteed a spot. This year, she dances at every competition.

"It feels like I value my position [on the team] a lot more," said Koehne. "I don't take it for granted. Being an alternate taught me flexibility when I have to change parts in the dance. [Learning new parts] is no big deal."

Junior Jessica Nouri also experienced a change from last year. Her basketball playing time was reduced. As a sophomore on varsity, Nouri started. This year however, she begins the game on the bench.

"Everybody wants to play," said Nouri. "I understand that there are people on a team who start, and people who don't."

Nouri is enjoying the season even though she does not get less playing time.

"One of the main reasons to play a sport is to build character and responsibility," said Nouri. "I feel like it's almost a good thing that I'm not starting this year. I'm pushing myself to get better and earn more playing time." *

Basketball: Team struggles through ups and downs

Continued from page 14

of in the first half," said Wilson. "I thought in the second half we did much better. The scores bear that out."

New to the varsity team this year are sophomores Leah Barthol, Abby Duethman, Paige Kuhlmann and Kelsey McCormick. McCormick had a fall in the second period and now is on crutches with an injured knee, while Kuhlmann proved to be the top scorer for STA with 12 points.

"We are still trying to figure ourselves out as a team," said Wilson. "We have four new sophomores trying to figure out how to play with returning players and a senior who also has come back."

Going into the tournament game, both Wilson and the players were aware of their opponent's capability.

"We knew they were very, very good," he said. "We knew we would have to play well to compete and the kids knew that too."

Following the game's outcome, Wilson commented on how the girls felt.

"I don't think they liked how they played in the first half, but felt much better about the second," he said. "They all understand that this is a process."

The Stars played Dec. 7 and won, allowing them to continue to the consolation bracket's final game. Wilson had positive thoughts going into the tournament.

"We had a good practice [Wednesday] and are ready," he said. "[The girls] are in this together. They know that."

Wilson also views tournaments as a good chance to learn.

"They help you read how you work as a team," he said.

Following tournament play, the Stars lost to St. Joseph Benton 54-42 Monday.

However, with more practices and games to come, the varsity basketball coach is optimistic about their teamwork.

"I'm proud of them," he said. "They really know they are a team and get along real well and have fun." *



Eye off the ball * Senior Alexandra Kurth knocks the basketball out of Benton High School's Blair Brown's hands during the Monday night home-opener. The two stopped when the referee blew his whistle. The Stars lost 42-54. PHOTO BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS

Swim team: Friday evening practices discourage swimmer

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[practices] might be harder than last year, they don't complain."

Sophomore Emma Spencer was on the freshman team for STA swimming last year. She said the main reason she chose not swim this year was because of the new practice time. She also agreed that

the new coach seemed tougher and more demanding.

"The Friday practices affected my decision a lot," said Spencer. "She probably added them because she wanted us to work harder because last year...well it was fun last year, that's all. But the fact that there was practice at eight on Friday was the deciding factor for me." *

Consumerism: Materialism exposed through holiday shopping

Continued from page 7

"Everyday we negotiate between the material and non-material, between the commercial and the domestic," said Keane. "We ritualistically try to control the relationship between these sets of dualities. But at the holidays, the pace of the negotiations accelerates and it becomes really hard to balance the tensions."

An undeniable sense of well-being comes from conquering an embankment of gifts, savagely tearing wrapping paper to a soundtrack of nauseating yet triumphant Christmas music. Presents have come to stand for the assurance someone actually cares about you, your parents are financially stable and life really will go on even after the holiday season leaves a trail of devastation behind it. It is important to remember family will still be there long after the battery on your new laptop is dead, which is what the holidays should really be about. We will all wake up December 26, maybe with some new warm socks, but essentially the same people. *

Faith in Action



Sassy Sister * Theology teacher Anita Reznicek, left, consults with Sister Rosemary Flanigan, CSJ, on Reznicek's introduction to Flanigan's Faith in Action speech Nov. 29. Flanigan has taught at both Fontbonne University and Avila University. PHOTO BY EMILY BECKER

Sister Harriet: Hate her now, love her later, respect her always

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putting in the effort to herself. If a student turned in a paper, she would have the back to her by the next day.

And her mantra? Hate me now, love me later. She was not afraid to be strict, so long as it taught her students a valuable lesson.

"One of the joys of being a teacher is to see the way your students have grown," she said. "One of the things that I enjoy now is hearing back from past students about their successes."

Sister Harriet admits that she misses "the lab, the kids," but giving up teaching

has forced her to find new activities.

"A lesson that goes with me all my life is just letting go, both physically and spiritually," she said. "When you let go of one thing, there's always something else to reach for. I thought I gave up teaching, what else could I do with my life. I had to learn to reach out, to evolve and to pick up new interests."

And whom has she reached out to? The athletic teams, for one. Sister Harriet has been an avid fan on the sidelines of sports games for many years, believing that the team "can't win unless I am there."

"I will stagger out to the soccer field as long as I can," she said.

Sister Harriet also helps Ms. Mary Montag and Ms. Jessie Thompson with the science knowledge bowl.

"It's a learning experience, and it's another way to relate to students in a non-threatening manner," she said.

Sister Harriet craves personal contact with the students, who "sometimes forget that I am human."

"I just really love it when kids come in and ask for help," she said.

The one-on-one interaction, through tutoring or a conversation, keeps Sister Harriet youthful.

"I may be old enough to be your grandmother, but I am still young at heart," she

said.

In fact, next semester she will be teaching a group of seniors once a week in organic chemistry.

"God gave me the gift to be able to inspire an others an interest in learning," she said.

Sister Harriet has always had a strong prayer life; one of the components that made her classroom special was that she opened every class with a prayer from scripture.

"The most important thing that I ever did for my students was pray for them," she said. "I just wanted them to know that I cared about them and loved them." *

Dunlay: English teacher enlightens students on power of language, literature, love

Continued from page 13

she has one objective in mind: the power of the written and spoken word.

"I am passionate about language, literature and reading, and I like to share that passion with others," she said. "I want young women to understand the power of language. If I succeed in teaching you the power of language, then that is huge."

Dunlay hopes to teach her students a les-

son in confidence.

"Many students feel unsure when they are first around me because I'm strong or I at least put out those vibes," she said.

"But I am trying to be an example for them. I am trying to teach young women to be confident and to not be intimidated. I want them to know that it's okay to make mistakes...I think that's what I'm trying to bring out in people: to stand up for what they believe." *

Dolan: Spirit Club moderator cheers on students every day



Continued from page 12

to my water bottle that I have had for six years."

Because of her loyalty and magnetic personality, students are often drawn to her room during frees and activity period.

"My room is usually full during frees with students doing homework and talking," said Dolan. "I like this time of day because I get to talk to students and catch

up on what's happening in their lives."

While she enjoys the student interaction of frees, her favorite part of day cannot be described by a particular time or set activity.

"My favorite part of any school day is when I witness a student advance, whether it be in a life decision, an 'ah-ha' moment in class or if she worked really hard on a paper," said Dolan. "I love seeing students experience self-improvement." *

Joan and Terri: Hard work of Development Office pays off

Continued from page 12

"There is a constant swinging in here," said Egelhoff. "With parents leaving and students coming, we get a lot of traffic flowing in and out."

"We never really know what the day will bring," said Jordan. "We come in thinking we are going to handle one

thing..."

"And the whole thing changes," Egelhoff said, completing Jordan's thought.

Jordan and Egelhoff recognize that without help, they could not do their jobs.

"We are really fortunate to have such great volunteers," said Egelhoff. "Without them, we would not be able to successfully complete our jobs." *

Prentiss: Students applaud drama teacher's compassion, personality



Continued from page 13

am open about my life and who I am and how I got to this place. I talk about how I have failed, how I have succeeded, and I am happy with the person I am today. Because of my openness, students see me as human."

At the same time, Prentiss realizes that her job as an educator isn't all fun and games.

"As goofy as I am and as unimportant as my job as a drama teacher may seem, I take my job very seriously. I serve an important purpose as a role model and as someone who can be trusted."

Her biggest goal as an educator is to teach students to overcome pain and to always try.

"I hope that students take away from me the idea that we can overcome anything

and that it doesn't have to be so dramatic and painful," she said. "My philosophy is that the worst thing that can happen is that you try and you fail...That's certainly my approach with auditioning. You can't make it unless you try. And even if you don't make it, you can still help out by joining crew or doing some behind-the-scenes work."

In motivating her students to audition, Prentiss shares her own failure stories.

"There have been hundreds of times when I have been rejected," she said. "I have tried out for so many plays and not made it, it's scary to think about. But the important thing is that I tried."

As silent study ends, Prentiss, smile still splashed across her face, picks up her empty coffee mug and returns to her classroom the same "confident, goofy and loving" woman. *

Fudenberg: Top Influential Male

Continued from page 13

as the most influential male at STA," said Mr. Mark Fudenberg, "I would like to

think that [I have been voted] because I try to see you all collectively as people and human beings first and students second." *

*in brief

Finally Finals
First semester exams begin tomorrow morning. The schedule will follow students' Friday classes, with Mods 1-6 exams tomorrow, Mods 7-12 Monday and Mods 13-16 Tuesday. Several classes, including Regular and Honors Algebra II, Computer Graphics, World Faiths, Women in Theology, Homepage, Ms. Hansbrough's Morality class and Ms. Wallerstedt's Art Portfolio class have special schedules for their exams. Exam conflicts should be taken in the Testing Center, which will be open Friday and Monday from 12:30-2:00 p.m. and Tuesday from 8:30-10:00 a.m.

Holiday lights set Kansas City aglow



BY MIKHALA LANTZ-SIMMONS

merry christmas * **feliz navidad** * shinnen omedeto. kurisumasu omedeto * mele kalikimaka ame hauoli makahiki hou * *buone feste natalizie* * kung his hsin nien bing chu shen tan * *milad majid* * *merry christmas* * **feliz navidad** * shinnen omedeto. kurisumasu omedeto * mele kalikimaka ame hauoli makahiki hou * *buone feste natalizie* * **kung his hsin nien bing chu shen tan** * *milad majid* * *merry christmas* * **feliz navidad** ❄️

14 december 2006
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The Dart
*
St. Teresa's Academy

*in brief

77th Annual Plaza Lighting Ceremony

Started as a string of 16 lights over a doorway in 1925.

First Plaza lighting in 1930.

In 1973, the Plaza lights were not lit because President Nixon asked all citizens to curb their Christmas light use.

The Plaza lights have been an attraction to many all over the world.

The Plaza lights signify the beginning of the Christmas season.



Merry Christmas

BY LIBBY CONWELL