

the

ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY

dart

volume 68★ issue 4★ december 12, 2008

4 is in

for donations

Charities struggle to meet growing need for services as recession hits Kansas City hard during holidays
see page 12-13



the end of...

[FACE 2 FACE]

While studies show text messaging impacts social skills, text messaging trends rise, influence teens' social lives

by KAYLA LOOSEN
Entertainment Editor

This month the average American teenager will send nine times more text messages than they will make phone calls. According to a Nielsen Mobile survey released in September, US teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 will send an average of 1,742 text messages this month while they will make only 204 actual phone calls. However, many teens are unaware of the arising theory that steady text messaging may affect social skills.

"Short message system (SMS) can be preferred to spoken interaction for achieving certain relationship goals," Fraser Reid, Ph.D. said in a study entitled "Text or Talk? Social Anxiety, Loneliness, and Divergent Preferences for Cell Phone Use." Reid continued, "Compared to a voice call, SMS enables the cell phone user to disengage from the multiple attentional demands of real-time social interaction and focus on...the task of composing a message, even to analyze the smallest cues to achieve important, self-presentational goals."

According to Reid, texting can replace interactions of typical relationships.

"It is now understood that online contact can at times surpass direct face-to-face interaction in both intimacy and intensity, and support the development of enduring on-line and offline relationships," Reid said.

Additionally, researchers and cell phone users have uncovered that text messaging, in comparison to a voice call, can be relatively inexpensive, discreetly sent and received, used when other forms of contact are unavailable and can fill uncomfortable moments of unoccupied time.

"[Teens] know [they] probably send too many texts everyday, but you feel confident texting

rather than being face-to-face or on the phone because you don't have to worry about awkward moments where there's nothing to say," said Grace Bisbee, an STA sophomore and avid texter for four years. "So when you have to actually face someone in person, you're forced to notice the uncomfortable pauses. Then the situation's even more awkward because you're not used to having those thanks to texting."

Reid surveyed that motivations for text messaging, similar to Bisbee's, are not all that uncommon. However, those who preferred texting in Reid's study proved to have considerably lonelier or socially anxious personalities.

"A minority [of teens] even develop an entirely separate, 'brave SMS self,' which contrasts with their more [reserved] real-life personality," Reid said. "The more lonely and socially anxious someone is, the more likely they are to be a texter and to locate their real-self through text."

Similarly, Bisbee believes that if you are not an already socially insecure person, regular text messaging may change that.

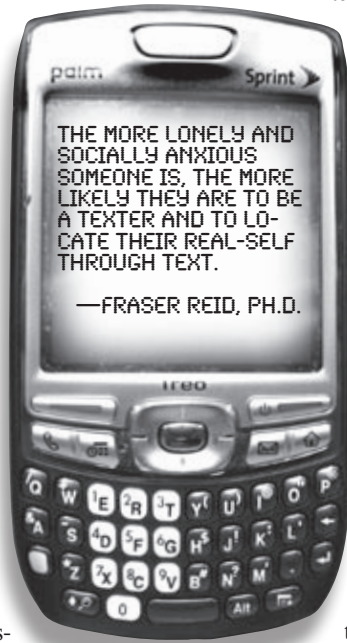
"A lot of our emotions are put more into text messaging than in person because people think it's easier not having to hear how the other person reacts and learning how to deal with it," Bisbee said. "Most of the time, the other person's text-reaction isn't realistic to what their reaction would be face-to-face or on the phone because they have so much time to think about what they want to say and end up having such a stronger response."

However, texting does maintain its benefits according to F. Allan Hanson, Ph.D., professor of socio-cultural anthropology at the University of Kansas.

"The potential for greater communication, to communicate with more people and find out
See TEXTING, page 22

omg!
lol
luv u...
p/n
l8r
nvm!
thnx!
jk
sup?

haha
brb
ttyl
sup?
:-)
rofl!
lylas
i ha u
cya



1/2

of sixteen year-olds' quality of sleep may be affected by text messaging

37%

of teens said they found text messaging to be extremely or very distracting while driving

204

phone calls on average were made this month by teens between the ages of 13 and 17

1,742

text messages on average were sent this month by teens between the ages of 13 and 17

2.3 TRILLION

text messages will be sent in 2008

Information compiled from Nielsen Mobile, AAA and USAToday.com

inside *out*



Close Up:
A look into teen sources of alcohol: STA and national surveys reveal results and patterns

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Features:
The Franke sisters welcome a fourth foster baby into their family, continuing tradition of assisting children in need

See Pages 21-22



Entertainment:
Ode to 2008: a look back at the movies, music and stars that owned the charts this year
See Page 17

New security system to shut doors



No more open door ★ Freshman Erin Sellers opens the door for a fellow student. A new security system, implemented next year, will require students to enter a code on a keypad upon entry. **PHOTO BY MOLLIE POINTER**

STA looks to install cameras, keypads to increase school safety

by KYLIE HORNBECK
News Editor

STA plans to implement a new security system by the next school year. The plan consists of two parts. The first part includes three to four surveillance cameras across campus to monitor the quad, M&A Building and Donnelly Hall entry ways and the parking lot and the second part keypads on the main doors of M&A, Donnelly and Goppert Center, according to STA president Nan Bone.

STA waits to hear in the upcoming month whether it will receive the \$25,000 financial support the administration requested from the McGee family. Bone believes STA has a sufficient chance of receiving the grant and says that money received will go toward a beneficial and necessary cause: security.

Bone believes STA is a safe place but that an updated security system will increase students' safety. The new system aims to prevent unwelcome visitors from wandering around campus buildings or interrupting the school day.

"You will never have a 100 percent guarantee of safety, but with a security system, what you do is you deter unwanted visitors," Bone said. "[Strangers] aren't apt to come up to a building and ring a doorbell."

Principal of student affairs Mary Anne Hoecker agrees with Bone that an updated system is overdue. Currently, there are no surveillance

cameras on campus and the main doors of Donnelly, M&A and Goppert remain unlocked during school hours, according to Hoecker.

"With [a security system], people can't have immediate access into our buildings," Hoecker said. "We're doing this as one more precaution."

Bone says she began planning a new security system even before the vandalism issue in the fall. Both Bone and Hoecker feel the security system will provide the school community with protection and surveillance that was not previously present.

According to Bone, the code portion of the security plan will roughly be in use only during the school day. The keypad system will allow for students to punch in a specific code that unlocks that door. Bone believes codes will be personal either to the individual student or to each grade level. Students will need to enter their codes upon arriving to school, in between classes or upon any entrance to any of the three buildings if another student has not let them in. Visitors without codes will have to ring a doorbell and then wait for a receptionist to see them on one of the surveillance cameras and admit them into the building. Bone says this system will create a safe but not limiting environment for students and will not greatly affect day-to-day student life at STA.

"In general the code system won't slow you down a bit," Bone said. "The only person who's slowed down is the straggler."

According to technology committee member sophomore Mary Frey, STA is not protected as much **See SECURITY, page 22**

DARTBOARD

by TAYLOR BROWN, MEGAN SCHAFF,
MORGAN SAID AND MICAH WILKINS

Board to approve campaign

At the board of directors meeting last month, members proposed a new fund-raising campaign.

According to board member Jack Reichmeier, the Steier Group, STA's fund-raising consultants, presented the campaign concluding that STA should begin the campaign for the new chapel, financial aid endowment, technological improvements and M&A Building renovations. The board held an additional meeting Monday to further discuss the topic, deciding that they will most likely formally vote to move ahead with the campaign at the January board meeting. The major focus of the board for the rest of the year will relate to the newly proposed fund-raising campaign, according to Reichmeier.

SCO plans Christmas Dance

Student Community Organization (SCO) will hold its annual Christmas Dance Saturday in the Goppert Center starting at 8 p.m. All STA students are allowed to buy tickets and attend.

SCO moderator Stacie O'Rear said the club sponsors the event to raise money for Student Appreciation Day, Teacher Appreciation Day and the scholarship the club gives each year.

The theme of this year's dance is "Christmas in Whoville."

The theme raises excitement for the dance and allows the students to have more fun, O'Rear said.

"[The theme] makes [the dance] more fun," O'Rear said. "It makes the kids more enthused about going. We want to encourage more kids to dress up and have fun with it."

Publications go to convention

Members of the STA newspaper and yearbook staffs attended the National Scholastic Press Association convention Nov. 13-15 in St. Louis and received nine awards. Junior Tracy Burns-Yocum, newspaper photo editor, was the first overall STA award winner at the event.

"I was really excited because I was the first person to win and we hadn't won anything the day before," Burns-Yocum said. "I was surprised, but it felt good to walk up there and be like 'that's my name!'"

Five Dart staffers Burns-Yocum, Allison Pointer, Elizabeth Wilson, Sydney Deatherage and Charlie Campbell received awards. Teresian staffers Katie Kenney, Lane Livers, Erin Andres and Riley Cowing also won awards.

Staffers brought back materials from the convention and have begun applying new techniques to both publications.

STA includes MTP program

STA is adding a new feature, Method Test Prep (MTP), to the Naviance program. MTP is a web-based college search and application tool that provides ACT test practice for students. Juniors will learn to use the program in January and sophomores this spring.

The program includes ACT practice tests, tips and a total of 1,500 practice questions. Students will be able to access MTP online through their Naviance registration code, where they will be able to listen to professional tutors to help them work through troubling problems.

Typically, every STA student in a graduating class takes the ACT, states Ms. Debi Hudson, STA's college advisor.

Students organize fund-raising weekend



Operation Helper ★ Rockhurst High School senior Adam Ungashick stands outside Operation Breakthrough where he often volunteers. Ungashick organized a city wide clothing drive for the organization that will take place over Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend. **PHOTO BY TRACY BURNS-YOCUM**

Community students plan clothing drive for children in need

by MEGAN SCHAFF
Staff Writer

Local high school students from STA, Notre Dame de Sion, Rockhurst High School, St. Thomas Aquinas High School and Bishop Miege High School began organizing a city-wide fund-raiser and cloth-

ing drive for children at Operation Breakthrough in October. Rockhurst senior Adam Ungashick came up with the entire idea for the event and is leading the fund-raiser with a group of over 20 students.

"My motto for this entire thing has been if we raise one item it's one more item that these kids have," Ungashick said.

Student volunteers will hold the fund-raiser over Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, starting with a public kickoff party Friday, a clothing drive Saturday and Sunday and a trip to

Operation Breakthrough Monday.

Friday's kickoff party will feature a musical performance as well as activities for kids and families. The party will have an item donation or \$5 entrance fee and a silent auction to raise additional money. Ungashick hopes the party will raise both excitement and awareness for the event.

On Saturday and Sunday, participating high school students will set up between 100 and 150 locations around the city to accept clothes and other non-money donations.

All donations will go to Operation Breakthrough, an organization devoted to providing low-income children with a safe, loving and educational environment.

"I feel with economic times and sorts like that it's necessary to help people," Ungashick said. "[Operation Breakthrough] is unbelievable and it's just one of the many places I could have picked but I have good affiliation with it and I felt they could greatly use the help."

According to Operation Breakthrough's director of volunteer services Debbie Skaggs, the organization helps 670 children annually, most all of whom are in need of clothing and other items.

"[The fund-raiser] would be able to provide clothing for some of our children that normally wouldn't have other resources," Skaggs said.

Student volunteers are completely organizing, planning and running the event. Initially, Ungashick feared

the fund-raiser might not be taken seriously because students are in charge.

"By being student run I do think we may not be taken seriously by sponsors which is my greatest fear," Ungashick said. "But I do think that helps us in the media department because it's not too often something of this magnitude comes around where news stations would turn it down."

Volunteer STA senior Lauren Damico thinks the fact that the event is student run makes it unique.

"It's just a good opportunity to know that it is a completely student run fund-raiser," Damico said. "And I think to be able to see the processing outcome will be really rewarding in the end."

Ungashick and other volunteers hope for media attention and sponsorships from large companies to inform the public and get better results.

"Media attention is key for an event like this," Ungashick said. "In order to get people to know that we are doing this we have to tell them ahead of time and that's where the media comes in."

The students hope the kickoff party, corporate sponsors and media attention will be enough to make the fund-raiser a success.

"I pray [the fund-raiser] is a success, but, again, you can't set your sights too high and no matter what, it's one more thing to help these kids," Ungashick said. ★

President-elect chooses cabinet members

President-elect Democrat Barack Obama chooses variety of individuals from both parties, different backgrounds as he finalizes top spots in the White House before anticipated Jan. 20 Presidential Inauguration

Position	Person	Explanation of position	Credentials
Attorney General	Eric Holder	The Attorney General is usually known as the chief lawyer of the U.S. government. He or she is the top law enforcement officer and is concerned with legal affairs of the U.S.	Holder is assisting President-elect Barack Obama as a senior legal advisor and was one of three members of Obama's vice-presidential selection committee.
Secretary of Defense	Robert Gates	The Secretary of Defense predicts what the U.S. military forces need and serves as the link between the president and senior military leaders.	Gates is currently serving as the U.S. Secretary of Defense for President George W. Bush.
Secretary of Homeland Security	Janet Napolitano	The Secretary of Homeland Security position was created after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. He or she is responsible for preventing, preparing for and responding to domestic emergencies.	Napolitano is the current governor of Arizona.
Secretary of State	Hillary Clinton	The Secretary of State is the highest ranking cabinet secretary. He or she serves as the president's chief advisor on foreign policy and foreign affairs.	Clinton is serving in the U.S. Senate representing New York. She was one of the 2008 Democratic Presidential nominees.
Secretary of the Treasury	Timothy Geithener	The Secretary of the Treasury advises the President on matters concerning the economy and is responsible for the national budget.	Geithener serves as the President and CEO of the New York Federal Reserve.

COMPILED BY MEGAN SCHAFF

Local employees sue for gender, age discrimination

Women file lawsuit against KMBC-TV for prejudice claims

by MICAH WILKINS
Staff Writer

Three female employees of KMBC-TV Channel 9 filed a lawsuit against the ABC affiliate Nov. 13 for gender and age discrimination in the workplace.

anchors Kelly Eckerman and Maria Albus-Twyman, also known on air as Maria Antonia, and reporter Peggy Breit claim that they have been demoted and degraded at Channel 9. According to the lawsuit, KMBC General Manager Wayne Godsey abruptly, "without any previous warning" altered Eckerman's and Breit's schedules from the Monday through Friday weekday shift to a less viewed Tuesday through Saturday weekend shift. Antonia was also demoted, "totally out of the blue", from her anchor position to one as a reporter.

The city recognizes Antonia as one of its most popular Hispanic journalists, and KMBC went to No. 1 on the weekday newscast

ratings while Eckerman anchored. Historically, reporters are promoted after demonstrating several years of solid performance. However, the lawsuit states that Breit, despite her 27-year post at the television station, has not been offered a promotion.

"Males are allowed to age, gain weight, turn grey, and wear glasses," the lawsuit states. "Female anchors, by contrast, are oppressively criticized, targeted, and harassed after they reach their 40s."

Eckerman, Antonia and Breit, all above the age of 40, have worked at KMBC for more than 60 years combined and claim that they have been bypassed for promotions in favor of women in their 20s. Meanwhile, the lawsuit states, the women's contemporary male anchors continue anchoring, like Larry Moore, who is over 60, and Len Dawson, who is over 70.

"Men can have a nice, long run in this business, and women can have a decent run, too," Godsey told Eckerman, according to the lawsuit. "You've had a decent run."

KMBC-TV denies the lawsuit's allegations. Hearst-Argyle Television Inc., the parent com-

pany of Channel 9, is also named a defendant in the lawsuit. The company likewise denies the suit's allegations.

Trina LeRiche, attorney for Hearst-Argyle Stations Inc. released a comment on the lawsuit late last month.

"The company is and always has been an equal opportunity employer and neither tolerates nor practices discrimination or harassment of any kind," LeRiche said.

The company has no further comments at this time.

Attorney Dennis Egan, who specializes in Employment Law, is representing Eckerman, Antonia and Breit. Egan also represented journalist Christine Craft in her famed case. In 1983, Craft sued KMBC-TV after she was demoted and told that she was "too old, too unattractive, and wouldn't defer to men," as stated in the lawsuit. Craft was initially awarded \$500,000 from a federal jury in Kansas City, however the decision was reversed in later appeals. Though KMBC did not have to pay a monetary award, the station's ratings suffered for years.

Upon hearing of the case, Craft, now a radio host in Cali-



Reporting Live ★ KMBC-TV reporter Peggy Breit is one of three KMBC-TV female employees involved in a lawsuit against the station for sex and age discrimination. The court hearing will be held March 2. PHOTO COURTESY OF YOUTUBE

fornia, was discouraged, yet not surprised.

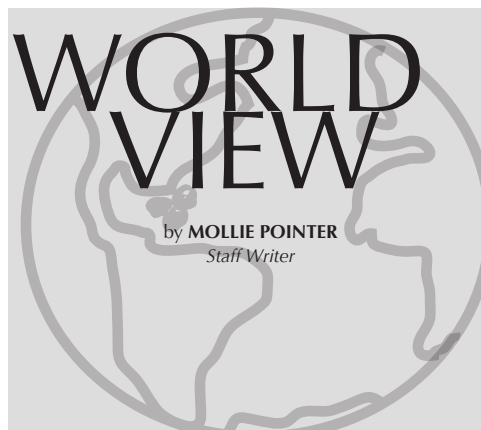
"They never seem to learn," Craft said to reporters when she was told of the case. "I know plenty of women in television in their 50s who are still anchoring newscasts. [But] women have to have two face-lifts for every one face-lift for males."

Unlike Craft, who sued under federal law, the plaintiffs filed their initial charges under the Missouri Human Rights Act,

seeking a minimum of \$25,000.

"It shall be an unlawful employment practice...to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, or disability," the Act states.

The hearing is scheduled to be held in the Jackson County Court Circuit March 2, 2009. ★



Terrorists attack Mumbai, India

Foreign terrorists attacked Mumbai, the financial capital and largest city in India Nov. 26. Attacks ended Nov. 29 when India's security forces took control of the terrorists' targets.

According to CNN.com, throughout the three day attack a total of about 180 were killed, hundreds injured and even more taken hostage. Terrorists targeted luxury hotels, a hospital, cafés, a Jewish center and a train station. India as yet to come out with an accusation of the terrorist group responsible. The attacks have left foreign relationships with neighboring countries uneasy. CNN.com stated the President-elect Barack Obama as been quoted to stand by India during these times.

Cholera spreads in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe declared an outbreak of cholera a national emergency earlier this week. The disease has now infected nine out of the 10 provinces in Zimbabwe.

The rapid dispersal of the water-borne disease is said to have been from poor water supply and sanitation. Symptoms of the disease are diarrhea, leg cramps and vomiting stated the Minnesota department of health's website.

The epidemic not only has the possibility of spreading nationally but internationally, too, with the poor governing in Zimbabwe. Countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom have agreed to help the suffering Zimbabwe.

Pope opposes defense plea

Pope Benedict announced last week that the Vatican will oppose the United Nation's proposed declaration pleading to end discrimination towards homosexuality. The declaration was sponsored by the French and supported by all 27 European Union countries to stop crimes based on sexual orientation.

Though the UN's declaration does not mention gay marriage, the Vatican's reasoning behind not supporting the statement was that the Vatican did not want countries that restrict gay marriage to be pressured into permitting it *Time Magazine* said. The pope is said to keep a tight rope on the traditional Catholic doctrine and plans to continue doing so.

Constant Contact



Texting mastery does not amount to social expertise

The text-addicted population has taken instant messaging to the extreme. With the potential of constant contact and the appeal of text messaging, the average teenager is becoming socially inept.

An experienced texter knows exactly how to handle every social situation – when it is handled on her cell phone. The average teen knows how to initiate and end small talk through texts. She knows how to ignore the 160 character limit and send a five-page text explaining her Friday night. She even knows how to have a discreet argument over texts with a friend sitting in the same room.

However, when this same teen is tossed into the world of face-to-face communication, she is lost.

Many people have grown so accustomed to building relationships through texts, while slowly forgetting how to function in more personal situations. In face-to-face conversations, one person must prepare an appropriate response while their counterpart is speaking and attempt to reply with poise. On the other hand, texters have unlimited amount of time to process what they have just received, dissect it for any hidden meaning, formulate a response, edit and re-edit to perfection then finally hit the “send” button. If conversationalists applied the time allotted to responding to a text in face-to-face dialogue, they would come across as slow and awkward.

Also, they have the choice to hit the “reply” button in the first place. Often times, choosing to ignore a message that obviously needs a response makes people comfortable with not facing their

problems. Because saying nothing in the texting world is better than saying something stupid, the choice to refrain from replying places that person at the upper hand of the exchange, while in personal interactions staying quiet is a sign of weakness.

Ideally, every text message would be perfectly understandable after all of the time dedicated to it, but the separation of the communicators causes

The staff editorial represents the views of *The Dart* editors
13 out of 14 editors voted in support of this editorial.

problems. The recipient can not recognize a tone of voice, and the sender can not perceive looks of confusion. After incorrectly analyzing the meaning of profound words such as “shut up,” an instant messenger might find herself in a serious misunderstanding.

And of course, when in a misunderstanding or even touching on an awkward topic, texters find it much easier to unrestrainedly voice – or type – their opinions through texts. In face-to-face confrontations, people often opt out of making a point because they know they can text it later when the intimidation of witnessing a reaction is not an issue. They become too timid to use their physical

voice over their keypad voice.

There are definitely advantages to texting. In the case of a two-second phone call while sitting in a quiet waiting room to ask your mom if she picked up your dry cleaning, a text is more than helpful. But texting under the table at Christmas dinner with your grandparents to tell your current fling how the pie tastes is a bit overboard. Not to mention disrespectful. Also, tracking down the cell phone number of your service agency representative and sending a text because it would be awkward to call does not exactly shout, “Professional!”

The potential for constant contact can also be helpful to keep a relationship healthy. Who doesn't love a little sweet-nothing text in the middle of the day or a reminder that tonight's your night to cook dinner? But realistically, texting does not stop there. The potential for contact at any time in any places quickly turns into texting at all times in all places. That is a lot of pressure.

Recognizing the limits of texting is key. Build face-to-face relationships with someone before you text them regularly. Reading someone's life story on a tiny cell phone screen is not nearly as effective as using those things on the side of your head you forgot about – ears. Also, the transition from knowing someone's text personality to their interactive personality can be brutal.

So, limit your addictions before you must present yourself to your future boss and fumble for the translation of your comfortable text lingo of, “I totes wnt this promotion plz.” ★



“I would hope they'd had the sense to stay sane but it feels like people in the public eye tend to lash out and are more prone to make [mistakes].”
 - Katie McCalla, sophomore



“[Obama's] kids will grow up as strong individuals who will be very diplomatic... They'll be very distinguished...”
 - Camellia Jahanshahi, junior



Say WHAT? How do you think Obama's presidency will affect his children?



I feel that the kids will [deal with] pressure and confusion about themselves culturally and spiritually... they'll have to keep true to themselves...”
 - Sherie Wallace, senior



“I think him and Michelle seem down to earth enough that even [in] a situation that extreme they will still be grounded.”
 - McKenzie Miller, junior



30 seconds with ... Betsy Tampke

Compiled by Julia Stapinski

Q How and when did you start knitting?

A My cousin knows how to knit and I saw her doing it once so I looked up how to do it on the internet.



Q Why didn't you petition to make a formally recognized STA club?

A We didn't want to leave our other clubs and other people probably wouldn't want to leave theirs, either.

Q How did you and Lindsay [Girardeau, sophomore] decide that you wanted to form a knitting club at STA?

A I starting bringing my knitting to school in a bag, and I talked to Lindsey and we thought it'd be fun [to start] the club.

Q Have you received any feedback from students about the club?

A I think people are really excited about it, or at least most of the people I've heard from are. It should be a lot of fun.

Online grades beneficial for state of mind

AN OPINION BY



MORGAN SAID

As the semester comes to a close and I begin organizing my binders for finals, I realize that in most of my classes I am completely blind-sighted to my class grade. I understand that this is partially my fault because I didn't keep a grade sheet throughout the semester like I promised myself I would; however, even if I would have kept this impossible grade sheet, I would like to be able to compare it with my grade emailed home to me by my teacher.

Here's the problem: teachers are busy people and don't always have time to enter and update my grades, and I'm a busy student and I don't always have time to write down my assignments on a grade sheet and calculate my percentage. Even if I somehow managed to keep myself organized enough to keep my own, updated personal grade sheet, the grade would not always be accurate due to multiple things. First, when I'm assigned a 100 point paper that hasn't been returned to me yet, my grade is not accurate because that paper could sway it significantly either way. Also, in some of my classes with weighted grades versus total points, I have tried and failed numerous times to teach myself to calculate my grade.

I think that a good way for students and teachers to meet halfway is to set up a program with online grades. Basically, students could set up an online account and password, and whenever teachers enter grades into their computers, it publishes onto the students' accounts. I think that it would be beneficial to put this program into effect at STA and would allow students more insight into their grades. Students could see their overall grade, but also their grade on each individual assignment. This would be an easy thing for teachers to do and would also eliminate the dreaded, "When are you going to send grades home?" question.

I feel that if I could see an updated grade report whenever I sign onto my computer, I could determine how much extra I need to study for a certain class to get my grade up, or how consistent I need perform to keep my grade balanced. Also, I would be more confident going into tests when I'm sure of my grade. I think that overall, this would be a good incentive for students to improve their grades. ★

AN OPINION BY



CAROLINE THOMPSON

As the volume of the church strengthens, I look at my brother at the opposite end of the pew who points to his wrist, indicating his desire to know the time. I tell him it's still another half hour before mass begins. There's tension building in the air as more people rush in to claim their seats. The room temperature is steadily increasing a degree each minute from the collective body heat. Behind me I hear a lady

bark, "This pew is taken!" before a family can even genuflect. This is Christmas Eve mass.

After seeing unfamiliar faces scurrying frantically up and down the aisles to find spots, I wonder if this is the same church I attended last Sunday or if somehow I stumbled upon a department store on Black Friday.

Although I would like to think that all of the additional people at mass are extended family and friends in town for the holidays, I have to credit most of these bodies to what are referred to as CEOs (Christmas and Easter Only), or those who attend mass twice a year. Statistics show that more Catholics attend mass on Christmas than regular Sundays. At Nativity Parish in Leawood, as many as 1,800 people attended the Christmas liturgy, while regular Sunday mass attendance averages two thirds of that number.

Therefore, consistent churchgoers are put in a tough position. With the word Catholic meaning "universal," it's important that

"It's not about who was here last week or who will be here the next; it's about appreciating who is here now..."

Catholics are inclusive of all - even those that might not attend church as regularly.

Also, as my mom often reminds us, "What if this was the night that they decide to go to mass the next Sunday because they had

such a good experience?" My concern is how can anyone have a positive experience when they are forced to arrive hours in advance only to be squished among hundreds of bodies during the liturgy? Nobody wants to begin a service with bitterness and resentment. It's so backwards from why we're actually there.

I'm not sure if there is an exact answer to my woes. It certainly isn't to restrain CEOs from going to Christmas mass.

But perhaps this is a chance for everyone to realize that it's not about who was here last week or who will be here the next; it's about appreciating who is here now and celebrating this most sacred event together.

And maybe through acquiring a new, more positive attitude, one in those 600 extra people will be inspired to come again next Sunday. ★

'Big Three' should make it on their own

AN OPINION BY



KYLIE HORNBECK

Currently, we are waiting to find out whether or not the Federal Government will bail out the "Big Three" in the automobile industry (General Motors Corp., Ford Co. and Chrysler LLC) from bankruptcy. The "Big Three" hope the Federal Government will support their \$25 billion bailout plan of which \$10 billion to \$12 billion would go to GM, \$7 billion to \$8 billion would go to Ford and \$7 billion would go to Chrysler. Specifically with \$43 billion debt GM could face liquidation by the end of the year without the Federal Government's help according to a Nov. 25 article in the *Kansas City Star*.

Even with the bailout, though, GM will be in debt and still "circling the drain." With Ford and Chrysler in conditions similar to GM, yet not as terminal, the bailout plan would essentially be an attempt to protect the three with this pecuniary support.

However, it is not necessary for the Federal Government to bail out the "Big Three." GM, Ford and Chrysler have each brought their financial problems upon themselves. They have signed shaky labor agreements that have caused them to lose money on car sales "under the assumption that the taxpayers will eventually shoulder much of the burden," a Nov. 15 article in the Heritage Foundation website stated. Taxpayers, like our parents, surely do not want funding coming from their own pockets and going towards the "Big Three's" problems. As millions in our country suffer during this time of financial crisis, we should not be giving money to these companies. It is important to take care of the people first. These billions of dollars could have potentially been given to those in need across America rather than car companies that have not been doing well financially.

Right now the Big Three have expensive



'Big Three' breakdown ★ Michigan Sen. Debbie Stabenow speaks with Chrysler's CEO and Chairman Robert Nardelli at the Senate Committee on Banking and Urban Affairs hearing on the domestic auto industry on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Nov. 18. Chrysler is one of three major car companies facing bankruptcy PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

top-heavy management and bureaucracy led business structures which will not help them even if the Federal Government bails them out. Besides, the bailout would not ensure that the car companies would stay out of bankruptcy. So if the bailout bill passes and these automobile companies continue their financial declines, billions of dollars could go to waste. The companies should be left alone to go into complete bankruptcy so that they can take care of their inner problems and work outward.

Despite the thousands of job cuts that could result from this crisis if the Federal Government does not come to the rescue, the bailout would not truly help the "Big Three." A time for restructuring is needed and taxpayers would be better off.

Although some may argue that a bailout could save the "Big Three" and get them back on their feet, I would argue that they need to get themselves out of their own mess. Bankruptcy could give them time for the reorganization they need to straighten out their issues. In this time of financial crisis, taxpayers have enough to worry about. The "Big Three" need to figure out how to fix their problem themselves.

Until we reach the age of 18, our parents are our means of monetary support. These automobile companies are all run by big boys and girls who I think should be able to take care of themselves. The Federal Government is not responsible and the Federal Government is not their mother! ★

The State of the Children: Obama's daughters live in spotlight

AN OPINION BY



BIANCA DANG

In recent decades, the idea of “family values” politicians has attracted media and public attention.

President-elect Barack Obama's image as a family man helped him win the presidency. It's almost time for his family to feel the results. From knowing what puppy the girls will have, to what school they will attend, to what their Secret Service code names are, any privacy Obama's girls have will be sharply deplete over the next four years. In January, Obama will bring his two daughters, Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7, to Washington with him. Sasha is the youngest child living in the White House since President John F. Kennedy's presidency.

Kennedy entered the White House with his daughter Caroline, 3, and John Jr., his newborn son. Kennedy's freshness and his small children made the presidency seem more youthful and spirited than before. The White House had a swimming pool, tree house and pre-school right outside the its lawn. This gave JFK the image of a “family man.” He was one of the most important men in the world but still made time to go home and play with his kids.

Obama's newness, his young children, and his plan for family normalcy all mirror Kennedy's step into the presidency. Obama is the dad who brings his kids to dance class and goes to parent teacher conferences and makes his kids do chores. Unlike their attitude toward the Kennedys, today tabloids have the Obamas in full-page articles. With today's cutthroat media, the Obama girls



Life in the public eye ★ President-elect Barack Obama's daughters Malia, from left, Sasha, and wife Michelle celebrate winning the presidential election after his acceptance speech at his Election Night Rally in Grant Park, Chicago, Ill., Nov. 4. Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7, will potentially live in the White House through their teen years. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

lack the privacy Kennedys received. This disregard for confidentiality, especially for presidential children, has become more common over the past few decades.

In recent years, presidents' children have been targeted by the media as instruments in the presidency. The media covered President George W. Bush's daughters, Jenna and Barbara, for underage drinking. In 1999, shortly before President Clinton's impeachment, People Magazine ran

a cover story on Clinton's daughter, Chelsea. In response to the story, the president and wife Hillary both responded that they were “deeply saddened” by the story and the break in then 19-year-old Chelsea's privacy. This dehumanization of the children will not change during Obama's time in the White House.

Obama's presidency means no more discretion for his children, though Obama and his wife Michelle plan to keep their family normal.

The girls will continue with chores, they have an 8:30 p.m. bedtime, they will have to take care of their dog and they will only get to watch one hour of television a day. Though the Obamas have good intentions the media will still target the two young girls; the paparazzi will follow them, just like they do any other celebrity.

The exploitation of teen pop stars and young actors and the media following every aspect of their lives has depleted privacy for all people in the

public eye. It's no longer the time of JFK when a woman was seen walking into this hotel room. The woman was not JFK's wife, but the reporter's editor killed the story because the President's private engagements were of limits. Today, everyone is fighting for the latest scoop and Obama's girls will get caught in the crossfire. Now Sasha and Malia will be seen as objects that either help or hurt his presidency, and that's a shame. ★

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Teachers join in the race to finals

With grades due soon after exams, teachers fight stress

by TAYLOR BROWN
Copy Editor

With only a few weeks left before finals, English teacher Stephen Himes came to an important realization. Being new at STA, Himes was initially unaware that teachers must turn in their final grades for a class just one day after the last day of exams. For Himes, this meant that he would have, at most, three days to grade



Himes

87 students' essays, which was his original plan for the final exam in his world literature and accelerated world literature classes. This tight schedule forced Himes to rethink his plan for finals and rearrange the class' syllabi.

"Originally, grading the final was going to consist of plowing through 400 or 300 pages of students' work which translates to about 10 hours of me on the couch," Himes said. "It would be impossible to be able to grade the exam in time."

With final grades due for teachers on Friday at 9 a.m., just one day

after the last day of exams, it is only natural that grading the tests is a main concern.

Therefore, Himes is not alone in the stress that revolves around grading a final exam. Many teachers agree that it is a major element in the thought process of creating, preparing and presenting a final. Science teacher Mary Montag agrees that the most stressful element of giving a final exam is "getting them graded in time for the deadline."



Montag

Himes' conflict regarding his exam outline for the world literature classes illustrates the stress that revolves around grading finals. His original plan included focusing on a main character from each of the two novels the students read this semester. Instead of presenting a comparative essay prompt on the characters, Himes had to find an alternative plan that would be a more timely option for grading. Not only did this entail reorganizing the final, but also re-evaluating the courses' syllabi.

Besides grading a final exam, teachers must consider other factors when they prepare their syllabi and tests.

"Ideally a final should isolate a few skills that over the course of the semester you want students to master so your entire curriculum points toward the final," Himes said.

Montag agrees but includes the factor of time and fairness.

"I always have to be aware that my students only have an hour," Montag said. "I want to make sure it is challenging, truly comprehensive but fair."

Some students overlook the opposite end of the spectrum regarding finals, according to sophomore Maddie Lueke. Due to the stress they are under when it comes to taking the exams, they do not realize the stress teachers are also under. Lueke agrees that stress is her biggest challenge.

"I'm really stressed, because some of my classes are really hard," Lueke said. "Everyone I've talked to has felt really stressed out about finals, because all of a sudden they are right around the corner."

However, she agrees that the teachers' work is often forgotten.

"I think that students really tend to overlook the work that teachers put into finals," Lueke said. "First off, students don't understand how much work it takes to put together and grade a final that will test students over things they have had to review over the past 4 months. It is just as stressful for them as it is for us."

Despite the amounts of pressure accumulated on both sides, teachers do not forget their students' levels of stress.

"Teachers put a great deal of thought and time into creating finals," Montag said. "Teachers are very aware of the stress students are under but final exams are wonderful preparation for college." ★

Teachers weigh in

Q: What's the most important aspect to your subject's final? How do you incorporate that onto the exam?



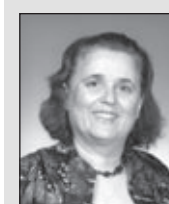
"Reading comprehension and grammar [I incorporate] reading comprehension activities other activities like filling in the blanks or forming complete sentences."
-Ms. Axton, Spanish teacher



"It depends on what math class it is. I teach geometry and algebra 2. For geometry, it is knowing the definitions and postulates. For algebra, it is the process of solving equations. This is incorporated through different problems on the final. For geometry, proofs and examples of how the proofs work is of course incorporated on the final."
-Ms. Clark, math teacher



"Basic concepts of each chapter. I try and see if I can get questions that you have to have some background knowledge to answer but you also need to be able to see the big picture in order to respond."
-Mr. Whitney, social studies teacher



"Understanding the concepts of moral thinking and Jesus' message and the ability of using academic language in doing it. I usually use vocabulary and matching for the academic language aspect and essays explaining two or three big concepts."
-Ms. Hansbrough, religion teacher

Teams place high, success adds up

Science and math teams create team dynamic, do well early in seasons

by SUSIE ANCONA
Staff Writer

On Nov. 1, juniors Celeste Bremen and, Stacy Hymer and sophomore Libby O'Neil sat in three consecutive chairs anxiously trying to configure the best possible answers for the mathematics portion of the Science and Math Challenge at Avila University. Quiet intensity filled the room as the Powerpoint projector stood still and a timer sat across from each of the nine teams. It was up to these three girls to bring it home for STA's science quiz bowl team.

The three Stars placed first in mathematics that day, as well as second in physics bringing them to third place overall in the competition. According to moderator Mary Montag, the girls typically place in the top in at least one category, such as physics, and second or third place overall.

"I think [these teams] reflect STA well because we always do a great job," Bremen said. "Most importantly, we always have fun when we do it, which is the best part about it."

The science quiz bowl team is not the only academic team that successfully represents STA. Although the math team season has just commenced, they are in the lead in their division. The team's next competition, the Great Plains Math League Competition, will take place at Johnson County Community College Dec. 6. In the past, the math team has been District champions at the Missouri Math League Competition every year since 2004.

"I had an excellent group of seniors who grad-

uated last year," math team moderator Jo Weller said. "This year's team is also strong. I expect them to do very well."

Bremen, who is also a member of the math team, claims the math team is more individually focused than the science quiz bowl team. She described some math team competitions as being set in a classroom, where everyone has their own desk, making it even more intense than science competitions. Senior member Margaret Schneider says she tries "to do her best" in the individual portions of competitions.

"You have to rely fully on what you know and you can't use the other people around you who are in different levels of math," Schneider said. "So if you have a question that's more geometry based, you can't ask someone who has been in geometry more recently. So it's completely up to you to do well."

Both teams contain a wide range of students from all different grade levels. Although the math team is more individually focused, Weller is "always amazed at how well these girls work as a team." Montag also stressed the concept of a team and the importance of that "cohesive" aspect.

"Each year there seems to be a dynamic," Montag said. "The girls enjoy each other, have fun, are extremely competitive, and even practice outside of school [for competitions]."

According to Bremen, "you have to want to enjoy it and want to be there." Weller appreciates the efficient preparation the girls receive in their math classes, so that way they do not necessarily have to "practice" for events. Montag and Bremen mentioned that because these academic teams do not meet every day, a prior knowledge and enjoyment of math or science is "required" to some degree.



Calculate that ★ Senior Martha Tilmon, left, and junior Colleen Riley listen to their math team coach Ms. Jo Weller at a math competition Dec. 6 at Johnson County Community College. STA's math team placed overall fifth out of ninth, but no one placed individually. TRACY BURNS-YOCUM

"You have to think outside of the box," Bremen said. "It complements what you've done in the classroom but requires a different sort of thinking."

Ultimately, these teams serve as a place of opportunity and fun for the girls. Bremen, who does not participate in school sports, claims her

membership on both teams as a different way to get involved and show school spirit. According to Montag, whenever competitions are coming up, they always show up excited and confident.

"[The girls] come in all different shapes, sizes and loves, and I think that's one of the things that really shine," Montag said. ★



"Access Alcohol" series:
Part 1: Getting alcohol from parents/adults
 Part 2: Teens with fake identification
 Part 3: Liquor stores that sell to minors

Shhh... ★ Former American Medical Association (AMA) president J. Edward Hill states that even if a parent is present at a high school party where alcohol is served, they still cannot completely control the actions of an intoxicated teen. However, according to an adult poll by AMA, 71 percent of parents reject providing teenagers alcohol. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALLISON POINTER

Adults help teenagers gain access to alcohol

National study shows adults as main source of alcohol for minors

by SYDNEY DEATHERAGE
 Managing Editor of News

According to two nationwide polls released by the American Medical Association (AMA), adults are the most common source of alcohol for teens ages 13 to 18, especially girls. The poll of teens revealed how often and easily minors obtain alcohol, and in addition displayed parental perceptions of and behaviors toward underage drinking.

The relatively high averages of the AMA polls contrasted with Missouri law enforcement records. According to the 2007 fiscal year report released by the Missouri Judiciary Crime System on their website, there were zero charges of providing alcohol to a minor filed or disposed, or in which a defendant was found guilty. This discrepancy indicates that law enforcement faces difficulties when parents or adults provide to minors.

"Policies and law enforcement efforts to stop minors from obtaining alcohol are important, but this data reveals how easily avoided

those policies and laws can be when legal-aged buyers are the leading source of alcohol for children," former AMA president J. Edward Hill said in a press release. "And even parents who do not buy for their children could be unwitting sources if their alcohol at home is left unsecured."

According to the adult poll by the AMA, 71 percent of parents with children ages 12 to 20 did not think teen drinking was okay even if a parent was present. However, 76 percent thought it likely that teens obtained alcohol from parents of peers. According to the teen poll, 21 percent of teens had attended a party or gathering where minors were drinking alcohol provided by a parent and 27 percent of teens had attended such a party where minors were drinking and the parent was present.

In a survey conducted by The Dart of ___ students, STA's statistics reflect, and in some cases surpass, the national average.

When asked if they had ever attended a house, party, or gathering in which alcohol was provided by a parent or family member, the following percentage of students answered yes:

- 36.8 percent of freshmen
- 55 percent of sophomores
- 57.5 percent of juniors

• 83 percent of seniors
 When asked if they had been to a house, party or gathering in which alcohol was present or provided for minors and a parent or guardian was present, the following percentage of students said yes:

- 39.5 percent of freshmen
- 45 percent of sophomores
- 68.2 percent of juniors
- 86.8 percent of seniors

"Parents allowing underage children to drink under their supervision are under a dangerous misperception," Hill said. "Injuries and car accidents after such parent-hosted parties remind us that no parent can completely control the actions of intoxicated youth, during or after a party. And the main message children hear is that drinking illegally is okay."

According to Missouri State Liquor and Tobacco Control supervisor Joe Hodgkin, it is not illegal for parents to provide liquor to their own kids. However, these parents cannot provide liquor to any other minors under any circumstances.

"It's illegal to allow [a minor] to drink in a building or piece of property that you own," Hodgkin said. "[Adults] can be charged for that; that's a class B misdemeanor. If there's somebody that's having a house party - their kids are there, their kids' friends are there and

they're under 21 - not only can the kids be arrested but the parents [or adults] will be arrested also."

The national survey, which found that girls nearly always ranked higher than boys in obtaining alcohol, cited that two out of three teens find it easy to obtain alcohol from their homes without their parents' knowledge. One-third said they find it easy to obtain alcohol from their own parents knowingly, and even easier from a friend's parent (40 percent). One in four teens have attended parties or gatherings where underage teens drank in front of parents.

Again, the school's statistics reflect and surpass the national average.

When asked if a parent or family member ever provided alcohol for them or their friends, the following percentage of students said yes:

- 18.4 percent of freshmen
- 25 percent of sophomores
- 24.2 percent of juniors
- 49.1 percent of seniors

When asked if they had ever taken alcohol from their home or that of a friend's without parental permission, the following percentage of students answered yes:

- 23.7 percent of freshmen
- 42.5 percent of sophomores
- 45.5 percent of juniors

• 64.2 percent of seniors

In regards to the national survey, Hill praised the majority of parents who rejected providing an environment for teen drinking.

The AMA applauds parents who discourage and disallow underage drinking," said Hill. "We hope that such parents willing to stand up for their children's health will be more vocal in their

BY THE NUMBERS

42.1% of freshmen describe their parents as "very strict" in regards to drinking

68.2% of juniors said yes when asked if minors should be able to drink alcohol if under parental or a peer's parent's supervision

86.6% of STA seniors have been to a party where alcohol was provided to them by a family member

See ALCOHOL, page 2

at a glance in 300 words

Modeled after Brady Dennis's original 300 word series, this series captures people and moments in 300 words: no more, no less.

by HALEY VONDEKAMP
 Lifestyles Editor

Gender Game

Ali Clauss tried figure skating but it was not fast enough. It was slow, tiresome, and careful - everything that hockey is not.

Downstairs below the rink, Ali prepares for the game alone while her teammates get dressed in the locker room above. After six years, being the only girl on the team doesn't faze her.

Ali applies her make-up before putting on the rest of her gear, knowing full well what her opponents think. A girl? Playing hockey?

With us? She feeds their naivety with a fresh coat of mascara. She plays up their misconceptions, disproving them on the ice come game time.

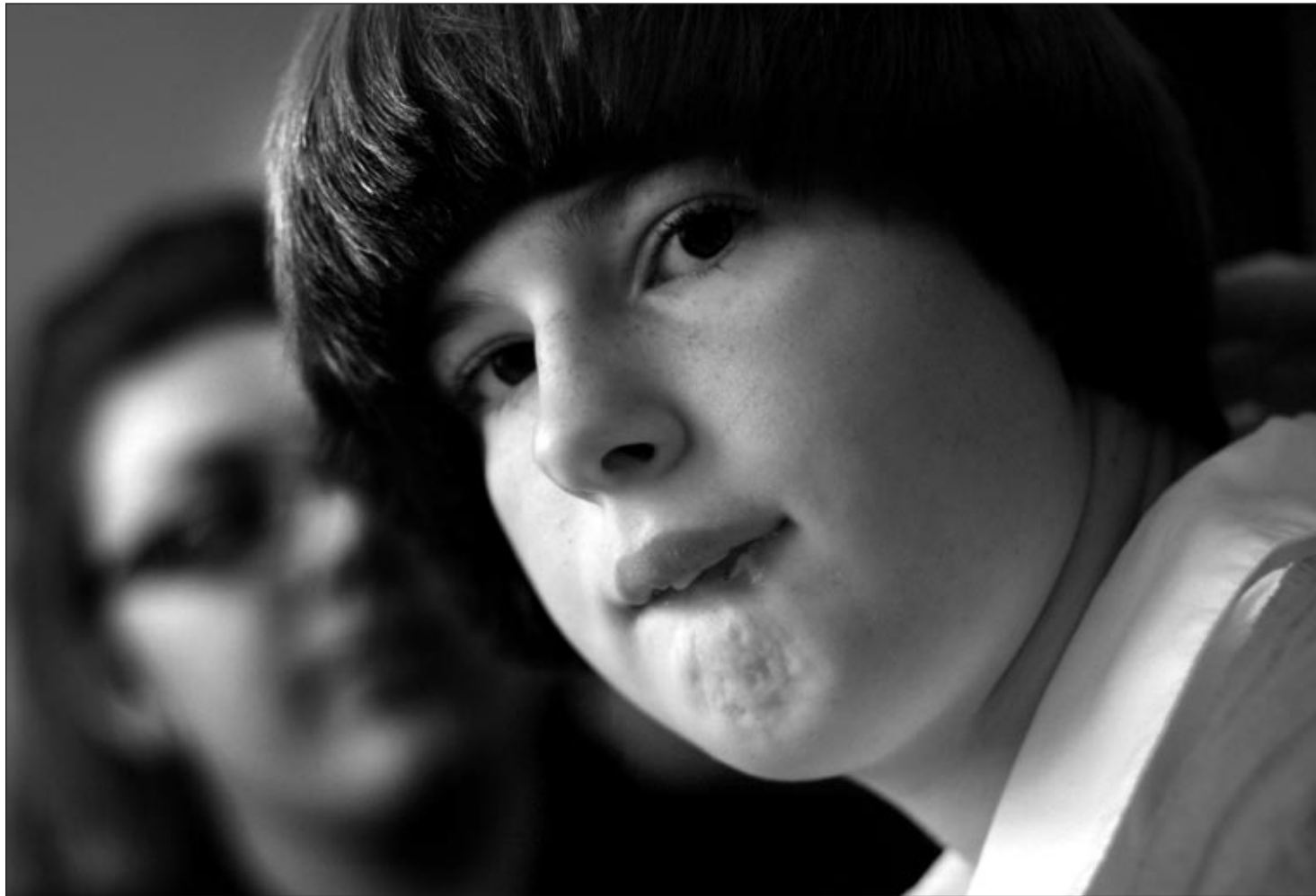
She wonders whom she'll face today: the boys afraid to hurt her or the ones out to do nothing less. Will it be the team who tentatively avoids her or the one who goes after her specifically? Unbeknownst to whomever she may play, the hard hits are what she's still in it for; the intense physicality she can't get playing with girls.

Ali is far from intimidated though. Thanks to growing up playing in boy's leagues, she doesn't notice things like size anymore. She

doesn't have much to be scared of anyhow with a team of "big brothers" protecting her, saving her from the big hits. She ignores the inevitable underestimation, and tunes out the rude jeers from the occasional obnoxious opposing fan base. While to them she's a novelty, to her teammates she's just another defender, just another name on the roster.

The final buzzer sounds. The players line up, slapping the hands of their opponents. The end is her favorite part. The implied "you just got beat by a girl" rings in her head, but she keeps this sentiment to herself. Skating past the last player, she conjures up a polite "good game" instead. ★

Job transforms to passion



Face time ★ After eating yogurt, a granola bar, and toast with McCalla, Hammond prepares to go on a walk. "She has a really unique personality," McCalla said. "I understand what she's trying to convey to me, even though she can't talk." PHOTO BY MORGAN SAID

Katie McCalla, employed by Another Day works with special education children

by MADALYNE BIRD
Staff Writer

"Hi Kailey!" said sophomore Katie McCalla as she entered the backseat of the Hammond family car. She was pleased to be rewarded with one of Kailey's smiles.

Kailey Hammond is just one of three children and young adults that McCalla works with. McCalla is a respite care attendant employed by Another Day. Another Day is an agency that provides assistance for families with children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. That family then has a certain amount of hours a week they can use based on the severity of their child's needs.

"It is sort of like a baby-sitting job, I'm hired to keep an eye on her and I do everything for her that she couldn't do herself," McCalla said. "I love it because I want to pursue special education as a career. It's nice to know that I love something now because I know that I won't be unhappy about doing that for a living."

McCalla explains that although she loves the job, it's anything but easy.

"This job is challenging because it has really taught me to have patience because it can be very frustrating at times," McCalla said.

Kailey, who is now a sophomore at Shawnee Mission East High School, has severe, high-functioning autism.

"Right now she has the body of a fifteen year old girl, the typical shape and size, but her mind is stuck at the stage of a twelve month old," said Mr. Dan Hammond, Kailey's father.

Her disability leaves her without the ability to speak, but Kailey is able to communicate in other ways.

"Kailey usually communicates to us by using loud noises, physically showing us what she needs, and sign language," McCalla said. "But



Daily stroll ★ Sophomore Katie McCalla, left, walks with fifteen-year-old Kailey Hammond down the street from Hammond's house Dec. 7. "Hammond was born with severe autism and mental retardation, and walking is her only form of exercise," McCalla said. PHOTO BY MORGAN SAID

it's very difficult working with a child who can't speak because it's hard guessing what they need at that moment."

Sitting at the table in their family's kitchen, Kailey is wearing a smile, happily observing as people file in and out of the room.

"Are you hungry Kailey?" Mrs. Marianne Hammond, Kailey's mother asks, setting a bowl of soup in front of her daughter.

Kailey begins to eat but she soon points to her drink. McCalla holds the drink in her hand, holding it out to Kailey and asks, "Can you show me how we say drink Kailey?"

Kailey reaches for the drink, but McCalla holds it back.

"Can you show me how you say drink, Kailey?" McCalla repeats.

Kailey signs "drink" with her hand and she is rewarded with McCalla holding the straw up to her lips.

"Repetition is key when you're working with kids with disabilities, because the more you repeat it to them, the more they remember," said McCalla. "We also have very strict routines with the kids because they need to know what is going on at that minute. They can be very easily agitated if that routine is broken, because it's what they know and is what they are familiar with."

After lunch is finished, McCalla begins to work with Kailey on a bead exercise.

"We use a string that she slides foam beads on to, it really has no significance other than it

See MCCALLA, page 22

Study links racy TV dramas to teen pregnancy

Shows with sexual content said to increase pregnancy risk for teens who tune in

by MICHELLE REICHMEIER
Staff Writer

Teenagers who view television programs with increased sexual content are twice as likely as teens watching less of this material to become pregnant, according to the first study to link explicit programming to teen pregnancy.

The Research and Development Corporation interviewed 2,003 12 to 17-year-olds in 2001. Following up again in 2002 and 2004, 744 of the adolescents said they had engaged in sexual intercourse. From the 718 who shared their pregnancy histories, 58 girls and 33 boys, said they had experienced a pregnancy or had impregnated someone during those three years.

"Although researchers are not sure that exposure to messages about sex in the mass media alters adolescents' behavior, repeated exposure likely affects their attitudes and beliefs," said Dr. Jennifer Oliver, an associate professor of psychology at Rockhurst University.

Sexual content in the media has doubled throughout the past few years. While some may argue the connection is obvious, researchers found a strong association with the media exposing explicit content on television and an increased rate of teen pregnancies.

"The media is one of the biggest agents of socialization, especially today," sociology student junior Anne Marie Whitehead said. "I don't really watch a lot of TV because of all the bad messages it sends through its most watched shows."

Despite decades of declining rates, these pregnancy statistics are rising, increasing concern and fueling a debate on exactly what factors are to blame. The U.S. possesses the highest teen pregnancy rates, as nearly one million American women between the ages of 15 to 19 become pregnant each year.

"One tremendous problem with interpreting the results of these research studies is that it is extremely difficult to disentangle cause and effect, partly because adolescents choose which mass media they are exposed to and also because other variables have not been controlled," Oliver said.

Although television cannot entirely account for these increasing numbers, the study provides evidence that it is playing a direct role.

"[Teenagers] watch TV everyday, so what they see can be a big deal and really have an influence," junior Cierra Marzett said. "People like to watch drama, and there's a lot of drama that comes with having sex. People want to watch it."

See PREGNANCY, page 22



Girls and gossip ★ Sophomore Amy Wendland, left, watches "Gossip Girl" with sophomore Molly Kenney. The girls tune in to the show, which contains an abundance of sexual content, almost weekly. PHOTO BY HALEY VONDEMKAMP



For Mom:

DVD collection. Find your a few of your mom's favorite movies from her high school days and buy them in the DVD version. (about \$50)

Yoga pass. Help Mom center her life. Buy her access to a yoga class. (30 days for \$30 at Yoga Fix)

Gratitude Box. Wrap a shoe box in holiday paper and have each family member contribute notes of thanks, photos, ect..

Is shopping adding to your end of semester stress?

For Dad:

Office chair massager: Help Dad relax on the job. Get him a back massager that attaches to his chair. (about \$100)

Pocket squares: Old school is back in style, make or buy your dad a hip, silk pocket square. (\$35 at Brooks Brothers)

Yard work coupon: Give your dad a makeshift coupon promising two or three hours of your work in the yard.



Holiday gift guide

For Significant Others:

iTrip with playlist: Create a playlist of favorite songs your significant other can groove to in the car using a new iTrip. (\$20- \$60)

Nano-chromatic: Ipod's new nano comes in over a dozen bright colors. (\$149.99)

Homemade dinner: Scrounge up a fun, unique recipe and schedule a dinner for two.



Aim to please with these creative gift ideas.

For Best Friends:

Custom made t-shirts: Inside jokes are always better big. Create your own design print it on matching t-shirts. (\$22.45 each)

Photo album: Buy a standard photo album and decorate it with paint pens. Help to fill it with favorite photos.(\$10-\$20)

Concert tickets: Surprise your friend with a pair of tickets. A Its a present both of you can enjoy. (\$30-\$200)



Need a little Christmas?

STA's Kitchen:
Students share their favorite Christmas recipes for the holiday season.



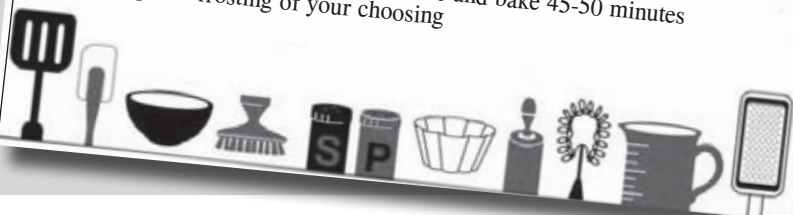
Cele Fryer-Oreo Pie

1 gallon peppermint ice cream softened
Mix 40 double stuff Oreos with melted butter until smooth
Pour mixture into pie pan and spread evenly
Scoop ice cream into crust
Crush 6 more Oreos and spread on top
Pour 1/4 cup melted hot fudge over pie
Place pie in freezer for 2 hours, or until frozen.



Amanda Ottolini - mint brownies

Mix cream cheese, 1/4 cup sugar, 1 egg, mint, food coloring
Melt 1 cup butter and 4oz chocolate over low heat
Add 2 cups sugar, 2 tsp vanilla, 4 eggs, and flour
Spoon cheese filing over mixture and bake 45-50 minutes
Spread frosting of your choosing



Anna Gigliotti - Pasta

Prepare Cannoli noodles
Stuff noodles with Ricotta cheese and shaved chocolate
Powder sugar on top
Cook noodles in boiling water
Once ready, allow cooling
After cooling, add shredded cheese on top of noodles



time to give

Economic recession drives more people to local charities

Charities get creative to fund new programs

Kansas City non-profits design new fund-raising techniques to meet greater demand for services

by CAROLINE QUINN
Editor-in-Chief

As everyday Americans struggle to pay home mortgages and buy groceries, it may seem logical to put charity giving at the bottom of the budget this holiday season.

Unfortunately for thousands of nonprofit agencies all over the country, this situation has created a two-fold problem this winter. With an unstable Wall Street and flailing housing market, charities are not only experiencing a decrease in donations, but a record increase in demand for services.

Ms. Rozanne Prather, executive director of the Catholic Charities Foundation of Kansas City, has seen local families' inability to meet basic needs rise from last year. Catholic Charities sponsors Project Shining Star, a system which connects donors with people's wish list for Christmas. Prather said most of the lists are modest, with items many people would consider necessities.

"Last year we served about 800 people, and this year we are doing about 1300 people," Prather said.

Prather stressed her view that more people are starting to feel the impact of the economic recession, and many are calling themselves middle class for the first time. Director of public relations at the United Way of Greater Kansas City Ron Howard believes the economic force has hit people like never before.

"A lot of people are unemployed or find themselves in need of help and have never asked for help before," Howard said. "Some are homeless, and are needing to go to food pantries for the first time in their lives."

Many struggling individuals are coming to Harvesters Community Food Network. Harvesters is experiencing a significant rise

in need for services, according to the organization's communications manager Karen Siebert.

"We say this is as bad as we've seen it at least the past 15 years or so," Siebert said. "We usually calculate about a 6 percent increase in need every year. But this year, agencies are reporting a nearly 50 percent increase in demand."

With more Kansas City citizens suffering than in years before, both Catholic Charities and Harvesters, agencies under United Way's umbrella of organizations, have had to devise new programs to fill in where families cannot.

Catholic Charities' new foreclosure intervention counseling has been a popular service in the past several months, Prather said. The federally funded program works directly with clients at risk of losing their home, and Catholic Charities affiliates negotiate with lenders. This comes at a time when Missouri's foreclosures are up 2.4 percent and Kansas' up 30.7 percent from the same time last year.

"We will work with lenders to renegotiate terms so people can stay in the house," Prather said. "Banks at this point would rather have that steady income and have people make payments than write it off as a debt."

Harvesters has fallen back on its retail pickup program. This involves workers going around to local grocery stores, like Sam's Club and Costco, on a weekly or even daily basis to pick up any food the stores can no longer sell. Siebert said the program is labor and resource intensive.

"We try to avoid doing it because of the cost," Siebert said. "But we are in such need of food [at Harvesters] that we have to go out and get it wherever we can."

While the new programs provide much needed relief to the city, raising money to fund these services in a time of economic stress is not easy. To ensure it would meet its \$40.5 million goal for the year, the United Way of Greater Kansas City had to create fund raising techniques the organization never used before.

The Kansas City United Way came up with United Way Day in response to the half a million dollar shortage near the

end of the campaign drive Nov. 20. For this event, United Way of Greater Kansas City asked companies to allow employees to wear jeans to work if they donated \$5. More than 100 companies adopted the event, and Howard said the day not only raised additional money for the campaign, but provided visibility for struggling in the community.

"We're not sure yet exactly how much money we raised [on United Way Day]," Howard said. "I can't specifically say, but we can estimate a minimum of \$50,000."

United Way of also produced a flash video, something it had never had to do. The video was sent in an e-mail to thank people who had already donated and provide those who had not given with a link to make an online denotation. The organization sent the video out the last week of the campaign to make a final attempt to reach the goal.

The United Way of Greater Kansas City announced Nov. 19 that it surpassed its \$40.5 million dollar goal by more than \$29,000, which set a fund raising record in the Kansas City area. Catholic Charities still needs to find donors to match up with the families in Project Shining Star before Christmas, but Prather said she feels confident "we will get it taken care of."

Prather believes the relative success of Kansas City non profits thus far demonstrates how the community cares about the needs of others. She said organizations may see an impact after the New Year, but hopes using the angle that there are always people who are suffering more will continue to work.

At Harvester's, Siebert is not as confident. She said the financial and food donations during the current holiday season are holding up, but she expected this because most Kansas City citizens keep Harvesters in mind during November and December. Siebert worries, however, that once the "giving" season ends, donations and volunteering will decline sharply.

"We feed nearly 60,000 people a week through our network," Siebert said. "Come Monday morning, we'll have to feed 60,000 people again. It doesn't stop after December 31." ★

- Less donations
- People seem to be more reluctant to give money away
- Volunteers are half of last year

"More donations come in during the holiday season," Weibe said. "Donations are still strong, mostly from..."

Salvation Army

- More people are coming in looking for clothes due to cold weather.
- Not as many donations

"Working [at Salvation Army] is extremely rewarding," Strom said. "Especially this time of year; we normally get a ton of donations once the weather gets colder. ca..."

blast
to christmas
past
COMPILED by CAROLINE QUINN
Editor-in-Chief

The charity donation statistics from "Giving USA" annual reports from the previous four years.

2004
Total charitable giving:
\$248.52 billion
and **\$187.92** billion
came from individuals

2005
Total charitable giving:
\$260.28 billion
and **\$7.37** billion
came from Katrina relief

2006
Total charitable giving:
\$260.28 billion
and **\$7.37** billion
came from Katrina relief

it's OUR story

The following are narrations from three local charities, sharing how giving this holiday season looks different from years past. COMPILED by TAYLOR IRWIN
Staff Writer

Goodwill

- Received more clothes this year – people are trying to sell more clothing to Goodwill and other thrift stores
- People want money to spend, so they are cutting back
- There is a more of a demand for brand name clothing and accessories this time of year

Source: Susanne Phillips, volunteer

"More and more people are coming in and shopping for brand names at cheap prices," Phillips said.

"Mainly to save money – our sales have doubled this year compared to this time last [year]."

Operation Breakthrough

more hesitant
as many as

- Assuming more people are wanting to spend more hours at work for extra cash for the upcoming Christmas season

Source: Jonathon Strom, volunteer

s always
the holiday
rg said.
ill coming
regulars.

We've noticed the amounts are smaller this year, but not by a whole lot – and of course we're still grateful to get what we do."

ion y

- More people are coming in that can't afford more expensive stores, trying to save money

Source: Lillian Weiberg, volunteer

this year donations are little slower, though. I think mainly people aren't spending as much money, they're keeping what they have."

your how to: donating

COMPILED by TAYLOR IRWIN
Staff Writer

who
they are

where
they are located

what
they want

Operation Breakthrough

3039 Troost St.
(816) 756-3511

money donations

Salvation Army

3637 Broadway Ave.
(816) 756-1455

gently used winter clothes

Goodwill

8929 Wornall Rd.
(816) 444-5776

winter clothes, designer brands,

Harvesters

3801 Topping Ave.
(816) 929-3000

non-perishable meals

Catholic Charities

1112 Broadway Ave.
(816) 221-4377

"shining star" donors

2006
charitable giving:
95.02 billion
and **75.6** percent
from individuals

2005
Total charitable giving:
\$306.39 billion
and **\$102.32** billion
came from religious places

Coach points the team in new direction

Take a peek behind locker room door during varsity basketball team discussion

by SHAUGHNESSY MILLER
Staff Writer

The Stars varsity basketball team played Notre Dame de Sion in the second round of the Lee's Summit North tournament Dec. 3 and lost 26-52. Take a peek inside the locker room discussion led by Coach Jamie Collins during and after the game:

At halftime the score was 13-29 and the feeling inside the locker room was tense.

Coach Jamie Collins was disappointed with the rebounding efforts of the team:

"I watched offensive board and I see one person. Just because someone comes in and blocks you out it's like 'oh, okay you can have it. I'm blocked out. Oh well.' No one ever tries to roll or fake 'em out or anything to go get an offensive board. We just say 'okay I'll give up.' High school players - no level - can you just shoot and everybody stand around and watch! We need to react."

When three shooters from the other team continually scored three-point shots against STA, Collins encouraged her players to guard them and force them to dribble or pass instead of shooting:

"Make them put it on the floor! Okay [number 25] hit two. Sometimes, remember what we talked about, we let 'em put one out. They shoot it, they hit one on ya, okay 'I need to go. She hit two. Hey, next time I'll tell you what, I'm going out and she's not getting another shot.' They'll put it on the floor and she's gonna have to drive."

Collins fired up the team before they headed back out for the second half:

"Come on now how bad do you want it? You want to call it off you let me know. Come on!"

At the end of the game, the locker room was full of regret and anger because of the loss.

Collins critiqued her own performance as a coach as well as the athletes' performance during the game:

"I think I've been too soft. I mean honestly, in self-evaluation, I've been too soft. I've let you get away with the little stuff in practice. I do. And that's on me. And I have to look in the mirror and say 'I did that.'"

Later, she reemphasized her point:

"You just have to get better. I don't know what to tell you. Really, that's what it's all about. Myself included. You think I don't go home and hammer myself? You're crazy if you don't think I do. You're crazy. Because I do. And I've got to figure it out. What am I not doing? 'Cause that's my job. What St. Teresa's pays me to do."

Collins created a new offense this season for her team. She discussed the team's follow through:

"It's those little things that you think aren't important. So we can't run anything because we're not executing. You have to at least attempt it. Then you can think 'oh it's not working!' But we're not attempting. It's the fundamental little things."

The team seemed to agree with her frustration about their execution:

"I don't think we're doing it because the offense is so hard," sophomore Caroline Gray commented.

"And maybe that's my fault. Again, putting too many layers in. Maybe I should say we'll go with one or two layers and that is it until we get those down. And then we'll move to the next level. Have you ever heard of 'paralysis by analysis?' We've got the ball and we're paralyzed because we're trying to analyze instead of just reacting. You're not sure what to do," Collins said.

Collins hoped to move the team to do better next time:

"Act like you wanna be at basketball practice, like you wanna play basketball for St. Teresa's. I just don't see that passion, that desire. Instead of 'oh I'll just show up.' I just need to see something more. Come on. Y'all are just too good for that. Stars - one, two, three. Stars!" ★



Leading the way ★ Varsity basketball coach Jamie Collins gives instructions to her team as they scrimmage each other during practice Monday. For her second year as coach, Collins hopes to improve the team's offense, as the season begins 1-3. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**

Stars start off season with a new offense but losing record

by MOLLIE POINTER
Staff Writer

Varsity basketball head coach Jamie Collins said she had been running the same offense for as long as she can remember and was ready for a change.

"I felt that we needed something different," second year coach Collins said. "Instead of having to memorize 10 to 15 different plays, [the new offense] allows them to just play basketball."

The STA varsity basketball program is running a new offense than it has in seasons past. All teams, freshman, JV and varsity, will carry out the new offense starting this year. Collins hopes to improve the basketball program since freshman and JV players continuing on will be familiar with the teams' offense strategies.

With a record of 1-3, senior varsity captain Abby Duethman said the team is trying not to get discouraged. According to Duethman, they had three tough first games, losing all of them, in the Lee's Summit North Invitational Tournament Dec. 1 through Dec. 5.

On Wednesday, varsity turned things around in game one of the Blue Springs Tournament with a score of 46-38 against Blue Springs South High School. Varsity will continue on in the tournament scheduled to have played Blue Valley North High School Thursday.

"I think that the offense clicked better," Duethman said after their win against Blue Springs South. "We've been practicing it more and more."

The new offense consists of players moving around the outside and improvising where necessary. The team is currently working on three different types of the new offense.

"There are more movements like cutting towards the basket," Duethman said. "When you pass, you move and everyone has to react from what you do."

According to senior varsity cocaptain Paige Kuhlmann, varsity seems to be having the most difficulty understanding the new offense.

"Freshmen and JV are really doing well [with the new offense]," Kuhlmann said. "Varsity is struggling the most."

According to Duethman, it is just a matter of time before the team understands what is going on.

"Last year was more of set plays that we ran," Duethman said. "Now we have control of the offense and that's hard for us."

With more practice, Collins believes the team will be able to run the offense the way it is meant to be run.

"Right now [the offense] is a work in progress," Collins said. "It's hard for the players because they're still learning."

Collins said the outcome of the final game in the Lee's Summit North tournament, only losing by four points to Lee's Summit North, reflected the new offense just takes practice and perseverance.

"We showed up," Collins said. "We didn't turnover the ball, we shot more and played better defense."

After the Lee's Summit North tournament, both captains and sophomore Caroline Gray approached Collins about how the offense was not working. The decision was made to cut down on the amount of new formations.

"Everyone was just really confused and flustered," Duethman said.

Kuhlmann agreed. "We decided that we would just perfect the first couple of levels before we move on," Kuhlmann said.

Duethman believes the offense can work, but the team needs to put forth all the effort possible and really understand the concept of the new offense.

"Everyone needs to know what level we're running," Duethman said. "We need a full 100 percent effort from everyone on the court for it to be really effective."

According to Duethman, once the team completely understands the new offense there should be signs of improvement. When the offense is run correctly, it throws should other teams off.

"There is no way you can scout our offense," Duethman said. "It's confusing for other teams to figure out what we're running."

Collins hopes to see the team come around by mid-January, performing the new offense properly.

"I don't expect it to click right away," Collins said. "They continue to progress day in and day out, and I'm noticing slight improvements everyday." ★



Shooting hoops ★ Sophomore Caroline Gray scores a basket after a lay-up drill during practice Monday. Gray has played since her freshman year and is currently a point guard. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**



Flying high ★ Freshman Lydia Thomsen performs a jump kick during karate practice at AmeriKick Dec. 3. Thomsen has been participating in karate classes and events since she was four years old. PHOTO BY TRACY BURNS-YOCUM

Karate kid achieves national success

Sophomore Lydia Thomsen competes in karate across the country with a black belt

by KYLIE HORNBECK
News Editor

Freshman Lydia Thomsen has a black belt in karate. She participates in local and national tournaments in the four categories of sparring (fighting), traditional forms, traditional weapons (fighting with a long piece of wood called a Bo staff) and demo team (performance with a team that demonstrates moves often for show rather than competition).

Full name: Lydia Sarah Grace Thomsen
Nickname: Lidderbugg
Birth date / place: June 23, 1994 / St. Luke's Hospital
Best known for: sparring (fighting)
Karate career: 10 years at AmeriKick Overland Park
Major awards and honors: Ran Placed 1st in traditional form and 1st in traditional weapons as 2nd Junior Grand Champion in a national competition in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Locally competed in the Tornados International competition, placing 1st in traditional form, 1st in sparring and 2nd in traditional forms and 2nd in sparring.

How it happened: "I started at age four when I took a karate seminar at my parents' club [Woodside Tennis and Health Club] because my mom wanted me to get involved in something," Thomsen said. Thomsen went on to receive her white belt, dragon yellow belt, dragon orange belt, dragon green belt, dragon blue belt, dragon purple belt, solid yellow belt, solid orange belt, solid green belt, solid blue

belt, first degree red belt, second degree red belt, junior black belt and now has her first degree black belt. "You go through a really big process to get your black belt," Thomsen said. "There are three different days of testing with three other people for about three hours each day and then a two-day intense test. We had to run eight miles, know all the different forms (since white belt is an oral test), get three letters of recommendation, write a paper on why we think we're ready [to receive our black belts]...We stayed at the karate school until 4 a.m. on a Friday, then went to a hotel and had to be back by 9 a.m. and we couldn't leave the school until we did 1,000 pushups and sit-ups."

Role model: "[Ms.] Christy Dienes because she's really good at karate and older than me and I look up to her and I look up to my brother a lot because he's two years older than me and he works really hard at [karate] and pushes himself to work really hard."

Pre-competition meal: pasta or some sort of carbs, granola bars and Gatorade

Practice location: AmeriKick Overland Park in the Nall Hills Shopping Center

Earliest karate memory: "When I first competed at a local tournament when I was five and got my first 1st place and my trophy was a karate girl kicking which I thought was really cool especially because I had my friend there watching me."

Favorite karate moment: "When I get done with my form but I don't know what place I've gotten and I feel really excited. I feel relieved and also I think when I'm fighting and I win the match I think it's a really good feeling."

Advice for other karate kids: "Practice a

lot at it and work hard and enjoy doing it because if you don't enjoy doing it, it's not really fun and also if you don't get something ask someone for help."

Other hobbies: teaching self-defense classes for the Ali Kemp Foundation (founded by AmeriKick Overland Park), piano, baking, golf and volleyball

Secret to success: "Concentrating really hard and being really powerful when you go out and present your form and I always tell myself to have deep stances and high kicks."

Pre-competition routine: "I usually practice by running the form over through my head and practice certain parts of my form and stretch in my stances."

Attitude: "I'm pretty serious about it. I mean, when I was littler, [karate] was more of a fun activity but now I want to practice hard and compete and do well. I do [karate] year round and not just practicing in karate but I do cardio workouts to be in shape and keep up."

If not karate: "I'd be doing homework, cardio workouts, running at the gym or working out."

Coach (sensei) Jarrett Leiker said: "I'd say [Thomsen's work ethic] is unmatched. It's probably the best in the academy. [Thomsen] gives 110 percent all the time. Her work ethic is definitely her best quality, and her attitude is always very positive... She's a great fighter and definitely the toughest girl I know." ★



Thomsen

Varsity basketball (1-3)		
Dec. 1	Hickman Mills	L
Dec. 3	Sion	L
Dec. 5	Lee's Summit North	L
Dec. 9	Blue Springs South	W

Varsity basketball roster

Caroline Gray ★	10
Emily Wilson	10
Avery Adams	11
Brady Essmann	11
Kelsie Fiss	11
Abby Duethman	12
Paige Kuhlmann	12
Stephanie Lankford	12
Paulina Wentworth	12
Head coach: Jamie Collins	
Assistant coach: Mark Einhellig	
*bolded: returning varsity members	

JV basketball (4-1)		
Dec. 1	Hickman Mills	W
Dec. 3	Sion	W
Dec. 5	Blue Springs	W
Dec. 8	Lee's Summit West	L
Dec. 9	Pembroke	W

JV basketball roster

Megan Lankford	9
Megan Lewis	9
Mayme Marshall	9
Clarissa Seay	9
Alex Christian	10
Ally Franken	10
Maddie Lueke	10
Katie Pautler	10
Lauren Scott	10
Emma Steck	10
Coach: Mick Fletcher	

Freshman basketball (3-1)		
Dec. 2	Lawrence West	L
Dec. 4	Lawrence South	W
Dec. 6	Miege	W
Dec. 8	Ward	W

Freshman basketball roster

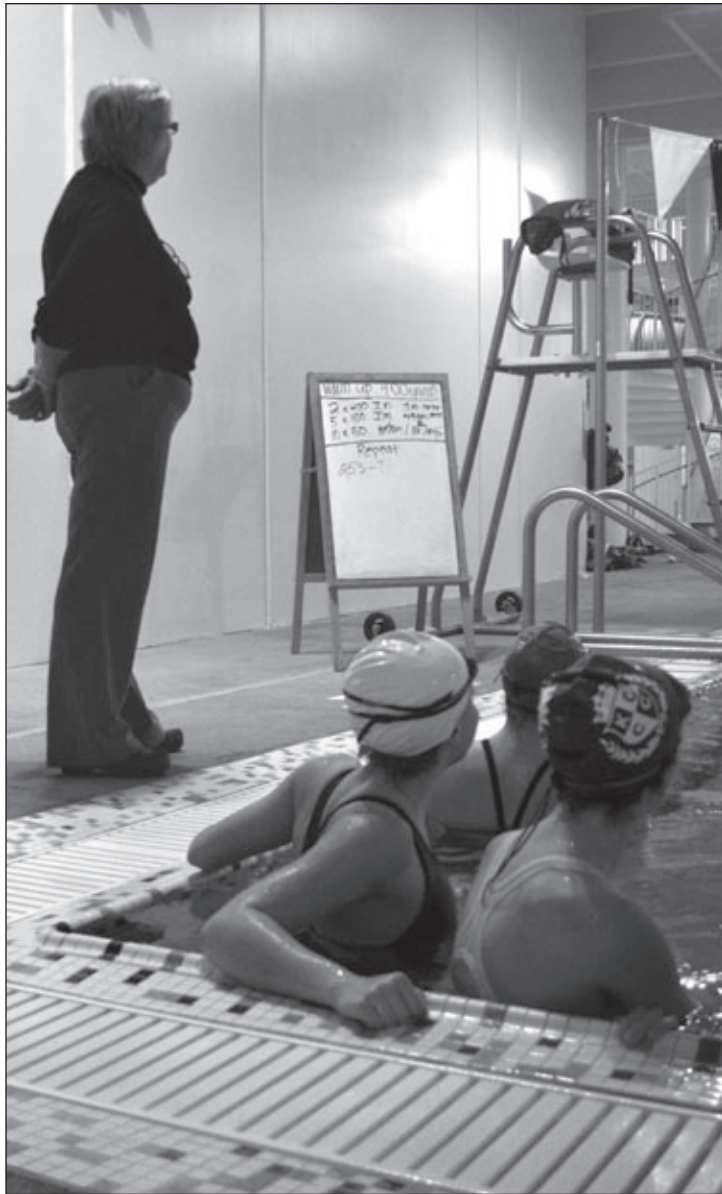
Mary Cate Feuerborn
Brenna Scott
Lauren Barrett
Emily Holt
Shannen Freeman
Mary LeRoy
Katie Beirne
Meg Nulton
Katelyn Ehrnman
Jennifer Blake
Paige Wendland
Coach: Jamie Cooper

Upcoming events

★
Dec. 12 at 4 p.m. swim team's Blue Springs relays at the Blue Springs YMCA

Jan. 2 at 6:30 dance team's halftime performance at the varsity basketball game vs. Lee's Summit North

STA strives for consistency



Water watch ★ New swim coach Maureen Nash watches varsity swimmers finish a set during practice on Dec. 3. The team's first meet of the season is today at 4 pm at Blue Springs High School. This meet is titled Blue Springs Relay Event. PHOTO BY ALLISON POINTER

Athletic directors believe consistency affects team success

by ELIZABETH WILSON
Sports Writer

The STA swim team has a new, but not so new coach this year: Ms. Maureen Nash. Nash, while new to this STA generation, is actually not so new to the STA swim program; Nash coached the swim team at STA from 1999 to 2003, sending swimmers to State four out of her five years.

Though the swim team has had eight different coaches in the past 15 years, athletic director Mike Egner feels the consistency of the same coaching staff from year to year only plays a part in how successful a team can be.

According to Egner, STA hires teachers, not teachers who can coach. Therefore, STA often has to go outside its teaching staff to look for coaches, which is a difficult time commitment for those with a 9-5 job.

According to Ms. Ann Bode-Rodriguez who has been the head track and field coach at STA for 30 years, consistency of the same coaching staff from year to year is very important to how successful a team can be.

"I've had the same jumping coach for over five years and the same with the throw coach," Bode-Rodriguez said. "It's knowing what to expect. It seems like I've had a different distance coach every year and that's hard. One coach expects this and one coach expects something else."

Bode-Rodriguez said when the girls have someone they know return as their coach every year they know what their expectations are.

"They are more comfortable

with that coach and develop better rapport with the coach if they are there for more than one season," Bode Rodriguez said.

According to Mr. Jack Garvin who has been the head golf coach since 1998, when there is consistency in the coaching staff from year to year, things are in place. When the coaching staff changes, there is always need for a transition year.

Garvin said if the girls like their coach, having that coach return every year means everything to them. If the opposite is true, then an inconsistent coaching staff can work in that direction too but there is no guarantee that that can be true.

"It's better to have people in coaching positions for four to five years, not just for two," Garvin said.

Garvin coaches because he likes to and has fun doing it. He said he will probably coach for another two to three years.

According to Egner, the coaches that continually return every year do it because they love coaching.

"It's not because of the money," Egner said. "Some of them will come back every year until they die. They appreciate the support they get and realize they've got a good program going. They enjoy the kids."

Egner said when there is a more consistent coaching staff the girls come in and have more respect for the program.

According to Egner, things go in cycles.

"Sometimes the basketball team does really well and sometimes it struggles," Egner said.

As for the swim team, Egner hopes Nash will continue to coach at STA for years to come and believes they will have a successful season despite the inconsistency of the coaching staff. ★

Any old athlete can swim or, so I thought

AN OPINION BY



ELIZABETH WILSON

Any athlete can swim.

I play soccer three to four times a week, go running the days I don't, I'm in good enough shape.

I know how to swim, I have a pool in my backyard, swim team should be easy.

Or, so I thought.

A few days before tryouts, Cele Fryer asked if I wanted her to get me a swim cap. Ha! Nice try Cele, I know better than to fall for that. They don't actually wear swim caps.

"Don't forget your goggles," she told me.

Cele, give it up. I'm not going to fall for your jokes. Stop trying to make me look like a dork. Can you imagine if I showed up for swim tryouts with goggles and a swim cap?

And a one-piece? Well, shoot. Mom, do you have a one-piece swimsuit I can borrow?

Day one of tryouts came and when Cele and I got out of my car, some lady carrying a big white board spotted us and bellowed, "Let's get in the pool, ladies!"

Yikes.

As we scurried in the double doors, Cele with her swim team bag and I with my clothes in an old Abercrombie purse, we meandered around the gym, searching for the pool. You know, that big blue thing filled with water?

"Excuse me, ma'am, could you tell us where the pool is?"

Aha! Behind the locker room. Of course.

So, we quickly threw open the door, took off our sweats, and went out to the pool area.

What did I see, you ask?

Well, only a sea of white-capped girls with goggles tight to their faces. Cele smiled and slipped me an extra cap and pair of goggles.

"Uh, thanks," I mumbled.

"Okay ladies! Let's get in the pool. We'll start with an 800..."

(That ellipsis was apparently the word "easy." So, I, trying to impress the coaches, swam as fast as I could... through the warm-up. I don't think they even watched the warm up which was just great because by the end of it, I was dead tired and ready to go home.)

As I looked around, I noticed the white board that lady - apparently her name was Coach Nash - had been carrying when we pulled in. This board would too soon become my worst nightmare.

It read: 800 warm-up - free, 5 x 200 - choice, 10 x 100 - free, 15 x 50 - choice, 20 x 25 - choice, 300 cool down - free.

I treaded water, trying to do the math in my head... that's not even three miles. This is going to be easy. Wrong.

And, somehow, I got out in the fast lane where Mandy Prather and Laura Peterson glided past my frantic strokes, lapping me several times.

What was going on?

A flip turn... oh right... um... what exactly is that again? Even after setting aside several minutes to practice flip turns, I still swam to the wall every time, grabbed it and pushed off with my feet. The one time I actually attempted one, I wound up three lanes over. Excuse me... sorry... sorry... Elle stop yelling at me!

I managed to make it through the first night and exactly three nights after that. Each night entailed nearly the same embarrassing debacles with the girls who actually knew how to swim laughing at me... jokes containing "swim lingo" I couldn't even understand.

After that, I threw in the towel... literally.

If you ask me why I quit, I'll probably make something up but, bottom line, I couldn't do it. It was too hard.

Not any athlete can swim. ★

Players believe in superstitions to get lucky

Student athletes create rituals in hopes to better their sports performances

by TAYLOR IRWIN
Staff Writer

Hands shaking and minds racing, athletes create superstitions to calm themselves before competing, believing these rituals have the ability to better their performances. Muscles warmed and stretched, these superstitions help athletes' minds become as ready as their bodies and once completed; its game on.

Shauna Muehlbach - senior track runner

Standing on the track after stretching and warming up, senior Shauna Muehlbach's eyes scan her path and land on the finish line. Once in her lane and ready to go, Muehlbach pictures something she desperately wants at the end of the finish line in order to calm her racing nerves.



Muehlbach

"All I keep thinking is, it'll all be over in a minute," Muehlbach said. "Just pretend a robber is chasing you, that way you

run faster."

Another pre-game superstition Muehlbach holds is not going to the bathroom before a race. According to Muehlbach, having to use the rest room before a race makes athletes run faster.

Muehlbach said most of her superstitions came from upperclassmen. When she was a freshman on the track team, the tips came from juniors and seniors "passing on the torch."

Leah Miller - swim team sophomore

The night before a big meet, sophomore Leah Miller completes her self created ritual for luck. After brushing her teeth and preparing for bed, Miller sleeps with her swimsuit on underneath her normal pajamas.

"It started out as convenient," Miller said. "Because our meets are so early, I would just wake up and be ready. It's just like girls sleeping in their uniforms at STA."

According to Miller, this ritual began on her first swim team when she realized she was not a morning person. This ritual became habit after only a few meets, and once when she did not sleep in her suit, she did not swim



Miller

as well as she had thought she would.

"It became a comfort thing," Miller said. "Sleeping in my suit makes me feel more prepared now."

Megan Wilkerson - Junior soccer player

Wanting to perform her best, junior Megan Wilkerson has her own superstitions she believes in. Before every game, Wilkerson takes a freezing cold shower to calm herself and prepare her mind. According to Wilkerson, this ritual began her freshman year when she was not able to wake up in the mornings, and the cold water finished what the alarm clock started.

"I always do it," Wilkerson said. "Even in winter, a lot of the time my hair will freeze."

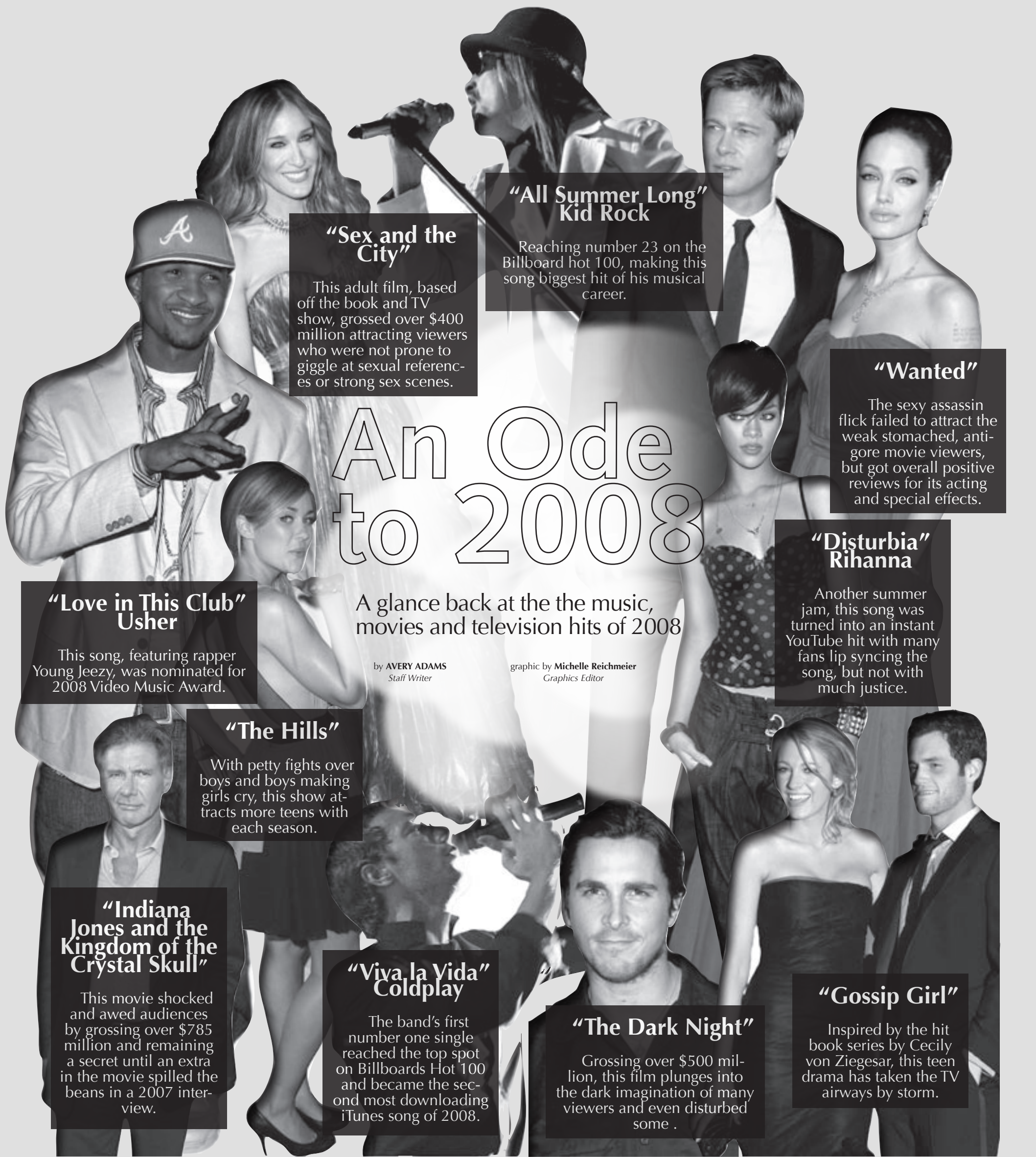
If Wilkerson is not able to take her shower, she said she does not feel prepared for her game and does not play her best.

Once she's wide awake and after her shower, Wilkerson listens to her favorite song: "What's it gonna do" by Lil' John.

With these superstitions completed, Wilkerson believes she is ready to play her best and win. ★



Wilkerson



An Ode to 2008

A glance back at the the music, movies and television hits of 2008

by **AVERY ADAMS**
Staff Writer

graphic by **Michelle Reichmeier**
Graphics Editor

"Love in This Club" Usher

This song, featuring rapper Young Jeezy, was nominated for 2008 Video Music Award.

"Sex and the City"

This adult film, based off the book and TV show, grossed over \$400 million attracting viewers who were not prone to giggle at sexual references or strong sex scenes.

"All Summer Long" Kid Rock

Reaching number 23 on the Billboard hot 100, making this song biggest hit of his musical career.

"Wanted"

The sexy assassin flick failed to attract the weak stomached, anti-gore movie viewers, but got overall positive reviews for its acting and special effects.

"Disturbia" Rihanna

Another summer jam, this song was turned into an instant YouTube hit with many fans lip syncing the song, but not with much justice.

"The Hills"

With petty fights over boys and boys making girls cry, this show attracts more teens with each season.

"Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull"

This movie shocked and awed audiences by grossing over \$785 million and remaining a secret until an extra in the movie spilled the beans in a 2007 interview.

"Viva la Vida" Coldplay

The band's first number one single reached the top spot on Billboards Hot 100 and became the second most downloading iTunes song of 2008.

"The Dark Night"

Grossing over \$500 million, this film plunges into the dark imagination of many viewers and even disturbed some .

"Gossip Girl"

Inspired by the hit book series by Cecily von Ziegesar, this teen drama has taken the TV airways by storm.

STA sophomore and musician Hannah Longstreet is going on the record. The musical record, that is. Her album, titled "All Used Up" is set to be released Dec. 16 and soon after to be put on iTunes.

"The title comes from a song I started but never finished," Longstreet said. "I set it down and I'll come back later when the negative memory of it isn't so strong."

According to Longstreet, putting her self-written and produced music on iTunes will be a rather easy task.

"I don't think it's a hard process," Longstreet said. "I just haven't really sat down and looked at all the paperwork yet, I'll get around to it though...I want [the album] to be on iTunes in December or January."

In order to submit music to iTunes, paperwork must be downloaded from iTunes online, completed and mailed in. This paperwork asks a series of questions to protect iTunes against libel, and verifies that the producer of the music has rightfully bylined the writer of the song. Once the paperwork has been processed and accepted, music may be uploaded from Garage Band or other computer generated production equipment for 99 cents. Lastly, there a 24 hour waiting period until songs can be purchased by iTunes users.

"All Used Up" features eight original songs, one of which she performed at a sophomore class talent show during class meetings on Nov. 7.

"Her vocals were really strong," sophomore Hayden Fudenberg said. "I was impressed that she wrote her own lyrics. They were simple but they had a lot of imagery and were really beautiful."

Although she was not nervous at first, Longstreet admits that once everyone became focused on her, she was intimidated.

"When everyone became silent I thought it could mean two things," Longstreet said. "It was either really good or really, really bad. But then everyone clapped after, so I think they liked it."

According to sophomore Sam Cusamano and talent show attendee, Longstreet was outstanding.

"I am just so envious of her creativity and talent," Cusamano said. "I know some of the words to her songs already. I think it's so cool we have somebody like her in our grade and hopefully one day we can look back and tell people we once knew the famous Hannah Longstreet."

All of Longstreet's songs were written about friends, crushes or boyfriends, and she said that "it's pretty obvious" when a song is written about someone in particular.

"[The song titled] 'Mothers' Day' is about my mom," Longstreet said. "I wrote it on Mothers' Day so I decided to just stick it on my album...it's cute."

Also, every song is written about something that has happened, will happen or sometimes even dreams, feelings or things to look forward to in her own life.

"'Behind My Brown Eyes' is most personal to me," Longstreet said. "It's about me trying to discover myself. I had one moment where I could convey what I was feeling so I wrote it down as fast as I could."

So far, 76 sophomores have pre-ordered her \$10 CD, which will be available for purchase in the STA quad on the first day of finals. Longstreet's plan is to put all of her money made into savings.

Longstreet sparked an interest in music when she was just six or seven after hearing the St. John LaLande grade school choir; she loved the sound and decided to join. After she joined her school choir, Longstreet wanted to take voice lessons but her choir teacher was persistent about her taking piano lessons. She started piano when she was eight and "became addicted to practicing." Shortly after, she began voice lessons.

Today, Longstreet spends most of her time working independently in her piano room with her grand piano, keyboard, computer and recording equipment.

"I take no [structured] voice or piano lessons because both teachers said that I've maxed them out," Longstreet said. "But I do practice about an hour and a half every day on the piano and an hour on voice."

According to Longstreet, her family is a very artistic family and although she is the only musical person in her immediate family, they have been very supportive throughout her whole musical career. Her parents have lent her money for equipment, and her older brother Joe, 23, is a graphic designer and helped design the album cover for "All Used Up." Longstreet also has a 21 year-old-sister, Rachel, who is in college in Iowa. Longstreet said that Rachel frequently calls her asking for new music and has always encouraged her love for music.

As of now, Longstreet is unsure about pursuing her musical career in college.

"I'll keep going," Longstreet said. "I don't think I'll major in it...maybe math."

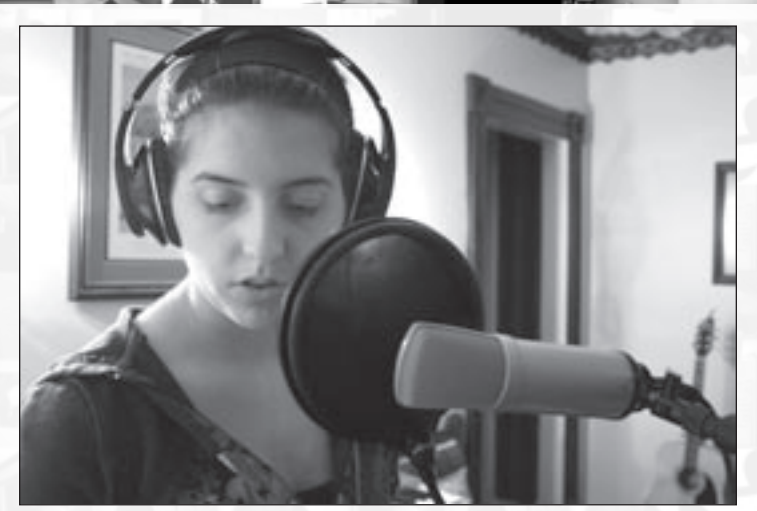
As Dec. 16 draws closer each day, Longstreet grows more nervous.

"I'm afraid people won't like it but they won't tell me," Longstreet said. "But I like just being able to get things out. I like being good at something and I think I'm good at this. This is a goal I've been striving for, for two years." ★

Like music to her ears

STA's Hannah Longstreet creates and produces CD to be released Dec. 16

by MORGAN SAID
Staff Writer



Sing Your Heart Out ★ Sophomore Hannah Longstreet sings "Midnight Motorcycle Rides" for her new CD. PHOTO BY TRACY BURNS-YOCUM

entertainment WALL

Movie

"James Bond: Quantum of Solace"

Fast cars, pretty girls, and explosions, the new James Bond movie "Quantum of Solace" is pretty predictable. While the plot picks up where "Casino Royale" left off, I felt like the whole point of the movie was lacking. I didn't even learn the infamous 'Bond girl's' name until the end credits. The movie itself was visually entertaining, but I was more distracted by the special effects. I'd wait for this one to hit Blockbuster before seeing it in the theater.

-Taylor Irwin

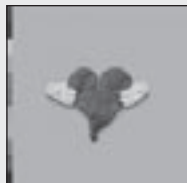


Song

"Heartless"

Kanye West's new single "Heartless" has a techno vibe that is different from West's older songs with a more traditional rap sound, but is not disappointing. "Heartless" describes the story of a failed relationship between a man and a "heartless" woman in a way that is repetitive and sing-songy, but undeniably catchy and upbeat. West has pushed the boundaries of the rap and hip-hop genre by creating a new hit that is artistic and arguably has more emotional value than other current rap music.

-Julia Stapinski



CD

"Acid Tongue"

Rilo Kiley front-woman Jenny Lewis's second solo album, "Acid Tongue," is a lovely assortment of eleven different songs. Lewis's voice is the foundation of the album; her range is impeccable. She brings the clearest high notes to the love ballad, "Black Sand," and a voice reminiscent of a 1920s jazz singer in "Jack Killed Mom." The only problem with the album is that, with the exception of the title track (the heart-stopper of the album), the songs seem too firmly based in past creations of other performers. Even so, her interpretations are beautiful.

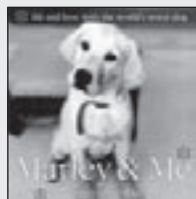
-Bianca Dang

Book

"Marley and Me"

The dog dies. Sorry to ruin it for you, but it's the circle of life. "Marley and Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog" is columnist John Grogan's autobiography based around the life of his highly energetic - almost psychotic - yellow lab. Grogan writes conversationally and with humor so it is an easy read. I found humor in his tendency to write the inner thoughts of those around him, including his dog. Sometimes it bothered me that the amount of detail Grogan dedicates is not consistent with the importance of the subject matter. It is a good story and I did shed some tears when Marley died, but this may be one of few stories that are better on the big screen.

-Rosie Hodes



Choir concert brings holiday spirit



Choir of Angels ★ STA music teacher Shana Westall directs the STA choirs during practice for the winter concert Dec. 2. The winter concert featured performances by the Concert Choir, Instrumental Choir, Capella Choir and STA singers. PHOTO BY TRACY BURNS-YOCUM

AN OPINION BY



LAUREN PASZKIEWICZ

Walking up to STA I could hear the anticipation rise with every pitch as the choir practiced in the music room. Smiling to myself I walked into the dim lit auditorium. Finding a seat was not difficult seeing as not very many people were in the audience. Looking around I felt a twinge of disappointment, thinking before hand that a lot of girls would come and support their fellow Stars.

As the choir began shuffling into their place on center stage, a small orchestra painfully played in the background. It wasn't that their orchestra was necessarily bad, just hard to hear over the mumbling of voices, bells ringing off key and parents shuffling into their seats. The beginning was indeed disappointing.

However, once the choir began to sing their variety of Christmas songs, the mood instantly began to change. The first piece was a combination of all the choirs entitled "Wassail." It was interesting to discover that the song title is another way of saying "Cheers" and wishing someone good health in England. Following "Wassail" came a Capella choir who incorporated a harpist to accompany their song "La Bonne Nouvelle." Listening to the voices and instruments blend into perfect harmony had most of the audience transfixed.

I was amazed how so many of my fellow classmates could reach some notes that I didn't even think were possible to achieve. Looking at the bright smiles on all of the girls' faces made it clear that they were up their having a great time and loved impressing their family members with the songs they had worked on through the semester.

Watching them having fun made me really get into the concert. Before I knew it, the choir girls were rounded up and shuffled out of the auditorium. The lights flew back on revealing the proud smiles on the parents' faces.

Over all I thought that this concert was well worth the time. I may be a little biased though, considering how I love supporting our Stars at any event. However, by the audience's enthusiastic reaction I could tell I was not the only one that thought so. ★

STA singers chosen for All-State choir contest

by MICAH WILKINS
Staff Writer

Senior Kirsten Hyde and junior McKenzie Miller were chosen last month to join the 2009 Missouri All-State Choir. Hyde and Miller, with 24 other sopranos, were chosen at All-District, where they moved on to All-State.



To audition, Hyde and Miller prepared and performed a solo piece of their own at All-District, and at All-State, they performed a piece in Latin, given to them prior to the auditions. During the "blind auditions" at Truman High School in Independence, the judges kept their backs against the performers while they sang.

"When I walked in, all the judges' backs were turned," said Miller. "So it really wasn't intimidating."

Out of those chosen at All-District, six Kansas City metropolitan area juniors and seniors moved on to All-State.



The Sopranos attended their first rehearsal in Independence this past week with choir teacher Shauna Westall.

"At our first rehearsal, we met some really talented choir directors and students," Hyde said. "The music was also very different and difficult. I've never before seen music that hard and complex."

Throughout the next month, Hyde, Miller and the entire Choir will rehearse to prepare for their performance at the five-day Missouri Music Educator's Association Convention in Jan. 2009. The sopranos are missing three days of school to perform at the convention.

"Students need to attend every rehearsal," Miller said. "It requires a lot of time and energy."

The winter convention will be held in Jefferson City. Choir teachers and students from around the will attend the convention in Jan. and will make up the majority of the choir's audience.

I'm sorry Edward Cullen, you make me uncomfortable

AN OPINION BY



ALLISON POINTER

I felt awkward. I was squeamish, uneasy and almost amused by it. To put it simply, "Twilight" sucked.

I wasn't one of those people going into the movie, knowing basically nothing about the story. I had read the books. I will admit they

were a fast, easy read, however I will not say that I am freakishly obsessed with them. Sure the vampire thing is somewhat intriguing and the plot can be entertaining, but even still, I would not consider myself a die-hard fan.

So why see the movie? I really want to say the only reason was for this homework assignment but that wouldn't be accurate. I confess that secretly I actually wanted to see it.

Twenty minutes in, I changed my mind. Whatever small liking I had for the books was completely ruined by the awfulness of the movie. Scratch that- ruined by the awkwardness of the movie. It was like those moments where you feel extremely uncomfortable and so

all you can do is laugh. I found myself laughing a lot, and this wasn't supposed to be a comedy.

Here's the play by play. Girl meets boy. Girl and boy are awkward. Boy is weird. Girl and boy decide that they can't be friends (even though they had no previous relationship). Girl and boy are awkward. Girl and boy fall in love. Girl and boy confess they cannot live without each other. Girl and boy are awkward.

I really wish that I could explain to you why I found every other second utterly uncomfortable, but I can't. I just cannot find the words to describe it (and I don't want to offend those who

really loved the movie and felt completely comfortable during it; if that is you, maybe you should discontinue reading this).

I glanced around the theater to see what the reactions from the people around me were. Some shared the same uneasiness I felt while others stared at the screen with a wide-eyed anticipation.

To those of you who have yet to see this movie, I do not want this to stop you. Perhaps the "I love you, you are my soul mate, I can't live without you" is your cup of tea. Maybe you think that is completely not awkward and would be comfortable watching this movie. I, however, did not. So "Twilight," sorry to say, but I can live without you. ★



Toe to toe ★ Senior Anna Franke plays with the newborn feet of baby Ben in her living room, comparing his tiny feet to her big toe. The Franke family received Ben during October, the fourth of the newborn foster children to come under their care. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**

Helping hand ★ In a picture from a scrapbook in their living room, next to the hospital band from the day of his birth, mother Martha Franke's holds newborn Michael's hand in hers. Besides this album consisting of all the foster babies to come through their home, pictures of Michael and Will adorn the walls of the Franke house and windowsills. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**

Gentle touch ★ Sophomore Mary Franke kisses the head of baby Ben, expecting him to become sleepy after his usual dinner milk bottle, in her living room last Sunday. Mary loves when Ben falls asleep in her arms. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**

Through the looking glass ★ Sisters Anna and Mary try to calm a crying Ben and place him in his crib for a possible nap, soothing him with musical baby toys. With a newborn in the house, a good night's sleep has become an inflexible goal, but the family shares the load by taking turns to care for Ben's needs. **PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE**

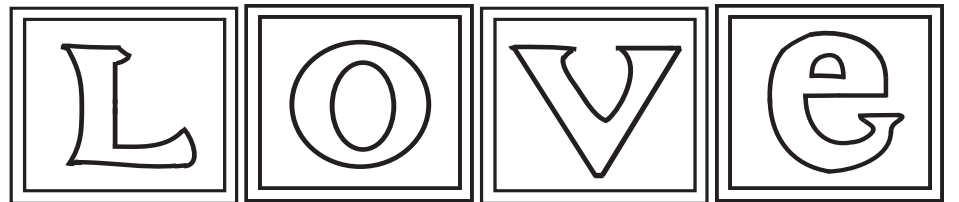


One big happy family ★ Mary, from left, feeds baby Ben as father John, older sister Anna, and mother Martha watch and laugh as the baby makes bubbles and slurping sounds. The Franke family has been a foster family for newborn babies for over four years now. PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE



From head to toe ★ Baby Ben lays on his favorite blanket in the Franke's living room, as senior Anna and sister sophomore Mary play with his hand and feet. PHOTO BY JAIME HENRY-WHITE

Sharing the



The Franke sisters of STA help their family welcome their fourth foster child

by HALEY VONDEM KAMP
Lifestyles Editor

Editors Note: In the interest of protecting the children, the Franke family has insisted that the names of the foster children included in this story be changed.

Heading west on I-70 from Columbia, Martha and John Franke were making their way back to their Brookside home almost four years ago. Midway into the drive, a long awaited phone call interrupted their travel plans. First, they made a drug store pit stop. They needed formula and diapers before they could make their most important pick-up. Michael, eight months old, was waiting for them at Children's Mercy hospital. He was their first foster child.

"We'd been waiting for a call so it was exciting to get it and be able to say yes," said John, father of STA senior Anna Franke and sophomore Mary Franke.

Anna and Mary were at home with their little brother Jack and older brother Pat Franke when their parents called, explaining the reason for their tardiness.

"They called us when they were for sure," Mary said. "We were all waiting. We were so excited because [Michael] was our first [baby]."

Now, the Frankes are housing their fourth foster child. They say they were much better prepared when this Halloween they received a call reminiscent to the one they took driving home from Columbia.

"They didn't tell us what hospital he was at, they didn't tell us his name, they didn't tell us anything except for they had a boy," Jack, a fifth grader at Visitation School, said.

Around noon, Anna and Mary received similarly ambiguous texts from their mother, Martha, sharing the news. "We might have a baby when you get home!" the messages read. The girls had only a few hours to wait upon arriving home from school. By 6 p.m., case workers from the foster program brought Ben, just three days old, into his new home. With a bedroom and clothes already set aside for him, the Frankes eagerly welcomed Ben into the family.

'Straight from heaven'

Over the recent Thanksgiving holiday, Anna answered the door, carrying Ben, now nearly two months old, still small enough to be cradled in one of her arms.

"He just woke up," she said.

According to the Franke children, Ben is like one of their own.

"I love feeding him," Anna said.

"Taking naps with him, that's definitely my favorite," Jack said.

"I like holding him when he's sleeping," Mary said. "Or when he's not squirmy."

The siblings share time with the newborn, doing little to differentiate between him and their biological brothers and sisters.

Anna stroked his tiny fingers as she talked, resting him in her lap.

"We all take turns baby-sitting him and feeding him and changing him," she said. "It's more responsibility but it's fun having a baby around. We all love babies."

Although the Frankes are now completely settled into their role as a foster family, the road to getting there was long. According to John it took about a year and half to become licensed.

Case workers and officials from the STAR foster program put the family through background checks conducted multiple interviews. Jack remembers being asked how he was punished and if he was a troublemaker, while Anna and Mary recall answering questions about their interests and relationships with the rest of their family.

"They were just making sure we were all willing to do it," Mary said.

The Frankes' house was also inspected and the family was required to submit references from neighbors and school officials. On top of these prerequisites, John, Martha and their older children were fingerprinted. Most time consuming of all were the hours they spent in classes and on home study.

Despite the long and at times strenuous process, the family stuck with the program, and was licensed by the time Anna reached her freshman year at STA.

John, who was first to become interested in fostering children, thought it to be an ideal opportunity for his family to help the community.

"I just feel like we have God's baby in our house and that's a good feeling."

Ms. Martha Franke

"We thought it would be a way to give back to society... to help the people that need help," he said. "We didn't know anyone who had experience as a foster parent, but we knew the program and we decided to give it a try."

Martha was initially apprehensive, according to her daughter Mary.

"Mom was a little iffy because she knew how hard it would be to give [the babies] up," she said.

However, it didn't take long for Martha to look past this inevitability.

"I've always liked babies and I've always wanted to do some sort of volunteer work with babies, so when my kids got old enough... it seemed like a good thing for us to do," Martha said.

Despite the sleepless nights, adjustment periods, and new set of responsibilities that came with their entrance into the foster program, the Frankes feel lucky.

"I just feel like we have God's baby in our house, and that's a good feeling," Martha said. "[Ben] is so perfect and his parents aren't, so he's just obviously straight from heaven."

Baby on board

Ben stirred and let out a cry. In that instant all six Frankes present stopped and deferred their attention to the squirming newborn whimpering in Anna's arms.

"Are you hungry?" Anna crooned.

"I think he needs a diaper," said Meg Franke, a senior at the University of Missouri and the oldest of the five Franke siblings. She took the baby

from Anna and standing in the middle of the room, gently rocked him to his previous calm.

"I just changed him 20 minutes ago," Martha said. "He needs a blanket."

For Martha, it's moments like these, seeing her own children interact with the foster children they house, that make the experience worthwhile.

The family agrees that while they're able to provide a stable home, the children they foster lend their gifts as well. John believes their involvement in the foster program has brought his family closer.

"It's been a good unifying experience for the family," he said. "It's the combination of being able to help an infant who's completely helpless and dependent... and bringing the family

together to help to care for that baby."

According to Anna, she's gained a new sense of responsibility that will help her in starting her own family.

"I know how to take care of babies now," said Anna. "I think I'll be prepared."

Martha interjects, prompting her kids, "Have we learned gratitude?"

The Frankes unanimously agree, through participating in the foster program, they've realized how lucky they are.

"Just seeing where [the babies] come from makes me grateful," Anna said.

Gone but not forgotten

"Let's take a walk," Martha said.

It was an afternoon last November and Anna and Mary had just arrived home from school.

The girls joined their mother, and the walk turned tearful when Martha broke the news. Will, a foster child who'd been with them for over a year, would be leaving the next day.

"We were just walking and bawling," Anna said.

For the Frankes, their time with foster children always ends with good-byes.

"It's always hard to give them up but we've always known we're not going to adopt," Anna said. "There are other families that need them."

John and Martha explain that in their training class of twenty couples, they were the only one planning to serve as foster parents only, with no intentions to adopt in the future.

"It's very tempting to want to adopt them after they bond with you," John said. "But our goal or our reason for getting in the program was to act as foster parents only, not adoptive parents. We've stuck with that mission statement so far."

Due to the scheduling of custody hearings, the Frankes know Ben will be with them until at least January, but beyond that, little can be done to predict how long he'll stay.

In the foster program, similar to how quickly the children arrive, they can leave just as fast. Mary explains that though she'll eventually have to say goodbye to Ben, she tries to avoid dwelling on his departure.

"I try not to think about it, but I know it's coming," she said.

Mary and Anna instead focus on the time they have left, and are excited to have Ben during the holidays.

"I just love babies, especially at Christmas," said Anna. She gently bounced Ben as she readjusted his pacifier. "He's just like a little present." ★

Corrections

Issue 3 Corrections

On page 22 a correction was incorrect: *Elle Rauch* took the picture under the headline "Flower Power."

Issue 3 Corrections

On page 14, coverage under the headline "Fall sports teams wrap up seasons" misspelled the name of tennis coach *Meghan Parrott*.

Issue 3 Corrections

On page 9, coverage under the headline "Freshman helps repair the world" misspelled the name of *Mattie Rhodes*.



Taking time to text ★ Recent studies show that texting is a detriment to social skills. However, with 17 million American teenage mobile users and half of them texters, text messaging has become an integrated part of teenagers' lives. PHOTO BY SYDNEY DEATHERAGE

TEXTING: Text messaging influences teens' social skills

Continued from page 2

things very, very fast is a very big assistance to our intellectual type of thinking," Hanson said.

Additionally, Reid's studies concluded that SMS messages hold multiple advantages, especially to teens suffering from social anxiety or depression.

"Texters reported having deeper relationships with the person that they texted the most," Reid said. "They also reported that texting helped them develop new relationships, added something new to their existing relationships and as having affected their social life more than [those who talk rather than text]."

In contrast to Hanson's generally appreciative outlook on most technology, he enforces the idea that the lack of personal communication in recent years has had its detriments.

"You have these efforts to kind of mimic gestures with emoticons in texting but they don't seem to be nearly as effective as gestures used in a face-to-face type of situation," Hanson said. "When you talk on the phone you gesture, and yet that just doesn't get through [in a text]. So, that part of our communication today is diminished."

Ultimately this biggest social effect text messaging has had, according to Bisbee, is the new-

found judgment teens can make about one another based on their texting "style."

"You can judge how smart people are by how they text like whether they misspell things or ignore punctuation or abuse it," Bisbee said. "For example, I've noticed STA girls will type our every word with correct punctuation like, 'What are you doing?' whereas at East they act really excited to talk to you like, 'What are you doing tonight, baby love!?' <3' and at Miega I've noticed they'll be like, 'Wat r u doing 2nite?'" It makes it more obvious maybe what school they go to or what group of people they're hanging out with."

With 17 million American teenage mobile users and half of them texters, text messaging has become an integrated part of teenagers' lives. Scholars have proven the advantages and disadvantages of this type of electronic communication, but regardless of their findings, understand that texting is not going anywhere.

"The extraordinary success of SMS, particularly among younger cell phone users, continues to surprise network operators," Reid said. "SMS is now expected to dominate mobile messaging in both traffic volume and revenue well into the last of the present decade." ★

MCCALLA: Student works with disabled

Continued from page 10

helps calm her when she becomes frustrated," said McCalla.

Kailey soon becomes bored and stands up, heading for the front door. Her mother and McCalla follow her.

"Do you want to go on a walk, Kai?" Marianne asks. Kailey smiles.

As McCalla and Kailey step outside, they are met with cold, wet weather. [Kailey's] hooded pink fleece collects snowflakes outside as the two circle her neighborhood's block, her feet shuffling as she walks.

"Walking is really the only form of exercise she has and she enjoys it so we usually do it a couple times a day," said McCalla.

The two soon return home because of the cold, but McCalla will be back next week. They'll take another walk then. ★

SECURITY: Security update to increase safety

Continued from page 3

as it could be, but the new security system will be effective and hassle-free.

"Security now [at STA] is kind of nonexistent," Frey said. "[The technology committee and I] thought the keypad system would be most convenient for students over a swipe card system and it would be less expensive [than other options]."

Bone believes this system will have positive effects on the STA community as a whole. She says parents should not be worried about STA's security now but she wants everyone to feel safe about coming to STA.

"I just think [a new security system] is a win-win for everybody: students, parents," Bone said. "I hope it's not going to be a signal of unwelcoming but in this day and age, safety is a concern for all of us."

All plans are subject to change in the upcoming months with administration finalizations. ★

ALCOHOL: Surveys, law officers show family as alcohol source

Continued from page 9

communities, letting children and other parents know that no adult should substitute their judgment for teens' own parents. Drinking is not a rite of passage."

Hodgin stated that his task force dealt more with college students than high school students, but that high school drinking was no less addressed than college drinking.

"It's just different," Hodgin said. "Most high school kids are still living with their parents. They're under a little bit more control than a college student."

Despite this, Hodgin said underage drinking and people providing to minors is a widespread issue that currently is difficult to address.

"The problem is huge," Hodgin said. "It happens all the time. There's not really enough of us around to really make an impact — The legislature hasn't seen fit to fund anymore. [If there

were more enforcement officers], we could be out there more...we just don't have the manpower to do that right now."

According to Hodgin and Hill both, parents have great power when it comes to influencing their teens' decisions. The survey conducted at STA revealed a trend in terms of parenting that supported Hodgin and Hill: for freshmen and sophomores, parents and adults were the strongest influence on girls when it came to making decisions regarding drinking. However for juniors and seniors, peers were the leading influence, indicating parents are capable of influencing decision making early on.

Hodgin advised parents and adults against providing liquor to minors.

"Don't do it," Hodgin said. "It's not worth the risk and it's morally wrong. It's dangerous and you're hurting the kid." ★

PREGNANCY: TV shows with sexual content increase risk

Continued from page 10

Researchers presented several implications including convincing industry leaders to examine how programming can include messages to teens about the consequences of sexual activity.

"If kids hear their favorite stars telling them to practice safe sex and encourage them to do their research, that might make a big difference," junior Chloe Watters said.

The study suggested that media education in schools could aid teens recognizing the lack of negative consequences of sex on television and encourage them to consider alternative outcomes to those displayed in the media.

"I've seen a lot of shows where the girl gets pregnant," Marzett said. "To help prevent real teen pregnancies the shows need to have a better influence and show the reality of it, not just the television version."

Researchers also concluded that parents should monitor their children's viewing and educate them on the consequences of sex. They suggest utilizing tools to review television content.

"My parents don't monitor what I watch as

much as they used to, but my mom hates MTV and its completely blocked along with some other channels," freshman Colleen McInerney said. "Some teenagers especially want to be just like celebrities, but the media affects all teens."

Over a decade ago, the American Academy of Pediatrics established the Media Matters campaign to make industries aware of how influential their shows and movies are to teens and to help parents recognize their critical role in mediating what their children watch.

"Media are not simply viewed or heard; they are interpreted," Oliver said. "Adolescents bring preexisting values, beliefs, and expectations to the experience of watching and/or listening and these preexisting states influence what one perceives and remembers, so the same show may disinterest one adolescent, intrigue another, and have others resisting the imagery/message to the point of criticizing it. Therefore, there may not be a one-size fits all answer to preventing negative influences since individuals react so differently to the same program." ★



Doctors who influence ★ Popular television shows like "Grey's Anatomy" contain sexualized content that studies prove increase the risk of teenage pregnancy. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

TALK TO YOU LATER



JAIME HENRY-WHITE

No need for camouflage in STA land

(Please read in Australian accent.) Today, on STA Planet, I will be taking you onto a discovery adventure into the life of a very strange creature: the STA girl. With only 537 in the world, remotely located in a place called 56th and Main, documenting these odd plaid-skirted girls meant camouflaging myself as one of their own. After over four years of research, my notes can only reach one conclusion. Nowhere else but STA is "weird" considered cool. Let's begin with the essential watering hole, the Commons. Here, despite their small frames, STA girls are Chipotle-donut-Waldo-pizza-eating machines, consuming at least twice before coming up for air. Their most prized food of all is the "star" cookie, prone to ignite people-shoving stampedes when an open box is spotted in the hands of a certain Mrs. Hudnall in the quad.

Following their obsession with food comes their odd habitat. Not only have these girls found home surrounding a beautiful quad, but journalism kids have built burrows behind a partition, the Harry Potter Club has discovered a safe haven in the "room of requirement," and Unitown delegates a nesting place on top the M&A roof. Another wild 'Critter' species also roams mysteriously to occasionally pop up in the ceramic room's window to meow a quick 'hello.' A STA girl's primal behaviors may be the most interesting of all. Improv piano recitals about essays due that day and boyfriends ring through the auditorium, while screams of the winning intramural badminton players echo through the gym.

Well, mates, to say the least, STA is simply a haven for the incomprehensible, or maybe just the strange genius of originality and humor. With travels under my belt, STA has become the Eighth Wonder of the World. Crickey! It's been a hollow search for me to find a college who will fill the void looking in my heart as my graduation date nears and I will finally walk away from these irreplaceable grounds. I guarantee you, mates, nowhere is as unique and memorable as the halls indigenous to the STA girl. ★

top

[[events of 2008]]

Compiled by Micah Wilkins

5 Jan. 21 - Stock markets around the world plunge due to the subprime mortgage crisis of the previous year. Later, the U.S. declares its economic recession while the world falls into a global financial crisis.

4 Aug. 7 - The South Ossetia war begins after days of border disagreements between Georgia and Russia, the day before the 2008 Olympics.

3 Aug. 8 - The Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Summer Olympics is held in Beijing, China amidst international outcry against Chinese treatment of Tibetans.

2 Nov. 4 - Barack Obama is elected the first African-American President of the United States.

1 Nov. 27 - Iraqi Parliament signs a pact with the U.S. government, which has occupied the country for the past six years. The agreement states that troops must be completely out of the country by the year 2011.

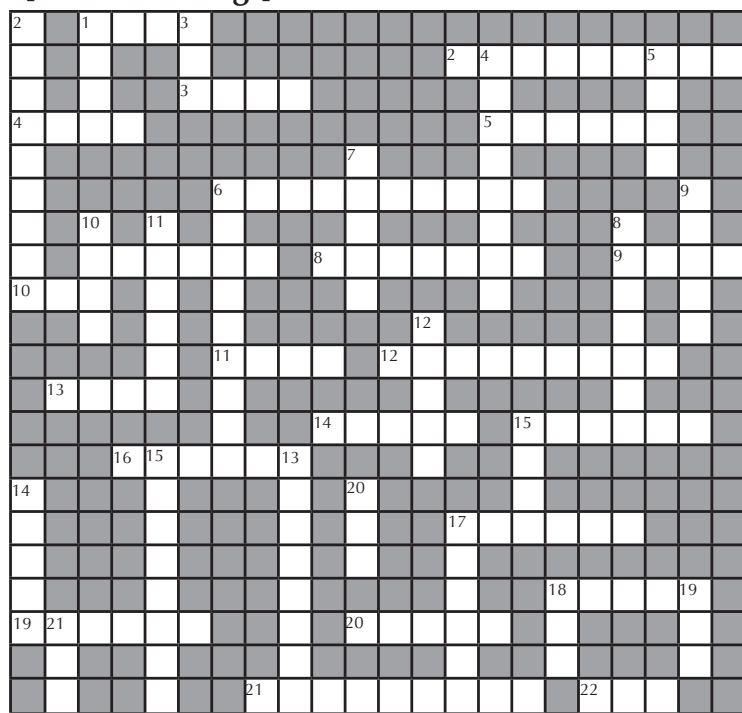
Campus Clowning

"Full moon" in the gym

The moon shined bright for all those participating in intramurals Nov. 11 in the Goppert Center. The Bode advisory was enjoying a party in the Verheyen Room when the next thing they knew, junior Gaby Wilson (commonly known for her outgoing personality) mooned the entire gym through the Verheyen windows. Some students laughed, others grimaced. The administration ticketed Wilson with a Category 1 SBR (Student Behavior Report) for "Danger to the Community" and banned her from the Bode advisory's subsequent Thanksgiving party. ★

Compiled by Avery Adams

[christmas songs]



across- 1. celestial guide of royal trio, 2. little holy town, 3. do this in the hallway with boughs of winter vegetation, 4. O little ___ of Bethlehem, 5. holy cradle, 6. Alice went here; winter ___, 7. We three kings come from this geographical region, 8. 3rd in line of Santa's reindeer, 9. ___ in a manger, 10. Dec. 24, 11. I saw three of these on Christmas day, 12. the day after 10 across, 13. do this, all ye faithful, 14. seasonally appropriate plant especially with ivy, 15. number of days and verses in song, 16. Title of happy snowman, 17. Santa's preferred mode of transportation, 18. rhymes with "holly," 19. some bells are this color, 20. messenger of Christ's arrival, 21. bring a torch, ___, Isabella, 22. jingle all the ___.

down- 1. comes in men, flakes, storms, 3. not green, 4. He'll ransom captive Israel, 5. ___ the Herald Angels, 6. the king who looked out on the feast of Stephen, 7. Christmas salutation, 8. mischievous caroling, 9. chestnuts are best prepared in this way, 10. another word for Christmas, 11. bells do this, 12. what ___ is this? 13. ___ by the fireside, 14. famous Christmas surname, 15. Yuletide animal, 17. the first Christmas was this kind of night, 18. happy Christmas emotion, 19. All I want for Christmas, 20. it's this emotion to ride in a one-horse open sleigh, 21. holly's compliment

answers: across- 1. star, 2. Bethlehem, 3. deck, 4. town, 5. manger, 6. wonderland, 7. Orient, 8. France, 9. away, 10. eve, 11. ship, 12. reindeer, 13. silent, 14. joy, 15. snow, 16. Frosty, 17. sleigh, 18. jolly, 19. silver, 20. angel, 21. Jeanette, 22. way down, 23. snow, 24. red, 25. hark, 26. Venetians, 27. merry, 28. wassail, 29. roast, 30. Noel, 31. jingle, 32. child, 33. Yuletide, 34. Claus, 35. 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time to put your game face on

who: STA senior class vs. Notre Dame de Sion High School senior class

what: Powder Puff football game to raise money to buy canned goods for The Redemptorist Center, a Sion fund-raiser

where: Migliazzo Park

when: Nov. 23

game score: Sion-3, STA-2



Mixed Emotions ★ Above center: senior JoEllen Redlingshafer expresses anger and frustration as she yells on the side of the field. Redlingshafer sported a skull bandana and black markings underneath her eyes, as did many of the other players.

Above: Seniors Jenny McLiney, left and Abby Duethman go over a play during a time out. Duethman, along with senior Megan Monsees were the two scorers for the STA team.

Far right: Senior Molly O'Byrne grabs hold of Sion player during a play in the first half.

Right: Senior Gabriella Garozzo, left, and STA coach Rockhurst High School senior Wyatt Mesh watch from the sidelines as the Sion team runs for a touchdown. The team had a total of four coaches from RHS and Pembroke Hill High School. **PHOTOS BY ALLISON POINTER**

